



# Alumni Manual

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## Who to Call? Resources Page:

The nine months of the Bridge Program may be over, but our commitment to you as our Bridge student has not ended.

Bridge Office: [310-578-1080, ext. 300](tel:310-578-1080) / [bridge.aula@antioch.edu](mailto:bridge.aula@antioch.edu)

Everyone in the Bridge Office is here to help!

Russell Thornhill: [310-578-1080, ext. 322](tel:310-578-1080) / [rthornhill@antioch.edu](mailto:rthornhill@antioch.edu)

Russell, co-director of the program.

Kathryn Pope: [310-578-1080, ext. 323](tel:310-578-1080) / [kpope@antioch.edu](mailto:kpope@antioch.edu)

Kathryn, co-director of the program.

Registrar's Office: [310-578-1080, ext. 216](tel:310-578-1080) / [registrar.aula@antioch.edu](mailto:registrar.aula@antioch.edu)

The Registrar's Office at Antioch handles transcripts and student records.

Student from my Class:

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A student from your class who you would like to stay in touch with, to support one another in your next steps.

Student from my Class:

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A student from your class who you would like to stay in touch with, to support one another in your next steps.

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Student from my Class:

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A student from your class who you would like to stay in touch with, to support one another in your next steps.

Someone in Bridge who inspires me:

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Maybe another student, a TA, or even someone you see on campus who isn't in the program. Someone you can contact when you need a little inspiration.

Someone in Bridge who challenges me:

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Maybe another student, a TA, or even someone you see on campus who isn't in the program. Someone you can contact when you need to be challenged or encouraged to keep going, despite tough times.

Someone in Bridge who I want to support:

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This might be someone in the class who has similar goals or simply someone who asked for your contact information for one of the lines above. Someone you would like to contact to check in on every so often to encourage.

## **What is my role, now that I'm part of Bridge Alumni?**

### **What does it mean to be an alum?**

An alum (gender-neutral), an alumna (feminine), or alumnus (masculine) is a student who has completed an academic program. A group of students who have completed a program are alumni. Once you have completed the Bridge Program, you become part of our Bridge alumni. As our alumni, you are important members of the Antioch community – and important members of our Bridge community.

Being an alum can mean staying connected to Bridge – by meeting others who have been through the Program, participating in Antioch's cultural and educational events, joining Bridge's alumni events, and giving back to Bridge by helping others in the community find the Bridge Program, by sharing experiences with current Bridge students, and by passing the torch of knowledge of learning to others.

## **How Can I Stay Connected?**

The end of our nine months together does not mean the end of Bridge. We are still in contact with alumni from the first year of Bridge (1999), all the way to the most recent years. There are three ways that you can stay connected to Bridge:

1. Getting on our email list: <http://eepurl.com/Y6od1>
2. Connecting to our Bridge 2 Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/antiochlabridge2?ref=hl>
3. Call the Bridge office if your address, email or phone number changes after Bridge: 310.578.1080 x300

## **What is available to me as a Bridge alum?**

As a Bridge alum, you will always have access to campus events at Antioch or our satellite campuses, field trips with current students, support for your questions regarding your education from the Bridge office, your co-directors, and other former Bridge students. You are always a part of Bridge!

## **I loved Bridge! Can I do Bridge again?**

As you can imagine, we get many applications from new students each year. The mission of Bridge is to help those who might not otherwise have access to education get access. Because we have limited seats in each class, we want to give first chance to students who have not yet been through the program. However, if there are enough spaces in the class, you are welcome to repeat the class.

## **I have a family member or friend who wants to enroll in Bridge. How do I get them signed up?**

This is great news! Call the Bridge office for the most recent version of the application (it is updated slightly each year), and we'll make sure you get a copy to share with your friend or family member.

## **What is my new role in Bridge, and how can I help Bridge?**

There are a few things you can do:

- Tell people you know about Bridge (in case they want to apply!)
- Speak in a Bridge classroom about your experience as a Bridge student, to help encourage current Bridge students
- Speak with us when we visit community organizations to share Bridge with potential students
- Participate in the Artistic Uprising
- Attend Bridge field trips with current students – and bring family and friends who you want to share learning with.
- Share your community events with Bridge – and invite current students
- Attend Antioch events to meet fellow alumni, support each other, and keep the Bridge community going! (Connections you make in Bridge can help in life. We can be a wide and deep network for one another.)

## **Advice on Succeeding in School**

What does it take to succeed in school?

## Advice from fellow Bridge Students

Ask three people from Bridge this question: "What helped you succeed in Bridge?"  
Write the responses you received here:

1)

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2)

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3)

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## Your own Reflections on Success

Reflect on your own experiences: "What helped *you* succeed in Bridge?"  
Write your thoughts here:

1)

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2)

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3)

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Below are a few additional thoughts on how to do well in classes, after Bridge.

### **Communicate with your teacher.**

In Bridge, we created a community in the classroom, which hopefully made it feel easy to communicate with your teachers. In other classroom settings, it might not always feel as easy to talk with your teachers. Communicating with your teachers, however, can make a big difference in your experience of a class.

Classrooms are all different, and when there are grades, traditional classroom settings, and tests, it can feel like a conversation with your teacher is unwelcome. Please remember that, just as in the Bridge classroom, your teachers are people who care about learning and want to share this passion with others. Just as in Bridge, you can claim your education by asking questions, bringing your concerns and interests into the classroom, and refusing to suffer in silence.

### **Avoid procrastination.**

Especially when it comes to larger projects and writing, it's important to begin as early as possible. If you consistently have troubles with procrastination and find yourself working on projects right before a due date:

- Reflect on what's holding you back internally. Is it perfectionism? Fear of failure? An elegant and sophisticated form of self-sabotage? (Know yourself!)
- Is there something practical in your life that is making it hard for you to work? Difficulty finding space to work? A workload that is too ambitious? Frequent interruptions? Life complications? Brainstorm ways to overcome these barriers. Then, make a plan, and communicate with your instructors early, if it's going to be tough to get things done. Ask for help!
- If you have troubles with organization, use a calendar to plan ahead. It's not worth trying to keep every due date and assignment in your memory.
- Remember that in Bridge, we used a community of learners for support. Gather a community of support around you! If there is little opportunity in your classrooms, stay connected with other Bridge alumni and the Bridge Office. You can still bring it to Bridge.

## **Considering Audience**

With any writing, you'll want to consider your audience. We do this every day, without thinking much about it. If I'm sending an email to my mother, I'm not going to start off with "To Whom It May Concern." If you write to a judge, you'll probably not want to start the document with "Hey, there!" Instead, we consider our audience and tailor the message to the person who's reading it. When writing an academic paper, you'll want to consider your audience too. Usually, the reader you'll want to keep in mind for a paper like this is your instructor.

Each teacher may have a different preference on formatting for the paper, as well as the tone for the assignment and specifically what they're looking for. Preferences for each assignment are often covered in the syllabus. If you are still unclear, the best way is to ask when the paper is assigned.

Another interesting question you can ask your instructor: *"What is the one problem you see most in student work you receive?"*

It also helps to be sure that you understand the assignment. (Kathryn here.) In my very first college class, I was assigned a paper to analyze a novel. The assignment was to look at the use of something called "the pastoral" in the novel. When I thought of the word pastoral, I thought of pastors at churches, so I proceeded to write a careful analysis of the novel, looking at themes of religion. I used quotation as evidence. I constructed my sentences carefully, and I organized my paper in a logical way. I was proud of my work. The following week, I was surprised to learn, when I got my paper back, that I had missed the point of the assignment completely. In literature classes, talking about "the pastoral" means talking about nature. I wasn't supposed to look at religion in the story at all. I was supposed to look at the novel's treatment of nature. Luckily, my teacher let me revise the paper, but the whole issue could have been avoided if I had asked my teacher a little more about the assignment or double-checked my interpretation of the assignment.

When you get a new assignment (especially a paper, which will take some time to write), you'll want to be sure that you understand the assignment. If you're not sure, don't be shy about asking your teacher and getting help. It could save you a lot of trouble, in the long run.

### **Finding a Community of Learners.**

In Bridge, we worked in a community of learners. We supported one another through the Bridge Program, challenging one another, encouraging one another during difficult

times, and enjoying the process of learning together. In Bridge, we believe that this is an important part of learning. As you continue your educational journey, it will be important to continue to participate in a community of learners. The Bridge Alumni group can continue to provide this community for you. You may also find a new community, among new classmates and in new classrooms.

## **Paperwork**

(Kathryn here.) One of the trickiest parts about school is often the paperwork. Even before you get to class, you will need to sign forms, and each form seems so ... official. The more official the form, the more you may feel a sour feeling in your stomach. The hungry ghosts that many of us talked about in the writing class (hungry ghost = our inner critic) can come up as a monster over the paperwork, asking us all kinds of questions about whether we really think we should be going to school. It's almost as if each paper is a question: "Are you sure you can do this?" The answer, always, is yes. It's just a piece of paper. It's just a form. It can help to think of forms like little signposts, leading you to the next step.

## **School Applications**

One of the first forms you'll have to fill out is an application for the school you're going to. This will require several sections, usually, including your name and information. Often, there may also be essays. If it seems like a lot, give yourself time to complete the application in stages.

### Considerations:

Some schools will have limited options for items such as gender, race, and ethnicity. Especially when considering issues of gender, it might be worth asking questions as you fill out your form.

While Assembly Bill 1266 took effect in 2014 to protect the rights of students who identify as trans, the law does not guarantee the transfer of student records during a legal name change. Because of this, it is important to ask each school how it handles student records and transcripts before and after a legal name change, if this is something that might apply. (Some schools have different rules for students who change a name after marriage than for students who change a name as part of transition.) In

the Bridge office, we cannot offer legal advice (since we do not have professional legal training). However, we may be able to help connect you to advocacy groups, if you are in need of support in this area.

Students who are undocumented may also have considerations when filling out school applications. We have included a specific section below on school funding for Dreamers and for students who do not have documentation. We will continue adding resources to this booklet as they become available to us, as this is an area of great importance.

## **Transcripts**

At some point, you will probably want to transfer the units you earned in Bridge to another school. It is best to wait until after you have completed the spring quarter, so all your units can be counted. You can use the form at the back of this booklet to request your Antioch transcripts. (Just bring or send it to the Student Services Office at Antioch.)

There are a few considerations, when requesting transcripts:

- Please allow at least one month for your transcripts to arrive.
- When you fill out the form, send your transcripts to the school you are going to. Transcripts are usually sent from one school to the next.
- If you are going to a community college, you may want to fill out the form for the GPA Equivalency. This allows Antioch to calculate an estimated grade point average for you. Many community colleges do better with this.
- Antioch allows Bridge students up to 5 transcript requests for free. Please use them wisely!

## **Syllabi from Bridge**

It helps to keep copies of your syllabus from each class in Bridge. As you talk with your transfer counselor, you can describe the work done in Bridge. Having the syllabus can help answer any questions about the nature of each course. If you attended all Bridge courses (fall through spring), including the Saturday classes, you would have paperwork for each of these courses:

HUM 1100: Philosophy: Good Questions for Life

HUM 1110: Literature: Reading Cultures

HUM 1120: Art History: Visual Literacy

ENG 1100: The Art of Personal Narrative

ENG 1110: Writing and Responding: Creating a Critical Dialogue

ENG 1120: Writing Critical Analysis

URB 1100: Introduction to Community Mapping Process

URB 1110: Applying Community Engagement Skills

URB 1120: Linking Community-Building and Service Learning

## Financial Aid Information

*\* No faculty or staff member in Bridge is an expert on financial aid information. Please check any advice you find here with the financial aid officer at your new campus.*

Tuition and textbooks can be expensive, but research on the impact of a college education is quite clear: even if you have to borrow money to make it through college, you are more likely to earn a significantly higher income over your lifetime than those who do not complete a four-year degree (*much* more likely, in fact). Incidentally, as we've seen in our Bridge classrooms, a lot more happens when we engage in education. We learn. We meet amazing people. We discover issues and ideas that we are passionate about. We think critically and creatively. In short, school can be a game-changer. It was for many of us who teach and work in Bridge.

With all this said, learning about the many options that can help you pay for college can be invaluable. There are Pell Grants, scholarships, and several options for federal loans. Below is information about some of your options, as well as places to go for help, support, and expert advice. If you are confused as you read or think through your specific situation, please don't suffer in silence!

## Important Starting Points

It can be easy to get overwhelmed without a plan. If you didn't have a chance to use the transition planning form during Bridge or if your plans change, take a moment to fill it out now (it's in the back of this booklet too). This will help you think about what you'd like to do next with your education, and where you'd like to go to school. It will also help you

think through some practical considerations, like how far you can travel to school every day and how many units, realistically, you'll be able to take, considering your responsibilities and work schedule.

There are several ways you can minimize your costs in school, as you're planning where you'd like to go and which classes you'd like to take:

- Every school has required general education classes. Begin with these, and take your time in math and English. Don't be afraid to ask lots of questions!
- If you're going to a community college, consider applying for the EOP&S Program. This program can help with costs on tuition and textbooks. The EOP&S office can also provide out-of-classroom support. (This program, unfortunately, requires a social security number and documented status.)
- Community support is important now, just as it was during Bridge – perhaps even more. Exchange emails or phone calls with a fellow Bridge alum to support one another as you take your next steps. Start study groups with other former Bridge students. The Bridge community can continue to support you.

**In planning your financial aid, there are some important websites you'll want to know about:**

**Free Application for Federal Student Aid (visit <https://fafsa.ed.gov/>).** When you first apply for college, and every year thereafter, you need to complete the FAFSA form. It's from your answers on the FAFSA that your financial aid package and federal grants are determined. It's best to fill out the FAFSA as soon as you file taxes for the year -- or according to the deadlines for your schools. FAFSA is important.

**Federal Student Aid (<https://studentaid.ed.gov/>).** The Department of Education has a section of the website, called "Federal Student Aid." This has some good information about FAFSA and student loans. Please don't try to google this site. There are imposters.

**California Dream Act (<https://dream.csac.ca.gov/>).** This is the website for the California Dream Act, which allows undocumented students interested in attending eligible California colleges, universities, and career education programs to apply for state financial aid.

## Scholarships and Grants

If you are awarded a scholarship or a grant to help pay for your education, you do not have to repay the money. Because of this, scholarships and grants are probably going to be your first choice for funding some or all of your education. Below is a description of several grants that might be applicable, as well as links on resources where you might be able to find additional scholarships and grants.

Pell Grant – The Pell Grant is a federally funded grant. If you qualify, you may receive up to \$5,755 for one school year. You can receive a Pell Grant for up to 12 semesters. In order to receive the Pell Grant, you must fill out FASFA. The amount of aid you can receive depends on your financial need, the cost of attendance at your school, as well as other factors included on the FASFA. For more information on Pell Grants, you can visit this website: <https://studentaid.ed.gov/types/grants-scholarships/pell>

Federal Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grant (FSEOG) - A Federal Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grant (FSEOG) is a grant for undergraduate students with exceptional financial need. Students can receive between \$100 and \$4,000 a year, depending on financial need, when a student applies (the earlier the better), the amount of other aid a student receives, and the availability of funds at the school. In order to receive this grant, you must get the FASFA in on time. Students who are to receive Federal Pell Grants and have the most financial need will receive FSEOGs first. The FSEOG program is administered directly by the financial aid office at each participating school and is therefore considered “campus-based” aid. Not all schools participate. Check with your school's financial aid office to find out if the school offers the FSEOG. Each participating school receives a certain amount of FSEOG funds each year from the U.S. Department of Education’s office of Federal Student Aid. Once the full amount of the school’s FSEOG funds has been awarded to students, no additional FSEOG awards can be made for that year. You can find a school’s deadline on its website or by asking someone in its financial aid office. For more information on the Federal Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grant, visit this website: <https://studentaid.ed.gov/types/grants-scholarships/fseog>

New Student Grant – It is worth asking your school if there is a “new student grant” offered to students who are new to the institution. Some schools (such as Antioch) have a “new student grant” for new students in their first quarter.

Work Study – If you would like to apply for a job on campus at your school, federal funding might make this a possibility. Both full and part-time students can apply. In order to participate in work study, students must complete the FASFA on time.

#### Iraq and Afghanistan Service Grant

If your parent or guardian died as a result of military service in Iraq or Afghanistan, you may be eligible for an Iraq and Afghanistan Service Grant. Like other federal grants, Iraq and Afghanistan Service Grants provide money to college or career school students to help pay their education expenses. However, Iraq and Afghanistan Service Grants have special eligibility criteria. You may be eligible to receive the Iraq and Afghanistan Service Grant if you are not eligible for a Federal Pell Grant on the basis of your Expected Family Contribution but meet the remaining Federal Pell Grant eligibility requirements, and your parent or guardian was a member of the U.S. armed forces and died as a result of military service performed in Iraq or Afghanistan after the events of 9/11, and you were under 24 years old or enrolled in college at least part-time at the time of your parent's or guardian's death. The grant award is equal to the amount of a maximum Federal Pell Grant for the award year but cannot exceed your cost of attendance for that award year. For the 2014–15 award year (July 1, 2014, to June 30, 2015), the maximum Federal Pell Grant award is \$5,730. For more information, visit:

<https://studentaid.ed.gov/types/grants-scholarships/iraq-afghanistan-service>

#### California Veteran Service Benefits

California offers education benefits and waivers for veterans and some for the dependents of veterans. To find out if you qualify, visit:

<https://www.calvet.ca.gov/veteran-services-benefits/education>

#### TEACH Grant

A TEACH Grant can help you pay for college if you plan to become a teacher in a high-need field in a low-income area. You'll be required to teach for a certain length of time, so make sure you understand your obligation. A Teacher Education Assistance for College and Higher Education (TEACH) Grant is different from other federal student grants because it requires you to take certain kinds of classes in order to get the grant, and then do a certain kind of job to keep the grant from turning into a loan. The TEACH Grant Program provides grants of up to \$4,000 a year to students who are completing or plan to complete course work needed to begin a career in teaching. IMPORTANT: If you do not complete your service obligation, all TEACH Grant funds you received will be converted to a Direct Unsubsidized Loan.

<https://studentaid.ed.gov/types/grants-scholarships/teach#eligibility>

## Scholarships

Even if you don't qualify for any of the grants listed above, it is still possible to find money for school. There are many scholarships available. They just require a little additional work. Below are two tools available for learning more about scholarships and searching for scholarships.

Finding and Applying for Scholarships

<https://studentaid.ed.gov/types/grants-scholarships/finding-scholarships>

Avoiding Scholarship Scams

<https://studentaid.ed.gov/types/scams>

## Student Loans

While there are many grants and scholarships available, it is possible that you may have to use loans to at least partially fund your education. There are two types of loans you may be offered:

- Subsidized Federal Stafford Loans. This is the one you want. On a subsidized loan, the government pays your interest while you are in school, so that when you start paying it later, you are paying off the exact amount you borrowed.
- Unsubsidized Federal Stafford Loans. Interest starts to accrue the day you accept the loan, so that when you start paying it off down the road, the amount you owe is already bigger than what you borrowed.

The difference between a loan and a grant (like the Pell Grant) or a scholarship, is that loans have to be paid back. When you complete your degree, you will have a six-month grace period before you have to start making payments on your loan. Unfortunately, you have to pay back student loans even if you don't graduate. Once you've been out of school for six months, whether it's because you graduated or

because you haven't been able to continue with school, you will have to start paying back your student loans.

In 2008, the federal government created some new repayment plans, which may make repayment easier than it would otherwise be:

- Student loans can now be put on income-based repayment, meaning that your payment each month will be based on your how much you make (so you're not asked to pay more than you can afford).
- If you're making your monthly payments, based on your income faithfully, after 25 years, the remainder of your loan is forgiven entirely.
- Another new option is for graduates who work full-time in the non-profit sector for ten years. After ten years of payment on your loan (while working full time in the non-profit world), the student loan is completely forgiven.

Sometimes, financial aid can be complicated if you have student loans from the past. Here are a few thoughts and places to go for support, if this fits your situation:

- Sometimes, consolidating loans (adding them together and making one payment) is a good idea. Sometimes it's not. It's a good idea to ask an advisor about your specific situation before taking action.
- Avoid taking a call from a random person offering to consolidate loans or do something great for student loan debt. If the caller is not a trusted source, please be careful!
- If you have past loans that have been in default or have other difficult situations, it can feel like you have fewer options. Please do not give up, though. Keep asking questions and reaching out for help.
- For specific and difficult questions on these issues, please speak directly with the financial aid officer at the school that you attend. It is important to get advice from experts at your school.

# Funding College for Dreamers and Those Who Are Undocumented

If you are a Dreamer and/or if you are undocumented, you may have glanced over the above sections thinking, “This is not for me.” Notably, most of the federal aid available to students is not available to students who are not documented. In Bridge, we are committed to supporting your education just as much as those students who are documented, and we are actively seeking as many resources as we can to help you in your journey toward a fully funded education. We also know that this is a difficult struggle, with additional barriers.

[The California Dream Act and AB540](#) - The California Dream Act is limited at this stage, but it does allow for state grants for Dreamers, and we hope it will grow and expand in the coming years. For more information on the Dream Act, visit <https://dream.csac.ca.gov/>

From the California Student Aid Commission:

## **Q. What is AB 540, and how do I obtain AB 540 status?**

--- NOTICE -- <http://ab540.com/Fears.html>

If you or a family member has already applied for AB540 status and are concerned about immigration status, please read the information here and seek advice from the trusted legal resources listed, if necessary - <http://ab540.com/Fears.html>

**A.** AB 540 students may include undocumented students, students who are US citizens but who are not CA residents, and dependent students whose parents are not CA residents. AB 540 students are those who:

- Have attended a CA high school for at least three years or graduated early from a CA high school with the equivalent of three or more years of credit\*, AND
- Graduated from a CA high school, or passed the California High School Proficiency Exam (CHSPE), or obtained a Certificate of General Education Development (GED), AND
- Enrolled in an accredited and qualifying CA college or university, AND

- If applicable, complete(d) an affidavit to legalize immigration status as soon as you are eligible.

\*If you graduated early from high school under this provision, you must also have attended CA schools (elementary and secondary) for a cumulative total of three or more years.

To confirm your AB 540 eligibility, you will be required to fill out an affidavit and provide supporting documentation to the campus Residency Deputy, Admissions Office, or Registrar of the college or university you will be attending. You should seek to complete this process in the spring or summer before you begin attending (or in fall for those who will be starting school in the spring).

### **Q. How do I apply for financial aid under the California Dream Act?**

**A.** The CA Dream Act Application is used by **undocumented students** who meet the eligibility requirements of AB 540. The application can be found at [www.caldreamact.org](http://www.caldreamact.org). The California Student Aid Commission processes the application and any aid received can only be used at eligible California public or private institutions. **U.S. citizens and permanent residents** meeting the AB 540 criteria above should complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) at [www.fafsa.gov](http://www.fafsa.gov). They may be eligible for federal student aid as well as California student aid.

The application deadline for students using the CA Dream Act Application or the FAFSA is March 2 prior to the academic year (E.g., **March 2, 2015** for the 2015-16 academic year). For Cal Grants offered under the California Dream Act, you must also submit a certified GPA to the California Student Aid Commission.

### **Q. Can I fill out the CA Dream Act Application if I don't have a Social Security number?**

**A.** Yes, students who meet the AB 540 eligibility requirements are not required to have a Social Security number in order to submit the application. If an applicant has a Social Security number issued by Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) for work purposes only, that number should be entered on line #8 of the application. Line #8 should be left blank for applicants without Social Security numbers.

In 2015-16, the U.S. Department of Education is encouraging students with DACA Social Security numbers to complete the FAFSA. This is not good advice for California students (attending college in CA). Undocumented AB 540 students should complete

the CA Dream Act Application instead of the FAFSA. In the event you have already submitted a FAFSA before learning that you should submit a CA Dream Act Application, complete the CA Dream Act Application, then contact the California Student Aid Commission at 1-888-224-7268 to let them know that you have submitted both applications.

**Q. As an undocumented student, am I eligible for *federal* student aid?**

**A.** No, undocumented students are not eligible for federal student aid. If you attend an eligible California public or private institution, you will be considered for CA state financial aid—like Cal Grants, Chafee Foster Youth Grant, Middle Class Scholarship—and institutional aid—like University Grants, State University Grants, California Community College Board of Governors (BOG) fee waivers, and private scholarships administered through institutions. Your school will determine your financial aid eligibility. We encourage you to submit the CA Dream Act Application by March 2, because it is the deadline to receive consideration for most types of aid available to you.

**Q. Do I have to wait until my parents or I file taxes to complete my CA Dream Act Application?**

**A.** No, do not miss any important deadlines! Simply estimate last year's tax information. Once you or your parents have filed taxes, you must log back into your CA Dream Act Application online to modify the estimated taxes. If you or your parents did not earn enough in the prior year to file taxes, simply select "Will not file" on the tax filing question in the application.

**Q. What if my parents live in another county, and I live with my aunt/boyfriend/sibling/roommate?**

**A.** If you are 24 years or younger, and don't meet any of the independent criteria (application questions #46-58), even if you do not live with your legal parents (your biological and or adoptive parents) you must provide your parents' information, and one parent must sign your application. You cannot report your aunt, grandparent, sibling, boyfriend/girlfriend, legal guardian, or friend's information in place of parent information unless they have legally adopted you.

If you are unable to get your parent information, complete the application as much as you can and see your college's financial aid office (FAO) as soon as possible. The FAO will evaluate your condition and tell you if they can override the need for parent information. The California Student Aid Commission does not have the authority to override dependency or financial information.

**Q. Does my parent's citizenship affect my eligibility for Dream Act financial aid?**

**A.** No, your parents' citizenship status does not impact your eligibility to receive Dream Act financial aid.

**Q. How does my parent sign my application?**

**A.** After completing your online application, navigate to the link that says "Sign Student Application." Your parent must select "Request Parent PIN" and answer the verification questions. Then your parent will be issued a 4-digit electronic PIN code to sign your application. Keep this code in a safe place—*your parent will need it to re-sign each time you make a correction to your application.*

**Q. How do I fix mistakes on my CA Dream Act Application?**

**A.** After initial successful submission of your application, the California Student Aid Commission will send you an email with your nine-digit Dream ID number. If you haven't received an email from us, be sure to check your spam/junk folders. Keep this number in a safe place- you will use your Dream ID number to log into your application, when you correct errors, or when you talk to your campus or the California Student Aid Commission. Review the Confirmation Page within your application to alert you to error codes that need correction.

**Q. I applied! What's next? Do I automatically get financial aid?**

**A.** Great, you successfully completed your CA Dream Act Application! Next, the California Student Aid Commission will send your application data to all of the colleges you listed on your application. After allowing for processing time, 8-10 business days, you may follow up with those colleges to determine whether you are eligible for campus aid. ***To apply for the Cal Grant, you must also submit your high school or community college GPA to the California Student Aid Commission by the deadline.*** Qualifying for the Cal Grant is not automatic. Cal Grant is a need-based program. You must meet financial eligibility and GPA requirements. After receiving your CA Dream Act Application and GPA, the California Student Aid Commission will process your application to determine if you are eligible to receive a Cal Grant. . After completion of your CA Dream Act Application, we encourage you to open a WebGrants for Students account at [www.webgrants4students.org](http://www.webgrants4students.org) in order to check the status of your Cal Grant eligibility. Click on the following links for more information: [How to apply for Cal Grants](#) [Cal Grant GPA requirements](#)

**Q. How do I submit my GPA if I don't have a Social Security number?**

**A.** You may submit a Non-SSN GPA; this is a school certified GPA that uses information other than an SSN to match the GPA to your application. Ask your school if they will

submit a Non-SSN GPA electronically for you. If not, you may download the paper Cal Grant Non-SSN GPA Verification Form [here](#). You will fill out the top portion and your school must verify your GPA and sign the bottom of the form. The form must be mailed to the California Student Aid Commission on or before March 2.

**Q. I was notified that I got the Cal Grant! How do I get the money?**

**A.** You must set up a Web Grants for Students account to manage your Cal Grant, to make school changes or address changes, and to find out if there are additional actions that must be taken before your school can disburse your first payment. Visit [www.webgrants4students.org](http://www.webgrants4students.org) to create an account.

If you are not attending the college that you listed as the primary college on your CA Dream Act Application, you must submit a school change through [www.webgrants4students.org](http://www.webgrants4students.org).

If you are a male between the ages of 18 and 25, you are required to register with the Selective Service System (SSS) before receiving state financial aid. The Selective Service **does not share** your immigration status. The 2015-16 California Dream Act Application will ask you if you want the California Student Aid Commission to register you through a secure electronic data exchange with the SSS or you can complete and mail in the paper registration form to the SSS. Visit their website for more information: [www.sss.gov](http://www.sss.gov).

Your college's financial aid office (FAO) is in charge of disbursing all Cal Grant payments. Check your financial aid portal, FAO, or financial aid website to see a schedule of their Cal Grant disbursement dates. If that date has come and gone without you receiving a disbursement, check with your FAO immediately to see if your financial aid file is incomplete.

**Q. How do I renew my Cal Grant?**

**A.** If you received the Cal Grant, you must re-submit your CA Dream Act Application every year to renew your award. You will use the same login information (User ID/Password) from the previous year to enter your CA Dream Act Application. To re-submit your application, go to [www.caldreamact.org](http://www.caldreamact.org), click the green "Login to Application" button, provide your login information, and select the appropriate academic year application. FAFSA filers will use your same PIN each year at [www.fafsa.gov](http://www.fafsa.gov).

Cal Grant renewals usually happen in late spring, so you should re-submit your application before then. If you did not receive the Cal Grant, you can reapply the next year by re-submitting your CA Dream Act Application and new GPA before the March 2

deadline following the same procedure outlined in the paragraph above. If you have never submitted a CA Dream Act Application, go to [www.caldreamact.org](http://www.caldreamact.org), click the green “Start Dream Application” button and answer all the required questions. Once again, FAFSA filers will login in to their application at [www.fafsa.gov](http://www.fafsa.gov).

**Q. Where can I get help with completing my CA Dream Act Application?**

**A.** You can visit your Financial Aid or School Counselor/Advisor, or you can attend a Cash for College workshop.

Check out <http://www.calgrants.org/> for help finding a workshop near you.

**Q. I am a foster youth, and I don’t have a Social Security number or any paperwork about my biological parents. Can I get any financial aid for college?**

**A.** If you apply, you may qualify for:

- Chafee Foster Youth Aid
- Scholarships offered through California public colleges and universities
- California Dream Act Cal Grants or school grants
- Board of Governors (BOG) fee waivers and California Community colleges
- Private grants and scholarships
- Talk to your institution’s financial aid office for more information.

Scholarship Search Tips for International & Undocumented Students – Because there is less financial aid available, scholarships are an important part of paying for school in the US if you are not a US citizen. Here are a few key tips:

- Look for scholarships that don’t require applicants to be a US citizen
- To find this, check the scholarship’s eligibility requirements carefully
- Here’s the tricky part. DON’T enter in the search engine that you are not a US citizen (it will limit searches too much, and you’ll miss scholarships you can actually apply for)

Finding and Applying for Scholarships

<https://studentaid.ed.gov/types/grants-scholarships/finding-scholarships>

# GED Information

Obtaining a GED or high school diploma can be important for a number of reasons, including requirements for some jobs, college financial aid, and AB 540 status. If you're ready for the GED, Bridge has compiled a booklet with information that can help. Below are some of the basics from this booklet to get you started.

## Decide Which Test is Best for You to Take

<http://hiset.org/>

<https://ged.com/>

In 2011, the [American Council on Education](#), the creators of the [GED](#) test, teamed up with Pearson VUE to revise the test and update it for modern needs, including alignment with the [Common Core State Standards](#). When it was announced that the new 2014 version of the test would be computer-based and had a price increase, states started looking for alternatives. Because states and jurisdictions are in charge of issuing the high school equivalency credential, they are free to find alternatives. Two competitors to the GED test, the [TASC](#) and the [HiSET](#) program, entered the market at the beginning of the year, with a selection of states choosing one or more of the three options for their needs.

### The 2014 GED Test

The new GED test assesses four subject areas: reasoning through language arts, mathematical reasoning, science, and social studies. Depending on what state you are in the test offers [two discounted or free retakes](#). Because all testing is done by computer, scores are available within three hours of completion, and the variety of question items has been expanded to more interactive methods like drag-and-drop. Writing has become a larger component of the exam, there are still two extended responses, one in language arts and one in social studies, and there has been an addition of a short answer question in the science section. Testing is completed at state-approved testing centers. Additionally, the GED Testing Service has released a predictive practice test to help learners determine if they are prepared for the full exam, GED Ready™.

## TASC

The Test Assessing Secondary Completion, or TASC, is available both online and on paper. Testers can theoretically take the test anywhere, depending on their state's rules. The TASC exam tests the same subject areas as the old 2002 GED test, meaning testers can combine scores from previously taken GED tests and the TASC, and the cost of the exam includes two free retakes. The test will be phasing in Common Core content over the next three years, which also helps its compatibility to the old GED test. Score reporting will be instantaneous if the online option is used. Scores are available in 10 days for the paper test.

## HiSET

The High School Equivalency Test, HiSET, also tests the five subject areas of the former 2002 GED test and the TASC, and the cost of the exam also includes two free retakes. It is also available online and via paper, but testing locations are left to the states to decide. The only major difference between the TASC and the HiSET is how they are approaching implementing Common Core. The HiSET exam is currently aligned to the new standards with a second phase planned that will better align with instructional programs once they themselves align with the new standards.

### **GED®, TASC™, or HiSET®? What is the Difference?**

<http://blog.edmentum.com/ged%C2%AE-tasc%E2%84%A2-or-hiset%C2%AE-what-difference>

### **Should You Take the GED or HiSET?**

<http://www.ged.pocket-prep.com/should-you-take-the-ged-or-hiset/>

## **Becoming More Active in Your Community**

In Bridge, we learned that being part of a community can be powerful. Many of us learned to think of Bridge as a community of learners, and many of us shared our learning and support with our families and communities outside the classroom as well. If

you have not been able to be an active part of your neighborhood outside of Bridge, now might be the time to begin building your sense of community in your neighborhood. We have compiled a few resources to help you:

### LA Works

LA Works is a website to help find organizations in your neighborhood that are looking for folks who want to become involved. If you visit the website, you can type your zip code, and find a list of organizations close to you.

LA Works - <http://www.laworks.com/>

In the appendix, we've also included a lengthy list of organizations in Los Angeles, brought to us by the AULA Master of Arts in Urban Sustainability Program. If you're not sure how you want to become involved, below is a short worksheet to help you think through your own interests and needs.

## WorkSheet:

This worksheet can help you organize your thoughts in one place (if you like).

Why you want to be involved – Check all that apply

- Network with others
- Learn or develop new skills
- Share your skills with others
- Enhance your résumé
- Gain new experience
- Improve your health
- Meet new people
- Connect with people you already know in your neighborhood
- Express gratitude
- Communicate that you care about the community
- Make a difference
- Take action on an issue that matters to you

Other \_\_\_\_\_

### Interests

- Animals
- Art, Literature, Culture
- Children's Issues, Rights, and Resources
- Community Development
- Elderly and Aging – Issues, Rights, and Resources
- Environmental Justice
- Education
- Economic Justice
- Food Justice, Urban Gardens
- Health and access to Healthcare
- Housing, Housing Rights
- Immigrant Rights
- Incarceration in the US
- Indigenous Rights
- LGBTQ and Gender Equality

- Public Open Space
- Racial Justice
- Transportation Justice
- Veterans' Issues, Rights, and Resources
- Youth Empowerment

Other: \_\_\_\_\_

Other : \_\_\_\_\_

Other : \_\_\_\_\_

Determine what about the topic interests you. For example, if you picked Animals - do you want to do rescue work, volunteer at a wildlife park, or perhaps learn to train assistance animals? When you have finished, you could even rank your selections in order of interest to help decide where to begin.

Skills

- Public Speaking
- Teaching or Mentoring
- Thinking Critically
- Being Creative
- Being Athletic
- Making people feel welcome or cared for
- Using computers
- Listening to Others
- Speaking or writing in more than one language \_\_\_\_\_

Other : \_\_\_\_\_

Other: \_\_\_\_\_

Other: \_\_\_\_\_

*Look to your past, if have you had a job or volunteered before – what do you do well?*

Your Needs and Preferences

\_\_ Preferred Schedule \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_ Prefer a Lively Environment

\_\_ Prefer a Quiet Environment

\_\_ Medical Needs – equipment, meds. Allergies etc. \_\_\_\_\_

Other: \_\_\_\_\_

Other: \_\_\_\_\_

*It is important for you to consider your needs and preferences. If you don't you may find yourself in a situation where neither you nor the organization are getting their needs met.*

Transportation: How will you reach the organization's site? \_\_\_\_\_

Just as you think through transportation with a commitment such as starting the Bridge Program, you'll want to think through transportation for a commitment to an organization.

Time: How much time can you reasonably give? It's better to promise less than you think you can offer, so you do not let others down. Take into consideration your health, family obligations, and transportation. \_\_\_\_\_

Learn: The organization or cause you work with benefits from your time, and you can gain valuable experience and connection to the community. Are there specific things you are hoping to learn while volunteering? If so write them down and be sure to let the volunteer coordinator know.

I want to learn:

1) \_\_\_\_\_

2)

3)

Organization Expectations: Once you figure out what you want to do, list your skills, and determine your goals, you need to develop a list of questions for the volunteer coordinator. For example:

- o *What do they expect from you?*
- o *Is there a minimum amount of time they expect from a volunteer?*
- o *Will you need any special equipment or clothing?*
- o *Can you talk with a current volunteer about their experiences?*

The space below can be used to record information for the organizations you are interested in working with.

	Organization	Contact	Phone	Email
1)	<hr/>			
2)				
3				

## Sections Written by Alumni for Alumni

We asked Bridge alumni to share their advice and thoughts about Bridge with other Bridge alumni. If you would like to add your thoughts to be included here, please write us in the Bridge Office at [bridge.aula@antioch.edu](mailto:bridge.aula@antioch.edu). (Just include the subject "Bridge Alumni Advice.")

### Tim Mackey, Bridge Alum

Off the Bat Congrat's you cross a Great Bridge 2 The Antioch Family  
Khow take what you Know & give it way  
Because you Teacher Now & Student of Life  
Knowledge is Information applying Knowledge is Power  
(So use it for Good)  
Help Me 2 Help You 2 Help Other's  
Mo Love,Laughs,Good Health,\$\$\$\$\$ N your Life  
--Tim Mackey

## **María de Jesús Gómez, Bridge Alum**

Bridge is unique; it provides its students with a safe environment for self expression and the quality of education one is hungry to attain. Here we learn not only about theory, but we also learn about our human rights and responsibilities . . . Eight years ago Bridge introduced me to the academic world. It gave me the tools to come back and claim my education in the BA Program. This time around Bridge also gave me the opportunity to give back what it was given to me.

--María de Jesús Gómez