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**NextStudent Provides Parents with Incentives to Get High School and College Kids Searching for Scholarships During Winter Break**  
*NextStudent Offers \$5,000 Scholarships to High School and College Students and one of the Largest Scholarship Search Engines on the Internet*

**PHOENIX (December 1, 2003)** – Parents who want their kids to be productive during the long holiday break now have some practical, fun and potentially profitable ideas for “holiday homework.” NextStudent, a leading education finance company, has developed incentives for high school and college students to begin searching and applying for college scholarships through its search engine, one of the largest, most robust scholarship databases on the Internet. Parents or students who visit the search engine at [www.nextstudent.com](http://www.nextstudent.com) during the holiday break can enter to win one of two \$5,000 scholarships – one for high school students and one for college students.

“Each year, billions of dollars in financial aid and scholarships are given away to college students. Many students procrastinate or aren’t aware of important deadlines and miss out on free money to assist with today’s increasing higher education costs,” said Paige Chadwick, vice president of marketing for NextStudent. “Parents who become actively involved in the financial aid process and encourage their children to complete scholarship entries before returning to school will be ahead of the game.”

With more than 800,000 individual awards totaling \$2.8 billion, the NextStudent search engine is one of the largest scholarship databases available. The student answers a series of questions to selectively narrow the 800,000 scholarships to a few dozen that they best qualify for – saving valuable time. Perhaps most important to students, the search engine is free of charge, does not include annoying pop-up ads and is completely private. In other words, NextStudent does not sell student names to marketers or spam students after searching.

*Parent Tips for Making “Holiday Homework” Fun*

The vacation from school is an ideal opportunity for students and parents to search for scholarships and grants before the next semester begins. Parents who are seeking ways to encourage their children to best utilize their time at home may wish to consider providing a “holiday homework” incentive. For example, offer \$5 towards a back-to-school shopping trip for every scholarship they apply for.

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### *Students look for funding alternatives as tuition costs increase nationwide*

With rising expenses, finding scholarships, grants and even low-cost student loans has become a top priority for high school and college students. Concerns about paying for college have been underscored by a study funded by Upromise, which indicates that education grants and aid, including federal student loans, pay for only 50 to 60 percent of total college expenses.

“Our first priority is to give students access to the many scholarships and grants available. NextStudent also provides easy-to-understand tools and personal Education Finance Advisors to assist students with finding the lowest cost federal and private loans to fill the funding gap,” added Chadwick.

The funding gap is due in large part to a national trend of steady tuition increases. According to the “College Cost Crisis” report by the U.S. House Committee on Education and the Workforce, over the past six years there has been an average tuition increase of \$2,000 nationwide for four-year institutions.

“The Congressional College Cost Crisis Report states that the increase in tuition is rising faster than the rate of inflation, family income and even increasing state and federal aid,” said Chadwick. “These factors have made NextStudent even more committed to helping students through the complicated financial aid process from start to finish, finding the lowest cost combination of funding available for each individual.”

### *NextStudent “Holiday Cash for College” Scholarship Adds Incentive to Students*

To help ease the tuition crunch, NextStudent is providing two \$5,000 scholarships, one for high school students and another for college students, during the holiday break at [www.nextstudent.com](http://www.nextstudent.com). These scholarships are designed to encourage students to search and apply for scholarships while they have the downtime.

#### *High School Applicants:*

- Must be a high school senior with a cumulative GPA of 3.5 or higher through junior year
- Must be attending a high school located in the United States
- Must be entering college in the fall of 2004
- Entries will be accepted through December 31, 2003
- Winner will be drawn on January 1, 2004 and notified by January 15, 2004

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College Applicants:

- Must be enrolled full-time at an accredited public or private four-year institution (college or university in the United States)
- Entries will be accepted from December 1, 2003 through January 14, 2004
- Winner will be drawn on January 15, 2004 and notified by January 31, 2004.

To learn more about the \$5,000 NextStudent scholarship or other services provided by NextStudent, visit [www.nextstudent.com](http://www.nextstudent.com) or call 800-799-7349.

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