# Transcript: IT Podcast – Ep 58 – Scholarship Tips with Kevin Richards

*The following transcript is a verbatim account of the video or audio file accompanying this transcript.*

Speaker #1 (Narrator):

WGU's IT audio series, flexible, portable, profound.

Speaker #2 (Kevin Richards):

Hi, and thanks for having me. I am Kevin. I am on the WGU scholarship team. I was asked to run through a little bit of a brief crash course on new student scholarships for a few minutes. I'll give a little bit of an overview and then get into more of the specifics on the process, the currently available new student scholarships. To be considered a "new student", we are talking about those who are 90 days before or after their start date in their first term of their program. A few things that you should know upfront. In order to be considered, you need to have been accepted into your degree program. We also need your transcripts in and evaluated, if you have them and a FAFSA application to be on file to be considered. Completing the FAFSA application, it doesn't obligate you to take out student loans, but will simply show you what you're eligible for, including loans or even grants if you are an undergraduate student. If you're not in a position yet, it's probably best to wait a little bit instead of possibly having to redo some of the work at a later date. But if you are in that position, then go ahead and have a look at this list. Everything on this page is going to be separated into categories like general scholarships, college-specific, military and veteran scholarships, and possibly then state-specific scholarships. If you are in one of the nine states that formally endorses WGU as a partner institution, such as Washington, Nevada, Texas, Missouri, Indiana, Tennessee, Ohio, and North Carolina, and now Idaho as of the time of this recording. If you reside in any of these, your IP address, it should automatically take you to the right place. When looking through this list, know that there's a lot of options on here, but there's going to be at least one scholarship that is open to all students to apply from all programs and colleges at WGU, including IT, business, nursing, and teaching. Again, at the time of this recording, that currently is what's called the sage scholarship, but that does change from time to time. In the near future, this will be listed as the back to school scholarship, but still a general scholarship open to all programs. Some of you might look through and see a handful of scholarships that are applicable to your situation or background and some of you may only see the one scholarship. Regardless, each of your application is going to be looked at individually. If awarded a scholarship, it would also be for one or the other and not for a combination of those applied for.Typically, it's going to be about one out of nine students who apply for scholarships are awarded. So they are competitive, and that means even good applicants are not all awarded. We also don't really have any full ride type scholarships. Most of the ones that you're going to see on the list are going to be for something like $625 a term for as many as four terms of tuition. If awarded a scholarship like this, that a unt would go back to however you're paying for school on the front end of things, whether that be with student loans, a web check, or a payment arrangement. We look at a lot of things like your scholarship application, essays, resume, transcripts, previous academics, as well as things like financial need. WGU runs as a non-profit and many students choose WGU because of the accreditation or the curriculum and certifications involved in your programs, the flexibility. We're probably most of all, the affordable cost of tuition. A huge portion of an operating budget isn't going to go towards things like scholarships. But because WGU's mission is to expand access to those looking to complete a degree and move up in their career, we award as many scholarships as we are able to. The general scholarship application. This is where we ask a bit of the general information but also ask you to clarify some things that make you a unique candidate for a scholarship consideration. I'd suggest thoroughly answering each question. It would be beneficial to complete this on a computer, or at least have a Word processor available to type out answers for the essay portions of this application and not just try to do a 200 word essay on your phone. Once you're done, click on the finish and submit button at the bottom of the page. The second part of this process is just as important, but we'll go much more quickly than the general scholarship, opportunities recommended section because of the answers that you gave on the general scholarship application, several of those may also be filtered out. Apply for the opportunities that you are eligible for. The supplemental questions for these scholarships are typically very brief but may ask for an additional essay response or a proof of membership or employment for a partner opportunity, which may ask for something like a PaysTab or uploading a membership card. We allow for about a one-week window to complete whatever specific scholarship applications that you would like to be considered for after finishing your general scholarship application. We also only consider candidates on one occasion during the time that you're considered a new student. Some w ks, our scholarship department will receive applications from about 900 students. As we're a small team, we really can't keep up with this work load of students if students apply are given a decision and then reapply and reapply over and over, hoping for some different outcome or change. So We do have that on a one-time basis. Then it's just a little bit of a waiting game to hear back because the scholarship department is a small team, and because each applicant is considered individually, general wait time is about six weeks to hear back. That's the majority of what you'd need to know about new students scholarships internally at WGU. Again, we require you to be accepted into your program, have a FAFSA on file transcripts in. They are competitive and the WGU scholarship landing page is going to answer most of the frequently asked questions that you may have, but there also may be external scholarships to apply for. These are going to be harder to find and probably more competitive. When I went to college several years ago, my roommate won some scholarship from Dr. Pepper, the soda. I think they had some campaign where people sent in a video about why they love Dr. Pepper or something like that. He had sent in a video, got selected, and he got a few $100 every semester for school. Ask yourself the question, why would a company or organization give away scholarship money? It's probably not because the company has too much money and they need to get rid of it,although it could have some tax benefits. Most often it's for some marketing purpose. As you search for external scholarships out there, it's good to understand what an organization wants to do with your, let's say contact information, email, or phone number. I do caution students that they should never have to pay for an application or give out something like your social security number in order to be considered, that would be a red flag. Although external scholarships are hard to find, I'd say begin with where you are now, check with where you work. Ask your HR rep if your company offers any scholarships to go back to school, check with things like your own local churches, groups, clubs, community organizations that you might be associated with, and start there, find out if there are opportunities within your own community. I hope this information was helpful and worth your time. WGU scholarships also have an available phone line from 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM Monday through Friday, Mountain Time if you have questions involving WGU scholarships. Although we wouldn't have any answers to questions about external scholarships, you can call us at area code 385-428-3125 if you need some additional help with questions. Thank you for having me and best of success in your journey at WGU. Thank you.

Speaker # (name optional):

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