

I've asked my parents of what they thought about sending me to England, where my dream school is and all they said was, "An international school is expensive. We can't afford that!" Thus, my future is more or less dependent upon money. Money that my family doesn't have.

Admittedly, I never actually thought about how expensive college actually was, rather, I dreamed about the colleges that I wanted to attend and all the things I wanted to learn about. Money was just an issue on the side-lines, rarely ever talked about. But it wasn't until this year that it started to dawn on me. It began with the knowledge of just how expensive mere college textbooks could be, to realizing that I wanted to attend a college in a whole different country, which meant a whole new set of rules to play by. The realization of all the costs—tuition, textbooks, housing, and many, many other fees to pay—is daunting. It makes me, and many other students, question whether their dreams can be achieved.

But what I think is most disheartening is the fact that my life can be so shockingly dependant upon whether I can afford to go to college. My dream college is *my* best fit. It has the environment that I need to thrive in, the courses that are taught by some of the most intelligent and an influential professor in their fields and it's the next big step into my future. But all of that can only be achieved on the basis of money. If a student can't afford college, then college doesn't become an option for them. It's an unfair but true statement nowadays. That's why I think that it's so vital that the government provides as much financial support to students in need as possible. Every penny counts, and every penny is appreciated.

Sincerely,
Maryann Kim