

Inside This Issue:

- Quality Versus Costs in College Choice2
- It's Not Too Late to Sign Up for ROP.....2
- What Is The Status of Your College Application.....3
- Scholarships4
- Reduce Test Taking Anxiety6
- FAFSA.....7
- Discover Your Future Through ROP.....8
- What Every Anxious Parent Needs to Know.....9
- Important Test Dates9
- Tools to Make High School A Success.....10



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SENIORS

College Sleepovers... Making the most of your visit

Many colleges offer prospective students the chance to spend the night in a dorm room. Some colleges set aside specific weekends (usually in the spring) for prospective students, but many others will work with you to schedule an overnight that fits into your timetable.

If you're already planning a visit during the day, why spend the extra time on an overnight?

"Day visits are pretty much 'canned,'" says George P. Lynes, II, a college admission consultant. "The admissions office has set up tours to the best campus spots, the nicest dorm rooms, etc., and the tour guides have been programmed to say all the right things."

Of course, there's nothing wrong with a college showing you its best side. You're not going to show up at a college in your most raggedy clothes and uncombed hair, either. But to get the real scoop on a college, you need to spend some time on campus without a tour guide at your side. And overnight visits are a fun way to get an inside view.

Perfect timing

The two best times to plan overnight visits are before applications are due and after you're accepted.

Most students don't have time to spend the night at ten different colleges, so try to wait until you have your list narrowed down. One strategy is to spend a night at the two colleges on your "possible" list that are the most different (for example, the big urban university and the small rural college). That way, you get an idea of what environment appeals to you more.

If you're thinking about applying early decision (ED), an overnight visit is a must (if the college offers them). You're making a commitment to attend

your ED college if accepted, so spend as much time as possible on campus to make sure this is your clear first choice.

Looking forward to spring? Overnight visits can be helpful in making that final decision between two or more colleges that accepted you. (Just something to keep in mind as you plan your spring schedule.)



Planning Ahead

First, do some research. Read the college's catalog, website, and any other information you have. Think about what you want to do while you're on campus. If you want to sit in on a particular class or meet with a faculty member or coach, make sure to ask the admission office about it when you schedule the trip.

As with all college visits, call the admissions office a few weeks (or even months) ahead of time. Ask whether overnight visits are an option. If family members will be traveling with you, make sure to find a place for them to stay (the admissions office can help with that, too).

While you're packing for the trip, throw in a notebook and pen, a book, and some homework. You may have some time on your own while your host studies or goes to class. You can use that time to jot down your impressions of the college or get some of your own homework done.

On Campus

When you arrive on campus, take a tour, attend an interview or information session at the admissions office, and participate in any other activities that are part of a day visit.

At some point, the admissions office will introduce you to your student host, and the "overnight" part will begin. You'll have a different experience depending on the college and the particular student you're paired with. But think of this as your chance to get a feel

(Continued on next page)

Quality Versus Costs in College Choice

As a student choosing a college to attend, you become a consumer. As you make this important decision in your life, you want to be aware of costs and attentive to your own needs. In order to assure that you will thrive at the college you select, you want to decide on a college with qualities that match your wants, needs and interests. Sometimes, that may not be the least costly alternative.

Here are some ways to judge the quality of a college.

- **Visit it!** Visiting is the most important aspect of making a good decision because you can judge whether the college fits you. When you visit, meet with an admission officer, go to classes, talk to students, eat in the cafeteria and check out the library, the bookstore, the student union and the residence halls. Some colleges will even let you spend the night.
- **Ask about the college's retention rate.** The retention rate will tell you the percentage of students who remain at the college for four years. This is an important measure of whether students are satisfied with their experience at the college.
- **Ask about the college's graduation rate.** The graduation rate will tell you the percentage of students who graduate from the college within a four-year period. This is an important measure because it tells you whether students are able to get the courses and the support they need to graduate on time.
- **Ask about what the college's graduates do.** By knowing this information, you can judge whether or not you would be able to meet your goals.
- **Get the details on their financial aid packages.** Make sure that any merit scholarships you receive from the college cover all four years, if you maintain a reasonable grade point average.

A good and successful college search, resulting in a match between you and the college you choose, is one in which you know what you want and you dig deep for information about the college. As you choose a college to attend and consider the cost of attending that college, keep in mind the qualities that will help you be successful.

Source: Pamela K. Fay-Williams

JUNIORS & SENIORS

IT'S NOT TOO LATE!!

There is still time to sign up for second semester ROP classes!



Many classes still have space available. Now is your chance to discover how to uncover clues to solve a crime, learn the joy of being a chef, or train for a career in the health care field. Crime Scene Investigation, Culinary Arts, First Responder, Fire Technology and Nursing Assistant are classes offered after school. Animal Health Care, Automotive Technology, Broadcast News, Environmental Design, Interior Design, Hotel/Tourism and Sports Medicine... to name a few...are classes located at other nearby locations. There are many other classes offered after school and in the evening at other local high schools. Some spring classes begin the week of January 28, and many other classes begin the week of February 4, 2008. Check with your career specialist in the Career Center TODAY to sign up for these classes.

COLLEGE SLEEPOVERS (Continued from page 1)

for what life at this college is like. Make an effort to be friendly and meet as many college students as you can.

- Eat in the cafeteria
- Check out a favorite hangout on campus
- Read the student newspaper (or stuff it in your backpack for later reading).
- Visit the library
- Sit in on a class
- Hang out in the dorm with your host and his/her floormates
- If it's the weekend, check out the social scene
- Attend a lecture, play or other campus-wide event
- Ask a lot of questions.

The Most Important Question

Try to find out as much as you can about a college while you're on campus. After all, the students you meet are THE source for inside information. They are doing what you are now planning for and dreaming about. Here are a few questions to get you started:

- Why did you choose this college?
- What is your favorite part of being at this college?
- What do you do on the weekends?
- How many hours do you study per week?
- What are the toughest/most popular/least popular majors?
- How many times do you go back home during the school year?

- What student groups are the most active?
- What do you do on a typical weekday?
- How many hours of sleep do you get per night?

But the most important question is one that only students—not the admissions office—can answer: What's wrong with this place?

"Aside from the usual comments on the food...it ain't Mom's cooking at any college...the answers from honest students can be helpful, but not necessarily devastating," says Lynes. "After all, they're still there, so it can't be all that bad."

But don't go with just one answer. Ask several different students. You'll probably get several different answers, but each one will give you a clearer picture of campus life.

Taking a Test Drive

In short, an overnight visit is the closest thing high school students have to a college test drive. Go ahead, kick the tires, check the transmission, drive it around the block. Collect as many impressions as you can about the college. After all, you're thinking about spending four years of your life here. Make sure you'll still love it when that "new-college" excitement has worn off!

Source: Jennifer Gross for NACAC.

What is the Status of My College Application?

Those of you who have sent applications may already be receiving letters, postcards or e-notifications that something is missing. Actually, it usually isn't – but just isn't filed yet.

It's College Application time, and the Class of 2008 is thoroughly involved in the very serious business of applying to colleges. The first of the early applications have already been mailed, and soon regular deadline applications will be sent off. The application process, with its possibility of rejection as well as for acceptance, is stressful for everyone involved.

Some of the stress can be reduced. Most seniors have the process well in hand and there should be little or no last minute panic. Essays are being written, auditions prepared, portfolios assembled. Students have contacted their recommenders. Students who are still selecting colleges to which they will apply have taken or registered for the standardized testing, determined their priorities, and organized the task at hand.

At every national conference of college and admissions counselors, several sessions address various tension points in the process of communication between applicant and college. One of them is this: as deadlines are met, the college admissions offices fill up with mail — applications, recommendations, transcripts, and so forth - all of this needs to be filed before folders are read and often, during the filing period, colleges send letters to applicants noting that some materials are not yet in the files.

It might help to know that colleges face a MOUNTAIN of admissions mail every day — mail that requires very systematic and careful handling. As a result, there will be a very reasonable delay between the moment your application arrives at the admissions office and the time it is processed and placed into your file. A colleague sent me descriptions of the process from a number of admissions officers – among them the following:

From a large public university: “I wish I had a photo that I could send you of thousands of pieces of mail sitting in the mail bins waiting to be processed. Maybe this bit of information will help... we employ an “army” of students to help us process the mail. We receive so much mail that all some of the students do is simply slit open envelopes. Other students will date stamp the materials, and yet others place the information in the proper bin (Part I- Early Decision, Part I- Regular Decision, High School Transcript - Early Decision, etc.) From the bins, our processing staff enters the information into the computer. We estimated that we received over 100,000 pieces of information for our freshman applicants alone last year. (Each application requires Part I & Part II, or the Common App and our Supplement, the Secondary School Report, the HS transcript, test scores, and at least one letter of recommendation.)

From a mid-sized private university: “We tracked mail received per day by application type. Last year in November (alone), we received 900 frosh applications. It took us four days to get this mail opened, let alone counted, stamped and sorted.

From a private college: “Typically we receive more than half of our applications right at the deadline. They are processed in the order in which they arrive, and it takes us about three weeks to get all of the applications processed and in files. We do enter quite a bit of data on each applicant into our student database, so for most of our data entry people it is physically impossible to process more than a certain number of applications in one day.”

From a large public university: “We never receive a complete application all in one envelope since we require that ACT/SAT scores be sent to us directly from the testing agency. There always are sorting and matching processes that must take place daily since we receive hundreds (sometimes thousands) of applications, transcripts, letters of recommendation, etc. each and every business day!”

From another large public university: “This morning the U.S. mail delivered 30 tubs full of applications, counselor statements, and teacher recommendations to our office. Two staff members spent all day just opening the envelopes. Another fifteen concentrated on logging everything in; and yet our mail room still looks as though a paper bomb went off in it.”

In other words, if a student gets a note from a college saying that a piece of your application is missing, DON'T PANIC! The material in question is usually in the admissions office itself, somewhere in those sacks of mail and has not been filed yet. The letters go out as a sort of insurance. Admissions offices, too, are under pressure to get all the folders complete for timely and considered reading. Harvard, for example, is very careful when asking for a second copy of any material to note that this sort of difficulty would in no way jeopardize an applicant's chance of admission. This assurance was reiterated at this year's conference by spokespeople for the college admissions offices, but many recognized that their procedures and budgets might not give them the latitude to write and mail a gracious letter.

The appropriate response to a postcard or a letter like this is merely for the student to ask his/her counselor to call and verify the file. Usually by the time the counselor calls the Admissions Office with a request to check the file, it is usually complete. **Keep copies of everything that is mailed.**

We counselors do the same. If applying online, the application should be printed out before being sent off – the application programs support making hard copies. So, should any document be missing from an admissions file, there's plenty of time to fax a duplicate.

As students complete and send their applications, the pressure is reduced. The anxiety of waiting for the colleges' responses, however, remains.

SOURCE: Barbara Schultz, Beckman Counselor



SCHOLARSHIPS

Los Angeles Jr. Chamber of Commerce Foundation

Award: \$2,000

Eligibility: Seniors, 2.5 GPA, community service & extracurricular involvement. For more information see website.

Website: www.lajcc.org

Deadline: March 2008

Ronald McDonald House Charities

Award: Varies

Eligibility: Seniors planning on attending 2- or 4-year college

Website: www.rmhc.org/rmhc/index/programs/rmhc_scholarship_program.html

Deadline: February 2008

Sun Trust Off to College Scholarship

Award: \$1,000

Eligibility: Seniors. *Not* based on GPA or financial need. 15 chances to win - one winner every two weeks from Oct -May

Website: <http://www.suntrusteducation.com/sweeps/default.asp>

Hispanic Scholarship Fund

Award: varies

Eligibility: Graduating high school senior of Hispanic origin. Must be a citizen or permanent legal resident, have 3.0 GPA, and complete the FAFSA in January. Various scholarships available

Website: www.hsf.net

Deadline: Varies

Quest Scholars Program

Award: varies

Quest Scholars Program is a national non-profit organization dedicated to connecting high-achieving low-income students with scholarships, internships, mentorship, and other educational opportunities

Website: www.questbridge.org or (650) 566-8391

Latino College Dollars

Award: varies

Eligibility: Scholarships for California's Latino Students

Website: www.latinocollegedollars.org

Deadline: Varies

Sons of Italy Western Foundation Scholarship

Award: \$500 - \$5,000

Eligibility: Applicants must be wholly or partly of Italian ancestry and completed a foreign language course in high school. Selection based on scholastics, activities, leadership and financial need.

Website: www.sonsofitalyca.org/scholarship.html

Deadline: February 29, 2007

National Commission for Cooperative Education Scholarships

Award: \$5,000

Eligibility: High school senior with 3.5 or higher GPA planning on attending one of the ten participating colleges.

Website: www.co-op.edu

Deadline: February 15, 2008

Southern California Mothers of Twins Club, Inc

Award: \$250 - \$1,200.

Eligibility: Seniors who are planning on attending college and are of multiple birth.

Website: www.scmotc.org

Deadline: February 2008

Discover Card Tribute Award

Award: \$2,500 (9 state scholarships) \$25,000 (9 national scholarships)

Eligibility: Juniors with a minimum cumulative (9th & 10th grade) 2.75 GPA who have special talents, obstacles overcome, or excel in leadership or community service.

Website: <http://www.discoverfinancial.com/community/index.shtml#scholarship>

Deadline: January 31, 2008

Gates Millennium Scholars

Award: varies

Eligibility: Seniors who show financial need and are of African American, American Indian, Asian Pacific Islander American, or Hispanic American origin. 3.3 GPA and U.S. Citizen or legal permanent resident. Fill out FAFSA and Pell Grant Applications.

Website: www.gmsp.org

Deadline: Varies

Best Buy Scholarship

Award: varies

Eligibility: Seniors who volunteer time to their communities, excel in academics, and participate in extra curricular activities.

Website: http://communications.bestbuy.com/community_relations/scholarships.asp

Deadline: Check website in January 2008

Hewlett Packard Scholar Award

Award: \$3,000 per year for four (4) years

Eligibility: Underrepresented minority (African American, Latino or American Indian) high school seniors and community college transfer students who wish to pursue a Bachelor of Science degree in computer science, computer engineering or electrical engineering.

Deadline: March 15, 2008

..you should also check the individual schools where you're applying and see if they have their own scholarships!



SCHOLARSHIPS



Santiago Canyon College Scholarships

Award: varies

Eligibility: See counseling office.

Deadline: May 29, 22007

Patrick Kerr Skateboard Scholarship

Award: \$1,000 - \$5,000

Eligibility: High school senior with a 2.5 or higher GPA planning on attending a 2- or 4-year college. Must be a skateboarder.

Website: www.skateboardscholarship.org

Deadline: April 20, 2008

American Planning Association High School Essay Contest

Award: \$5,000

Eligibility: High school juniors & seniors. Essay required. See website for details.

Website: <http://www.planning.org/institutions/hseessay.htm>

Deadline: January 15, 2008

Signet Classic School Essay Contest

Award: \$1,000

Eligibility: High school juniors & seniors with recommendation by their English teacher. Essay required based on the book *Jekyll and Hyde*. See website for details.

Website: <http://us.penguinroup.com/static/html/services-academic/essayhome.html>

Deadline: April 15, 2008

Jeff Krosnoff Scholarship Fund

Award: \$10,000

Eligibility: High school senior with a 3.0 or higher GPA planning on attending a 4-year college. Essay: "Select a song or poem that inspires you and explain why."

Website: <http://www.krosnoffscholarship.com/Scholarship.htm>

Deadline: January 9, 2008

Create a Greeting Card Scholarship

Award: \$10,000

Eligibility: High school student 14 years or older. Submit a greeting card with original work of art.

Website: <http://www.gallerycollection.com/scholarship.htm>

Deadline: January 15, 2008

Disneyland Resort Scholarship Program

Award: 10 awards of \$5,000

Eligibility: High school senior who has accumulated 100 or more volunteer hours from January 1, 2007 thru January 31, 2008. Letter of recommendation, verification from non-profit organization(s) of hours worked.

Website: <http://publicaffairs.disneyland.com/education/>

Deadline: January 31, 2008

Optimist International Essay Contest

Award: up to \$6,000

Eligibility: High school students under the age of 19. Essay "Today's Choices Shape My Future"

Website: <http://www.optimist.org/default.cfm?content=members/mbrcdpa5.htm>

Deadline: contact local Optimist chapter....see website

US Bank Scholarship

Award: \$1,000

Eligibility: High school senior planning on attending a 2- or 4-year college

Website: www.usbank.com/studentbanking

Deadline: February 29, 2008

Sam Walton Community Scholarship

Award: \$1,000

Eligibility: Seniors not Wal-Mart/Sam's Club employee or family members (other scholarships available for employees and family members....see website) 2.5+ GPA, SAT/ACT scores and financial need.

Website: www.walmartfoundation.org

Deadline: January 14, 2008

Elks National Foundation Awards

Most Valuable Student Competition

Award: \$1,000 - \$15,000 per year for 4 years

Eligibility: Seniors planning on attend a 4-year college – selection based on academics and leadership.

Website: www.elks.org/enf/scholars/mvs.cfm

Deadline: January 11, 2008

Legacy Award

Award: \$ 1,000

Eligibility: Senior child or grandchild of an Elk member

Website: www.elks.org/enf/scholars/legacy.cfm

Deadline: January 12, 2008



Reduce Test Taking Anxiety

Many students experience some nervousness or apprehension before, during, or after an exam. This kind of anxiety can be a powerful motivator. However, some students experience test-related anxiety to such a degree that it can lead to poor performance and interfere with their learning.

Some tips for reducing test anxiety

Fortunately, there are several things that can be done to make test anxiety more manageable:

- **Preparation** - develop good study habits; spread studying over several days; ask for additional help when needed; eat good foods; get adequate rest; and exercise to build energy; attend class regularly and complete all assignments in a timely manner; make and take practice tests.
- **Keep a positive attitude** - develop reasonable expectations; do not allow your grades to become dependent on the outcome of one exam; avoid negative and irrational thoughts about catastrophic results; set up a system of rewards for dedicated studying and good test performance; encourage yourself.
- **Relaxation techniques** - deep breathing exercises, imagery and visualization, and muscle relaxation techniques can help to increase focus and concentration; don't arrive too early or get distracted by others preparing for the test; check to make sure you have everything you will need.
- **Learn good test-taking skills** - do not panic if you can't remember something right away; answer questions you know well first, and then go back to other ones; read questions and directions carefully before you begin; outline essays before you begin to write; keep short-answers short; don't spend a lot of time reviewing answers

Additional Coping Strategies

The techniques for dealing with test or performance anxiety can be divided into 5 basic principles:

1. **Be healthy:** If you are physically and emotionally exhausted, your body and mind are less able to tolerate stress and anxiety. You can improve your resistance to anxiety by getting adequate rest, eating appropriately,

and taking care of your physical health. If you find you don't have time to be healthy, consider seeking assistance with time management.

2. **Be prepared:** Practice... practice... practice... study... study... study. Sounds a bit repetitive, but nothing can help reduce anxiety like confidence. In fact, if you over-prepare a bit, your responses become more automatic, and your performance will be less affected by anxiety. Preparation for an exam may include improving your study and test-taking skills. Be on time and have all the "tools" you may need for an exam (e.g., #2 pencils, calculator, watch, pen). Finally, learn and practice the anxiety management techniques in the following points, 3-5.
3. **Practice the performance:** The time limits of an exam, the tied score of a game, or the audience at your performance—all are stimuli that increase your level of arousal and add to your experience of anxiety. If you practice under similar conditions, you'll become less sensitive to these stimuli. For an exam, work through a practice exam (or two!) under the same time constraints that will exist when you take the exam (don't look at your notes, create as many conditions of the actual exam as possible). For an athletic or artistic performance, practice with distractions or with an audience. For conditions that you cannot actually reproduce, create them in your mind—close your eyes and "see" the audience in the seats, give the play-by-play of the last seconds of a tied game. Imagination is a powerful tool—it can help you be less anxious when reality hits!
4. **Practice relaxation methods:** In cases of anxiety, the goal is to relax. Some of the most effective ways involve altering your physical responses like breathing and muscle tension.

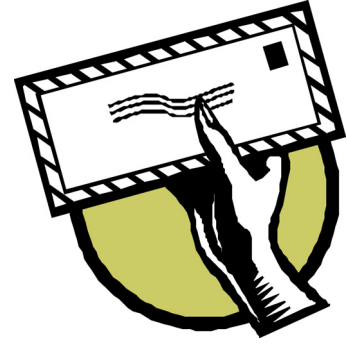
- o **Deep breathing:** When anxious, we often take shallow breaths. We feel like we aren't getting enough air, and get more anxious. If you focus on breathing deeply and slowly, this cycle is interrupted and the body and mind begin to relax. To learn to breathe deeply, place your hand on your stomach and inhale in a

way that makes your abdomen expand. As you exhale, your abdomen should move inward. Practice taking 10-15 slow deep breaths in a row, 2-3 times per day—training your body to breathe deeply and relax. Then, during a stressful situation, focus on taking 2-3 deep breaths, and your body will relax.

- o **Progressive muscle relaxation:** We also tense our muscles when anxious. Consciously relaxing your muscles will help your body and mind relax. Practice muscle relaxation during deep breathing by focusing on a particular muscle group (e.g., shoulders) and alternatively tensing and relaxing the muscle. Then, focus on releasing all of the tension in the muscle, repeating "relax" in your mind. Add muscle relaxation to deep breathing in a stressful situation.
- o **Reduce distractions:** Distractions are additional stimuli that increase arousal. Explore ways to reduce the distractions in your immediate environment, e.g. sit in a back corner of the room, take a sweater so you aren't distracted by being cold, change seats if you are distracted by the person sitting next to you.
- o **Rituals:** Rituals are repetitive behaviors that give us a sense of familiarity, help us focus, and reduce anxiety. The basketball player who bounces the ball three times before shooting a free-throw has a ritual. You may already have some rituals—getting a drink of water just before an exam or using a particular pencil or pen. Just a note of caution—make sure your rituals are not harmful or distracting to yourself or others (tapping your pencil 10 times before each question may annoy your classmates!).



FAFSA



The **FREE** Application for Federal Student Aid, or FAFSA for short, is a form that you must fill out to be eligible to receive federal financial aid. The easiest and quickest way to apply is on-line. You can find the application on-line at the FAFSA website...www.FAFSA.ed.gov. You can also get a paper copy from your high school counselor, any college financial aid office or your public library. You will find numerous tips and frequently asked questions at the FAFSA website. Here are a couple to get you started....

1. I probably don't qualify for aid. Should I apply for aid anyway?

Yes. Many families mistakenly think they don't qualify for aid and prevent themselves from receiving financial aid by failing to apply for it. You should apply for financial aid every year, even if you think you won't get any. More than two-thirds of families qualify for some financial aid. In addition, there are a few sources of aid such as unsubsidized Stafford and PLUS loans that are available regardless of need. The FAFSA form is free. There is no good excuse for not applying.

2. How do I apply for a Pell Grant and other types of need-based aid?

Submit a FAFSA. To indicate interest in student employment, student loans and parent loans, you should check the appropriate boxes. Checking these boxes does not commit you to accepting these types of aid. You will have the opportunity to accept or decline each part of your aid package later. Leaving these boxes unchecked will not increase the amount of grants you receive.

3. Where can I get information about Federal student financial aid?

On the web at www.studentaid.ed.gov, by calling the Federal Student Aid Information Center (FSAIC) at 1-800-4-FED-AID (1-800-433-3243) or 1-800-730-8913 (if hearing impaired) and ask for a free copy of The Student Guide: Financial Aid from the US Department of Education. This toll free hotline is run by the US Department of Education and can answer questions about federal and state student aid programs and applications. You can also write to Federal Student Aid Information Center, PO Box 84, Washington, DC 20044.

4. How soon after January 1 should the FAFSA form be sent in? Is it better to wait until the income tax forms have been completed?

Send in the form as soon as possible after January 1. Do not wait until your taxes are done. Although it is better to do your taxes early, it is ok to use estimates of your income, so long as they aren't very far off from the actual values. You will have an opportunity to correct any errors later. If you wait too long, you might miss the deadline for state aid. Most states require the FAFSA to be submitted by March 1, and some even as early as mid-February.

Before you and your parents fill out the FAFSA, make sure you have all your materials together. You'll need the following:

- You and/or your parents' previous-year tax return. If your parents haven't done their taxes yet when you fill out the FAFSA, use year-end W-2 forms.
- Your driver's license and Social Security card.
- W-2 forms and other records of money earned.
- Records of untaxed income, such as welfare, Social Security, AFDC or ADC, or veterans' benefits.
- Current bank statements.
- Current mortgage information.
- Business and farm records.
- Records of stocks, bonds, and other investments.

These figures will be used to determine your Expected Family Contribution (EFC), the amount of money the federal government believes that you and your family should be able to pay toward your education for one year. Be sure to allow yourself plenty of time to fill out the FAFSA. It's a good idea to photocopy it and practice filling it out first in pencil.

Keep in mind that schools may have their own deadlines and additional applications for awarding student aid. Check with the school's financial aid department.

Make a photocopy of the completed FAFSA to keep for your records and mail it to the processor as soon as possible after January 1 of the year you plan to start college. Be sure to mail it by mid-February to meet most colleges' deadlines.

Discover your future through the ROP!

Coastline Regional Occupational Program (ROP)



MISSION STATEMENT: *Provide the highest quality of career preparation which satisfies students' needs and the demands of employers for today and the future.*

The Coastline Regional Occupational Program provides a unique opportunity for students to “try out” a career and see if it fits their personality. Through ROP internships and classes, students are able to get valuable “hands-on” experience enabling them to evaluate exactly what they do and do not like about certain jobs. This type of career exploration also shows college admissions officers a sense of commitment or depth of interest in a subject area which might help identify the student as the correct match for a particular program of study or for a particular institution.

Research shows that choosing a college major based on interests, skills and values is the best way to make the right career choice. The Regional Occupational Program offers a broad spectrum of classes including courses in health sciences, computer science, business technologies, public service careers, and the arts. ROP courses provide experiential learning because students are expected to apply the skills they learn in the classroom. Most classes are taught by experts with not only teaching credentials in their fields, but also experience working in their fields.

Chart a course for exploration through ROP! The classes are free and available to all students who are sixteen years of age and older. The course catalogs are available three times a year: fall, spring, and summer. They offer valuable insight into many career opportunities. Students should seize this opportunity for self-discovery. Please see your Career Specialist in the Career Center today to register for spring classes. Actual registration occurs in early December and classes fill quickly!

What Every Anxious Parent Needs to Know

In this highly competitive college admissions climate, many parents are terrified of not doing everything right to give their children the advantages they need to ultimately be accepted into a top college. Getting into the “wrong” college, they fear, will negatively impact their child’s entire future. As a result, parents sometimes behave in ways that are contrary to their deepest values.

So here’s my best advice to parents who suffer from college admissions anxiety:

- **Don’t become “helicopter parents,”** hovering over your children to make sure that their every activity, from sports to music lessons, has only one goal—getting into that right school. In trying to do their best, many well-intentioned parents miss opportunities to teach their children how to solve their own problems and develop their own passions. In short, the more we adults do for our children, the less our children seem able to do for themselves. And if they do not learn to think for themselves and trust their own choices, they may come to feel that nothing they do will ever be good enough—a pathway to weakened self-esteem, anxiety, and depression.
- **Refocus on the “best match” rather than on the “best college.”** Take time to consider all the factors important to your child in choosing a college, such as size, location, academic challenge, curriculum, intensity, campus life, social diversity, opportunity for religious expression, and college costs. The goal is to find a place where your son or daughter can be successful academically, socially, and emotionally.
- **Remember what is important for success in life.** In general, one’s success in life has no more to do with the name of one’s college than a person’s achievement has to do with his or her given name. Success is, instead, a reflection of what we make of that name. It is about what we accomplish through hard work and good deeds. It is the development of core values and strength of character that ultimately will be the best measure of success—and, with it, personal fulfillment.

Source: Judith Berg for URJ Magazine



Important Test Dates for the 2007/2008 School Year



SAT & SUBJECT TEST DATES

log on to www.collegeboard.com to sign up for the SAT & Subject Tests

| Test Date | Due | Late |
|------------------|---------|----------|
| Jan. 26 | Dec. 26 | Jan. 4 |
| Mar. 1**SAT ONLY | Jan. 29 | Feb. 7 |
| May 3 | April 1 | April 10 |
| June 7 | May 6 | May 15 |

ACT

log on to www.actstudent.org to sign up for the ACT

| Test Date | Due | Late |
|-----------|---------|------------|
| Feb. 9 | Jan. 4 | Jan. 5-18 |
| Apr. 12 | March 7 | March 8-21 |
| June 14 | May 9 | May 10-23 |

CHECK OUT THE CAREER/COLLEGE CENTER ...THERE'S A WEALTH OF INFORMATION!!

10 Tips for Winning Scholarship Applications



Before you submit your scholarship application, check out these tips, provided by scholarship sponsors nationwide.

Tip #1: Apply only if you are eligible.

Read all the scholarship requirements and directions carefully to make sure you're eligible before you send in your application.

Tip #2: Complete the application in full.

If a question doesn't apply, note that on the application. Don't just leave a blank. Supply all additional supporting material, such as transcripts, letters of recommendation and essays.

Tip #3: Follow directions.

Provide everything that's required, but don't supply things that aren't requested—you could be disqualified.

Tip #4: Neatness counts.

Always type your application, or if you must print, do so neatly and legibly. Make a couple of photocopies of all the forms before you fill them out. Use the copies as working drafts as you develop your application packet.

Tip #5: Write an essay that makes a strong impression.

The key to writing a strong essay is to be personal and specific. Include concrete details to make your experience come alive: the who, what, where, and when of your topic. The simplest experience can be monumental if you present honestly how you were affected.

Tip #6: Watch all deadlines.

To help keep yourself on track, impose your own deadline that is at least two weeks prior to the official deadline. Use the buffer time to make sure everything is ready on time. Don't rely on extensions—very few scholarship providers allow them at all.

Tip #7: Make sure your application gets where it needs to go.

Put your name (and Social Security number, if applicable) on all pages of the application. Pieces of your application may get lost unless they are clearly identified.

Tip #8: Keep a back-up file in case anything goes wrong.

Before sending the application, make a copy of the entire packet. If your application goes astray, you'll be able to reproduce it quickly.

Tip #9: Give it a final "once-over."

Proofread the entire application carefully. Be on the lookout for misspelled words or grammatical errors. Ask a friend, teacher or parent to proofread it as well.

Tip #10: Ask for help if you need it.

If you have problems with the application, don't hesitate to call the funding organization.

Source: Kay Peterson, Ph.D.

FRESHMEN, SOPHOMORES, JUNIORS & SENIORS

Tools To Make Your High School Years A Success



The end of the first semester of high school for this year is coming soon, and with that, final exams (January 29-31, 2008). Though preparing for these exams is important, the real preparation should have been taking place all semester. Work on the following study skills:

TEN STEPS TO STUDENT SUCCESS

1. Be on time and attend class daily.
2. Be prepared — book, binder, pencil, paper, and calculator.
3. Do work in class every day. It is “class work.” What you do not finish is “homework.”
4. Take good notes and listen to the instructions.
5. Take pride in your work and do it to the best of your ability. Give it some effort!
6. Be courteous to your classmates and respect their right to an education.
7. Seek help when you need it. Ask questions.
8. STUDY daily, not just before tests. This five-letter word is the key to success in the classroom.
9. Bring a positive attitude to class.
10. Get involved at the high school.

TAKING FINAL EXAMS

Even if you have developed good study skills by taking adequate notes in class and listening carefully, you cannot improve your grades unless you get your knowledge down on paper at test time. The following are ten mistakes to avoid at this important moment:

1. *Not reading directions* — Find out exactly what the teacher wants.
2. *Not skimming the entire test* — It boosts confidence to see what you do know on the test.
3. *Cramming* — Short-term memory can fail you and so can lack of sleep.
4. *Not learning the test’s grading plan* — Your strategy should be to find out how much each section of the test is worth, and if points are deducted for wrong answers.
5. *Letting tough questions drag you down* — If you cannot get an answer quickly, go on to the next question.
6. *Studying too much* — Pick out what is really important and leave the rest, especially if you have little time to study.
7. *Letting nerves get to you* — Put yourself in the right frame of mind by getting enough sleep, using relaxation techniques, or eating a good breakfast.
8. *Doing poorly on essay questions* — Get at least partial credit by writing something, even if your answer is a little off base.
9. *Disregarding rules of grammar, spelling, and good penmanship* — First impressions of a well written, neatly appearing paper can only help your grade.
10. *Forgetting to review the finished test* — Careless errors can lose valuable points.

HOW TO USE TEST-TAKING SKILLS

If you think these ideas are only useful in high school, think again. These skills can be used when taking SAT and ACT exams or college placement exams. One thing you can be sure of is that you will take many, many tests in college. If you can master test-taking skills in high school, you will be much more successful in college.

Source: Careers and College