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Debbie Cogan  
St. Thomas High School

### Helping Eagles Soar

From working with a large Public High School District to a Private High School with a 100 percent college entrance rate she has experienced a lot in more than 30 years in Education.

*By Connie Voss*

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## Dear Counselors



In October, Signet Research, Inc. conducted a survey of Counselors that received and read our Fall 2015 issue. The results showed that Counselors spent an average of 36 minutes reading that issue of LINK for Counselors and there were 2.7 readers per copy. This was great news as it showed the information we are publishing has some value and you are taking the time to share that information with other counselors in your school. We currently send the magazine to 25,000 Counselors in print and an additional 20,000 digitally, so this means our information is getting shared with close to 90,000 readers per issue.

As an incentive to complete the survey we offered a \$100 Amazon Gift Card to one lucky Counselor to be chosen randomly by Signet Research, Inc. The lucky winner was Ms. Sue Senner, Counselor at The Arts Academy at Benjamin Rush in Pennsylvania.

We asked you what types of articles you would like to see in future issues of LINK for Counselors. We took that information to heart and tried to come up with a comprehensive slate of articles for the Spring issue you are reading.

This issue includes articles on a variety of subjects that Counselors said they would like to see, including how to help athletes find the right college, CTE, helping your students master the college essay, helping them write their resume, working with students with disabilities, and much more. We also have several new Careers to Consider articles that you can share with your students. The Table of Contents on page 6 & 7 makes it easy to see the complete list of more than 20 exclusive articles we compiled for you.

I hope you enjoy it, and please feel free to send us a note on your thoughts and comments about the content in this issue and what you would like to see in subsequent issues.

Sincerely,

Jason Bullock, CBC  
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# Burnout

## A Preventable Phenomenon

By Dawn Marie Barlyte



The odds are high that burnout will strike someone you know at some point in their career. Indeed, staff at all levels are at increased risk for this stress syndrome because of the intensity of the work and the emotional bonds formed while working. Budget cuts will sometimes force staff to take on greater responsibilities, leaving fewer resources to replenish themselves. Not commonly discussed and often misunderstood, this ailment is afflicting our nation's education staff, driving the brightest, most energetic from the field. It can transform an otherwise enthusiastic counselor into someone who is cynical, unmotivated, and going through the motions.

Ruth Luban MA, a burnout specialist located in Laguna Beach, CA, says stress and burnout are an occupational hazard in the helping professions, in that staff tends to give too much with too few rewards. Burnout is an elusive problem that slowly wears down the body and spirit of the suffering individual and eventually negatively impacts a school's functioning. The children we serve ultimately suffer as a result. Counselors are in a key position to recognize symptoms early on, reducing staff turnover, and creating an optimal atmosphere for children to flourish.

There are a myriad of strategies to help staff cope with this occupational stress. First and foremost, this insidious malady can be prevented if we recognize the symptoms early on. Just who is a candidate for burnout? The answer: none of us are immune. But through early detection, we don't have to become a casualty.

Burnout is not an ephemeral situation we experience after a difficult day. It is a physical, emotional, mental, and spiritual exhaustion caused by very

demanding work. It does not occur overnight. We all have days when we are feeling uninspired by our work. Ruth is also the author of "Burnout: Keeping the Fire, recognize the symptoms, reduce your risk and reclaim your life" emphasizes that "burnout is a process, not an event, it happens over a long period of time as the result of chronic, unrelenting stress." It begins with small warning signals. If unheeded, these symptoms can progress — tending to spread into all aspects of one's life. Before this happens, it's critical to recognize the signs and make changes. What causes one staff member to burnout and another to walk away unscathed isn't that easy to predict — but research says there are predispositions. Those with the highest motivation and ardor for their work are most susceptible. In their book "Career Burnout: Causes and Cures", Ayala Pines and Elliot Aronson contend "in order to burn out, a person needs to have been on fire at one time." Having goals that are too high or unrealistic is a common pitfall and a powerful antecedent to burnout. Burnout is most likely to afflict those who started out being the most idealistic and caring. Ruth Luban MA describes the typical burnout victim as one who is "idealistic, a perfectionist and overly committed to his or her work. They are the brightest, most capable and committed workers, who give 100% to any project they undertake" she adds. The people most susceptible to burnout are those who approach their career as a calling, a place from which to derive a strong sense of meaning or purpose. This individual is the quintessential Type A personality — a striver with high energy, creativity and dedication, typically bright, and talented .....it's when an excess of these productive qualities is given to one's job at the expense of

other parts of their life that the inexorable process of burnout is set in motion”

If left unidentified, burnout is imminent. Burnout can impair judgment, impact our moods, and distort our ability to evaluate situations objectively. These are skills we rely upon to be effective with students, parents, and colleagues. Idealism and enthusiasm may become cynicism; self-responsibility may turn to blaming others; and cooperation can disappear into distrust. You may experience more frequent intense feelings of unhappiness, powerlessness, isolation; frustration, and physical and emotional exhaustion. Your attention span gets shorter and your tolerance level decreases. The youth we serve seem to need more and more of us, yet we are less and less willing to go the extra mile. You may find yourself going through the motions, doing as little as possible to get through the day. Eventually, you may

lose your commitment to those who rely on you. It is vital to recognize the red flags of the early stages of burnout. If we do recognize symptoms early on, we can catch it before we lose yet another dedicated staff member. We can help staff regain balance instead of a long recovery period. Ruth Luban says people who approach their career from a sense of contribution, who see their jobs as an opportunity to innovate, people with a great deal of empathy and compassion, are most likely to burnout. She adds, “Recognizing burnout requires an understanding of the physical, mental, and emotional characteristics. True burnout has a certain degree of all three components below.”

**Physical characteristics** Low energy, chronic fatigue, somatic complaints such as chronic headaches, increased susceptibility to illness, back pains, nausea, muscle tension, changes in eating habits, and sleep difficulties.

**Emotional characteristics** Feelings of hopelessness, helplessness, irritable, trapped, feeling of emptiness, nothing left to give, irritability, disenchantment, and loneliness

**Mental characteristics** Self-critical, cynical, indecisive, pessimistic, negative judgments of others.

With more demands on educators than ever before and a desire to be all things to all people, often stretching ourselves too thin, many are experiencing early symptoms of burnout. Even newcomers aren’t immune. Sadly for some, it may mean leaving the field. Yet for most, the cure is to recognize the red flags of burnout and to find ways to rekindle the passion they once felt for their work. If you have noticed some of the warning signs in yourself or a colleague, it’s crucial to begin practicing these tips before reaching the point of throwing in the towel.

**Maintain Healthy habits** Regular exercise is a good way to relieve stress, any form of aerobics, Pilate’s or yoga, eat a sensible diet, and get lots of rest; lack of sleep can leave your nerves raw and in no shape to meet the challenges of teaching today — when you’re not at your best your work will suffer.

**Practice Time Management** Use your time wisely. Don’t try to do everything at once, set goals that are challenging but realistic, avoid procrastinating; the feeling of accomplishment will energize you.

Stay aware and assess your level of stress regularly and take steps to reduce it when it’s high, make a list



of what you need to do and prioritize, learn how to delegate and practice the word "No". It's not a crime to refuse requests or demands on your time occasionally; if over involved, take steps to reduce commitments to conserve your energy.

**Take a break** Don't be afraid to take a time out, to take a moment and replenish your energy. Every day make an appointment with yourself that cannot be broken, to reflect. Practice stress relieving techniques or relaxation exercises, do things you enjoy. This sounds simple but many teachers forget to have fun - develop a hobby, read a good book, visit with friends, schedule leisure time - set aside time everyday for personal recreation.

**Learn something New & Different** If you feel stuck in a rut, broaden your knowledge and master a new skill to keep excitement alive. If you have always longed to write, start an article of your teaching experience, or take a class in something you've always wanted to learn - choose a stimulating activity that is a complete change of pace.

**Give yourself permission to be imperfect** Be kind to yourself; acknowledge and celebrate your successes, and make allowances for your shortcomings.

**Collaborate with colleagues** Avoid cutting yourself off from the valuable idea sharing and support network. Develop or renew intimacies with co-workers, don't keep frustrations bottled up, sometimes it helps to let it out or ask for guidance. Join a professional organization for camaraderie and become an active member.

**Lighten up** Keep your sense of humor; laughter is good medicine, so go ahead and laugh at yourself and at those stressors that push your buttons.

**Get in touch with yourself** Learn to identify when you are driving yourself too hard and when you are depleting your inner resources.

**Keep the faith** Counseling is not a short-term endeavor, it requires faith to know what you do, does make a difference!

**See the glass as half-full!** An optimistic attitude is key to reducing stress and your success.

*Dawn Marie Barhyte is a widely published freelance writer and former educator who continues to touch the lives of young people through her writing.*



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# How to Help Students Set Realistic SAT and ACT Target Scores

By Vicki Wood

Any school counselor knows that students and parents can have unrealistic expectations regarding college admissions prospects, often based on outdated beliefs and practices from a time when admissions were not quite as competitive and 4.0 grade point averages not quite so common. In the test preparation industry, we also routinely encounter such improbable goal-setting: students with previous SAT or ACT results well below the national average aiming for 95th percentile scores, or parents insisting that their children apply to Stanford with 2.5 GPAs. When helping to form realistic standardized test target scores with our clients and their families, it can be challenging to convince them that their ambitions might be impractical, so we try to help students and parents form their own conclusions, by assessing the available data.

## 1. Determine a baseline test score.

If the student has recently taken an official SAT or ACT and feels that he or she performed to the best of his or her abilities on that test, these scores can provide a starting point for setting a target

score. Otherwise, the student should print the free practice test available on the corresponding test websites, take the test under timed conditions in one sitting, and score it according to the directions provided. This baseline score can help provide some initial indication of raw abilities, and thus can help parents evaluate their expectations.

## 2. Compare the baseline test score percentile to the class ranking percentile.

If your school uses class ranking, compute the student's class rank percentile and compare this number to the national percentile rankings on the ACT and SAT. A student who has earned a class rank percentile of 83rd has performed better than 83% of his or her classmates. To the extent that we might expect grades to correlate with standardized test scores, we would expect this student to perform similarly well on standardized tests, scoring better than around 83% of test takers. This would lead to a predicted ACT score between 25 and 27 (79th to 85th percentile) and a predicted SAT score between 1770 and 1870 (79th to 86th

percentile) on the current version of the test (the percentiles for the redesigned SAT are not yet available). Discrepancies between the actual test scores and expected test scores can sometimes provide insight to counselors and parents alike: if a student's test scores are well below his or her class percentile, we might suspect test anxiety or grade inflation; on the other hand, if a student's test scores are significantly higher than his or her class percentile, we might suspect that the student is underperforming in school. It is important to understand, however, that GPA distribution has changed over time, and that a student's GPA is not always an accurate predictor of standardized test success.

## 3. Find the average tests scores of a student's prospective colleges.

Using the College Board's Big Future website, students and parents can search for any college and view the range of the average SAT and ACT scores of accepted students; many universities also offer this information right on their admissions webpage. Since most schools provide a test score range, a concrete target score can

be based on the midpoint of that range. For example, admitted students in the class of 2014 at the University of Georgia had an SAT middle 50% range of 1800 to 2060. The midpoint of this range is 1930. Since this represents a “middle of the road” score, we encourage our students to add another 100 points for SAT and another 2 points for the ACT; thus, a good SAT target score for the University of Georgia is around 2030.

#### **4. Consider score requirements for scholarships.**

If there are scholarships that the student is interested in pursuing—whether from local organizations, specific colleges, or national associations—have the student research them to see whether there are SAT and ACT score requirements, or information regarding the average scores of previous recipients. As with the average score range of prospective colleges, ideally the student should note these scores and seek to achieve a score 100 points higher on the SAT or 2 points higher on the ACT.

#### **5. Study the data and determine a target score.**

Start with a student’s previous test score, and ask the student to estimate a realistic score increase, based on the time and effort that the student expects to invest in preparation for the test. Then, consider the average scores of prospective colleges and potential scholarships; is the student’s target score the same as or higher than the average scores of previously admitted and awarded students? If a student’s target score is only 50 SAT points or 1 ACT point shy of the average test scores at his or her first choice of college, that can be encouraging

and motivating in the application process. But when a student’s target score is well below a school’s average, we still try to encourage realistic expectations. We certainly support our determined students who choose to apply to such “reach” schools, but the data we have gathered allows us to provide a honest opinion about their prospects for admission, and we suggest applying to several schools whose standardized test score averages are roughly in line with realistic target scores.

Children today are taught that anything is possible, but those of us working with college applicants know that while this might have been true in kindergarten, it is often not the case by the end of their high school careers. The fact that some colleges are

unattainable can be a disappointing revelation for many students and even their parents, so it’s important to provide them with a reasonable basis upon which to make informed decisions in the application process. Helping students set a target SAT or ACT score is about more than just ensuring they raise their test scores and reach their potential; it’s about helping them to set realistic expectations about their prospects for admission and helping them to identify the colleges where they are likely to stand out and excel.

*Vicki is with Powerscore Test Preparation. She can answer any questions you may have about the SAT by e-mailing her at [vwood@powerscore.com](mailto:vwood@powerscore.com) or visiting their website at [www.powerscore.com](http://www.powerscore.com).*



# Summer: A Critical Point on the Path to College

By Dr. Laura Owen and Laura Winter

EDUCATION

Roughly 3.3 million students received their high school diploma last year (US Dept. of Ed) and if recent trends hold, approximately 2.1 million, or 65% of high school graduates, are attending college this fall. If the U.S. is to achieve the 2025 goal of reclaiming the top college graduation rate worldwide, we must understand why approximately 1.2 million, or 35% of recent graduates, are not showing up to college the fall after graduation.

## Could Part Of The Solution Be As Simple As Summer?

"Summer melt" is a term college admissions officers use to explain students who apply to college, get accepted, and pay a deposit to secure their enrollment during spring of their senior year, but actually never show up to that college in the fall. Believing that these students simply changed their mind and opted to attend a different institution, higher education did little to learn more. However, school counselors have long known there is more to "summer melt."

Researchers Ben Castleman and Lindsay Page first shed light on how pervasive this issue was by working with school districts in Boston, MA, Ft. Worth, TX, Fulton County, GA, and Providence, RI. Rethinking the definition, "summer melt" is now used when seemingly college-intending students fail to enroll anywhere the fall after high school graduation. These college-intending students have typically applied to college, completed the FAFSA, applied for financial aid, and paid deposits to secure a spot at their intending institution. Using high school exit surveys to determine college intention and National Student Clearinghouse data to confirm fall atten-

dance, researchers find "summer melt" rates that range from 21% to 50% in some of the largest cities across the U.S. (Figure 1). These rates are higher among students from low- and moderate-income families and among those with lower academic achievement. Melt rates are also considerably higher among students who intend to enroll at community colleges compared to their peers intending to enroll at four-year colleges and universities. Schools with greater proportions of students qualifying for free or reduced-price lunch tend to have higher rates of "summer melt" as well.



Figure 1. Summer Melt Rates

## Why Do Students "Melt"?

Focus groups with counselors reveal students are faced with many challenges over the summer, ranging from an absence of information and worries about insufficient financial aid, to the lack of transportation to attend required orientations or meetings with college admissions counselors (Figure 2).

Families typically serve as the primary source of information on college for students. However first-generation youth lack that go-to support network. School counselors can fill the gap to some degree,



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but require certain skills and competencies to make sure they are able to support first-generation students.



Figure 2: Student Challenges

## What School Counselor Skills And Competencies Are Needed?

School counselors describe a host of skills they feel are necessary to successfully address “summer melt” (Figure 3). With leadership as a core focus, passion, personal determination, grit, confidence in one’s college and financial aid knowledge, and ability to support students throughout the transition process were all seen as essential skills. Counselors also need to be creative and flexible when addressing barriers and concerns. One counselor discussed meeting with students and parents at Starbucks because there was no access to the school building when they were available to meet. Another counselor shifted his hours toward the evening to accommodate student work schedules. One counselor even helped a parent rent a car to drive a large group of students to freshman orientation.



Figure 3. Leadership Skills of Counselors Assisting First-generation Students

Additionally, counselors must have the skills and confidence to advocate on behalf of their students to university and college admissions, financial aid, housing, and student affairs offices all while teaching

students how to advocate for themselves. During the summer months, this can include: building rapport, listing important tasks and timelines for completion, providing direct outreach via text messages, emailing students, communicating with parents, adjusting work hours to meet student and parent schedules, establishing outside contacts, and forming collaborative relationships to address “summer melt” in creative partnerships.

## Forming Collaborative Partnerships, Think Outside Your Staff

In St. Louis, Missouri, “summer melt” is defined as a community problem, not the sole purview of high schools or colleges. Consequently the “summer melt” strategy in St. Louis is a collaborative one – bringing together counselors from middle and high schools, with financial aid, admissions, and transition advisors from non-profits and higher education.

The High School to College Center is coordinated by St. Louis Graduates, a collective impact network focused on year-round strategies to increase college degree attainment by low-income, first-generation students. The network mindset sets the tone for the Center, where counselors set aside their institutional affiliations to focus on the needs of the students who drop in. This past summer, the team staffing the Center consisted of 37 counselors from 23 area middle and high schools, plus representatives of 16 colleges and four non-profits. At the St. Louis Center, it’s not unusual for a representative of a local four-year college to counsel a student to attend the community college – all who participate agree to a guiding principle of putting the needs of students first.

The integrated model blends in-person counseling with near peer outreach and nudge texting. College students make calls to recent high school graduates to see if they need help, and provide the initial welcome when they come to the Center. Their ability to say “I’ve been there and the Center kept me on track” brings credibility to the Center that balances the recommendation of the counselors who refer students there.

Undergirding the counseling at the Center is Bridgit, an online software that guides students and counselors through the matriculation maze. Students complete a brief survey that tells them, and the counselors, where they are in the transition process, and what remains to be done. The task list standardizes counseling sessions, with behind-the-scenes case

management for counselors, and in-app reminders for students. Bridgit also provides the platform through which the Center sends text messages to keep students on track and recognize them when a task is completed.

The integrated approach is showing some success. Among first-time college goers visiting the St. Louis Center, 75% matriculated, compared to national estimates of 60% for first-generation students.

Kansas City, Missouri, adopted a modified version of the High School to College Center model in 2014. Led by the Missouri College Advising Corps, the Center in Kansas City emphasizes outreach to students assisted by Corps members during the school year.

This summer San Diego State University (SDSU) school counseling graduate students partnered with Gear Up advisors to staff a “summer melt” Center at Hoover High School. As a requirement for their college and career counseling class, each graduate student volunteered at least 10 hours in the center over the summer to support students transitioning to college. These graduate students are then applying what they learned by designing and implementing interventions with students in high schools this year to avoid summer pitfalls next year.

One size does not fit all when it comes to “summer melt” interventions, but three factors appear critical to success: (1) counselors with the capacity and core skills to assist students in the transition from high school to higher education; (2) thinking creatively and collaboratively about “summer melt” as a community problem requiring a community solution rather than the purview of high schools, higher ed or community groups alone; and (3) adopting an integrated approach that may include text messages, near peers, or graduate students but retains individualized college counseling at its core. Working together, communities can begin to reduce “summer melt” and keep students on the path toward college graduation.

### **Steps School Counselors and College Access Partners Can Take Together to Address “Summer Melt”**

Be proactive and take initiative to address “summer melt” and the tasks needed for on time matriculation.

- Calculate your school’s “summer melt” rate
- Disaggregate the data to determine if there are

groups who melt at higher rates than others

- Design interventions to reach out to college-intending students before their senior year
- Pay particular attention to first-generation and low-income students
- Emphasize the importance of FAFSA completion; provide support to students and parents through workshops, hands-on assistance and web-based resources
- Administer a student exit survey to learn what students think would help them as well as gather the most current contact information
- Identify strategies to involve skilled counselors in the summer months, by extending district contracts or engaging them via community “summer melt” centers

### **Build collaborative relationships with others who are also committed to addressing “summer melt”**

- Organize a meeting and invite stakeholders invested in increasing college opportunity in your community
- Determine overlap and shared work areas to provide a seamless array of student supports
- Bring in organizations that specialize in areas of need (i.e. College Goal Sunday to help with FAFSA completion events, uApsire to train counselors on FAFSA completion)
- Work with community organizations, business organizations, higher ed institutions, faculty/administration, parents, and students to address issues and concerns that results in increased graduation and postsecondary matriculation and to advocate for student needs
- Utilize the faith-based community to help dispel myths around college admissions and financial aid

### **Find resourceful ways to address barriers and concerns.**

- Provide workshops and office hours at varied times to accommodate parent schedules

- Translate FAFSA and college admissions information into appropriate languages
- Ensure that all students at every grade level are provided with adequate and appropriate supports in preparation for their transition out of high school
- Look into technology supports like College Bound's Bridgit2College to support students and counselors in the transition from high school to college
- Open a "summer melt" center with collaborative community partners

**Become well versed and knowledgeable regarding financial aid and college admissions.**

- Insist on participating in ongoing professional development to stay up to date and prepared for your role in college and career counseling
- Attend CollegeBoard, ACT, and local college and university counselor workshops

- Partner with Higher Ed institutions to evaluate your school counseling programs, interventions, and curriculum to determine outcomes and discover best practices
- Remove non essential non-counseling duties from school counselor schedules so they can provide more direct services to all students

**Measure impact of activities and share results**

- Intentionally measure impact of "summer melt" interventions on college enrollment for low-income, first generation, and students of color
- Work with Higher Ed institutions to design and evaluate your summer melt intervention
- Report results of "melt interventions" to stakeholders including parents and students

*Dr. Laura Owen is Assistant Professor, College of Education, Department of Counseling and School Psychology, San Diego State University. Laura Winter is Project Director, St. Louis Graduates.*




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# Good Work

Internships can be great opportunities  
-- with your guidance.

*By Jim Paterson*



They would seem to be win-win situations. A high school or college student explores a career through a real job in a field that interests them, and their employer gets an energetic temporary worker who can fill in where needed and potentially prove to be a well-vetted full-time employee.

Internships are almost just that good, but there can be problems too, and counselors can play a key role in helping students both connect with this increasingly popular part of the career exploration process, and avoid the pitfalls.

No one suggests the problems are common, but in some cases students are exploited or not paid when they should be, critics say, or wasting time in positions that aren't challenging or educational. However, the benefits, even the harshest critics say, outweigh the potential problems.

## Practice can be perfect

So it's a popular concept and becoming almost something that is expected among young people, but there is also data to back up the real value of these "practice jobs".

Miriam Salpeter, a specialist in job searching who has written several books on career exploration, says about 50 percent of companies are creating high school internship programs this year, and that high school students are even more career-focused than college students. "High schoolers are really planning ahead and seeking internships to help them get into college and land job opportunities down the road," she says.

According to Internships.com, an online internship marketplace, 65 percent of college graduates say they completed at least one college internship, and the number working as interns in high school is growing quickly.

Salpeter says that students will benefit because they learn the value of a network and how to start and build one, particularly by using social media, where opportunities abound. She notes that LinkedIn encourages adolescents to create a profile to make connections, and other opportunities are available online such as Internships.com.

She also says students will gain

the attention of colleges, get an opportunity to explore a career that interests them, and just learn about the job search process and workplace environment with internships. Other experts say young people learn a great deal about themselves at a time when they can make adjustments to their work habits, improve certain social skills, or get advice about their strengths and weaknesses.

## Six tips for you and your student

As a counselor, you can assist students with several steps, but remember, although their brain is still developing at this age and they may seem inefficient or scattered, they are capable of exploring these options and applying to the jobs that interest them. It is important for them to take on these types of responsibilities at this age. Here are some tips for what you CAN do in relationship to internships.

### Your job

**Focus your effort** – Certainly it would be good for all students to be educated about internships, but you may have to develop

a list of students who show a particular interest or for whom such an experience would be most valuable based on their plans or their motivation. This might include some hard-working students who aren't thinking about college necessarily – but interested in a trade or training other than a traditional four-year degree.

**How will you reach them** – You might provide information to interested students through classroom lessons – or run groups where specific students are invited to learn about the process and exchange information. You can also create a flyer or build a page on the school web site – maybe even a simple job board accessible by those looking for interns or internships.

**What's their goal** – Have your student carefully consider what type of work would help them better explore a specific career – and if they aren't sure about what they want to do, there are plenty of ways to explore more generally. Remind them to be creative and look for opportunities that might not be obvious. They may, for instance, get as much hands-on experience doing some advertising and web site design for a local hardware store as they will working for a high-end graphic design firm. They might learn some business basics at a pizza shop and the inner workings of the health industry volunteering at a clinic. There are ways to gain experience from any job.

**Network** – In the same way you advise them to network. Have a flyer you can give any prospective business or other organization that lets them know you have students who would like a position and provides ways to

contact you. Ask the school staff to let you know about any connections they have.

**Get parents involved** – Make sure they are ultimately responsible for checking out internships and assuring they are safe and valuable.

**Keep data** – Keep records about the contacts that you develop in helping your students find potential internships, and collect information from the students who get them and where they find them, it will be useful for a future group of students.

## **Their job**

**Start them early** – Generally, experts say the winter break is a good time for students to search for summer jobs or internships, but it's probably valuable to start earlier, even if it's only to develop contacts. You might start talking to your students soon after school starts about making plans for the following summer.

**Nag about networking** – Help your students learn about the critical value of networking. At the high school level, the discussion might start with showing them how they already network – to meet new people or to date or to improve their relationship with a teacher where their grade is slumping. Explain how they can use those same skills. Explain to them how to communicate their interest when they have an opportunity – even rehearse with them.

**School connections** – They should use school administrators, teachers, even the people in the office (who sometimes have professional contacts outside of the school) to make contacts. Spouses and families of all these

professionals often work in other fields or know someone who does. One enterprising student sent an email to the entire school letting them know the sort of internship she was interested in and put up a poster about her plans. A counselor perhaps should not recommend this process, but they certainly can encourage students to be resourceful and perhaps work together to come up with a way to share their interests and meet potential employers. One high school holds a summer job fair, which includes people hoping to hire interns.

**Consider colleges, too** Especially if the student is interested in the school. An enterprising student might write a professor in the field in which they hope to study to see if they need any assistance (or their department). That can double as an early college application contact.

**Records too** – Tell them as they work to get an internship they should keep a separate “future” contact list, where they have names of anyone who might help them with an internship – or their career or college plans. A good place to start networking is with family and friends and people they know. Craft a pitch – for a classroom assignment, ask a teacher to have students write a brief pitch about their search for a job or internship, including who they are, their goals and what they are looking for in a position. Have them revise and improve it, and have them translate it into a 30-second “elevator speech” that they might make with cold calls to companies they want to pursue or, slightly revised, to Uncle Bob at Thanksgiving. It will serve them well in the future.

**Networking online** They are likely to find plenty of ways to network online. A counselor's role might be just in reminding them to be safe, and what that involves. LinkedIn, again, is the most promising, and Internship.com's marketplace offers nearly 120,000 internships from 83,000 companies, though some are vague about responsibilities. You should speak to your students about needing clarity about what the job entails and being wary of any position that requires them to pay a fee. Other online internship services include Internmatch.com and YouTern. Idealist.com lists positions world-wide.

### A few warnings for them

**Keep high standards.** It is rare, but there are always situations where adults try to take advantage of younger people – to do their work, or have them do menial tasks. Obviously interns are sometimes going to do lower level work, but they should have this spelled out for them early and find a way to stop it if it's excessive – or perhaps if it is coming from one particular employee. Anything sexual or

illegal, obviously, is something they should be aware of and report. Again, it is important that they engage their parents in the process.

The labor department has these somewhat vague guidelines about internships:

The intern

- must benefit from the internship
- must receive training that's similar to what an educational environment would offer
- must not displace regular employees, but should work closely with staff
- must not be entitled to a job afterward
- must not provide employer "immediate advantage" because of the intern's work

Critics have said the guidelines are too vague, and the department has said they intend to strengthen and enforce them with the growing popularity of internships. "What is an immediate advantage?" asks Mimi Collins, director of communications for the National Association of Colleges and Employers. "That's where it's a little bit vague." NACE's website has a lot of information about standards which companies offering internships should be expected to meet.

**Get a paycheck.** There is a lot of controversy about a growing trend toward unpaid internships, fueled by the number of students who want them or think they are essential for their success. Several groups are lobbying for restrictions on unpaid intern-

ships, and in Great Britain they have been banned.

One study by Intern Bridge, an organization that works to create paid internships across the country, found that 46 percent of university career centers reported more unpaid internship postings during the most recent calendar year, compared to 2009-2010. About 38 percent reported more paid internship postings.

It is an issue you should discuss with your students – and they should discuss with their parents.

**Time out.** Remember, internships will take time, and may be especially difficult if they occur during the school year when students are busy trying to keep grades up, participate in a variety of activities, and explore colleges. Experts say the student will need to plan for at least 10-15 hours per week to devote to an internship. Discuss a time management plan with your student and how an internship might fit it.

**Just a peak.** Remind your students to keep an open mind about their careers - often we get interested in something when we are young for what can be frivolous reasons. Just because they have explored a career doesn't mean they have to stick with it or do an internship in that field specifically. Changes are possible later in college or even after they have taken a job.

*Jim Paterson has written broadly on career exploration, academic success and other education-related topics for several national and trade publications. He is also a school counselor, and was named "Counselor of the Year" in Montgomery County, MD, a large Washington, DC-area district.*





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# How to Make the Most of Starting College “Undecided”

By Liz Funk



Students preparing for their freshman year know the essentials they need to be ready for college: extra-long twin sheets, shower shoes, cash for late-night pizza delivery, and a big plastic tote for all the free tee shirts they'll acquire. But some students don't have a major in mind when they start their freshman year. For some, being an undecided major feels like a mild luxury, to have the opportunity to explore what they like, in an environment where there are ample opportunities—classes, and programming, and guest speakers—to have their interest piqued. But for other students, they confuse being “undecided” with being “lost,” or they have concerns that they could fall behind their peers who started college ready to race down their academic track and onto a career path.

But clenching up and worrying about potentially falling behind certainly won't help students open their minds and be ready to have their passions ignited. Getting the maximum benefit out of being an undecided major is partly a mental game... but it also requires taking action as though students were pursuing a concrete goal. Your students can consider the below strategies to make the most of the opportunity to explore their academic interests, with a relaxed determination.

## 1. Don't force a decision too soon.

High school students who have been accepted to college are used to holding themselves to high standards and pursuing the goals they set for themselves. But for undecided majors, this intense, outcome-oriented approach may be counterproductive. Rikki Korkowitz, who was undecided during

her first three semesters at Pace University in New York City says, “I was definitely stressed starting college undecided. I was in good company, but I felt like those who had chosen a major, some of whom had begun working toward said major in high school and were on the path to early graduation, seemed like they had it more together than the rest of us. It was a challenge for me—a self-proclaimed overachiever—to feel like I didn't have a definitive goal to work toward.”

Yet when a student is trying to figure out what they like, applying pressure and listening to their anxious thoughts may cause them to rush into a major selection, when there could be a better fit for them out there that they'd discover as long as they committed to relaxing and loosening up during their discovery process. Says Rosemary Schultz, an academic advisor at Hudson Valley Community College in upstate New York, “For this type of student, I try to encourage them to reframe their view: they are not in a race, they don't have to push themselves to be something or someone they are not just for the sake of fitting into someone else's timetable. They are on a journey and the goal of it is to learn. Learning what one doesn't want can be as valuable as learning what one does want. Believe it or not, learning and school are fun for those who find the field they love! But sometimes we have to ‘kiss a lot of academic frogs’ first.”



## 2. Relax and embrace being “undecided”.

Erin Bradley was undecided during her first year at

the University of Wisconsin- Madison. "While I was a little anxious about starting out undecided, it also was nice not to have to stress over which classes to take for my major at orientation over the summer. Instead I was able to explore for a semester."

Erin recommends that undecided majors commit to some exploring and to taking chances. "Enroll in a class you have never heard of before, start working in a research lab, and join clubs. College is the time to discover yourself, so use it to find your passion. If you let yourself find your passion instead of forcing yourself into a specific major, I personally believe you will enjoy your future career much more." Says Rikki Korkowitz, "I tried to get the most out of my core classes, and I joined A LOT of clubs to try to get a handle on what's out there. I also spent a lot of time with my adviser. I'd say it was a fun process overall—I had brief love affairs with computer programming, Spanish composition, and anthropology, before finally settling into psychology, and I still come back to things I learned in all those classes."



### 3. Use the systems your college has in place to help guide students in choosing a major.

Many colleges offer special courses and programming for freshmen that is intended to open their eyes to the full range of academic disciplines, courses of study, and career paths available to them. Erin Bradley took advantage of one such opportunity: "At the University of Wisconsin-Madison, freshmen have the opportunity to take a Freshman Interest Group (FIG). I signed up for one of those, and it was called Disabilities and Diversity in Education. I have always been interested in disabilities and equality, so to me it sounded like a perfect fit." Rosemary Schultz recommends that students take advantage of similar Freshman Seminar courses at her college. She also encourages students to make a visit to their college's career center: "Our college has an excellent Center for Careers and Employment that can help students to identify where they fit in the world of work. Using various inventories, tests, and interview techniques that identify the student's likes and dislikes, abilities, values, and interests, these can help the student to see where they will be most satisfied career-wise. There are also career planning courses, credit-bearing and non-credit, at most colleges."

### 4. Stay motivated.

For undecided majors, just because they are not chasing a specific goal, does not mean they are not chasing a goal. Rikki Korkowitz puts it bluntly: "Try everything...and go hard. If you decide you want something, or even think you might, just get started and really throw yourself into getting it. I let my indecision get in my head sometimes, and I think it slows me down when it doesn't have to. You're never wasting time if you're learning and growing, so just make sure you're always putting yourself in the position to do both those things. You'll get where you're going eventually."

### 5. Take special initiative.

Erin Bradley sought out an opportunity during her first semester to assist with an Occupational Therapy professor's research. As they got to know one another, this professor gave Erin career advice. And then it finally clicked for Erin: "Between joining the Freshmen Interest Group class and following the guidance of my research mentor, I stumbled upon my path of majoring in Rehabilitation Psychology in order to do Occupational Therapy."

Erin says that if she had to choose a major prior to coming to college, she would have picked social work or psychology, both fields that have always interested her. But if she hadn't been undecided, she "never would have discovered the field of Rehabilitation Psychology or been on the path to become an Occupational Therapist... When I talk about my career path now, I can feel myself fill with both excitement and passion."



# Helping Your Students Create a Resume for College Admissions

*By Jolyn Brand*

When your students apply to college, admission officers review more than just their grades — they also take note of what students have done outside the classroom. Extracurricular activities, such as jobs, sports, clubs, and volunteer work, give colleges a better sense of who students are and show them what students can bring to their campus community.

The best way to show them all of your activities and engagement is through a student resume. Some colleges will actually request or require submission of a student resume, but for others it's still a good idea to not only track activities over the four years, but to prioritize them as well.

The student resume is different than resumes designed to get you a job; this resume highlights student accomplishments and activities throughout high school. It can be very helpful when filling out college applications, when requesting teacher recommendations, and when applying for scholarships. It focuses on the sections that colleges will want to cover in applications: awards/honors, activities, and community service.

To begin, students should write down every activity and award that they participated in or earned during high school. Write down everything after graduation from 8th grade. The student's resume doesn't have to adhere to the 'one page' rule for formal employment resumes. Student resumes are generally two to three pages long and include this information:

- ✓ **Heading-** Name, address, phone number, and email address. Some colleges will also request your application ID (which can be filled in after application submission).

- ✓ **Objective of Overview (optional)-** Can be used for a specific purpose, such as college major or scholarship.
- ✓ **Academic/Education Stats-** High school name and graduation year. Class rank and GPA, SAT/ACT scores. You can also include impressive courses- AP/IB, Dual Credit classes, and relevant electives.
- ✓ **Activities-** List clubs and participation. Be specific, don't use initials or acronyms. Include any leadership roles and whether or not you were elected to that position.
- ✓ **Honors/Awards-** List any awards or accomplishments, along with grade.
- ✓ **Community Service-** List activities, service performed, approximate dates, and hours volunteered.
- ✓ **Sports-** List teams, position, awards, and grade.
- ✓ **Employment/Internships-** Start with most recent employment and list dates.

Students who begin this resume in 9th grade should be reminded at the end of each semester to update it by adding any new activities, awards, or community service. This reminder also serves as a check- students will be able to quickly see which sections aren't getting filled in.

Once students reach the end of junior year, it's time to fine tune the student resume so that it can



be handed to teachers who are going to write letters of recommendations for the student. Once applications are begun senior year, students can easily prioritize which activities or honors to include and which to leave off. Many applications, including the Common App, only allows for five Honors or Awards to be included. Students with more than five can review their resume and include the five most impressive or appropriate, or can lump some of the activities together, such as sports awards.

*Jolyn Brand is the founder of Brand College Consulting ([brandcollegeconsulting.com](http://brandcollegeconsulting.com)). She has a passion for helping students find, apply, and get accepted to colleges that are a good fit for their interests and abilities. She works with students in the Houston, Texas area and across the country. She can utilize Skype and college planning software to communicate with students and parents.*

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# Help Your Students Master the College Essay!

How to Translate the Message from Admission so Your Students Better Understand What Colleges Want in an Application Essay

By Kim Lifton

"I'm clueless as to what these colleges are really looking for in the essays. I've heard so many different things from various people- I don't know what to believe."

-Tracy, West Bloomfield,  
Michigan

This quote, emailed from a parent of a college-bound high school senior, heightens awareness over one of the biggest challenges students face each college admission season. There is so much information coming from outside sources to students and parents, it is often hard for them to differentiate between good and bad advice.

## As a result

Students and parents are confused. Colleges are not getting what they asked for, and are unimpressed by many of the essays that come across their desks.

High school counselors, like you who want to help students write better essays, may be unsure how to untangle the mixed messages.

We can all learn something from Tracy, who told me she knew the essay was important but was troubled by conflicting information she heard from other parents, read on the Internet, and received in the mail.

Parents and students get flooded with information promising success on the essay through gimmicks; write it like a movie trailer, use a killer opening sentence, buy a book of essays that worked. There are books filled with essays that "got students admitted to UC-Berkeley." Students can enroll in intense week-long boot camps. Summer trips will teach students how to make a difference doing humanitarian work

in remote parts of the world.

Another parent who had worked with Wow told Tracy to contact us. The information overload cluttered her mind – and her daughter's. We calmed her, and explained what colleges wanted and what the words they used really meant.

As counselors who work with students and talk to college reps, you know what admission wants from students in the essay. But how can you help them? Translate the message from admission so students - and their parents - really understand what the essay is, and what's expected.

To begin, take a look at a few of the most common terms used inside the admissions industry:

- Passion
- Leadership
- Initiative
- Reflection
- Voice

Buzzwords like these are not new to this industry, but they take on new meaning (and not always accurate) to students and parents as college becomes increasingly competitive, and as the essay rises in importance in the holistic admission process.

"An entire business is built around jargon," explained Shawn Felton, the Director of Undergraduate Admission at Cornell University. "There is garbage cluttering the message, and that creates anxiety."

Because students trust high school counselors, you have an opportunity to set the record straight, help

them find accurate information, and perhaps calm them so they feel less pressure - and ultimately less anxiety - when applying to college.

## Help Students Cut Through the Clutter

Consider what happens inside your 17-year-old students' minds when they hear these buzzwords and industry phrases used often by admissions. They resist. They shut down. Why should they have to reflect? They are focused on their future, not past.

It does not matter if they don't want to write an essay. Most selective colleges require an essay, or several, and so they need to do it. And they should look at it as an opportunity, rather than a burden.

The Common App essay prompts, and personal statements for UC-Berkeley, ApplyTexas, and other schools, ask students to be introspective. Most teens do not have a lot of experience thinking or writing about who they are, or how they got to this point in their lives.

You will help your students in more ways than you may even know if you just talk to them, and let them know you understand this is a hard task. Then make the task a little bit easier by explaining what colleges mean when they use certain words.

## Break Down the Buzzwords

Start translating the message by using the most common buzzword: Passion.

*Show us your passion! What is your passion?*

*Share your passion.*

*Is there something you are so passionate about your application might be incomplete without it?*

*Ask your students, what does passion really mean? Do*

colleges want something huge, big, and life changing. Not at all! They may tell you they have nothing to write because they have not done anything big. Or they may say they are going to take trips to work with indigent families to show colleges they have passion.

"We don't care about your passion," Cornell's Felton said. "We care about your convictions. What are your beliefs? There is no passion without core."

To help students understand what colleges mean when using the word passion, ask them to write down a few things they like to do. Here are a few starter questions:

What do you care about?

What are you going to do today when you get home from school?

If you could do anything in the world right now, what would it be?

What do you do in your free time?

Amy Jarich, Assistant Vice Chancellor and Director of Undergraduate Admissions, University of California – Berkeley, would love to know what your students do in their free time: "I just want to know what you care about," she tells students. "What would you tell me in an elevator? Let me know that you're active and alive in the world you live in."

Jarich and Felton talked about the buzzwords at NACAC last fall in San Diego during a panel I moderated: *What Admission Wants in an Essay: How to Instruct Your Students*.

Joining us were high school counselors Ed Schoenberg, of Bellarmine College Prep in San Jose, Calif., and Olga Morales-Anaya, a former high school counselor for San Jose's unified school district. She developed a curriculum to help underserved students write college application essays.

During the session, we talked about the mixed messages, the buzzwords, and ways to make it all less confusing for students. The two counselors shared some of their best tips for clarifying the messages from admission. Schoenberg suggested counselors help students learn how to celebrate leadership in the most unlikely places- to move them away from boring stories about experiences running for school office, or starting a club, rather than stories showing what they learned about themselves.



"You don't have to be elected to anything," Schoenberg said. "You don't have to be the captain of a sports team."

He mentioned a favorite story by the son of a janitor, who noticed that his high school classmates were leaving the cafeteria in a mess after lunch. The student organized a group of a half-dozen classmates who picked up trash, so that the school's cleaning staff wouldn't be overburdened.

Another student came into school one day, feeling discouraged about his life showing any aspects of initiative. He said he had nothing to write about. Schoenberg did not believe him and started asking leading, probing questions. He helped pull a story out of the boy. "I looked at his file and saw that he played the violin, and that he worked in a senior-citizens home. I asked him about those. He told me: 'Yeah, and I teach the seniors how to play the violin.'" Then they discussed how he felt when he played for the seniors.

The boy wrote a compelling story about what he learned about himself when he played his violin for the seniors.

Even with the best intents, well-meaning adults often contribute to the mixed messages the students and families take home.

Following the dynamic, interactive NACAC session, we started a LinkedIn group, **The College Essay Discussion: How to Clarify the Message from Admission.** (<https://www.linkedin.com/groups/7011206>) Already, we have hundreds of participants, and we'd like you to join the group, share best practices with colleagues, and help us continue the conversation.

"We need to start a conversation and change the way we all look at it," Felton said.

*Kim Lifton is President of Wow Writing Workshop, which developed the college admission industry's only proven process for teaching students how to think about and write the essay, so admissions officers will pay attention to a student's application. Wow offers free resources to high school counselors and to families. They also provide paid services for every type of student, from a do-it-yourself essay-writing program with a "virtual coach", to essay reviews, and private coaching. For more information e-mail [info@wowwritingworkshop.com](mailto:info@wowwritingworkshop.com).*

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# Say What?

## Writing Great Recommendation Letters for Your Students

By Kat Coy, M.S.

Two years ago, I was at the dinner table with my two sons, Travis (almost 4 at the time) and Gabriel (7 months at the time). Gabriel was starting on solid foods and Travis was trying to help. He was cheering him on, distracting him when he was crying, grabbing a paper towel when some food spilled on the floor, and was overall just completely mystified as to why you wouldn't want to eat solid food. It was truly a character revealing moment and a great glimpse into the heart and soul of my darling son. Because I am a high school counselor and knee deep in letters of recommendation, I thought to myself "that would be great to mention in his letter of recommendation one day." Then the crazy light bulb went on and I realized I needed to check my work at the door and not start planning letters of recommendation for my 4 year old!

Alas, in my world right now I am thinking about unique adjectives, purposeful rephrasing, and 100 ways to state that little Johnny is just a "great kid", without stating that of course. The letter of recommendation has come to serve as a great source of support in a student's application for admissions. That puts counselors in a precarious position: we have to know our students, write a quality letter, and do that amidst the other 500 things on our 'to do' list.

There are some easy things to keep in mind when tackling the letter of recommendation. I hope that by sharing some of these tips and tricks I have stumbled upon during my ten years as a high school counselor, it can help put you at ease during this process. Here are some suggestions:

**1.** Get to know the students that you need to write about! I know that seems obvious, but with high case loads and heavy responsibilities, this can be a major task. I have found two invaluable things to help me get to know my students: student written counselor surveys and a parent brag survey. I actually will not even have a senior meeting with one of my students unless they have completed the counselor survey. I read the counselor survey before our meeting and that gives me the opportunity to question any interesting things mentioned to potentially use in my letter of recommendation. Last year, I found out that one of my student's mother had breast cancer and she had never told anyone at the school! In my counselor survey I ask them some of the following:

- Fun questions: How would your friends describe you? If you could have a super power, what would it be?
- Basic questions: What do you want to be when you grow up? Did you have any schedule conflicts that I need to mention? What are you really good at? Have you worked in high school?
- High school specific questions: What have been your favorite memories of high school? What was your favorite class and why? Has our community changed because you were here and how?
- Serious questions: What is the most difficult thing you have had to face? What has changed you? You are in a room with the



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college admissions staff from your number one college pick. There is only one spot left. What do you want them to know about you?

For the parent brag survey, the questions are geared toward an understanding of the child as a whole. I feel sorry for my child's future counselor because you all can see I have been writing his brag survey since birth. The parent brag survey can help me write an incredible letter and I encourage you to try and incorporate this into your program. In my parent brag survey, I ask them some of the following questions:

- Choose three to five adjectives that describe your child and give one anecdote to support each adjective.
- In what areas have you witnessed the most growth and development in your child in high school.
- Your child's high school years have been pleasurable/painful because.... Feel free to comment on both aspects.
- Are there any special circumstances your child and/or family has encountered that the counselor should be aware of?
- Describe any family factors that influence your child's choice of schools. These could include finances, legacies, location of the college, family expectations, etc...

**2.** Focus your writing on what is not found elsewhere in the student's application. Your letter is not a time to list all the clubs and sports that little Johnny

has participated in; they see that already on the activities list. However, this can be your time to bring to light any unique or interesting tidbits in relation to their resume. For instance, I don't typically write about how many AP's a student has taken, but I did last year when for the first time in the school's history a student took eleven AP courses. Though they can count that he took eleven on the transcript, I thought it was important to note that no one ever had before. Another unusual thing I chose to write about was a student who founded a Ping Pong Club. Though being founder and president of this club is on his activities list, I wasn't sure that someone from outside the school could take this club seriously. For them to see past the title of a club, I wrote about his 95 person tournament he organizes every year (bracket style), the money he raised, and the charity that received all of the proceeds. Therefore, it is o.k. to expand upon what is on the transcript or activities list.

**3.** Don't be afraid to get creative! I was talking to an Admissions Representative one time about letters and she said that she wished she could tell people to write letters that they themselves would like to read. I had to pause and really digest how profound of a statement that really was! She is right, the people reading these letters are often no different than you or I (except probably much younger and with more energy!). I know that I love to hear stories that really encapsulate the student. I don't necessarily need to be dazzled by the lofty language and creative prose that requires me to use dictionary.com to look up uncommon adjectives. Therefore, when I had a student who was infatuated with Latin, I went to the Latin teacher and got her to give me a couple of Latin phrases to put at the top of my letter. When I had to write for the editor of the paper, I used a headline to draw the reader in. For my graphic design student, I wrote

about the door to my office. It is adorned with 14 inspirational quote/photographs designed by this student. These are the letters that admissions representatives have mentioned to me later that they remember ("Hey, you are the counselor for the Latin Girl?"-true statement on a college tour).

**4.** Keep it to a page. I have had a couple "two pagers" in my career, but those really have a story to tell. For most of my students I try to write about the essence of the student, expound upon their academics or extra-curriculars, and then a summary of anything worth noting. I like to focus on these two phrases when I get stuck: "What I like best about..." Or "What sets this student apart is..."

**5.** When in trouble, throw a life-line! There have been several times when I just can't get the letter going. That is when I get out of my office and hunt down any and all faculty that has ever interacted with this student. I go armed with a pen and paper and ask them to tell me any stories that they can to help me write this student's letter of recommendation. I have found coaches can be a gold

mine of stories and sometimes experience a much different side of our students. The bottom line is to take a deep breath, gather any and all resources that you can, and sit down to write a letter that you would want to read. Keep it real, keep it unique, and don't feel bad sharing a story or two! Now, back to writing some more letters!

*Kat Coy was born and raised in Tennessee. In her college years, she decided to spread her wings a bit and transferred to Warren Wilson College in Asheville, North Carolina, where she received her B.A. in Psychology and Outdoor Leadership. Kat moved to Oregon to pursue a career in mental health, but her husband brought her back to her heart and roots, and then returned to East Tennessee. Kat received her Masters of Science in Counseling from the University of Tennessee at Knoxville in 2006. She has been a high school counselor at Knoxville Catholic High School since 2006. She holds memberships in SMCA, TCA, ASCA, ACA, SACAC, and NACAC. She is currently President-Elect of the Tennessee Counseling Association (TCA). Finally, she is the proud mom of two boys who keep her grounded (and active) most days!*

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# Visitation Right

Here are some tips from college admissions officials on how to do the college visit the right way.

By Jim Paterson

As your students excitedly consider life after high school, one of the most engaging and informative parts of the process for many is their visit to colleges. Experts say, however, that while the schools have mastered these tours packed with selling points, students and their families often could use some advice to get the most out of them.

Some school counselors provide tips about visits as part of seminars on college preparation – or present material on their website, flyer, or newsletter (feel free to link to this article). As students contact counselors about college, some make a talk about college visits part of the process. Regardless, it's valuable for your students to have some guidance about these trips.

Jeff Schiffman, an admissions advisor at Tulane University, says school counselors should first make sure that students take time to plan the visit, and combine their own agenda with the school's. It's a mix recommended by most experts.

"They should do some stuff on their own, but also do the formal

visit," he says. "While they may just want to chill with their cousin who's a sophomore at the school, they should take the time to register and attend a formal campus tour, and perhaps chat with the admissions officer or have a formal interview. They really should make the most of the visit."

He also notes that students may not realize that a tour tells a college they are interested, another reason to register and connect with the admissions office. Many schools value such "demonstrated interest."

Other experts say another key concern up front is the student's system for keeping information as they visit – the same information about each college so they can do easy and efficient comparisons. Students often get overwhelmed by the material or forget details as features of schools blend together, making the decision all the harder. Part of that organized system – electronic or on paper – should be some record of deadlines they must meet.

In addition, early in the process, the student and parent should have an understanding about who

is responsible for the visits. This can be a good time for parents (and counselors, perhaps) to take a step back and give students more responsibility. Students can arrange the visit and be independent during the tour.

## Timing the visit

Experts stress that students should be thinking about when to visit.

"Tell students to visit a college campus when classes are in session. They'll get a better picture of what campus life is like," says Joyce Mai, Associate Director of Admissions for North Carolina State University.

"Summer may be a convenient time to check out schools, but with few students on campus it's tough to get that solid impression of what the school is like," says Schiffman. He also says students should visit during "weather-appropriate" times. "If you're considering a school in a cold weather climate, be sure to visit at that time of the year."

Rick Funk, director of admissions for the University of Alabama, warns that Saturday or holiday

visits are a bad idea. "I know that this can be convenient because of family schedules or school obligations, but you want to be there when there are students and activity going on," he says.

Some families start college visits early during high school, though spring of their junior year is plenty early for enthusiastic students or those considering an early-decision option. Tours, however, can be most valuable in the fall of senior year when the student has narrowed down their options and have a better understanding of the college process.

Some advisers recommend that students visit one college early to get a feel for a campus and some idea what to expect, but visit others later when they have narrowed the field and have a more specific idea about what they want.

### Other preparation?

Jennifer Ziegenfus, Senior Assistant Director of Admissions at Towson State University in Baltimore, says students should pay attention to the types of visits available. "They should know the format. There are many versions of a campus visit that can include weekday, weekend, private tour, group tour, or open house formats."

In preparation, students also should do their research on the school, according to Schiffman.

"We like it when we can tell students have done some legwork before arriving on campus. If they get to campus and they are asking the admission officer questions like 'how large is this school?' and 'do you have a psychology major?', it becomes quickly obvious to us that they may not have

put too much thought into the school. We'd much rather hear 'I read that psychology is your most popular major. Do you find it to be more of a clinical-based major, or maybe more neuroscience?'"

That suggests that a visit might be better later – maybe senior year – when a student has honed their interests further.

David Antoniewicz, Assistant Director of Admissions for Widener University in Chester, PA, says students should think about the people and places they would like to see. "Many schools can accommodate their requests if you give them notice in advance. So if they'd like to meet with a faculty member, club advisor, coach, or see a particular academic building, they should make that request when they schedule their visit."

### Meet with others who can help

Funk and Vanessa Ea, an admissions counselor at University of Colorado, both strongly agree.

"They should use the time on campus to really explore what the school has to offer in line with their interest," Funk says. "We set up visits that include meetings with advisors and faculty or those involved in co-curricular interests. They should even arrange for a lunch with a current student."

"Is the student interested in nursing? Ask if observing a clinical class is possible," says Ea. "Is the student excited about the research that a psychology professor is doing on PTSD and veterans? See if meeting with faculty or someone from the research team is possible."

Just plan it all in advance, says

Ziegenfus, and don't try to make late or complex arrangements through the college staff. She says students should be reminded that the admissions representative they are working with also may be reviewing their application and making decisions about it. Showing interest is important; being bothersome or inconveniencing them is not a good idea.

### An interview?

Here is Ziegenfus' advice to students:

"If an interview is included in the admissions process, decide if interviewing on the same day as a college tour is appropriate. Some interviews will ask you to regurgitate your knowledge of the school. You may not have the time to absorb this information if you interview immediately following a campus tour. Tours can also be physically taxing. If distance from the campus requires you to complete both in one day, allow at least 1-2 hours to gather yourself. Also, schedule your appointment at least an hour before the close of business to guarantee quality time with your representative."

### Tell them to ask

Ziegenfus agrees with Schiffman about students doing their homework in advance and being prepared for the visit, but notes that admissions officials also want students to be inquisitive.

Antoniewicz has some specific advice. "When a student is on campus, they should ask lots of questions, but also ask the same questions to lots of different people," he suggests. "They'll get similar answers, but from different perspectives. One of these perspectives might resonate more

strongly with them.”

He says that being inquisitive in this way will give them insight into the student experience from different viewpoints. “The more people they meet with and talk to, the more complete a picture they might gain.”

### Get away from crowd

Shiffman notes that while the tour will provide useful information, visiting students should try to chat informally with students attending the school. He said it can give a student a good feel about concerns of those enrolled – even if they are uncomfortable talking, which also may say something about their experience.

“Tell them to walk around on their own,” says Funk. Go to the food area or dining facilities, visit the student center, pick up a student paper or publication. Especially if they are just doing the tour, this gives them a better sense of the school.

Ziegenfus says tour guides only have a limited time to show students the “best of the best.” “They should take some time to explore the rest of the campus to make sure it’s a good fit beyond what is shown on the tour.”

### Eat in the dining hall

“There is no better spot on campus to get a true feel for the pulse of the campus than the freshman dining hall,” says Schiffman. “The visiting student should eavesdrop on conversations; see what students are passionate about and what the chatter is. They’ll even get to see how good the food is on campus.”

“They can observe some great things about the students there,”

Antoniewicz notes. “People-watching in the dining hall can be a lot of fun and informative, plus there is usually all-you-can-eat ice cream and cookies.”

### Some other things to do

Ea says students should take their time.

“When on campus, set aside time to grab a coffee or snack at the student center, to just sit and people watch. What is everyone doing? Are students, faculty, and staff interacting with one another, saying hi as they pass through the “center?” Or are they engaged in conversation, either about classes or activities outside of the classroom? Ask your student to imagine themselves as part of the campus.”

They should also think about the region, says Mai. “Explore the area surrounding campus because if you are going to be spending 4 years at this college, you should see the opportunities/activities in the area.”

At the University of Delaware, officials suggest attending a sporting event or a performance on the campus – as a good way for the student to relax, enjoy the visit, and get a feel for the campus and the students.

Delaware and other schools also offer an opportunity to stay over night in the dorms at various campus for prospects.

### End it right

Finally, tell students to follow-up. “They should send a quick thank-you to anyone they met,” says Antoniewicz. “It leaves a great impression, but also gives them an opportunity to ask follow-up questions. Inevitably,

they will be on the drive home and new questions will pop into their mind.”

*Jim Paterson has written broadly on career exploration, academic success and other education-related topics for several national and trade publications. He is also a school counselor, and was named “counselor of the year” in Montgomery County, MD, a large Washington, DC-area district.*

## Ten trip tips

**Ten ways to get the most out of a college visit.**

- 1. Time the visit – when students are there and you’re ready**
- 2. Let the school know – the formal tour pays off**
- 3. Be informed, but ask – do your homework and ask questions**
- 4. Have an interview – schedule one, but with care**
- 5. Do your own tour – get away from the crowd**
- 6. Meet some others – faculty, students, advisers, coaches**
- 7. The dining hall – investigate the students – and the ice cream**
- 8. Check out the area – see what it offers**
- 9. Get some tickets – see a game or a show on campus**
- 10. Give thanks – follow up with a note**

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# Questions Prospective Students Don't Ask on their College Visits—But Should!

By Liz Funk

If students feel a little shy around their tour guide or the admissions counselors when they are making college visits, that's perfectly understandable. If it is the students' goals to make their admissions tour guides their new best friends and mentors by being effusive and asking lots of questions, that's fine too. What makes students most effective when they meet with admissions counselors and visit campuses? Students who know what questions to ask during their college visits, and are prepared with thoughtful questions relevant to their own academic interests and lifestyle preferences, may greatly increase the likelihood that they'll land at the college that fits them best, academically and socially.

First, it's important for students to do their homework before crossing the college's gates on Open House Day. "We recommend that students stay away from asking the tour guide or any other admissions representative for statistics about the school that they can find on the website or in the catalog," says Mandee Adler, the author of *From Public School to the Ivy League: How to Get into a Top School without Top*

*Dollar Resources*" and owner of a college admissions coaching firm. Says Judith Hodara, the former assistant director of admissions at the University of Pennsylvania, "I always appreciated when students had done their homework a bit before visiting to show that they knew a bit about the school—so that their discussions with me were a bit more than 'What majors do you offer?'—that really showed they had learned enough about the school to ask about specific classes and opportunities.... I grew to really like questions that showed some depth of understanding."

Read on for suggested questions students can ask during campus visits to inform their understanding of whether a college is a strong match and will help them thrive academically, socially, and after graduation.

## "What systems does the college have in place to help me be successful?"

Joseph V. Tiesi, the senior assistant director of undergraduate admissions and campus visit coordinator at Binghamton University, has some specific questions that students can ask about

who on the faculty and staff can guide students as they explore possible majors, select courses, and strategize to graduate on time. He recommends asking, "How easy is it to meet with my teacher or academic adviser? Do they have open office hours and are they accessible to support me if I have questions?" Tiesi also encourages students to feel comfortable asking about how many students return for sophomore year. Tiesi recommends asking, "What is this university's retention rate? Are students staying and graduating on time or are they transferring away... because they are not getting the support that they need?" (It's best to consider colleges with retention rates above 90%.)



**"Do professors and faculty actively participate in the community?"**

Judith Hodara recommends not asking about the faculty-to-student ratio: "In my mind, the variation of 'How involved or accessible are my faculty?' is really important." She also recommends asking, "In addition to

office hours, how involved are they in campus life?"

### **"What are weekends here like?"**

Says Will Ferante, a senior at Binghamton University who will graduate in 2016 and is an admissions tour guide, "I talk about extracurricular activities I'm involved in, I talk about the activities that campus puts on for students (ie: guest speakers, concerts, fun traditions, etc.), I talk about things to do in the surrounding city. This is where students gain insight on what the university has to offer in terms of getting involved. I mention that some schools are commuter schools—where people don't stay on the weekends—and how Binghamton is different and why it's better for the student population in that sense."



### **"How strong is the Career Center?"**

Elizabeth Venturini, a college admissions coach based in southern California, stresses the importance of learning about the scope of services offered by the college's Career Center. "I recommend students and parents ask about number of counselors degree-ed in career counseling... number of counselors certified to administer career assessment tools, number of career days, job finding workshops, number of companies attending career days; number of students hired, their degrees, starting salaries, how recent the job hiring data is and how are they collecting it, [and] number of alumni in positions of influence to hire students."

Joseph Tiesi, of Binghamton University admissions, echoes the importance of learning how

the Career Center helps students get hired. He suggests asking, "What networking opportunities with Alumni do you have to move my resume along?" And in the meantime, Joseph Tiesi also recommends asking, "Can I get a part time job on campus if I want to earn a few dollars?"

### **"Who else can I talk to?"**

"Once on campus, students should talk with as many people as they can. This list can include admissions officers, professors, students, and coaches," says author Mandee Adler. She continues: "We encourage students to ask very specific questions as they pertain to them. If a student knows what they want to major in, we recommend meeting with a professor and asking questions like, 'What are the strengths of the program or department?' or 'What kind of coursework can I expect to complete?'"

**Who am I? What am I really looking for in a college and what do I want from my college experience? Am I likely to change in a significant way between now and the beginning of my first semester?**

Of course, students shouldn't pose these questions to tour guides or to the admissions staff - but honing some self-knowledge before students start visiting campuses could help them glean the most helpful information from their college visits. Says Judith Hodara, "I think that students may not have really considered that they were going to be a year older when they enter college than at the time of application. So, their questions sometimes reflected what they heard from others or read online.... I always wanted the students to be really thoughtful about who they were and what they hoped to get out of the experience, so that in taking the time to ask about and understand the culture of the campus as well as the opportunities, they would begin to understand if the school was a good fit for them." When students applying to college carve out some time to contemplate and reflect on what they truly want, it creates a win-win for admissions officers who are curating their entering class, and for students themselves, who will select the admissions offer at the campus that's best for them.



# Athletes Need Champions to Help them Find the Right College



By Penny Deck

There is still so much misinformation out there, that I feel compelled to address the issue of athletic recruiting once again. As a parent of a college athlete, and a college counselor, I have experienced different roles in this process. I want to impress upon student athletes the need to be their own advocates, and to find a champion – someone who will partner with them and help them through this ever increasing complex process of college admissions. A “champion” is defined as a “person who fights or argues for a cause or on behalf of someone else.” This person may also serve as the necessary “reality check”, a role sometimes absent in the student’s quest for glory on the athletic field. I cannot reinforce enough that in the term “student athlete”, the word student remains and should always remain first in the equation. How heartbreaking it is for an athlete who suffers an injury and cannot play to only then realize the school s/he attends is no longer a good fit.

The importance of being proactive, a term which is frankly not usually in a teenager’s vocabulary, nor mindset, is key in this process. That’s where a champion fits in.

Actually, there is nothing wrong with having a team of champions in your arsenal – parents, coaches, school counselor, etc. However, at least one of these needs to be objective and unemotional, and as such, provide a heavy dose of realism at times. This role is frequently played by the school counselor, someone who realizes that admission to the college or university comes way before becoming a member of the team. Though college coaches at some schools will work with admissions on securing a player, it is always ultimately an admissions decision whether an athlete gets an offer, and there is too much at stake for coaches to ignore the academic ability of their players. After all, who is being served if an athlete has to drop out because he/she is unable to handle the rigor of the academic program?

Just like a good athletic coach, a student athlete can benefit from having someone partner with them in this all important quest to find the right institution where they will flourish both on the field and in the classroom.

*Penny Deck, M.Ed., CEP is a College Counselor at Maggie L. Walker Governor’s School.*

## Student Athlete Reminders:

- ☐ **Start Early!** Depending on the sport, your junior year may even be too late
- ☐ **Actively Communicate with Coaches** – Let them know you are interested in their school/program
- ☐ **Visit Campuses**, ask questions, observe teams in action
- ☐ **Stay on top of deadlines**
- ☐ **Just like you need to be competitive on the field, transfer those skills to your quest for the right school program**
- ☐ **Find a Champion to support you through this process!**



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"How to Help Students Ace Tests Every Time!"

By Dawn Marie Barhyte



Taking any test is challenging, so it's perfectly normal to be a little nervous and stressed before taking these all important standardized tests. A touch of anxiety can keep students focused at peak performance. However, for some test takers this normal anxiety is more intense and impacts performance. In fact, just the thought of taking tests can send them into a tailspin. There are those students who become so anxious its overwhelming so that their performance doesn't reflect their true ability. Ellen Smith LCSW, licensed clinical social worker and Certified Health Coach, says "being anxious about taking tests is very common, especially the SAT's because there is so much pressure from teachers, parents, and peers on students to get good scores and often getting into the college of their choice is at stake." Peter Van Buskirk speaker, author of *Winning The Admissions Game*, former admissions counselor and consultant, adds "This is especially true for selective institutions where the stakes are highest and the emphasis on testing seems to be greatest." It's no secret these are tough tests and a respectable score can be a critical component of college applications. Ronnie Demler, the SAT coach, agrees and remarks "While the SAT's are an important part of the application package, its still just one part of the package, don't overemphasize its importance." So as counselors, we need to drill that into our students.

Test anxiety can be potentially serious when it leads to such high levels of anxiety and stress, resulting in underperformance. For some, the nervousness and self doubt they feel before a test is so intense that it impacts their concentration. Ellen Smith LCSW says "like other anxiety reactions, test anxiety affects the body and the mind. There are physical

symptoms, such as a pounding pulse, nausea, rapid breathing, sweating, and/or butterflies. The mental symptoms are inability to organize thoughts, forgetting what you know, careless mistakes, reading without understanding the questions, and blanking out. "These red flags range from mild to severe and can interfere with test taking abilities and how students do on exams.

The most common barrier to achieving a maximum score on the SAT's is anxiety about the test. Marty O'Connell, Executive Director of Colleges That Change Lives, says "Most stress stems from not having enough information about the testing process and fearing what might happen. Taking sample tests in advance to become familiar with test format, to learn how to focus for four hours, and discover strengths and weaknesses will go a long way to reducing test anxiety." But there are other ways of reducing that anxiety so that students can do their best. Like anything else that requires practice, preparing for standardized tests is possible. Even if students have test anxiety, they can increase their scores and perform at their best when the pressure is on. By being prepared, student confidence can rise so some anxiety can slip away. Coach students that studying well in advance may sound like a drag, but the results will be worth the effort. Feeling ready to meet the challenge can keep test anxiety from spinning out of control. If your students have a tendency towards test anxiety, helping them develop ways to cope will allow them to do their best on tests. Ronnie Demler, The SAT Coach, says "There are no shortcuts; it's not wise to look for a trick that will dramatically raise your score with little effort." He adds, "Those students who are very well prepared

tend to have less anxiety.” In his experience, True confidence comes from competence, not psychological tricks”. With that said, follow these tips before the test to reduce anxiety, so your students can make their way calmly through the test.

**It's About Time:** Advise students to establish a study plan, make a commitment, and schedule it over time – Ellen Smith says, “studying in a consistent manner will decrease test anxiety. Waiting to the last minute to cram is not helpful when managing anxiety.” No amount of cramming can replace the deeper learning that happens over time with regular studying.

**Help Students Set A Goal:** Know the average score of students admitted to their favorite college – this will be their target score, which may help reduce stress if they know they scored within that range. Marty O'Connell says, “gather testing data for those colleges you are interested in applying to by checking most recent profiles of the class admitted and enrolled”.

**Focus on Learning!** Coach students to be prepared to dedicate a % of their energy into studying. In fact, 20-50 minute chunks of highly focused studying are more valuable than two hours of ineffective work.

**Practice Makes Perfect!** Advise students to get comfortable with the test format. Take many practice tests under realistic conditions. Ronnie Demler says, “prompt students to make sure to time themselves and go over every question they get wrong or skip. Review where they succeeded and what they need to work on. The more your students are accustomed to answering questions, time constraints, and pacing, the more comfortable they will feel when they do sit down to take the real test!”

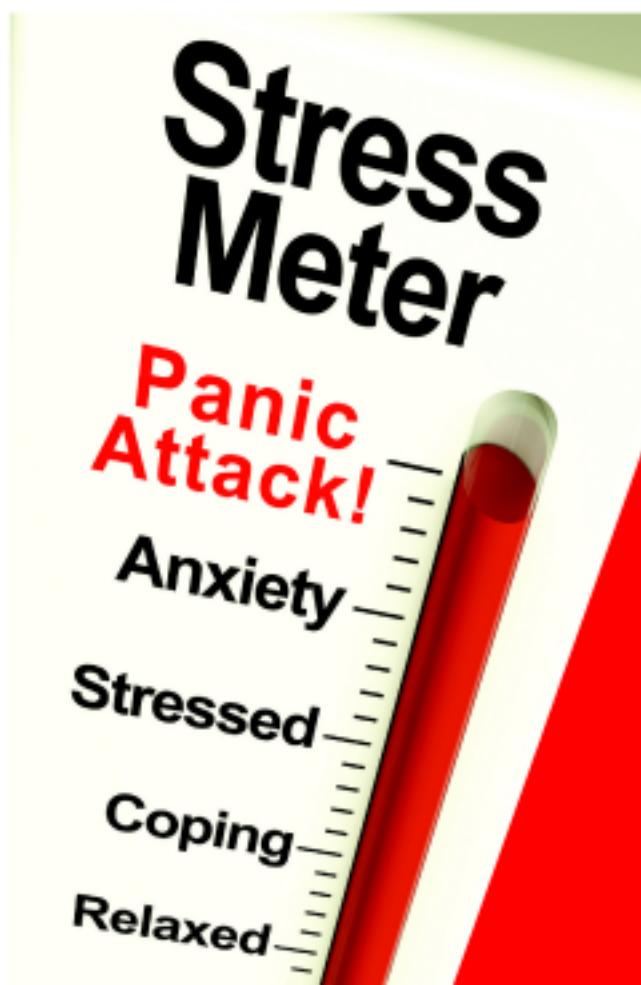
**Just Chill Out!** Help students integrate relaxation techniques into their routine to call upon right before the test and during the test to help stay calm, confident, and focused such as deep breathing, imagining a positive outcome, or repetition of positive mantras. Ellen Smith says, “these techniques will help reduce anxiety, make testing less stressful, and help students focus. Also, prompt them to watch for negative messages they might be sending themselves about the test, which can contribute to anxiety. Help students establish a consistent pretest routine: Help students learn what works to reduce their anxiety and have them follow those steps every time they are getting ready to take a test!”

**Reading Rocks:** Remind students it's unanimous, everyone agrees, start reading a lot. Ronnie Demler says, “Students who spend hours reading for pleasure usually do extremely well on the Critical Reading and Writing sections of the SAT. Spend at least an hour every single day, reading the classics, newspapers, and magazines. Doing so will improve grammar, vocabulary, reading comprehension skills, reading speed, and your writing skills.”

**Prompt students to Sleep on it!** Catch Some ZZZ's and forget about all nighters. Researchers say getting a good night sleep before an exams is key to doing well! Sleep deprivation can negatively impact performance, energy level, ability to focus, and concentration.

Encourage students to have Great Expectations! Instill the attitude that allows students to think positively but realistically, avoiding perfectionism and aiming for excellence!

*Dawn Marie Barhyte is a widely published freelance writer and former educator who continues to touch the lives of young people through her writing.*



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# Under Pressure

## Practical Ways to Help Your Students Cope with College Admissions

By Elizabeth Drucker



The college admissions experience can leave many students with difficulties coping with the stress. Students from a wide range of academic abilities all face the pressure and anxiety of creating an after high school battle plan. Some students may be pursuing admission to Ivy League or other highly selective universities while others may be struggling to find a way to fund their community college educations. Each student has stress regarding what to do after high school. It is compounded by a college admissions machine that seems to make it harder to get into the top schools each year. Also, so-called “helicopter” parents are putting more pressure on their children to get into these top schools.

Bradley Fixman, an AP US History teacher in Phoenix, Arizona, explains that there are certainly some strategies you can implement to ease your students’ stress about getting into college. While not all situations are equal, here are some general tips and tricks to get you through the season.

### 1. Make financial resources available.

Many students are extremely anxious about how to pay for college, especially when their parents are going to have difficulty doing so. As a counselor you should have an expansive knowledge of where to find scholarship opportunities and how to make them available to your students. Be informed about scholarship opportunities in your community. Network with local businesses to keep abreast of new programs that might help your students.

**2. Be prepared.** When your students feel like they are in control of their own futures, they will be less prone to stress. You should counsel students

from the first year of high school, on what they will need to do throughout high school to become competitive applicants in the college admissions process. This could include making a four-year plan, educating your students on summer opportunities in the community and abroad, and explaining the potential advantages of AP and honors classes, for some students.

**3. Keep their eye on the prize.** There are so many stressors in high school, as you know. Your students will almost definitely experience anxiety during the college admissions process. You have the unique opportunity to allay your students’ fears through positive self-talk and anxiety techniques such as deep breathing. Affirmations are also helpful. Encourage them that while college is important, for every student, there are many places that they could be happy, thriving, and successful.

**4. Parents can be stressful.** Make sure to keep your parents abreast of any new information about where your students are in the admissions process. They mean well, but can sometimes be “helicopter” parents that hover and often expect more than their children can deliver.

**5. Know the mental health resources in your community.** Sometimes, anxiety over college admissions is a manifestation of a psychological disorder such as depression or anxiety. If your student seems overly anxious or sad, you might want to refer them to an outside counselor or psychiatrist. Having a list of these professionals and how to recognize if their students need extra help would be beneficial.

# Becoming a Better Test Taker

## 4 Ways to Improve at Any Age

By Michael Henry

We've noticed, from both personal and professional experience, that college entrance exams don't exactly sit still. It's obviously extremely important to make sure these exams are both relevant and effective, so continually updating and improving is something all parties involved should demand. That being said, it makes a complicated process that much more difficult. So we thought to ourselves: What are some basic tips for students of any age that can help build a solid foundation, not only for success on the SAT and ACT exams, but even into college and beyond?

**1. Do some Googling and find out what's on the test!** This might seem trivial, but we've seen time and time again that students will often walk into the classroom for their PSAT or their first attempt SAT/ACT and have absolutely no idea how the rest of their day will go. Even simple things like understanding the tests are over 3 hours long catch students off guard. Forget knowing what subjects and skills are being tested, not many people have an "on/off" switch to intensely focus for that amount of time. Oh ya, and then you have to be really good at those subjects and skills to answer the questions. Long story short, students of all ages can spend even the slightest amount of time researching and understanding the exams to spare themselves of multiple, unpleasant Saturday mornings.

**2. Read widely and wildly!** These exams place a heavy emphasis on reading comprehension. In the case of the new SAT, even math now includes extra-wordy problems. Interpreting passages on these exams hinges on having a grasp

of the language, a wide vocabulary, and the ability to process the information in a finite amount of time. Students should be reading their textbooks for classes, at the bare minimum (we know, not a given). Additionally, the new SAT will emphasize historical texts and founding documents like the Declaration of Independence or the Gettysburg Address, for example, so there's a good reason to pay closer attention in history class. But some easier and possibly more engaging ways for students to improve their reading comprehension would be to regularly visit the websites of news outlets and magazines (or even download the phone app!) to read articles that are 500-700 words long. Practice ultimately makes perfect, so frequently engaging in the activity of reading, in any capacity, will pay dividends on the SAT and ACT exams.

**3. Make friends with charts, graphs and tables.** Our world is increasingly more focused on collecting and analyzing data. These are skills that will be vital, not only for the SAT and ACT exams, but also for the jobs of tomorrow. The good thing is a lot of those reading materials we mentioned in the last point are now using these kinds of tools to support their points. Did we mention students should read everything yet? Needless to say, we don't think the ability to work with these data tools can be overemphasized. They aren't just necessary skills for the SAT or ACT exams, they're great "life skills" for college and beyond.

**4. You can never be too good at something.** The SAT and ACT exams test for all kinds of skills. We've touched on reading comprehension, but math skills are equally important. Even

if students get straight A's in their Algebra and Geometry classes in 9th or 10th grade, there are always skills that can be exposed on the SAT/ACT. One of those is not being able to answer questions quickly enough (in a minute or less). They may do great on all of their homework with all the time in the world, but can they recall the knowledge of the underlying concepts efficiently enough to show that on the test? Maybe that isn't the issue. Maybe they can recall that information quickly enough, but they're completely reliant on the calculator. And in the case of the new SAT, there is a no calculator section (another trap!). Ultimately, complacency can be a student's biggest enemy and it has to be fought off early and often because without consistent practice, knowledge and skills will wane.

We hope you've noticed that each of these tips to share with your students is meant to have a bigger picture in mind. Preparing for the specific content

on these exams is a no-brainer; it has to happen given the stakes. Interestingly, we've found that explaining how these tangible and intangible skills translate into life after the test has helped our TestRocker students see the value of their prep efforts (and raised scores significantly!). Our online programs have uncomplicated the specific material on the test, and now we're trying to help counselors around the world motivate their students to reach their potential.

*Michael Henry is the Director of Business Development for TestRocker in the United States. He's helped hundreds of students around the world understand the importance of their efforts on these entrance exams with incredible results. He can help students and schools develop tailored programs to efficiently and effectively utilize the TestRocker programs to prepare for the SAT and ACT exams. Have questions? Shoot him an email ([michael@testrocker.com](mailto:michael@testrocker.com)) or give him a ring (210-413-0570).*

# Five Things College Admissions Officers Look For

*By Rob Davenport*

You can help your students rise to the top of the candidate list by doing the following

College enrollment is up across the US, which means many schools have more applicants than they can accommodate. To get the attention of college admissions officers, your students need to distinguish themselves from other candidates. Below are a few things that will help them stand out.

To increase your student's chances of getting in, their application materials should show:

**1. A fit between their intentions and the school's program.** They'll need to demonstrate some qualities that show college admissions officers they know themselves, understand the school and its mission, and have a plan in mind to succeed in school and use their training in their planned career or field.

**2. A sense of their personality.** Schools want to hear a voice in the application essay. They

want to know what your student values and what drives his or her interests. Avoid making laundry lists of achievements or bragging. It tends to create the synthetic sense of someone trying to play up qualities and make an impression.

**3. The ability to succeed academically or in their planned career.** Their grades, test scores, and letters of recommendation will convey whether they're prepared for a higher education.

**4. A constructive use of their time outside school.** Your student should show that they pursue their interests when not doing schoolwork. This could mean volunteer or community-related work, a hobby, or clubs and associations joined in school.

**5. The passion to achieve their goals.** Their essay should show an understanding of how their higher education feeds into their life's goals. It should also show what those goals mean to them.

*Rob is with AIE.org. You can find the full article and other Counselor resources from AIE.org at <http://www.aie.org/plan-for-college/apply-to-college/five-things-college-admissions-officers-look-for.cfm>*



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# Careers in Supply Chain Management and Logistics

*By Dr. Jacqueline R. Mozrall & Dr. Manlu Liu*



Have you been frustrated when your favorite product isn't stocked on the shelf at Wegmans or Walgreens? Or when your shoe order at Zappos.com is delayed in transit through UPS or FedEx? Can you magically track its location on your smart phone?

If the answer is "Yes"—these are the marvels of what is known as supply chain management (SCM), an area that is growing in complexity and sophistication. Global companies such as General Electric, Cummings, and Bendix as well as more nimble small and medium-sized companies are always adding new innovations. Supply chains are concerned with all of the activities associated with moving a product: the initial acquisition of raw and intermediate materials, the final goods, various production processes, distribution to warehouses and consumers, and returns, recycling and reuse.

Students who like structure, are analytical, and have good interpersonal skills may find a rewarding career in supply chain management and logistics. Even students who want a career in other areas of business may find knowledge of supply chain considerations essential for their jobs.

The Department of Labor's Occupational Outlook Handbook indicates that the job category they identify as Logisticians has above-average pay (\$72,780 median annual wages in 2012) and much faster-than-average growth in employment from 2012 to 2022. The Department of Labor indicates that the important qualities include skills in communication, critical-thinking, organization, and problem solving.

Supply Chain Management is an interdisciplinary degree field combining principles of business, engineer-

ing, technology, and liberal arts. As careers progress, employees can pursue more specialized tasks—such as in purchasing or transportation—or in more general tracks encompassing and integrating all aspects of supply chain management. Throughout the supply chain, extensive use is made of information technology. This includes managing the large volume of data, identifying all items in the supply chain, forecasting future supply and demand, and helping to optimize decisions throughout the chain.

Jobs in the supply chain area include: sales estimating, production scheduling, make vs. buy decision making, factory and warehouse locations, allocation of products, purchasing, warehousing, inventory management, information systems, and transportation.

Many supply chains are global and require understanding of the laws and cultures of various countries. Labor work rules, import duties, and transportation costs all matter. For example, transportation by ship, plane, train, or truck have different time/cost tradeoffs and these decisions have to be made in the context of where raw materials, intermediate materials, final products are sourced (or could be sourced), and where customers are located. As technology, products and the economic environment changes, the supply chain may need to be changed. In the past few decades, company supply chains have been greatly affected by the World Trade Organization reduction in tariff and importation barriers, the creation of the European Union, and the North American Free Trade Association. If the Trans-Pacific Partnership of the countries bordering the Pacific Ocean becomes a reality, supply chains will have substantial changes.

A great variety of job opportunities exist throughout the supply chain. Interviews with company managers elicited the following information oriented towards what new employees in supply chain management and logistics activities might do:

**Walgreens:** Manager Supply Chain, Supply Chain Manager Optimization, Senior Category Manager, Demand Planner, Transportation Analyst, and Business Process Manager

**UPS:** International Logistics Specialist, Director of Operations, Procurement Analyst Principle, Operations Systems Manager, and Senior Manager of Global Inventory Management

**FedEx:** Global Service Analyst, Sourcing Specialist, Logistics Manager, Manager – Sustainability, Shipping Coordinator, and Reconciliation Specialist

**Zappos.com:** Security Operations Center Analyst, Practice Operations Analyst, Senior Data Analyst, Senior Manager, Business Strategy + Operations, and Email Deliverability Manager

**Bendix:** Supplier relationship management assistant, operations management assistant (assembly lines, manufacturing), and Analyst using MS Excel and Visual Basic programming.

**Cummings:** Packaging engineering assistant, purchasing assistant, supplier quality assessor, sourcing specialist, logistics analyst, and inventory management analyst

**General Electric:** Cost Modeling Analyst, and MIS-database specialist

Co-authors Dean and Professor Dr. Jacqueline R. Mozrall and Associate Professor Dr. Manlu Liu are from Saunders College of Business at Rochester Institute of Technology (RIT). Dean Mozrall earned her master's degree in industrial engineering from North Carolina State University and a Ph.D. in industrial engineering from the State University of New York at Buffalo. She has over 20 years of academic experience holding key leadership roles at RIT, most previously serving as Senior Associate Dean of RIT's Kate Gleason College of Engineering. Dr. Liu received her Ph.D. degree in Management Information Systems from Eller College of Management at the University of Arizona. She obtained an MBA in Accounting and Finance from the Hong Kong University of Science & Technology. She has served as Associate Professor at Zhejiang University in China, prior to her industry experience as a senior consultant, venture capital analyst and financial analyst. To learn more about Supply Chain Management at Saunders College, please visit [saunders.rit.edu/ug-scm](http://saunders.rit.edu/ug-scm)

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# Introducing the CEP

By Steve Syverson



Although there are numerous graduate programs and a variety of licenses and certifications available to school counselors, virtually none of them recognizes the specialized knowledge base and expertise required to do excellent college counseling.

Plumbers and athletic trainers are certified. Accountants aspire to become CPAs. When you seek help with your financial affairs, you'll probably seek a Certified Financial Planner. Doesn't the profession of college counseling deserve a professional credential? This was the genesis of the Certified Educational Planner (CEP)<sup>TM</sup> credential.

The CEP designation is awarded by the American Institute of Certified Educational Planners (AICEP) to the most well-qualified and experienced college counseling professionals. It is the only national credential available specifically to college counselors. It is not an entry-level credential and cannot be earned solely through coursework. It is awarded to professionals who have substantial experience and training, and who pass a board-certifying exam. And, to retain their credential, CEPs must be recertified every five years by demonstrating appropriate continued professional development.

Successful candidates for the CEP will have a Master's degree in an appropriate discipline and at least five years of experience as a school-based college counselor, as an independent educational consultant, or providing college counseling at a CBO or community access organization. Candidates who do not have a Master's degree but have extensive experience in the profession may be considered on a case-by-case basis.

There are many trajectories to becoming a successful, well-informed college counselor, so there are not a specific and rigid set of requirements to become a CEP. The application offers candidates numerous categories in which to document their training. These include formal graduate school coursework as well as programs offered through university extensions such as the UC-Berkeley Extension Certificate Program in College Admissions and Career Planning, the Harvard Summer Institute on College Admissions, and the UCLA Extension College Counseling Certificate (which is offered on-line). Most candidates have attended and/or made presentations at a number of national and/or regional conferences offered by NACAC and its Affiliates, the College Board, and ACT. Others have contributed to the profession through leadership roles in those and similar organizations. Webinars increasingly have contributed to the professional development of CEP candidates.

On the CEP application, in addition to providing their educational and experiential background, candidates provide a list of 30 colleges they have visited in the past three years and they offer a short "case study" of a student they have counseled recently. In the case study, they provide a brief outline (about one paragraph) of the student's educational record, areas of interest and involvement, and family expectations/aspirations for college. Then they briefly (about one paragraph) describe their process in working with the student. And finally they list colleges they recommended to the student, along with their rationale as to why they feel those colleges would be a particularly good fit for the student.

Candidates also provide five professional references and affirm their commitment to the AICEP Principles of Good Practice.

Each CEP application is reviewed independently by at least two trained readers. Candidates who are approved are then invited to sit for the CEP Examination. Candidates who are not approved are given specific feedback about how to improve their application – often it is simply that they need an additional year or two of experience.

The CEP Exam assesses Institutional Knowledge and Professional Knowledge. It is proctored and there is no access to resources or notes; there is no time limit. While some candidates take more time and some less, most complete the exam in 3-4 hours.

In the Institutional Knowledge section, the candidate is given a list of four of the colleges from the list of 30 they have visited. They choose two of the four about which to respond to five prompts:

- What type of student might be happy and best served at this institution?
- What are stand-out features or attributes of this institution?
- Describe the physical plan and influences of the surrounding community.
- What are the general admission criteria?
- What are the general parameters of students you would refer to this institution?
- Name one or two examples of similar institutions and describe the similarities.

In the Professional Knowledge section the candidate is given short vignettes or case studies of two hypothetical students. Each outlines the student's general academic background, areas of interests, extra-curricular involvements, personal characteristics, aspirations for college, and any notable family situations. For each of the two students, the candidate responds to three prompts:

- What general characteristics would you be looking for in colleges for this student?
- Suggest 3-5 colleges appropriate for this student and support your rationale for each option.

- List any other points that should possibly be considered in working with this student.

The exams are reviewed anonymously by at least two trained readers. The readers will never know whose exams they have read, thereby ensuring greater objectivity. Candidates who pass are awarded the designation of Certified Educational Planner (CEP). Unsuccessful candidates are offered feedback on their exams and given the opportunity to sit for it again within the next 12 months without any additional fee.

Because the field of college admission is constantly evolving, it is critical that CEPs maintain current knowledge of the changing trends as well as continuing to visit institutions and update their knowledge of those institutions. Thus, to retain their credential, CEPs must be recertified every five years. The recertification process does not require another examination, but during each five year period, CEPs must document at least 75 hours of continuing professional development. Typically this involves sessions at conferences, webinars, and workshops, but there are a variety of other categories as well.

Additionally, to maintain their College Knowledge, CEPs are required to visit 75 college campuses during each five-year period. While there is no real substitute for an actual campus visit, it is possible to substitute “campus visit equivalents” for up to 25 of the required 75 visits. For instance, school-based college counselors may sit in on the briefings done by visiting college representatives. Five of those school visit sessions will count as the equivalent of one actual campus visit.

*Steve Syverson was the Vice President for Enrollment at Lawrence University in Appleton, WI until 2011. He has served twice on the NACAC Board of Directors and has made numerous presentations at regional and national professional conferences on admission-related topics. He is currently serving in the role of Executive Director of the American Institute of Certified Educational Planners. If you'd like to learn more about the CEP program or feel you may qualify for the Certified Educational Planner (CEP) designation, you may obtain more information by visiting the AICEP website ([www.aicep.org](http://www.aicep.org)) or by sending an email to [info@aicep.org](mailto:info@aicep.org).*

# Redefining Parent/Teacher Conferences

## How Can Counselors Help Students?

*By Michelle Rabinowitz*



Parent/Teacher conferences at the high school level... what feelings does it bring to mind for you? Excitement or anxiety? Have you seen that cartoon where 50 years ago it was the teacher and the parent on one side of the desk asking the student why they were failing a class? Now it is the parent/guardian and student now on one side of the desk asking the teacher why the student is failing? I get it now. My thought as I left the building after last conference was, "If they are going to yell at me for their child failing, then why should I call?" Now I understand why attendance at our parent/teacher conferences is so low, the reason why the teachers in my rural school are reluctant to call home to schedule parents. There is something very wrong with this. It is time to step back, reformat, and make a change. It is not an "us" versus "them" mentality, even though that is sure what I felt when I was being yelled at by a parent for putting their child in "that" class, which he was now failing. We, as counselors, are advocates for our students, our staff, ourselves, and change when needed. If we consider conferences important, which they are, then we need to make them work! If we don't consider them important, then we have essentially given up on bringing parents/guardians into their student's education, and that is NOT acceptable. We will not give up on making this a team effort between school, student, and home.

Conferences are at the time that we given to meet families face to face, have conversations regarding our students, and hopefully provide connections for the student to improve. There are a few things you need to consider when planning your next set of conferences:

**1.** You must have administration support and teacher buy in.

This being important to your administration is crucial. The teacher buy in may be forced, but that's ok (insert smiley face). I know of an elementary school in which each of their classroom teachers has to have 100% of their parents met with in person, before they could have their district-given day off. This was very effective, but this wouldn't work at a HS since most teachers have an average of 100-150 students and share students with everyone else.

So what do you do? Divide and conquer the numbers.

Consider having your homeroom teacher contact the 10-20 kids they have in their advisory/home-room/etc. This should be the first person they see when they come in the building for conferences. That teacher would then give them the report cards and have them go to see the rest of their teachers from there. A school that I know that does this has 90% attendance with this method.

**2.** Use your current resources.

Email- Your school information system can probably email out grade reports automatically whenever you want them to.

School information system log-in- Providing the opportunity and training for families to access grades online, possibly during a Freshman orientation time at the beginning of the year or clear, visual instructions mailed home with grades.

Phone calls- We can do an auto-bot phone call home, it is pretty effective.

Snail Mail- You can send grades home a week early so concerned parents have time to schedule time off when they receive a bad report card.

Ransom- You can hold grade cards and parents can come get them at conferences.

### 3. Try new resources.

Reach out to neighboring school districts to exchange ideas and strategies.

A Google Form that will add to a common document that staff can see.

Online system like SignupGenius or VolunteerSpot are free and claim a substantial rise in attendance.

- An online sign up system will send automatic email or text reminders so parents can't claim they forgot.
- Note: play around with it first, I found once a time slot was selected, and then needed to cancel that spot, it was tricky to put it back in the list to choose from.

### 4. Change it up!

Consider switching to student-led conferences.

The student attends with their parent/guardian and walks them through their schedule.

Consider changing times.

- Traditional conferences don't work for some populations.
- Consider adding a morning time if you live in a community with a lot of families that work third shift.

Consider changing the weight

that your parent/teacher conferences has.

- Fall conferences attendees get to do any schedule changes for spring.
- Spring conferences attendees get to be apart of a ranking system for who gets to schedule first (attendance, GPA, and attended conferences).

Implement a point system for students who attend P/T conferences, college tours, college rep visits, etc = day off school to shadow, movie afternoon, finals pass, whatever your students want and will work for!

Lead with the positives about students before talking about grades.

Suggest ways for parent/guardians to be more connected with the school or classroom.

Don't give up on Parent/Teacher conferences until they are doing what they are supposed to... connecting school and home.

*Michelle Rabinowitz is a 7-12 school counselor in Southwest Missouri who enjoys exploring new ways to better her school counseling program for the betterment of her students and community.*



## Blog of the Issue

*By Jason Bullock*



We constantly search for great content from Counselors and Writers that will bring you valuable information. We have uncovered a number of blogs that provide daily content for the Counselor. Each issue we will report on one blog that provides great content.

This issue we are featuring the For High School Counselors blog which can be found @ [forhighschoolcounselors.blogspot.com](http://forhighschoolcounselors.blogspot.com)

This blog is authored by a High School Counselor, Cynthia Morton of Rockdale's Virtual Campus in Georgia.

Features include:

**Peer Helping:** Resources, organizations, information, and training information for Peer Helping

**Resources:** Links to online resources for Counselors. Hundreds of tools for Counselors to use in one convenient location saved in Livebinder.

**Counselor University:** Links to webinars and training courses. There are hundreds linked and there are some good ones on bullying prevention, conflict resolution, NACAC summer academy webinars and many more.

**The Best School Counselor Blogs and Websites:** Links to some of Cynthia's favorite websites. More than 20 blogs are featured with great content from Counselors around the country.

**Pinterest Page:** Nice resource for Counselor photos etc. to use. Cynthia's Pinterest page with

High School Counselor tools, technology for Counselors, etc.

**The School Counselor Store:** Link to a group on Facebook with more than 5,000 members.

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# Helping Eagles Soar

One of many famous quotes by astronaut Neil Armstrong is, "Houston, Tranquility Base here. The Eagle has landed." But when Debbie Cogan landed in eagle territory in Houston, tranquility followed.

*By Connie Voss*



Debbie Cogan was with the Fort Bend, Texas ISD (FBISD) for 32 years; first as a history teacher and later as a high school counselor. She transitioned from the classroom to counseling because she says it was a constant battle to show youngsters the relevance of history as it applies to the issues of the day. She already had a BA in education then went on to earn a M.Ed. in counseling. She found the one-on-one relationship that counseling provides more rewarding than being a classroom disciplinarian. She was a counselor at several schools within FBISD, and lastly served with the counseling advisory team at Fort Bend's Elkins High School.

## Challenges and rewards

After retiring from FBISD, Debbie stepped onto the campus of a small catholic college preparatory school in Houston named St. Thomas High School (STHS), home of the St. Thomas Eagles. The 116-year old private high

school for boys averages about 775 students annually including 190 seniors who will be graduating this year. Compared to senior class sizes of well over 500, working at the smaller school was a relatively soft landing, but it still offers its own challenges as well as its rewards.

"Working with all boys is quite different than working at a co-ed school," Debbie observed. After being a counselor in co-ed schools and having three boys and one daughter of her own, Debbie said, "You generally see girls exhibit much more dramatic behavior, while boys tend to keep their feelings under wraps. However, you have to stay on top of the boys to continually steer them in the right direction and keep them focused on their goals."

Another of the many differences she sees, is that boys need more help when it comes to writing their college application essays. Debbie says, "Boys have a different style than girls and it seems more difficult for them to reveal themselves." The English teacher and Debbie's staff offer guidance so the boys feel comfortable in writing about themselves as they really are,

so colleges get to know them.

The STHS faculty has changed throughout its century-plus existence. It once was comprised largely of Basilian priests and a few lay people but today there is only a handful of priests serving at the school. The Basilian order is known for its dedication to knowledge and teaching, and therefore STHS attracts almost as many non-Catholics as Catholics.

**A 100 percent entrance rate** "Since STHS provides a college preparatory curriculum, 97 percent of our seniors enroll in a four year college or university immediately after graduation," Debbie remarked. "The two or three percent of our students who do not go straight from STHS to a four-year college are in a transition academic program such as the Texas A&M-Blinn College TEAM program." She says her office is working on doing a better job of tracking their former students as they progress through the higher education process.

"Our alumni are most generous in helping current students. We host a career day each spring for our sophomores with at least 30 or

40 alumni participating. We have six periods per day with about six alumni on each panel.” She continued, “This not only allows our boys to get to know former students, but they can benefit from each man’s advice and experience as he recounts his own path from student to occupation.”

### **Getting on the right trajectory**

Incoming students often need assistance to get on the STHS path. “Our freshmen are coming from many different middle schools and several school systems. Although they may have made As and Bs in middle school, they may not be completely prepared for St. Thomas’ tougher standards,” said Debbie. She continued, “We use our training and experience to assist them along with software such as Naviance™ to help with assessments and measurements of each new student’s particular strengths, weaknesses, interests, learning style, and personality. This helps them adapt to our requirements more effectively.”

STHS also uses the SATs, ACTs and other testing methods to measure progress in various subjects. STHS students typically score higher than average on most standardized tests by the time they reach their junior and senior years.

Debbie and her team work most closely with parents during the first couple of years. By the time boys are in their junior and senior years, they’ve pretty well settled into the “rigor of a private education and commitment of a sport, while maintaining a balanced social life” or so stated a student in an article he wrote for *The Eagle*, the STHS student newspaper.

Debbie says that parents, on average, seem more engaged in a private school setting. “We meet

with parents as often as needed and we make sure we meet at least annually. During our junior year conferences, we work with parents and students to help plan the boy’s senior year. We also host parent nights periodically. We keep families apprised on the availability of scholarships and encourage parents to complete financial aid forms for college, although we may also refer them to others who are more expert in the many nuances of financial aid should it be needed.” Debbie put all four of her own children through college, so she knows the drill both professionally and personally.

Of course athletics play a significant role in an all boys school and Debbie points out that many students participate in more than one sport. “To balance out the rigor of our academics and sports, our school also has a good, fine arts program,” she noted. “Our arts programs serve as a sort of release valve from the challenges of our curriculum.”

Because the school is small it does not offer as many electives as larger schools, but STHS students are also required to complete 100 hours of community service by the end of their senior year, and theology is a required course. Serving others is one of the principles of the Catholic Social Teaching.

“Our students express great interest in STEM careers and business,” Debbie said. “That is logical because those are generally the fields their fathers, uncles or older siblings have pursued, and these fields are often at the top of the growing careers to explore.”

### **Boosting helpful options**

Since taking the position of counseling director three years ago, Debbie’s staff has grown from three counselors to five. The school

now provides a program to educate and deter students from unhealthy choices such as drug, alcohol or video game addiction. Support is also provided for students with family issues such as divorce or an absentee parent. She explains, “There is help for any student who may be exhibiting signs of distress. For the last three years, we have had a Learning Enrichment Center that manages student accommodations and provides math tutoring. The center also helps students with their time management and organizational skills.”

Despite Debbie’s years of experience, she believes there is always more to be learned and she says the value of networking with your peers is invaluable. She reads *LINK for Counselors* magazine and receives the *LINK* emails. She also belongs to a number of professional organizations. STHS encourages Debbie and her colleagues to attend workshops and conferences that will offer new concepts, ideas, or information.

Although Debbie has landed with the eagles, her goal is to help them soar even higher. She would like to arrange more short-term internships for her students and collaborate more with the STHS alumni base on new projects—but those are just two things on her list of to-dos.

*Connie Voss has been writing professionally for over 40 years. Her body of work includes a wide range of technical articles and human interest stories. She researched and wrote St. Thomas High School in the 20th Century, an account of the first 100 years of a well-known Houston, Texas boys’ school. She writes a monthly column on advertising and marketing, and assists a variety of industrial firms with their advertising communications.*

# CHEMICAL ENGINEERING TRAINING:

Today and the future

*By John C. Bonacci, BS, MS, PhD, PE, US Patent Agent*



A basic 4-year Chemical Engineering degree is one of the four basic engineering original degree programs. The others are Civil, Electrical and Mechanical. However in recent years there has been a take-off of specialties and actually renaming of Engineering Departments such as Environmental, Materials, Bio, etc.

These specialties are well and good but really ought to be reserved for graduate training. It just seems to confuse young people and perhaps get them to declare themselves too early in their education.

The basic curriculum in a 4-year Chemical Engineering Program has math, chemistry and physics along with a liberal arts course and mechanical drawing for the first year. The second year has the most important starting Chemical Engineering course which deals with processes and flow sheets. In my experience, many non-engineering students take this course because of its value for systems approaches to problems. The rest of the 4-year curriculum includes quite a bit of Chemistry and other engineering courses. There are laboratory courses in Chemistry and Unit Operations (i.e. processes). This type of program helps develop a great capacity for "problem solving", which is a skill that industry wants and needs.

When one looks at the courses for various Engineering Schools, you will find a number of options. Overall though, most educators and students see a Chemical Engineering degree as the most scientific one of the major disciplines. In fact, the statistics show that more Chemical Engineering students go on to graduate school after they obtain their B.S. degree. A number I have seen is about 25%.

This provides a great degree of flexibility to both

average and above average students and industry really likes these students. For example, at my undergraduate school, about 95% of the students get jobs every year.

Although it is reasonable that the chemical and Allied industries hire Chemical Engineers, they are also actively sought by companies like GE, IBM, and a host of computer oriented companies. I was first employed by the USAF for a while before joining the DUPONT Company, and later Mobil Oil. Many Chemical Engineers make a career in design as well as Mechanical Engineers, and these are interesting careers with large Engineering firms.

Although it is not necessary, Chemical Engineers do get PE (professional engineers) licenses even if they go on to graduate school. The scientific nature of a basic Chemical Engineering degree also serves as a good entry into the teaching profession once an advanced degree is pursued... After 10 or so years, the career opportunities open up in management and many Presidents of large companies have Chemical Engineering degrees.

The Consulting Field is also wide open for Chemical Engineers, especially those with a graduate degree. Most Chemical Engineers enter consulting in their later years or as part of job transitions that are always occurring. One specific organization is the Association of Consulting Chemists and Chemical Engineers, Inc. (ACCCE), which is a national organization operating out of the New York/New Jersey area with members in the South and as far as Hawaii. About one-third of the members are Chemical Engineers who have developed specialties in computers, phar-

maceuticals, etc.

This brief commentary is intended to get you the Counselor to encourage prospective college students to check out the listed courses in the colleges of most interest to them. The options and opportunities to meet special needs are certainly available and most schools are flexible.

As a final note, another path your students should

consider is to obtain a 2-year A.B. degree from a community college and then transfer to a 4-year college. For students who might be on a budget, this can really cut down on the cost of obtaining the degree and most colleges readily recruit and accept such transfers.

*Dr. Bonacci is currently Executive Director of ACCCE, Inc. and operates his consulting business as Fibonacci Consulting, LLC. He can be contacted by e-mail at [Fibonacci@aol.com](mailto:Fibonacci@aol.com).*

Chemical engineering is one of the highest paying degrees for entry level jobs, with even higher pay scales for experienced chemical engineers. The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics shows there are 33,470 people employed as Chemical Engineers in the U.S. as of May 2014. Salaries ranged from \$59,480 to \$156,980. The mean wage was \$103,590.

**Industries with the highest levels of employment in this occupation:**

Industry	Employment (1)	Percent of industry employment	Hourly mean wage	Annual mean wage (2)
Architectural, Engineering, and Related Services	6090	0.45	\$49.72	\$103,410
Basic Chemical Manufacturing	4,610	3.19	\$51.82	\$107,780
Scientific Research and Development Services	3,370	0.53	\$50.64	\$105,320
Petroleum and Coal Products Manufacturing	2,360	2.14	\$56.87	\$118,290
Resin, Synthetic Rubber, and Artificial Synthetic Fibers and Filaments Manufacturing	2,250	2.44	\$50.00	\$104,000

**Industries with the highest concentration of employment in this occupation:**

Industry	Employment (1)	Percent of industry employment	Hourly mean wage	Annual mean wage (2)
Basic Chemical Manufacturing	4,610	3.19	\$51.82	\$107,780
Resin, Synthetic Rubber, and Artificial Synthetic Fibers and Filaments Manufacturing	2,250	2.44	\$50.00	\$104,000
Petroleum and Coal Products Manufacturing	2,360	2.14	\$56.87	\$118,290
Pesticide, Fertilizer, and Other Agricultural Chemical Manufacturing	750	2.10	\$44.29	\$92,130
Other Chemical Product and Preparation Manufacturing	760	0.92	\$46.53	\$96,790

**Top paying industries for this occupation:**

Industry	Employment (1)	Percent of industry employment	Hourly mean wage	Annual mean wage (2)
Oil and Gas Extraction	730	0.38	\$70.59	\$146,820
Management of Companies and Enterprises	1,070	0.05	\$64.08	\$133,290
Employment Services	310	0.01	\$59.38	\$123,500
Petroleum and Coal Products Manufacturing	2,360	2.14	\$56.87	\$118,290
Management, Scientific, and Technical Consulting Services	720	0.06	\$53.43	\$111,120

# Featured Counselor:

## Anne Moigis

### ANNE MOIGIS



**Position:** Counselor A-K  
**School:** Huron High School  
**City:** New Boston, Michigan  
**Nominator:** Steven P. Hudock, Assistant Principal

**Q.** Give us at least one example of how this school counselor has helped you or others with college planning, educational/scholarship searches, and planning life after high school.

**A.** Anne Moigis is a students' counselor. She really builds positive relationships with her students from freshmen year through senior year. In the freshmen year, she is involved with incoming students as one of the staff Link Crew Leaders. Through the Link program, upperclassmen work with freshmen and that's where the magic starts. Under her guidance, the upperclassmen help spark the freshmen's drive toward post high school life.

During students' junior year, Mrs. Moigis speaks to our Junior class students in their SAT Prep class, motivating them to do well but also helping students understand that college and post secondary training is available and attainable for everyone. She helps inspire these students to look forward.

Mrs. Moigis is also responsible for sponsoring our college application week (CAW). This is the second year in which we have participated. We've had numerous students the past two years participate. In 2014 147 college applications were submitted by 60 of our seniors; this year during CAW, there were 112 seniors that submitted 252 applications. During this week, Mrs. Moigis organizes staff to wear their Alma matter's gear and speak to students about their college experience.

Furthermore, working with our other counselor, Mrs. Moigis helps with financial aid and college nights. Speakers come in and help students and their parents understand the process and requirements for financial aid and college life.

**Q.** How does this counselor contribute to the school? (example: hosting college planning nights, organizing career nights, creating a school-wide

initiative, etc).

**A.** I credit Anne Moigis with bringing the Link Crew Program to Huron High School. It was her interest and insight into the middle school's WEB program that sparked us to look into expanding the program to the high school. Anne, along with two of our teachers, sponsor our Link Program. This program is a huge success and helps acclimate freshmen to high school life. It provides a safe transition into high school and helps build positive relationships with upper classmen and incoming freshmen. Anne is responsible for a lot of the administrative background work with the program.

Anne is also very involved with organizing and sponsoring College Application week, as well as helping coordinate college visits and parent/student nights for financial aid. Mrs. Moigis also is responsible for coordinating everything for the SAT and M-Step testing that occurs every spring.

**Q.** Describe this counselor in 100 words or less.

**A.** Mrs. Moigis is a students' counselor. She is fun, but also real with her students. Her life experiences allow her to connect well with students, and they know she truly cares about their safety, well-being, and futures. Anne is open-minded and all of our students know they will be treated fairly and supported by Mrs. Moigis. Anne is a bright spot for students, teachers, parents, and administrators at Huron High School.



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# Helping Students With Disabilities

*By Elizabeth Drucker*



In your work as a high school counselor you encounter students with a wide array of needs and accommodations. There is no one definition of a student with a disability and they present themselves at different times and within different contexts. For example, you might not be aware that a student is struggling with a mood or anxiety disorder. It is important to know if a student has a disability so you can properly assist and advocate for them at your school and beyond.

You are an integral part of your students' life and if you put in an effort, you have the opportunity to make a real difference. Accommodations for disabilities depend on the particular disability. You are probably familiar with 504 Plans and IEPs. A 504 Plan allows the facilitation of accommodations in the classroom. Making a teacher aware of the disability can usually be a big help. IEPs (Individualized Educational Plan) provide more extensive support for students with accommodations and sometimes even special education. Common accommodations include: extended time on exams, longer deadlines for assignments, and a note taker. These are all interventions that can begin in high school and continue on through college and beyond.

## Testing

Testing accommodations are very important to high school students with disabilities. These can include a wide spectrum of things, such as extra time, and a quiet room to take the exam, to accommodations for the visually impaired. The SAT and ACT exams can both be taken with special test-

ing, where you might be able to administer it. This would occur for students who use Braille, a computer, or need a scribe to report their answers for them. They might also provide breaks through the sections of the exam. If you are developing a plan for students with disabilities, it would be helpful to start as early in high school as possible so you can determine the accommodations that would be most helpful on these national standardized tests. Encourage your students to prepare for these exams way in advance to reduce their anxiety.

## College Planning

When you begin college planning there are many issues you will wish to explore. You might want to encourage your students to add a local college or university to their list, including one that is a safety school. If you have been using accommodations in the high school curriculum, you should prepare for the documentation that will be required from the college he/she needs to receive services. You should also make a list of things you are looking for in a school. This could be: how far away from home, what support services there are, will he/she have to live in a dorm? It might also be helpful to have them take AP courses or classes at a local college so they can get a hang of the accommodations that will be most helpful for them. Every college or university has an office dedicated to the advocacy and assistance of students with disabilities. They are trained professionals who will devise a plan for academic success.

Supportive counseling would be another trick you

could use to cope with the stress of college admissions. Students with disabilities are just like any other student who would be anxious. You might try to teach them relaxation techniques or the use of affirmations. If you have a social worker or school psychologist on board, they might have more ideas about how to manage their distress better. Any student going through the stress of college admissions should have a plan of attack for managing this. Such a plan would include activities of distress tolerance such as: writing creatively or painting/drawing, listening to music, or watching a movie.

Your students might also want to be aware of the burgeoning use of technology. Many very highly regarded universities are designing BA programs that can be entirely completed online. For example, the University of Arizona costs approximately \$500 per credit and offers bachelor's degrees in fields as diverse as Health, Care, and Society, Philosophy, and Psychology. This is a helpful program for students with many different life circumstances, including students with disabilities. Technology is growing every day and graduate degrees can be pursued online as well.

## Special Programs

While the online distance learning programs are beneficial to many students with disabilities, there are some emerging (and more classic) programs that help students with many aspects of the college student experience. Most of them provide more support services, such as tutors in writing, math/science, and foreign language. They do extensive psychoeducational testing and also provide help with study skills, and how to cope in college. One program of particular note is the University of Arizona SALT program, which follows through on the above goals for undergraduate support for students with disabilities. They also provide "strategic learning specialists" that work with students to promote success in and out of the classroom. While there is a charge to being accepted into the program, many students and parents alike endorse the program and rate it very highly. In fact, many students across the country choose to attend the University of Arizona based on this program. Many of these students would not have been able to succeed in college, or not have attended very long at all, due to a learning disability.

## Scholarships For Students With Disabilities:

**Here is a list of some helpful ideas for students with disabilities:**

### **Microsoft disability Scholarship:**

This scholarship is for a high school senior living with a major disability who intends on matriculating into an undergraduate program following high school graduation. Must be declaring a major in science, business, law, or math. They must also demonstrate financial need and a high school cumulative GPA of 3.00.

<http://www.microsoft.com/en-us/diversity/programs/microsoftdisabilityscholarship.aspx>

### **LD Resources Foundation Award:**

This is for a high school student with a learning disability, including dyslexia and ADHD. Its purpose is to provide assistive technology resources for students. There are currently four different awards.

<http://ldrfa.org/?portfolio=award-programs>

### **1800wheelchair.com Scholarship:**

This is a scholarship for students in their final year of high school, or enrolled in an undergraduate program. They must also have a cumulative GPA of 3.00. The application is available online.

<http://www.1800wheelchair.com/scholarship/>

### **American Council of the Blind Scholarship Program:**

Students must be legally blind, as examined by an ophthalmologist, optometrist, or other physician. A GPA of 3.3 is required.

<http://www.acb.org/scholarship>

### **Testing Accommodations for Students With Disabilities:**

#### **American College Test (ACT):**

<http://www.actstudent.org/register/disab/>

#### **Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT):**

<https://sat.collegeboard.org/register/for-students-with-disabilities>

# Attention, Retention

What the SAT & ACT really test, and why it's important to school counselors.

*By Evan Wessler*

The SAT and ACT serve as both gateways and gatekeepers for students seeking college admissions. As such, students the country over do their best to prepare for them by poring over content and practice exams, seeking to learn strategies and techniques in efforts to raise their scores. And rightly so: though the College Board and ACT might have us believe otherwise, their tests are both highly predictable, and are thus teachable. It's true that certain students will never cross a certain score threshold; however, it's also true that most students would never achieve their potential on the SAT or ACT without learning how to tackle the tests as unique exams, vastly different from the ones they're used to seeing in school. All this, though, hides two elements of student ability that are instrumental to success on the SAT and ACT: attention to detail, and retention of material. So important are these capacities that the correct answers to many of the questions will elude students who, despite possessing the sheer intellectual capability of comprehending the material, fail to focus on minute details or to search their memories for material they covered long ago (or even content they have just read). This, in large part, leads to the struggles of students whose standardized test scores and GPAs are highly disparate, creating tough situations for counselors of students whose standardized test scores are holding them back.

When it comes to testing mental focus and the ability to sift through detail in questions and answer choices, the ACT takes the cake. In fact, I joke with my students that the ACT Science test, for instance, is a bit of a misnomer, proposing that it ought to be called the "Advanced Paying Attention to Detail" section instead. Take, for example, a simulated

sample question and set of four answer choices I put together:

Which of the following statements regarding the reactions inside the reaction tubes best describes the rates of reaction for Enzyme A and Enzyme B? Enzyme A's rate of reaction was:

- A.** less than Enzyme B's rate of reaction, because the rate of product formation in Tubes 1 and 3 was greater than the rate of product formation in Tubes 2 and 4.
- B.** less than Enzyme B's rate of reaction, because the rate of product formation in Tubes 2 and 4 was greater than the rate of product formation in Tubes 1 and 3.
- C.** greater than Enzyme B's rate of reaction, because the rate of product formation in Tubes 1 and 3 was greater than the rate of product formation in Tubes 2 and 4.
- D.** greater than Enzyme B's rate of reaction, because the rate of product formation in Tubes 2 and 4 was greater than the rate of product formation in Tubes 1 and 3.

Don't worry about the fact that the specifics mean nothing without the context of an experiment. The point is that students must pay a great deal of attention to the particulars of the wording in order to avoid making careless errors on questions like this one. First, they must find which enzyme reacted more rapidly; then, they must determine the correct rationale, ensuring that the choice they pick uses the correct evidence in the correct way to prove

their answers. Doing this repeatedly and with high accuracy for forty questions in a row after having sat through the English, Mathematics, and Reading sections of the exam requires an immense degree of focus that isn't normally tested in a typical classroom setting. It is true that in-class high school exams, especially those in the maths and sciences, can set "traps" for students who aren't paying attention, but when the stakes are so high, the test so long, and the pressure so intense, students become exposed to a new required level of intensity. Questions on both of the exams force students to store lots of information in their short-term memories and to organize it very quickly: under stressful conditions, any student's ability to do so can become muddled.

Even if students develop the wherewithal to sit through a four-hour exam, all the while maintaining their ability to pay careful attention to language and avoid tossing points away to careless errors, they will still come up against another factor not usually discussed in test prep circles: retention. There are two types of retention at play on the SAT and ACT.

The first is long-term retention. So much of what the ACT and SAT test is simply about raw knowledge: how much did a student absorb and remember through middle and high school? This is especially so for the Mathematics sections on both exams, but applies also to grammar rules, and in the case of the ACT, some science concepts (though raw outside knowledge isn't tested on the ACT Science section, students do have to understand general experimental concepts like controls and variables). Many of the topics tested go all the way back to 8th and 9th grades, when students learn the fundamentals of algebra and grammar—topics tested extensively by the ACT, and to be tested even more extensively by the Revised SAT. If students' brains are libraries, and the things they learn the books, then it's all too often the case that old volumes are cleared—rather than archived—after spending a year in circulation. This lack of long-term retention is a big contributor to the "high-GPA-low-SAT/ACT-score student" phenomenon, which baffles parents: though their children could be doing very well in the current year, that won't mean much if all the other knowledge has slipped away and can no longer be applied at will.

There is also the issue of short-term retention. On the SAT and ACT, students must be able to store and integrate information under time constraints. This is especially relevant on the ACT Reading and New SAT Reading sections, which feature several ques-



tions that do not give line references for students to use while returning to the passage for answers. When they have difficulty with fast processing and short-term mental storage, students find it difficult to answer questions that don't point them to specific points of the text. Many will end up essentially re-reading large segments of the passage, wasting valuable time doing what a student who does have good short-term retention skills will have to do only once. Recall in reading—even if it allows a student to remember just the approximate location of a fact or statement—is crucial if a student is to get through the Reading section on either exam efficiently.

All this is relevant to the guidance community because it sheds light on the reality of the SAT and ACT: they present challenges that test capacities beyond sheer intelligence, and present an entirely novel test-taking experience for most students who sit for the exams. What, then, can counselors do with this knowledge? The first thing is to encourage students to start working with SAT or ACT material early and often. This doesn't mean students should be preparing in 9th grade, but it does mean that students should not be putting off thinking about the exams two weeks prior to taking them. It also means that counselors should encourage students to keep

their old notes, and to review them periodically if they feel they are forgetting what they've learned. This last suggestion may elicit a few chuckles and eye rolls; I'll admit that it is idealistic, but I would also say that it's practical. The strategies and techniques that organizations like mine teach students mean little if the foundational content isn't there; the surest way to make sure students won't have to "re-learn" their material is to make sure it doesn't drop away in the first place. Second, counselors should encourage conversations between administration and Mathematics and English department heads to ensure everyone knows the skills students will be expected to employ. For example, an English teacher made aware of the realities of the Reading sections of the SAT and ACT could periodically administer exercises in which students must read a passage quickly and then write a paragraph or two about the main idea and the details of the passage without referencing the passage while doing so. Such exercises can help educators determine which students struggle with comprehension while giving the students a chance to expand their capacities of retention and recall. Third, counselors can communicate the realities of the tests to parents of students who perform well in school but falter on standardized ex-

ams. After all, the first step to fixing a problem is to discover the root of the problem itself. Once parents and their students understand that earning a 95 in Trigonometry or AP Language by no means makes a high SAT or ACT score a given, they can seek to address the gaps in skills and knowledge that can so often lead to puzzling disparities between GPA and standardized test scores.

Counselors are uniquely positioned to help their students succeed on the SAT and ACT. As the people whose job it is to guide students through high school and their education beyond, counselors are seen as important sources of information and advice in all matters of secondary education, including the standardized exams that can be such stressful rites of passage to high school juniors and seniors. Knowledge, they say, is power, and the more counselors can help their students understand what these exams really demand of students, the less trying and frustrating the SAT and ACT can become.

*Evan is VP Education, Method Test Prep. He can answer any questions you may have about the SAT or ACT by e-mailing him at [evan@methodtestprep.com](mailto:evan@methodtestprep.com) or visiting their website at [www.methodtestprep.com](http://www.methodtestprep.com).*




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# Careers to Consider Nondestructive Testing (NDT)

Great career, NO degree required.

By Michael Oden

One of the most important things a counselor can do to help his or her students prepare for life after graduation is to help them develop a plan or strategy for post-secondary education and training. This is especially true for those 30% or more students nationwide whose post-secondary education plans will most likely NOT include attending a college or university.

According to Dr. Randall Hansen, Ph.D., post-secondary education and training are critical for success after high school but post-secondary education does not necessarily mean college. He said there are numerous other career opportunities and choices out there that do not require a college degree (Quintessential Careers, 2015).

For example, a career in Nondestructive Testing (a.k.a. NDT) involves technicians who are trained to use specialized equipment like x-ray cameras and ultrasound machines to inspect the infrastructure of our world. NDT inspectors are not required to have a college degree and according to a 2014 salary survey from Personnel Qualified for Nondestructive Testing—entry level NDT inspectors averaged

\$55,000 - \$63,200 annually (pqndt.com, 2014).



## What is NDT?

Everything we use in our daily lives is manufactured or man-made. Nothing manmade lasts forever. Daily news reports about bridge failures or pipeline explosions, or other tragedies are reminders that everything manufactured, MUST be inspected! This type of inspection is called nondestructive testing because the inspection methods used will not destroy or harm the objects

being inspected.

NDT inspectors work in a variety of industries including aerospace, nuclear power, wind power, offshore, pipeline, automotive, manufacturing, defense, and many more. There are also opportunities to use automated and robotic equipment, or perform inspections using rope access equipment. Opportunities for both national & international travel are also available.

## Hands-on Training

NDT inspectors are not required to have a two or four year college degree. They are required to have a high school diploma or GED and they will need to complete an NDT training program that includes both NDT theory and practical equipment use. NDT training is offered mainly at vocational schools like The Ocean Corporation in Houston, Texas, where students spend a little more than 30 weeks learning the six most common NDT methods and will receive job placement assistance upon graduation.

There are also a few community colleges around the country that offer the training. Accredited

NDT schools may offer tuition assistance for those students who qualify and The American Society for Nondestructive Testing (the

professional association for NDT inspectors) annually offers scholarships to high school graduates interested in studying Nondestructive Testing.

The majority of NDT education and training required will be hands-on and in most cases the training can be completed in less than a year.

### Great Alternative to College Degree

Most people working in the NDT business today will tell you, "It's the best job around" and "I wish I would have known about it when I graduated high school".

NDT inspectors do not sit behind desks and work on computers. It is a hands-on career and the work is performed either outside or in industrial warehouses.

NDT work is interesting. Inspectors examine bridges, buildings, airplanes, ski lifts, roller coasters, ships, rockets, and just about anything else you can think of that is manufactured.

The work NDT inspectors do is important. It is a source of great pride for those who do it because it deals with safety. Inspectors must pay close attention to the details and always take their job responsibilities seriously. After all, someone's family will be flying in the jet plane after you have inspected it, maybe even your own! The majority of inspectors in the industry are men but the number of women has increased at least 6% since 2010 (pqndt.com, 2014). Women can be found on most every inspection job there is today. NDT is not a physically demanding job. Inspectors do not repair the flaws that their inspections reveal and rarely will they be required to lift or carry anything weighing more than 20-30 pounds.

For many high school graduates, training for a career in NDT may be a great post-secondary alternative to college. It offers young men and women an exciting, hands-on career with opportunities for travel, high income potential and best of all—no degree is required.

*Michael W. Oden, M.A. Ed., graduated from The Ocean Corporation School of Nondestructive Testing in Houston, Texas and has worked in the NDT industry for more than 15 years. For more information about careers in Nondestructive Testing contact Michael at [stepwedge@gmail.com](mailto:stepwedge@gmail.com).*





## Scholarships For Your Students

Encourage your students to register at NextStepU.com. They have a chance to win NextStepU scholarships, can use the College Match tool, search for additional scholarship money, and read articles about getting ready for college life.



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*We can even train your new school counselors or deliver a college planning program for you!*

# NextStepU.com

# Career and Technical Education (CTE)

*By Rebecca Vander Meulen*



Students at Brenda Turner's school have launched landscaping and engine-repair businesses while still in high school. New graduates have landed advanced manufacturing jobs with \$50,000 salaries. Alumni have pursued competitive college majors like nursing and engineering.

"Some of them have this really clear vision for what they want to do with their lives and are already taking steps to get there," says Turner, a counselor at Pathfinder Regional Vocational Technical High School in central Massachusetts. She also attended Pathfinder for computer programming.

Despite success stories like these, parents are often wary of considering technical schools as options for their children. The idea of a high school student learning a trade often rings hollow in a country where, according to the Pew Research Center, 94 percent of parents expect their children to attend college. These hopes clash with many parents' memories of vo-tech schools where underachievers were sent.

Megan Reed, Career Specialist at Butler Technology and Career Development Schools in southwestern Ohio, finds that many of her conversations with parents are about combating common ideas about CTE.

Career and technical education, often referred to as CTE, emphasizes postsecondary education, whether that means college, industry credentials, or both. These schools have a wide range of students, including student-athletes, honor-roll students, and those who have dropped out.

More than 7 million high school students attend ca-

reer and technical schools where they get hands-on, targeted training in fields such as nursing, firefighting, welding and graphic design. Some schools operate on a full-day schedule. At others, students split their time between their CTE schools and traditional high schools.

According to the Association for Career and Technical Education, more than 70 percent of students in CTE programs go on to postsecondary education shortly after finishing high school. And students in these programs are more likely to graduate. Ninety percent of students in CTE programs finish high school, compared with the nationwide rate of about 75 percent.

Turner says CTE makes it easier for students to understand the relevance of their academic subjects. Teachers at Pathfinder explain how auto mechanics use English and how heating and air conditioning technicians use math.

Brian Ruttman, Executive Officer for student and stakeholder services at Metro Technology Centers in Oklahoma City, adds that parents and school counselors are often surprised by how much graduates can earn.

"There's great career outlets for students, and they're making good money," Ruttman says.

## What you need to know about CTE

Fortunately, learning about the CTE options in your area doesn't have to be time-consuming. Here are some ways to become more knowledgeable:

Visit the career and technical school that serves

your area. Check out the programs and look for student services such as resume-writing assistance and job-interview preparation.

Ask how students are placed in career programs. How do they apply? Are some more competitive than others? What are the criteria for selecting students?

Find out how the students' day is structured. Are they in career programs for a full day or part of the day?

Understand how CTE fits into your state's high school graduation requirements. In Ohio, for example, students graduating from high school after 2017 will need to pass state tests, receive sufficient scores on a college entrance exam, or earn an industry credential and satisfactory scores on the ACT WorkKeys assessment. Reed, of Butler Tech, says this creates another option for students at risk of dropping out.

Ask about the school's classes in academic areas such as math and social studies. Sometimes schedules at a student's traditional school and technical school conflict, making it appear impossible for the student to take a necessary academic class. In cases like this, career schools often offer these subjects on site so students aren't short-changed.

How does the school accommodate students who want to take part in sports, performing arts and other activities at a traditional high school?

Learn how the school collaborates with you and other school counselors. Career and technical schools often have counselors on staff. What is their role?

Find out which assessment instruments the school uses. Schools that specialize in CTE make good use of aptitude tests and interest inventories, such as CareerScope and WorkKeys.

## Talking with parents

Students who hear about CTE programs that fit their interests are often excited to learn how to take advantage of them. School counselors can help parents help their children by showing how CTE can fit into a student's long-term goals.

## Here are pointers for discussing CTE with parents:

Encourage families to visit the school so they can

see what modern CTE looks like. "When we can get people on site for a tour, it makes a difference," Reed says.

Detail how the CTE curriculum compares with what the student would learn at a traditional school. Focus on how graduation requirements and post secondary preparation is addressed. Turner says parents are sometimes surprised to learn that Pathfinder students take Massachusetts' state-mandated assessments. "It's not a different test," she says. "It's not watered down. It's the same standards, the same benchmarks."

Stress that CTE training is likely free, or close to free, for high school students. Adults have to pay for similar training later. This savings is a plus for families worried about the cost of college. "As far as career exploration, there's nothing that can beat it," Reed says. "College is such an expensive place to explore careers." Even if students don't fall in love with a career field in high school, they can pick up skills they can use to earn money for college.

Show statistics demonstrating the demand for skilled workers in your region, and how much these workers can earn.

Find out what types of jobs CTE graduates in your area land, along with the types of postsecondary schools they attend. Invite graduates of your area's CTE programs to speak with your students.

Tell parents about career-focused extracurricular activities available to CTE students. Thousands of these students belong to national organizations such as SkillsUSA and HOSA – Future Health Professionals. "We regularly send kids to national competitions," says Ruttman of Metro Tech. These skill-focused competitions often shine a spotlight on students who aren't normally recognized for excellence.

CTE can give many students the real-world education they're looking for while preparing them well for whatever comes next. If students and parents have a full understanding of their options they can better decide whether career-focused education is right for them.

"Getting buy-in from teenagers is critical to having them take ownership of their education," Turner says.

*Rebecca VanderMeulen has written and contributed to NextStepU, Education.com, The Philadelphia Inquirer, and many other print and online outlets.*

# Consider the military

Serve your country, learn a skill and earn money for college with a career in the military.

**The U.S. Armed Forces are made up of the five service branches:**

- Air Force
- Army
- Coast Guard
- Marine Corps
- Navy

Also, consider enrolling in Reserve Officers' Training Corps, or ROTC. The obligation free program allows cadets to receive leadership training their freshman and sophomore years, with time to decide if it's the right choice. If you decide the military is right for you, the program will support you with scholarships for tuition, books and other college expenses. Then, upon graduation, you'll be commissioned as an officer and have immediate job opportunities.

And don't forget other financial benefits, too. Through the GI Bill, (ROTC), scholarships and more, the military can help you pay for college and other training. Interested in ROTC but not sure it's for you? You can enroll in your freshman and sophomore years



to receive leadership training without incurring obligation for military service. Once you accept a scholarship or enroll in advanced ROTC courses, you make a service commitment. No matter which branch of the military you choose—Army, Navy or Air Force—ROTC classes include officership, leadership, military history, organization and tactics. You will receive college credit for your ROTC classes. You'll also have to pass regular physical training exams and train for the tests with your peers in "PT" sessions.

After commissioning is when you'll decide on a career field and begin training for a specific job. Remember, the military offers many career options from becoming a soldier to working as a doctor, pilot, engineer and more! After commissioning, you'll be known as a second lieutenant or

"2nd Lt." in the Air Force, Army or Marine Corps. If you go into the Navy or Coast Guard, your rank will be "ensign."

Wondering what the differences are? Talk to a local recruiting office in your neighborhood or a recruiter in your area.

**NOTES:** \_\_\_\_\_

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**Read more!**

Get more tips on how to apply to college at  
**[LINKForCounselors.com](http://LINKForCounselors.com)**

# Take a college tour

Sure, you can tour a campus online these days. But there's nothing better than a campus tour when you're trying to get a feel for the college or university. In order to make the most of your college tour you have to be prepared. Follow these steps and you'll be a college tour pro!

## Be prepared

Research its outstanding programs, faculty-student ratio, educational mission — even its mascot. Know the competitive sports teams and major rivals. Prepare yourself with all of the pertinent, public info about the college.

### SCHOOL NOTES:

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## Read while you wait

Once you arrive on campus, check out the bulletins, pick up a copy of the college newspaper or magazine and don't forget to grab a few brochures from the admissions office. This will help familiarize you with the campus basics, so you can focus on more in-depth questions while touring.

### Questions to ask the tour guide:

- Why did you choose this college?
- What was your best experience here?
- Why did you stay after freshman year?
- What's your plan for after graduation?

## Ask questions

Sometimes the excitement of the tour can lead to lots of distractions, which means you may forget to ask questions. Be sure to create a list of questions before the tour and keep them handy the day of. Reference it regularly to make sure you've got all the answers. If a question hasn't been addressed, ask it!

### YOUR QUESTIONS:

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## Talk to students

Some of your best feedback will come from students who are actually at the college! They are living

the life you may live everyday, so who better to give you insight on the day-to-day activities on campus? Visit the campus coffee shop or commons and ask students what the campus is really like (It's OK to leave the tour guide and/or parents behind on this one!)

## While on the tour

Your tour guide will be an actual student at the college you are visiting, so be prepared to ask questions.

## After the tour

Write down five impressions of the school. Consider the campus personality, diversity of the student body, the size of the lecture halls and student interaction. These little mental reminders will help you compare colleges later.

### FIRST IMPRESSIONS:

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## Find your match

Get matched up with your perfect college at **LINKForCounselors.com**



# Study abroad

The decision whether or not to study abroad can be a difficult one. But once you've decided that you have your heart set on traveling to a foreign country, there are still many decisions to be made.

## ⚡ Pick a length

There are study abroad programs of all kinds. Go abroad for a few weeks, a semester or a year. Take a trip during winter break or do a summer program.

The most common college programs involve studying for a semester or year in another country. Some programs are administered by your home university, while others are offered through foreign universities.

## ⚡ Research your options

Some schools send students and professors abroad for the semester, creating a group atmosphere with people from your home university.

Other schools might be part of programs where you'll be with students from other colleges. Or you could take classes through a foreign university. But before signing up with another college, make sure credits from other universities will transfer to your school.

If your school doesn't have a program in the country you want to study in, then a private company might be the answer.

If you're up for deep immersion into a different culture and language, you could also apply directly to a foreign university. If you plan to finish school in the U.S., then you are responsible for credit transfer, organizing your application and maintaining a relationship between your college abroad and your home school.

## ⚡ Pick a location

Make sure the program you pick fits your needs and your lifestyle. Check out the classes before applying, as well as the housing and meal programs.

## ⚡ Check the requirements

Does your program require a certain proficiency of language? When do you need to arrive? Make sure your academic load is acceptable, and ensure that the credits will transfer back home.

## ⚡ Application essentials

Many applications require teacher recommendations, a short essay and a transcript. Don't wait until the last minute to apply. And don't forget to apply for a student visa early — it takes time to process. For more information

on student visas, go to <http://travel.state.gov/visa>.

Lastly, investigate your health and travel insurance and transportation options.

## ⚡ Pack

Once you're accepted and all your paperwork is in order, start packing your bags! Be reasonable about what you pack, though. Check the climate of the region and leave space to bring things home!

*Excerpted from "How to spend a semester studying abroad" by Elizabeth Bond.*

### NOTES:

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# Consider a two-year college

You're on the last leg of your high school education about to head out on your own and take on the world. One of the most important decisions facing you is your education and your career plans.

You can be anything you want to be...the possibilities are endless. The first step though, after thinking about the careers you may want to pursue, is deciding what kind of training and education you will need to achieve those goals.

Here are some of the educational options available to you:

**1 Community college**  
Those who go to community college obtain a general academic education that can help you get all your core courses out of the way and prepare you for a four-year school with a specific major. This education typically takes two years and can provide you with a solid base of academic knowledge that you can then apply to a number of different career paths. So if you don't know what you want to do when you grow up, that's OK. You can check out classes that sound interesting and find out if the career suits you.

## Technical school

Technical school, sometimes also

referred to as vocational school, is almost the complete opposite of college. Rather than receiving a generalized education, students who enroll in a course of study at a technical school take very specific classes that prepare them for a particular job (for example: culinary arts, massage therapy, office management, cosmetology, fashion design, or information technology). Although vocational classes are typically found in community colleges, there are also a large number of technical institutes that provide this kind of training.

There is no "best" or "worst" choice; both of these educational possibilities has advantages and disadvantages. However, in order to determine which path is the right one for you, you must first consider your potential career path and the ensuing requirements.

## Keep a few things in mind:

If you're not sure about what you want to do for a living, or which career you'd like to pursue, community college may be the best option. This is because college allows you to "try on" different disciplines and see which one fits best.

If you know exactly what you want to do, perhaps a technical school is the right choice. This is particularly true if the career you're interested in requires hands-on technical knowledge and experience. One of the great aspects about a technical school is the amount of practical experience you will obtain during your course of study, which will directly translate to the job.

What if you're not sure about what you want to do? Some of you may already know exactly which career path you want to pursue. However, if you don't know, don't worry — you're not alone! It may take a while for you to decide and that's OK. Talk to your parents, friends, teachers and counselors, and tell them about some of the career choices you're considering or ask them for suggestions.

Taking some time to really think about what you want to do and what will make you happy is just as important as deciding where you'll go to make your dreams happen.

*Excerpted from "What school is right for you" by Anne Chaconas, director of admissions counseling for PowerScore Test Preparation ([www.powerscore.com](http://www.powerscore.com))*

# Play sports in college

Interested in playing sports in college, but not sure where to start? We've got you covered.

## Get started early

▶ Start the process your freshman year of high school and schedule a meeting with your school counselor and discuss the proper sequence of classes you will need to participate in NCAA Division I or Division II athletics.

▶ Review the NCAA Eligibility Center information with your counselor and become familiar with its standards. Student-athletes interested in either of these two divisions will need to register with the NCAA Eligibility Center during your junior year of high school.

▶ Meet with your counselor about your current college resume to determine any potential weaknesses. Admissions departments are looking for rigor in your course work and well-rounded individuals! If you go about the process the right way, you significantly improve your chances of getting admitted to your number one choice.

▶ Be sure to visit several campuses. Before you visit, do some research online. Look at the athletic department variables such



as the coach, the program and current team members.

▶ Review program history and assess the retention rates of freshman athletes through their senior year.

▶ Check the number of athletes participating in each competition and how the program fared with their win/loss record. Checking the hometowns and high schools of the current roster will give you an idea of recruiting trends.

## When you're on campus ask these questions:

- Ask to see where the team practices, locker rooms, weight room, training room and where competitions take place.
- Figure out the academic success of the athletes involved in the program? The team GPA is usually a good indicator.
- How much traveling does the

team do and how flexible are the professors with getting work in advance or make up work/tests?

## Find the right college

If you are truly looking to find the right college fit, academics are the first priority. Never choose a school only based on a coach or playing a sport. The best litmus test would include your desire to still attend that college if the coach left or if you were injured and not able to participate in your respective sport again. The ultimate goal is to get your degree. Playing a college sport is a wonderful bonus but shouldn't be the main reason you selected that institution.

*Excerpted from "Recruit Doctor" by Chris Bianchi, president of Red Penguin Athletics.*

CONFERENCE	LOCATION	DATE
Pittsburgh National College Fair	David L. Lawrence Convention Center	Thursday, February 4: 9:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.; 6:30 p.m. - 9:00 p.m. Friday, February 5: 9:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.
Houston National College Fair	NRG Arena	Tuesday, February 9: 9:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.; 6:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m.
Miami National College Fair	DoubleTree by Hilton Miami Airport Convention Center	Sunday, February 21: 12:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.
Tampa National College Fair	Florida State Fairgrounds Expo Hall	Sunday, February 28: 12:00 p.m. - 3:00 p.m.
Syracuse National College Fair	SRC Arena, Onondaga Community College	Thursday, March 10: 9:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.; 5:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m.
Atlanta National College Fair	Georgia International Convention Center	Sunday, March 13: 12:30 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.
Rochester National College Fair	Rochester Riverside Convention Center	Sunday, March 13: 1:00 p.m. - 3:30 p.m. Monday, March 14: 9:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.
Buffalo National College Fair	Buffalo Niagara Convention Center	Wednesday, March 16: 9:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.; 6:00 p.m. - 8:30 p.m. Thursday, March 17: 9:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.
Upstate South Carolina National College Fair	TD Convention Center	Saturday, March 19: 1:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.
Charlotte National College Fair	Charlotte Convention Center	Sunday, March 20: 12:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.
Metro Detroit National College Fair	Suburban Collection Showplace	Sunday, March 20: 2:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m. Monday, March 21: 8:30 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.
Greater Raleigh National College Fair	Raleigh Convention Center	Tuesday, March 22: 4:30 p.m. - 7:30 p.m.
West Michigan National College Fair	DeVos Place	Wednesday, March 23: 8:30 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.; 6:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m.
Hartford National College Fair	Connecticut Convention Center	Wednesday, March 30: 9:00 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.; 6:30 p.m. - 8:30 p.m. Thursday, March 31: 9:00 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.
Springfield National College Fair	Eastern States Exposition (The Big E)	Sunday, April 3: 1:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m. Monday, April 4: 9:00 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.
Austin National College Fair	Palmer Events Center	Tuesday, April 5: 5:30 p.m. - 8:00 p.m.
Providence National College Fair	Rhode Island Convention Center	Tuesday, April 5: 5:30 p.m. - 8:30 p.m.
Omaha National College Fair	CenturyLink Center Omaha	Thursday, April 7: 9:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.; 6:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m.

CONFERENCE	LOCATION	DATE
Dallas / Ft. Worth National College Fair	Arlington Convention Center	Thursday, April 7: 5:00 p.m. - 8:30 p.m.
Honolulu National College Fair	Hawaii Convention Center	Tuesday, April 12: 8:30 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.; 5:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m.
Columbus National College Fair	Greater Columbus Convention Center	Saturday, April 16: 1:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.
Nashville National College Fair	Music City Center	Sunday, April 17: 1:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.
Cleveland National College Fair	Cleveland Convention Center	Sunday, April 17: 1:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.
Montgomery County National College Fair	Montgomery County Agricultural Center	Wednesday, April 20: 9:45 a.m. - 12:45 p.m.
Greater Memphis National College Fair	Agricenter International	Tuesday, April 19: 6:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m. Wednesday, April 20: 9:00 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.
San Diego National College Fair	San Diego Convention Center	Wednesday, April 20: 9:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.; 6:00 p.m. - 8:30 p.m.
New Jersey National College Fair	Meadowlands Exposition Center at Harmon Meadow	Wednesday, April 20: 9:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.; 5:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m. Thursday, April 21: 9:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.
Prince George's County National College Fair	Prince George's Sports and Learning Complex	Friday, April 22: 9:30 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.
New York National College Fair	Jacob K. Javits Convention Center of New York	Sunday, April 24: 11:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.
Orange County National College Fair	Anaheim Convention Center	Sunday, April 24: 1:30 p.m. - 4:30 p.m.
Ventura/Tri-County National College Fair	Ventura County Fairgrounds	Monday, April 25: 5:30 p.m. - 8:30 p.m.
Inland Empire National College Fair	Ontario Convention Center	Wednesday, April 27: 9:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.; 6:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m.
Greater Los Angeles National College Fair	Pasadena Convention Center	Thursday, April 28: 9:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.; 6:00 p.m. - 9:00 p.m.
San Francisco National College Fair	Cow Palace Arena	Saturday, April 30: 1:30 p.m. - 4:30 p.m.
Vancouver International Universities Fair	Vancouver Convention Centre	Saturday, May 7: 1:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.
Boston National College Fair	Boston Convention & Exhibition Center (BCEC)	Sunday, May 22: 2:00 p.m. - 5:00 p.m. Monday, May 23: 8:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.

*Please check with show organizer to confirm dates, location and times or for further information*

# LINK for Counselors thanks you for the kind words!



"Thank you for the most recent issue of LINK. I added the LINK for the LINK magazine on our school guidance page under Resources for Hoover High School. Our parents will like this magazine." — *Jason Downey Hoover High School*

"I just received my copy of your magazine. What caught my attention were the topics on the front of the magazine. Thank you for thinking of us counselors!" — *Cynthia Deiner Los Osos High School*

"I just happened to get a copy of LINK Magazine and it's so helpful!" — *Sherri O'Lonegan, MA, NCC, LPC Air Academy High School*

"Your group is doing a great job/service for all of us. I use your articles frequently as I advise students and parents, and they also keep me fresh and engaged with current goings-on. LINK is a hit!" — *Steve Cook Stoney Creek High School*

"We absolutely love LINK! Thank you so much for this valuable resource." — *Darrell R. Pickard, M.S.Ed. Stratford Senior High School*

"I'm loving LINK Magazine. Great articles/topics; very relevant." — *Robert F. Kennedy Smoky Hill High School*

"I just got LINK magazine this morning, and I love it!" — *Mike Hays, M.Ed., LPC-I Northwest High School Counseling Team*

"We are SO impressed! Thank you so much for this great resource." — *Jenna Clark Bedford North Lawrence High School*

"LINK is filled with articles that were 110% relative to what we do day in and day out in the high school counseling profession. What a great resource for all professionals!" — *Mary Dolejs Independence High School*

"It is a GREAT magazine that students, counselors and teachers can read to obtain great college and university information." — *Juan Mendoza-Romero, Ed.D. Panorama High School*

"I am only on page 33 of the magazine and I already have great information!! I am really impressed, and will look forward to more!!!" — *Melanie Schubach Boling High School*

"I have been in this profession for 24 years and this is the best resource I have ever read!" — *John Chillman, Faith Lutheran, Las Vegas, NV - 11/15*

"Love the magazine - always find great ideas and great conversation starters!" *Counselor, Signet Research Study, 11/15*

"I do think the articles are useful and I use them to add information to our newsletter for our parents." *Counselor, Signet Research Study, 11/15*

"I love that you send me a hard copy and I love the size of the book, Easy to carry and read while waiting in the school pick up line and for appointments. Thanks!" *Counselor, Signet Research Study, 11/15*

We love to hear your feedback on how we are doing. Send any comments on how we are doing or what you would like to see to [Jason@linkforcounselors.com](mailto:Jason@linkforcounselors.com).



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**Institutional Designation:** Private/For-Profit

**Tuition Costs:** Actual tuition and housing costs will vary depending on program, number of credits enrolled, and living arrangements. Contact school of interest for details.

**Average Student Aid Package:** Financial aid is available for those who qualify. Students who require financial assistance must complete the FAFSA and meet with a financial aid officer. Students may also apply for a number of scholarships focusing on their specific areas of career interest.

**Average Scholarship/Grant Aid Awarded:** Average Scholarship/Grant Aid Awarded

**Average Work-Study Aid Awarded:** Varies by location

The Art Institutes system of schools offers bachelor's and associate's degree programs in the areas of media arts, culinary, fashion and design. Here, in a collaborative, creative, and challenging environment—from dedicated instructors, many with real-life experience—students can learn the skills they need to build a career on what they love. Find out more about our focused curricula and locations at [create.artinstitutes.edu](http://create.artinstitutes.edu).

**Telephone:** 800-894-5793



# Barry University

## BARRY UNIVERSITY

**Location:** Miami, FL

**Website:** [www.barry.edu](http://www.barry.edu)

**Year Founded:** 1940

**Type of Institution:** University, Private

**Student-Faculty Ratio:** 14:1

**Tuition Costs:** \$28,800

**Room & Board:** \$10,600

**Average Student Aid Package:** \$26,808

**Average Percentage of Financial Need Met:** 44%

**Average Scholarship/Grant Aid Awarded:** \$19,316

**Average Work-Study Aid Awarded:** \$3,000

Barry University in Miami, Fla., offers exciting learning opportunities, with more than 75 majors and specializations. You learn in small classes with professors who not only know your name, but they know your goals and will help you succeed. You live on a 122-acre campus just minutes from the beach and downtown Miami. You gain hands-on experience and apply what you've learned in the classroom to a rapidly changing world.

**Telephone:** 800-695-2279

**Email:** [admissions@barry.edu](mailto:admissions@barry.edu)





## CENTRAL ARIZONA COLLEGE

**Location:** 8470 N. Overfield Road, Coolidge, AZ 85128

**Website:** [www.centralaz.edu](http://www.centralaz.edu)

**Year Founded:** 1962

**Type of Institution:** Community College

**Student-Faculty Ratio:** 18:1

**Institutional Designation:** Accredited by Higher Learning Commission

**Tuition Costs:** \$82 per credit hour for Arizona residents / \$164 per credit hour for out of state residents

**Room & Board:** [www.centralaz.edu/reslife](http://www.centralaz.edu/reslife)

**Average Student Aid Package:** \$20,124

**Average Percentage of Financial Need Met:** 82%

**Average Scholarship/Grant Aid Awarded:** \$8,801

**Average Work-Study Aid Awarded:** \$1,500

For more than 45 years, CAC has been serving and educating the diverse communities of Pinal County, AZ. With five campuses and three centers located throughout the county, CAC provides accessible, educational, economic, cultural and personal growth opportunities for all ages. The college offers nearly 150 degrees and certificates, on-line and university transfer courses, career training and personal enrichment classes. An on-campus living environment featuring residence life options is available at the Signal Peak Campus.

**Telephone:** 800-237-9814



## D'YOUVILLE COLLEGE

**Location:** Buffalo, NY

**Website:** [www.dyc.edu](http://www.dyc.edu)

**Year Founded:** 1908

**Type of Institution:** D'Youville is an independent, urban, coeducational institution. It provides health care, business education, liberal arts and professional programs.

**Student-Faculty Ratio:** 12:1

**Tuition Costs:** \$23,900

**Room & Board:** \$11,180

**Average Student Aid Package:** \$20,124

**Average Percentage of Financial Need Met:** 82%

**Average Scholarship/Grant Aid Awarded:** \$8,801

**Average Work-Study Aid Awarded:** \$1,500

D'Youville's programs cover everything from health care to business education with a strong liberal arts core in the curriculum. The success of D'Youville's programs is reflected in the high placement rate of graduates being employed or continuing in advanced studies. This reflects an excellent return on investment. D'Youville remains focused on meeting the demands of the professional job market and the needs of students. It offers a competitive tuition and lives up to its motto, "Educating for Life."

**Telephone:** 800-777-3921

**Email:** [admissions@dyc.edu](mailto:admissions@dyc.edu)





## ERSKINE COLLEGE

**Location:** Due West, SC

**Website:** [visit.erskine.edu](http://visit.erskine.edu)

**Year Founded:** 1839

**Type of Institution:** Private, Christian, 4-year, liberal arts college

**Student-Faculty Ratio:** 12:1

**Tuition Costs:** \$31,345

**Room & Board:** \$10,600

**Average Student Aid Package:** \$35,960 (SC)

**Average Percentage of Financial Need Met:** >95%

**Average Scholarship/Grant Aid Awarded:** \$22,360

**Average Work-Study Aid Awarded:** \$1,500

Forbes ranks Erskine College #1 among Christian colleges in South Carolina and #1 among NCAA Div. 2 schools in the Southeast (Forbes 2015 America's Top Colleges). As the first Christian college in the state, Erskine has provided excellent education in a nurturing atmosphere for over 175 years. Erskine's small size and rich tradition of scholarship create an ideal atmosphere for students who desire close working relationships with faculty. The results of this intensely relational approach are demonstrated by Erskine's exceptional rates of acceptance and completion in both research and professional graduate programs, with several programs achieving near 100% placement.

**Telephone:** 864-379-8838

**Email:** [admissions@erskine.edu](mailto:admissions@erskine.edu)



*Believe in the possibilities.*

## GANNON UNIVERSITY

**Location:** Erie, PA

**Website:** [www.gannon.edu](http://www.gannon.edu)

**Year Founded:** 1925

**Type of Institution:** University

**Student-Faculty Ratio:** 14:1

**Institutional Designation:** Private - Religious

**Tuition Costs:** \$28,590-\$30,310

**Room & Board:** \$10,270-\$13,500

**Average Student Aid Package:** \$20,989

**Average Scholarship/Grant Aid Awarded:** \$17,030

**Average Work-Study Aid Awarded:** \$2,300

Gannon University in downtown Erie, Pennsylvania, is a caring community of dynamic faculty and staff who educate motivated students in an environment inspired by Catholic values. Enrollment at Gannon exceeds 4,400 students, and personal attention for each student is provided with a student-to-faculty ratio of 14:1. U.S. News & World Report's "America's Best Colleges" continues to cite Gannon as a top tier university in the northern region of the United States. Additionally, Gannon has been ranked in the annual guide's Great Schools, Great Prices category, which affirms Gannon's mission of providing a quality education at an affordable price.

**Telephone:** 814-871-7407

**Email:** [admissions@gannon.edu](mailto:admissions@gannon.edu)





## HAMPTON UNIVERSITY

**Location:** Hampton, VA

**Website:** [www.hamptonu.edu](http://www.hamptonu.edu)

**Year Founded:** 1868

**Type of Institution:** Private

**Student-Faculty Ratio:** 10:1

**Institutional Designation:** Hampton University, coeducational

**Tuition Costs:** \$20,526

**Room & Board:** \$10,176

**Average Student Aid Package:** \$5,632

**Average Percentage of Financial Need Met:** 35%

**Average Scholarship/Grant Aid Awarded:** \$5,050

At Hampton University "Inspiration to Impact" are more than words. We offer a rich academic environment that cultivates leaders. Through global scientific collaborations and modern research projects, our professors and students are asking questions and finding answers. We offer our students innovative courses that lead to 48 bachelor's; 24 master's programs; and doctoral or professional degrees in nursing, physics, atmospheric/planetary sciences, business leadership and administration, educational leadership and management, physical therapy, and pharmacy.

**Telephone:** 757-727-5000

**Email:** [admissioncounselor@hamptonu.edu](mailto:admissioncounselor@hamptonu.edu)



## HOFSTRA UNIVERSITY

prideandpurpose

## HOFSTRA UNIVERSITY

**Location:** Hempstead, NY

**Website:** [hofstra.edu](http://hofstra.edu)

**Year Founded:** 1935

**Type of Institution:** University

**Student-Faculty Ratio:** 13:1

**Institutional Designation:** Private, Non-profit

**Tuition Costs:** \$39,400

**Room & Board:** \$13,950

**Average Student Aid Package:** \$25,487

**Average Percentage of Financial Need Met:** 61%

**Average Scholarship/Grant Aid Awarded:** \$15,009

**Average Work-Study Aid Awarded:** \$2,883

Hofstra University offers students the complete college experience — a vibrant, active campus with hundreds of cultural and social events annually, small classes with experienced faculty, access to state-of-the-art technology and facilities — all less than an hour away from downtown New York.

**Telephone:** 516-463-6700

**Email:** [admissions@hofstra.edu](mailto:admissions@hofstra.edu)





## LYCOMING COLLEGE

**Location:** Williamsport, PA

**Website:** [www.lycoming.edu](http://www.lycoming.edu)

**Year Founded:** 1812

**Type of Institution:** A private, residential, four-year liberal arts undergraduate institution

**Student-Faculty Ratio:** 14:1

**Tuition Costs:** \$35,000 (year)

**Room & Board:** \$5,552 (room/year); \$5,332 (board/year)

**Average Student Aid Package:** 100%

At Lycoming College, our network of nearly 15,000 alumni find success across all industries. They include dozens of executives at Fortune 500 companies and public servants at all levels of national and international government. They win Pulitzers, Oscars and Emmys. They get accepted to nationally ranked graduate programs such as Harvard Medical School and the University of Pennsylvania. What's more, they come back to network, metro counsel and help the next generation of students find their careers and pursue higher degrees.

One of the nation's 50 oldest and most respected liberal arts colleges, Lycoming College enrolls 1,400 students from 30 states and 15 countries. Join a community of active learners and renowned scholars in class sizes of 18 or less. Work with professors to craft customized, market-driven majors, minors and concentrations across our 36 academic programs. Compete in one of 17 NCAA Division III sports. Study abroad in more than a dozen countries. Put the liberal arts to work at Lycoming College.

**Telephone:** 1-800-345-3920 or 570-321-4026

**Email:** [admissions@lycoming.edu](mailto:admissions@lycoming.edu)



## MARSHALL UNIVERSITY

**Location:** Huntington, WV

**Website:** [www.marshall.edu](http://www.marshall.edu)

**Year Founded:** 1837

**Type of Institution:** Public

**Student-Faculty Ratio:** 19:1

**Institutional Designation:** Master's Large

**Tuition Costs:** \$6,814 (in-state); \$15,602 (non-resident)

**Room & Board:** \$9,832

**Average Student Aid Package:** \$12,033

Marshall University is a state-supported, public institution with multiple campuses and educational centers in West Virginia. Founded in 1837, the university is headquartered on a 100-acre campus in the heart of Huntington, W.V., the second-largest city in the state. Students find that Marshall combines the best of the opportunities of a large institution with the personal care and attention expected with a school of a much smaller size.

**Telephone:** 1-877-goherd1

**Email:** [recruitment@marshall.edu](mailto:recruitment@marshall.edu)





## MERCYHURST UNIVERSITY

**Location:** Erie, PA

**Website:** [www.mercyhurst.edu/mymuexperience](http://www.mercyhurst.edu/mymuexperience)

**Year Founded:** 1926

**Type of Institution:** 4-year, Catholic, liberal arts

**Student-Faculty Ratio:** 14:1

**Tuition Costs:** \$31,320

**Room & Board:** \$10,800-\$12,000 (depending on residence hall)

**Average Student Aid Package:** \$17,000

**Average Percentage of Financial Need Met:** More than 90% of students receive financial aid

Mercyhurst University, founded in 1926 by the Sisters of Mercy, is a fully accredited, four-year, Catholic comprehensive institution, in Erie, Pa. The university offers more than 100 majors, minors and concentrations as well as unique post-baccalaureate, advanced certificate and master's degree programs. In addition, Mercyhurst provides certificate and associate degree offerings at branch campuses in North East, Corry and the Booker T. Washington Center. Inspired by our motto, "Carpe Diem" (seize the day), our faculty and students are busy making a difference on and off campus — from "the Hill" to the far corners of the world.

**Telephone:** 800-777-3921



## MIDWESTERN STATE UNIVERSITY

**Location:** Wichita Falls, TX

**Website:** [www.mwsu.edu](http://www.mwsu.edu)

**Year Founded:** 1922

**Type of Institution:** Comprehensive higher education system

**Student-Faculty Ratio:** 17:1

**Institutional Designation:** Public, State

**Tuition Costs:** \$4,002 (in-state); \$4,977 (non-resident) per semester

**Room & Board:** \$3,535-4,050 per semester depending on hall

**Average Student Aid Package:** \$10,933

**Average Percentage of Financial Need Met:** 67%

**Average Scholarship/Grant Aid Awarded:** \$5,805

**Average Work-Study Aid Awarded:** \$2,681

Midwestern State is recognized as a public liberal arts university with strong programs in the arts, humanities, sciences, and social sciences as well as accredited professional programs in mechanical engineering, social work, nursing, radiologic science, respiratory care, athletic training, and business, among others. MSU offers the individual attention of a private education but the affordability of a public university. Classes average fewer than 30 students, and most are taught by fulltime faculty, not graduate assistants. Students are active in more than 100 organizations and bring a spirit of competition to 13 NCAA Division II athletic programs.

**Telephone:** 800-842-1922

**Email:** [admissions@mwsu.edu](mailto:admissions@mwsu.edu)





## THE OCEAN CORPORATION

**Location:** Houston, Texas

**Website:** [www.oceancorp.com](http://www.oceancorp.com)

**Year Founded:** 1969

**Type of Institution:** Vocational/Trade School

**Student-Faculty Ratio:** 30:1

**Institutional Designation:** Single Campus/Full Academic Year/Proprietary

**Tuition Costs:** \$21,000

**Room & Board:** No on-campus housing and meal plans available

**Average Student Aid Package:** \$15,541

**Average Percentage of Financial Need Met:** 78%

**Average Scholarship/Grant Aid Awarded:** \$4,862

The Ocean Corporation has trained men and women for exciting new careers since 1969. Students train at The Ocean Corporation to become commercial divers and industrial NDT inspectors. We have been in the business for over 40 years and we know the “nuts and bolts” of both industries. Our hands-on training takes less than 8 months to complete and will give you the competitive edge you need to succeed.

**Telephone:** 800-321-0298

**Email:** [admissions@oceancorp.com](mailto:admissions@oceancorp.com)



## PENNSYLVANIA COLLEGE OF TECHNOLOGY

**Location:** Williamsport, PA

**Website:** [www.pct.edu/link](http://www.pct.edu/link)

**Year Founded:** 1914w

**Type of Institution:** 4-year college

**Student-Faculty Ratio:** 17.6 to 1

**Institutional Designation:** Public

**Tuition Costs:** \$15,810 (PA); \$22,470 (out-of-state)

**Room & Board:** \$10,288

Pennsylvania College of Technology, a special mission affiliate of Penn State, is a national leader in applied technology education. Penn College offers more than 100 bachelor, associate, and certificate majors to nearly 5,600 students in careers ranging from manufacturing, design, transportation, and construction to hospitality, health, business, and natural resources. Business/industry connections, small classes, industry-standard equipment, and faculty with work experience contribute to strong graduate placement rates. The full college experience awaits those desiring on-campus housing, Greek Life, student organizations, and NCAA Division III athletics.

**Telephone:** 800-367-9222

**Email:** [pctInfo@pct.edu](mailto:pctInfo@pct.edu)





## REGENT UNIVERSITY

**Location:** Virginia Beach, VA

**Website:** [www.regent.edu](http://www.regent.edu)

**Year Founded:** 1977

**Type of Institution:** Private, Liberal Arts, Christian  
**Student-Faculty Ratio:** 17:1

**Tuition Costs:** On Campus: \$15,900/year (24-36 credits/yr.); Evening/Online: \$395 per credit hour

**Room & Board:** Room: \$2,150 - \$5,785 per semester; Board: \$2,520 avg.)

**Average Student Aid Package:** \$11,889

**Average Percentage of Financial Need Met:** 60%

**Average Scholarship/Grant Aid Awarded:** \$5,499

Regent University prepares students with the knowledge to excel and the faith to live with purpose. Our 19,000 alumni, from more than 110 countries, are changing the world as accomplished professionals. Named a top-25 school nationally for online bachelor's programs (U.S. News & World Report, 2014), Regent is among the most affordable undergraduate Christian colleges (CCCU 2014). Fully accredited, challenging programs are available online and on campus. New classes begin every eight weeks

**Telephone:** 800-373-5504

**Email:** [admissions@regent.edu](mailto:admissions@regent.edu)



## SALISBURY UNIVERSITY

**Location:** Salisbury, MD

**Website:** [www.salisbury.edu](http://www.salisbury.edu)

**Year Founded:** 1925

**Type of Institution:** 4-year, public comprehensive  
**Student-Faculty Ratio:** 16:1

**Institutional Designation:** A Maryland University of National Distinction

**Tuition Costs:** \$8,128 in-state; \$16,474 out of state

**Room & Board:** \$10,240 (based on "all day, every day" meals and double occupancy renovated dorm)

**Average Student Aid Package:** \$7,143 (need-based)

**Average Percentage of Financial Need Met:** 52.4% (need-based)

**Average Scholarship/Grant Aid Awarded:** \$2,514 (non-need-based), \$5,644 (need-based)

**Average Work-Study Aid Awarded:** \$1,888

Nationally recognized for academic excellence, Salisbury University is a proud member of the University System of Maryland offering 42 undergraduate majors, 14 graduate programs and 2 doctorates in nursing practice and education. SU is ranked among the nation's "Best Value" colleges by Kiplinger's Personal Finance, Money, Forbes and The Princeton Review and U.S. News & World Report. Washington Monthly also named SU among America's "Best Bang For The Buck" Colleges. Sea Gull athletes have earned 18 NCAA Division III national team championships. Founded in 1925, SU is just 2.5 hours from Baltimore and Washington, D.C.

**Telephone:** 410-543-6161

**Email:** [admissions@salisbury.edu](mailto:admissions@salisbury.edu)





## STATE UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK AT FREDONIA

**Location:** Fredonia, NY

**Website:** [www.fredonia.edu](http://www.fredonia.edu)

**Year Founded:** 1826

**Type of Institution:** Fredonia is a comprehensive, public, liberal arts university in western New York that offers bachelor's and master's degree and advanced certificate programs.

**Student-Faculty Ratio:** 16:1

**Tuition Costs:** In-state Tuition/year: \$6,470; Out-of-state Tuition/year: \$16,320; Fees: \$1,604

**Room & Board:** \$7,600 (room) \$4,900 (food)

Fredonia has just what you're looking for in an education. With 5,300 students on a beautiful residential campus, it's the perfect mix of campus size and program variety that provides a classic, complete college experience in a creative and vibrant environment. With affordable tuition and housing, Fredonia gives you the academic challenges of a selective liberal arts college committed to developing your character as you prepare for a successful career and a rewarding life.

**Telephone:** 716-672-3251 or 800-252-1212

**Email:** [admissions@fredonia.edu](mailto:admissions@fredonia.edu)



## SUNY OSWEGO

**Location:** Oswego, NY

**Website:** [www.oswego.edu/admissions](http://www.oswego.edu/admissions)

**Type of Institution:** Comprehensive higher education system

**Institutional Designation:** Public, state

**Tuition Costs:** In-state: \$6,170; Non-resident: \$15,820

**Room & Board:** \$12,958

**Average Student Aid Package:** \$7,779

**Average Percentage of Financial Need Met:** 80%

**Average Scholarship/Grant Aid Awarded:** \$5,980

**Average Work-Study Aid Awarded:** \$1,107

Founded in 1861, SUNY Oswego enrolls over 6,800 full-time undergraduate students at our picturesque and residential campus along the southeastern shore of Lake Ontario in upstate New York.

SUNY Oswego, offering a broad range of liberal arts and career directed academic programs, has a reputation for excellence and has been consistently recognized as among the nation's "Best Northeastern Colleges" by The Princeton Review and U.S. News and World Report. SUNY Oswego has also been named to the President's Higher Education Community Service Honor Roll with Distinction.

**Telephone:** 315-312-2250

**Email:** [admiss@oswego.edu](mailto:admiss@oswego.edu)





## Potsdam

THE STATE UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK

### SUNY POTSDAM

**Location:** Potsdam, NY

**Website:** [www.potsdam.edu](http://www.potsdam.edu)

**Year Founded:** 1816

**Type of Institution:** Public

**Student-Faculty Ratio:** 15:1

**Institutional Designation:** SUNY Arts Campus

**Tuition Costs:** In-state: \$5,870; Non-resident: \$15,320

**Room & Board:** \$10,580

**Average Student Aid Package:** \$12,000

**Average Scholarship/Grant Aid Awarded:** \$2,600

**Average Work-Study Aid Awarded:** \$1,200

SUNY Potsdam is one of 64 units of the State University of New York and one of 13 SUNY Arts and Science Colleges. The College is one of only three SUNY campuses designated as an arts school. SUNY Potsdam enrolls 4,330 graduate and undergraduate students, with approximately 2,100 living on campus. The College offers more than 40 majors, with an additional 45 minors available.

**Telephone:** 315-267-2180

**Email:** [admissions@potsdam.edu](mailto:admissions@potsdam.edu)



## TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY GALVESTON CAMPUS.

### TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY AT GALVESTON

**Location:** Galveston, TX

**Website:** [AggiesByTheSea.com](http://AggiesByTheSea.com) or [tamug.edu](http://tamug.edu)

**Year Founded:** 1962 as Texas Maritime Academy

**Type of Institution:** University

**Student-Faculty Ratio:** 16:1

**Institutional Designation:** Public, State

**Tuition Costs:** \$5,405.86/year (Texas resident); \$15,223.53/ year (out-of-state) for 24 credit hours/year

**Room & Board:** \$8,358.96/year with 19 meals/week

**Average Student Aid Package:** \$11,645

**Average Percentage of Financial Need Met:** 67%

**Average Scholarship/Grant Aid Awarded:** \$5,554

**Average Work-Study Aid Awarded:** \$2,165

A great education and an adventure. Science majors use the latest technology to map oceans, count whales and studying aquatic life in underwater caves. Business majors prepare for career where international trade and world travel is the norm. Engineers learn to build undersea pipelines, design bridges, construct ports and build maritime structures. Maritime Academy officers work on-board naval and civilian ships that sail the world's waterways.

**Telephone:** 409-740-4414

**Email:** [seaaggie@tamug.edu](mailto:seaaggie@tamug.edu)





## TEXAS A&M KINGSVILLE

**Location:** Kingsville, TX

**Website:** [www.tamuk.edu](http://www.tamuk.edu)

**Year Founded:** 1925

**Type of Institution:** Public

**Student-Faculty Ratio:** 20:1

**Institutional Designation:** Four-year

**Tuition Costs:** \$7,700 per year (in-state for 15 semester credit hours)

**Room & Board:** \$5,051 per semester, \$10,102 per year

**Average Student Aid Package:** \$9,874

**Average Percentage of Financial Need Met:** 78%

**Average Scholarship/Grant Aid Awarded:** \$5,154

**Average Work-Study Aid Awarded:** \$2,819

Texas A&M University-Kingsville is the fastest growing public doctoral university in the nation. Degree offerings include well-known programs in engineering, agriculture and music, and new programs in veterinary technology and criminal justice. Classroom learning is enhanced through hands-on research opportunities at both the undergraduate and graduate level. Recognized for excellence in affordability, financial aid, athletics and more, Texas A&M-Kingsville offers a complete college experience.

**Telephone:** 361-593-2111

**Email:** [admissions@tamuk.edu](mailto:admissions@tamuk.edu)



## TOURO COLLEGE, NEW YORK SCHOOL OF CAREER AND APPLIED STUDIES (NYSCAS)

**Location:** NYC

**Website:** [touro.edu/nyscas](http://touro.edu/nyscas)

**Year Founded:** 1971

**Type of Institution:** Comprehensive higher education system

**Student-Faculty Ratio:** 19:1

**Tuition Costs:** \$14,600

**Average Student Aid Package:** \$9,000

**Average Percentage of Financial Need Met:** 90%

NYSCAS is ideally suited to reflect, and respond to, the challenges of this new era. Our tradition of academic excellence has given us the foundation and confidence to reach for new and unimaginable knowledge, while the diversity of our University system community makes it possible for students, faculty, alumni, and neighbors to interact with — and thus be transformed by — the multiplicity of human perspectives. At the same time, our numerous locations in the world's most global city offers us a unique laboratory in which to study the evolution of modern society, attract and learn from the remarkable people who make New York home and, in doing so, fulfill our responsibilities as active, engaged citizens.

**Telephone:** 212 463-0400 ext.5500

**Email:** [admissions.nyscas@touro.edu](mailto:admissions.nyscas@touro.edu)





## UNIVERSITY OF HOUSTON-VICTORIA

**Location:** Victoria, Texas

**Website:** [www.uhv.edu](http://www.uhv.edu)

**Year Founded:** 1973

**Type of Institution:** 4-year public, university

**Student-Faculty Ratio:** 18:1

**Institutional Designation:** Bachelor's and master's

**Tuition Costs:** \$7,086 (full-time, in-state, undergraduate)

**Room & Board:** \$4,686

**Average Student Aid Package:** \$9,680

**Average Percentage of Financial Need Met:** 58%

**Average Scholarship/Grant Aid Awarded:** \$3,887

**Average Work-Study Aid Awarded:** \$2,313

The University of Houston-Victoria offers courses leading to more than 70 bachelor's and master's degree programs and concentrations in the schools of Arts & Sciences; Business Administration; and Education, Health Professions & Human Development. UHV provides face-to-face classes at its Victoria, Texas campus as well as teaching sites in Greater Houston, and online classes that students can take from anywhere. Since its founding in 1973, UHV has provided students with a quality university education from excellent faculty at an affordable price.

**Telephone:** 877-970-4848

**Email:** [recruitment@uhv.edu](mailto:recruitment@uhv.edu)



## UNIVERSITY OF THE WEST

**Location:** 1409 Walnut Grove Avenue, Rosemead, CA 91770

**Website:** <http://www.uwest.edu>

**Year Founded:** 1991

**Type of Institution:** 4 year private

**Student-Faculty Ratio:** 10:1

**Institutional Designation:** WASC accredited

**Tuition Costs:** \$4,908/semester

**Room & Board:** \$2,930/semester

**Average Student Aid Package:** \$6,872

**Average Scholarship/Grant Aid Awarded:** \$5,374

**Average Work-Study Aid Awarded:** \$3,300

Founded in 1991, UWest is a WASC-accredited, private, non-profit university situated on a beautiful hill in Rosemead, CA. UWest is committed to serving the local community in providing excellent academic programs and student-centered services to assist students in reaching their educational goals. Small classroom sizes allow for individualized attention and interactive learning. In addition, UWest is committed to providing scholarship opportunities for students. UWest programs are in Business, Psychology, English, Religious Studies, and General Studies.

**Telephone:** (626)571-8811

**Email:** [info@uwest.edu](mailto:info@uwest.edu)



# UTICA

## COLLEGE

### UTICA COLLEGE

**Location:** Utica, NY

**Website:** [www.utica.edu](http://www.utica.edu)

**Year Founded:** 1946

**Type of Institution:** 4-year, private, residential college

**Student-Faculty Ratio:** 11:1

**Tuition Costs:** \$19,996

**Room & Board:** \$10,434

Utica College is a uniquely personal institution making bold moves in addressing affordability. Specializing in professional education with a strong foundation in the liberal arts, UC offers innovative, career-driven programs in 16 of the 20 most desired majors and an 11:1 student to faculty ratio. Utica students get results, in college and beyond. Our faculty and staff never stand still in finding ways to give students the most relevant learning, real-life experience, and personalized mentoring.

**Telephone:** 800-782-8884

**Email:** [admiss@utica.edu](mailto:admiss@utica.edu)



**WILLIAM PEACE**  
UNIVERSITY  
*Your Success. Our Mission.*

### WILLIAM PEACE UNIVERSITY

**Location:** Raleigh, NC

**Website:** [www.peace.edu](http://www.peace.edu)

**Year Founded:** 1857

**Type of Institution:** 4-year private

**Student-Faculty Ratio:** 15:1

**Institutional Designation:** Private - Religious

**Tuition Costs:** \$25,850

**Room & Board:** \$9,900

William Peace University (Raleigh, NC) offers innovative academic programs rooted in the liberal arts tradition to prepare students for careers in the organizations of tomorrow. Nowhere is this more evident than in our graduates: 97% of graduates are placed in a job or graduate school within a year of graduation. Also, WPU is ranked No. 1 nationally for its internship program, according to U.S. News & World Report.

**Telephone:** 919-508-2214

**Email:** [admissions@peace.edu](mailto:admissions@peace.edu)



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## Have some knowledge you want to share with other Counselors?

LINK for Counselors is always looking for great content. Our Spring issue will be published in February 2016.

Contact us at [Jason@linkforcounselors.com](mailto:Jason@linkforcounselors.com) to find out how you can participate.

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A man with dark hair and glasses is looking down at a drawing on a table. A woman with blonde hair and a pearl headband is also looking at the drawing, with her hand near her chin in a thoughtful pose. The background is a simple indoor setting with a microscope and a colorful abstract painting on the wall.

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