

COLLEGE IS MY OPPORTUNITY

Helping first-generation
college students make
their college dreams
a reality!



GUIDE TO COLLEGE

an initiative of



striveforcollege.org



ImFirst.org

About Strive for College	
Strive for College is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization that connects aspiring college students with dedicated mentors online to receive one-on-one guidance and support through the college admissions and financial aid application process. Strive also runs ImFirst.org and publishes the <i>I'm First! Guide to College</i> to celebrate and support first-generation college students.	
For more information or for permission to use material from this text or product, contact Strive for College, Sobrato Center for Nonprofits, 556 Valley Way, Milpitas, CA 95035; or find us online at www.striveforcollege.org and www.ImFirst.org .	
For bulk sales to schools, organizations, colleges, and universities, please contact info@striveforcollege.org .	
Editors: <i>Matt Rubinoff, Cara Martin</i>	
Staff Contributors: <i>Chelsea Jones, Julie Tennie, Terry Roberts</i>	
Cover Design: <i>Cinda Debbink</i>	
Interior Page Design and Layout: <i>Cinda Debbink, Valerie Wilmot</i>	
<i>Special thanks to Michael J. Carter</i>	
<i>Photo Credits</i>	
© Thinkstock <i>pages 2, 3, 4, 5, 7, 8, 9, 11, 13, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 31, 32, 35, 36, 37, 48, 49, 59, 62, 63, 66, 71, 72, 73, 74, 75, 76, 77, 78, 89, 99, 103, 107, 108, 110, 111, 112, 119, 120, 122, 126, 127, 128, 129, 130, 134, 137, 138, 140, 141, 142, 146, 147, 149, 151, 152, 154, 155, 156, 157, 160, 161, 162, 163, 164, 165, 166</i>	
© Shutterstock <i>pages 38, 46, 68, 69, 90, 94, 100, 101, 143, 144, 148, 158, 159</i>	
Copyright © 2017 Strive for College Collaborative	
Strive for College Collaborative has the exclusive rights to reproduce this work, to prepare derivative works from this work, to publicly distribute this work, to publicly perform this work, and to publicly display this work.	
All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted, in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording, or otherwise, without the prior written permission of the copyright owner.	
Printed in the United States of America	
10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1	

Contents	
iv	A Message from the Editor
1	Unit 1: I’m College Bound
31	Unit 2: How Do I Find the Right Fit?
59	Unit 3: How Do I Apply to College?
89	Unit 4: How Will I Pay for College?
107	Unit 5: Making My College Dreams a Reality
119	Appendix
136	Unit Quiz Answers
137	For Parents & Mentors
151	Padres y Mentores en Español
169	College Profiles
355	Glossary

A Message from the Editor

Dear Students,

On behalf of Strive for College, thank you for picking up this copy of the *I'm First! Guide to College*.

There's something special about being first. The first in flight, first man on the moon, and the first African-American president. First kisses, first impressions, first place. **Being among the first in your family to attend and graduate from college is special too.**

We developed this Guide to help students like you get to college and succeed. If you feel overwhelmed by the college process, don't worry! There are specific steps you need to take during the college search and application process. This Guide is designed to turn your college dreams into action-oriented goals and simplify the steps to college so you know what to do next.

It's your responsibility to find out which school is right for you. Asking the right questions and knowing what information to seek out is important. To help you get started, the Guide profiles 179 colleges and universities that are committed to helping students like you thrive in college.

Remember too that you are not alone on the path to college. In the Guide, you will read inspiring stories of students who overcame many obstacles to become first-generation college students. They, along with others, share great advice on how you too can make it to and through college.

We wish you the best of luck on this journey to college and hope you find the *I'm First! Guide to College* to be valuable along the way.



Need more assistance with your college search and application process?

Strive for College can connect you with a mentor to help.

Sign up at www.striveforcollege.org.

Did you know that you can continue your research and college prep on the *I'm First!* web site?

Sign up at www.ImFirst.org



For counselors, teachers and mentors

The *I'm First! Guide to College*, now with an interactive curriculum and built-in workbook activities and quizzes, is a great resource to use in the classroom or to give to students to call their own.

To purchase additional copies, visit <http://store.ImFirst.org>.

Contact info@striveforcollege.org to request bulk order discounts.

Unit 1

I'm College Bound

CONTENTS

- 1.1 Beginning My College Journey
- 1.2 Setting Strong Goals
- 1.3 Identifying My Supports
- 1.4 High School Timelines
- 1.5 Student Workbook
- 1.6 Unit Quiz



“The road to reaching your goals begins now. If you wait until tomorrow to begin reaching for them, you might just find it's too late.”

Objectives

- By the end of this unit, I will...
- understand the benefits of obtaining a college degree.
 - identify the characteristics that competitive colleges are looking for in students, both inside and outside of the classroom.
 - develop long- and short-term goals which will build toward college success and identify supports that can be used to achieve these goals.

Why College?

With everything you need to do to get ready for college, you may wonder if it's all worth it. Here are four quick (but very important) reasons why:

REASON 1 Every bit of education you get after high school increases the chances you'll earn good pay. Most college graduates earn a lot more money during their working years than people who stop their education at high school.

REASON 2 The more education you get, the more likely it is you will always have a job. According to one estimate, by the year 2028 there will be 19 million more jobs for educated workers than there are qualified people to fill them.

REASON 3 Continuing education after high school is much more important for your generation than it was for your parents' generation. Today most good jobs require more than a high school diploma. Businesses want to hire people who know how to think and solve problems.

REASON 4 Education beyond high school gives you a lot of other benefits, including meeting new people, taking part in new opportunities to explore your interests, and experiencing success.

ON THE SPOT: Do these facts surprise you? How do they affect your decision to apply for college?

Young people in all socio-economic groups have college aspirations. In fact, eight out of 10 expect to attain a bachelor's degree or higher, according to the U.S. Department of Education. But despite their aspirations, low-income students and those who are the first in their families to pursue higher education are severely underrepresented on college campuses. Studies show these students often lack the guidance they need to prepare for postsecondary education.

In order to turn these students' college dreams into action-oriented goals, the **American Council on Education**, **Lumina Foundation for Education** and the **Ad Council** launched the KnowHow2GO campaign in 2007. This multi-year, multimedia effort includes television, radio, outdoor public service advertisements (PSAs), and the interactive website KnowHow2GO.org to encourage students to prepare for college using four simple steps.

Throughout the *I'm First! Guide to College*, you'll find pages with content and graphics printed with permission from KnowHow2GO. Learn more at KnowHow2GO.org.

KnowHow2GO

SPONSORED BY



Being the FIRST

By Rachel Brody

First things first.

Everyone loves the first.

The first man on the moon, the first African-American president, and the first in flight.

First kisses, first impressions, first place.

What is it about the first?

In many ways, it is easier for students who have siblings or parents who took on the big firsts. When it comes to college, students with parents who attended college have a better chance of attending college themselves.

So what does that mean for students who don't have a family history of higher education? These students who enroll in colleges and universities are called first-generation college students.

Yes, being the first can be lonely. Everything feels strange and different the first time. You might worry how your friends and family will see you, the first: "He thinks he is so special because he is first."

But don't hold back on being first. The great thing about being the first one is that it doesn't mean that you will be the last one. By being the first in your family to graduate

from college, you open the door for younger siblings, for your children, and their children. College will not be an intimidating unknown because you went first.

OK, maybe the betterment of your imaginary grandchildren isn't the most convincing reason to take on being the first in college. So, think of yourself. College is four years that are all about you. Your discoveries, your achievements, and your firsts. People who attend college live longer, make more money, and vote more often. You will have more opportunities in your lifetime if you go to college.

Although it can be daunting, being the first is an accomplishment. It will make you a stronger and happier person. And that is what really matters. ■



try it Now it's your turn to use what you've learned.
Turn to page 25

BIO Rachel Brody is a former adviser with the National College Advising Corps and past intern with Center for Student Opportunity (now Strive for College).



College Prep Tips

There’s an old Chinese saying that goes, “The journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step.” But no matter how unsure you feel taking that first step, every single one after that will be a little easier. Here’s some helpful tips to get you started.



Plan out a challenging program of classes.

- Colleges care about which courses you’re taking in high school. Remember, you will have more options if you start planning now for college and do your best to earn good grades.
- The courses you take in high school show colleges what kind of goals you set for yourself. Are you signing up for advanced classes, honors sections, or accelerated sequences? Are you choosing electives that really stretch your mind and help you develop new abilities? Or are you doing just enough to get by?
- Colleges will be more impressed by respectable grades in challenging courses than by outstanding grades in easy ones.
- Do your high school course selections match what most colleges expect you to know? For example, many colleges require two to four years of foreign language study.
- Your schedule should consist of at least 4 college preparatory classes per year.

PLAN OUT YOUR CLASSES

Create a file of important documents and notes.

- Copies of report cards.
- Lists of awards and honors.
- Lists of school and community activities in which you are involved, including both paid and volunteer work, and descriptions of what you do.

FIND OUT ABOUT WHICH COLLEGES TO ATTEND

Start thinking about the colleges you want to attend.

- Create list of colleges and universities in which you are interested.
- Discuss the list with your school counselor and narrow it down to your top few.
- Start visiting the campuses.

FILE YOUR IMPORTANT DOCUMENTS

TAKE HONORS-LEVEL CLASSES

Find out about honors-level courses at your school.

- Ask if AP or other honors courses are available.
- See if you are eligible for the honors classes you want to take.

- Stay active in clubs, activities, and sports that you enjoy.
- Study, study, study. Colleges look at your permanent academic record for admissions beginning with freshman-year grades.

- Think about an after school or summer job to start saving for college.

OTHER TOP TIPS



Going Above and Beyond: Taking Rigorous High School Courses

Students are often surprised to learn that many colleges would rather accept a student with okay grades in advanced classes than A's in basic classes.



Course Rigor

The college application process is more competitive now than ever before. So when college admissions officers look at your transcript, they want to see more than just good grades. They are looking for evidence that you are an ambitious student with the skills needed to persevere in a rigorous academic setting. In other words, they want to see that you’ve taken advanced classes. Students are often surprised to learn that many colleges would rather accept a student with okay grades in advanced classes than A’s in basic classes.

It’s no wonder that course rigor is important to colleges. Many

When college admissions officers look at your transcript, they want to see more than just good grades. They are looking for evidence that you are an ambitious student.

first-year college students find that the transition from high school academics to college is challenging because college-level work is more difficult and time-consuming than high school work. However, students who have been exposed to college-level classes before arriving on campus are usually better prepared to handle their first-year work load.

AP Courses

Most high schools offer Advanced Placement (AP) courses for their students. AP courses are generally year-long classes offered in a specific content area, from Chinese to Studio Art (a full list of courses available can

be found at www.apstudent.collegeboard.org/apcourse). AP courses are designed to offer college-level rigor, and students who take them can sometimes receive credit towards their college degree before they even graduate high school! Sometimes these courses are only available to juniors and seniors. Check with your guidance counselor to see what courses are offered at your school and what eligibility requirements you need to meet to enroll.

In May of each year, most AP students take the national AP exam in their specific subject. The exam is scored on a scale from 1-5. There is a fee to take the exam, but schools are often provided with fee waivers for low-income students. Students earning a score of 3, 4, or 5 on their exams may be eligible for credit towards their college degree, depending on the college they attend. For example, a student who gets a score of 4 on the AP European History Exam might be excused from taking a history course at his/her college. Not all schools will accept AP credit, and some will only accept

credit from certain courses, so make sure you check on the school website to see what their policies regarding APs are.

If your school doesn’t offer APs, you may be able to find a class online offered through your state’s Department of Education or through a local college or university. Ask your guidance counselor for more information!

International Baccalaureate Program

Select schools around the country (and the world) offer the International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme (IB). This program is open to students ages 16 to 19 and offers rigorous instruction which is well recognized among selective colleges and universities.

Most schools are not able to offer IB for their students, and you must be enrolled in an IB school to participate in the program. To find out if your school, or any schools in your area, offer IB, check out www.ibo.org/schools.



continued from previous page

Dual Enrollment and Early College

Increasingly, high schools are partnering with colleges and universities to offer students the chance to take college courses while they are still in high school through dual enrollment programs, sometimes referred to as “early college.” In most cases, students who take these classes earn college credit, which may eventually be used towards their college degree.

Taking college courses in high school is a great idea because it shows colleges you are able to succeed in a postsecondary setting. It also helps you get used to learning in a college classroom and being on a college campus before you begin your first year. Many students participate in dual enrollment programs to save themselves money and time by accumulating college credit early.

Dual enrollment programs may be offered through your school, district, or state. Some states require students and their families to pay for dual enrollment courses, but other states offer dual enrollment for free or reduced prices. If your school does not offer dual enrollment, there may be special charter or Early College High Schools in your district that do.

Go Above and Beyond!

No matter what kind of advanced courses your school offers, take advantage! They will help your academic transition to college and can increase your chances of being admitted to a selective college. Remember to be respectful of your own limits. Taking five AP courses in one year might sound impressive, but will probably end up overwhelming you and taking time away from extracurricular activities and SAT/ACT study. ■

try it

Now it's your turn to use what you've learned.

Turn to page 26

Required Courses

The chart below gives you a good overview on what courses you need to take in high school to meet standard college entrance requirements. Of course, every college has its own requirements—check with the ones you're interested in to see what they recommend.

SUBJECT	NUMBER OF YEARS	COURSES
English	four or more years	grammar, composition, literature, etc.
Mathematics	three or more years	algebra I and higher—does not include general math, business math, or consumer math
Natural Sciences	three or more years	earth science, biology, chemistry, physics, etc.
Social Sciences	three or more years	history, economics, geography, civics, psychology, etc.
Additional Courses (Some colleges and universities require other classes as prerequisites for admission)	two or more years	foreign language
	one or more year	visual arts, music, theater, drama, dance, computer science, etc.


FACT

Studies show that the more math courses students take in high school, the more likely they are to graduate from college.⁴

⁴ Clifford Adelman, “Mathematics Equals Opportunity” (U.S. Department of Education, 1997).

GETTING INVOLVED

When it comes time to apply for college, you should be able to show that you've been involved with activities outside of your regular school day. This way, a college can see what you can add to their campus outside of the classroom. Don't wait until senior year to get started—colleges will become suspicious that you simply got involved to make your applications stronger. And remember, choose depth over breadth. Admission officers are more likely to consider an applicant who is deeply committed to one or only a few activities, rather than loosely involved in many activities.

Activity	How to Get Involved	What it Shows About You
COMMUNITY SERVICE 	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Join your school's community service club.Get involved with service work at your place of worship.Find a cause you're committed to (like ending animal cruelty) and Google ways to get involved.	Service work shows colleges that you feel a duty to give back to your community. It shows that you care about leaving your world a better place than you found it.
INTERNSHIPS/ JOBS 	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Ask your guidance counselor (or career counselor) for information on internships or jobs that suit your interests.Draft a résumé and take it to local businesses.Search the web and ask friends and family for recommendations of businesses that hire teens.	Holding down a job shows colleges that you are consistent, mature, and responsible, particularly if the money from your job goes to help support your family. Securing an internship in an area of interest to you will show colleges you are dedicated to reaching your career goals.
BECOME A LEADER OF A CLUB/TEAM 	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Pay attention to your school building. Lots of times, clubs and teams post flyers about try-outs and meetings, but if you don't keep your eyes peeled, you'll miss them.Ask your teachers, coaches, and counselors about available clubs.If you don't see a club you want to join, ask a teacher to sponsor you in founding a new club.	Joining clubs and teams early in high school gives you time to make your mark and work your way up to leadership/captain positions by junior or senior year. Holding a leadership position shows that you are responsible, you get along well with your peers, and you are committed. Founding and growing a club shows initiative, dedication, and perseverance.
DEVELOP A TALENT YOU'RE GOOD AT 	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Ask your guidance counselor for summer enrichment opportunities in a certain skill area.See if there are groups at your school devoted to developing your specific skill.	If you are a budding author or a first-rate flute player, don't keep these skills to yourself. Finding groups in your community to join and participating in a summer enrichment program will show schools you are serious and passionate about developing your talents.

TRANSFORM THE TRAJECTORY OF YOUR LIFE

SUMMER EXPERIENCES CAN PROPEL YOU TO COLLEGE

By Joni Bissell

Every summer, seniors meet with their mentor and me, as their college advisor, to reflect on their two and a half years participating in Summer Search, a leadership development program providing students with year-round mentoring, life-changing summer experiences, college advising, and a lasting support network. Ninety-one percent of these low-income students head to college each fall, and much of their courage and willingness to take this step is emboldened by the experiences of their summer trips.

During a recent meeting, one senior told me that he never thought he would go to college. He assumed he would work to provide for his siblings; a responsibility that he shouldered from a very young age. His proudest reflection, aside from his college destination, was his recent choice to initiate a family meeting to talk

with his siblings about their family's dynamics and history. He was, in effect, passing on responsibility in a thoughtfully mature way, which freed him to find comfort in leaving home for college soon.

We spoke about his first summer wilderness trip and the culminating hike when each student in the group was offered a choice, poetically the "hard road" or the "easy road." He took the "hard road." His second summer trip was an academic program. He fell in love with architecture and was able to experience living with a variety of peers on a college campus. Both experiences, holistically combined with Summer Search mentoring, transformed the trajectory of his life.

Summer experiential programs contribute to student success by providing an opportunity to

take healthy risks and experience unfamiliar settings. Students learn to navigate social challenges as these summer experiences often consist of more wealthy, less diverse students, an experience that can be both alienating and intimidating. The courage it takes to be vulnerable in these situations is what defines their immense personal growth. Students return home with new confidence and broader options. They and their families begin to bridge the dramatic distances between college and home life.

Combined with thoughtful mentoring and best possible preparation to ensure success, summer experiences offer students practice for challenges similar to those they will face on campus. In doing so, students develop skills to be resilient leaders and voices in college, their communities and beyond. ■

TIPS

for Finding a Summer Experience

Summer Search runs offices in Boston, New York City, North San Francisco Bay, Philadelphia, San Francisco, Seattle, and Silicon Valley. If you're a student in one of these cities, visit www.summersearch.org for more information.

If not, here are a few tips for researching and finding the best summer program for you:

- 1. Start early.** Many programs require an application and have a limited number of spaces available, so the earlier you start the more options you'll have.
- 2. Check local colleges and universities.** Many schools offer pre-college initiatives over the summer that give you a chance to preview the school while exploring your academic interests.
- 3. Ask your counselor or mentor.** Counselors, community leaders, or mentors may be able to point you to local programs tailored specifically to high school students.
- 4. Search online.** Tailor your search to the type of program you are interested in, and the geographic location where you are looking to spend your summer.
- 5. Ask for financial aid.** Summer experiential programs cost money, but many will offer financial assistance and scholarships to those who need it. Just ask!

Summer Search
where change begins
www.summersearch.org

BIO Joni Bissell is Bay Area College Director for Summer Search San Francisco.

CHANGE YOUR LIFE IN ONE SUMMER



Lysa Vola
College: Williams College
Hometown: Jensen Beach, FL

You've just made it through a year of high school. So, what are your plans for this summer? What about going to college? Every summer there are programs held on college campuses across the country. They range by various interests, activities, and academic areas. Some are science programs, while others enhance artistic ability or musicality, but all of them are right at your fingertips.

So, now you might be thinking, how can I afford to go to a summer program if I don't have the money? Many summer programs such as MITES (Minority Introduction to Engineering and Science) and QuestBridge affiliated summer programs offer full scholarships for all students accepted into their programs. You could attend a program the summer following your junior or even sophomore year of high school for free!

While these programs may not sound like the most exciting thing to do over your summer, let me share my experience with you.

As a high school junior, I applied to the MITES program on the campus of Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT). It is a seven week program in Science and Engineering that is aimed towards helping disadvantaged minorities and/or students from low-income backgrounds excel in the field of science. While at MIT, I was given the chance to complete research in genomics at the Broad Institute of MIT and Harvard. My research team dealt with Single Nucleotide Polymorphisms in genetic disorders such as Cystic Fibrosis and early onset Breast Cancer. Prior to the summer, I had no idea what that even meant!

Besides doing work and taking courses, I also explored the city of Boston on weekends, went to theme parks, dances, and dinners. I spent that summer at MIT living on my own

and learned how to balance my time. I got a chance to experience what college might be like before actually getting into college.

My point is not that all of you should apply to the MITES program, but rather that you should consider finding out more information about summer programs like MITES. Summer programs provide you with opportunities to discover what it's like to be in a college setting prior to actually applying to or attending college. Summer programs also offer high school students an edge in the college admissions process. They are looked highly upon, because many of them are a lot of work, and prove your dedication and skill. Completing a program successfully makes you stand out from amongst thousands of high school college applicants who didn't take the opportunity to explore, learn, or take their summer seriously. Most are only a few weeks long, so you will still have time to be home and relax with friends before school starts!

So before you turn away an application to spend your summer away studying, consider how it might change your life, the new adventures you might be able to take, and the people you may meet. Never turn down an opportunity, because they are just that, something that you either take or leave, but ultimately can never be replaced!



LYSA VOLA is an I'm First! scholarship winner. Lysa shares her college experiences and offers advice on the I'm First! student blog.

Visit www.ImFirst.org to follow the student blog, research and connect with colleges, ask questions and get answers, and have the chance to be a future scholarship winner and student blogger yourself!

HAVE A GOAL-ORIENTED MINDSET



Alexis Montes
College: University of Rochester
Hometown: National City, CA

Three years ago, I struggled to decide which colleges I wanted to apply to. There was no doubt in my mind that I would make my goal of attending college a reality. The question was: where would I apply? As I cracked down on my search and shared my tentative choices with others, a pattern revealed itself. After reading my list of potential schools, one of my teachers declared, "You're undervaluing yourself."

I heard similar statements from everyone who saw my list. I didn't understand what they meant. "I don't think you realize what you have to offer to these schools," my teacher explained. **"They want kids like you. You need to sell yourself efficiently. You have bargaining power through your diversity, so don't be afraid to reach for the stars."**

What my teacher meant was that often times, diverse students don't realize how much colleges value their unique backgrounds and how committed they are to helping first generation and low-income students succeed on their campuses. But what he didn't understand at the time was that this "bargaining power" he spoke of (my low-income status, race, and sexual orientation) was something that I truly saw as a pure disadvantage to my life. The fact that I was poor wasn't a "bargaining power" to me, it was a circumstance that had brought me to feel sorry for myself because of how society perceived people like me. How was I supposed to understand that colleges viewed these same traits as positive aspects that would help bring diversity to their campuses?

Through some soul-searching and meditation, I learned that we create our own realities. If we set goals for ourselves and see ourselves achieving them, then we will. If we undervalue ourselves and set the bar low, we will never reach higher. As diverse students, we are vulnerable to underestimating our capabilities when we are constantly told, for example, that "Latinos, African-American, and other minority groups are less likely to graduate high school." We must be able to create and honor our own realities and acknowledge that existing perceptions created by others may not be correct. This is not to say that systems of inequality do not exist, simply that we as diverse students all have the choice to counter these systems with goal-oriented thinking and view ourselves not as inferior, but as limitless beings.

ON THE SPOT: Have you ever felt as though your potential was being undervalued? What did you do in that situation?

Fortunately, there are people and organizations (like Strive for College and I'm First!) whose sole mission is to challenge and alter our cultural realities to make them fair and equal for those who are systematically

disadvantaged because of race, income status, sex, etc. When I realized my potential was quite literally limitless if I refused to accept to the cultural stigmas that were placed upon me for being poor or gay, I was able to allow myself to dream bigger. I was able to accept that I was worthy of attending a prestigious Ivy League school if I chose to do so. In essence, I was able to have a goal-oriented mindset in which I no longer undervalued myself and my merits, but instead set realistic and ambitious goals.

Set goals for you and you only. Don't underestimate yourself by believing in someone else's perception of who you are and who you will be. Instead, set goals tailored around you and your very own reality.

"You might not do as well on a paper as you'd hoped, but it's not the grade that matters, but rather what happens afterward. What did you learn from it? How are you going to adapt and make things better next time? It's a learning process, and you might even learn more from your mistakes than from the things you did right."

– It's a Learning Experience



Maggie Acosta
College: Bowdoin College
Hometown: Kansas City, MO



Samuel Hayes
Northern Arizona University
Hometown: Chandler, AZ

"At first, my priorities were out of whack, and my grades suffered. But a big part of college is maturing and getting your priorities straight. College really makes you grow up fast because you are on your own and your parents aren't there to bail you out."

– Learning Experience



ALEXIS MONTES is an I'm First! scholarship winner. Alexis shares his college experiences and offers advice on the I'm First! student blog.

Visit www.ImFirst.org to follow the student blog, research and connect with colleges, ask questions and get answers, and have the chance to be a future scholarship winner and student blogger yourself!

Learning to Walk: Effective Goal Setting

Ever heard the expression "you can't learn to walk until you learn how to crawl"? This idiom stresses the necessity of setting short-term goals to help you achieve your long-term goals. We all have big dreams. Maybe yours is to become a doctor, or an engineer, or a politician. No one becomes these things overnight. Ask any lawyer or scientist how they got to where they are today and they'll tell you it took a lot of hard work and discipline.

Short-term goals are tasks we set ourselves to accomplish in a small amount of time, such as one week or one month. Long-term goals are the ambitions that drive and shape our lives—the colleges we want to graduate from, the careers we want to have. But having a long-term goal without having short-term goals to support it is like trying to build a bridge in midair: our goals can't stand without positive foundational habits to support them.

GOALS
short-term gets you to long-term

Margarita is a high school senior who is aspiring to become a newspaper journalist. In order to achieve this long-term goal, she set short-term goals for herself:

daily

Finish all assigned homework
Read three newspaper articles
Spend one hour in Spanish tutoring after school

weekly

Research two colleges
Write one article for the student paper
Spend five hours per week studying for the SAT

1 year

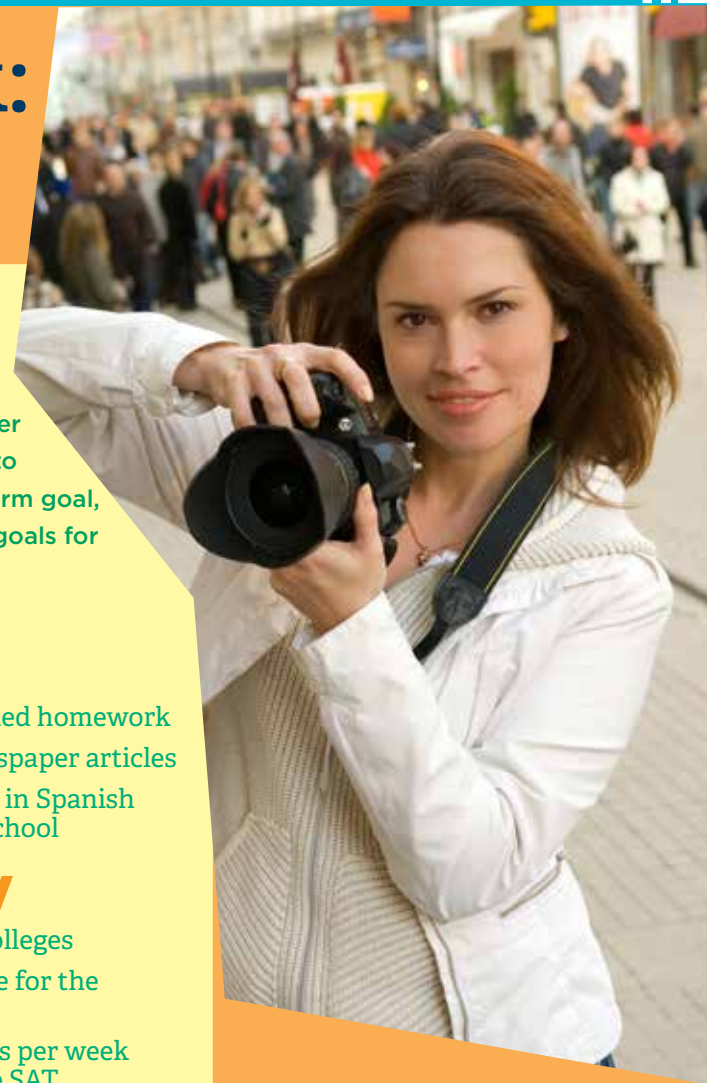
Maintain honor roll grades
Get accepted to a school with a well-known journalism program
Obtain an internship at a local newspaper

5 year

Graduate from college with a Bachelor's degree in Journalism
Become editor for my college newspaper
Study abroad to become bilingual in English and Spanish

10 year

Become a journalist at a leading global newspaper



Without finishing her homework, Margarita could not become an honor roll student. Without being an honor roll student, she might not be able to get into a competitive school to study journalism. And without studying journalism in college, she might not be able to get a job as a reporter once she graduates.

The road to reaching your goals, like Margarita's, begins now. If you wait until tomorrow to begin reaching for them, you might just find it's too late. ■

try it Now it's your turn to use what you've learned.
Turn to page 27

L.O.V.E. YOUR PARENTS

As I look back on my first two years in college, I realize I'm at the halfway point. I'm grateful for the opportunity, but more importantly, I'm grateful for L.O.V.E. The month of February gives me a chance to express my love for those who have been in my corner. February is also a chance to thank those who have my back through whatever and whenever. That would be my parents.

We often take our parents for granted. I realize some may have grandparents or other family members who substitute as their parents. I just want to show some love to my parents because I realize how critical their assistance has been in my life up to this point.

I am pursuing higher learning because I want to achieve a level of success in life which will allow me to have my best life. The main reason I'm here today is because of the values instilled in me by my parents. My parents ensured I was in the right programs and schools in order to position myself for college. I could not have done this alone.

So, it is with love that I write this for them.

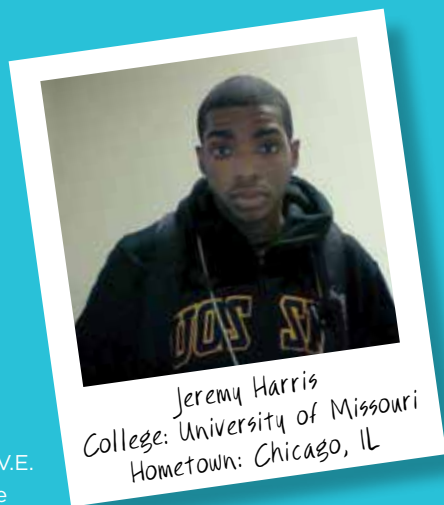
L is for the love my parents have consistently given me through the years.

O is for my continuous effort to obey their rules, advice, and guidance as they share their personal experiences with me.

V is for the value of all that love and support – it's priceless and I value them to the highest. And finally,

E is because I encourage them to continue to be a part of my life even though I'm away from home. I call my mom all the time to ask her for advice and direction. I realize that I still need them in my life – now, more than ever.

As you're preparing for college, please never forget what matters most: the L. O. V. E. you share with your parents – it's invaluable and the best thing in life!



JEREMY HARRIS is an I'm First! scholarship winner. Jeremy shares his college experiences and offers advice on the I'm First! student blog.

Visit www.ImFirst.org to follow the student blog, research and connect with colleges, ask questions and get answers, and have the chance to be a future scholarship winner and student blogger yourself!

Ask People for Help!

By Dr. Tomika Ferguson

When I was younger, I had aspirations to attend the University of Virginia. Despite not having a strong college-going culture in my hometown, opportunities existed for me to accomplish my goals.

Every semester during high school, I signed up for classes that challenged me. I did not always get straight A's, but I did gain skills that prepared me for college. I was not the valedictorian of my high school class, but I was a risk taker.

My parents and I did not understand all of the specifics about applying to college since I was first in our family to do so. I took a personal risk and asked people for advice about the college application process. Asking for help wasn't a sign of weakness, but rather the most important step in following my dream of being accepted at the University of Virginia.



Here are a few people who helped me throughout my college journey.

- **My English teacher** was the best writer I knew, and she helped me to organize my thoughts. I felt very confident in the essays I submitted with my college applications.
- **An older cousin** helped me craft a résumé, and it paid off big time! High school activities demonstrated my capacity for leadership and interests beyond academics.
- **My parents** didn't understand how to fill out the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) but with the help of **my guidance counselor**, we completed it well before the deadline.

As a high school student, you are surrounded by teachers, college counselors, family members and friends who want you to become successful. They will do everything they can to help you reach your goals.

It is hard to admit when you need help, but you have to be brave and take the first step to find people who have the answers you need. Without asking for help, I never would have accomplished my goal of graduating from the University of Virginia. ■

try it Now it's your turn to use what you've learned.
Turn to page 30

BIO Dr. Tomika Ferguson is Director of Community Partnerships at James Madison University. Previously, she was an adviser with the National College Advising Corp and an intern with Center for Student Opportunity (now Strive for College).





Mentoring powered by
technology = a level playing
field for college opportunity

Last year:

99%
of Strivers went
to college...

78%
to a four-year
institution, and...

89%
without tuition debt.

4 STEPS TOWARDS SECURING YOUR COLLEGE FUTURE



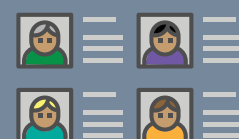
Log in
to Strive



Jot down your
current college list



Tell us what you
are interested in

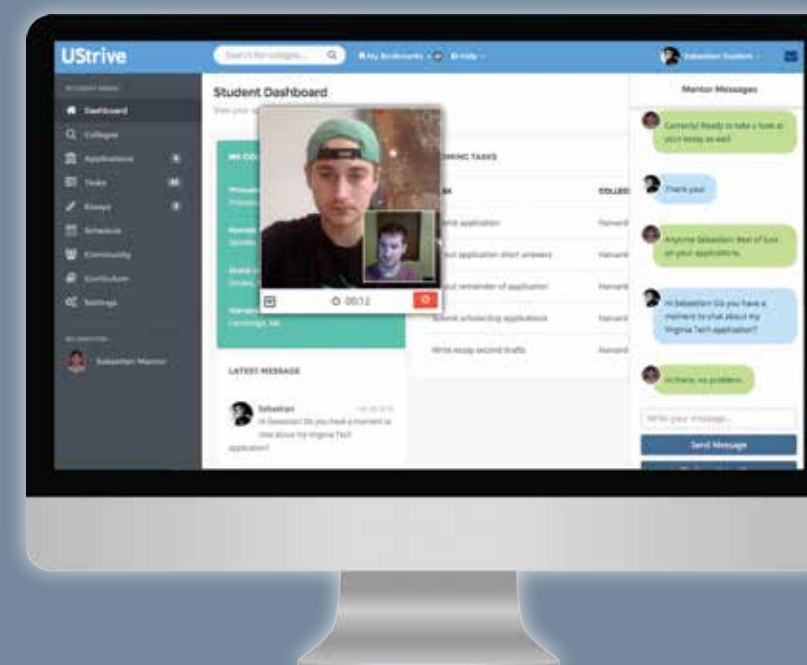


Choose
your mentor!

"The guidance I got from Strive for College is something I wouldn't have had in my high school... It helped me take the right path. I'm in the process of going to college, and I'm very excited!"

Marco - Strive Class of 2016

Strive for College is the national leader in solving the college access problem by connecting qualified high school juniors and seniors with volunteer mentors on our secure, custom-built online mentoring platform. Students who receive Strive's structured, one-on-one guidance have substantially better college outcomes than their unmentored peers.



**Get one-on-one
GUIDANCE**



**Connect anytime,
ANYWHERE**



**Get amazing
RESULTS**

Sign up today at striveforcollege.org

advice

I'm First! Scholarship winners are first-generation college students who blog about their college experiences and offer advice on www.ImFirst.org

SOS: SEEK OUT SUPPORT



Angelica Robinson
College: Dillard University
Hometown: New Orleans, LA

"Being a first-generation college student, it is imperative that I seek guidance, branch out to grasp what I need to succeed in my environment. I've realized that it is true that everyone needs someone in their corner."

– **Second Semester Freshman: Through the Storm**

"ASK, ASK, ASK! Don't be afraid to ask questions! You may think that you'll look dumb because your classmates seem to know what they're doing or where they're headed. But, you'll only hurt yourself by not getting the information you need."

– **Dumb Questions?**



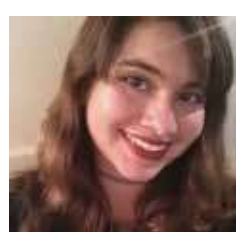
Abigail Macias
College: Dartmouth College
Hometown: Sparks, NV

"I give thanks to my Spanish Teacher, Mrs. Martinez, who has supported me academically/socially for half my life, and of course, my dear and lovely college bound adviser, Ms. Marano, who is the main reason why I even went to college. Each person, event, club, team and aspect of my life has given me the power and confidence to challenge myself and try new things."

– **Thankful Blessings**



Gina Bolanos
College: University of Rochester
Hometown: Dallas, TX



Raquel Diaz
College: Reed College
Hometown: Monterey Park, CA

"College can feel like a maze riddled with trap doors. A mentor is somebody who has traversed the maze, found the exit, and walked back into the maze with a flashlight to help others who have entered the maze."

– **The Places You'll Go—Much, Much Further With A Mentor**



Jesse Sanchez
College: Harvard University
Hometown: San Diego, CA

"Not having a mentor can leave you without a sense of direction—you need someone there to go to for advice, to keep you motivated, and to help you out in times of need. It is very important to find this person in your life early on so they can help you make the right decisions from the beginning."

– **Got Mentors?**



Visit www.ImFirst.org to follow the student blog, research and connect with colleges, ask questions and get answers, and have the chance to be a future scholarship winner and student blogger yourself!

Community and Virtual Supports

Feeling overwhelmed by the prospect of going to college? You're not alone. Fortunately, there are resources in your community and online to help you in your pursuit of college.

Here are some online resources to help you find support in your community:

National College Access Network (NCAN)
www.collegeaccess.org

NCAN builds, strengthens, and empowers communities committed to college access and success by providing nearly 400 member organizations across 49 states and territories with professional development, networking, benchmarking, and news from the field.

National Partnership for Educational Access (NPEA)
www.educational-access.org

There are over 300 organizations across 34 states that comprise NPEA's membership. These organizations all serve underrepresented students with academic preparation, placement services and counseling, and ongoing support to ensure enrollment at and graduation from four-year colleges.

Directory of TRIO and GEAR UP Programs
www.coenet.us

Check out the directory of TRIO and GEAR UP programs hosted by the Council for Opportunity in Education (COE). COE works in conjunction with colleges, universities, and agencies that host TRIO Programs to help low-income students enter college and graduate.

KnowHow2GO
www.knowhow2go.org

The "Find Help" page offers a searchable map to help you connect with local resources.



Get the Conversation Started!

Planning for college isn't something you do by yourself—it's really a team effort.

But it's up to you to put together your team. And that means talking to the adults in your life who can help—from your parents, guardian, or other family members to your teachers, coaches, guidance counselor, or religious leader.



YOUR PARENTS

The best way to communicate with parents, or any adult, is to keep talking to them, no matter what. Strong relationships really depend on keeping the lines of communication open. Here are some ways to approach your parents (or any adult) with a specific topic:



KnowHow2GO Printed with permission from KnowHow2GO. Learn more at KnowHow2GO.org.

Plan what to say.

Think over what you want to say in advance, and write down the two or three most important points you want to make.

Be direct.

Let them know directly that there's something you'd like to discuss. Be sure you have their full attention and be direct in your language. Say, "There's something important I want to talk to you about," instead of "Hey, when you have a moment I'd like to talk."



Pick a good time to talk.

Try to approach them at a time when you know they'll be less busy and more able to focus on you. You may even want to ask if they could talk at a particular time so that you know you have their attention.

Write it down first.

Some people find it easier to put their ideas into a letter. Let the other person read it and then have your discussion.

Disagree without disrespect.

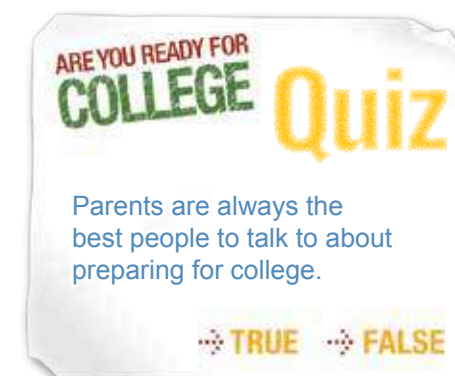
Parents are only human, and they can feel offended when their views are challenged. Using respectful language and behavior is important. Resist the temptation to use sarcasm, yell, or put down your parents and you'll have a much better chance of getting what you want.

OTHER ADULTS

No matter how good your relationship is with your parents or guardian, there will be times when you'll feel more comfortable confiding in other adults. Even if you'd rather talk to friends about certain things, an adult may have more experience, be able to contact the right person, or find the best resources to get help.

Ask for their word.

Most adults will keep your conversations confidential if you ask them to, unless they fear that your health or well-being may be in danger.



KnowHow2GO Printed with permission from KnowHow2GO. Learn more at KnowHow2GO.org.

Other adults.

Other adults who may be able to help include teachers, your school guidance counselor, or other family members such as an aunt, uncle, or older sibling. Parents of a close friend may also be able to help.

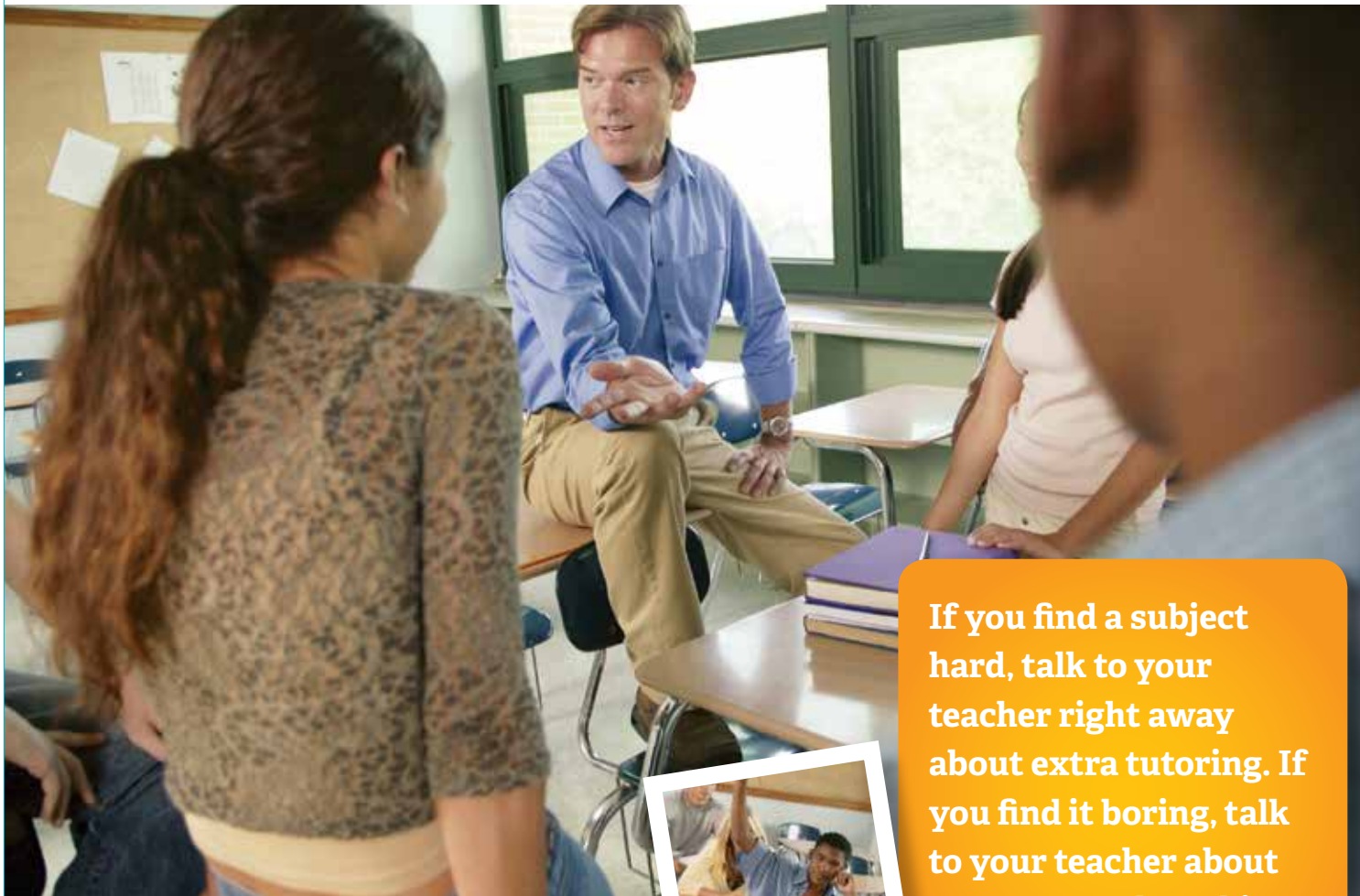
Spiritual leaders.

If you're involved in a church group or belong to a synagogue or mosque, your spiritual or youth group leader may also be a good source of advice.

Extracurricular leaders.

If you're involved in an extracurricular activity, such as sports or drama, you may feel close enough to your coach or advisor to ask him or her about more personal stuff.

FALSE
If your parents didn't go to college, chances are there's an adult in your life who did – and would be happy to help you prepare for college.



YOUR TEACHERS

OK, so it may be hard to think of your teachers as real people. But they eat pizza, watch movies, and enjoy sports on the weekends just like you. And they know about more than just their subject matter. Given the chance they can offer you the kind of advice and support that might change your life forever. Here's how to build a connection:

Show some interest.

Obviously, your teachers are really interested in their subjects. Showing the teacher that you care—even if you're not a math whiz or fluent in French—sends the message that you are a dedicated student.

Schedule a conference.

Schedule a private conference during a teacher's free period to get extra help, ask questions, inquire about a career in the subject, or talk about your progress in class. You may be surprised to learn that your teacher is a bit more relaxed one-on-one than when lecturing in front of the whole class.

Be yourself.

Teachers can sense when your only motivation for trying to be a "favorite student" is to get special treatment or a good grade. Just be yourself and forget about trying to show off.

If you find a subject hard, talk to your teacher right away about extra tutoring. If you find it boring, talk to your teacher about ways to see the subject in a different light.

Deal with study problems.

If you find a subject hard, talk to your teacher right away about extra tutoring. If you find it boring, talk to your teacher about ways to see the subject in a different light. For example, you may hate math, but learning how to calculate averages and percentages can help you in everything from sports to leaving a tip.

Show some respect.

Just as teachers need to be fair and treat everyone equally, students have responsibilities too. You don't have to like your teacher or agree with what he or she says, but it is necessary to be polite. ■

KnowHow2GO Printed with permission from KnowHow2GO. Learn more at KnowHow2GO.org.

HOW TO Use Your High School Counselor

By Mary Lee Hoganson



School counselors are one of the best sources of support for college-bound students. Whatever grade you are in, now is the time to start helping your counselor get to know you and your college dreams.

Introduce yourself and state clearly that it is your definite goal to attend college. Let your counselor know that, regardless of your test scores or grades to date, you are highly motivated.

Also, make sure to tell your counselor about yourself: your interests, activities, college and career goals, and family background—including what your parents do and whether or not anyone in your family has attended college. With this initial meeting as a good starting point, your counselor can help you plot a successful course for college.

Top 10 items to cover with your counselor:

- 1) Plan classes that will prepare you for college.
- 2) Review your academic record and suggest areas that need improvement.
- 3) Identify the questions you should be asking, like: Do I want to stay near home? Does the college have my major? How important is size?
- 4) Get information about specific colleges and universities.
- 5) Identify opportunities like college fairs, weekend or summer programs on college campuses (often free for first-generation or low-income students), internships, or community college classes open to high school students.
- 6) Register for college admission tests and get fee waivers if your family can't afford to pay for tests.
- 7) Write a letter of recommendation to colleges or universities.
- 8) Complete and submit college applications carefully and on time and ask colleges to waive application fees.
- 9) Figure out how to pay for college.
- 10) Compare offers of admission and financial aid from all of your colleges.

There are a few other very important things to remember about working with your school counselor:

- Most school counselors have many, many students who they want to help. So make appointments early, show up on time, and submit forms that require counselor completion well in advance of due dates.
- Make backup copies of everything you mail or give to your counselor.
- Make sure that you keep your counselor "in the loop" in terms of what you are hearing from colleges. If there are any problems which arise, your counselor can act as your direct advocate with colleges.
- If you think it would be helpful, try to schedule a meeting with your counselor AND your parent(s). There are parts of the college process that will require additional assistance, such as completing the financial aid applications.
- Be sure to thank your counselor for assistance given. When you have made it successfully through the college selection and admission process, send your counselor a handwritten note (along with any teachers who helped).

BIO Mary Lee Hoganson has over 35 years experience as a high school counselor, 25 of those years focused on college counseling. She served as President of the National Association for College Admission Counseling in 2007.



High School Timelines

The college planning process can be daunting for everyone. It's best to plan ahead and allow plenty of time. It also helps if you have a plan to follow from your freshman year through your senior year—and here it is.

FRESHMEN TIMELINE

FALL

- ☐ Make sure you **enroll in geometry or algebra**. Colleges require that you take rigorous math courses in high school.
- ☐ Create a college information folder that you can take with you through high school.
- ☐ Start the school year off right by **getting organized** and practicing **good study habits**.
- ☐ Meet new people by signing up for **extracurricular activities** and trying something new!
- ☐ Explore careers on the Web on your home computer or at the library.
- ☐ Find **job shadowing** opportunities in the community, where you can spend a day shadowing someone at work and watching what he or she does.

SPRING

- ☐ Start to plan your sophomore year.
- ☐ Talk with your parents and counselor about summer vacation. **Explore summer programs or camps** to attend at local colleges and universities. Look for volunteer or service opportunities in the community. Some may be sponsored by a local church, synagogue or mosque.

START HERE
FRESHMEN

SOPHOMORE TIMELINE

FALL

- ☐ Polish your study skills. **If you need to improve in some subjects, this is the time to do it.** Colleges and future employers look at high school transcripts and are impressed with regular attendance and improving grades.
- ☐ Have you taken a **career interest inventory**? Ask your counselor or guidance office to give you one. These tests help assess your strengths and weaknesses and can help guide your college search and long-term career plans.
- ☐ **Take the Preliminary Scholastic Aptitude test PSAT**—the preliminary version of the SAT—or the PLAN, the preliminary version of the ACT. Taking the PSAT now is practice for the PSAT test in junior year which allows you to be considered for a National Merit Scholarship. Find dates and more information about the PSAT from your high school's guidance office.
- ☐ Surf the Web to **check out** colleges, technical schools, and apprenticeship opportunities.
- ☐ Consider job shadowing to get some work experience and **test possible careers**.

SPRING

- ☐ Begin exploring financial aid and scholarships options.
- ☐ Use the Internet to explore different careers.
- ☐ **Select five to ten colleges** to contact for brochures and applications.
- ☐ Visit your school or community Career Center.
- ☐ Plan a **productive summer**. The summer before 11th grade is a good time to have a part-time job to prepare for a future career.
- ☐ Choose a **summer camp** or find a **volunteer service program** to jumpstart your skills.
- ☐ Remember to sign up for the most **challenging classes** for next year.

SOPHOMORE
TIMELINE

Stay on track
FOLLOW THE
TIMELINES

JUNIOR YEAR TIMELINE

JUNIOR
TIMELINE

August:

- ☐ Start your year off right: **Talk with your guidance counselor** about your options and your plans. Be sure to ask about test dates for the PSAT, ACT, and SAT. You'll need to register up to six weeks ahead of time.
- ☐ Sign up for courses with your eyes on the prize: college and money to pay for it! **A tougher course load** may pay off with scholarships and may get you a better chance to get admitted to the school of your choice.
- ☐ Start investigating private and public **sources for financial aid**. Take note of **scholarship deadlines** and plan accordingly.
- ☐ Sign up for **activities to boost** your college applications.

September:

- ☐ Find out about schools you are interested in attending. Treat your school selection process like a research paper: Make a file and gather information about schools, financial aid, and campus life to put in it. **Go to college fairs and open houses** and learn as much as you can from the Internet about schools.
- ☐ Begin **planning college visits**. Fall, winter, and spring break are good times because you can observe a campus when classes are going on.

October:

- ☐ Take the **PSAT**. You'll get the results by Christmas.
- ☐ Sign up for ACT or SAT **prep courses**.
- ☐ Do your top college picks require essays or recommendations? Now is the time to begin **planning your essays** and choosing whom you'd like to **ask for a recommendation**.

November:

- ☐ Sign up for the **ACT and SAT**, if you haven't already.

December:

- ☐ Begin the **application process** for service academies (West Point, Annapolis, etc.)
- ☐ Decide if you should take **AP exams** in May. Investigate the College-Level Examination Program® or CLEP, which grants college credit for achievement in exams covering many different college-level subjects.

January:

- ☐ Meet with your **guidance counselor** again to develop your senior schedule.
- ☐ Organize your Individual Graduation Plan.

February:

- ☐ Think about lining up a **summer job**, internship, or co-op.
- ☐ Plan **campus visits** for spring break.
- ☐ Memorize your **Social Security number** if you haven't already. It will be your identity on campus.

March/April:

- ☐ Get ready for AP exams next month.
- ☐ Write a **résumé**.




SENIOR YEAR TIMELINE


August

- ☐ Sign up for the ACT and/or SAT if you didn't take it as a junior, or if you aren't satisfied with your score.
- ☐ Review ACT and/or SAT test results and **retest** if necessary.

August to December

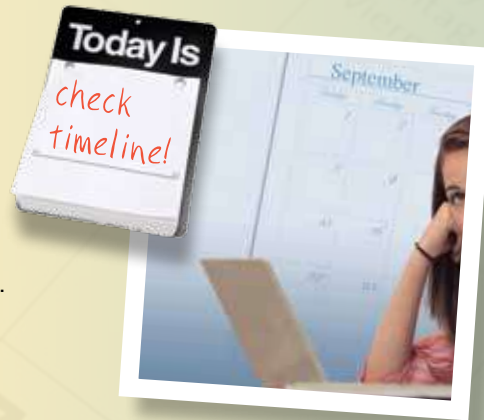
- ❑ Visit with your school counselor to make sure you are on track to graduate and fulfill college admission requirements. Consider taking courses at a local university or community college.
 - ❑ Keep working hard all year; second semester grades can affect scholarship eligibility.
 - ❑ Ask for personal references from teachers, school counselors, or employers early in the year or at least two weeks before application deadline.
 - ❑ Follow your school's procedure for requesting recommendations.
 - ❑ Visit with admissions counselors who come to your high school.
 - ❑ Attend a college fair.
 - ❑ Begin your college essay(s).
 - ❑ Apply for admission at the colleges you've chosen.
 - ❑ Avoid common college application mistakes.
 - ❑ Find out if you qualify for scholarships at each college where you have applied.
 - ❑ Start the financial aid application process.
 - ❑ See your school counselor for help finding financial aid and scholarships.
- 

January to May

- ☐ If you need it, get help completing the **FAFSA** (Free Application for Federal Student Aid).
 - ☐ Ask your guidance office in January to **send first semester transcripts** to schools where you applied. In May, they will need to send final transcripts to the college you will attend.
 - ☐ **Visit colleges** that have invited you to enroll.
 - ☐ Decide which college to attend, and **notify the school** of your decision.
 - ☐ Keep track of and **observe deadlines** for sending in all required fees and paperwork.
 - ☐ Notify schools you will not attend of your decision.
 - ☐ Continue to look for scholarship opportunities.
 - ☐ Keep track of important financial aid and scholarship deadlines.
 - ☐ Watch the mail for your **Student Aid Report** (SAR)—it should arrive four weeks after the FAFSA is filed.
 - ☐ Compare financial aid packages from different schools.
 - ☐ Sign and send in a **promissory note** if you are borrowing money.
 - ☐ **Notify your college** about any outside scholarships you received.
- 

June to August

- ☐ Make sure your **final transcript is sent** to the school you will be attending.
- ☐ Getting a summer job can help pay some of your college expenses.
- ☐ Make a list of what you will need to take with you for your dorm room.
- ☐ If you haven't met your roommate, call, write, or e-mail to get acquainted in advance.
- ☐ Make sure **housing documentation** is quickly accessible when you move into the dorm.
- ☐ Learn how to get around at **your new school**. Review a campus map.
- ☐ Wait until after your first class meeting to buy your books and supplies.



Free Write: Why is College for Me?



You just read some of the reasons that college is an important step for all students. Take a minute to think about what priorities and goals are important to you personally. Why is college important for you in particular? As you write, you may want to think about:

- How will going to college affect your future career path?
- How will going to college impact your family?
- What might you be exposed to in college (academically and socially) that will help you grow as a person?

Mapping Out Your Courses

The chart on page 6 gives you a good overview of what courses you need to take in high school to meet standard college entrance requirements. Now let's see how you stack up.

List the courses you have taken and those you plan to take before you graduate. You may need to consult your guidance counselor for help.

Subject	Number of Years Required	Example Courses	Courses Taken	Courses You Will Take
English	four or more years	English I, AP English Language, AP English Literature		
Mathematics	three or more years	Algebra I and higher—does not include general math, business math, or consumer math		
Natural Sciences	three or more years	Biology, AP Physics, Environmental Science		
Social Sciences	three or more years	History, economics, psychology, sociology, etc.		
Additional Courses	two or more years	foreign language		
	two or more years	visual arts, music, theater, drama, dance, computer science, etc.		

Setting Goals: Planning Backwards to Set Short-Term Goals

You just read about the importance of setting goals, and how setting short-term goals can lead to achieving long-term goals. Now it's time to think about your short- and long-term goals and how they relate. Answer the questions below. As you write, think about how your short-term goals are setting you up for success in your long-term goals.

1. What career goal do you hope to achieve in the next ten years?

2. What goals will you set for yourself to achieve in the next five years?

a)

b)

c)

d)

TIP:

Keep your goal-setting document with you as the year goes on.

Make sure to monitor your progress.

Are you on track to meeting your goals? If not, why?

What can you do to ensure you meet them in the future?

continues on next page

continued from previous page

3. What goals will you set for yourself to achieve by the end of the year?

- a)
- b)
- c)
- d)

4. What goals will you set for yourself to achieve every week of this school year?

- a)
- b)
- c)
- d)

5. What goals will you set for yourself to achieve everyday of this school year?

- a)
- b)
- c)
- d)

answers on page 136

Unit 1 Quiz

Multiple Choice, circle your answer

- 1. Most colleges require high school students to take at least how many years of Math, Natural Science, and Social Science?
 - a) two years
 - b) three years
 - c) four years
 - d) most colleges don't have standard entrance requirements
- 2. My guidance counselor can and should help me with all of the following except:
 - a) writing a letter of recommendation for college
 - b) helping me to choose what colleges to apply to
 - c) completing my college applications
 - d) sending my high school transcript to colleges
- 3. Goal-setting is most effective when I:
 - a) write down my goals
 - b) revisit my goals often and check my progress
 - c) create short-term goals which build toward long-term goals
 - d) all of the above
- 4. When planning my high school schedule, I should do all of the following except:
 - a) sign up for rigorous courses, including honors and/or AP classes
 - b) choose courses that allow me to explore academic fields that interest me
 - c) balance my schedule to ensure that I have time for extracurricular activities
 - d) choose easy elective courses to boost my GPA
- 5. When deciding whether to admit a student, colleges generally consider all of the following except:
 - a) my standardized test scores
 - b) my counselor's and teachers' opinions of me
 - c) my middle school grades
 - d) whether or not my grades have improved over time

True or False, circle your answer

- 1. Most college graduates earn a lot more money during their working years than people who stop their education in high school.

T F
- 2. Going to college was more important for my parents' generation than it is for mine.

T F
- 3. Colleges care more about how good my grades are than how rigorous my classes are.

T F
- 4. Involving myself in extracurricular activities can increase my chances of getting into college.

T F
- 5. If I performed poorly in freshmen and sophomore years, I probably won't get accepted to college.

T F

Fill in the Blank

- 1. One example of a web-based College Access Program that I can use as a resource in my college journey is _____.
- 2. Most colleges require one to three _____ written on my behalf by my high school counselor and teachers.
- 3. The things I do outside of school, such as clubs, sports, community service, or working, are all _____.
- 4. When setting goals, it is important to set both _____ and _____ goals.
- 5. A _____ student is a student whose parents have not gone to or graduated from college.

continues on next page

continued from previous page



Open Answer

1. What are some obstacles you expect to face in your journey to college?

What supports can you use to overcome these obstacles?

2. What characteristics of a college-bound student do you already have?

What do you need to improve on before applying to college?

3. List people that may be able to help and support you through your college journey:

Unit 2

CONTENTS

- 2.1 The Right Fit
- 2.2 Types of Schools
- 2.3 Identifying Priority Factors
- 2.4 Using the College Profile
- 2.5 Finding Out More
- 2.6 Narrowing Down My List
- 2.7 Student Workbook
- 2.8 Unit Quiz

How Do I Find the Right Fit?



“Ultimately, finding the right college fit is also about taking time to think about why you want a college education and what you hope to do with your life.”

Objectives

- By the end of this unit, I will...
- know the various types of two- and four-year postsecondary institutions.
 - evaluate my priorities in order to develop a list of the most important factors in the college search and narrow down a college list.
 - understand and integrate information from the various elements of a college profile.
 - identify additional ways to obtain information about a college beyond the college profile.

Finding the Right Fit

What should you be looking for?

By Dr. Larry D. Shinn

Surprisingly, more than half of college students who declare a major when they arrive as freshmen change their major one or more times before they graduate! So, selecting a college that has the major you want to study is not a sufficient reason when deciding the best college fit.

There is one consideration that all students should make in deciding the “fit” of a college: its capacity to provide an educational environment that promotes life-long learning. Even if the colleges that you are considering have programs

specialized for a specific career path (e.g. fashion design, civil engineering, architecture, or teaching), every one of those professions will require continued learning beyond college.

The best fit is ultimately the college whose learning environment is diverse and where you are challenged to think and grow beyond your current interests. From internships to undergraduate research and study abroad programs, your college experience should expand your abilities and horizons in ways you cannot do yourself. ■

BIO Dr. Larry D. Shinn is retired president of Berea College, a liberal arts college in Berea, Kentucky that provides every admitted student a four-year tuition scholarship and the opportunity to work on campus to assist with costs of room and board.



Get Started!

By Michelle D. Gilliard, Ph.D.

Finding an institution that provides the right fit works best when you take the time to develop a short list of institutions that (1) offer majors in your areas of interest, (2) provide you with multiple opportunities to become actively engaged in your own learning, and (3) are focused on creating an environment where students from a variety of backgrounds and experiences can be successful.

Ultimately, finding the right college fit is also about taking time to think about why you want a college education and what you hope to do with your life. A college that both challenges you and supports your educational and social development is the type of college that will lead to your success. ■

BIO Michelle D. Gilliard, Ph.D. is a partner at Venture Philanthropy Partners.



advice

I'm First! Scholarship winners are first-generation college students who blog about their college experiences and offer advice on www.ImFirst.org

OH SO MANY OPTIONS

“Act like a tourist looking at the city. Every place has its gem. If you find yourself lost in the cave, start a new direction because any direction will work as long as you can picture the happiness you’ll feel when you finally stumble out.”

– *I got...*

“If things do not work out as you would have wished, there will be plenty of opportunities to improve, and you may find that what you once dismissed as a secondary option may be better than expected. If things do work out, congratulations! You deserve it! In either case, enjoy the last few months of high school life, and

make memories to cherish and look back on when you have moved on to college.”

– *Decisions are coming... Game of Groans*

ON THE SPOT:
Ask someone you know who is in college now why they chose the school they did.

“When applying to schools listen to others but also think for yourself. What you want is important, and it is your education on the line here.”

– *Do You Feel Like Time is Running Out?*

“As for deciding, I can also give you this advice: do you! When trying to decide which option is best or what path to choose, think of yourself and be selfish for once in your life. It’s not about what your parents want or how many of your high school friends are going to a specific college.”

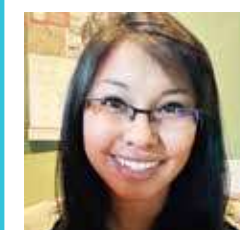
– *Look Ma I’m Going to College*



Leah Jean-Louis
College: Swarthmore College
Hometown: Cambridge, MA



Visit www.ImFirst.org to follow the student blog, research and connect with colleges, ask questions and get answers, and have the chance to be a future scholarship winner and student blogger yourself!



Megan Cooke
College: Whitman College
Hometown: Window Rock, AZ



Benjamin Hoertnagl-Pereira
College: Johns Hopkins University
Hometown: Water Mill, NY



Joseph Dingman
College: Occidental College
Hometown: Pueblo, CO

**Padres y Mentores en
Español página 151**

PARENTS & MENTORS

- 
- 138 Why College? Q & A
 - 139 Planning for College: Ten Steps
 - 140 Talking to Your Teen
 - 141 Conversation-Starters
 - 143 Getting Your Child To College – No Degree Required!
 - 144 Myths About College
 - 146 Visit the Campus
 - 148 Be a Safety Net
 - 149 Concerns About College
 - 150 Who Are You? And What Have You Done With My Son?

Whether you’re a parent, guardian, teacher, mentor, or other caring adult, chances are there’s a teen in your life who wants to go to college. You can help your teen succeed by taking time to learn about college planning and financing. Together, you and the teen you care about can share this important goal and achieve it.



MENTORS: Why College?

“Why should I get a college degree?” Has the teen in your life ever asked you this question? Whether you’re a parent, guardian, or other caring adult, you need convincing, practical answers to share with your teen. Here they are:

“You’ll gain greater understanding and skills to help you be successful in our complex world.”

College enables you to:

- Expand your knowledge and skills.
- Express your thoughts clearly in speech and in writing.
- Grasp abstract concepts and theories.
- Increase your understanding of the world and your community.
- Gain more financial security.

“You’ll find a greater range and a number of job opportunities.”

In our changing world, more and more jobs require education beyond high school. College graduates have more jobs to choose from than those who don’t pursue education beyond high school.

“You’ll earn more money—a lot more.”

A person who goes to college usually earns more than a person who doesn’t. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, on average, someone with a bachelor’s degree earns \$51,206—almost double the \$27,915 earned annually by someone with only a high school diploma.

Planning for College: Ten Steps

Step One

Save money as early as possible to help pay for your teen’s education.

Step Two

Encourage your teen to make high school count, preparing academically for higher education.

Step Three

Discuss with your teen his or her skills and interests, career options and schools he or she is interested in attending.

Step Four

Meet with the high school guidance counselor to determine what schools match your teen’s academic abilities.

Step Five

Gather information about the schools your teen is interested in attending, including information on financial aid.

Step Six

Take your teen to visit a college campus and ask the right questions.

Step Seven

Help your teen apply for admission. To apply for financial aid, help your child complete the FAFSA.

Step Eight

Consider scholarships, grants, and work-study programs. Complete any necessary applications or forms and submit them before the deadline.

Step Nine

Consider the loan programs available to you and your child.

Step Ten

Learn more about tax credits, deductions, and other considerations for education expenses.

College Profile List by State

Alabama	
Spring Hill College.....	176
Arizona	
Northern Arizona University.....	177
University of Arizona.....	178
Arkansas	
Henderson State University	179
California	
California Institute of Technology.....	180
California Lutheran University	181
California Polytechnic State University.....	182
Chapman University.....	183
Claremont McKenna College.....	184
Fresno Pacific University.....	185
Loyola Marymount University	186
Marymount California University.....	187
Mills College	188
Notre Dame de Namur University	189
Occidental College	190
Pepperdine University	191
Sacramento State University.....	192
Saint Mary's College of California	193
Simpson University	194
Soka University of America.....	195
Stanford University	196
University of Redlands.....	197
University of San Diego.....	198
University of San Francisco.....	199
University of Southern California.....	200
University of the Pacific.....	201
Vanguard University	202
Colorado	
Colorado College.....	203
Colorado State University.....	204
United States Air Force Academy.....	205
University of Colorado Colorado Springs	206
University of Denver.....	207
Connecticut	
Central Connecticut State University.....	208
Quinnipiac University.....	209
Trinity College.....	210
University of Bridgeport.....	211
Wesleyan University.....	212
Yale University.....	213
Delaware	
University of Delaware.....	214
District of Columbia	
The Catholic University of America.....	215
George Washington University.....	216
Florida	
Saint Leo University.....	217
Stetson University.....	218
University of Florida.....	219

Georgia	
Emory University	220
Georgia State University	221
Illinois	
Columbia College Chicago.....	222
Elmhurst College	223
MacMurray College	224
Millikin University.....	225
Monmouth College	226
Northwestern University	227
The University of Chicago	228
University of Illinois at Chicago.....	229
Indiana	
Indiana Wesleyan University	230
Saint Mary's College.....	231
University of Notre Dame	232
Iowa	
Grinnell College.....	233
Loras College	234
Kentucky	
Centre College.....	235
Maine	
Bates College	236
Colby College	237
Maryland	
Johns Hopkins University	238
Loyola University Maryland	239
St. John's College.....	240
Massachusetts	
Amherst College.....	241
Babson College	242
Bay Path University	243
Bentley University.....	244
Boston University.....	245
Brandeis University.....	246
Framingham State University	247
Harvard University.....	248
Lasell College.....	249
Northeastern University.....	250
Smith College	251
Tufts University.....	252
University of Massachusetts Lowell	253
Wellesley College	254
Williams College.....	255
Worcester Polytechnic Institute	256
Michigan	
Calvin College	257
Ferris State University	258
Grand Valley State University.....	259
Kalamazoo College	260
Northern Michigan University	261
University of Detroit Mercy	262
University of Michigan	263
University of Michigan-Flint	264

College Profile List by *State*

Missouri	
Missouri State University	265
Missouri University of Science & Technology	266
Truman State University	267
Washington University in St. Louis	268
Nebraska	
University of Nebraska–Lincoln.....	269
New Hampshire	
Colby-Sawyer College.....	270
Dartmouth College.....	271
Keene State College.....	272
New Jersey	
Georgian Court University	273
New Jersey Institute of Technology	274
Princeton University.....	275
Ramapo College of New Jersey.....	276
Rutgers University–Camden.....	277
Rutgers University–New Brunswick.....	278
Rutgers University–Newark.....	279
New Mexico	
New Mexico Highlands University	280
St. John's College.....	281
New York	
Barnard College.....	282
Colgate University	283
The College of Saint Rose.....	284
Columbia University in the City of New York	285
Cornell University	286
Fordham University	287
Hamilton College	288
Hobart and William Smith Colleges	289
Manhattan College	290
Mercy College.....	291
New York University.....	292
Purchase College	293
Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute	294
Rochester Institute of Technology	295
St. John Fisher College	296
Sarah Lawrence College	297
Skidmore College	298
Syracuse University	299
University of Rochester	300
North Carolina	
Davidson College	301
Duke University	302
Meredith College	303
North Carolina State University	304
Queens University of Charlotte	305
University of North Carolina Wilmington.....	306
Ohio	
Antioch College	307
Baldwin Wallace University	308
Kent State University	309
Miami University	310

University of Cincinnati.....	311
University of Dayton	312
Walsh University	313
Oklahoma	
Oklahoma Baptist University	314
Oregon	
Reed College.....	315
Southern Oregon University.....	316
Warner Pacific College.....	317
Willamette University.....	318
Pennsylvania	
Arcadia University.....	319
Bucknell University	320
Carnegie Mellon University	321
Cedar Crest College	322
Chatham University	323
Dickinson College.....	324
Elizabethtown College	325
Gettysburg College.....	326
Haverford College.....	327
Juniata College.....	328
Lafayette College.....	329
Lycoming College.....	330
Mount Aloysius College	331
Saint Francis University.....	332
Saint Vincent College	333
Swarthmore College.....	334
University of Pennsylvania	335
Rhode Island	
Brown University.....	336
South Carolina	
College of Charleston	337
Tennessee	
Belmont University.....	338
Fisk University	339
Maryville College	340
Vanderbilt University.....	341
Texas	
Texas State University	342
University of Houston	343
University of Texas at Arlington	344
Vermont	
Champlain College	345
Virginia	
Ferrum College.....	346
University of Mary Washington	347
University of Virginia.....	348
Virginia Commonwealth University.....	349
Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University	350
Washington	
Whitman College	351
Wisconsin	
Marquette University	352
University of Wisconsin–Milwaukee	353
University of Wisconsin–River Falls	354

Spring Hill College



Spring Hill College is the oldest Catholic college in the Southeast, the third oldest Jesuit college and the fifth oldest Catholic college in the United States. Ranked among the top 20 Southern colleges and universities in U.S. News & World Report’s “America’s Best Colleges,” its mission is to form students to become responsible leaders in service to others. We accept students from all religious denominations. Located in one of Mobile’s most picturesque neighborhoods, Spring Hill’s campus rests on a 400-acre site, is naturally landscaped, and features huge oaks, azalea-lined walkways and an 18-hole golf course. Several buildings are listed in the National Register of Historic Places.

> First-Year Experience & Transition Academic Student Advocate

The Academic Student Advocate (Advocate) is a full-time faculty member who serves as an additional resource for Donnelly Scholars. The Advocate meets with first and second year scholars regularly on an individual basis to help scholars set goals, establish plans of action and evaluate goals.

> Scholars & Leadership Donnelly Scholars Program

The Donnelly Scholars program was established in 2008 to serve First Generation College (FGC) students at Spring Hill College. FGC students are defined as students whose parents did not graduate from four-year institutions. Students who wish to participate in the Donnelly Scholars program must meet the following criteria: ~Be first generation college students ~Be enrolled in at least 12 credit hours ~Be in good academic and disciplinary standing ~Demonstrate a willingness to succeed. The Donnelly Scholars program provides academic and social support to FGC students in an effort to assist students in realizing their greatest potential.

> Mentoring Peer Mentors

All first year scholars will be paired with a returning Donnelly Scholar who has successfully completed at least one year of study. Mentors will meet with first year scholars at least twice a month. Mentors are available to answer questions about the whole Spring Hill College experience. In the past, mentors have spent time with mentees at: one-on-one meetings around meals club meetings athletic events Donnelly Scholars social events lectures community service events.

> Mentoring Faculty Mentoring Program

Third and fourth year scholars will be assigned to a faculty mentor in their disciplines. Faculty mentors are not necessarily academic advisors for scholars. Faculty mentors will work with scholars to continue goal setting, execution and evaluation. They will also work with scholars to provide resources that relate directly to the scholars’ major area of study.

Spring Hill College
4000 Dauphin Street
Mobile, AL 36608
Ph: (800) 742-6704
admit@shc.edu
www.shc.edu

Fast Facts

STUDENT DIVERSITY

# undergraduates	1,294
% male/female	40/60
% first-generation college	n/a
% American Indian or Alaskan Native	1
% Asian	1
% Black or African American	16
% Hispanic/Latino	8
% Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	n/a
% White	66
% two or more races	2
% race and/or ethnicity unknown	5
% International/nonresident	1

STUDENT SUCCESS

% first-to-second year retention	74
% six-year graduation	56
% six-year graduation for underrepresented minority groups	n/a
% first-years who live on campus	100
% undergraduates who live on campus	90
full-time faculty	n/a
full-time minority faculty	n/a
student-faculty ratio	13:1

Popular majors

n/a

Multicultural student clubs and organizations

n/a

AFFORDABILITY

Cost of Attendance

tuition	\$32,031
required fees	\$2,060
room and board	\$12,090

Financial Aid

total institutional scholarships/grants	n/a
% of students with financial need	n/a
% of students with need awarded any financial aid	n/a
% of students with need awarded any need-based scholarship or grant aid	70
% of students with need whose need was fully met	n/a
% Pell Grant recipients among first-years	n/a
average aid package	n/a
average student loan debt upon graduation	n/a

ADMISSIONS

# of applicants	n/a
% admitted	44
SAT Critical Reading	480-620
SAT Math	480-600
SAT Writing	480-590
ACT Composite	21-26
SAT/ACT optional	no
average HS GPA	3.44

DEADLINES

regular application closing date	rolling
early decision plan	no
application closing date	n/a
early action plan	no
application closing date	n/a
application fee	n/a
application fee online	\$25
fee waiver for applicants with financial need	yes

Northern Arizona University

Northern Arizona University (NAU) delivers a rigorous, learner-centered education. The university promotes a learning community where students are prepared to contribute to the social, economic, and environmental needs of a changing world. With 26,606 undergraduate and graduate students, students become active citizens, leaders, and problem solvers with an understanding of global issues.

> Pre-College Prep & Outreach Nizhoni Academy

Nizhoni Academy is a pre-college program designed to encourage Native American students to prepare for secondary and post-secondary education in STEM fields. The Academy provides students a clear understanding of the demands of college studies and academic study skills necessary to be successful.

> Pre-College Prep & Outreach Educational Talent Search (TS)

Talent Search is a year round pre-college program that provides services to low income and potential first-generation students in Northern Arizona. Talent Search’s goals are to increase educational and career awareness, increase the number of students who complete high school and encourage our participants to continue and enroll in post-secondary education.

> First-Year Experience & Transition Successful Transition and Academic Readiness (STAR)

The STAR program offers selected new freshmen a unique way to begin their higher education. STAR assists students with making the important transition from high school to college. STAR students will earn six university credit hours, live in a campus residence hall, experience campus life and connect with other new students in the summer before college begins.

> First-Year Experience & Transition Student Support Services (SSS)

The Student Support Services (SSS) program assists eligible students in adjusting to campus life and the rigors of academic study. Throughout participation in the program, students will receive free individual mentoring from peer and professional staff members. Students also attend educational workshops, cultural activities, and community service projects. Freshmen and sophomores can earn grant money (up to \$500 per semester) after a full semester of participation in the program.

> Scholars & Leadership First Scholars

The First Scholars program is a holistic student success program, designed to help first-generation college students succeed in school, graduate, and have a life complete with self-awareness, success and significance. Scholars receive personalized support, including an annual scholarship of \$5,000, renewable for an additional 3 years for a total maximum reward of \$20,000. The program is open to incoming freshmen whose parents have completed no more than 2 years of college.

> Scholars & Leadership Lumberjack Leadership Institute

The First Generation Workshops Initiative offers learning and engagement opportunities in five domain areas: academic success, professional development, financial management, health and wellness, and campus and community engagement. Completing the workshop series will enhance a student’s credentials when applying for Peer Mentoring positions, as well as becoming future workshop facilitators.

Northern Arizona University
Undergraduate Admissions
P.O. Box 4084
Flagstaff, AZ 86011
Ph: (928) 523-5511
admissions@nau.edu
www.nau.edu

Fast Facts

STUDENT DIVERSITY

# undergraduates	19,361
% male/female	42/58
% first-generation college	42
% American Indian or Alaskan Native	3
% Asian	2
% Black or African American	3
% Hispanic/Latino	19
% Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	0
% White	62
% two or more races	5
% race and/or ethnicity unknown	1
% International/nonresident	4

STUDENT SUCCESS

% first-to-second year retention	74
% six-year graduation	50
% six-year graduation for underrepresented minority groups	41
% first-years who live on campus	87
% undergraduates who live on campus	29
full-time faculty	1,055
full-time minority faculty	156
student-faculty ratio	19:1

Popular majors

Criminology and Criminal Justice, Hotel and Restaurant Management, Biomedical Science, Biology, Elementary Ed

Multicultural student clubs and organizations

Black Student Union, Hispanic Honor Society, MEChA-Native Americans United, National Society of Minorities in Hospitality, Native American Business Association, American Indian Science and Engineering Society, Club STAR

AFFORDABILITY

Cost of Attendance

tuition	in-state: \$9,746; out-of-state: \$23,126
required fees	\$870
room and board	\$9,292

Financial Aid

total institutional scholarships/grants	\$63,585,081
% of students with financial need	65
% of students with need awarded any financial aid	96
% of students with need awarded any need-based scholarship or grant aid	69
% of students with need whose need was fully met	13
% Pell Grant recipients among first-years	36
average aid package	\$10,622
average student loan debt upon graduation	\$22,422

ADMISSIONS

# of applicants	35,247
% admitted	79
SAT Critical Reading	470-580
SAT Math	460-570
SAT Writing	450-560
ACT Composite	23
SAT/ACT optional	yes
average HS GPA	3.7

DEADLINES

regular application closing date	7/1
early decision plan	n/a
application closing date	7/1
early action plan	n/a
application closing date	n/a
application fee	\$25
application fee online	\$25
fee waiver for applicants with financial need	yes

176

I'M FIRST! GUIDE TO COLLEGE

I'M FIRST! GUIDE TO COLLEGE

177

University of Arizona



Established in 1885, the University of Arizona, the state’s super land-grant university with two medical schools, produces graduates who are real-world ready through its 100% Engagement initiative. Recognized as a global leader and ranked 16th for the employability of its graduates, UA is also a leader in research, bringing more than \$580 million in research investment each year, and ranking 19th among all public universities. UA is advancing the frontiers of interdisciplinary scholarship and entrepreneurial partnerships, and is a member of the Association of American of Universities, the 62 leading public and private research universities.

➤ Pre-College Prep & Outreach New Start

New Start is a comprehensive, six-week summer bridge program designed to help incoming freshmen succeed in the transition from high school to college.

➤ Pre-College Prep & Outreach Early Academic Outreach

The mission of the Office of Early Academic Outreach at The University of Arizona is to increase the number of ethnic minority, low-income, and first-generation college-bound students who are eligible to enter a degree program at a university. This mission is accomplished by providing services to K - 12 students throughout southern Arizona. Some of the programs and services offered by Early Academic Outreach include: Mathematics, Engineering, Science Achievement (MESA), Native American Science & Engineering Program (NASEP) and College Academy for Parents.

➤ Scholarship & Financial Aid Arizona Assurance

The Arizona Assurance Scholars Program at The University of Arizona is a financial aid program for low-income students in the state of Arizona. The program is designed to assist students by providing both financial aid and support services. The Arizona Assurance Program partners with college and departments on campus to provide scholars with comprehensive programming from their freshmen year through their senior year, so that they are able to have a smooth transition into and out of the University. The mission of Arizona Assurance is achieved through first-year transition programming, mentoring, leadership, and career development, graduate/professional school preparation, and cultural enrichment.

➤ Academic Advising & Support Think Tank

The Think Tank is a student support center for Math and Science tutoring, Writing assistance, Weekly Course Reviews, Supplemental Instruction, Academic Skills tutoring and so much more! The Think Tank provides both free and fee based services to all UA students.

➤ Academic Advising & Support Writing Skills Improvement Program

The Writing Skills Improvement Program (WSIP) was established over 30 years ago in order to help students at the University of Arizona improve their writing skills and achieve academic success. These writing coaches work one-on-one with students, staff, and faculty across all majors and degree programs. WSIP also offers regular writing workshops, custom workshops, and summer writing institutes.

University of Arizona
PO BOX 210073
Tucson, AZ 85721
Ph: (520) 621-3237
admissions@arizona.edu
www.arizona.edu

Fast Facts

STUDENT DIVERSITY

# undergraduates	34,072
% male/female	48/52
% first-generation college	26
% American Indian or Alaskan Native	1
% Asian	6
% Black or African American	4
% Hispanic/Latino	25
% Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	<1
% White	53
% two or more races	4
% race and/or ethnicity unknown	1
% International/nonresident	6
% first-to-second year retention	62
% six-year graduation	81
% six-year graduation for underrepresented minority groups	n/a
% first-years who live on campus	80
% undergraduates who live on campus	21
full-time faculty	1,559
full-time minority faculty	294
student-faculty ratio	22:1
tuition	in-state: \$11,800; out-of-state: \$35,000
required fees	\$512
room and board	\$11,300
total institutional scholarships/grants	\$182,520,970
% of students with financial need	52
% of students with need awarded any financial aid	96
% of students with need awarded any need-based scholarship or grant aid	88
% of students with need whose need was fully met	9
% Pell Grant recipients among first-years	29
average aid package	\$12,278
average student loan debt upon graduation	\$23,635
# of applicants	37,662
% admitted	76
SAT Critical Reading	n/a
SAT Math	n/a
SAT Writing	n/a
ACT Composite	24
SAT/ACT optional	yes
average HS GPA	3.4
regular application closing date	n/a
early decision plan	yes
application closing date	10/15
early action plan	no
application closing date	n/a
application fee	\$75
application fee online	n/a
fee waiver for applicants with financial need	yes

178

I'M FIRST! GUIDE TO COLLEGE

Henderson State University

Henderson State University, located in the heart of southwest Arkansas, provides a learning environment that prepares students for a lifetime of intellectual and personal growth in a global society. For 125 years, Henderson State has worked to bridge student aspirations to career success by instilling in students the skills employers most want—communication, decision-making, teamwork and problem-solving—through the application of a strong core of liberal arts classes that are applied through professional studies. Henderson State focuses on teaching and student success in its 75 undergraduate and graduate programs. Our dedicated faculty and staff serve 3,600 students from 25 states and 19 countries. We also serve our students from the Landmark Building in Hot Springs, where they can complete their undergraduate degrees or work on graduate programs in education or business.

➤ Pre-College Prep & Outreach Southwest Arkansas College Preparatory Academy

The Southwest Arkansas College Preparatory Academy (SWACPA) helps students prepare for college through a focus on teaching critical thinking skills and college-level subject matter. We empower students so they are ready to take on the responsibility of college – and be successful as well. Our focus is on creating life-long learners who contribute positively to their communities.

➤ First-Year Experience & Transition Henderson Seminar

The Henderson Seminar facilitates the transition of first-time freshmen to the university by introducing them to academic expectations and support services and by fostering engagement in university life beyond the classroom.

➤ First-Year Experience & Transition Heart Start

All first-time freshmen and transfer students who are fully admitted are invited to attend Heart Start. Each Heart Start session is a one-day event that allows you to get REDDIE for your college career! You will have the opportunity to register for fall classes, have questions answered, and take care of important business, such as financial aid and on-campus housing. This is also your opportunity to meet the administration, faculty, staff, and other new students.

➤ Academic Advising & Support Student Support Services

Student Support Services provides a supportive environment for academic success, retention, career planning and college graduation for individuals who are first generation, low-income college students. We accomplish this by helping students make adjustments to living away from home, monitoring student progress to insure good academic standing, providing students with academic tutoring, support groups, workshops and academic advice.

➤ Academic Advising & Support Academic Advising

In collaboration with departmental faculty, Henderson State University’s Academic Advising Center is a student success committed team of professional advisors whose aim is to focus on the individual academic needs of each undergraduate student served and facilitate their transition and integration into the university by steering them toward the programs and resources that will help them to successfully persist and matriculate. The Center promotes the personal growth of students by instilling a sense of responsibility and independence, as well as respecting and appreciating various communication and cultural backgrounds.

➤ Mentoring McNair Scholars Program

One of eight federally funded TRIO Programs, the Ronald E. McNair Post Baccalaureate Achievement Program helps provide effective preparation for doctoral study to low-income, first-generation college scholars and scholars from groups underrepresented in graduate education.

Henderson State University
1100 Henderson Street
Arkadelphia, Arkansas 71999
Ph: (870) 230-5028
www.hsu.edu

Fast Facts

STUDENT DIVERSITY

# undergraduates	3,099
% male/female	43/57
% first-generation college	56
% American Indian or Alaskan Native	<1
% Asian	<1
% Black or African American	24
% Hispanic/Latino	4
% Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	<1
% White	66
% two or more races	4
% race and/or ethnicity unknown	<1
% International/nonresident	1
% first-to-second year retention	58
% six-year graduation	34
% six-year graduation for underrepresented minority groups	23
% first-years who live on campus	86
% undergraduates who live on campus	50
full-time faculty	177
full-time minority faculty	31
student-faculty ratio	15:1
tuition	in-state: \$6,450; out-of-state: \$6,450
required fees	\$1,666
room and board	\$6,358
total institutional scholarships/grants	\$5,776,570
% of students with financial need	83
% of students with need awarded any financial aid	85
% of students with need awarded any need-based scholarship or grant aid	64
% of students with need whose need was fully met	42
% Pell Grant recipients among first-years	64
average aid package	\$7,656
average student loan debt upon graduation	\$16,468
# of applicants	3,786
% admitted	64
SAT Critical Reading	230-690
SAT Math	235-705
SAT Writing	n/a
ACT Composite	20
SAT/ACT optional	n/a
average HS GPA	3.21
regular application closing date	rolling
early decision plan	n/a
application closing date	n/a
early action plan	n/a
application closing date	n/a
application fee	\$25
application fee online	\$25
fee waiver for applicants with financial need	yes

I'M FIRST! GUIDE TO COLLEGE

179