

*Villa Maria Academy is...*



**College Bound**

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## INTRODUCTION

Your junior year is a good time to start making concrete plans for your future. It is time to take stock of yourself. If you are not sure about your post high school plans, here are some questions you might want to ask yourself:

1. What do I want to do with my future? What are my goals?
2. What is important to me? What do I enjoy?
3. What kind of student am I? Based on my academic record, what realistic options are open to me?
4. What am I good at? Can I build a career around my talents?
5. What opportunities are available to me?
6. Where can I get information that will help me make realistic decisions?
7. Have I talked with my parents, my counselor, my teachers, my friends about my plans?

\* Regardless of your plans, make an appointment with your counselor now to discuss the various alternatives open to you.

## **JUNIOR MONTH-TO-MONTH CALENDAR**

### **August/September**

- Think about future plans
- Plan your next two year's extracurricular and community service activities
- Memorize your social security number

### **October**

- Take PSAT
- Study Hard! Colleges look *very* carefully at junior grades

### **November**

- Involve parents in college choice process
- Put forth best academic effort

### **December**

- Using PSAT/INMSQT results and GPA, begin to develop range of colleges

### **January**

- Start Junior Guidance Classes with counselors
- Register online for upcoming SATs and ACTs
- Prepare for mid-year exams (Remember: colleges look carefully at junior year grades!).

### **February**

- Research interesting and challenging summer courses, programs, jobs, or activities
- Check deadlines for Advanced Placement (AP) tests
- Register for senior year courses
- Continue career exploration
- Consider taking SAT Subject Tests in courses you are finishing this year
- Continue college search process using VMA college planning guide

### **March/April**

- Apply for proposed summer activities
- Develop a preliminary list of colleges
- Write or call colleges for information and viewbooks
- Begin College visits
- Explore Early Decisions/Early Action Options
- Take SAT
- Take ACT

### **May**

- Identify teachers to ask for recommendation letters
- Take AP Exams
- Take SAT/SAT Subject Tests
- Plan a challenging senior year
- U.S. Service Academies and the R.O.T.C. scholarship programs

### **Summer**

- Continue college search
- Arrange college visits and/or interviews
- Take SAT/SAT Subject Tests
- Take ACT
- Keep extracurricular and community service going

## **SENIOR MONTH-TO-MONTH CALENDAR**

### **September**

- Make appointment to meet with counselor in September/October
- Register early for Fall SAT/ACT
- Finalize college list
- Ask teachers to write recommendation letters (give them at least 4 weeks)
- If applying Early Decision, Early Action, or Rolling, begin filling out applications
- Revise essay from junior year and/or begin drafts of new essays
- Get off to a good start academically (colleges will receive your 1<sup>st</sup> semester grades)

### **October**

- Take SAT
- Take ACT
- Continue working on college essays
- Plan college visits and interviews (remember thank you letters)
- Check for local college fairs and visits
- Send Early Decision/Action and Rolling Admissions applications (be aware of deadlines!)

### **November**

- Take SAT (if didn't take in October)
- Check on dates for/attend financial aid night (before January)
- Research sources of private outside scholarships (continuing throughout the year)
- File CSS Financial Profile if applying Early Decision

### **December**

- Take SAT (if didn't take in Oct/Nov)
- Take ACT (if didn't take in Oct/Nov)
- Finish applications and essays to colleges
- Talk with graduates who are home from college
- Retrieve your FAFSA pin from [www.fafsa.ed.gov](http://www.fafsa.ed.gov), in order to be ready to file Jan. 1

### **January**

- File FAFSA or other appropriate financial aid forms after January 1

### **February**

- Mid-year reports will be sent to all colleges still considering your application
- Check/Apply for private scholarships
- Send in all necessary forms and applications for financial aid (if not done already)

### **March**

- Send any new material to colleges which may help (new SAT/ACT scores, report card, etc)

### **April**

- Review your college responses and aid offers with your parents/counselor
- Visit college(s), if still undecided
- Should receive your FAFSA acknowledgement/Student Aid Report (SAR)
- Make final-decision and send deposit to your chosen college by May 1

### **May**

- Write withdrawal letters to colleges you will not attend
- Take AP exam(s) (make sure to send official scores directly to your college for possible credit)
- Check arrangements for Stafford Loans
- Send original and signed SAR to your chosen college
- Graduation

## GETTING STARTED

### **DEVELOPING A CAREER GOAL:**

Although it is not absolutely necessary that you know what your career goal is before enrolling in university, it is helpful to have at least a general idea of what subjects most interest you. Some careers, such as architecture, nursing, medicine and engineering require that you make your decision to specialize right from the start. Choosing a major in college is often the first step towards choosing a career in life. This is a difficult task if you have not yet spent a sufficient amount of time reviewing your skills and aptitudes and exploring career possibilities. Colleges and universities in America tend to allow students flexibility in changing majors and most offer broad liberal arts studies.

It is certainly not too early to begin considering a choice of career. In fact, this is an ideal time. Your choices of high school courses will play a major role in your future plans. For example, failing to take mathematics beyond the level of geometry could prevent you from majoring in engineering, computer science or pre-medicine at some universities. Thus, the decisions you make in high school influence the choices you will have after you graduate.

Since you are already a junior, you have to assess quickly where you stand and what options are open to you. **Before you panic and try to sort out your entire future in one critical moment, keep these points in mind:**

- ◆ You are likely to change your ideas about possible jobs as you develop new interests & abilities.
- ◆ Jobs themselves will change. Some jobs will become obsolete, while new jobs that don't presently exist will come into being.
- ◆ Your future education after high school should not simply prepare you for a single occupation, but increase your adaptability and attitude of openness to change.
- ◆ Changes in your career plans should be a result of careful thought rather than a passing whim.

**If you're wondering about career possibilities you might want to consider the following resources:**

- ◆ The career inventories we do in the college guidance class.
- ◆ Taking part in the career day opportunities at VMA.
- ◆ The internet has a variety of career search sites. See Appendix 4 for an extensive listing.

## **STEP 1: COMPILING A LIST OF COLLEGES**

Keeping in mind variables such as: geographic location, size, academic programs, admission requirements etc., develop a list of schools you would like to study more closely. This **initial** list can contain as many as **25** schools. Take time to research these schools closely.

If you remove institutions which do not meet the criteria you feel is important, you will reduce the list to a size that will be realistic in terms of gathering further information and filling out applications. Usually **ten to twelve** letters/emails/calls requesting information are enough.

### **Resources to use in developing your list of colleges:**

- IN OUR GUIDANCE OFFICE WE HAVE A WIDE RANGE OF REFERENCE MATERIALS.

Please note: Because of the many inaccuracies that exist in any general reference it is recommended that you use more than one reference book to verify information, or go directly to the college or university web site. Remember that the most accurate source is an up-to-date catalogue (prospectus, calendar) from each of the schools in which you are interested.

- **Access the World Wide Web.** Most colleges have excellent web sites that offer a wealth of information. There are general sites, as well, which help you search for colleges and expand or refine your list. See Appendix 4 for an extensive list of web sites to get you started.
- **It is important to talk with representatives of universities that visit VMA.** These professionals can give you first-hand information about their schools, and give you ideas of other colleges, parallel programs or career opportunities after graduation. Keep an open mind and take advantage of the wide variety of university representatives that visit VMA.
- **Talk with your counselor, teachers, parents, and friends of parents** to see if they know of colleges that they think might interest you. Be prepared to tell them the kind of school you are looking for so they can make suggestions that match your criteria. But also keep an open mind about suggestions that might not completely match your idea of the perfect school or location. They may know things about you and particular colleges that might suggest a good match.

## **10 QUESTIONS TO EVALUATE YOUR COLLEGE PREFERENCES**

1. **WHY DO YOU WANT AN EDUCATION?** Why are you going to college?
2. **WHICH INTERESTS DO YOU WANT TO PURSUE IN COLLEGE?** Do your interests require any special facilities, programs, or opportunities? Consider ALL your interests in terms of fields of study, activities, community and cultural opportunities? Are you more interested in career preparation, technical training or general knowledge and skills of inquiry thinking?
3. **WHAT DEGREE OF ACADEMIC CHALLENGE IS BEST FOR YOU?** What balance of study, activities and social life suits you the best? How interested are you in the substance of intellectual life: books, ideas, issues and discussion? Do you want an academic program where you must work hard? Or one where you can make respectable grades without knocking yourself out? How important is it to you to perform at the top of your class or would you be satisfied to be in the middle or bottom of your university class? How well do you respond to academic pressure and competition from others?
4. **HOW WOULD YOU FEEL ABOUT GOING TO COLLEGE WHERE YOU WERE RARELY TOLD WHAT TO DO?** How much structure and direction do you need?
5. **HOW WOULD YOU ENJOY LIVING IN A DIFFERENT PART OF THE COUNTRY/WORLD?** How often do you want to be able to go home? What kind of change in your lifestyle and perspective might be exciting, or distressing and overwhelming?
6. **WHAT KIND OF SURROUNDINGS ARE ESSENTIAL TO YOUR WELL-BEING?** Are there certain places, activities, countryside terrain, weather or pace of life which make you happy? Do you prefer a fast environment where something is happening most of the time? Do you prefer an organized environment where you can join a wide variety of planned activities? Do you prefer a more relaxed environment where you can go your own way?
7. **HOW WOULD YOU FEEL ABOUT GOING TO A UNIVERSITY WHERE THE OTHER STUDENTS WERE QUITE DIFFERENT FROM YOU?** How would you react? Would you find it an exciting or intimidating environment? Would you prefer to be with people who share your viewpoints and lifestyles or who challenge and make you question your values?
8. **WHAT SATISFACTIONS AND FRUSTRATIONS DO YOU EXPECT TO ENCOUNTER IN COLLEGE?** What worries you most? What do you hope to gain from college? What is the overriding consideration in your choice of a college?
9. **HOW DO YOU WANT TO GROW AND CHANGE IN THE NEXT FEW YEARS?** What kind of environment would stimulate or inhibit the growth you would like to see?
10. **HOW FREE DO YOU FEEL TO MAKE YOUR OWN COLLEGE DECISIONS?** Do you and your parents agree about your post-secondary plans? How important to you are the opinions of your parents and friends? Or considerations of familiarity, prestige or reputation in your community?

Now ... ask yourself Question 1 again...

## DECIDING WHICH COLLEGE IS RIGHT FOR YOU

In deciding which college is the right one for you, it is necessary to devote time and energy on research and self-analysis. While you may have personal preferences, keep in mind that there is no single college that is the only one for you. A number of colleges might be a near perfect fit for each student; thus, your goal must be to find a handful of schools that meet your needs and maximize your future options.

Listed below are several criteria and questions that you may use to determine the kind of school you might like to attend. Not all of the suggested criteria or questions will be important to you. Find those that are and use them to help you search for the schools that are right for you.

### **Type of Institution**

- ◆ **Would you prefer a private or a public institution?** Costs, diversity of students, range of programs, and amount of administrative control vary considerably. **Note: Private institutions tend to provide more support in the form of scholarships + loans. Don't initially rule out schools due to cost.**
- ◆ Are you considering a school other than a college/university, such as a professional or specialized school? Keep in mind that there are specific types of schools available to you including fine arts schools, conservatories, or technological universities.
- ◆ **Will you consider a single sex or co-ed college?** Most students seem to choose a co-ed environment, but the number of students who recognize the advantages of a women's (or men's) college is growing. At women's colleges, the career counseling and placement in professional schools, leadership positions, and research assistantships are all for women. Current studies show that graduates of women's colleges have greater self-esteem and often greater success as employees than their counterparts who attend co-ed colleges.
- ◆ **Religious affiliation** of the school may be an important factor.

### **Location**

Try not to let the vision of ivy-covered walls and a rural setting unconsciously dominate your decision.

- ◆ Urban - How important is the city to you? Things to consider: cultural outlets, internships, work, transportation, etc.
- ◆ Rural - Small town, somewhat removed from an urban center. Do you enjoy the outdoors? Possibly fewer activities "off-campus", but potential for a more bonded campus. Often, the town itself thrives on the college students.
- ◆ Suburban - Perhaps the best of both worlds, these schools usually have easy access to a city, major airports, and/or train transportation.

### **Size**

- ◆ While the quality of an institution is not determined by its size, your enjoyment of it may be. How important are class size, faculty contact, and involvement in activities to you? Would you prefer to be a "big fish in a small pond" or perhaps more autonomous in a larger environment. In large schools, you can find smaller communities (dorms, fraternities, sororities), club sports, and associations for people with your interests. Ultimately, you will take advantage of the opportunities and activities that hold the most interest for you, whether at a large or small school. You must be prepared to act as your own advocate wherever you decide to go.

## Culture/Environment

- ◆ What does the college look like? What does it feel like? Can you see yourself here for four years? Is there room to "grow?"
- ◆ What is the atmosphere on campus? Competitive? Cooperative? Intellectual? Conservative? Non-conformist? Socially aware/concerned? Experimental? Artistic? Supportive?
- ◆ Do many students work on campus or in the nearby area? Are jobs available for all students or only for financial aid recipients?
- ◆ Is there a "party" environment during the week? How serious are students about their academics?
- ◆ Is there activity on the weekends other than beer drinking parties or "Greek" activities? Are there activities for those who don't drink even if there is no pressure to drink?
- ◆ What kind of entertainment is available on and off campus? Accessibility to movies, concerts, dancing, music, plays, exhibits, lectures, etc.? Cost?
- ◆ How safe is the campus? Security measures? Escort service? Campus police?

## Facilities

- ◆ How are the library facilities? More than one? Hours? Used for study or socializing? On-line? Accessibility to other collections? Research libraries by academic department?
- ◆ What are the types and availability of residence facilities? How old and in what kind of repair? Percentage of students who live on campus? Remain on campus on weekends? Freshman dorms? Sororities/fraternities? Specialty housing areas by interest or major? Are all dorms co-ed? By floor? Is housing guaranteed all four years? Can you live off-campus?
- ◆ What are the health facilities like? Is there a staffed infirmary on campus?
- ◆ What are the dining facilities like? Are dining rooms in dorms? Variety of dietary options? Accommodations for special diets such as vegetarian or kosher meals? Flexible meal plans? Snack bars? Can you eat anywhere on campus with your meal card?
- ◆ What are the computer facilities like? MACs? PCs? How many? Where are they located? Easy access? Are the dorms wired for computer mainframe access, modem access, and wireless?
- ◆ What is the college newspaper like? How active is the dialogue in the paper? What are the hot issues on campus?

## Competition for Admission

- ◆ Talk with your counselor about the degree of competition that will provide you with a challenging yet comfortable college environment. Many college guides categorize colleges by their "competitive standing." Because diversity of students is increasing, selectivity at your parent's alma mater has probably changed. Even if a parent did well at a highly selective college, the pool of candidates at that college today might look differently. Admission policies may have changed, reflecting the nature of the applicant pool today.
- ◆ Is student competition high, average, or low in terms of competition for places? Are students admitted to a general program? By major? Does competition differ from one program to another? Be aware that the number of applicants and percentage of students admitted will determine the level of competition.
- ◆ What criteria are used for admission? Importance of challenging academic program, academic performance, GPA? Does the college require SAT, ACT, SAT II subject tests? What emphasis does the college put on extracurricular activities, school involvement, strength of your academic program, and essays?

- ◆ Are interviews required? Offered? Optional? On campus or by local alumnae? Will interview be evaluative or informative?

## Academic Program

- ◆ Your first concern should be the quality of the academic programs at the college. Try to evaluate the strength of the departments that interest you through the breadth and variety of courses offered, undergraduate research opportunities, and placement of graduates in professional school.
- ◆ If you are undecided about a major, look for the largest range of possibilities available to you. When are you required to "declare" a major? Examine each college for its independent study programs, semester abroad programs, internships, and cooperative plans.
- ◆ What degrees are offered (BA, BS, BFA ... combined degree programs?) Does every department offer a major? Special concentrations or minors?
- ◆ Is there a core curriculum? What courses are offered to first year students? What elective options are available to you?
- ◆ How are new students assigned an academic advisor? Can you choose your own at a later date? Are there special advisory groups for academic/professional interest areas?
- ◆ What is the grading system? Is there a pass/fail option during the first year? Honors program?
- ◆ What does the academic calendar look like? Semester? Trimester? Quarter?
- ◆ What is the academic load? How many courses constitute full-time? Can you overload? Is there a summer term? Does the school require you to attend a summer term?
- ◆ Class size- what percentage of your classes will be "large lecture?" Are survey and seminar classes available? Size and frequency of labs? Are discussion sections available? How much work will be with "teaching assistants"? Do professors teach all classes?
- ◆ Do students pre-register? Is there difficulty getting the classes that you need and want? Can most students graduate in four years?
- ◆ What support services are available? Tutors? Services for learning disabled students? Is there an extra charge for these services? Are writing centers and math centers available?
- ◆ Are there honor or professional societies on campus?
- ◆ Is there an opportunity for independent work? Can you design your own major? Is there support for this from the faculty?

## Student Body

- ◆ Who are the people who make up the campus and what does the student body look like? Ethnic composition of the campus, percentage of international students, cultural, and socioeconomic diversity? Where in the US or abroad do the students come from?
- ◆ Is there a genuine commitment to multi-cultural education and a diverse student body?
- ◆ How many students go on to graduate school, medical school, law school, or business school?
- ◆ How many students are employed directly out of school? Do companies come to campus to recruit? Can everyone interview?

- ◆ What is the ratio of males to females?

## **Faculty**

- ◆ Number of full-time faculty? Are part-time/adjunct faculty used extensively? What is the faculty/student ratio? Do faculty teach undergraduate classes? What percentage of faculty members hold PhDs?
- ◆ Do faculty serve as academic advisors? Are professional counselors and advisors available?
- ◆ How accessible are professors? Do all maintain posted office hours? Is this enforced?
- ◆ Percentage of female professors? Minority professors?
- ◆ Are there opportunities to work with faculty mentors in undergraduate research?

## **Extracurricular Activities**

- ◆ Are students encouraged to engage in extracurricular activities? Is there a means of introduction to the various groups during orientation? Are activities open to all students?
- ◆ Are there adequate gym, pool, and recreational facilities? Intramural sports? Interscholastic teams? Varsity sports? Division I, II, or III?
- ◆ What other activities are available? Are there student government opportunities? Is the student body considered to be socially/environmentally/politically conscious? To what degree? What organizations exist on campus and how active are they?
- ◆ How important are fraternities and sororities? Do they have houses on campus? What percentage of undergraduates are members? What is the social life for those who do not belong to one?
- ◆ What role do the arts play on campus? What activities are available outside the classroom? What performance opportunities are there in theater, music, etc. Are all facilities open to all students or just those enrolled in courses/majors?

## **Cost**

- ◆ The cost of tuition, room, and board may vary between \$15,000 for state residents enrolling in their state college and upwards of \$45,000 for some private institutions. Keep in mind that you will also have to pay for transportation, clothing, fees, and books. In addition, you will need spending money.
- ◆ Do not eliminate a college too early in the process if it seems too expensive. Check out what they offer in the way of financial assistance. Resources are available in the guidance office concerning scholarships, financial aid, and available money to help support college costs.

**Through research you will find that you are able to narrow down your list of schools. After visiting, you will have a clearer idea about what you like and you don't like. Carefully compare the features and environment particular to each school and your reaction to these campuses.**

**Remember you know yourself better than anyone else. You know which environment best suits your needs. Believe in yourself and your ability to make decisions. Your counselor will work with you throughout the process supporting, encouraging, questioning, and challenging you as you investigate all of your options. This is a very exciting time! Good luck!**

## **STEP 2: REFINING YOUR LIST**

Gather additional information:

- ◆ If possible, **visit** a selection of colleges that you are considering. This is the best way to get to know a college and find out if you will be comfortable there for the next four years. A detailed description of how to get the most from your college visit begins on page 15. In this section, you will also find information on ways to gather details and impressions about a prospective college if you are unable to visit.
- ◆ During your campus visit, **interviewing** with a college representative is an excellent way to gather first-hand information about a college **and** let a college know a little more about you. Many schools have alumni representatives living in the area or have admission personnel who visit VMA who can conduct an “evaluative” and/or “informational interview.” See page 18 for tips on successful interviewing.
- ◆ **Talk** to as many different sources as you can about each school. You may get very useful information from admission representatives, current students, alumni and faculty and their opinions may not all match! And that is okay; remember, these are opinions and even the fact that they vary can be useful to you. We also have a list of student emails in the Guidance Office from the Class of 2008 who are willing to be contacted to talk about the college they attend.
- ◆ When you have worked your list of colleges down to a manageable size, **divide** your remaining college choices into three categories: REACH, REALISTIC, and CONFIDENT. Colleges’ admission decisions are based on a variety of factors in addition to GPA (grade point average) and SAT scores; strength of high school courses, essay responses, and recommendations to name a few. To get a general idea, however, if it is a REACH, REALISTIC, or CONFIDENT school, you can begin with your GPA and test scores (To estimate your SAT scores, multiply your PSAT results by 10. For example, a PSAT Critical Reading score of 45 becomes a 450 on the SAT scale. A 58 in Math is equivalent to 580).
- ◆ **Family Connections** and [www.collegedata.com](http://www.collegedata.com) are good sources of online help for determining your reach, realistic, and confident schools.

Use the following as guidelines:

- ◆ **REACH:** The average GPA or SAT/ACT scores or other admissions criteria of entering freshmen will be significantly higher than yours.
- ◆ **REALISTIC:** The average GPA or SAT/ACT scores and yours will be approximately the same.
- ◆ **CONFIDENT:** The average GPA and SAT/ACT scores of entering freshmen will be lower than yours. The main question to ask is... "Is this a confident school that is right for me?" AND "If accepted, would I be glad to attend?"
- ◆ Students are urged to give careful consideration when considering their final list of colleges, making sure they have chosen schools that have diverse admission standards. In other words, one should not apply exclusively to schools that have a reputation for being highly selective.
- ◆ In the fall of your senior year, refine your list of schools to which you would like to apply to about 6-8 colleges and universities. A general rule of thumb is to apply to 1 to 2 REACH schools, 3 to 4 REALISTIC schools and 1 to 2 CONFIDENT schools. Be selective and know for certain that you would like to attend any one of them if you are accepted.

## **STEP 3: EXAMINATIONS**

### **1. WHAT ARE THE COLLEGE ENTRANCE EXAMINATIONS?**

Most of you have already taken the Preliminary Scholastic Assessment Test (PSAT) and the PLAN (practice test for the ACT). Other tests you have heard about are the SAT Reasoning Test (formerly called SAT I) and the SAT Subject Tests (formerly called SAT II). The SAT's are published by the College Board. The ACTs are published by the American College Testing Program in Iowa. Those students in Advanced Placement courses will take Advanced Placement Examinations (AP).

#### **A. The Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT Reasoning Test):**

Most colleges require the SAT Reasoning Test for admission because it is considered a standard measure of abilities important for college work. Students may have their test scores sent directly from the College Board in Princeton, NJ, to the colleges they are applying to. The registration form allows students to send four reports at no additional charge. Scores may be sent to additional colleges for a fee. Scores are also located on the back of the transcript.

The SAT Reasoning Test measures three areas: verbal, mathematical reasoning and writing. The verbal questions measure your ability to understand what you read and the extent of your vocabulary. The mathematical questions measure your ability to solve problems involving arithmetic reasoning, algebra, and geometry. The new writing section is actually the former SAT Writing Test. This section includes an essay section. A detailed description of the SAT and a complete sample test and answer key are included in Taking the SAT Reasoning Test, which is available in the Guidance Office. Additional information is available online at [www.collegeboard.com](http://www.collegeboard.com)

Scores on the SAT or ACT will give colleges some indication of the student's aptitude for college work. College entrance examination scores are only one factor used by admissions officers, together with your high school record and other personal and extracurricular information, in making decisions about your readiness to successfully undertake college studies. Colleges accept students who have achieved a range of scores. College resource books indicate what percent of its last freshman class had certain SAT and ACT scores. SAT scores are, therefore, one way a student can estimate his/her chances at a given college. If a student has taken the SAT and ACT several times, colleges will take the highest verbal, highest math, and highest writing score. We encourage additional preparation for the SAT, through a preparation course, tutoring, practice books or online study guides.

#### **B. The SAT Subject Tests:**

The SAT Subject Tests are designed to measure the knowledge and skills you have developed in a particular subject area. They are administered in the following areas: Literature, Math Level I, Math Level IIC (calculator), Biology, Chemistry, Physics, American History & Social Studies, World History, French, German, Modern Hebrew, Italian, Latin, Spanish, Japanese, and Korean.

Many four-year colleges require two or three SAT Subject Tests. Some colleges specify the tests to be taken; others allow applicants to choose those they feel best qualified to take. The math test is frequently suggested. Since testing requirements vary from college to college, it is imperative that students are aware of each school's admissions requirements. Check the college catalogues to know the testing requirements of the schools you are considering. You should also see your counselor and subject area teachers to discuss which tests to take.

A booklet, Taking the SAT SUBJECT TESTS (available in the Guidance Office) describes the various SAT Subject Tests and is an excellent source of information and preparation. Since the SAT Subject Tests measure what you have already learned in a given subject, it is best for students to take the exam the year they study the subject. When registered for the SAT Subject Tests, you do not have to indicate which tests you plan to take beforehand. On the day of the test, you will be given a booklet, which contains all of the tests administered that day. The SAT Subject Test scores are sometimes used by colleges for placement purposes and at times allow a student to bypass an introductory course.

### **C. The American College Test (ACT):**

The American College Testing Program is the competitor to the College Board and administers the ACT test. Like the SAT, the ACT test is constructed to measure knowledge and skills typically taught in high school that are important for successfully completing college work. The ACT measures four areas: English, Mathematics, Reading and Science Reasoning. The ACT offers an optional writing section and does not penalize for wrong answers. In addition, unlike the SAT, the ACT student report provides information to the student about his/her educational, occupational and college planning.

### **D. Advanced Placement Examinations:**

Advanced Placement (AP) tests are designed to measure in depth a student's proficiency in a given subject area after having taken the Advanced Placement (AP) course in that subject. Each exam is three hours in length. Students who demonstrate a sufficiently high level of achievement on the tests may be granted college credit for work they have completed in high school, or they may be excused from a freshman course requirement in a specific subject. AP tests are given at the high school during May. Students register at the high school through their AP teachers.

## **2. TESTING SPECIFICS:**

Go to the counseling office to see test dates and times.

## **3. WHEN SHOULD I TAKE THE EXAM?**

It is advisable for juniors to take the ACT in April or June and the SAT Reasoning Test in March, May or June. For students who will be applying to competitive colleges in the United States it is advisable to take the ACT in April, the SAT Reasoning Test in May, and the SAT Subject Test in June. If students wish to retake either test, it should be done before December of their senior year.

### NOTE:

Since SAT Reasoning Tests and SAT Subject Tests cannot be taken at the same time, it is important to plan carefully after checking the requirements of each college in which you are interested.

## **4. THINGS TO CONSIDER**

To be certain the **College Board, ACT, and your university** keep all of your records in order, be sure to give your name **EXACTLY THE SAME WAY** on all forms and in all communications with Educational Testing Service, American College Testing Service, and the university admissions offices: Using initials one time and not the next may cause confusion and your scores may not be reported. Also, using one name on the test registration form and another on the application and yet another on your school records can result in the university not recognizing them as the same person.

Keep track of your registration number for each testing date. This will be most helpful if you have to contact Education Testing Service (ETS) or ACT at a later date.

Again, see the counseling office for a list of test dates for the SAT and ACT. Be sure to know Villa's code (392375) when registering for the test.

## **THE CAMPUS VISIT**

**Note:** The campus visit can occur before or after you apply to a college.

### **Why bother...**

One of the best ways to get to know a college is to visit. Seeing the campus and experiencing various activities first-hand allows you to make your own judgments about whether the college is the right one for you. It will provide a context for comparison and contrast and give you a chance to talk to students, faculty and admission personnel about the important issues currently under discussion on the campus.

### **What will you do...**

Most colleges are well prepared with a variety of options available for you to consider during your visit. Typically, you will have an opportunity to tour campus, attend a group information session, and have an interview. In the best scenario you will also be able to sit in on a class or three, talk to professors, try out the food in the dining hall, and spend the night in a dorm. There is a lot to be learned from each of these activities and you should sign up for any and all that are offered.

### **When to go...**

The best time to visit a campus is during the school year while classes are in session. That way, you are assured of seeing how the campus looks and feels during the regular school year. It also increases your chances of being able to take advantage of the activities listed above. If you can only visit during the summer, do it anyway! Many colleges have summer sessions and/or offer much of the above during holidays and even on weekends. Check with the admission office to see whether your vacation time coincides with theirs, and what events you will be able to participate in during the time of your visit. In addition to regular visits, most colleges have special visit days with special activities that will help you get to know the school. Advantages to visiting during one of these events are that you may gain additional information through special tours, panel discussions and planned activities. It also gives you a chance to meet other students who are considering the college. Disadvantages are that you may not get as much personal attention and you may not be seeing the school in its truest light. The programs are usually well thought out, however, and are designed to give you a good picture of the academic and social life on campus.

### **Making the most of it...**

The idea behind a visit is to see more than the hallowed buildings and beautiful grounds. You want to try and get a feel for the place and see if this is where you would like to spend the next several years of your life. Talk to everyone you can and take advantage of everything that is offered. This is no time to be shy! Ask lots of questions. Ask the same opinion-type questions of a variety of students, faculty and admission staff (and don't be surprised or dismayed if you get different answers!). Differing opinions can be a sign of a healthy, vital and exciting campus!

### **Remember...**

The success of a visit doesn't depend on your falling in love with the school and deciding you want to attend. It is great if that happens, and hopefully it will, but you will gain as much from a visit if you discover it is **not** the place for you, as well!

### **Setting it up...**

To set up a visit, contact the admission office at least 2-3 weeks before your planned arrival. Let them know when you would like to come and how long you are able to stay (half of a day at the minimum; a day and a night is ideal). Ask about which activities are available and sign up for as many as possible, but also leave yourself

time to roam campus on your own. Be sure to receive confirmation of your visit plans **before** you make any flight reservations.

### **A note to parents...**

Parents are welcome and encouraged to visit campus with their son or daughter. Chances are, your questions may be very different and equally as important as those of your student. Please keep in mind, however, that there are certain activities that your son or daughter will gain more from by doing alone, specifically: interviewing, visiting smaller classes, and spending the night on campus. Give him or her some space and let them get a feel for the place as it might be when they are attending the school. If you can not, or choose not to, join your student on the visit, rest assured that most campuses are well equipped to accommodate student visits without parents. Some offer transportation to and from the airport and most are accessible by taxi or shuttle systems. If you can't go, there is nothing wrong with sending along your list of questions!

### **Questions you might ask during your visit or in an interview...**

(Select those that are important to **you** and avoid those that you should have found answers to in the viewbook or catalog!)

#### **A. Academic Life:**

- ◆ What programs, courses, activities, or features do you believe are most distinctive?
- ◆ What are some "popular" areas of study? What makes them so appealing?
- ◆ What makes some of the smaller departments interesting?
- ◆ When do I choose a major? What if I change my mind?
- ◆ Tell me about the \_\_\_\_\_ (you fill in) department/major.
- ◆ What is the general class schedule? How often do classes meet? How long?
- ◆ Are there conference or discussion oriented classes in addition to lectures?
- ◆ What is the average size of each class-type?
- ◆ Do professors teach classes? Are any taught by graduate students? Teaching assistants?
- ◆ Are professors accessible outside of class? Do they have office hours?
- ◆ Do undergraduate students have opportunities to work with professors on special projects?
- ◆ Are there any activities designed to bring students and faculty together on an informal basis?
- ◆ Is there advanced lab equipment available for use by undergraduate students?
- ◆ Are there opportunities for internships? Study abroad?
- ◆ What is the library like? What are the hours and policies? Is there ample and comfortable study space?

#### **B. Social Life:**

- ◆ What do you like best about going to school (or working) here?
- ◆ What would you change if you could?
- ◆ Are there fraternities and sororities? If so, how big a role do they play?
- ◆ What is a popular activity to do on the weekends?
- ◆ Is there anything you wish you had known before you came?
- ◆ Are there social pressures? (How important are money, possessions, and appearances?)
- ◆ Are the students friendly? Have they been helpful to you?

### C. Campus Life:

- ◆ What are the residence halls like? Singles? Doubles? Suites?
- ◆ Any special interest dorms, quiet dorms, or substance-free dorms?
- ◆ Do the residence halls have computer access, kitchen facilities, and laundry facilities?
- ◆ Are students required to live on campus? What percent do?
- ◆ Are the dorms coed? By floor? By suite? Coed bathrooms?
- ◆ What do you like about living on-campus? –Or- why do you live off campus?
- ◆ Is there affordable housing near campus? Good transportation systems?
- ◆ What is the surrounding neighborhood like?
- ◆ What is the relationship between the town and the school?
- ◆ Where do students go when they leave campus?
- ◆ What are some current student issues, concerns, complaints?
- ◆ How would you describe the student body?
- ◆ What kind of student would not do well here?
- ◆ Tell me about your orientation program for new students.

### It's over, now what?

Whether you are on a whirlwind tour of a dozen schools or simply talking to an alum over the phone about one, it is always a good idea to jot down your general impressions as soon as you can, and preferably before you visit the next school. Your memories will invariably run together as you go from place to place unless you take a few moments to write down your likes and dislikes of what you experienced. **It is also a great idea to take along some stationery and write a thank you note to your interviewer and/or your dorm host.** Hand-written thank you notes often are entered into a student's file, and a little consideration can go a long way when those admission decisions are being made!

### The next best thing to being there...

Should time, distance or expense prevent you from visiting some or all of the schools that interest you, there are some alternative ways to gather information. Contact the admission office to find out which of the following opportunities are available to you:

- ◆ Interview with an alumna of the college who now lives in, or is visiting West Chester/Philly.
- ◆ Meet with a representative of the college at a VMA school visit or local college fair.
- ◆ Set up correspondence with a current student via email or telephone.
- ◆ Visit the university's website or use an interactive CD-ROM (take a virtual tour).
- ◆ Read every piece of literature the admission office will send you.
- ◆ Check out the guide books.

## The Interview

**Note:** This can be done during a campus visit or as your application is being processed.

### **What it is...**

Most campuses offer the opportunity for interested students to interview, either at the college or with a visiting college representative or a local alumnus. While a few schools require an interview as part of the admission process, most treat it as an optional activity that can be of great value as the candidate and the school attempt to get to know one another. Many interviews are regarded simply as “informational” and do not weigh heavily in the admission decision. Others can be more “evaluative” and a write up of the interviewer’s impressions will be considered as part of the application. Most are a combination of the two, and are used to allow each of you to share information that will be helpful to each other.

### **What to prepare...**

You should be prepared to answer questions about you – your interests, your academic history, your school and community activities, your summer activities, etc. The interview is also a good time to address issues in your academic record or personal life that you would like the college to know about. This may be one of the few opportunities to explain such issue face-to-face with a representative of the college. This is the person who can go to bat for you before the admission committee.

Also, be prepared to talk about why you are interested in attending this particular institution. This requires some research on your part, prior to the interview. At minimum read the viewbook and browse through the catalog, so you have a general idea about why the college appeals to you. Nothing impresses an interviewer more than knowing you put a little effort into finding out about the school before visiting or interviewing.

### **What will be asked...**

The questions you are asked will generally be straight-forward. They are not trying to “trick” you or put you on the spot. Rather, the questions should be open-ended in order to elicit the most complete answer possible. If they are not, take the initiative to expand upon your “yes” or “no” response without being asked. Skilled interviewers will strive to establish a dialog, where you have an active role. Be sure to carry your half of the conversation!

### **Questions you may be asked in an interview:**

- ◆ Are you enjoying your visit?
- ◆ Have you had any surprises (i.e. learned or seen anything different than you were expecting?)
- ◆ How did you become interested in this school?
- ◆ Why are you interested in attending?
- ◆ What do you think you could contribute to this college?
- ◆ What other colleges are you considering, and why?
- ◆ Have you thought about a major?
- ◆ Tell me about your high school. What do you like and dislike?
- ◆ What are you looking forward to most about the upcoming school year?
- ◆ What classes are you currently taking?
- ◆ Which classes do you enjoy most? Least? Why?
- ◆ Is there a teacher you find particularly inspirational? Why?

- ◆ What activities are you involved with outside the classroom? Outside of school? Which are most meaningful to you? Why?
- ◆ How do you spend your free time?
- ◆ What did you do last summer?
- ◆ List some words that describe you.
- ◆ What do you consider to be your strengths and weaknesses?
- ◆ How would your friends describe you?
- ◆ What makes you laugh?
- ◆ What books have you read recently? What were your reactions?
- ◆ What current events are of most interest to you?
- ◆ What is the greatest risk you have ever taken?
- ◆ Is there anything you would especially like me to convey to the admission committee?
- ◆ Is there anything of special interest to you that we haven't talked about?

### **What you should ask...**

You should be prepared with some questions of your own. If you have read about the school, your questions will have real context and you will not be asking about things you should have already learned from the literature. Don't be afraid, however, to ask for clarification or for the interviewer's opinion about things you have seen, heard, or read. This is a good way to demonstrate your level of curiosity and understanding. It is also appropriate to have a list of questions that are generic in nature and will work at any school you visit (i.e. academic program flexibility, advisor system, student concerns, study abroad opportunities, financial aid, admission requirements, etc.). Answers to these questions are especially helpful as you compare and contrast the features at each of the schools you are considering.

See the list of "Questions you might ask during your visit or in an interview" in the **Campus Visit** section on page 16 for some suggestions.

### **What to keep in mind when you interview...**

- ◆ Be on time! Not only do you want to make a favorable impression, you want to take advantage of your entire allotted time. If you know you will be late or have to change your plans, be sure to call and let the admission office know...they will really appreciate it!
- ◆ Dress comfortably, cleanly, and appropriately. Know enough about the school to know what is appropriate. On some campuses, a shirt and tie or a nice dress are perfect, on others you may be the only person wearing one and feel a bit out of place.
- ◆ Politely ask your parents to wait for you in the waiting room. The interview should be a time for *you* and the school to get to know one another. Most interviewers will be more than happy to answer your parent's questions after your interview.
- ◆ Take along a summary of your grades, PSAT/SAT scores, and activities for your information. The interviewer may or may not ask to see this information, but it is a good idea for you to be familiar with it if asked to speak about your record, including your present and future courses.
- ◆ Since most schools are primarily concerned with the academic match between you and the institution, address academic issues first when asked about your interests or are given the opportunity to ask questions about the school.
- ◆ Answer questions fully and candidly. Don't be afraid to pause or say, "I am not sure about that," where it seems appropriate or necessary. Honesty is critical!

- ◆ If you are not asked about something that you want the interviewer to know, take the initiative and work it into the conversation.
- ◆ Speak clearly and use good eye contact throughout the interview. Show that you are engaged and interested.
- ◆ Be prepared with a list of questions you want to ask your interviewer. *Always* have questions if asked if you have any. *This is part of the interview!* Even a few well thought-out questions will make a favorable impression. If you have already had all of your questions answered by your tour guide, or in an information session, ask some of the same questions of your interviewer, especially those that require his or her opinion.
- ◆ It is perfectly fine to pull out a list to help you remember your questions. It is also fine to jot down a few notes as the interviewer answers.
- ◆ Be sure to listen to the answers. Don't be in such a rush to get through all of your questions that you cut off your interviewer's responses. A small list of well-crafted questions is better than a huge list of questions that are unimportant to you, or ones you should have found answers to elsewhere.
- ◆ Learn your interviewer's name (ask for a business card) so you can write a personal thank-you note. Also, it makes a good impression if you listened carefully enough, when the interviewer introduced him or herself, that you can thank them by name before they give you their card.
- ◆ Relax! College interviews are not meant to be grueling tests of your stamina. Your presence on campus and your readiness to talk about your college plans are clear indications of your seriousness about the school. Remember that **you** are also interviewing the college to see if it is right for you. The exchange of information and the impressions gained on both sides – yours and the interviewer's – should be interesting and meaningful.

### **What about Alumni interviews...**

If you do not have the opportunity to visit or interview on campus, call the admission office and request an interview with a local alumnus or alumnae of the college. You might consider an "informational" interview even if you have visited and had a regular interview with an admission representative. While alumni may not be able to answer all your questions about the current issues on campus, they can provide a perspective that is completely different than a current student, faculty member, or admission representative. They have had the opportunity to step away from the college and see how the experience has affected their lives. They are perhaps the best resources to convey the true value of the education that the school has to offer.

## **STEP 4: APPLYING FOR ADMISSION: WHEN AND HOW**

**DEADLINES:** University application deadlines vary greatly. The more selective schools expect applications to be completed in January and February. **Some California schools prefer applications by November 1.** Some schools have “rolling admission” and accept applications later in the spring. Check each school's deadline carefully to avoid disappointment.

### **The College Application Process**

#### **The Student**

##### **What you do:**

- Request applications from colleges. Complete them on-line or on paper.
- Pay application fees.
- Send ACT/SAT scores to the colleges you have applied to.
- Carefully read all directions and make note of deadlines.
- Complete forms and write essays (if applicable).
- Complete *VMA Teacher Recommendation Questionnaire*.
- Ask teachers of two academic subjects to fill out a *VMA Teacher Recommendation Form* and write a letter of recommendation. Have them make copies and give the signed original to your counselor. (They have access to the forms, but it is up to you to give them clear deadlines).
- Complete application cover sheet and attach it to each application. Be sure to go through the checklist, making sure that you have given us all of the necessary information.
- Don't forget to hand in your essay and resume (if you choose to send one) along with your application and cover sheet. Or, send these things on-line if you are completing your application on-line.
- If your application has been done on-line attach a copy of the receipt, along with the cover sheet.
- Complete and send all financial aid applications (if applicable).
- Make copies of everything you have completed.
- **Include one book of “forever stamps” TOTAL (not with every application).**

#### **The Counseling Office**

##### **What we do:**

- Complete VMA Secondary School Report and write letters of recommendation.
- Make copies of everything prepared by this office.
- Mail counselor forms and recommendations, teacher recommendations, and transcripts to colleges and applications and payments if they have not been submitted on-line.
- Provide follow-up to any problems or questions that may arise.

#### **General Guidelines:**

- ◆ Deadlines are crucial! Give your teachers and counselor plenty of advanced notice so your materials can be completed and sent in a timely fashion.
- ◆ Pay special attention to financial aid deadlines.
- ◆ Regularly check the Senior Calendar so that you do not miss any deadlines pertaining to your applications (**calendar can be accessed on ed-line**).
- ◆ Complete requested forms from the guidance office (**VMA Teacher Recommendation Questionnaire, The Right to Access Form, The Authorization Form, and the Senior College Information Form**) and schedule appointments with your counselor as needed.
- ◆ Register for all appropriate tests (SAT I, SAT II, ACT). See application materials for each college to find out which are required. Mail registration forms early: at least two weeks before the deadline (and earlier in December). SAT recommends mailing registration forms four weeks before the deadline. Or, better yet, register on-line.
- ◆ Be honest and realistic with yourself and with us.
- ◆ Ask for help with your application and essays, but the work must be your own.

- ◆ Your future is your responsibility; we are here to help.
- ◆ There are over 3000 colleges and universities; there is at least one that is right for you!

## **MATERIALS BEING SENT TO COLLEGES:**

### **1. APPLICATION FORM:**

The student's application should be completed and proof-read before being submitted. **Succinctness and clarity are important.** The completed application sent to a university is the only information which is directly from you.

The appearance and content of the application will reflect a great deal about you as university admissions committees have very little else with which to judge you. It is crucial that you invest time and thoughtfulness in completing each application if you want to present yourself positively.

Unless a university specifically requests that you complete a question in your own handwriting, ALL APPLICATIONS SHOULD BE TYPED NEATLY. To avoid unnecessary erasures, always complete questions on a photocopy first.

Applications can be as demanding as term papers. You need a first draft for revisions and corrections.

### **2. ESSAY QUESTIONS:**

For some universities the essay questions may be an important factor in the admissions committee's decision. The committee is not only judging you by the content of your response, but also by your use of English and your ability to express yourself. After you have completed the first draft of each essay question, discuss it with your English teacher or counselor. The questions are admittedly difficult and frequently open-ended. Don't try to second-guess the admissions committee by writing an answer that you think the committee wants. Write honestly! Many questions are autobiographical in nature. Don't disown yourself by evading the subject (YOU). Answering these questions has the dual function of assisting the admissions committee as well as forcing you to ask yourself questions you may never have considered.

**REMEMBER:** The university has to get to know you from the application you submit. Personal interviews are only sometimes possible because of the distance and the lack of representatives. A neatly typed, well-expressed and accurately completed application will communicate to an admissions office that your interest is genuine. The application itself must, of course, be your own work, but you are encouraged to solicit constructive criticism of your grammar and written expression before you submit your application.

Sometimes the application does not allow you the freedom to give the university a complete picture of you. Take the time to write a well composed personal statement that will give them some insight into the real you if allowed.

### **3. APPLICATION FEE:**

Most universities require an application fee. It can vary from \$30 to \$100. Almost all the universities prefer applications to be submitted electronically, credit cards can be used to pay these application fees. If by paying by check, write your name on the checks, so that in case it becomes detached it will be much easier to determine to which application it belongs. It would be to your advantage to keep receipts or photocopy all checks you send and note the day you mailed them.

### **4. TEST RESULTS:**

Universities require that admission testing results be forward to them directly from the testing company. Check each university's admissions procedures for this requirement.

## **STEP 5: OBTAINING SCHOLARSHIPS AND FINANCIAL AID**

### **U.S. UNIVERSITIES**

Currently, higher education can cost anywhere from \$15,000 to \$65,000 per year. Because of spiraling costs, most colleges have as many as 40-50% of their students on some kind of financial assistance. Much of the financial assistance awarded to those seeking higher education today is being granted on the basis of financial need. Competitive scholarships for which you compete with others on the basis of merit, however, continue to be available. Because the two kinds of awards are so different, they are separated for discussion below.

### **COMPETITIVE OR MERIT BASED (NO NEED SCHOLARSHIPS):**

Competitive scholarships include those awarded for special skills in such areas as athletics, music, art and leadership as well as those awarded for academic accomplishments and ability. Several steps for locating and/or qualifying for such scholarships are listed below.

1. As a junior take the PSAT/NMSQT to qualify for the National Merit Scholarships.
2. Contact the Financial Aid Office of each college to which you are interested & ask for information on competitive scholarships.
3. Contact the personnel office of parents' employers and ask if scholarships are available.
4. Write to colleges where music, art, athletics, etc. are important.
5. Contact any government agencies for special scholarships.
6. Check scholarship listings on the internet (Appendix 4) and scholarship books.

### **NEED-BASED FINANCIAL AID**

Financial need scholarships are awarded on the basis of the ability of the family to pay for a student's post-secondary education. As such, most of the universities offering such scholarships feel a need to document confidentially the financial need of each applicant's family. The result of this documentation is called a "needs analysis" and is usually computed from the Free Application for Student Aid (FAFSA) and CSS Profile. These must be completed by the parent in the student's senior year and submitted to the specific universities that your child has applied to. These forms are available on the internet at [www.fafsa.edu.gov](http://www.fafsa.edu.gov).

### **Websites with good financial aid information:**

- ◆ [www.collegeboard.com/finaid/fastud/html/proform.html](http://www.collegeboard.com/finaid/fastud/html/proform.html): this site helps calculate how much money your family will be expected to contribute.
- ◆ [www.fafsa.ed.gov](http://www.fafsa.ed.gov): official site for applying for US federal and need-based aid.
- ◆ [www.fastweb.com/](http://www.fastweb.com/): excellent source for scholarship information. You will be sent scholarships for which you qualify. Sign up early since some scholarship programs begin in the 11th grade.
- ◆ [www.finaid.org/](http://www.finaid.org/): an excellent site for financial aid information. See Appendix 4 for others.

## **WHAT IF I'M NOT READY TO GO TO COLLEGE?**

A large number of people do not know what they want to do after they leave high school. For some it's just a matter of not being sure what it is that they want to study when they go on to further education. For others it is a question of whether they feel themselves ready for further study or whether they would be better doing something else for a year or two before resuming their studies.

Many colleges have the option of deferred entrance. With deferred entrance, you apply to college in your senior year, and if you are accepted, you may opt to postpone your entrance for a year. Only you and your parents can come to this decision, but it's important to be aware that this is an option should you need it.

### **Should I take a year off before I go on to university or college?**

The answer to this question is not automatically no, of course, because it is the perfect path of action for some people. But do ask yourself why you want to take a year off and what it will gain for you. There is no real point in just taking a year off if you have no specific plan for how you will spend the time. What about learning a language? Participating in an exchange program? Or even working in a field related to one that you think that you might like to work in permanently. Of course, you are going to have to make some inquiries into all this to see what is possible and how you would go about doing it (and those inquiries might be just as exhaustive and time consuming as applying to college would be), but if something appears feasible then it is certainly worth discussion and consideration.

If your year off is only to give you an academic break it could be worth your while to apply to university in any case and then have your entry deferred for one year. Some universities will do this and some won't, but it is certainly worth finding out from those you are interested in whether this is possible. It is a good feeling to go off and do what you want for a year secure in the knowledge that you already have a place to go to the following year. It definitely saves a lot of time and energy while you are out of school.

**But don't just do nothing!** Inspiration (sad to say) will not drop down on you from the sky. "God helps those who help themselves," the saying goes and you should have a plan of some sort - even if it later proves to have been the wrong one! If you really don't know what to do, talk it over with someone: your counselor, your parents or your friends. Your time is far too precious to waste and far too valuable not to use positively.

### **A Great Resource:**

#### **The Lonely Planet Guide to a Gap Year**

**This book gives descriptions and program information for gap year opportunities around the world.**

**ACCEPTANCE PROCEDURE**  
**YES! YOU WERE ACCEPTED!!!**

As soon as universities send their letters of acceptance to you and you decide which school you would like to attend, be prompt in replying.

When you receive an acceptance from the school you wish to attend, follow their instructions re:

1. Payment of fees at specific times
2. Selecting courses for your freshman year
3. Housing reservations
4. Personal information data sheets

If the university does not require anything immediately, acknowledge the acceptance with a letter to the Director of Admissions thanking him/her for the attention given to you and saying that you are looking forward to attending the college.

At the same time, you should write to the other universities which accepted you. Thank them for their consideration and ask them to withdraw your name from the rolls. You should explain that you have decided to attend another college and should name the college you have chosen. (Universities are always interested in the competition). In withdrawing your name promptly, you are giving an acceptance possibility to another applicant who may have been placed on the waiting list.

THE COURTESY OF NOTIFYING UNIVERSITIES OF YOUR PLANS IS A VERY IMPORTANT PHASE OF THE APPLICATION PROCESS. IT SHOULD BE COMPLETED AS CAREFULLY AND ACCURATELY AS THE ACTIVITIES WHICH PRECEDED IT.

Important: Inform your counselor that you have been accepted, \*waitlisted, or rejected at the universities where you applied. Please bring us a **copy** of your letters. We also need copies of letters informing us of any scholarships or grants you receive (not loans). This will help us in offering further assistance at the appropriate times, and will help us to help other students in the future by providing us insights into how universities make their admissions decisions.

\*If you have been waitlisted at a school that you would really like to attend, ask your counselor what you might do to increase your chances of being admitted from the waitlist.

## Appendix 1

### TERMINOLOGY AND ABBREVIATIONS

#### Admission Plan Terminology

**Admit** — You're in! You are being offered admission to the college to which you applied.

**Admit/deny** — You have been admitted but denied any financial aid. It is up to you to figure out how you are going to pay for school.

**Deny** — You are not in. The decision is made by the college or university admissions committee and is forwarded to you and your high school.

**Wait list** — You are not in yet but have been placed on a waiting list in case an opening becomes available. Schools rank their wait list in order of priority, and unfortunately, the more competitive schools have years when they never draw from their wait lists. After a certain time, a rejection notice is sent.

**EARLY DECISION (ED):** If you are certain by the early fall of your senior year that you want to attend a particular college, and if admitted, you are willing to sign a statement agreeing to attend; you may want to apply Early Decision. The application deadline is usually early November. The college will notify you by mid-December or early January. If you are accepted, you must withdraw applications to all other colleges. For most students November may be too early to decide where you would like to be ten months later. In choosing Early Decision candidates, admissions officers are looking for very clear indications of ability. The scrutiny of your credentials is sometimes much closer than in the regular admissions process. You may, on the other hand, have a slight advantage because you are clearly signaling to the college that you are committed to attend if admitted.

**EARLY ACTION (EA):** Early Action is another option for early notification of acceptance. In this instance, however, students are not obligated to attend that school and to withdraw all other applications. Accepted students are allowed to use the Candidate's Reply Date of May 1 and hear from all their schools before making a final decision on which school they will attend.

**ROLLING ADMISSIONS:** One of the most popular methods of notifying students. As colleges accumulate complete information on a candidate, the admissions board immediately makes decisions and notifies students sometimes within three weeks of receiving all the data.

**DEFERRED ADMISSION:** This is an admissions plan whereby a student applies to a college and is notified of acceptance during the senior year of high school. The student then may take off a year for travel, work, or other projects before attending college, with permission from the college to which she/he sends in a deposit by May 1.

**CANDIDATES REPLY DATE AGREEMENT (CRDA):** Originated by the College Board, this agreement establishes a common date, May 1, that is the earliest a subscribing college may require an accepted applicant to say whether he or she plans to attend. This allows students to make informed decisions when all alternatives are known.

**ADMISSIONS FOLDER:** A file kept at a college to which you apply, containing your completed application, high school transcript, standardized test scores, teacher recommendations, and other pertinent information (writing samples, portfolios, and so on).

**COMMON and UNIVERSAL APPLICATIONS:** Approximately 346 colleges and universities in the country use the *Common Application*; while the *Universal Application* is used by about 84. Participating colleges all give equal consideration to these applications and the college's own form. The application must be completed only once. Photocopies may then be sent to any number of participating colleges. This procedure simplifies the application process by saving time and eliminating unnecessary duplication effort. The common application is available online at [www.commonapp.org](http://www.commonapp.org) and [www.universalcollegeapp.com](http://www.universalcollegeapp.com).

**NEED BLIND:** Admissions decisions made without reference to a student's financial aid request, that is, an applicant's financial need is not known to the committee at the time of decision.

**OPEN ADMISSIONS:** A policy of admission that does not subject applicants to a review of their academic qualifications. Many public junior/community colleges admit students under this guideline, that is, any student with a high school diploma or its equivalent is admitted.

**PERSONAL INTERVIEW:** A one-on-one interview with an admissions officer, college representative or alumni. You will be provided information about the college as well as given an opportunity to ask questions. At many competitive colleges, this meeting is part of the selection process.

## **Testing Terminology**

**ADVANCED PLACEMENT (AP) Courses:** High-level, quality courses in any of twenty subjects. The program is administered through the College Board to offer high school course descriptions equated to college courses and correlated to AP examinations in those subjects. High schools provide the courses as part of their curriculum to eligible students. Based on the composite score on an AP test, which ranges from 0 to 5, a college may award college credit or advanced placement to a participating student. A score of a 4 or 5 on the AP test is usually required by colleges for credit or advanced placement in college courses. Some colleges limit the number of AP credits that they will recognize. Check the universities' policy on AP credits.

**AMERICAN COLLEGE TESTING (ACT) Program Assessment:** An alternative to the SAT, this test is accepted by all institutions and is given during the school year at test centers. The ACT tests English, mathematics, reading, and science reasoning. These subject test scores can be used, at some schools, in lieu of SAT II subject tests (always check with the school first). The score is the average of all four tests.

**COLLEGE ENTRANCE EXAMINATIONS BOARD (CEEB):** (called College Board). An identification number given by the College Board to every high school in the United States. This number is requested on many college applications. VMA's school number is 392375.

**EDUCATIONAL TESTING SERVICE (ETS):** ETS is the operational phase of many College Board programs. It includes the development and administration of the Board's major testing programs. ETS is a separate and independently governed nonprofit organization.

**PRELIMINARY SCHOLASTIC ASSESSMENT AND NATIONAL MERIT SCHOLARSHIP QUALIFYING TEST (PSAT/NMSQT):** The PSAT is a practice test taken by juniors in October as an introduction to the SAT. The NMSQT Selection Index Score is used to determine the top scholars in the country for the National Merit Scholarships. The PSAT is also a source through which some colleges use to contact you.

**AMERICAN COLLEGE TESTING PROGRAM (PLAN):** The PLAN is a practice test taken by sophomores in October as an introduction to the ACT. Based on how a student performs on this assessment, your child's counselor may recommend taking the ACT as well as the SAT.

**SCHOLASTIC APTITUDE TEST (SAT REASONING TEST):** Taken in the spring of the junior year and sometimes repeated in the fall of the senior year, the SAT is a multiple-choice test designed to test your aptitude for college work. (Please note that many colleges accept the ACT in lieu of the SAT.) The SAT Reasoning Test, formerly known as the SAT I, is almost always required for admission to college.

**SAT SUBJECT TESTS:** Formerly known as the SAT II's, the SAT Subject Tests cover a variety of academic subjects and are designed to test your level of knowledge in certain academic areas. Students must investigate college requirements carefully and know which tests are given when.

**SILENT SCORES:** The term is applied to PSAT scores because only the student and his or her guidance counselor see the scores. They are not reported to colleges. It is the "practice without penalty" feature of the test.

## **Financial Aid Terminology**

**THE COLLEGE SCHOLARSHIP SERVICE (CSS):** is the financial aid division of the College Board. It provides a needs analysis service for financial aid applicants.

**CSS/FINANCAIL AID PROFILE:** The Financial Aid Profile, more commonly known as the PROFILE, is used by many private colleges and universities to help them determine how to award private, non-federal student aid funds. Information about filing for a PROFILE is available at <https://profileonline.collegeboard.com>. This includes a list of all colleges, which require the PROFILE. Public colleges and universities do not require the PROFILE. There is a one-time registration fee of \$5.00, plus an \$18.00 per college processing fee for every college the student applies to which requires the PROFILE.

**EXPECTED FAMILY CONTRIBUTION (EFC):** The amount of financial support a family is expected to contribute toward a child's college education. This amount is part of the formula used by the federal government to determine financial aid eligibility using the FAFSA form.

**FEDERAL PELL GRANT PROGRAM:** This is a federally sponsored and administered program that provides grants based on need to undergraduate students. Congress annually sets the appropriation; amounts range from \$400 to \$3,000 annually. This is "free" money because it does not need to be repaid.

**FEDERAL PERKINS LOAN PROGRAM:** This is a federally run program based on need and administered by a college's financial aid office. This program offers low-interest loans for undergraduate study. Repayment does not begin until a student graduates.

**FEDERAL STAFFORD LOAN:** Another federal program based on need that allows a student to borrow money for educational expenses directly from banks and other lending institutions (sometimes from the colleges themselves). These loans may be either subsidized or unsubsidized. Repayment begins six months after a student's course load drops to less than halftime.

**FINANCIAL AID PACKAGE:** The combination of financial aid that a college awards to a student - generally from federal and state grants, scholarships, student loans and/or work study jobs.

**FREE APPLICATION FOR FEDERAL STUDENT AID (FAFSA):** is used to apply for financial aid from federal student financial aid programs. The FAFSA is available at [www.fafsa.edu.gov](http://www.fafsa.edu.gov).

**STUDENT AID REPORT (SAR):** Report of the government's review of a student's FAFSA. The SAR is sent to the student and released electronically to the schools that the student listed. The SAR does not supply a real money figure for aid but indicates whether the student is eligible.

### **Miscellaneous Terminology**

**ASSOCIATE'S DEGREE:** A degree granted after satisfactory completion of a two-year program.

**BACHELOR'S DEGREE:** A degree granted after satisfactory completion of a four year program.

**COLLEGE PREPATORY COURSES:** Courses taken in high school that are viewed by colleges and universities as a strong preparation for college work. The specific courses are usually in the five major areas of English, history, world languages, mathematics, and science. The courses may be regular, honors-level, or AP offerings, and the latter two categories are often weighted when calculated in the GPA.

**CO-OP PROGRAM:** A college program that integrates work experience (usually in your field of study) with classroom study (sometimes in alternating seminars). For example, Northeastern and Drexel.

**DUAL ENROLLMENT:** This policy allows a student to earn college credit while still in high school. Many of these course credits can be transferred to a degree-granting institution, especially if the student maintains a minimum B average. A college, however, may disallow courses taken in the major field of concentration at another institution because its policy dictates that all courses in the major must be taken at the college. When considering dual enrollment, students should talk with admissions offices at the colleges they are considering enrolling in to make sure that they will accept credit transfers.

**FEDERAL WORK STUDY PROGRAM (FSW):** A federally financed program that arranges for students to combine employment and college study; the employment may be an integral part of the academic program (as in cooperative education or internships) or simply a means of paying for college.

**FEE WAIVER:** Students who can show substantial financial need may be permitted to submit college applications and test registration forms without the fee. Check with your guidance counselor for details.

**GRANTS/SCHOLARSHIPS:** These are financial awards that are usually dispensed by the financial aid offices of colleges and universities. The awards may be need- or merit-based. Most are need-based. Merit-based awards may be awarded on the basis of excellence in academics, leadership, volunteerism, athletic ability, or special talent.

**HONORS PROGRAM:** Honors programs offer an enriched, top-quality educational experience that often includes small class size, custom-designed courses, mentoring, enriched individualized learning, hands-on research, and publishing opportunities. A handpicked faculty guides students through the program. Honors programs are a great way to attend a large school that offers enhanced social and recreational opportunities while receiving an Ivy League-like education at a reduced cost.

**LIBERAL ARTS:** A degree program consisting of study in the areas of the arts, natural sciences, and humanities.

**LOANS:** Money that is borrowed from federal or state governments, colleges, banks or agencies that specialize in making student loans. Some loans are need-based; others are not. Federal government loans include Federal Perkins Loans, subsidized and unsubsidized Federal Stafford Loans and Federal Direct Stafford Loans, Federal PLUS loans and Federal Direct PLUS Loans.

**MERIT AWARDS, MERIT-BASED SCHOLARSHIPS:** More “free” money, these awards are based on excellence in academics, leadership, volunteerism, athletic ability, and other areas determined by the granting organization, which can be a college or university, an organization, or an individual. They are not based on financial need.

**OFFICIAL TRANSCRIPT:** Most colleges will only accept an “official” transcript, one that bears the high school seal and is mailed directly from the high school to the college.

**PLUS LOAN:** Parent Loan for Undergraduate Students. This is another low-interest variable rate loan with a cap of 9%. Applications for loans are made through the college with funds coming from a participating bank. A FAFSA does NOT need to be completed.

**RESIDENCY REQUIREMENT:** The term has more than one meaning. It can refer to the fact that a college may require a specific number of courses to be taken on campus to receive a degree from the school, or the phrase can mean the time, by law, that is required for a person to reside in the state to be considered eligible for in-state tuition at one of its public colleges or universities.

**TRANSCRIPT:** A record of your final year marks and credits earned for all subjects taken since 9th grade.

**VIRTUAL VISIT:** This is the use of the Internet to investigate various colleges by looking at their home pages. A student can “tour” the college, ask questions via e-mail, read school newspapers, and explore course offerings and major requirements on line. It is not a substitute for a live visit.

**WAIVER TO REVIEW RECOMMENDATIONS:** The form many high schools ask their students to sign by which they agree not to review recommendation letters before they are sent to the colleges or universities to which they are applying.

## Appendix 2

### TYPES OF HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS

- COLLEGE:** An institution that offers educational instruction beyond high school level in a two-year or four-year program.
- UNIVERSITY:** An academic organization which grants undergraduate and graduate degrees in a variety of fields and which supports at least two degree granting professional schools that are not exclusively technological (such as medicine, journalism, or agriculture). It is composed of a number of "schools" or "colleges" each of which encompasses a general field of study.
- LIBERAL ARTS COLLEGE:** Four-year institution which emphasizes a program of broad undergraduate education. Professional or pre-professional training may be available but is not stressed.
- JUNIOR COLLEGE:** Two-year institutions of higher learning which provide vocational training and academic curriculum (terminal and transfer).  
**Terminal course:** Academic program is complete in itself. A student who completes it may not apply to a four-year college for further study without completing additional course requirements.  
**Transfer course:** Academic program is designed to lead into a four-year course at another college or university.
- ENGINEERING OR TECHNICAL COLLEGE:** Independent professional schools which provide four-year training programs in the fields of engineering and the physical sciences. They are often known as Institutes of Technology or Polytechnic Institutes.
- TECHNICAL SCHOOL:** A two-year institution which offers terminal occupational programs intended to prepare students for immediate employment in fields related to engineering and the physical sciences. These schools may also offer one-year certificate programs in certain crafts and clerical skills.
- NURSING SCHOOLS:** There are three kinds of nursing schools. At schools affiliated with hospitals, students receive an R.N. (Registered Nurse) diploma upon successful completion of three years of training and a state examination. At schools affiliated with four-year colleges, students receive both a B.S. (Bachelor Degree) and an R.N. diploma. Junior colleges and community colleges may offer a two-year nursing program. These schools confer an AS (Associates Degree) in nursing.
- BUSINESS SCHOOL:** Business schools fall into two categories. At some colleges it is possible to specialize in business. Other institutions offer predominantly the business or secretarial courses and may or may not be regionally accredited.
- MILITARY SCHOOLS AND U.S. SERVICE ACADEMIES:** Federal military academies prepare officers for the Army, Navy, Air Force, Merchant Marines and the Coast Guard. West Point, Annapolis, The Air Force Academy, and the U.S. Merchant Marine Academy at Kings Point require recommendations and nomination by U.S. Senators or U.S. Representatives. Private and state-supported military institutions, however, operate on a college application basis, as does the U.S. Coast Guard Academy. They all offer degree programs in engineering and technology with concentration in various aspects of military science. (See the next page for application procedures to Service Academies. See Appendix 6 for a sample letter to request a congressional nomination to a United States Service Academy).

## SERVICE ACADEMIES AND ROTC SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAMS

Those interested in the U.S. Service Academies and the R.O.T.C. scholarship programs must begin before the conclusion of junior year. **The first step** in securing an appointment to one of the academies is to write and ask for a Pre-Candidate Questionnaire. Addresses follow:

Admissions Office  
U.S. Military Academy  
West Point, NY 10996  
[www.usma.edu/admissions](http://www.usma.edu/admissions)

Admissions Office  
U.S. Air Force Academy  
U.S.A.F. Academy, CO 80840  
[www.academyadmissions.com](http://www.academyadmissions.com)

Admissions Office  
Naval Academy  
Annapolis, MD 21402  
[www.usna.edu/admissions](http://www.usna.edu/admissions)

Admissions Office  
Merchant Marine Academy  
Kings Point, NY 10024  
[www.usmma.edu/admissions](http://www.usmma.edu/admissions)

**The second step** is to write to each of your senators and your congressperson and ask that they consider you as one of their nominees. In this letter you should indicate your first, second, third, and fourth choices for academies as well as:

Your name, address, and telephone number  
Date of Birth  
Social Security Number  
High school name and year of graduation  
Names of your parents  
(You will find a sample letter for congressional nomination in Appendix 6).

The Coast Guard Academy has an admissions procedure similar to other highly competitive colleges. There is no nomination process involved. Write directly for an application to:

Admissions Office, US Coast Guard Academy, New London, CT 06320 ([www.uscg.mil](http://www.uscg.mil))

**R.O.T.C. Scholarship Programs** involve a competitive application process as well. In addition to the written application, candidates must undergo a physical examination, formal interview, and a physical abilities test. The first step in the process is to write for an application:

Air Force ROTC/RRUF  
Maxwell Air Force  
Alabama, 36112-6663

Army ROTC  
Base Box 9000  
Clifton, NJ 07015

Navy ROTC  
Box 3060  
Hyattsville, MD 20784

## Appendix 3

### COLLEGE GUIDES/ PUBLICATIONS

*Borders and Barnes and Noble have many of these books available. Also, check the College Guidance Office for books that are available to students and parents.*

**COLLEGE BOARD PUBLICATIONS: COLLEGE HANDBOOK**- Organized by state, this reference offers an abundance of data about colleges that are members of CEEB (College Entrance Examination Board).

**INDEX OF COLLEGE MAJORS**: This is a good reference for determining which colleges offer a particular major.

**COLLEGE COST HANDBOOK**: Gives a tabular summary of costs.

**PETERSON'S GUIDES:**

**2 YEAR & 4 YEAR COLLEGES: REGIONAL GUIDES**- Similar to the College Handbook these guides offer general information about all colleges and universities in the US.

**PETERSON'S COMPETITIVE COLLEGES**

**PETERSON'S GUIDE TO COLLEGE PROGRAMS FOR STUDENTS WITH LEARNING DISABILITIES**

**PETERSON'S SPORTS SCHOLARSHIPS AND COLLEGE ATHLETIC PROGRAMS**

**THE FISKE GUIDE TO COLLEGES**: Edited by Edward Fiske of the New York Times, this guidebook provides both anecdotal and statistical information in an easy to read format.

**BARRON'S TOP 50**: Another "inside" look at American universities, similar to Fiske and Princeton Review with a slightly different perspective.

**INSIDERS GUIDE TO THE COLLEGES**: Written by students about colleges all across the U.S.

**RUGG'S RECOMMENDATIONS ON THE COLLEGES**: This provides lists of schools by program of study or major. It is a good starting point for compiling the initial list.

**AMERICA'S BEST COLLEGES**: A compilation by the U.S. News and World Report magazine that each year looks at what they consider the best colleges in the U.S.

**HOW TO GET AN IVY LEAGUE EDUCATION AT A STATE UNIVERSITY**: Comprehensive profiles of America's outstanding public colleges.

**LOOKING BEYOND THE IVY LEAGUE: FINDING THE COLLEGE THAT'S RIGHT FOR YOU**

## Appendix 4

### COLLEGE INTERNET SITES

#### Exploring College

College Data	<a href="http://www.collegedata.com">www.collegedata.com</a>
College Board	<a href="http://www.collegeboard.com">www.collegeboard.com</a>
Collegesurfing	<a href="http://www.collegesurfing.com">www.collegesurfing.com</a>
Collegebound	<a href="http://www.cbnet.com/">www.cbnet.com/</a>
College Net	<a href="http://www.collegenet.com/">www.collegenet.com/</a>
College View	<a href="http://www.collegeview.com/">www.collegeview.com/</a>
Indep. Higher Ed. Network	<a href="http://www.fihe.org">www.fihe.org</a>
NACAC	<a href="http://www.nacac.com/">www.nacac.com/</a>
Peterson's Guide	<a href="http://www.petersons.com">www.petersons.com</a>
Power Students	<a href="http://www.powerstudents.com/index.shtml">www.powerstudents.com/index.shtml</a>
Princeton Review	<a href="http://www.princetonreview.com">www.princetonreview.com</a>
Yahoo Education Site	<a href="http://www.yahoo.com/Education/">www.yahoo.com/Education/</a>
American Colleges Abroad	<a href="http://www.aaicu.org">www.aaicu.org</a>

#### On-Line Applications

Common Application	<a href="http://www.commonapp.org/">www.commonapp.org/</a>
Universal College Application	<a href="http://www.universalcollegeapp.com">www.universalcollegeapp.com</a>

#### Athletics

NCAA	<a href="http://www.ncaa.org">www.ncaa.org</a>
Subscription service	<a href="http://www.studentathlete.com">www.studentathlete.com</a>

#### Financial Aid/Scholarships/Loans

CSS Profile On-line	<a href="https://profileonline.collegeboard.com/index.jsp">https://profileonline.collegeboard.com/index.jsp</a>
FAFSA	<a href="http://www.fafsa.ed.gov">www.fafsa.ed.gov</a>
Fastweb	<a href="http://www.fastweb.com/">www.fastweb.com/</a>
Finaid Info Page	<a href="http://www.finaid.org/">www.finaid.org/</a>
Paying for School	<a href="http://www.adventuresineducation.org">www.adventuresineducation.org</a>
Peterson's FA Page	<a href="http://www.petersons.com">www.petersons.com</a>
Sallie Mae FA Info	<a href="http://www.salliemae.com/">www.salliemae.com/</a>
Go College	<a href="http://www.amsa.com/">www.amsa.com/</a>
eStudent Loan	<a href="http://www.estudentloan.com/">www.estudentloan.com/</a>
Loans MEFA	<a href="http://www.mefa.org">www.mefa.org</a>
College Link	<a href="http://www.collegelink.com">www.collegelink.com</a>

#### AP Info

AP information galore	<a href="http://www.collegeboard.com/AP/colleges">www.collegeboard.com/AP/colleges</a>
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#### Links to College Home Pages

College Board	<a href="http://www.collegeboard.com">www.collegeboard.com</a>
All About College	<a href="http://www.allaboutcollege.com/">www.allaboutcollege.com/</a>
Ecola college Locator	<a href="http://www.ecola.com/college.php">www.ecola.com/college.php</a>
Indep. Higher Ed. Netw.	<a href="http://www.fihe.org/">www.fihe.org/</a>
International College Dir.	<a href="http://www.yahoo.com/education/higher education/">www.yahoo.com/education/higher education/</a>
Links to Coll. Home Pages*	<a href="http://www.clas.ufl.edu/au/">www.clas.ufl.edu/au/</a>
Virtual Campus Tours	<a href="http://www.campustours.com/">www.campustours.com/</a>

#### Test Prep

College Board On-Line	<a href="http://www.collegeboard.com">www.collegeboard.com</a>
College Power Prep	<a href="http://www.powerprep.com">www.powerprep.com</a>
ETS	<a href="http://www.ets.org/">www.ets.org/</a>
Princeton Review	<a href="http://www.review.com/">www.review.com/</a>
ACT	<a href="http://www.act.org/">www.act.org/</a>

**Careers:**

Career Choices	<a href="http://www.umanitoba.ca/counselling/careers.html">www.umanitoba.ca/counselling/careers.html</a>
Career page: College View	<a href="http://www.collegeview.com/careers/index.html">www.collegeview.com/careers/index.html</a>
Career Paths On-Line	<a href="http://careerpathsonline.com/start.html">careerpathsonline.com/start.html</a>
Careers	<a href="http://www.usnews.com/sections/business/careers/index.html">www.usnews.com/sections/business/careers/index.html</a>
Kiersey Temperament Sorter	<a href="http://www.keirseey.com/sorter/register.aspx">www.keirseey.com/sorter/register.aspx</a>
Mapping your Future	<a href="http://www.mapping-your-future.org/">www.mapping-your-future.org/</a>
Occupational Handbook	<a href="http://www.bls.gov/oco/home.htm">www.bls.gov/oco/home.htm</a>
Occupational Information	<a href="http://www.umanitoba.ca/counselling/occupations.html">www.umanitoba.ca/counselling/occupations.html</a>
Career Facts	<a href="http://www.overview.com/career_summaries/index.html">www.overview.com/career_summaries/index.html</a>
X-AP Career Page	<a href="http://www.xap.com/career">www.xap.com/career</a>
What can I do with this major?	<a href="http://www.career.utk.edu/students/major.asp">www.career.utk.edu/students/major.asp</a>
Explore Careers	<a href="http://www.princetonreview.com/careers-after-college.aspx?uidbadge=%07">www.princetonreview.com/careers-after-college.aspx?uidbadge=%07</a>
Career Exploration	<a href="http://www.uhs.berkeley.edu/students/CareerLibrary/index.shtml">www.uhs.berkeley.edu/students/CareerLibrary/index.shtml</a>
Career Interests Game	<a href="http://www.career.missouri.edu/students/explore/thecareerinterestsgame.php">www.career.missouri.edu/students/explore/thecareerinterestsgame.php</a>

**Other Useful College Links**

US News Coll. + Career	<a href="http://www.usnews.com/sections/education/index.html">www.usnews.com/sections/education/index.html</a>
Jesuit Colleges and Universities	<a href="http://www.ajcunet.edu">www.ajcunet.edu</a>
Catholic Colleges and Universities	<a href="http://www.catholiccollegesonline.org">www.catholiccollegesonline.org</a>

**Country Specific**

Canada	<a href="http://www.studyincanada.com">www.studyincanada.com</a>
UK	<a href="http://www.UCAS.com">www.UCAS.com</a>
American Colleges Abroad	<a href="http://www.aaicu.org">www.aaicu.org</a>

**Appendix 5**

<b>COLLEGE ADMISSION LOG</b>				
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COLLEGE NAME:				
Required Tests SAT1/SAT2				
APPLICATION DEADLINE				
Teacher Recs: 1. 2.				
REACH REALISTIC CONFIDENT				
Transcript Request done?				
PROS WHAT I LIKE:				
CONS Questions I have:				
ADMISSION CONTACTS				
NOTES:  Follow-ups				

## Appendix 6

### **SAMPLE REQUEST FOR CONGRESSIONAL NOMINATION TO THE U.S. SERVICE ACADEMIES**

(This format is intended as a guide. A separate letter must be sent to each Senator and Congressman to whom you apply).

Your Street Address  
Your Town  
Date

The Honorable \_\_\_\_\_  
United States Senate or House of Representatives  
Washington, D.C. 20510

I desire to attend the \_\_\_\_\_ (name of service academy) \_\_\_\_\_ and to be commissioned in the class in July, 20\_\_ \_\_.

Following is some information about me:

Name:

\_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_

High School: \_\_\_\_\_

Social Security Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Names of Parents: \_\_\_\_\_

I have/haven't requested that a pre-candidate file be initiated for me at the Admissions Office.

Thank you for your consideration. I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

Your signature

Your name  
(typed or printed in full)

## Appendix 7

### SAMPLE LETTER WITHDRAWING APPLICATION

(Sometimes circumstances intervene which make it necessary for a student to withdraw an application even before she/he has received a decision from a college. It is polite to inform the college of this situation).

Your Street Address  
City, State, and Zip Code  
Date

Office of Admissions  
Name of College  
Address of College  
City, State, Zip Code

Dear \_\_\_\_\_

My application for admission to \_\_\_\_\_ College/University has been filed with you. Since my plans for higher education have changed, I would like to withdraw my application for admission at this time.

Please accept my thanks for your assistance and consideration.

Sincerely,

Your signature

Your name  
(typed or printed in full)

(Some colleges allow students to apply for Early Decision and also to make applications to other colleges. If a student is accepted under Early Decision, colleges require that the student withdraw the other applications. A letter similar to the one above may be used for that purpose).

Appendix 8

**SAMPLE LETTER INFORMING COLLEGE OF DECISION NOT TO ENROLL**

Your Address  
City, State, and Zip Code  
Date

Office of Admission  
Name of College  
Address of College  
City, State, Zip Code

Dear \_\_\_\_\_

I have received notification of your acceptance of me at \_\_\_\_\_ College/University. However, since I applied for admission, I have decided to \_\_\_\_\_. Therefore, I want to inform you of my decision now in order that another applicant may be chosen in my place.

Thank you for the consideration and confidence that you have shown me. I shall continue to think highly of \_\_\_\_\_ College/University.

Sincerely,

Your signature

Your name  
(typed or printed in full)