

Fall 2009



Greetings from the CCHS/CR Professional Development Committee!

And welcome to college counseling, where you help students attain a higher education - and their dreams.

One of our Colorado high school counselors responded when asked what one piece of information she wished she had known in her first year of counseling: "If I could have been injected with 1,000,000 pieces of information that come over time, THAT would have been helpful." Those of us who have been doing this for a while have learned that college counseling is a team effort: We utilize our colleagues, mentors, and school counseling and admission connections.

We surveyed our Colorado colleagues to determine what subjects are most important to know in your first years as a high school or admission counselor. This Resource Guide will provide you with much of that information on topics like Financial Aid, Academic Advising, the College Application Process, and more. Our hope is that you also utilize the many resources available through the Colorado Council on High School/College Relations—the Colorado Collegiate Handbook, this Resource Guide, and your many colleagues in the state—to build a network of knowledge that will benefit your students.

We highly value professional development and encourage you to attend as many conferences, workshops, and networking opportunities as possible. As well, utilize the members of this committee (listed below), who are all mentors for new counselors.

Best wishes for a successful counseling career!

The CCHS/CR Professional Development Committee

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ACADEMIC ADVISING

For Our College-Bound Colorado Students

Colorado's Two-Year Colleges

Our Colorado community colleges offer an excellent opportunity to continue a student's educational path. These schools include:

Aims Community College
Arapahoe Community College
Colorado Mountain College
Colorado Northwestern Community College
Community College of Aurora
Community College of Denver
Front Range Community College
Lamar Community College
Morgan Community College
Northeastern Junior College
Otero Junior College
Pikes Peak Community College
Pueblo Community College
Red Rocks Community College
Trinidad State Junior College

The Colorado Community College System offers an informative website at www.coloradocommunitycolleges.com/index.html which details each institution and the more than 800 different programs available to students. Our Colorado Community College System offers many benefits to students and families:

- Convenient locations across our state
- Flexible course schedules
- An open admissions policy
- Extensive student support services
- Childcare services
- Athletic programs
- An affordable college beginning
- Experienced faculty who often work in the field in which they teach
- Small classes
- Residential living at several institutions
- Online learning opportunities

Each community college also offers “transfer agreements” or “articulation agreements” with their four-year counterparts, outlining what courses and requirements a student must complete to successfully transfer to a four-year school. Information on these transfer agreements is available online at www.cccs.edu/edservices/TransferPolicy.html.

Colorado's Four-Year College and Universities

Our four-year colleges and universities in Colorado include:

Adams State College
Colorado Christian College
Colorado College
Colorado School of Mines
Colorado State University
Colorado State University-Pueblo
Fort Lewis College
Mesa State College
Metropolitan State College of Denver
Naropa University
Regis University
Rocky Mountain College of Art and Design
United States Air Force Academy
University of Colorado-Boulder
University of Colorado-Colorado Springs
University of Colorado-Denver
University of Colorado-Health Sciences Center
University of Denver
University of Northern Colorado
Western State College

The public colleges and universities adhere to the Admission Eligibility Index. From the Colorado Commission on Higher Education's website:

“Admissions standards are established for undergraduate applicants for admission at public institutions of higher education in Colorado. The policy establishes state-level admission standards for both first-time freshmen and transfer students at each of the Colorado baccalaureate public institutions. The standards represent minimum requirements at four-year public institutions and not for the state's community colleges, which are open admissions. Meeting the CCHE admission standards does not guarantee admissions as institutions consider a broad range of factors in making admissions decisions.”

Tip from the Professional Development Committee: To understand the characteristics, offerings, and requirements of Colorado's two- and four-year institutions, we recommend you do the following:

- Annually attend the Fall Counselor Updates offered by CCHS/CR.
- Visit each of the institutions as time allows, whether it be on a college-sponsored tour or while driving through on family vacation.
- Get to know the admission representative of each school. Make sure they understand the characteristics of your high school, and create a relationship of trust and teamwork.
- Keep the Colorado Collegiate Handbook handy on your desk. Use it often. Encourage families to purchase the handbook as an excellent resource to higher education opportunities in Colorado.
- Talk with recent graduates of your high school who are attending a Colorado college or university to learn of their experiences. Ask them about their courses, professors, residence hall, roommates, and activities.

Colorado’s Higher Education Admission Requirements (HEAR)

One of the first things you must know as a high school counselor in Colorado is our state’s Higher Education Admission Requirements or HEAR. You can find information on these requirements at <http://highered.colorado.gov/Academics/Admissions/default.html>. The information below is from the Colorado Commission on Higher Education’s website.

In 2003, the Colorado Commission on Higher Education adopted the Higher Education Admission Requirements which are entry requirements for students planning to attend any of Colorado’s public four-year colleges or universities. The requirements go into effect in two phases: Phase One for students graduating in 2008 and 2009, and Phase Two for students graduating in 2010 and beyond. Private colleges and universities set their own admission standards, so students should contact those institutions directly for information regarding their enrollment policies. Additionally, public two-year colleges have open enrollment policies, meaning that students applying to these schools do not need to meet the following admissions requirements.

Students planning to attend a four-year college or university in Colorado will need to complete the following classes in order to fulfill the Higher Education Admission Requirements. In addition to the Higher Education Admission Requirements, students must also meet the Admission Eligibility Index (see below).

Meeting the Higher Education Admissions Requirements does not guarantee admission to a four-year public institution. Colleges and universities may have additional requirements.

Academic Area*	2008/2009 Graduates	2010+ Graduates
English**	4 years	4 years
Mathematics (Must include Algebra I, Geometry, Algebra II or equivalents)***	3 years	4 years
Natural/Physical Sciences (two units must be lab-based)***	3 years	3 years
Social Sciences (at least one unit of U.S. or world history)	3 years	3 years
Foreign Language	not required	1 year
Academic Electives****	2 years	2 years

* CCHE, CDE, and School Districts are developing standards for alternative demonstration of proficiency to be accepted in lieu of course completion. For course guidelines see paragraph 4.01 of the Admissions Standards Policy, available online at <http://highered.colorado.gov/Publications/Policies/Current/i-partf.pdf>.
 **Two units of ESL English may count for HEAR requirements when combined with two units of successfully completed college preparatory English.
 ***College-preparatory ESL mathematics/science courses that include content and academic rigor/level comparable to other acceptable courses may satisfy HEAR requirements.
 ****Acceptable Academic Electives include additional courses in English, mathematics, natural/physical sciences and social sciences, foreign languages, art, music, journalism, drama, computer science, honors, Advanced Placement, International Baccalaureate courses, and appropriate CTE courses.

The Colorado Commission on Higher Education does not review individual high school courses to determine whether or not they meet Colorado’s Higher Education Admissions Requirements. Because local school districts in Colorado oversee their high school curricula and colleges and universities establish their own entrance requirements, it is their discretion to determine what coursework meets the Higher Education Admission Requirements.

Admission Eligibility Index

Available online at <http://highered.colorado.gov/Publications/Policies/Current/i-partf-index.pdf>

Insert index here. Include both pages.

Four-Year Academic Plans

Many high school counselors meet with 9th grade students to develop a **Four-Year Academic Plan**. This tool encourages students to consider their future goals and determine what courses they should complete in high school to meet those goals as well as graduation requirements. [The Four-Year Plan should be developed in collaboration with parents and the student's counselor.](#) Below is a sample Four-Year Plan that can be modified for your school community.

Subject	9 th Grade	10 th Grade	11 th Grade	12 th Grade
English (4 years required)				
Social Studies (3 years required)				
Math (3 years required)				
Science 3 years required)				
Foreign Language (0 years required)				
Fine/Practical Arts (1.5 years required)				
Health (.5 years required)				
PE (1.5 years required)				
Other Requirements				
TOTAL				

Tip from the Professional Development Committee: Some high school counselors are working with their middle school colleagues to help students create a “Six-Year Plan” that incorporates middle school courses into students’ planning and encourages them to plan for college at an earlier age.

NOTE: The College in Colorado website (www.CollegeInColorado.org) offers a High School Planner tool which allows students to build their high school academic plan based on the requirements of a specific Colorado college or university. This Planner is available online at https://secure.collegeincolorado.org/Plan/Planner/High_School_Planner_V3.aspx.

As well, the Colorado Community College System, in collaboration with Colorado Career and Technical Education (CTE), has created “Plans of Study” based on Career Clusters. These Plans of Study offer students and parents insight into recommended high school courses that lead to specific career pathways and college preparation. Templates for the different “Plans of Study” are available online at www.coloradostateplan.com/default_cluster.htm.

Western Undergraduate Exchange 2009-2010



www.wiche.edu/sep/wue

Student Exchange Programs
Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education
3035 Center Green Drive, Suite 200
Boulder, Colorado 80301-2204
(303)541-0270

What Is WUE?

WUE (pronounced “woo-wee”) is the Western Undergraduate Exchange, a program coordinated by the Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education (WICHE). Through WUE, students in Western states may enroll in participating two-year and four-year public college programs at a reduced tuition level: up to 150 percent of the institution’s regular resident tuition. In all cases, WUE tuition is considerably less than nonresident tuition.

Which States Participate?

For the academic year 2008-2009, the 20th year of WUE’s operation, resident students from the following states may participate, if they meet eligibility requirements:

Alaska	Idaho	Oregon
Arizona	Montana	South Dakota
California	Nevada	Utah
Colorado	New Mexico	Washington
Hawaii	North Dakota	Wyoming

NOTE: Residents of Hawaii are now eligible to enroll in two- and four-year WUE institutions (effective 2008).

Programs Available

Virtually all undergraduate fields are available to WUE students at one or more of the participating colleges and universities. Some institutions have opened their entire curriculum on a space-available or first-come, first-served basis. Others offer only designated programs at the discounted WUE rate.

WUE Online

To learn of the wide array of programs available, consult *WUE Online*, our new searchable database, located at www.wiche.edu/sep/wue.

For additional details, follow the links to the receiving institutions’ websites.

Eligibility

Many institutions require evidence of academic

performance, such as ACT/SAT test scores or high school GPA, or place other conditions on WUE enrollment. Consult your high school counselor or *WUE Online* for details.

Application and Admission

Apply directly to the institution(s) of your choice for admission and WUE tuition status. **Mark prominently on the institution’s application form that you seek admission as a WUE student.**

Further Information

Further information about specific programs in WUE may be obtained from the admissions office of participating institutions.

Schools That Participate

ALASKA

Since many certificate and associate degree programs available to WUE students are provided by University of Alaska four-year institutions, students should review both two-year and four-year institutions.

TWO-YEAR INSTITUTION

Prince William Sound Community College

FOUR-YEAR INSTITUTIONS

University of Alaska Anchorage
University of Alaska Fairbanks
University of Alaska, Kenai
University of Alaska, Ketchikan
University of Alaska, Kodiak
University of Alaska, Mat-Su
University of Alaska, Sitka
University of Alaska Southeast

ARIZONA

TWO-YEAR INSTITUTIONS

Arizona Western College
Central Arizona College
Chandler-Gilbert Community College

Cochise College
Coconino Community College
Eastern Arizona College
Estrella Mountain Community College
Gateway Community College
Glendale Community College
Mesa Community College
Mohave Community College
Paradise Valley Community College
Phoenix College
Pima Community College
Rio Salado College
Scottsdale Community College
South Mountain Community College
Yavapai College

FOUR-YEAR INSTITUTIONS

Northern Arizona University
Northern Arizona University Yuma
University of Arizona
University of Arizona South

CALIFORNIA

FOUR-YEAR INSTITUTIONS

California Maritime Academy
California State University, Bakersfield
California State University, Chico
California State University, Dominguez Hills
California State University, East Bay
California State University, Sacramento
California State University, San Bernardino
California State University, Stanislaus
Humboldt State University

HAWAII

FOUR-YEAR INSTITUTIONS

University of Hawaii at Hilo
University of Hawaii at Manoa

IDAHO

TWO-YEAR INSTITUTIONS

College of Southern Idaho
North Idaho College

FOUR-YEAR INSTITUTIONS

Boise State University
Idaho State University
Lewis-Clark State College
University of Idaho

MONTANA

TWO-YEAR INSTITUTIONS

Dawson Community College
Flathead Valley Community College

Miles Community College
Montana Tech
University of Montana - Helena College of
Technology
University of Montana - Missoula College of
Technology

FOUR-YEAR INSTITUTIONS

Montana State University - Billings
Montana State University - Bozeman
Montana State University - Northern
Montana Tech of the University of Montana
The University of Montana
The University of Montana - Western

NEVADA

TWO-YEAR INSTITUTIONS

Community College of Southern Nevada
Great Basin College
Truckee Meadows Community College
Western Nevada Community College

FOUR-YEAR INSTITUTIONS

Nevada State College
University of Nevada, Las Vegas
University of Nevada, Reno

NEW MEXICO

TWO-YEAR INSTITUTIONS

Eastern New Mexico University
New Mexico Junior College
Northern New Mexico Community College
Santa Fe Community College
The University of New Mexico Gallup Campus

FOUR-YEAR INSTITUTIONS

New Mexico Highlands University
New Mexico Institute of Mining and Technology
New Mexico State University
The University of New Mexico
Western New Mexico University

NORTH DAKOTA

TWO-YEAR INSTITUTIONS

Bismarck State College
Lake Region State College
Minot State University - Bottineau
North Dakota State College of Science
Williston State College

FOUR-YEAR INSTITUTIONS

Dickinson State University
Mayville State University
Minot State University
North Dakota State University
University of North Dakota

Valley City State University

OREGON

FOUR-YEAR INSTITUTIONS

Oregon Institute of Technology
Portland State University
Southern Oregon University
University of Oregon
Western Oregon University

SOUTH DAKOTA

Associate degree programs, available at most South Dakota universities, are open to WUE students, as are baccalaureate programs.

FOUR-YEAR INSTITUTIONS

Black Hills State University
Dakota State University
Northern State University
South Dakota School of Mines and Technology
South Dakota State University
University of South Dakota

UTAH

TWO-YEAR INSTITUTIONS

College of Eastern Utah
Salt Lake Community College
Snow College

FOUR-YEAR INSTITUTIONS

Dixie State College of Utah
Southern Utah University
The University of Utah
Utah State University
Utah Valley State College
Weber State University

WASHINGTON

FOUR-YEAR INSTITUTIONS

Central Washington University
Eastern Washington University
Washington State University, Pullman
Western Washington University

WYOMING

TWO-YEAR INSTITUTIONS

Casper College
Central Wyoming College
Eastern Wyoming College
Laramie County Community College
Northwest College
Sheridan College
Western Wyoming Community College

FOUR-YEAR INSTITUTION

University of Wyoming

Tip from the Professional Development Committee: WUE is an excellent resource for students interested in attending college out-of-state who are also concerned about cost. Be sure to check the requirements of participating schools as they vary greatly.

THE NUTS AND BOLTS OF THE COLLEGE APPLICATION PROCESS

“The CCHS/CR Updates are critical to attend every year. The Colorado Collegiate Handbook is your new bible. Use the college’s website.” – Rebecca Morlan, La Junta High School

“The thing that caught me off-guard was the high proportion of the college, career, scholarship, etc. components of being a high school counselor versus the individual and group counseling that I had received a preponderance of training for.” – Dan Harris, Arriba-Flagler Consolidated School District

Planning ahead is a critical step in preparing for college. Below is a timeline for students in each year of high school. Feel free to customize to your school and community and reproduce.

Freshman Year

- Build strong academic, language, mathematics and critical thinking skills by taking challenging courses.
- Study hard and get excellent grades.
- Strengthen your vocabulary by increasing your reading.
- Become involved in co-curricular activities.
- Meet your high school guidance counselor and discuss your plans for the next four years. Develop a four-year plan of the classes needed to meet your college and career goals.
- Browse through college literature or surf the Web to get an idea of what kinds of schools may be of interest to you.
- Check out what high school courses colleges require.
- Know NCAA (National Collegiate Athletic Association) requirements if you want to play sports in college.
- Keep an academic portfolio and co-curricular record.
- Research career possibilities.
- Begin saving money for college.

Sophomore Year

Concentrate on academic preparation and continue to develop basic skills and co-curricular interests.

September

- Talk to your guidance counselor about taking the PLAN this fall. The PLAN is a preliminary standardized test that will prepare you for the ACT. PLAN does not have national testing dates, so ask your guidance counselor about test dates offered by your school.
- Consult your guidance counselor about taking the PSAT in October. The PSAT is a preliminary test that will prepare you for the SAT Reasoning Test.
- You need to register several weeks in advance for the PLAN and the PSAT, so consult your guidance counselor early in September.
- Take NCAA-approved courses if you want to play sports in college.

October

- Take the PLAN and/or PSAT for practice. The results will not be used for college admission.
- Sign up, if you have not done so already, for co-curricular activities that interest you. The level of involvement and accomplishment is most important, not the number of activities.
- Keep a record of your co-curricular involvement, volunteer work, and employment (all year).

November

- Make sure you are "on top" of your academic work. If necessary, meet with your teachers for additional help.

- Save your best work in academic courses and the arts for your academic portfolio (all year).

December/January

- Receive results of PLAN and/or the PSAT. Read materials sent with your score report. Consult your guidance counselor to explore ways to improve on future standardized tests and courses to discuss which may be required or beneficial for your post-high school plans.
- Keep studying!
- Volunteer-a great way to identify your interests and to develop skills.

February/March

- It is never too early to start researching colleges and universities. Visit your guidance office to browse through literature and guidebooks and surf the Web to check out college and university home pages.

April

- Register for June SAT Subject Test if you think you may apply to colleges that require or recommend these tests. These are one-hour exams on academic subjects that you have already completed. Among the many to choose from are biology, chemistry, foreign languages and physics. Many colleges require or recommend one or more of the SAT Subject Tests for admission or placement. Talk to your teachers and counselor about which tests to take.
- Continue to research career options and consider possible college majors that will help you achieve your career goals.

May

- Plan now for wise use of your summer. Consider taking a summer course or participating in a special program (e.g., for prospective engineers or journalists or for those interested in theatre or music) at a local college or community college. Consider working or volunteering.

June

- Take the SAT Subject Tests that you registered for in April.
- If you work, save some of your earnings for college.

July

- During the summer, you may want to sign up for a PSAT/SAT prep course, use computer software, or do the practice tests in books designed to familiarize you with standardized tests.

August

- Make your summer productive. Continue reading to increase your vocabulary.

Junior Year

Begin college selection process. Attend college fairs, financial aid seminars, general information sessions, etc., to learn as much as you can about the college application process. Make sure you are meeting NCAA requirements if you want to play Division I or II sports in college.

September

- Register for the October PSAT. Meet with your guidance counselor to review your courses for this year and plan your schedule for senior year.
- Save samples of your best work for your academic portfolio (all year).
- Maintain your co-curricular record (all year).

October

- Junior year PSAT scores may qualify a student for the National Merit Scholarship Competition and the National Achievement and the National Hispanic Scholars Programs. So, even though these scores will not be used for college admission, it is still a good idea to take the PSAT. The more times you take standardized tests, the more familiar you will become with the format and the types of questions asked. If you wish to receive free information from colleges, indicate on the PSAT test answer form that you want to participate in the Student Search.

November

- Junior year grades are extremely important in the college admission process, because they are a measure of how well you do in advanced, upper-level courses. Grades also are used to determine scholarships and grants for which you may be eligible. So put in the extra effort and keep those grades up!
- If you will require financial aid, start researching your options for grants, scholarships and work-study programs. Make an appointment with your guidance counselor or start by visiting NACAC's Web Resources for the College-Bound to do research on your own using the Internet.

December

- During December you should receive the results of your PSAT. Read your score report and consult your school counselor to determine how you might improve on future standardized tests. The PSAT is excellent preparation for the SAT Reasoning Test, which you may take in the spring.
- If you plan to take the ACT, register now for the February ACT. Many colleges accept the ACT (American College Test) or the SAT Reasoning Test. Some colleges require the ACT or both SAT Reasoning Test and the SAT Subject Tests. When you begin to explore different colleges and universities, double-check to see if they prefer or require the ACT, the SAT Reasoning Test and/or the SAT Subject Tests.

January

- Begin to make a preliminary list of colleges you would like to investigate further. Surf the Internet and use the college resources in the guidance office or library.
- Ask your parents for your Social Security number (required on many college applications). If you were never issued a Social Security number, contact the closest Social Security office as soon as possible to obtain a number.

February

- Meet with your guidance counselor to discuss your preliminary list of colleges. Discuss whether your initial list of colleges meets your needs and interests (academic program, size, location, cost, etc.) and whether you are considering colleges where you are likely to be admitted. You should be optimistic and realistic when applying to colleges.
- Register for the March SAT Reasoning Test if you have completed the math courses covered on the SAT Reasoning Test. If not, plan to take the SAT Reasoning Test in May or June. Prepare for the SAT Reasoning Test or ACT by signing up for a prep course, using computer software, or doing the SAT/ACT practice tests available in the counseling office or at bookstores. But don't spend so much time trying to improve standardized test scores that grades and co-curricular involvement suffer.

March

- Write, telephone, or use the Internet to request admission literature and financial aid information from the colleges on your list. There is no charge and no obligation to obtain general information about admission and financial aid.

April

- When selecting your senior courses, be sure to continue to challenge yourself academically.
- Register for the May/June SAT Reasoning Test and/or the May/June SAT Subject Tests. Not all SAT Subject Tests are given on every test date. Check the calendar carefully to determine when the Subject Tests you want are offered. Register for the June ACT if you want to take that test.
- Continue to evaluate your list of colleges and universities. Eliminate colleges from the original list that no longer interest you and add others as appropriate.
- Look into summer jobs or apply for special summer academic or enrichment programs. Colleges love to see students using their knowledge and developing their skills and interests.

May

- Attend a college fair to get more information about colleges on your list.
- Get a jump start on summer activities. Consider enrolling in an academic course at a local college, pursuing a summer school program, applying for an internship, working, or volunteering. If you work, save part of your earnings for college.

- Begin visiting colleges. Phone to set up appointments. Interviews are always a good idea. Many colleges will tell you they are optional, but an interview will show interest, enthusiasm and initiative on your part and provide an excellent opportunity to have your questions answered. Do a practice interview with your counselor, teacher, employer, or a senior who has had college interviews. Set up interviews as early as possible-interview times become booked quickly!
- Take the SAT Reasoning Test or the SAT Subject Tests.

June

- After school ends, get on the road to visit colleges. Seeing the college firsthand, taking a tour and talking to students can be the greatest help in deciding whether or not a school is right for you. Although it is ideal to visit colleges during the academic year, going in the summer will be valuable. Admission offices employ their students to give tours and answer questions from prospective students and their parents.
- Take the SAT Reasoning Test, the SAT Subject Tests and/or the ACT.

July

- Visit colleges, take tours, interview and ask questions. Make college visiting a family event. Involve your parents and siblings in every step of your application process. Choosing the right college is a tough decision; the opinions of those who know you best can provide helpful insight into which college is best for you.

August

- Continue to refine your list of potential colleges and universities.
- Begin preparing for the actual application process: draft application essays; collect writing samples; and assemble portfolios or audition tapes. If you are an athlete and plan on playing in college, contact the coaches at the schools to which you are applying and ask about intercollegiate and intramural sports programs and athletic scholarships.
- Complete the NCAA Initial-Eligibility Clearinghouse form if you hope to play Division I or II sports. (This form cannot be mailed until you finish your sixth semester of high school.)

Senior Year

Apply to colleges. Make decisions. Finish high school with pride in yourself and your accomplishments.

September

- Make sure you have all applications required for college admission and financial aid. Write, phone, or use the Internet to request missing information.
- Check on application and financial aid deadlines for the schools to which you plan to apply. They may vary and it is essential to meet all deadlines!
- Meet with your guidance counselor to be sure your list includes colleges appropriate to your academic and personal record. Review your transcript and co-curricular records with your school counselor to ensure their accuracy.
- Register for the October/November SAT Reasoning Test and/or SAT Subject Tests, or September/October ACT.
- If the colleges require recommendations, ask the appropriate people to write on your behalf. At least three weeks before the due date, ask your counselor and teachers, employers, or coaches to write letters of recommendation. Provide recommendation forms, any special instructions and a stamped, addressed business envelope to the people writing your recommendation. Be thoughtful! Write thank-you notes to those who write recommendations and keep them informed of your decisions.
- Plan visits to colleges and set up interviews (if you didn't get to them during the summer or if you want to return to a campus for a second time). Read bulletin boards and the college newspaper. Talk with current students and professors.

October

- Attend a regional college fair to investigate further those colleges to which you will probably apply.

- Mail applications in time to reach the colleges by the deadlines. Check with your guidance counselor to make sure your transcript and test scores have been/will be sent to the colleges to which you are applying.
- If applying for early decision or early action, send in your application now. Also prepare applications for back-up schools. Remember, if you are accepted under the early decision option, you are expected to enroll at that college and to withdraw all other applications. Submit financial aid information if requested from early decision/action candidates.
- Register for the December/January SAT Reasoning Test and/or SAT Subject Tests, or December ACT if you have not completed the required tests or if you are not happy with your previous test scores and think you can do better.
- Have official test scores sent by the testing agency to colleges on your list.

November

- Take the SAT Reasoning Test or SAT Subject Tests if appropriate. Don't forget to have test scores sent to colleges on your list.
- Be sure your first quarter grades are good.
- Continue completing applications to colleges. Make copies of all applications before mailing the applications.
- If you need financial aid, obtain a FAFSA worksheet (Free Application for Federal Student Aid) online at www.fafsa.ed.gov. Check to see if the colleges to which you are applying require any other financial aid form. Register for the CSS Profile if required and obtain the college's own financial aid forms, if available.
- Keep all records, test score reports and copies of applications for admission and financial aid. Do not throw anything away until at least the end of your first year in college. Having detailed records will save you time and effort should anything be lost or should you decide to apply in the future to other colleges and scholarship programs.

December

- Have official test scores sent to colleges on your list if you have not done so.
- Consult your school counselor again to review your final list of colleges. Be sure you have all bases covered. It is a good idea to make copies of everything before you drop those envelopes in the mail. If for some reason your application gets lost, you will have a back-up copy. File your last college application.
- If you applied for early decision, you should have an answer by now. If you are accepted, follow the instructions for admitted students. If the decision is deferred until spring or you are denied, submit applications now to other colleges.

January

- Keep working in your classes! Grades and courses continue to count throughout the senior year.
- Request that your counselor send the transcript of your first semester grades to the colleges to which you applied.
- Parents and students, complete your income tax forms as soon as possible. You will need those figures to fill out the FAFSA. Complete and return your FAFSA as quickly as possible after January 1. Check to make sure your colleges or state does not require any other financial aid forms. If they do, consult your guidance counselor or contact the college's financial aid office.

February

- Remember to monitor your applications to be sure that all materials are sent and received on time and that they are complete. Stay on top of things and don't procrastinate; you can ruin your chances for admission by missing a deadline.
- If you completed a FAFSA, you should receive your Student Aid Report (SAR) within four weeks after submitting the FAFSA. Review the SAR carefully and check for any inaccuracies. If necessary, correct any items on the SAR and return it to the FAFSA processor (if a college transmitted your data directly, notify the college of any change).

- If more than four weeks have passed after sending in your FAFSA and you have not received an acknowledgment, contact the Federal Student Aid Information Center at (319) 337-5665. To identify you, they will need your name, social security number, address, and date of birth exactly as it was written on your FAFSA.
- Complete scholarship applications. You may be eligible for more scholarships than you think, so apply for as many as you can.
- Enjoy your final year in high school, but don't catch senioritis!

March

- Stay focused and keep studying-only a couple more months to go!

April

- Do not take rolling admission applications for granted. (Some colleges do not have application deadlines; they admit students on a continuous basis.) These schools may reach their maximum class size quickly-the earlier you apply, the more availability there may be.
- Review your college acceptances and financial aid awards. Be sure to compare financial aid packages in your decision-making process. If you are positive you will not enroll at one or more of the colleges which accepted you, please notify those colleges that you have selected another college. Keeping colleges abreast of your plans might enable those colleges to admit someone else. If you know which college you will attend, send your tuition deposit and follow all other instructions for admitted students. You must decide which offer of admission to accept by May 1 (postmark date).

May

- By May 1, decide on the one college that you will attend. By May 1, send in your tuition deposit to the college you will attend. Notify the other colleges that accepted you that you have selected another college.
- BE PROUD-you have completed a difficult task.
- If your first-choice college places you on their waiting list, do not lose all hope. Some students are admitted off the waiting list. Talk with your counselor, and contact the college to let them know you are still very interested. Keep the college updated on your activities.
- Take Advanced Placement examinations, if appropriate, and request that your AP scores be sent to the college you will attend.

June

- Request that your counselor send your final transcript to the college you will attend. Notify the college of any private scholarships or grants you will be receiving.
- Know when the payment for tuition, room and board, meal plans, etc., is due. If necessary, ask the financial aid office about a possible payment plan that will allow for you to pay in installments.
- Congratulations, you've made it through high school! Enjoy your graduation and look forward to college.

July

- Look for information in the mail from the college about housing, roommate(s), orientation, course selection, etc. Respond promptly to all requests from the college. August-September
- Ease the transition into college. Accept the fact that you'll be in charge of your academic and personal life. What you do, when you do it and how things get done will be up to you. You'll have new responsibilities and challenges. Think about budgeting your time and establishing priorities. Take charge of the changes that lie ahead and eliminate or minimize pressures. Go forth with confidence and enthusiasm, willingness to adapt and determination to succeed academically and personally.
- Pack for college. Don't forget to include things that remind you of friends and family. Be prepared for the new opportunities and challenges. Have a great freshman year!

*Adapted from NACAC's PACT Guide, 2000, Printed and Revised Online: March 2005
Available online at www.nacacnet.org/MemberPortal/ForStudents/CollegePrep/*

Types of Applications

Counselors should be aware of the various types of college applications available to students.

ONLINE

Virtually 100% of our Colorado colleges offer an online application. The majority of students are very comfortable with this format, and when they hit “submit,” their application is electronically transmitted directly to the college, automatically filling in the data fields on their end.

PAPER

If a student is not comfortable with submitting his or her application online, most colleges still offer a paper version. This can be completed by hand or, as is more typical, completed online and printed out to be mailed. It is imperative that students use legible handwriting if they complete it by hand!

COLORADO UNIFORM APPLICATION

This application is accepted by almost every college in Colorado and is available online at www.coloradocouncil.org/undergraduate.htm. Students can complete the application and send it to multiple schools, simplifying the process.

COMMON APPLICATION

The Common Application, available online at www.commonapp.org, is utilized by over 350 member colleges and universities across the country, all of which agree to accept this application in lieu of their own. Many accept only the Common Application. Although this application does simplify the process, students must check carefully to ensure that they submit all required materials, as many of the participating colleges require additional “Supplements.”

UNIVERSAL COLLEGE APPLICATION

The Universal Application is relatively new to the scene, with just over 75 member colleges and universities accepting this application. Although no Colorado institutions currently participate, it may be an option for students considering out-of-state colleges. You can learn more about the Universal Application at www.universalcollegeapp.com

Admission Options

Counselors should also be aware of the variety of admission options available to students. The majority of Colorado institutions employ one of two options: Rolling Decision or Regular Decision; however, some of our private colleges also utilize an early application option. Following are definitions of the different options available:

Non-Restrictive Application Plans - Students are not restricted from applying to other institutions and have until May 1 to consider their options and confirm enrollment.

Rolling Decision: Institutions review applications as they are submitted and render admission decisions throughout the admission cycle.

Regular Decision: Students submit an application by a specified date and receive a decision in a clearly stated period of time.

Early Action (EA): Students apply early and receive a decision well in advance of the institution’s regular response date.

Restrictive Application Plans – Students are responsible for determining and following restrictions.

Early Decision (ED): Students make a commitment to a first-choice institution where, if admitted, they definitely will enroll. The application and decision deadline occurs early.

Restrictive Early Action (REA): Students apply to an institution of preference and receive a decision early. They may be restricted from applying EA or ED or REA to other institutions. If offered enrollment, they have until May 1 to confirm.

Tip from the Professional Development Committee: An excellent flyer outlining these options is available on the NACAC website at www.nacacnet.org/NR/ronlyres/5F9DB294-F7F7-4D79-8C88-DA37A62A1E7D/0/AdmisOptFlyer.pdf

College Application Requirements

Even within our state, applications vary from college to college, but most require some or all of the following parts:

Application Form

Students can often apply online directly to an individual school or use the one of the uniform applications, entering their information only once. This part of the application typically asks for biographical, parent, and school information.

Application Fee

The average college application fee is around \$25. (Some colleges charge up to \$60, while others don't have an application fee at all.) The fee is nonrefundable. Many colleges offer fee waivers for applicants from low-income families. For more information on fee waivers, call the college's admission office.

High School Transcript

Transcripts can look very different from school to school. The main point is that they be easy for the colleges to read and understand.

Admission Test Scores

At many colleges, you have to submit SAT, SAT Subject Test, or ACT test scores. All of our Colorado institutions accept a student's State ACT score, as well as SAT scores.

Letters of Recommendation

Many colleges ask students to submit one or more letters of recommendation from a teacher, counselor, or other adult who knows them well. Students should request letters of recommendation from teachers in the spring of their junior year, and meet with counselors in the fall of their senior year. Most counselors write their letters in the fall, after meeting individually with the student.

Essay

The essay is a chance for students to share information about themselves that may not surface in other areas of the application, as well as showcase their writing skills. Whether writing an autobiographical statement or an essay on a specific theme, students should take the opportunity to express their individuality in a way that sets them apart from other applicants.

Interview

This is required or recommended by some colleges. Even if it's not required, it's a good idea to set up an interview because it gives students a chance to make a personal connection with someone who will have a voice in deciding whether or not they will be offered admission. If students are too far away for an on-campus interview, try to arrange to meet with an alumnus in the community.

Audition/Portfolio

If applying for a program such as music, art, or design, students may have to document prior work by auditioning on campus or submitting an audiotape, slides, or some other sample of their work to demonstrate their ability.

The Sum of the Parts

A student's entire application should create a consistent portrait of who they are and what they will bring to the college. The more the pieces of the puzzle support one impression, the more confident the admission committee will be in admitting that student. If the essay or interview contradicts information given on other forms, they may have doubts about accepting the student.

If all the parts of the application are filled out honestly and carefully, with an attention to their conviction that each school is a good match for them, your students will come across in the best light possible.

Adapted from the College Board website: www.collegeboard.com/student/apply/the-application/115.html

Tip from the Professional Development Committee: Many new counselors are initially overwhelmed by the Counselor Evaluation Form or School Report Form that must accompany the transcript and counselor letter of recommendation with some applications. Colleges may ask you to rank or rate students in terms of their academic and personal characteristics. If you feel you cannot rate a student based on your personal knowledge, do not be afraid to mark "No Basis for Judgment." As well, be restrained in your evaluations: Not every student can be "The Top Encountered in My Career." Try to evaluate students based on your knowledge of their peers in the senior class, or state that your evaluation is "to your best knowledge."

College Planning Schedule of Events for the 2009-2010 School Year

(You can customize this page for your high school community, adding your specific college programs, i.e. Financial Aid Night, Junior College Planning, etc.)

ACT TEST DATES

September 12, 2009
October 24, 2009
December 12, 2009
February 6, 2009
April 10, 2010
June 12, 2010

POSTMARK DEADLINE

August 7, 2009
September 18, 2009
November 6, 2009
January 5, 2010
March 5, 2010
May 7, 2010

LATE DEADLINE

August 21, 2009
October 2, 2009
November 20, 2009
January 15, 2010
March 19, 2010
May 21, 2010

Registration for the ACT can be completed online at www.actstudent.org. Testing locations available online.

SAT TEST DATES

October 10, 2009
November 7, 2009
December 5, 2008
January 23, 2010
March 13, 2010*
May 1, 2010
June 5, 2010

POSTMARK DEADLINE

September 9, 2009
October 1, 2009
October 30, 2009
December 15, 2009
February 4, 2010
March 25, 2010
April 29, 2010

LATE DEADLINE

September 23, 2009
October 15, 2009
November 12, 2009
December 30, 2009
February 18, 2010
April 8, 2010
May 13, 2010

* SAT Reasoning Test ONLY (no Subject Tests).

SAT Registration can be completed online at www.collegeboard.com. Testing locations available online.

STATE ACT – Given to all juniors in the state of Colorado on April 28, 2010

PLAN Test – Recommended for sophomores. Offered between September 1 and December 15, 2009. Check with your counselor for registration information.

PSAT/NMSQT – Recommended for juniors. Offered Wednesday, October 14 or Saturday, October 17, 2009. Check with your counselor for registration information.

Advanced Placement (AP) Exams – May 3-14, 2010. Sign up with AP Coordinator or AP Teacher.

International Baccalaureate (IB) Exams – May 4-24, 2010. Sign up with the IB Coordinator.

Out-of-State College Nights

October 4, 2009	Aspen High School, Aspen	11:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.
October 5, 2009	Fountain Valley School, Colorado Springs	1:00 to 3:00 p.m.
October 5, 2009	Phil Long Expo Center, Colorado Springs	6:00 to 8:00 p.m.
October 6, 2009	Poudre High School, Fort Collins	6:00 to 8:00 p.m.
October 7, 2009	Monarch High School, Boulder Valley	6:30 to 8:30 p.m.
October 8, 2009	John F. Kennedy High School, Denver	6:30 to 8:30 p.m.

Greater Denver College Fair – Over 250 college representatives from around the country and 20 college-related workshops throughout the fair.

Saturday, October 10, 2009 Cherry Creek High School 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

In-State College Nights – See calendar of programs online at www.coloradocouncil.org/DayNight2009/2009%20Member%20Calender.pdf.

Check with your counselor for nearest location, date, and time.

Denver Spring College Fair – April 18, 2010, University of Denver, 1:00 – 4:00 p.m.

COLLEGE ENTRANCE TESTING

“Think back to the most recent blizzard in your memory. Now, picture yourself as a first-year state ACT Coordinator, chasing the FEDEX truck from delivery point to delivery point in an attempt to pencil in the one student’s free and reduced lunch question on their answer sheet. Yes, it would have been nice to know that, if you forget to pencil in extra information on the answer sheet, you can correct that information later.” – Anonymous Colorado Counselor

ACT

www.act.org

Denver Field Office
3131 S. Vaughn Way, Suite 218
Aurora, CO 80014
(303) 337-3273
(303) 337-2613 FAX

National Office
P.O. Box 168
Iowa City, IA 52243
(319) 337-1270

Basics:

- Four sections: English, Math, Science Reasoning, and Reading
- Scores on each section averaged to reach ACT Composite Score, figure colleges utilize in admissions
- National mean = 21
- Colorado mean for 2008 = 20.5
- Perfect score = 36
- Testing time: 3.5 hours
- Cost: \$30 for ACT, \$44.50 for ACT Plus Writing (adds 30 minutes to testing time)
- Every college or university accepts the ACT in addition to the SAT
- Some institutions will accept the ACT in place of both the SAT and three SAT Subject Tests. Some require ACT Plus Writing OR SAT.
- ACT does not penalize for a wrong answer; encourage students to guess rather than leave answer blank.
- Results mailed about 4-5 weeks after test date to student and school
- Students can choose which test results to send to colleges.

PLAN

Basics:

- Offered to sophomores in late fall. Many school districts pay for the cost to test students
- Content is “normed” to tenth graders
- Perfect score = 32
- Testing time: 2.5 hours

SAT

The College Board

www.collegeboard.com

Western Regional Office (WRO) services the following states: Alaska, Arizona, California, Colorado, Hawaii, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, Oregon, Utah, Washington, Wyoming
2099 Gateway Place
Suite 550
San Jose, CA 95110-1017
Phone (408) 452-1400
Fax: (408) 453-7396

Basics:

- Three sections: Writing, Critical Reading, and Math
- Each section scored individually to reach total score
- Perfect score on each section = 800; Perfect score on exam = 2400
- Critical Reading, formerly Verbal, includes questions on reading passages and sentence completion. Math covers arithmetic, geometry, Algebra 1 and 2; includes 10 “grid-in” student-produced response questions.
- Cost: \$43
- Testing time: Just under 4 hours
- Students can take the SAT or up to 3 SAT Subject Tests, but not both, on any one national test date
- The SAT Program (including SAT and Subject Tests) is organized and administered by The College Board, which handles registration and scoring. The tests are developed by ETS, the Educational Testing Service, which also conducts the statistical analysis on the tests.
- Current format introduced March 2005 in response to University of California-system threat to no longer require SAT. In response, now includes Writing Section.
- **The College Board has approved an important change to the current SAT score-reporting policy. This new policy will give students the freedom to send the scores by sitting (test date) that they feel best represent their ability to colleges and universities, at no additional cost. Designed to reduce student stress and improve the test-day experience, this new score-reporting feature called “Score Choice”, will launch in early February 2009, and will therefore be available to students participating in the March 2009 test administration.**

SAT Subject Tests

Basics

- Formerly known as Achievement Tests, then SAT II Tests, now Subject Tests
- Required for admission by a small handful of highly competitive colleges and universities, including the University of California system
- Each test one hour long
- Perfect score = 800
- 20 Subject tests include: English Literature, U.S. History, World History, Mathematics 1, Mathematics 2, Biology E/M, Chemistry, Physics, French, German, Modern Hebrew, Italian, Latin, Spanish, and the following with Listening—Chinese, French, German, Japanese, Korean, and Spanish
- All Subject Tests are not offered on the same dates, so students must look closely at registration form.
- Cost: \$20 registration fee, plus \$20 per Language with Listening, and \$8 per other tests

PSAT/NMSQT

Basics

- Preliminary SAT/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test
- Given only in October on 2 national test dates—one on Wednesday and one Saturday
- Scored on 20-80 scale comparable to 200-800 scale on SAT
- Targeted to juniors, but test taken by sophomores and even freshmen, depending on school policy
- Schools handle registration, collect fee of \$15 - \$25 based on policy
- National Merit Scholarship Program, based in Evanston, Illinois, uses juniors’ PSAT results to qualify students for consideration. Index Score based on CR + M + WR, which varies by state. 2008 Colorado Index Score = 213

- PSAT results mailed to schools, which distribute. Score Report improved recently to provide significant feedback to students on how to improve their SAT scores

TOEFL

Basics

- Test of English as a Foreign Language
- Mainly Internet-based with Speaking, Reading, Writing, and Listening sections; also Paper Based Test with Reading, Writing, and Listening component.
- Required by most American colleges and universities for international students; however, many colleges will not require it if student graduates from American high school
- Cost: \$150 for Internet Based Test, \$140 for Paper Based Test
- For more information: www.ets.org/toefl

Testing Under Special Conditions

ACT and College Board have developed procedures to enable qualified students to take any of their tests under special conditions that accommodate a student's documented learning disability or permanent/temporary physical limitations. Qualifying procedures vary by testing company, but usually require the following:

- Professional diagnosis completed within the last 2 years by a qualified professional (PhD, EdD, MD) whose credentials are appropriate to the student's disability, and whose written evaluation specifically supports the need for special testing accommodations
- Students must currently receive comparable accommodations for tests and other schoolwork.
- Testing documentation must accompany application for special accommodations.

College Board's policy requires submission of documentation only once for all tests. In other words, once a student is approved for accommodations, they do not have to reapply. ACT, on the other hand, requires application for accommodations for EACH TEST. Extended time (not "untimed" testing) is the most frequent accommodation.

Tip from the Professional Development Committee: Encourage sophomores to consider taking SAT Subject Tests in the spring of their sophomore year if they are taking advanced courses, particularly if they are considering highly selective colleges. For example, a sophomore in Honors Chemistry may want to take the Chemistry Subject Test while the material is fresh in their mind.

ACT–SAT Concordance Tables

(available online at www.act.org/aap/concordance/index.html)

The ACT and SAT are different tests that measure similar but distinct constructs. The ACT measures achievement related to high school curricula, while the SAT measures general verbal and quantitative reasoning.

ACT and the College Board have completed a concordance study that is designed to examine the relationship between two scores on the ACT and SAT. These concordance tables do not equate scores, but rather provide a tool for finding comparable scores.

Table 1		
Concordance between ACT Composite Score and Sum of SAT Critical Reading and Mathematics Scores		
SAT CR+M (Score Range)	ACT Composite Score	SAT CR+M (Single Score)
1600	36	1600
1540–1590	35	1560
1490–1530	34	1510
1440–1480	33	1460
1400–1430	32	1420
1360–1390	31	1380
1330–1350	30	1340
1290–1320	29	1300
1250–1280	28	1260
1210–1240	27	1220
1170–1200	26	1190
1130–1160	25	1150
1090–1120	24	1110
1050–1080	23	1070
1020–1040	22	1030
980–1010	21	990
940–970	20	950
900–930	19	910
860–890	18	870
820–850	17	830
770–810	16	790
720–760	15	740
670–710	14	690
620–660	13	640
560–610	12	590
510–550	11	530

**Table 2
Concordance between ACT Combined English/Writing Score
and SAT Writing Score**

SAT Writing (Score Range)	ACT English/Writing Score	SAT Writing (Single Score)
800	36	800
800	35	800
770–790	34	770
730–760	33	740
710–720	32	720
690–700	31	690
660–680	30	670
640–650	29	650
620–630	28	630
610	27	610
590–600	26	590
570–580	25	570
550–560	24	550
530–540	23	530
510–520	22	510
480–500	21	490
470	20	470
450–460	19	450
430–440	18	430
410–420	17	420
390–400	16	400
380	15	380
360–370	14	360
340–350	13	340
320–330	12	330
300–310	11	310

SELECTING A COLLEGE

Helping Students Through the Process

There are so many factors students should consider when selecting a college. Yet often their decisions are based on the most irrational of reasons: how close—or far away—a school is from home; where their current love interest is attending; the campus is “pretty”; or “Mom and Dad hate this school, therefore—I love it!”

Our job as high school and admission counselors is to help students sift through their thoughts and emotions to arrive at a school that “fits” them—academically, emotionally, physically, financially.

Finding a good college “fit” will depend upon how well the student assesses their strengths and weaknesses and knowing in what kind of environment they will be able to succeed. **Here are “Ten Factors in Choosing a College,”** adapted from an article available at www.collegetoolkit.com/Guides/CollegeSelection/resCollSelect.aspx.

1. Geographic Location

Some students decide that they want to go to college in a different region of the country from where they grew up. Others want to stay near their hometown or within driving distance from mom and dad. A strict adherence to a specific location can severely limit your college choices. It can be a good idea to consider some colleges outside the location that you currently prefer. Once you start learning about the colleges, your preferences may change, so it is best to keep an open mind. You may also find other factors that will take on greater importance than geography, so you do not want to eliminate a college before you consider whether it has some of the other attributes you are seeking.

2. Enrollment

The undergraduate enrollment at a college can range from as little as 700 students to as many as 40,000 students. When determining what size school you wish to attend, consider a range of school sizes around what you believe is the ideal size. For example, if you think that you want to attend an intimate college of fewer than 1,000 students where you know nearly everyone in your class, then your initial pool should probably consist of colleges with up to 5,000 students. Yet, you should also consider a few colleges in the 5,000 to 15,000 student range. Even if you are considering a large university with more class offerings and resources, you still might want to visit a few smaller colleges to confirm your decision. Upon visiting colleges and learning more about them, you may discover that you actually prefer a larger or smaller college than you previously thought.

3. Campus Setting

Campus environment is another factor that is important for many students. On one side of the spectrum is a college like Adams State College in a small-town setting in southern Colorado. On the other side of the spectrum is University of Colorado-Denver in the heart of the city. Visiting colleges is one of the best ways to help you decide upon the campus setting that you prefer.

4. Campus Safety

The best way to find out about campus safety and what a college does to ensure the safety and security of its students is to talk to current students or recent alumni. You may also want to inquire about the presence of campus security officers, dorm entrance security, the availability of transportation around campus, escort services at night, the presence of outdoor lighting and emergency phones, and the crime rates on campus and in surrounding neighborhoods.

5. Public vs. Private

U.S. colleges are either privately or publicly funded. Since public colleges are supported and operated by individual states and partially funded by state tax dollars, they generally cost less than private colleges. Yet, attending a state college outside your home state will likely cost more than tuition at the school in your home

state. In addition, enrollments and class sizes at state schools tend to be higher than those at private institutions.

Private colleges, on the other hand, are funded by tuition, fees, private gifts, corporate contributions, and endowments. Typically, this means that private colleges are more expensive than public colleges, though private colleges tend to offer more scholarships and grants. Enrollment and class sizes at private colleges tend to be smaller than those at public colleges.

6. Religious vs. Non-Denominational

Although most private and all public colleges are secular, some colleges are operated by a religious organization and require religious activities and courses. Other colleges may be associated with a particular religion, yet students of varying religions attend the college and practice their own religions. Secularity can be gauged by the number of lay (non-clergy) faculty and the percentage of students of other faiths attending the college.

7. Single-sex vs. Coed

The vast majority of U.S. colleges are coeducational. Although most women choose to attend coed colleges, there are eighty-two women's colleges. Research shows that women who attend women's colleges have advantages that lead them to be more fulfilled and successful in life than their female counterparts at coed colleges. On the other hand, advocates of coed colleges argue that women's colleges isolate women from the "real world" and the intellectual and social diversity that men provide.

Aside from seminaries and rabbinical colleges, only a handful of men's colleges exist today: Hampden-Sydney, Morehouse, Wabash, Deep Springs, and St. John's University.

8. Academic Focus

A good way to assess the academic focus of a college is to consider the most popular majors and the percentages of students in those majors. A college where most of the students major in engineering obviously has a different strength and focus than a college where most of the students major in the arts or humanities. With that said, do not eliminate a college simply because your intended major is not one of the top three as long as you understand what the college's most popular subjects are.

9. Structured vs. Free Environment

Each college has its own curriculum and course requirements for each major. Some colleges have strict requirements that allow for few electives. Other colleges have few requirements and allow students the freedom to select courses and do not require a formal major. Students who feel they need more structure and guidance may favor a college with stricter requirements; conversely, students with a defined academic and career plan may favor a college that offers flexibility. Choose the environment that you feel most comfortable in.

10. Extracurricular Activities

Thinking about what you want to do outside of classes should also play a factor in your decision. For example, if you are a high school athlete who would like to play a varsity sport in college, you need to make a realistic evaluation of your chances of playing at the Division I, II or III level and choose colleges based on the competitiveness of the sports teams. If you are interested in participating in Greek life, make sure the colleges you are looking at have fraternity and sorority houses; or, if you want nothing to do with toga parties, then look for a school where Greek life is not prevalent. Do not downplay the importance of participating in extracurricular activities in college; getting involved on campus will lead to a more fulfilling collegiate experience and will be viewed positively when you look for your first job out of school.

Visiting with College Admission Representatives – Tips for Students and Parents

Many students and their parents hesitate to talk with a college representative because they feel they may have an obligation to that school as a result of their visit, or they may not know what questions to ask.

Remind them that a conversation or completing a request card does not constitute a commitment to attend that particular school. In fact, knowledgeable admission representatives will often refer a family to another college that may be a better fit for a particular student.

Students should know their basic academic information (GPA, test scores) before talking with an admission representative. As a counselor, you can also encourage them to have a fulfilling conversation by providing them with a list of potential questions like the following:

- What are your admission requirements? Do I need to write an essay? If so, what are the possible topics?
- What factors are emphasized in the admission process?
- What can you tell me about your program in (insert major/program here)?
- Does your college give credit for AP/IB scores? If so, do you have a chart I could see?
- What is the academic profile of students attending your college?
- If I'm interested in art/engineering/music/etc, are there specific requirements for admission?
- Tell me about your cost of attendance. What percent of students are offered need-based financial aid? How many receive scholarships?
- Is housing guaranteed if I am accepted? How many students live on campus? What are your policies regarding on-campus housing?
- What is the average class size? For freshmen? For juniors and seniors? What is the largest class on your campus?
- Are freshmen taught by professors or graduate students?
- Tell me about your academic advising program.
- Are there parking restrictions on campus? Can I bring my car?
- What do students do on weekends? Do they tend to leave campus or stick around?
- What percentage of your recent graduates started working right after graduation? How many went on to graduate school?

Tips from the Professional Development Committee: If many of your students attend a college fair at your school or in your area, provide them with a list of questions to ask prior to the fair. Admission representatives are impressed with students who ask good questions.

Encourage students to create a page or two of pre-printed labels prior to a college fair, which will make it easier for them to complete a college's request card. The label could include: name, address, high school, year of graduation, phone number, email address, GPA, test scores to date, and any particular programs they might be interested in.

Provide families with a chart to take with them on a college trip, providing a means to distinguish one college from another.

The College Visit and Interview – Tips for Students and Parents

Although many would say that visiting a college or university while it is in session is the ideal time to visit, families should go when they can. If that means visiting during summer vacation, then go! The key for students and parents is simply to get on a campus, to see for themselves how it differs from high school, and to get a sense of the people and place.

Do you have to visit a college before applying? Absolutely not. Again, some would say that it is best to do so, but sometimes it is not possible. Students can get a good sense of a college's personality from their website, literature, and a phone or e-mail conversation with an admissions representative and/or current student.

When you are planning a trip to visit a college, we recommend you do the following:

- Call the Admission Office at least two weeks in advance to schedule your appointment.
- At a minimum, tour the campus and meet with someone in the admission office for the “information session.” Ideally, try to also include sitting in on a class, eating lunch in the cafeteria and talking with current students, meeting with a professor in your area of interest, talking with the coach of a sport you may want to pursue, and staying overnight on campus with a student host (if the college offers such a program).
- Develop a list of questions BEFORE you visit. And do your homework—know the basics before you engage someone in conversation (like size of the school, type of school, etc.).
- Talk with people! Engage current students in conversation and find out why they decided to attend this particular college/university. Ask what other schools they applied to. Why do they like attending this school?
- At the end of the visit, as you are driving away, write down your impressions of the school. This will help you remember what you liked and didn't like, especially if you are visiting several schools in one trip.

The College Interview

(Adapted from Gunnar Olson, Indian Springs School, AL, on the Naviance Network)

Purpose: To help the college gather further information about your suitability as a candidate and to help you determine if this college is a good match.

Before the Interview: Evaluate yourself: identify your strengths, interests, weaknesses. Compose a list of questions about this college and its admissions process. Dress comfortably but appropriately.

At the Beginning: Shake hands with the interviewer; look the interviewer directly in the eye; know the interviewer's name - ask him or her to repeat it if you did not hear it the first time; introduce your parents, if they are with you, and then invite them to leave.

The Interview: An interview can last an hour and can be divided into six different parts:

Personal Background: Where you have grown up, your parent's occupation/interests, information about siblings and colleges attended by family members. The purpose is to put you at ease.

Academic Background: Information about your high school and curriculum. Why you have taken certain classes and any academic awards.

Extracurricular: What activities mean the most to you and why? Have you had any specific roles within an activity?

Academic Interest: What are you interested in studying and how have these interests developed? What are your future career goals?

College Choice: What are you looking for in a college/university? What expectations do you have in a school?

Why this school: What brings you to this particular school? How does this school fit into your criteria?

Questions to expect:

- Tell me about your high school – what kind of environment does it have?
- What has been the most difficult course you have taken during high school?
- Is there a specific teacher or course that has really caught your interest? Can you explain why?
- What has been the most exciting academic project you done in high school? What has been your most significant academic accomplishment?
- Tell me what you have read outside of school lately.
- How would you use your talents at our university?
- What has been the most significant personal challenge you have ever faced?
- If I were to visit your school and talk with some of your friends, how would they describe you to me?
- What are your plans for after college?
- What specific questions can I help you with?

After the Interview: Thank the interviewer, shake hands, say good bye. Write or e-mail a thank you note to the person who interviewed you.

Tip from the Professional Development Committee: The private colleges in Colorado highly recommend that our Colorado students take advantage of an on-campus interview. If a student applies to one of these colleges and does not interview, it is duly noted in the admission process. As a counselor, encourage these students to take the time to interview, even if the school is not their first choice—and especially if it is their first choice.

WHAT FAMILIES & STUDENTS NEED TO KNOW ABOUT PAYING FOR COLLEGE

Prepared by Misti Ruthven, School Relations Manager, CollegeInvest

Having a discussion about how to pay for college can be a sensitive subject for many families and students. However, it's important for families to consider their "ability to pay" in the college selection process. As you'll see in this section, there's an "affordable" college option for any and all students.

What is higher education?

Higher education, as used in this section, is more than just a traditional four-year college. Skill-based training certificates or associate's degrees are viable educational attainments for many students. Higher education includes two- and four-year public colleges/universities, private college/universities, vocational/technical school and proprietary (for-profit) education.

What is financial aid?

Financial aid is money that is given, borrowed or earned for educational purposes. Sources of financial aid include federal and state governments as well as the school/college/university the student attends and private businesses (common scholarship providers). Sometimes businesses offer tuition remission or payment programs for their employees as well.

Tip: When helping a student select a school, be sure that school is eligible for Title IV financial aid. Some schools are not approved by the federal government to offer aid. If a school does not offer financial aid, it's up to the student and their family to find money to pay for that school. Most often, it's easiest for the student to find a similar program at a school that offers financial aid

Who is eligible for financial aid?

All students who are U.S. citizens or eligible non-citizens are eligible for some kind of financial aid. To be eligible for financial aid students must:

- Be a U.S. citizen or eligible non-citizen (see definition of "eligible non-citizen" under Financial Aid Terminology)
- Have a valid Social Security Number (Note: Parents don't need a SSN for their children to apply for aid)
- Comply with Selective Service registration (if male, age 18-25)
- Enroll at least half-time in an eligible program at a college/university/vocational school, etc.
- Have a high school diploma, GED or enroll at a community college and successfully complete six credit hours
- Be enrolled or accepted for enrollment as a regular student working toward a degree or certificate in an eligible program at a school that participates in the federal student aid programs
- Not have a drug conviction for an offense that occurred while receiving federal student aid (such as grants, loans, or work-study)
- Not owe a refund on a federal grant or be in default on a federal student loan
- Demonstrate financial need (except for unsubsidized Stafford Loans)

Where should families begin?

The Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) is the universal application for financial aid for all schools in the United States. The only legitimate place for families to complete a FAFSA is www.fafsa.ed.gov. One parent and the student must also apply for a Personal Identification Number (PIN) to electronically sign the FAFSA form at www.pin.ed.gov.

- Families must complete the FAFSA each year their student attends college in order to receive aid. One FAFSA per student attending college per year.

- The earliest possible date a family can complete a FAFSA is January 1 of the year the student plans to attend school. For example, if a student plans to attend school in Fall 2010, the earliest date the family can complete a FAFSA is January 1, 2010.
- To complete the FAFSA families need:
 - Social Security Numbers (this is required for students only)
 - W-2 forms and other earning records
 - Current bank statements
 - Business & farm records
 - Investment records
- If families are unable to provide the most current year's tax information, they can estimate using their prior year's taxes. However, they will need to update their tax information on the FAFSA when their taxes are complete.
- The EFC or Expected Family Contribution is the number that is sent to the family after completing the FAFSA. This is how much the Federal government believes the family can afford to send their student to school. However, families will not necessarily need to write a check for this amount, but can use some types of financial aid to cover their EFC if they don't have resources.
- The Cost of Attendance (COA) or how much it costs to attend a certain school minus the EFC equals the family's financial need. Cost of Attendance varies by institutions with two-year colleges generally being the lowest and private colleges usually the highest. Consequently, it is possible for families to not have a "Need" at some colleges while having a "Need" at other colleges. If this number is positive, then the family has "Need" and may qualify for need-based aid.

$$\text{COA} - \text{EFC} = \text{Need}$$

Tip: The FAFSA does NOT look at the following assets for the student or their family

- Life insurance plans
- Retirement plans
- Equity from primary residence
- Value of small business (if 100 employees or fewer)
- Farm when it's the primary source of income

Unique Family Situations: Students must include at least one parent's information on the FAFSA unless they are 24 years of age or older, a veteran, ward of the court, married, in graduate school, supporting dependents (and providing more than 50% of support), both parents deceased, foster youth or unaccompanied homeless youth.

If the student's parents have divorced or separated, they should answer only the questions about the parent that they lived with most during the last 12 months. If the student did not live with one parent more than the other, answer only the questions about the parent who provided most of their financial support during the last 12 months. If this parent is remarried, the step-parent's financial information must be included on the FAFSA. Keep in mind that the Federal Department of Education believes it's the family's responsibility to pay for their child's education, regardless of their ability or desire to pay.

Beware: Scam web sites charge families to submit their FAFSA information.

Four Types of Financial Aid

Grants – Money from the federal or state government, college/university or private companies or organizations. Most grants are need-based and do not need to be repaid.

Scholarships – Money that is won or given for a variety of reasons such as academic, athletic or personal attributes or affiliations. Some scholarships are need-based and some are not. They do not need to be repaid.

Work-Study – Money that is earned from work typically on-campus while in college. Work-study money comes from the federal and state governments or from the colleges and does not need to be repaid. Work-study is awarded to both need and non-need students. The students are paid as they work their hours. This money is often not available upfront to pay the college’s bill but can be used for living expenses throughout the term.

Loans – Money that is borrowed from the federal or state government, a lender or other private source. Loans must be repaid upon graduation, when the student leaves school or drops below half-time. Both parents and students may use loans to pay costs of attendance.

College Scholarship Service Profile (CSS Profile)

Some private colleges/universities and a few public universities with large endowments use the CSS Profile as a tool to give their institutional grant monies to families. The CSS Profile, from the CollegeBoard, charges families \$25 to complete a supplemental form (in addition to the FAFSA) that looks at a family’s qualitative lifestyle choices, value of the family’s primary residence and retirement assets. Students are charged an additional \$16 for each college they wish to receive the information. Families can complete the CSS profile on-line at www.collegeboard.com. The CSS Profile is only used to determine how much institutional grant funds for which the student/family is eligible and does not affect federal or state financial aid amounts. In Colorado, Colorado College and the University of Denver require the CSS Profile.

Tip: Waivers are available from the college/university the student plans to attend if the family cannot afford the fees.

To complete the CSS Profile, families will need the same information as for the FAFSA. Additionally they will need:

- Life insurance plans
- Retirement plans
- Equity from primary residence
- Investment value of business or farm

Note: Some colleges that require the CSS Profile may ask for the non-custodial parent’s information as well as custodial parent.

Timeline for Students

Sophomore/Junior Year

- Apply for the College Opportunity Fund at <https://cof.college-assist.org/COFApp/COFApp/Default.aspx>
- Attend a financial aid workshop

Tip: You can schedule CollegeInvest to come to your school to present FREE financial aid, college savings, scholarship, and financial literacy workshops for parents and students in English or Spanish. Call 1-800-448-2424 or visit www.collegeinvest.org to schedule.

- Complete the FAFSA4Caster to understand the process at www.fafsa4caster.ed.gov
 - Begin your scholarship search – NEVER pay for a scholarship search!
<http://www.collegeinvest.org/PDF/ScholarshipList.pdf> is a good place to start
 - Find scholarships that fit you and file them away
 - Write essays
 - Collect reference letters
 - Create a resume

- Check financial aid deadlines for the schools where you plan to apply for admissions – each school has their own priority deadline.

Tip: Advise students to meet priority deadlines for financial aid – they could lose grant money for each day they are late!

Senior Year

- Apply for scholarships
- Double-check college admissions and financial aid priority deadlines because colleges will not determine financial aid until you’ve been admitted
- Complete the FAFSA as close to January 1st as possible
- Complete the CSS Profile if required by your college/university
- Compare award letters from colleges – you’ll hear back from schools between March and July
- Sign and return your award letter/financial aid package by the deadline

Tip: Financial aid offices may ask families for additional information to verify the data they provided on the FAFSA. Encourage families to immediately respond to these requests; otherwise, they may lose out on financial aid dollars.

Financial Hardships: If families are facing a hardship, such as a job loss, death in the family, excessive medical expenses or other unique financial situations that are not accurately reflected by the FAFSA, they may write a letter to the college/university outlining their circumstances. Families need to work closely with the financial aid office at each school to which their student applies to be sure they include the necessary documentation to accurately reflect their situation. Financial aid professionals have the ability to take a family’s unique circumstances into account when awarding financial aid – this process is referred to as “professional judgment.”

Financial Aid Terminology

Academic Year

The period during which the educational institution is in session, consisting of at least 30 weeks of instructional time. The academic year typically runs from mid to late August through the end of May at most institutions. At institutions using a semester definition, there are two semesters: Fall and Spring. For institutions using a quarter definition there are three terms: Fall, Winter and Spring.

Award Letter/Notification

An official document issued by an institution’s financial aid office that lists the financial aid awarded to the student. This notification provides details on their analysis of the students’ financial need and the breakdown of the financial aid package according to amount, source and type of aid. The award notification will include the terms and conditions for financial aid and information about the cost of attendance. Some colleges require the student to acknowledge the award notification, indicating acceptance (or denial) of each source of aid, and to submit the award letter to the financial aid office by a deadline. Most award notices are electronically posted on a secure web site for the student to access or are e-mailed to the student.

College Opportunity Fund (COF)

Money that the State of Colorado pays to state-funded colleges/universities in Colorado on a student’s behalf that helps reduce their tuition. If students do not sign-up or authorize the use of COF they will pay more – 09-10 amount is \$68 per credit hour. Students will never receive a check or COF monies directly; they are always paid to the college.

Note: Colorado public colleges/universities that list in-state tuition costs on the website or in brochures already assume that the student is receiving COF.

Cost of Attendance (COA)

(Also known as the cost of education or "budget"). The total amount it should cost the student to go to school, including tuition and fees, room and board, allowances for books and supplies, transportation, and personal and incidental expenses. Loan fees, if applicable, may also be included in the COA. Child care and expenses for disabilities can be included at the discretion of the financial aid administrator. Institutions establish standard budget amounts for students that may differ based on living on-campus and off-campus, married and unmarried students and in-state and out-of-state students. Guidelines for determining the COA are provided by federal and state resources.

CSS Profile

A supplemental financial aid application to the FAFSA that some colleges/universities use to determine how to award their institutional grant funds.

Dependent Student

For a child or other person to be considered a dependent, they must live within the parent household and the parent must provide them with more than half of their support. Dependent student must include their parent(s) financial/tax information on the FAFSA.

Eligible Student

To be eligible for federal and state financial aid the student must demonstrate need, must be a U.S. Citizen or eligible non-citizen with a valid Social Security Number, must be working towards a degree or certificate at an eligible educational institution, and show that they are qualified and able to obtain a postsecondary education.

Eligible Non-Citizen

A student who is not a U.S. citizen but is eligible for Federal student aid. Eligible non-citizens include U.S. permanent residents who are holders of valid green cards, U.S. nationals, holders of form I-94 who have been granted refugee or asylum status and certain other non-citizens. Non-citizens who hold a student visa or an exchange visitor visa are not eligible for Federal student aid.

Expected Family Contribution (EFC)

The number used to determine the student's financial aid eligibility from the information submitted on the FAFSA. The EFC includes a parent contribution and a student contribution and depends on the student's dependency status, family size, number of family members in school, taxable and nontaxable income and assets. Both the parent and student are assessed a percentage of their income and assets to be used in the calculation of the EFC. The difference between the COA and the EFC is the student's financial need and is used in determining the student's eligibility for need-based financial aid. If the student or family has unusual financial circumstances (such as high medical expenses, loss of employment or death of a parent) that may affect their ability to pay for education, the student should inform the financial aid administrator. He or she may choose to adjust the COA or EFC to compensate if there are exceptional circumstances.

Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA)

FAFSA is the universal application for financial aid at all eligible colleges/universities. Students and families must complete the FAFSA every year the student plans to attend higher education. January 1st of the year the student will attend school is the earliest date the FAFSA may be completed. As the name suggests, no fee is charged to file a FAFSA. Students apply on-line at <http://www.fafsa.ed.gov/>.

Gift Aid

Financial aid, such as grants and scholarships, which does not need to be repaid.

Grant

Aid funds provided to students as part of the gift aid portion of the award package. Grant funds do not have to be repaid. Most grants are need based.

Independent

For the 2009-2010 academic year, an independent student is at least 24 years old as of January 1 of the academic year, is married, is a graduate or professional student, has a legal dependent other than a spouse that they supply more than 50% of financial support, is on active duty or a veteran of the U.S. Armed Forces, was in foster care as of age 13, is an emancipated minor as determined by the court, in legal guardianship as determined by the court, is an unaccompanied homeless youth, or is self-supporting and at risk of being homeless, or is an orphan or ward of the court (or was a ward of the court until age 18). A parent refusing to provide support for their child's education is not sufficient for the child to be declared independent. A student may appeal their status to the financial aid office if exceptional circumstances are present.

Institutional Grant

Endowment or foundation funds that colleges/universities provide to students as financial aid. Institutional grant monies from a college may ONLY be used at that school.

Loans

A type of financial aid which must be repaid, with interest. The federal student loan and parent PLUS programs (FFELP and FDSLPL) are a good method of financing the costs of a college education. These loans typically have a lower interest rate. Parent PLUS loans do have credit-worthiness criteria. Student and parent loans are divided into multiple disbursements that coincide with the enrollment terms. The Stafford Student Loans and Perkins Loans also provide a variety of deferment options and extended repayment terms.

Stafford Student Loan:

Subsidized – Need based, loan amount varies by grade level. Federal Government pays the interest while the student is enrolled at least half time and during grace period. Fixed interest rate at 5.6 % for July 1, 2009, to July 1, 2010.

Unsubsidized – Not need based, loan amount varies by grade level. Interest accrues during student's enrollment period. Fixed interest rate of 6.8%.

Parent PLUS Loan:

Parent borrower may borrow up to the Cost of Attendance (COA) minus any other financial aid. Parent borrowers must credit qualify based on limited criteria and interest starts to accrue within 60 days of the last disbursement. Fixed interest rate of 8.5%.

Federal Perkins Student Loan

Need based, loan amount varies with interest rate fixed at 5% with a nine month grace period. The federal government pays the interest while student is enrolled and during grace period. Not all colleges or universities participate in this program and loan funds are limited.

Private or Alternative Loans

Education loan programs established by private lenders to supplement the student and parent education loan programs available from federal and state governments. All forms of state and federal student aid (including Stafford and PLUS loans) should be exhausted before choosing to borrow a private or alternative loan. Interest rates are generally high, based on the borrower's credit score and interest is usually variable. These loans are similar to commercial loans and interest accrues while the student is enrolled.

Merit-based Aid

Financial aid that is merit-based depends on the student academic, artistic or athletic merit or some other

criteria and does not depend on the existence of financial need. Merit-based awards use grades, test scores, hobbies and special talents to determine eligibility for scholarships. Essays, transcripts and personal interviews may be required.

Need-based Aid

The difference between the COA and the EFC is the student's financial need -- the gap between the cost of attending the school and the student's resources. The financial aid package is based on the amount of financial need. The process of determining a student's need is known as need analysis. The formula for determining EFC is federally determined and consistent for all families applying for financial aid.

Personal Identification Number (PIN)

The PIN number provided by the U.S. Department of Education at www.pin.ed.gov can be used to file the FAFSA on-line, update or correct the FAFSA, add colleges to receive the FAFSA results, access loan information online, and apply for financial aid in future years. The PIN can also be requested at the time the student and parent fill out the FAFSA. Students and families should save their PIN's to use the following years.

Professional Judgment

Financial aid administrators may use Professional Judgment to adjust either the COA or EFC for a student based on independent special circumstances that may affect the families' ability to pay education expenses or the amount of educational expenses. Students may request an adjustment by providing a detailed explanation and relevant documentation to the financial aid office.

Satisfactory Academic Progress

To be eligible to receive federal student financial aid the student must meet and maintain the school's standards of satisfactory academic progress towards a degree or certificate offered by that institution. Standards vary by school but must meet or exceed federal requirements.

Scholarship

A form of financial aid given to students to help pay for their education. Many scholarships are restricted to paying all or part of tuition expenses, though some scholarships also cover room and board. Scholarships are a form of gift aid and do not have to be repaid. Many scholarships are restricted to students in specific courses of study or with academic, athletic or artistic talent.

Self-help Aid

Financial aid in the form of loans and student employment (work-study). Most financial aid packages are required to include a minimum amount of self-help aid before any gift aid is granted.

Student Aid Report (SAR)

Report that summarizes the information included in the FAFSA. The colleges selected on the FAFSA will receive electronic copies of the Institutional Student Information Record (ISIR). The SAR will indicate whether the student is eligible for Federal Pell Grant and the Expected Family Contribution (EFC). If the student files the FAFSA electronically they will receive the SAR electronically within three to four days. If the student files a paper FAFSA the SAR will be sent by regular mail and take several weeks. Review your SAR and correct any errors on the SAR. Keep a photocopy of the SAR for your records.

Unmet Need

The financial aid office strives to provide each student with the full difference between their ability to pay and the cost of education. However, due to funding constraints, the student may receive less than the student's need. This gap is known as the unmet need.

Work-Study

Program providing undergraduate and graduate students with part-time employment during the school year. The federal and state governments pay a portion of the student's salary, making it cheaper for departments and agencies to hire the student. Eligibility for federal and most state work study is based on need. Money earned from a federal work-study job is not counted as income for the subsequent year's FAFSA. Many colleges also have institutional work-study not dependent on financial need. Financial Aid Offices have information about institutional work-study.

Web Resources

www.college-assist.org – Website for the designated loan guarantor for the State of Colorado, College-Assist. This is also the website for applying for the College Opportunity Fund (COF).

www.collegeinvest.org - Colorado's not-for-profit college finance experts. CollegeInvest is a division of the Colorado Department of Higher Education and provides the State 529 College Savings Plan, scholarships, community outreach and parent and student loans. CollegeInvest provides seminars on financial aid, financial literacy, 529 College Savings plans and is active in promoting education to students and families. There is also an extensive scholarship listing as well as pre-collegiate resources. Contact CollegeInvest to set up a financial aid presentation at your school.

www.cafaa.org – Colorado Association of Financial Aid Administrators. Colorado's statewide organization of financial aid professionals. CAFAA also provides financial aid workshops to high schools throughout the state. Information regarding College Goal Sunday may also be obtained on this site.

www.collegegoalcolorado.org – College Goal Sunday is sponsored by CAFAA and CollegeInvest and is a free workshop for parents, students and families to assist with filling out the FAFSA.

<http://studentaid.ed.gov> – The federal website describing all federal financial aid programs and requirements. Also in Spanish.

www.fafsa.ed.gov – The website to fill out the Free Application for Federal Student Aid. Also in Spanish.

www.pin.ed.gov – The website to obtain a PIN number before you fill out the FAFSA online. Also in Spanish.

www.fafsa4caster.ed.gov – Tool for estimating the EFC. All calculations are based on information submitted by the student or parent. Also in Spanish.

www.fastweb.com – Website search engine for scholarships. Students must fill out a detailed profile and the website will match interests and talents to scholarships that fit the profile.

www.finaid.org – Nonprofit financial aid resource for students, parents and financial aid professionals.

Top Ten Financial Aid Hints for High School Counselors

1. All students, regardless of their academic or financial circumstances, should be encouraged to complete a FAFSA as long as they have valid Social Security Numbers.
2. Many financial aid information resources are available in both English and Spanish.
3. Students should be encouraged to think about the long-term implications of going heavily into debt to pay for an expensive college because less expensive community colleges, state colleges, and even living at home can bring down the amount of long-term indebtedness.
4. Schedule your school's FAFSA workshop early in the school year to be held as soon as possible after January 1.
5. Colleges will not prepare financial aid packages for students until the students have been accepted and the colleges have received completed financial aid applications.
6. Money and finances should never be an excuse to forego higher education.
7. DEADLINES matter in college admissions and financial aid processes!
8. Give students folders to keep financial aid paperwork and PIN's.
9. You are not expected to be a financial aid expert. There are many resources available from colleges, the web, and local organizations like CollegeInvest...just focus on getting all seniors to complete FAFSA's as early as possible after January 1.
10. Remember to pat yourself on the back for a job well done in transitioning students to that important next step...life after high school graduation!

Helpful Hints for Winning Scholarships

From our friends at the Boettcher Foundation

Application Materials

- Obtain applications as early as possible.
- Photocopy all applications. Practice filling them out, and always keep a back-up blank copy.
- Pay attention to DEADLINES. Verify whether an application has a post-marked by deadline or a received by deadline. Admissions offices and scholarship committees strictly adhere to published deadlines.
- Read the directions on the application, and clarify any questions you have regarding the details of the application before the deadline.

Academics

- Check with the scholarship committee or admissions office early in your high school career to verify that you are taking a college prep curriculum and pursuing a course of study that will position you well for admission to the specific programs in which you might be interested. A strong academic record clearly indicates that you have taken the most challenging courses available to you throughout all four years of your high school career.

Test Preparation

- Prepare yourself to take the SAT or ACT by taking practice tests like the PSAT & NMSQT. These tests will show you early in your high school career how college admissions tests are administered as well as and indicate areas where you need to improve for the ACT & SAT.
- Take practice ACT & SATs; familiarize yourself with the directions, the pace and length of the test and question format.
- Check out the College Board and ACT websites for more information.

Activities/Service/Leadership

- Most scholarship and college admissions committees are looking for students who have been actively involved in their schools and communities and who have demonstrated leadership, initiative and a high level of involvement throughout their high school careers.

Essays & Short Answer Sections

- Abide by length requirements, and proofread.
- Clearly make a statement in your answers, and be sure that your answer directly addresses the questions posed.
- Demonstrate the clarity of your writing, as well as the depth and quality of your thought. Be authentic. Whether discussing a personal issue or an issue of national concern, allow your passion to stand out.

Recommendations

- Most scholarships require extensive recommendations. Think carefully about who knows you best when selecting your recommenders and give each of them plenty of time to write you a strong letter of recommendation.
- Inform your recommenders of the requirements of the scholarship and ask them to address how you match the selection criteria.
- Check in with your recommenders at least a week before a deadline and make sure they are aware of all deadlines.
- Send a thank you note! Writing a good letter of recommendation is hard work!

Interviews

- Review your essays and application before your interview; it is likely that you will be asked specific questions about issues you raised in the materials you submitted.
- When answering questions, be detailed and specific, demonstrate your goals and achievements.
- Be prepared to discuss why the scholarship/program/school is right for you.
- Demonstrate your knowledge of the scholarship/program/school through thoughtful answers and questions.
- Dress appropriately.

Campus Visits

- Campus visits, if at all possible, will help you discover if a college or university is right for you. We highly encourage you to participate in campus visit days while an institution is "in-session."
- Nothing substitutes for walking around a campus, sitting in on classes, eating in the residence halls, sleeping in the dorms, meeting faculty, shadowing students, checking out special facilities and talking to students.
- Check to see if an institution is a match for who you are and what you want to accomplish during your undergraduate experience.

WRITING A STRONG LETTER OF RECOMMENDATION

How do colleges use a counselor letter of recommendation?

A great letter of recommendation is one that is honest and speaks from personal experience. The admission officers reviewing the applicant's file have all the facts and figures recorded elsewhere, so there is no need for you to take time recounting these details in your letter. What the officer and the rest of the admission committee don't yet know is what it is like to know and work with this student. How is a class or activity enhanced by his or her presence or participation? What is the student best known for around school? Where is his or her impact most deeply felt? What kind of assignments does he or she relish...or dread? Is he or she a great creative writer, or a talented researcher, or both? Help the admission committee imagine how this student contributes to the community so they can extrapolate what kind of contribution he or she has the potential to make on their campus. Let what is special about each student shine through in your support of their candidacy.

Someone once said that a teacher recommendation is like a spotlight: it specifically shines light on how a student contributes to their classroom. A counselor recommendation, on the other hand, is like a floodlight, illuminating a student's contribution to their school, family, and extracurricular activities. It is not a laundry list of the student's activities; rather, it outlines what is important to the student, and why. A good counselor can relate every student's "story" in writing—what has impacted them in their life, how they have made a difference, and how they will contribute to their college community.

How do I gather information from my student to write their letter of recommendation?

First, make sure your student understands the importance of your conversation! Monosyllabic answers and grunts will not ensure a solid letter of recommendation. Ask them to complete a questionnaire prior to your interview. Some possible questions could include:

- The three qualities I like best about myself are:
- The accomplishments I am most proud of are:
- What has been your most meaningful extracurricular activity/activities? Why?
- What is your favorite academic subject? Why?
- What do you see as priorities in your life? Do you have a "philosophy of life?"
- As a senior, what have you learned about yourself since your freshman year?
- Do you feel that your academic record is an accurate assessment of your ability? Are there any situations with grades or courses that you would like me to address in my letter?
- Is there anything about you I should know that I wouldn't otherwise? Special situations or experiences or unique skills or talents? Are there circumstances that have affected your ability to achieve in school?

Tip from the Professional Development Committee: When collecting information to write their letter, some counselors have asked teachers, parents, even a student's peers to submit information. This can be very helpful, providing depth to your letter, as well as validation that others agree with your opinion of a student.

Effective Letters of Recommendation...

- Provide context, giving the reader an overall perspective of the candidate, one only available from the vantage point of a counselor who is privy to both academic and personal information about the student.
- Build upon a candidate's demonstrated talents. DO NOT, however, provide the "laundry list" of a student's activities or achievements. Describe how they impact an organization, their family, their job.
- Give honest insight on factual aspects of the candidate's circumstances. Do not overstate a student's achievements or potential in an effort to help them win a spot at a particular college. It is appropriate to speak to their strengths *and* areas that need improvement.
- Provide specifics! If you feel a candidate is a "natural leader," provide details on why you feel that way. Tell a story to illustrate your impressions, i.e. proven integrity via a student government controversy, capacity to wrestle with abstract ideas as shown in an eloquent letter to the editor written by the candidate to your local paper, a growing maturity as viewed by a candidate's reaction to an 0-9 football season and student discontent.
- Can often tell a story which paints a very amiable, human picture of a candidate, one the reader might identify with more easily than if general, unspecified words of praise were listed.
- Are economical in the choice of words. Quantity does not necessarily equate to quality.

Tips from the Professional Development Committee:

- Show rather than tell. Provide details.
- Focus on the student.
- If you have not known the student long, state that in your letter.
- Invest in a book called The Synonym Finder, J.I. Rodale, Warner Books, a Warner Communications Company by arrangement with Rodale Press, Inc. It is an excellent help in finding just the right word to describe a student.
- Use the student's own words as a quotation to back up your thoughts.
- Avoid variations on "be" words.

INTERNET RESOURCES

There are thousands of websites associated with the college counseling process, and it can be as overwhelming for counselors as well as students and families. **Here are websites every new Colorado counselor should bookmark on their computer:**

www.act.org	ACT information for counselors and educators
www.actstudent.org	ACT information and registration for students
www.collegeboard.com	SAT information and registration
www.CollegeInColorado.org	Detailed information on Colorado's higher education offerings, career information, online application for the College Opportunity Fund (COF), test prep, Early Achievers Scholarship information, and much more
http://wue.wiche.edu/	Western Undergraduate Exchange (WUE) information
www.boettcherfoundation.org/scholarships/index.html	Boettcher Scholarship Information
www.danielsfund.org/scholarships/	Daniels Fund Scholarship Information
www.fafsa.ed.gov	Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA)
http://higher.ed.colorado.gov/	The Colorado Commission on Higher Education's Website

The following are websites we have found helpful when counseling students:

General Information Websites

www.commonapp.org	Common Application Website
www.ctcl.com	Colleges That Change Lives Website, based on the popular book by Loren Pope
www.princetonreview.com/com.aspx?uidbadge=%07	Counselor-o-Matic College Search Engine created by Princeton Review.
www.nacacnet.org/studentresources/pages/default.aspx	Information for students from the NACAC Website
www.nces.ed.gov/collegenavigator	College Search Engine from National Center for Education Statistics

Testing Websites

www.ets.org	Educational Testing Service – Information on AP, SAT, TOEFL
www.fairtest.org	Fair Test lists schools who are “score optional” and don’t require SAT/ACT scores to make an admission decision

Financial Aid and Scholarship Websites

www.fastweb.com	One of the best scholarship databases out there, despite annoying ads
www.fafsa4caster.ed.gov	EFC Calculator from the FAFSA folks. Great website to refer parents to
http://profileonline.collegeboard.com/index.jsp	CSS Profile Online. This additional financial aid form is required by certain colleges in addition to the FAFSA
www.ftc.gov	Federal Trade Commission's information on Scholarship Scams
www.finaid.org	Comprehensive site regarding everything related to financial aid
http://studentaid.ed.gov/students/publications/student_guide/index.html	The Guide to Federal Student Aid

NCAA Websites

www.ncaaclearinghouse.net	NCAA Clearinghouse Information for Prospective Student-Athletes
www.ncaa.org	Official Website of the NCAA

For more college-related websites, go to NACAC's Listing of Web Resources at www.nacacnet.org/studentresources/pages/default.aspx.

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN HIGH SCHOOL COUNSELORS AND COLLEGE ADMISSION REPRESENTATIVES

Perhaps the first point of business is to recognize the nature of counselors and admission professionals' very different jobs. High School Counselors are tugged in 100 different directions from the moment they enter their office each morning, juggling appointments with students, parents, and teachers with the paperwork, phone calls, and e-mails that constantly clog their in-boxes. Admission reps are on the road from 7:00 a.m. most mornings during travel season, hitting high schools and college fairs, and often not into bed until 11:00 p.m. or later. They too squeeze in the constant communications with their office, colleagues, and prospective students and parents. We are ALL faced with hectic days. And each of us must respect the other!

Counselors—Try to provide the following to your admission colleagues:

- Always ensure that a counselor meets with the admission rep when they visit your school. They don't want to talk only with students. They need to know what is happening at your school as well.
- Ask them specific questions to learn what is happening on their campus. Avoid the vague "So what's new?" question. Try these out:
 - Are there any changes happening on campus? New programs? Buildings? Requirements? Personnel?
 - How are our recent graduates faring on campus? Can we discuss how they fared in the admission process?
 - What are the admission office's goals for the coming year?
 - What are your most popular majors at this point? Why do you feel they are most popular?
 - Are there any unique programs at your institution?
 - What can I tell you about my high school? I'd like to share our profile with you.
- Provide your business card with the best way to contact you should a question arise about an applicant. Always answer these phone calls or e-mails promptly!
- A bottle of water and/or cup of coffee is always appreciated.
- A map and directions to nearby schools is also helpful.
- Always inform admission reps of the best place to park on your campus. Try to keep a spot or two open for them during the busy travel season.

Admission Reps—Try to provide the following to your counseling colleagues:

- Understand that counselors are busy folk. Empathize with their schedule and try not to take too much of their time.
- Make friends with the counseling secretary. She/he can open doors for you, and is often the person coordinating your visit. Treat them well!
- If you are running late due to traffic or some other unforeseen circumstance, take the time to call the counseling office on your cell. Often, students are waiting for your arrival and everyone is wondering if you forgot your appointment.
- Ask for the high school profile to find out what offerings are available to students at the school. Is it an AP or IB school? How many students attend college in-state versus out-of-state? Ask questions to make your job of reading applications easier.
- Ask students what distinguishes their high school from other schools. They can give you an honest appraisal of their educational home.
- Students often don't know what questions to ask. Encourage them to ask you about different topics, like admission requirements, scholarships, specific majors, campus life, etc.
- If you receive a large number of applications from a particular high school, consider visiting with the counseling staff to review application history and discuss plans for the coming year. Treat them to lunch!
- Let counselors know the best way to contact you with questions, and promptly answer their e-mails or phone calls!

GUIDELINES FOR WORKING WITH INDEPENDENT CONSULTANTS

CCHS/CR recognizes that some families will seek assistance from outside consultants for help with the college process. Here are some guidelines for HS counselors to use when working with independent consultants:

1. Help families to realize there are professional standards and ethics that govern and surround the field of independent consulting and college admissions. Recommend that families utilize the services of those consultants who are members of good standing in one or more of the following organizations that encourage continual professional development, have established specific principles of good practice that respects the High School Counselor relationship, as well as professionalism and best practices between High School Counselors and educational consultants.
 - a. HECA-Higher Education Consultants Association*
 - b. NACAC-National Association of College Admission Counselors
 - c. RMACAC-Rocky Mountain Association of College Admission Counselors
 - d. AICEP-American Institute of Certified Educational Planners
2. The work of consultants and HS Counselors should support the student's progress throughout the high school years. Consultants are expected to work collaboratively and in support of all high school counselors and their programs, methods, deadlines and processes.
3. Realize that consultants are not allowed to share information unless given written permission through a signed release from parent and or guardian when appropriate. Encourage parents to do so for collaboration.

*HECA members respect the student/school relationship. They strive to work as a team with other independent consultants, high school counselors and college staff. They respect students' work and expect them to complete admission applications and write essays personally.

Submitted by:

Diane Schaefer, MA, LPC, CEP, Schaefer Educational Planning
Licensed Professional Counselor, Certified Educational Planner
President-elect, HECA-Higher Education Consulting Association
CCHS/CR Professional Development Committee

SPECIAL PROGRAMS IN COLORADO

The Boettcher Scholarship



BOETTCHER
FOUNDATION

www.boettcherscholarships.org

Boettcher Foundation Scholarship Program

600 17th Street, Suite 2210 South

Denver, CO 80202-5422

800-323-9640

Contact: Katy Craig, Director, Scholarship Program

Scholarships@BoettcherFoundation.org

Download the Colorado Advantage brochure: www.boettcherfoundation.org/pdf/Colorado-Advantage.pdf

The year 2009 marks the 57th anniversary of the Boettcher Foundation Scholarship Program. Originally created in 1952, the program now includes more than 2,100 Current Scholars and Alumni and has provided over \$51 million in undergraduate Scholarships. In 2007, Scholarships paid on behalf of the 160 Boettcher Scholars enrolled as undergraduates in Colorado universities and colleges totaled nearly \$3 million.

The vision for the Boettcher Scholarship came from the high value the Boettcher family placed on education. In addition to supporting capital projects on many Colorado campuses, Claude Boettcher felt if Colorado's best and brightest young people were educated in the state, they would remain in Colorado as adults and ultimately provide leadership for the state's communities.

He was also aware that Boettcher Scholars had the potential to raise the bar at Colorado's institutions of higher education, thus enhancing the quality of the academic environment at these institutions and benefiting a far larger number of students indirectly.

Of the more than 2,100 Boettcher Scholars to date, more than half of the Alumni have remained in Colorado and become leaders in their professions and communities, fulfilling Claude Boettcher's vision.

Eligibility

Applicants must meet these requirements to be considered:

- Rank in the top 5% of their graduating class or the top 2 students in classes under 40
- Score 1200 or higher on the SAT reading and math sections combined - or - 27 or higher on the ACT
- Be a Colorado resident
- Be a U.S. citizen or permanent resident of the United States
- Be a graduating high school senior

Selection Criteria

Scholarships are awarded by a committee selected by the Trustees of the Boettcher Foundation. Selection criteria include:

- Superior Scholastic Ability
- Evidence of Leadership & Involvement
- Service to Community and School
- Outstanding Character

Each of the 40, four-year Scholarships includes the following:

- **Full Tuition & Fees at any of the following Colorado schools:**
 - Adams State College
 - Colorado Christian University
 - Colorado College
 - Colorado School of Mines
 - Colorado State University
 - Colorado State University - Pueblo
 - Fort Lewis College
 - Johnson & Wales University
 - Mesa State College
 - Metropolitan State University
 - Regis University
 - University of Colorado at Boulder
 - University of Colorado at Colorado Springs
 - University of Colorado at Denver
 - University of Denver
 - University of Northern Colorado
 - Western State College
- **Living Stipend** – An annual stipend of \$2,800 is provided to help defray room and board expenses during the academic year
- **Book Allowance**
- **Community Enrichment Programming:** Through this program, the Foundation provides funding to the universities and colleges that Boettcher Scholars attend for special programs and opportunities to support the Scholars' educations. Although the funds have supported a variety of opportunities, the money must be applied toward experiences that are academically enriching and particularly helpful to Boettcher Scholars as they prepare for graduate school and/or a future career.
- **Educational Enrichment Grants:** The Foundation also offers Boettcher Scholars the opportunity to apply for Educational Enrichment Grants. Through this grant program current Scholars who are still pursuing undergraduate studies during the term of their Scholarships may submit an application to receive up to \$3,000 for individual projects or programs in the following four grant categories: Academic/Professional Development, Internships, Research and Special Classes/Field Sessions.

- **International Education Grant:** Through the International Education Grant, Scholars may apply to trade one half of one year's scholarship for a \$5,500 grant towards an International Education experience, **OR** apply to trade one year's scholarship for an \$8,600 grant towards an International Education experience.

- **Scholar Events**

In addition to receiving full tuition, fees, books and a living stipend, Boettcher Scholars are also provided with events and programming that enhance the Scholarship with unforgettable life experiences.

- **Annual Events for New Scholars**

Each year the Foundation hosts three Scholarship events for the 40 new Scholars:

- Rockies Baseball Game (*in a luxury suite generously donated by the Rockies Baseball Club*)
 - Teacher Recognition Awards Program
 - New Scholar Orientation

- **All-Scholar Events**

Current Boettcher Scholars attend events held by each of the campuses where Scholars are enrolled. They also attend occasional events for all current Scholars, typically held at the Governor's Residence at the Boettcher Mansion during the summer and holiday season. Such events are planned to allow Scholars the opportunity to visit with Boettcher Scholars from other campuses. In addition, the Foundation organizes two annual Scholar Community Service Days for Current and Alumni Scholars.

College In Colorado Campaign



College In Colorado
1801 Broadway, Suite 360
Denver, Colorado 80202
Phone: 720-264-8560

Colorado ranks in the top five states nationwide for the greatest number of degree holders per capita, yet only one in five Colorado ninth-grade students will earn a college degree, ranking the state in the bottom quartile nationally. The State of Colorado initiated College In Colorado as a statewide effort to improve college access and change expectations about college for all Colorado students. A cornerstone of the campaign, www.CollegeInColorado.org, offers a one-stop resource to help students and parents plan, apply and pay for college, which includes:

- Career planning and exploration tools;
- High school coursework planner;
- ACT/SAT test preparation;
- Virtual campus tours;
- College comparisons;
- Online college applications;
- Financial aid information;
- Scholarship search engine;
- Information for College Opportunity Fund (COF)

Other free services provided by College In Colorado include:

- Trainings on www.CollegeInColorado.org for students, parents, and educators;
- Motivational presentations by Team CIC and;
- Materials for career and college planning, including the *College Guide*.

For more information, please go to www.CollegeInColorado.org or contact us at (720) 264-8570.

Colorado Pre-Collegiate Partnership

The Pre-Collegiate Regional Network links and serves career and college prep stakeholders across Colorado. Organized in 13 regions – the 12 Colorado School Counselor Association Regions plus one for Aurora – the network brings together players from:

- K-12 (CDE, BOCES, local administrators, teachers, counselors and career and technical educators)
- Higher Ed (college and university admission and financial aid officers)
- Pre-Collegiate Service Providers (GEAR UP, TRiO, High Horizons, AVID, CU Pre-Collegiate programs, etc.)
- Business and workforce development
- Non-profits with youth oriented missions
- State and local agencies (health, corrections, libraries, recreation districts)

Regional networks meet as needed to address topics and issues of mutual interest and concern, such as

College In Colorado resources, Higher Education Admission Requirements, remediation, online learning resources, parental engagement, etc. Local leadership is provided by supporters in each region, and coordination and support is provided by College In Colorado.

Resources include:

- Service providers Website (www.CollegeInColorado.org, click on pre-collegiate resources)
- Regular updates on partnership activities
- Materials (*College Guide and Pre-Collegiate Services Directory*)
- Strategic Advisory Committee and sub-committee discussions, focusing on issues related to outreach to underserved communities; networking; communications; and database development. Contact: Gully
- Stanford, Director of Pre-Collegiate Partnerships at (720) 264-8563 or gully.stanford@cic.state.co.us

College Opportunity Fund

The College Opportunity Fund (COF) provides a tuition stipend for students completing undergraduate course work either full or part time at a participating public or private college or university in the state of Colorado.

To use this tuition stipend funding from the state of Colorado a student must:

- Complete an application
- Attend a participating college or university
- Authorize the college to request this funding on your behalf

The amount of this stipend is deducted from total in-state tuition. Students who do not apply for the stipend will be responsible for the full amount of their tuition bill. The amount of this tuition stipend is determined by the general assembly for the state of Colorado, is subject to legislation oversight each year and may vary from year to year. For the academic year (AY) 2007-2008 the stipend equals \$89 per credit hour for students attending participating public colleges and universities. Eligible students attending participating private colleges and universities receive half the stipend amount per credit hour. The state of Colorado will pay a portion of each eligible student's tuition, up to 145 credit hours, as long as the student is an undergraduate. The state will also pay the same portion of tuition (\$89 per credit hour) if the student is taking Postsecondary Enrollment Option classes of Fast Track classes while the student is in high school. Students can apply for the stipend online at: www.CollegeInColorado.org. Click on the College Opportunity Fund tab at the top of the page to learn more about the COF and to apply.

- Students must be at least 13 years of age to complete the stipend application.
- Students who are 18 years or older are required to provide documentation to prove legal residence in the
- United States, pursuant to Colorado statute.
- Students are not required to know which college or university they plan to attend before completing the stipend application.
- Students need to complete the stipend application only once. Completing the application creates an account that remains active for as long as the student is an undergraduate student, or until the 145 hours allotted to
- the student by the state have been exhausted.
- Students will authorize the use of these hours each semester when they register for their classes at their college.
- There are no income qualifications for students attending participating public colleges and universities in the state of Colorado.

CollegeInvest Early Achievers Scholarship

Colorado's 7th, 8th and 9th grade students have the opportunity to apply for the CollegeInvest Early Achievers Scholarship (formerly called the College In Colorado Scholarship). Applicants must complete pre-collegiate coursework, graduate from high school with at least a 2.5 cumulative GPA, and qualify for a federal Pell Grant at the time of enrollment at an eligible Colorado college.

How much?

The scholarship is designed to help close the gap between the cost of a college education and financial aid. Qualifying students will receive up to \$1,500 per year for up to five years at an eligible Colorado college.*

Where to apply?

Go to www.CollegeInColorado.org and click on the "Early Achievers Scholarship" tab or call 1-800-448-2424 to request an application.

*There is no guarantee that a student completing the scholarship application will receive a future scholarship or that they will receive the full \$1,500 per year. The final scholarship amount will depend primarily on the student's dollar amount of unmet need, the number of students qualifying, and the annual available scholarship dollars. The scholarship amount for students attending college less than full time (i.e., less than 12 credit hours) will be pro-rated; students must attend college at least half time (i.e., at least six credit hours) to be eligible.

Colorado Pre-Collegiate Scholarships

The state's 2007-08 budget includes \$800,000 for scholarships for graduates of Colorado's Pre-Collegiate Programs. Students/counselors/pre-collegiate service providers should check with College Financial Aid Offices as to their students' eligibility.

College Summit-Colorado



www.collegesummit.org/local/colorado/

For information on partnering with College Summit-Colorado, contact:

Susan Bross, Executive Director

coinfo@collegesummit.org

College Summit CO

1201 E. Colfax Avenue, Ste. 301

Denver, CO 80218

(303) 832-7174

College Summit works to increase the college enrollment rate of low-income students by building schools' capacity to guide their students through the college preparation and application process. The organization seeks to create lasting change by helping high schools and the communities they serve develop a culture where going to college is what is expected of every student - not the exception.

College Summit uses a systemic approach combining teacher training, post-secondary planning curriculum and web-based tools, peer leadership and data management that facilitates accountability. Our unique strategy moves the goal post for students from high school graduation to post-secondary success, creating an expectation among school administrators, educators and students that high school is not the end, but a launch pad to the next stage of one's future success.

The College Summit Strategy for Schools

In response, College Summit strengthens schools' capacity to prepare all students for success after high school. Our strategy for schools includes:

- Introducing a college and post-secondary planning course for all seniors.
- Providing educators with professional development to lead the course and support the achievement of all students.
- Training influential students to forge a students-driven college-going culture.
- Using data to manage the school-wide college enrollment progress.

Results and Growth

- College Summit's partner schools have seen a statistically significant increase in college enrollment rates from year to year.
- 79% of College Summit summer workshop participants enroll in college, significantly above the national average for low-income high school graduates.
- To date, College Summit has served more than 35,000 high school students. More than 17,000 seniors will participate in a College Summit class in 2008-09.
- College Summit operates in 10 states, partners with close to 40 school districts and is implemented in 170 high schools nationwide.
- College Summit has trained over 700 teachers and counselors in this use of the Navigator curriculum.

College Summit Student Profile

- 40% African-American, 30% Hispanic or Latino, 20% White, 2% Native-American, 4% Asian-American, 4% Other
- Average High School GPA: 2.8 out of 4.0

CollegeInvest



1560 Broadway, Suite 1700

Denver, CO 80202

Phone: 1-800-448-2424

www.collegeinvest.org

Contact: Misti Ruthven, School Relations Manager

mruthven@collegeinvest.org

CollegeInvest helps Colorado families break down the financial barriers to college. As a division of the Colorado Department of Higher Education, we are Colorado's not-for-profit higher education financing resource. Our Outreach team canvases Colorado giving more than 700 financial aid, scholarship, FAFSA and college savings workshops annually.

Free services and materials offered by CollegeInvest:

- College Savings Workshops
- Early College Planning and CollegeInvest Early Achiever's Scholarship Presentations
- General Scholarship Presentations
- Financial Aid Presentations
- FAFSA Workshops
- Financial Literacy and Debt Management Presentations
- Financial Planning Workbooks for College
- Scholarship Workbooks

CollegeInvest Scholarships - Apply online at www.collegeinvest.org

CollegeInvest Early Achievers Scholarship

Colorado 7th, 8th, or 9th grade students, have the opportunity to apply to become a CollegeInvest Early Achiever with the CollegeInvest Early Achievers Scholarship. If the student graduates from high school with at least a 2.5 cumulative GPA, he/she may qualify for up to \$1,500 per year for up to five years at an eligible Colorado college.

- Apply during 7th, 8th or 9th grade. (Deadline is June 1st of your 9th grade year)
- Graduate from high school with at least a 2.5 weighted cumulative GPA for all coursework completed in grades 9 through 12
- Complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) and be eligible for a Federal Pell Grant prior to June 1st each year that you are enrolled in college
- Apply for your College Opportunity Fund (COF)
- Be accepted for admission and attend an eligible post-secondary institution (see a list of eligible institutions at www.collegeinvest.org)
- Begin attending college at least half time (i.e., at least 6 credit hours per term) within three years of high school graduation
- Be a legal Colorado resident and qualify for in-state resident tuition at the time the scholarship is disbursed

CollegeInvest Opportunity Scholarship

These \$1,000 scholarships are awarded to randomly drawn Colorado students who:

- Attend a two- or four-year Colorado college, university or vocational school in fall 2011
- Are full-time undergraduate students
- Complete the Free Application For Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) and have an Expected Family Contribution (EFC) of \$15,000 or less (FAFSA does not have to be completed prior to registering)

CollegeInvest Service Scholarship

These \$6,000 scholarships are awarded over a two-year period (\$3,000 each year), and will be awarded to randomly drawn Colorado students who:

- Attend a two- or four-year Colorado college, university or vocational school in fall of 2011 and 2012
- Are full-time undergraduate students each year
- Complete the Free Application For Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) and have an Expected Family Contribution (EFC) of \$15,000 or less (FAFSA does not have to be completed prior to registering)
- Commit to 40 hours each year for 2010 and 2011 in a service-to-children volunteer program. Volunteer work may take place at the applicants' college, or any of CollegeInvest's Community Partners qualify as a service site for our Service Scholarship.

College Summit-Colorado



www.collegesummit.org/local/colorado/

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Susan Bross, Executive Director

coinfo@collegesummit.org

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Colorado GEAR UP



www.coloradogearup.com

Colorado GEAR UP

Colorado Department of Higher Education

1560 Broadway Suite 1600

Denver, CO 80202

Ph: 303-866-4032

Fax: 303-866-4266

Contact: Scott Mendelsberg, Executive Director

scott.mendelsberg@dhe.state.co.us

Colorado GEAR UP (Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs) is the state's program to prepare low-income students for college. Now entering the fourth year of its second cycle, 2005-11, the program is funded by the U.S. Department of Education, and managed by the Colorado Department of Higher Education on behalf of the Governor's Office.

GEAR UP's vision is to engage and enable Colorado's low-income and academically needy students and to encourage and support their path to college access and success. Paradoxically (and disproportionately), Colorado's highly educated population includes far too few of Colorado's high school graduates.

- Only 39% of our own graduates proceed directly to college (whether technical, two-year or four-year).
- Only 15% of African American male high school graduates do so.
- Only 9% of Latino male high school graduates do so
- Even so, over 27% of Colorado high school graduates entering college will be required to take remedial classes in math, reading or writing

GEAR UP's mission is to close the Colorado Achievement Gap, as it relates to college admissions and graduation, to prepare all students to meet rigorous expectations and to level the playing field for Colorado's low-income students. Of the 750,000 students attending Colorado Public Schools, some 250,000 qualify for Free or Reduced Lunch. The majority come from families in which no one has ever attended college.

Who qualifies: 2,500 low-income public school students grades 7 – 12 in 8 school districts (Alamosa, Aurora, Colorado Springs, Denver, Mesa County Valley, Lamar, Pueblo 60 & Weld County) who indicate a commitment to academic achievement participate in Colorado GEAR UP.

Goals and Objectives:

- Expand access to education and excellence through partnership efforts with schools and students and their families
- Provide information early to students and parents about college options, required courses and financial aid
- Promote student-oriented educational reforms and improvements
- Develop strategies and activities to increase parental involvement at the secondary level
- Provide intensive, individualized and coordinated support to middle and high school students including mentoring, advising and tutoring

The Daniels Fund Scholarship



www.danielsfund.org

Daniels Fund Scholarship Program
101 Monroe Street
Denver, CO 80206
877-791-4726, 303-393-7220

Contact:

Tracey Lovett
Assistant Vice President, Scholar Selection and Programming
Daniels Fund
101 Monroe Street
Denver, CO 80206
303-393-7220
tlovett@danielsfund.org

The Daniels Scholarship Program

Daniels Scholarships are awarded in the spring to graduating high school seniors from Colorado, New Mexico, Utah, and Wyoming and are supplemental after other federal, state, institutional, and private financial aid and scholarships. Students may use their scholarship at any two- or four-year accredited nonprofit college or university in the United States with an intention to complete a bachelor's degree.

As of spring 2009, more than 1,750 students have been named Daniels Scholars since the program was launched in the year 2000.

To identify candidates for the scholarship, the Daniels Fund partners with youth serving agencies and high schools that nominate candidates. After being nominated, candidates take part in an interview and selection process in the communities in which they live.

In establishing the Daniels Scholarship program, cable pioneer Bill Daniels was seeking promising students with financial need whose academic performance may not necessarily reflect their potential, but who demonstrate strength of character, a well-rounded personality and a record of accomplishment in giving back to the community.

Daniels Scholarships are not full-ride. Instead they cover the unmet needs of the student. The scholarship amount is determined after all other financial aid sources and an Expected Family Contribution have been applied. Scholarships cover all or part of a student's required college expenses (i.e., tuition and fees, room and board, books and supplies, transportation, and miscellaneous educational expenses).

Upon being named Daniels Scholars, students immediately become part of the "Daniels Scholar Success Program," a support system made up of Daniels Fund staff, college and university officials, and members of the community.

The Daniels Scholar Success Program has currently resulted in a 72 percent graduation rate for students in the program. The national average for all students entering college is 57 percent.

Eligibility Criteria

To be eligible to apply for a Daniels Scholarship, students must satisfy all of the following:

- Be nominated by a designated Referral Agency (see www.danielsfund.org for a list).
- Be a current high school student with an expected graduation during the 2009/2010 academic school year from any high school in Colorado, New Mexico, Utah, or Wyoming.
- Be a current resident of Colorado, New Mexico, Utah, or Wyoming.
- At the time of application, be a U.S. citizen, a permanent resident of the U.S., or have refugee or asylum status in the U.S.
- Demonstrate financial need (see “What is Financial Need?”).
- Take the ACT by October 24, 2009 and achieve an exam composite score of 17 or higher, or take the SAT by October 10, 2009 and achieve a combined math and verbal score of 830 or higher.

For more information please visit www.danielsfund.org



INROADS Rocky Mountain Region, Inc.

www.inroads.org

Contact:

Metro Denver:

Charlotte Steele, Manager, csteele@inroads.org

303-967-7328

INROADS is a national career development organization that prepares students of color for professional careers in business, engineering, and computer science, as well as prepares them for corporate and community leadership. INROADS recruits talented ethnic minority students during their senior year in high school, or their first two years of college. Qualified candidates receive in-depth information and training to prepare them for interviews. Candidates then **compete** for multi-year internships with a sponsoring company. INROADS' goal is achieved when the sponsoring company hires the INROADS Intern upon graduation from college. In recent years, 92% of the Colorado graduates who received offers from their INROADS sponsoring company accepted full-time employment with that company.

INROADS Application Criteria:

All Applicants:

Majors in Accounting, Business, Engineering, Finance or Computer Science
Demonstrated Leadership Potential

High School Applicants:

High school senior planning to attend a 4-year college or university
Cumulative grade point average of 3.3 or better—transcript required to verify GPA
ACT Composite score of 20 or better OR SAT score of 800 or better

College Applicants:

Freshman or sophomore at a 4-year college or university
Cumulative grade point average of 2.8 or better—transcript required to verify GPA
Community college transfer admitted to a 4-year college or university

Benefits of Participating in INROADS:

- Direct and immediate access to the corporate world
- A paid multi-year internship with a Fortune 1000 company
- An early start on your career with great potential for a full-time career after college
- Unparalleled networking opportunities with career-minded peers and corporate executives
- Gratifying community involvement
- Year-round professional and personal support, guidance, training and development
- Corporate mentors who take a personal interest
- Additional scholarship opportunities through Corporate Sponsors and INROADS offices

Next Step for Interested Students: Apply on-line at www.INROADS.org

Post Secondary Enrollment Option & Fast Track Program



Colorado Department of Education

<http://www.cde.state.co.us/cdefinance/sfpostsec.htm>

Colorado Department of Education

201 East Colfax Ave

Denver, CO 80203-1799

(303) 866-6652

Contact: Jacquelin Medina

Medina_j@cde.state.co.us

Post Secondary Enrollment Option (PSEO)

What Is It?

Post-secondary enrollment options allow public school juniors and seniors to enroll in courses at Colorado public institutions of higher education. The intent of the program is two-fold: (1) to provide students with opportunities for additional academic challenge and rigor, and (2) to offer an alternative educational setting which may stimulate interest and motivation in learning. Tuition is paid by the student's school district when the courses count toward high school graduation.

Eligibility

Any public school student, including undocumented, enrolled in the 11th or 12th grade and who is not more than 21 years of age may participate. There are no grade or performance requirements except for specific course prerequisites that all students must meet.

Cooperative Agreements

After receiving written notice from a student, the high school (if it hasn't already) develops a cooperative agreement with the institution of higher education selected by the student. This agreement defines which courses will be accepted for high school credit, college credit, or both. It also establishes a protocol for tuition payment.

How To Participate

- *Obtain information:*
School districts are required to provide information to eligible students and their parents about the program. Students should direct inquiries to their counselors or principals.
- *Determine whether the program is appropriate for you:*
Participation will require considerable independence and responsibility. Students should consult their parents, high school counselors, and perhaps other students who have previously done this to decide whether it is an appropriate option at this time.
- *Select courses:*
Students may take any class for which they meet prerequisites and may take one or more courses up to a full-time schedule. They are encouraged to work with their counselors to decide whether desired courses are appropriate and adequately challenging. When selecting courses, students should also keep in mind that (1) only courses that fulfill high school graduation requirements are eligible for tuition

payment from school district funds, and (2) if eligible for high school credit, the grade earned for the college course will be calculated into the high school grade point average.

- *Inform the high school:*

At least two months prior to the beginning of the selected course(s), students must submit written notice to the school district of their desire to enroll at an institution of higher education. It should include a description of all courses a student intends to take and whether or not high school graduation credit is anticipated for each course.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

- *Is the student considered a high school student or college student?*

The student is still enrolled at the high school. Importantly, enrollment in a course is not the same as admission to the institution. The college or university is not required to approve an admission request from the student after high school graduation.

- *May the student participate in activities in the high school and college?*

The student is eligible for all activities at her/his high school of enrollment. However, the college is not obligated to allow the high school student to participate in any of its activities.

- *Does this program include summer school or continuing education programs?*

The program does not apply to students enrolled in an institution of higher education during the summer term or for continuing education courses.

- *Who pays for transportation, books, and student fees?*

Districts are required to cover tuition costs if the course fulfills high school graduation requirements. Tuition does not include transportation, books, and student fees. Although a few districts may absorb these costs, it is usually the student's responsibility.

- *What can I do if credit is denied?*

The high school determines whether each course fulfills high school graduation requirements. If the high school denies credit, it must inform the student in writing of the reasons for denial, to be sent within 10 working days after receiving the student's written notification of intent to enroll. The school must also provide the student with the district appeal procedures and forms. The student may appeal to the local school board and, if denied, s/he may then appeal to the Colorado State Board of Education. The State Board decision will be final.

Fast Track

This program allows a student who fulfills his/her high school graduation requirements to take one or more higher education courses during the twelfth grade year. This program only provides college credit for the student, since the student has already earned all of the high school credits required for graduation. The offering of such a program is voluntary for school districts.

Students remain eligible for all sanctioned high school events, but do not receive any rights or privileges of regularly enrolled college students. School districts receive state support for students participating in the program and colleges also claim FTE funding based on the course credit hours taken by the student. The statute requires the district to pay up to 75 percent of the per pupil operating revenues for higher education tuition.

TRIO



In Colorado, questions may be addressed to:
Ryan Ross, President, Colorado ASPIRE
c/o Talent Search, Community College of Denver
1201 5th Street, Suite 325
P.O. Box 173363
Denver, CO 80217-3363
(303) 629-9226
ryan.ross@ccd.edu

The term “TRIO” was coined in 1968 to describe three federal educational opportunity outreach programs designed to motivate and support students from disadvantaged backgrounds. The first of these programs is **Upward Bound**, which was authorized by the Economic Opportunity Act of 1964 as part of President Johnson’s “War on Poverty.” The second program, **Talent Search**, was created as part of the Higher Education Act of 1965. In 1968, the Higher Education Amendments authorized the third program, Special Services for Disadvantaged Students, which has been renamed **Student Support Services**.

Since the late 1960s, the TRIO programs have been expanded and improved to provide a wider range of services and to reach more students who need assistance. The fourth program, **Educational Opportunity Centers**, was authorized by the Higher Education Amendments of 1972. The 1976 Educational Amendments authorized the **Training Program for Federal TRIO Programs**, initially known as the Training Program for Special Programs Staff and Leadership Personnel. The **Ronald E. McNair Post-Baccalaureate Achievement Program**, the sixth program, was authorized by the 1986 amendment. In 1990, the Department of Education created the **Upward Bound Math/Science** program which is administered under the same regulations as the regular Upward Bound program.

TRIO Programs at a Glance

Talent Search identifies and assists individuals from disadvantaged backgrounds who have the potential to succeed in higher education. The program provides academic, career, and financial aid counseling to its participants and encourages them to graduate from high school and continue on to the post-secondary school of their choice. The program also serves high school dropouts by encouraging them to reenter the educational system and complete their education. **Talent Search programs in Colorado are located at: Arapahoe Community College, Community College of Denver, Colorado State University, The Dream Team in Greeley, and Fort Lewis College.**

Upward Bound provides opportunities for participants to succeed in precollege performance and ultimately in higher education pursuits. The program serves high school students from low-income families in which, neither parent holds a bachelor’s degree, and low-income, first generation military veterans (Veterans’ Upward Bound) who are preparing to enter post-secondary education. Participants receive instruction in literature, composition, foreign language, mathematics and science on college campuses after school, on Saturdays, and during the summer. **Upward Bound programs in Colorado are located at: Adams State College, Colorado State University, Colorado State University-Pueblo, Colorado Mountain College, Fort Lewis College, Mesa State College, Pueblo Community College, Trinidad State Junior College, University of Colorado-Boulder, and University of Colorado-Denver.**

Upward Bound Math/Science seeks to strengthen the math and science skills of participating low-income, first generation potential college students. The goal of the program is to help students recognize and develop their potential to excel in these fields and encourage them to pursue post-secondary degrees in math and

science. **Colorado programs are located at: Trinidad State Junior College and University of Northern Colorado.**

Student Support Services helps students stay in college until they earn their baccalaureate degree. The goal of the program is to increase the college retention and graduation rates of its participants and help students move from one level of higher education to the next. Participants, who include disabled college students, receive tutoring, counseling, and remedial instruction. **Student Support Services programs in Colorado are located at: Arapahoe Community College, Adams State College, Colorado Mountain College, Colorado State University, Colorado State University-Pueblo, Community College of Denver, Fort Lewis College, Lamar Community College, Mesa State College, Northwestern Junior College, Pikes Peak Community College, Pueblo Community College, Trinidad State Junior College, University of Colorado-Boulder, University of Colorado-Denver, and University of Northern Colorado.**

Educational Opportunity Centers provide counseling and information on college admissions to eligible adults who want to enter or continue a program of post-secondary education. An important objective of the program is to counsel participants on financial aid options and to assist in the application process. The goals of the program are to increase the number of adult participants who enroll in post-secondary institutions.

Educational Opportunity Centers are located at: Colorado State University, Colorado State University-Pueblo, and Community College of Denver.

The Ronald E. McNair Post Baccalaureate Achievement Program is designed to prepare participants for doctoral studies through involvement in research and other scholarly activities. Program participants are from disadvantaged backgrounds and have demonstrated strong academic potential. Institutions work closely with these participants through their undergraduate requirements, encourage their entrance into graduate programs, and track their progress to successful completion of advanced degrees. The goal of this program is to increase graduate degree attainment of low-income, first generation college students and individuals from other disadvantaged groups. **Colorado programs are located at: Colorado State University, University of Colorado-Boulder, University of Colorado-Denver, and University of Northern Colorado.**

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT ORGANIZATIONS AND OPPORTUNITIES

“CCHS/CR was very valuable to me in my first five years of admissions. It was important for the network opportunities it afforded me. The workshops as well as the conferences were great opportunities to meet other admissions professionals (I met Directors, Deans, and Vice Presidents my first year) and discuss current and future issues in education. This kind of networking helped me see other state and private schools in an even light and that we are all about the same in the recruiting process (give or take quality and types of programs). I would also recommend that new (counselors) become active in CCHS/CR or RMACAC their first year.” - Deb Vinnola, Regis University

Colorado Council on High School/College Relations (CCHS/CR)

www.coloradocouncil.org

CCHS/CR is a voluntary organization of Colorado high schools and colleges/universities working together to serve our students, the state and the nation. Opportunities for high school and college professionals abound, including the Fall Counselor Updates and the Annual Conference. CCHS/CR publishes an outstanding handbook on Colorado institutions of higher education titled *Colorado Collegiate Handbook*.

President: Vaughn Toland, Metropolitan State College of Denver, tolandva@mscd.edu

Membership: Cost is based on size of high school or college/university. High School costs ranges from \$15 to \$35. College/University cost ranges from \$70-\$90.

National Association for College Admission Counseling (NACAC)

www.nacacnet.org

NACAC is a voluntary association of more than 10,000 high school counselors and college admission professionals from around the United States and the world. Members support and advance the work of counseling and enrollment professionals as they help all students realize their full educational potential, with particular emphasis on the transition to postsecondary education. NACAC is committed to promoting high professional standards that foster ethical and social responsibility.

Membership: \$160 for High School Voting Member; \$285 for College/University Voting Member. For more information on membership, go to www.nacacnet.org/AboutNACAC/Membership/pages/default.aspx

Rocky Mountain Association for College Admission Counseling (RMACAC)

www.rmacac.org

RMACAC is a regional affiliate of NACAC, working to promote NACAC's objectives and goals on a regional level. Participating states include Arizona, Colorado, New Mexico, Utah, and Wyoming.

President: Cathy Nabbefeld, Colorado Academy, cathynabbefeld@coloradoacademy.org

Membership: \$25 per member for High Schools and Colleges/Universities

Colorado School Counseling Association (CSCA)

www.coloradoschoolcounselor.org

CSCA represents over 1,500 school counselors at all levels in Colorado. Its purpose is to serve its members and the public through programs that advance guidance and counseling in all school work settings: elementary, middle/junior high, high school, and post-secondary.

President: Tammy Dodson, Grandview High School, tdodson@cherycreekschools.org

Membership: \$75 for licensed school counselor

Professional Development Opportunities for 2009-10

As the Professional Development Committee, we feel strongly that opportunities for networking and furthering our knowledge base are invaluable. We encourage you to take advantage of as many of the below workshops as your time and budget allows.

“Keeping the Options Open” KOO I Workshop

June 2010

Location: Regis University, Denver

The KOO Workshop is a graduate-level course for high school counselors, covering the many aspects of college counseling.

Contact: Amy Belstra, KOO Coordinator, abelstra@cherrycreekschools.org, (720) 554-2340

“Keeping the Options Open” KOO II Workshop

June 2010

Location: Regis University, Denver

KOO II is for experienced high school counselors and/or KOO alumni, covering advanced college counseling topics. Graduate credit is offered.

Contact: Amy Belstra, KOO Coordinator, abelstra@cherrycreekschools.org

College Fairs of Greater Denver, Inc.

College Fair and Workshops

October 10, 2009, 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

Location: Cherry Creek High School

Over 250 college representatives attend this college fair. As well, workshops are provided on a variety of topics by experienced admission professionals and others.

Contact: www.collegefairsdenver.org

College Board

- Fall Counselor Workshop, October 1, 2009, University of Denver
- Western Regional Annual Meeting, February 27-28, 2010, San Diego, CA
- 2009 National Forum, October 21-23, 2009, New York, NY

For more information on these and other College Board workshops:

<http://professionals.collegeboard.com/prof-dev>

ACT

Colorado ACT State Organization Annual Conference, September 11, 2009, Sheraton Denver West, Lakewood, CO

Contact: West Region/Denver Field Office, 303-337-3273

Colorado School Counselor Association

Annual Fall Conference, November 19-20, 2009, Four Points Sheraton Hotel, Denver Southeast

For more information: <http://www.coloradoschoolcounselor.org/csca.home/Conference.html>

National Association for College Admission Counseling (NACAC)

Annual Conference, September 24-26, 2009, Baltimore, MD

For more information: www.nacacnet.org

Rocky Mountain Association for College Admission Counseling (RMACAC)

Annual Conference, April 2010, Phoenix, AZ

For more information: www.rmacac.org

Colorado Council on High School/College Relations (CCHS/CR)

Annual Meeting, December 3-4, 2009, Hyatt Regency, Denver Tech Center

For more information: www.coloradocouncil.org/annual_conference.htm

MORE TIPS FROM YOUR COLORADO COLLEAGUES

For Admission Counselors:

“I think it is important for admissions folks to know a little bit about the different colleges we have in Colorado. When I’m on the road out of state, I often get questions about other schools and wish I would have been more equipped to answer those basic questions.” - Karlen Suga, Colorado State University

“New counselors should understand: the nuts and bolts of the application process for their own school as well as a general understanding of the application process throughout the state; a complete understanding of Early Action, Early Decision, and rolling admission terms; financial aid, along with Boettcher, Daniels and COF is extremely important if traveling in Colorado. The Colorado Collegiate Handbook is, to this day, one of the most valuable resources I have, since it includes each school in the state and their majors, programs and activities. I would encourage everyone to get one and use it.

It would have been really helpful to have a good state map and specific directions to schools. Most of mine indicated to look for a water tower or grain elevator. It would also have been helpful to learn time management—not the kind on how to juggle appointments, but the kind on how to do laundry while in between trips and how to see family and friends. I struggled with how to get phone calls and paperwork completed while still trying to find time to drive between appointments. I think it’s very important to understand the time spent alone and the dietary “issues” that go along with traveling. Dinner at 9 p.m. and hotel coffee and an Altoid mint for breakfast, for example. I was very lucky to have had Colorado travel with good people who became friends, but out of state, there was no “support group” and I struggled to make those connections. Everyone should join their regional ACAC groups and any other regional/ state organizations for updates on what is important in those areas.” - Deb Vinnola, Regis University

“I was once the Director of Admissions at a community college before I began working in the counseling office in secondary ed. There were several things that I became aware of once I began working in a HS, that I was oblivious to as admissions personnel: 1)Make friends with the secretaries—they make things happen and know the kids well, 2)HS Counselors multi task on multiple levels, 3)If you can help a counselor with his/ her responsibilities, you’re more than likely to access more kids, e.g. help them complete FAFSA’s and admissions apps (not just a presentation-help them complete it).” - Maria de la Cruz, Counselor at John Mall Jr/Sr High School

From Andy Losier, University of Denver:

The High School Visit & College Fair

- Plan ahead for fall travel. Have your ideal schedule arranged in June, and begin calling/ mailing by late July. Even if counselors are out for the summer, yours will be the first voicemail they return in August. If you are new on the job in June or July and have an unfamiliar territory, talk to your boss (or counselor who previously held your territory) about what’s worth visiting and what’s not.
- Play-up the “newbie” factor when scheduling visits with counselors your first year; while some may be disappointed to have *another* new counselor visiting their school, I found most to be helpful with the scheduling visits (i.e., telling me of nearby schools so I could plot out my days better.)
- Personalize visits whenever possible; find out something about the high school, counselor or area you’re visiting. “Nice”, “Perky”, and “PC” are great... but alone do not show the genuineness needed to build a relationship.
- Ask counselors or students for one piece of information—critical to the High School—you want to remember when reviewing files; much like finding that piece for the students, I have found it helpful to remember something particular about the high school.

- Dress appropriately. You are no longer the student; you are the adult and will often be meeting with other adults (counselors, parents). Remember that College Admission is a small, tight-knit community; as such, people in that community gossip. Don't be the one they are gossiping about.
- Just because your boss isn't standing next to you at your visit or fair, doesn't mean somebody else's boss is. There's a good chance that boss might know yours, so always be courteous, professional and polite. You may be getting reviewed for your current (or next) job without even knowing it.

Traveling:

- Don't leave your luggage in the car—if at all possible. Even the trunk! I one time had my briefcase stolen and a colleague had her laptop and iPod stolen from the trunk of our rental car.
- Get recommendations from your office and colleagues at rookie camp about which hotels to use, what airline is best for your territories. You'll learn to love those points! I've had friends who have paid for an entire vacation in Europe with these points.
- Determine if you would rather:
 - Stay in one central location for an entire week of visits and fairs (many college reps prefer this, even if it means more time in the car. It's really nice to hang your clothes in the closet, set up your laptop... make your home away from home.
 - Travel to two-three hotels that are closer to your morning visits throughout the week.
- Many of my female colleagues request a room on the 2nd or above floor of the hotel. Use common sense.

Professional Development

- Find a mentor; someone outside of your office with at least five years experience, and trustworthy. Ask questions, bounce ideas off of them, let them motivate you.
- Get involved & volunteer with your regional ACAC or state organization. This is a great way to build relationship, gain visibility and network.
- Attend conferences, and don't skip out on the sessions! There's a lot of value experience being shared, from which you can benefit! In a few years, you'll be the one presenting.
- Enjoy the conference social. Get to know some of your colleagues on a more personal basis. Remember, however, that this is not the place to take advantage of the open bar! Again, your boss (or future boss) will not be impressed if you're slurring your words while you converse.

For High School Counselors:

“So much of the college hype is only pertinent to a small fraction of the general population. It is so important to first get a sense of the population you are working with: percent of First Generation? Percent of free/ reduced lunch? Conservative community? High rate of students interested in Christian-based colleges or BYU? The whole hype about Early Decision, getting into the Ivies, etc, may not really apply to your students, so taking some time to identify needs in a general sense is important. How sophisticated are your parents/ students about the whole college process? What myths do you need to address? What are the most common roadblocks that your students are facing?” - Kathryn Fruh, Doherty High School, Colorado Springs

“Suggestions: Hold a Senior Seminar where students can work on career and college planning. Teach it, it is worth your time! Provide opportunities for Financial Aid Night, FAFSA Night, College Fairs. Find a way to communicate with parents about college and scholarship opportunities. I do a Senior Newsletter...I mail it home and I have senior mailboxes. Then they can't say they didn't know.” - Shirelle Bandy, Limon School Counselor

“After I researched the characteristics of poverty communities, it helped me to understand the students more. I was actually raised in a poverty community and grew up as part of a low-income, minority family. However, I had never had the characteristics of this population laid out for me. When I read about mindsets and tendencies, I thought, “Yeah, that's exactly how it is.” Yet, knowing something through experiences is very different than looking at it in black and white. This concrete form helped me to establish methods to better serve communities. I also believe that this is a valuable tool for folks who do not come from these backgrounds.” - Maria de la Cruz, John Mall Jr/Sr High School, Walsenburg

“It is really difficult to talk to students about academic fit. They all want to go to CU or CSU, regardless. I made an overhead of the Admissions Index matrix and colored in three bands of scores to represent the selective, moderately selective and open admission school scores. I made sure to have available the average AI score for all Colorado schools, the score equivalents for Nebraska and Wyoming schools my students often attend, and NCAA recruiting info regarding GPAs from core courses only. I have all seniors in my Life Skills CTE class, so my audience was captive. Without using names, I refigured a couple of top athletes' GPAs on the board and ‘discovered’ their Admissions Index scores on the overhead. I also ‘discovered’ the AI scores of the top two students, a couple in the middle and a couple from the bottom end of the class. Then we plotted the student AI scores on the colored AI matrix. I had tried several times to explain ‘academic fit’ and, of course, got nowhere. The sound of light bulbs going off was deafening after we got done with this activity. 20 minutes of ‘show’ beat the bejeebers out of a couple of hours of ‘tell.’ I had the seniors write one paragraph telling me the relevance to the student of this activity (what the info meant to them) and then picked the clearest & cleanest paragraphs to use with the freshmen to talk about scheduling, course selection and athletic scholarships. It is best to have the seniors do the freshman presentation- nothing like first-hand witnesses!

Scholarships are a big deal in my community. The first thing I did was get every senior's email address and as many parent email addresses as I could. I send something at least every 10-14 days: sometimes a FastWeb newsletter, sometimes an article from a Denver paper, sometimes an article by Michelle Singletary, Washington Post Financial Columnist, and an excel chart I made with the name of the scholarship, the deadline, any special criteria, and a live link to the application internet site. I update the chart periodically, depending on how many snail- and e-mails I receive. I sort them by deadline and only include those scholarships or grants whose deadlines are not passed. I keep two notebooks with the hard copies of scholarship announcements or emails I receive. I copy all emails to my principal and the chart to the secretary responsible for the high school's weekly newsletter. I have aimed for transparency regarding notice and procedures for all scholarships. It has been gratifying for my principal to tell me that she hears in the community that there are lots of scholarships for students to apply for and that they (the townspeople) are glad to know what's going on. I think the key has been copying parents on the emails. They know what their student knows and the process is not my little secret.” - Barbara Gorman, Haxtun High School

“I attended an SAT college counselor workshop for one week the summer before I started college counseling, and it made a HUGE difference in what I did. Attend updates and meet with college admissions representatives and get their feedback, so you are telling students current information. I make sure I visit at least 3 or more colleges each year, so I stay current.” - Gayle Dudley, Steamboat Springs High School

“The KOO Conference was the best thing I did. Every new counselor should attend. It covered everything I needed and then some.”
- Linda Anson, Fort Collins High School

“It is helpful to have a better understanding of specific major areas of study to which my students aspire. Each college/ major area has specific requirements over and above general education requirements. As it happens, I have dual roles as high school director/ counselor and university instructor. I counsel students on both sides of high school graduation. I can see the results of wishful thinking in college undergrads based on ineffective pre-college counseling in high school. Reality bites and sometimes it bites hard if students do not have an accurate picture of what their area of study actually entails.” - Linda Rittner, Pleasant Hill Academy, Longmont