

Get involved

Do you love helping others? Can't pass up getting involved for a good cause? Even though you may not expect anything in return for your volunteering efforts, there are colleges, companies and organizations that will reward you for your community involvement.

Going beyond high school or college groups

High schools and colleges offer plenty of opportunities to participate in extracurricular activities. But the extracurriculars at school aren't the only ones that count. Consider taking on classes outside of school, like joining a performing arts group or a dance company.

NON-SCHOOL RELATED:

Volunteer

Better yet, if you can volunteer in an area that is related to your intended major. Not only are you giving back to the community but

you also are gaining experience in a subject that is important to you and possibly a future career! For instance, if you plan to study nursing in college, you could volunteer at your local hospital. Or if you want to be a teacher, volunteer in an afterschool program or at a daycare center.

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES:

Show commitment

It's important to show continual commitment to at least one activity. Having a list of dozens of extracurricular activities during your senior year of high school isn't as fulfilling as having one or two activities that you have shown a continual commitment to. Plus, many scholarships—both from the institution or private sources—are available for students who participate in certain extracurricular activities! Sure giving back and getting involved in your community feel great! But they have their advantages, too!

Ways to highlight your extracurricular activities to get an edge

- Discuss one of your activities in your admissions essay
- Include a list of activities and highlight leadership positions and accomplishments on your résumé
- If an extracurricular opportunity you are interested in doesn't exist at school, create it yourself.

Excerpted from an article by Elaina Loveland, author of Creative Colleges: A Guide for Student Actors, Artists, Dancers, Musicians.

