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SURVEY SAYS! Why do we ask for your input?

You may have received a survey from LINK for Counselors electronically over the past few years. After each issue is published, we survey a select number of our readers to determine which articles were of most interest, how long you spent reading that issue, do you pass it along to

other counselors, etc. Why do we ask for this feedback? This information helps us determine content for future issues that will be of value and helps us plan all our upcoming subject matter. It also gives us valuable data to share with our advertisers/potential advertisers who allow for us to send this magazine at no charge to you. In fact, everything we provide to Counselors is entirely free. That is one of our credos!

Recently we had Signet Research survey readers of our Fall 2020 issue. We received some great feedback and ideas for future issues. One interesting tidbit was that each reader passes their issue on to an average of 1.7 other Counselors, which extrapolates to a readership of more than 108,000 readers in print and digitally. We also were able to add a couple of great articles to this issue based on survey feedback. So, for all that took part in the survey, we appreciate you! One lucky reader won a \$100 Amazon gift card just for participating. See who the lucky winner is at the bottom of this page.

We hope you enjoy the content of this issue and look forward to any feedback we receive when conducting our Spring survey or directly from you. We will begin planning our content for the 2021-2022 school year over the next few months. If you have any other ideas on what you would like to see in the magazine or would like to contribute something, please send me an e-mail at the address below.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jason Bullock".

Jason Bullock, CBC

Publisher

Jason@linkforcounselors.com

The winner of a \$100 Amazon gift card for taking our Fall Signet Research Study was Mike Lipka, (pictured at right), Agoura High School, Agoura Hills, California. Congratulations, Mike!





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The 2020 Pandemic: How The Good, The Bad, and The Ugly Sparked Cooperation

By *Connie Voss*

Do you remember those first days when COVID-19 reared its head?

In early March 2020, a shift to distance learning was already taking shape and we asked Dr. Christy Conley to keep a journal of how the virus and resulting lockdowns affected students at North Oconee High School (NOHS) in Georgia where she is the Lead School Counselor.

not available? During the quarantine, stores, and coffee shops with WiFi were closed, how could we help students gain access to their classes?"

In addition, the emotional needs of the students were vital and were also supported by the school. Christy and her team wanted to make sure that students had emotional support and still felt connected to the school. Were students lonely?




From left to right: Christy Conley, Jodie Anderson, Katie Wood, Mackenzie Molter.

Like all schools, remote or distance learning was being utilized on a small scale, but almost overnight, classroom teaching was non-existent and remote learning was front and center. Christy recalls their first level of care was to ensure that the basic needs of NOHS students were being met. She said, we asked ourselves these questions: Did our students have food, shelter, WiFi, and an awareness of resources? Were they safe? Could we provide home visits while everyone is being advised to quarantine? How could we reach NOHS students who reside in rural areas where WiFi is spotty or

Did they have to take care of their younger siblings while their parents were working?

There was a lot to consider and the list of questions grew longer, but much good can come from even the most trying of situations. Here are the good, the bad, and the ugly from how one school has handled COVID-19.

THE GOOD: The pandemic created a collaboration and connection among counselors.



Like many of us, Christy says this situation forced her to quickly advance her technological skills. She began to follow groups that helped her including the High School Counselor Network, ACCEPT, the Georgia School Counselor Association (GSCA), the American School Counselor Association (ASCA), and others. She said the nationwide pandemic brought counselors from across the country together as they posted resources and created videos to help their fellow counselors think through the forced situation and outside the box. She added, “Many of us were contemplating how to continue to efficiently work and check things off our end-of-the-school year list while engaging our students.”

Numerous questions and ideas were generated and seeing the collaborations and connections forming among professionals was a positive result of the circumstances as teachers, staff, and counselors exchanged ideas and shared fears as well as information on common problems and solutions.

“Our families tend to be very private about their needs and they did not want to reach out for help,” said Christy. “We had to be sensitive regarding privacy while at the same time, we needed to determine who was in need and how we could provide support without being pushy or ‘all-knowing.’”

She continued, “Luckily, our district had many things in place that helped with our transition to a virtual learning environment. We were already 1:1 with district-provided Chromebooks for all students. While all students had devices, the issue was access to WiFi. Our school system created free WiFi points in school parking lots and some businesses offered unlimited data or discounted WiFi prices. Another issue was food insecurity, although our county is an affluent one. There are still pockets of poverty and with the pandemic, some parents experienced reduced income. Our district was granted a waiver by the Georgia Department of Education to provide free breakfast and lunch to any individual up to the age of 18 - whether they were enrolled in our system or not. There were no income restrictions or paperwork required. Our school buses became delivery trucks. Our school nutrition staff served over 72,000 meals during the closure. We also worked to provide ‘in-person’ opportunities from a distance. For example, our school’s speech therapist conducted lessons from her car in the school parking lot!”

THE BAD: “My heart hurt when students did not get to experience milestone moments in the traditional setting.”

The stress of “what shall we do” was felt by

everyone during the spring and summer. Honors night, spring sports, graduation, and summer programs were cancelled or adjusted. Many seniors were devastated, and their parents were unsure of how to compensate for their kids missing out on the typical experiences, i.e. graduation exercises, parties, and memories that are milestone moments in a student’s lives. Many felt “robbed” of the moments that their older siblings received, as well as the pride of showing off their achievements - like being the first in their family to graduate, graduating with honors, or receiving special recognition for various achievements. Milestone moments that would spark memories for decades to come were on hold. The entire community was hurting and being a sports-loving community, the lack of activities was difficult.

Although the school held a virtual honors night and hosted an online signing event for seniors, they missed out on showcasing their talents in local and national competitions. Those events are often used to leverage scholarships. It was also around this time when mental health issues became front and center. Christy recalls, “We had some students that completely shut down while some went into overdrive trying to access and participate in all of the online opportunities they could find. And, the large in-between group simply floundered. As a counselor and parent, it was difficult to figure out who fell where on the spectrum. How do you decide what student to push to increase activity and engagement, what student our office needed to provide tips on how to relax, and how do we get them back on their right road?”

Despite the difficulties, students pushed through and their patience was rewarded. An in-person graduation ceremony was held outside in the school’s football stadium in July. Students were socially distanced and safety measures were in place. Seeing each other in person and throwing their caps into the air helped seniors - and their parents - have the closure they had been seeking.

THE UGLY: “Family dynamics changed. Some families were on an emotional rollercoaster.”

Increased stress levels and COVID-19 case levels compounded an already stressful situation, and it began to take a toll on old and young alike. In some cases, older kids became caretakers of younger siblings. Parental supervision ranged from hands-off to hyper-vigilant - and everything in between. Nationwide concerns about child and spousal abuse were rising. “Even though our community was not deemed a ‘hot spot’ for the virus, many families are transplants and were

worried about relatives in ‘hot spot’ areas,” Christy noted in her journal. “Our staff wondered if some had the virus and were too embarrassed to disclose it. We had several students who lost loved ones and felt guilty because they were not allowed to visit during the last hours of their lives. And, because funerals were not held, there was no defined ‘closure’ for families. For these children, we offered grief counseling to allow them a safe space to navigate an emotional situation.”

Economic issues added to family stress. Many parents who had previously worked outside the home were now contained in the home 24/7 along with other family members. Computer time became a premium. Maintaining one’s professionalism while video conferencing from the kitchen table with screaming kids and barking dogs in the background was often contrary to the image they wanted to project to co-workers and clients. Lots of stressors became apparent.

In an effort to provide support for families and staff when the students moved to a virtual format, the counseling office created a NOHS resource guide. Virtual check-ins were scheduled, and information was sent out in a variety of ways. In an effort to highlight our seniors and provide them with “their moment to shine” a senior spotlight initiative was created on Instagram. Each senior was highlighted individually, and their personal statements were included in the spotlight. In an attempt to lighten the mood for our teachers, we passed along Tulane University’s Work From Home playlist and tried to promote a variety of ways to advocate for them to have moments of self-care. The counseling office also tried to support the students that were weighing heavily on their hearts and minds and kept communication open between teachers and students. Although we are back face to face with a small pocket of students participating in virtual learning, we are continuously trying to find ways to support our teachers and students. We have recently offered self-care bingo to our faculty and students. Both parties have enjoyed the activities and it has sparked meaningful conversations and helped to cultivate relationships in this time of “distance”.

Revelations revealed.

Christy explained that with the sudden blurring between home and school, it was difficult to set expectations and create new norms.

The school setting itself is designed to have a psychological effect on students. It is communal and helps students know they are not alone. It places students in an environment where certain behavior is expected and required. There is

interaction between administration, staff, teachers, and students. It also serves as an introduction to the community where students of all beliefs, economic situations, and more come to represent and form the community.

School is also a place where students can feel respected as valued participants. It is an institution that supports learning and also offers recognition for merits and talents. Through sports and other competitions, schools invoke a pride of belonging with support for and from the community. It is also an environment of consistency with stated policies and procedures. Obviously, life at school is meant to be different than life at home. But, due to the virus quarantine, the two were suddenly intermingled with no clear and stated rules or boundaries.

Christy recorded how information in their district was shared as the community awaited information about when there may once again be a sense of normalcy. She explained, “The superintendent’s cabinet and several committees formed to make suggestions on how to handle the school during the final months of Spring 2020. Much was dependent upon state government official rulings including county-by-county authorities’ varying rules. Families anxiously waited for our plans to be released. In July, the school system announced that we were slated to return in-person with an option for students to participate in an online program.”

Ninety percent of NOHS students returned for face-to-face education on August 5, 2020. Things went better than expected. Seeing success on the horizon, surrounding school districts also began to implement a process for their students to return to face-to-face learning as well.

Challenges going forward.

Consistency is a key factor during teenage years when social judgement and decision-making skills are being formed. Reading peers’ expressions and body language is an essential part of this growth and maturity pattern. Studies show that emotional support from families and teachers negates stress, and that teens with emotional support from their families are less likely to become depressed. But consistency was turned on its ear when COVID struck. So, we asked Christy, what she foresaw as future positives and negatives as a result of the quarantine and its accompanying period of uncertainty.

She replied, “I see many facets of how this could shape our students moving forward. I believe there will be a resiliency to their group that has

been created by living this experience but I also think they will be indifferent for a time regarding things that they used to view with importance and become focused on discovering the truth in regards to our medical, educational, and political systems. They may now pay more attention to what is going on in our nation and how to move forward as a school, community, and country.”

She also described some of the challenges. “We are seeing some students who are not as social as they were before and it’s difficult for new kids to make friends, especially with everyone wearing masks. Plus, we have noticed that many of our seniors are not following the normal college process for fear a shutdown will happen again. The attitude is, ‘Why get excited only to be disappointed?’ We are making a concerted effort to thwart these tendencies and help them think through their post-graduation plans.”

She continued, “As educators, we are trying to navigate numerous situations to help students catch up academically and help them transition back to school. We also want to help them work through where they are emotionally, especially with all the continued uncertainty surrounding the virus. We must also maintain professionalism during such a tumultuous time. 2020 has turned

out to be quite the year - and spring will bring new challenges. Our community will come together, as it has in the past, and help provide the best possible experiences for our students.”

About Christy Payne Conley...she is currently the Lead School Counselor for North Oconee High School in Georgia. She received her BA in Psychology from The University of Georgia, earned her Master of Education in School Counseling from Columbus State University, and was awarded her Doctorate in Education, Counseling Psychology from Argosy University. She is married. She and her husband have three children plus two fishes (named Bubbles and Annabelle). NOHS has approximately 1500 students serving grades 9 through 12 with a 98.2% graduation rate and is ranked in the top 4% of schools nationally. NOHS is located in Bogart, GA about 10 miles from Athens, GA and 50 miles from Atlanta, GA.

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



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Counseling, the job is changing.

**Here are some
tips that can help!**

by Jim Paterson

A high school counselor's responsibility for helping students on their pathway to higher education is likely something they find rewarding – but challenging. The combination of a growing number of college-bound students, the complexity of the ever-changing application and financial aid process, and a lack of training in the process complicate the work—and this year doubly so.

Hiring additional counselors to decrease a caseload that averages over 450 students nationwide would help, as would more training in college. However, neither of those options seems likely to happen right away. The counselor caseload is dropping, on average, but slowly, and college and school budgets make it unlikely there will be big future investments in more counselors or training. And college counseling programs focus on the other growing responsibilities for counselors—one report showing that a third of high school counselors got no instruction on the college admission process.

It all means that high school counselors with the key responsibility of helping their students take this critical step into higher ed often must educate themselves, be creative in their approach, and use their time very wisely. Tara Nicola, a doctoral student at the Harvard Graduate School of Education who has written about the issue, notes that the job perhaps has never been more important – and never been more challenging. She has chronicled the lack of training in post-secondary work and the inadequate opportunities for professional development, concluding that “counseling professionals simply aren’t equipped to effectively assist students with their college planning”.

Beyond that, Jennifer Mandel, director of the college counseling program in the UCLA Education Department, says the COVID-19 pandemic has made the job of students applying for college more complex—meaning they will need more support. Meanwhile, counselors have not been supplied complete or accurate information—especially about thorny issues related to testing and whether it will be optional at many schools.

“COVID-19 has touched virtually every industry both in the United States and around the world, and the college application process in the U.S. is no different. The admissions process this year looks very different for the class of 2021, and the classes of 2022 and 2023 will likely also feel some of the effects of the pandemic,” she says. “Despite the adjustments that high school counselors and advisors have had to make this application season, there are some very new and interesting aspects to the admissions process.”

Information is key

Given the lack of training and in-service opportunities, Nicola says counselors have to



be deliberate about finding good sources of information about the college admissions process—and information that is up-to-date since their work procedures are changing during this period.



“This year is especially difficult as counselors need to keep track of all the different deadlines with so many of them shifting, Nicola says.” She is particularly concerned about first-generation students, who often need more support and may not have access to information.

Counselors should find information sources that are reliable including the American School Counselor Association (which offers a college admissions specialist training course online), Fiske Interactive, Naviance, the Common App (which has Virtual Counselor and Explore Colleges pages), and the National Association for College Admissions Counseling, with its Knowledge Center offering tips and up-to-date info.

Getting that information out is also important and having an accessible platform for it, so that students and parents are familiar with it to save counselors from endless calls or student visitors asking the same questions repeatedly. Social media is also very helpful, and counselors should strive to have easy ways to connect to students in families who are planning to do postsecondary work.

Maintain an easy-to-use website, update it frequently and train students and families to go there for the latest information. Alicia Oglesby, director of school and college counseling at Bishop McNamara High School in Forestville, MD, says that she finds students need to be reminded about key information, deadlines, and other dates. “Students don’t remember when they wake up that

they have a college visit at 2 p.m.,” she says “We send reminders 15 to 30 minutes prior. She notes that may be even more important when students are learning virtually. “We have seen many students attend events when we send reminders with a link at the last minute.”

She says in a virtual setting she has also kept open hours and maintains one terminal or device devoted to students who then have a link to “pop in” online to ask a question or seek advice. “We actually miss students being able to walk by our office and ask a question we’ve already answered. It’s the nature of working with teenagers.” She and her staff also create videos with the information they send out in emails and post them online. “We link those videos along with text in away messages for students to receive instantly when they email us. We highlight and put the links in all caps in our emails. And we send push notifications to students’ phones with the same information so students do not have to search to find where they can request transcripts or how their teacher letters of recommendation are sent to colleges. We reiterate this information over and over in multiple places.”

Enlist others

Nicola encourages counselors to get help from others in their building. “Making sure that students are college-ready and that they and their families have the information and tools needed to successfully complete the admission and financial aid processes, an important responsibility of counselors, but that large task need not fall only on their shoulders,” she says. “It truly takes a village to prepare students. Other key stakeholders in schools have important roles to play as well.” She says, for example, English teachers can work with students on their personal statements, or math teachers can assist with “unpacking” the FAFSA. “A particularly important stakeholder is the school principal who can work with counselors to institute school-wide policies that would promote a college-going culture,” she notes. “For example, they can require students submit the FAFSA or at least one college application whether to a community college or a four-year institution in order to graduate.” Nicola says counselors should see themselves as a leader of a school-wide effort to get students to consider higher education and should create a school culture where everyone is participating.

Outside of the school, some experts suggest that counselors enlist the help of parents either in putting on events or providing their expertise about a specific college or the experience.

For instance, parent volunteers can be enlisted to help with a FAFSA workshop or college fair, but

might also come to speak about their experience at a specific school. Alumni can also be used to talk about their experience.



Virtual benefits

Mandel says that because of the restrictions from the pandemic, colleges have focused on their virtual presence, meaning students can gather more extensive information online—more easily.

She notes that colleges and universities have redesigned their admission websites to include a robust virtual experience with better quality online campus tours, and they have set up virtual admissions information sessions and even one-on-one opportunities to connect with admissions officials via online platforms like Zoom. “It’s never been easier for school counselors to take advantage of learning about the 3,500 colleges and universities in the country, and I know the admissions officers welcome the chance to connect with counselors.”

Students also may have fewer distractions and be more focused if they are learning virtually, but some experts say that they also may be suffering from “zoom fatigue.” Counselors should try to find ways to safely touch base in person if possible.

Jim Paterson has written broadly on career exploration, academic success and other education related topics for several national and trade publications. He was a school counselor and was formerly named “Counselor of the Year” in Montgomery County, MD, a large Washington, DC—area district. He is currently a writer for many education publications and websites, based in Lewes, Delaware.

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Technology Transformation: From Avoidance to Advocacy

*By: Angela Cleveland,
MSEd, MEd, MA*

What did you want to be when you grew up? As a child, did you dream of being an astronaut, a doctor, or a teacher? How closely does your childhood dream connect with your current career?

As a child, I knew I wanted to help others, and I wanted to achieve that goal by being a hand model. Yup, a hand model! I watched commercials and perused advertisements, fascinated by the way people used their hands to highlight how to use a product and make something mundane, like toothpaste or dishwashing soap, look exciting and inviting. I practiced for years, imitating the hand placement and gestures of people on commercials. I'm sure it must have looked odd, but I was pretty confident that this was exactly how you were supposed to use products since I saw lots of commercials where someone would put down a product and do a little hand flourish.

As I moved into middle school, I realized that technology tools like photoshop meant that my carefully honed hand skills as a 10-year-old could easily be replaced or edited. I reflected on what I loved about being a hand model, and the mission of sharing a story of how a product helped someone resonated with me. The goals are easily connected with my love of literature and my favorite place - the local library. I dreamed of helping people to understand their stories and life experiences but also to connect to others' stories and experiences. My career aspirations shifted to being a librarian. I practiced wearing a bun, placed my toys around me, and sat in a chair and read to them wearing fake reading glasses. I used my fancy hand flourishes to highlight pictures in the book!

When I entered high school and college, I soon learned that my childhood experience with librarians did not reflect the evolving role of this profession. School librarians were called

"Media Specialists," and my favorite memories of my fingers dancing across the card catalog were replaced with heavy desktop computers and the clack of a keyboard. Once more, I felt like technology usurped my dreams. I needed to rethink my career aspirations yet again.

I reflected on my goals to help others and on the vulnerability in the power of story-sharing. I realized that I could follow my career goals AND I would not need to use technology if I pursued a career as a school counselor. I felt like I finally landed in the right spot. I dove into school counseling and loved the work I was doing with my students, but I soon faced some professional challenges that made me question how I could continue to meet the needs of my students.

Challenges:

- I had no budget for classroom curriculum! Many lessons were too expensive, and even when I purchased them, I still had to modify them to meet the needs of my students!
- Data Collection?! I wasn't a math major, and my students, teachers, or families didn't want to fill out boring surveys! How could I engage folks to respond to questions to inform my program?
- Another week of late nights and weekends spent doing paperwork! How could I be more efficient and address the paperwork avalanche more effectively? I loved working directly with students, but I procrastinated on my paperwork, and it seemed to always feel like a dark cloud looming over me.
- Budget cuts? Again?! Few decision-makers know what we do as school counselors, and our department was repeatedly at the top of the

position layoff list. How can I let others know about the critical role school counselors have in the K-12 ecosystem?

■ Where can I find and collaborate with other school counselors quickly, easily, and at no cost? I also need some free resources and ideas for bulletin boards and lessons. Where do I find my community of support?

I had spent most of my life avoiding technology, but I was motivated to solve these professional challenges and suspected that shifting my mindset to be more open to using EdTech might provide some solutions. I saw some fun, flashy tech tools the teachers in my district were using, but I felt overwhelmed at the thought of trying to figure out how to fit these tools into my program. My district offered technology training professional development, but everything was geared toward classroom teachers.

A design-thinking approach and considering the needs of my students and my own self-care framed my technology exploration. I thought about what would work best for my students and how my own skill sets, abilities, and time to invest in self-paced learning aligned with these tools.

I used the challenges listed above to inform and guide my exploration. I made efforts to be intentional and strategic about the tools I was going to use. I was guided by the challenges I faced and the solutions I needed to find.

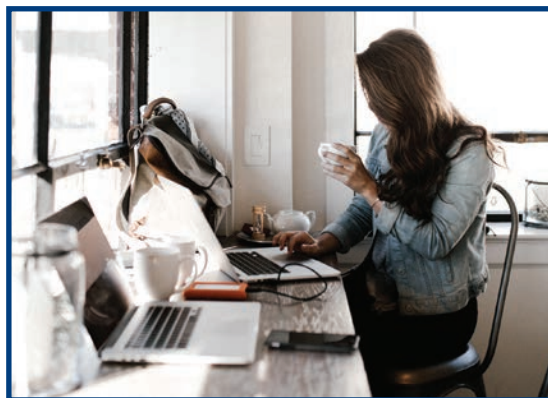
■ For classroom lessons, I did not have the time or money to invest in building out my own content. I turned to Nearpod where I found free lessons I could use asynchronously, synchronously, in a virtual setting, or in person. Reputable partners like Common Sense Media and Teaching Tolerance offer free, differentiated content. I could even upload my own slides and add engagement tools! Instead of scouring YouTube for video clips that highlight concepts, like conflict resolution strategies, I was able to search the Nearpod library by grade level, state standards, and type of content.

■ I needed engaging data collection strategies I could use in-person, virtually, or in a blended model. My students, families, and staff were “surveyed out.” I discovered Mentimeter, which helped me to embed fun, formative data collection tools in my lessons and meetings.

■ I struggled with completing paperwork and following up on tasks until I discovered the G Suite, all of the free tools Google offers from slides, sheets, forms, calendars, and more. It made

my job so much easier! Instead of working from stacks of paper and worrying about losing items or forgetting tasks, I used reminders on my calendar and linked it to documents I was working from. I discovered a series of formulas for my Google Sheets that helped analyze data immediately.

■ Each year, the administrators and other key decision-makers wondered if the counseling department should cut positions. I soon realized this was because they often did not actually know what the current role is of school counselors in a K-12 setting. When I was in school, the counselors simply maintained attendance and managed the course scheduling process. Today, the role of school counselors is completely different and is more focused on the holistic well-being of students. This includes academic achievement strategies, managing emotions and applying interpersonal skills, planning for post-secondary options (higher education, military, workforce), and more. I found that my best advocacy tool was using social media and marketing tools to promote my comprehensive school counseling program and support my students.



■ I needed to find a Professional Learning Network beyond my local community. I was looking for insights and ideas beyond my region, and I soon realized that I could find that Community of Practice with grade-level school counseling Facebook groups and following key hashtags on social media.

Get started by searching these hashtags on Twitter or Instagram:

- #SCCHAT = School Counselor Chat
- #ESCCHAT = Elementary School Counselor Chat
- #MSCCHAT = Middle School Counselor Chat
- #HSCCHAT = High School Counselor Chat

Are you new to using educational technology tools? Here are three tips to get you started!

■ Make a list of some of your professional challenges. These do not have to be tech challenges! Notice that my list was about budget, lessons, collaboration, and advocacy.

■ Prioritize just one or two places to begin exploring.

■ Identify where you want to search for information based on your comfort level.

■ If you are already on Facebook, consider joining a Facebook group for your demographic of students you work with, such as High School Counselors Network, Caught in the Middle School Counselors, or the Elementary School Counselor Exchange. You can search by keywords in the group to see what other counselors have already shared on the topic OR post your question (without identifying student information) in the group.

■ If you are not on social media, you can still search YouTube for topics such as “School counselor + remote” for videos and tips from school counselors.

■ There are lots of fantastic podcasts made by school counselors and designed for school counselors. You can listen right from your

computer and many podcasters video record their session so you can watch as well! Check out Counselor Accents Podcast for a list of topics on current trends in school counseling, including virtual school counseling, engaging families, and the school counselor and administrator partnership.

■ Search the archives of your favorite school counselor magazine (LINK for Counselors)

Angela Cleveland is an advocate for student equity and access to technology, both in terms of content and the design-thinking process that informs intentional and inclusive integration practices.

As the co-author (with Stephen Sharp) of “50+ Tech Tools for School Counselors: How to Be More Engaging, Efficient, and Effective,” Angela sets forth 50+ tactics to help non-classroom-based educators have a direct impact on how students grasp content and incorporate design thinking in all aspects of their lives. The book is a powerful instrument that enables virtual and in-person, synchronous and asynchronous experiences that enrich the educational process while also helping counselors guide decision making, streamline work, and enhance communication. Learn more about Angela at www.AngelaCleveland.com.

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Bettina G. Heiman • Wilmington, DE



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Success from the Start: Three Systems that Must Be in Place Before a Student Starts College

By JoBeth Evans

College is more challenging now than ever. The look, feel, and act of attending college is also very different than what many students may want or have anticipated for themselves. They are working to adjust to this new way of attending school in addition to navigating the new-found freedom that they have. And while there are a lot of new things, there are also many things that are still the same, including graduation requirements and being a successful college student. Something that makes all the difference in the life of college students is having systems in place before they actually arrive on campus - or open their computer - for their first college class. Everything important in life has a system. Having success in college is no different.

In this article, I will share the three most tried-and-true systems that all students should be able to identify, practice, and come back to in order to make their college experience the most successful one they can have.

Time-management Systems

It is not a surprise that college students struggle with time management. For the first time in their lives, students are making their own schedules, holding themselves accountable, and are 100% in the driver's seat of their daily life. Time

management systems could be the difference between keeping scholarships or losing them. Google Calendar is the perfect tool to help students learn good time-management. One of my favorite sayings is 'plan your work and work your plan'. Students already have all the knowledge they need to appropriately plan out their weeks, but they have two problems. One: they may not take the time to make a plan. Two: They may make a plan, but fail to bring their plan to life. The perfect start to executing a school week is having a plan at all. Have them start with a blank Google Calendar. Encourage them to put all of their class times in the calendar first. They can then create a time in their calendar to study by blocking the time off in different colors. At the beginning, they should be encouraged to put everything in the calendar - from workouts to lab times. Students can consider these questions while building their first Google Calendar:

- ▶ When will I wake up?
- ▶ What's the first thing I'll do?
- ▶ What will their morning ritual look like; how long will it take?

All of this can be visually represented in their Google Calendar, which they can access from their phone or their computer. As a student who is

new to time-management, making their schedule as visual as possible will help to set them up for success in every part of their life, both scholarly and socially.

Study Systems

Some students have made it all the way through high school without having to study, then when they get to college, they quickly start to struggle because they simply do not know how to study. Like everything else that runs smoothly in life, students need a system for this as well. If the student has never had to study before, it might take a while to figure out how they can study most efficiently for them. You sometimes see pictures of students on campuses studying in the lounge or at a busy coffee shop, but is that realistic? Maybe it is, maybe it is not. Students should find out how they can study most effectively and efficiently. Here are some great questions for students to consider as they begin to bring good study systems and habits into their lives:

- ▶ Where can I focus and not be distracted?
- ▶ Do I need music or silence?
- ▶ Does my brain work better in the morning, afternoon, or evening?
- ▶ What is my learning style and how I can study in a way that matches my learning style?



Being able to answer these questions is crucial for students to find what works best for them, so they find the success they need in sitting down and hitting the books.

Adulting Systems

Adulting... It is a new word that summarizes what has been haunting young adults for centuries - growing up and being responsible for more than cleaning their rooms. Being a college student means taking on responsibilities that they may not have had while living at home and going to high

school. If the student has an apartment, car, job, or scholarships- adulting is now required. There are things that students need to keep up with and having strong systems in place will help them to make sure they are on top of everything. The first thing I suggest to students I work with is putting “check-ins” or reminders into the calendar. If they are on a budget, as they should be, they might need to login to their checking account every Monday to make sure they are within their spending limit for the week. If rent is due on the first of every month, then they will want to schedule time on the first of every month to pay rent. Another thing that will help them with adulting is making sure they are in a good place financially. Applying for 2-3 scholarships a month could be the difference between going to school debt-free and having to take out student loans. They may also need to have a part-time job. It is important they know their financial responsibilities, their budget, and put these things in their calendar, so that they know exactly the amount they need to cover their cost of living.

Now for the hard part: Execution.

Having a plan in place for everything they need to do to be successful is just the beginning. It may be fun to plan out a schedule and put everything in the calendar, but pointless if they are not able to execute their plan. This is where they need to have self-discipline and grit. This is what separates successful college students from the students that fail out. They know what to do, now they just have to do it. They can be a successful college student by putting systems in place that set them up for success from the beginning.

Encourage them to plan for fun too! These systems are all in place so students can focus on one thing at a time and then enjoy their time “off” without worry or frustration.

JoBeth Evans has five years of experience teaching high school and has been teaching public speaking at the University of Arkansas for six years. She holds a bachelor's degree from the University of Arkansas and a master's degree from Arkansas Tech University. She is a nationally certified life coach with a total of three different coaching-related certificates. In her work as a life coach, she helps teen girls make the transition from high school to college. In addition, JoBeth is a speaker and writer who works to equip young women for the major life transition to enter college. She can be reached at jobethevans@outlook.com.

Be Careful Where You Get Tips About the College

By Kim Lifton



As a former journalist, I tend to love social media, especially when I can use it to bond with like-minded professionals like you on the topic that consumes so many professionals during the college admissions process: the college essay. I also love conferences and any place where I can discuss college admission with counselors like you—and share best practices in safe spaces.

It all helps me keep up with trends inside the world of admissions, and I find comfort in being able to talk to about the challenges we might have in common.

But as nice as it is to bond, and to share, I have noticed over the past year that there are a lot of tips about the college essay across multiple mediums (online and in print) that just don't seem helpful. In fact, much of it is not even true!

For example, when the pandemic shut down the country last year—and the world as we once knew it—I noticed many comments about an increase in the significance of the essay in admissions in a world without as many test scores... To be honest, these were just comments based on nothing but conjecture on the part of a few.

Be careful. The essay is—and has been for a few decades at least—super important inside the world of competitive admissions. That is not likely to change anytime soon. But who told you it is *more* important?

This time of the year, as the Class of 2022 starts preparing to apply to college, you can make a special effort to provide useful and relevant information about the college essay to your students – not a bunch of tips and suggestions that are out of context, or simply wrong (that stuff you read on the Internet)!

Let me explain: During the last admissions cycle, a counselor asked members of a Facebook group for tips to handle an essay he thought was finished; he had a change of heart after attending an

information session on the campus of a beloved university in his home state. While there, he realized his student had written THE exact essay this particular admissions rep said she never wants to see.

I can certainly understand why the counselor reached out for some insight. But I wondered why so many people offered tips like these:

- ◆ Start over.
- ◆ The rep was right.
- ◆ The rep was wrong.
- ◆ Ditch it.
- ◆ Keep it. Have the student write three essays and pick the one that works best. (Yep. That tip really threw me for a loop!)

The tips could make you question your own judgement. Was the college rep right? Should the counselor have asked the student to start over? Was the essay good enough?

I wanted to respond in the group; after all, I am an expert on the college essay. But that is not the point. Here is why I did not say a thing: truth is, I did not have enough information to offer anything valuable. The tips I mentioned above—and most of the tips inside of this group chat—were completely out of context. The advice was not right or wrong, but every tip was half-baked, and incomplete.

In this particular case, professionals offered tips and commentaries about an essay they had never read. That's not good. And this type of advice is never going to be helpful to you, or to your students.

This challenge is not exclusive to social media groups. In fact, there is no shortage of out-of-context tips inside this industry. You will find handouts at industry conferences that offer 50+ brainstorm tips, videos that suggest the answers to 3 questions will guarantee a great opening line and Internet downloads with tips for finding the best college essay topic.

Remember the old adage: *If it sounds too good to be true, it is?*

As you begin the next application season, and you feel yourself getting overwhelmed by the mounds of outside advice you hear, read online, or get in the mail, slow down and ask yourself, what am I going to do with all of this stuff, really?

- ◆ How will you incorporate the 50+ tips into your college essay coaching process? You can't.
- ◆ How will 3 questions guarantee better essays? They won't.
- ◆ What do you really need to do to improve your college essay coaching practice? Follow a process.

Then focus on what you can do to make your life easier and also help your students.

In all we do, whether working directly with students applying to college, or training professionals who counsel them, we follow an approach, never a cookie-cutter template.

And, inside of the high-stakes world of college admissions, we have learned that one great tip will not help you improve your college essay coaching process. Twenty tips will not get you there, either. Sure, even at Wow, we have great free videos, tip sheets and advice, but they do not stand alone.

We have also discovered the real secret to what you do need to help your students succeed on any college essay. It is not necessarily what you may be thinking, either. And it is not such a big secret, either. If you work with students on the college essay, you need:

- ◆ A process with simple, and clear instructions to help your students succeed.
- ◆ A plan to help guide your students with clear expectations upfront: what you expect from them, what they can expect from you. This will help everyone stay calm during the season.
- ◆ And a schedule to follow. You will need tasks, deadlines, and a little bit of wiggle room. Our schedule for a Common App essay gives students a month; you can see there is some extra room during the last week to make up for any missed deadlines, or unforeseen challenges.

Please review the graphic below. It is a sample of one of our schedules to start, write and complete the personal statement.

The College Essay Experience for Students
Plan. Process. Schedule.

PRE-WORK	Date	Steps	Task	Who
Monday	At registration		Questionnaire due (15 minutes) Log in to wowwritingworkshop.com for access	Student
Monday	5/17		Receive welcome email from your coach with link to brainstorm dates	Student
Monday	5/31		Make sure you've chosen a brainstorm date	Student
WEEK 1	Date	Steps	Task	Who
Sunday	6/7	Intro-2	Intro-Step 2: Prework due (1 hour)	Student
Tues-Fri	6/9-12	2-4	Brainstorm appointment; complete Steps 3-4 after brainstorm (2 hours)	Student
Wed-Fri	6/10-12	3-4	Steps 3-4: Respond to student ASAP; assign Draft 1 (Content)	Coach
WEEK 2	Date	Steps	Task	Who
Sunday	6/14	5	Step 5: Content draft due (2 hours)	Student
Monday	6/15	6	Step 6: Assign Write Outside the Essay exercise	Coach
Tuesday	6/16	6	Step 6: Write Outside the Essay exercise due (1 hour)	Student
Wednesday	6/17	6	Step 6: Assign New Openings exercise	Coach
Thursday	6/18	6	Step 6: New Openings exercise due (1 hour)	Student
Friday	6/19	7	Step 7: Assign Plan Your Next Draft exercise	Coach
WEEK 3	Date	Steps	Task	Who
Monday	6/22	7	Step 7: Plan Your Next Draft exercise due (1 hour)	Student
Tuesday	6/23	7	Step 7: Assign Draft 2 (Content + Structure)	Coach
Wednesday	6/24	7	Step 7: Content + Structure draft due (2 hours)	Student
Thursday	6/25	8*	Step 8: Respond to Content + Structure draft	Coach
Friday	6/26	9*	Step 9: Content + Structure + Polish draft due (2 hours)	Student
WEEK 4	Date	Steps	Task	Who
Monday	6/29	10*	Step 10: Respond to Content + Structure + Polish draft	Coach
Tuesday	6/30		Send essay to proofreader	Coach
Thursday	7/2		Return essay to student after proofreading	Coach
Tuesday-Friday	6/29 – 7/3		Prep for additional essays (depending on package purchased)	Both

*Please note that Steps 8-10 are sometimes more fluid than Steps 1-7. You may need an extra 1-2 hours to complete interim exercises during Week 4.

Here is some accurate advice from inside the admissions office:

A college application essay is an opportunity for your students to share something meaningful about themselves. They need to tell their stories in their own voice and in their own words. Here are some tips direct from admissions officers:

Shawn Felton, Cornell University, Director of Undergraduate Admissions

“Colleges ask applicants to take a look inside themselves and consider who they are and what they want. We want to know who and what an applicant sees in their own mirror. And we want to know, as much as it is possible, at this moment in time, what each applicant thinks, feels, understands. Everyone has a story and it is important for us, in admissions, to hear directly from each applicant about their story and how it is going so far.”

Stefanie Niles, Ohio Wesleyan University, Vice President for Enrollment and Communications

“The essay, in my experience, definitely matters in an admission committee’s overall consideration of a student’s admissibility to an institution. I want to be sure that students address the question asked of them in a way that gives me insight into who they are. I believe that a student should write about what is important and meaningful to them, and that feeling will shine through their essay.”

Lorenzo Gamboa, Santa Clara University, Senior Associate Director of Admissions

“Students do not need to compile an entire season into an essay. Just give us one place, one time, one moment, and that will do it for you. The key is to show genuine passion, commitment, and that they have what it takes to survive at the school.”

Christina Lopez, Barnard College, Dean of Admissions

“The whole application process is one big “Match.com” process. The students are creating their ‘profile’ within their application and reflecting in the essays on who they are as scholars and people.”

Christoph Guttentag, Duke University, Dean of Undergraduate Admissions

“By the time (the application) comes to us, many of them have gone through so many hands that the essays are sanitized. I wish I saw more of the thoughtful voice of a 17-year-old.”

Gregory Sneed, Denison University, Vice President for Enrollment Management

“Even after reviewing a mediocre transcript or seeing a limited activities list, I can be swayed to

admit a student who writes an essay that really blows me away. The topic of the essay doesn’t need to be mind-blowing (in fact, the most mundane topics are often the most relatable and enjoyable), but if it reveals someone who would be highly valued in our campus community, that could tip the scales.”

John Ambrose, Michigan State University, Executive Director of Admissions

“Be your most authentic self! Students put a lot of effort into trying to convince admissions officers who they think we want to see. Authenticity is always appreciated.”

Jan Suter, Vanderbilt University, Senior Assistant Director of Admissions

“Sometimes students feel that because they haven’t found the cure for cancer, they have nothing to share. Life is truly lived in the smaller moments, and that can be a powerful essay.”



College admissions representatives tell us time and again that the student’s voice is the only one they want to hear when they read your application essay. They read too many essays that have been sanitized after being edited and “fixed” by adults. When that happens, the essays no longer sound like 17-year-old students wrote them.

“If the essay is sanitized, there won’t be any value added to the application,” said **the University of California – Berkeley Associate Director of Undergraduate Admissions, Michelle Larkrith.**

“It won’t help you. The essay is the only opportunity we have to understand who you are. Take advantage of it.”

Added **Brent Benner, Director of Admissions for the University of Tampa**, “We want you to sound real and be true to yourself.”

So how can you sound real and be true to yourself? Start with this writing exercise:

- ◆ Get out a piece of paper and a pen or open a document on your computer. You are going to write fast – and messy!
- ◆ Set a timer for 10 minutes.
- ◆ Think about this prompt: What did you do this morning from the moment you woke up until you left your home?
- ◆ Using all of your senses, begin writing. Quickly record as much as you can recall about your morning.
- ◆ Be specific, but do not worry about making sense or sounding clever.
- ◆ Write fast, and do not judge what you write. You can write fragments, sentences, lists or run-ons. It doesn’t matter because you are not writing an essay; you are simply capturing details.
- ◆ Do not read it as you go along. Do not erase anything. Do not stop and think about what you will write. Keep your pen on the paper or your fingers on the keyboard at all times.

◆ When the timer goes off, stop. Look back at what you wrote about your morning, and find three segments that truly sound like you. Each one can be anything from a short phrase to a multi-sentence description. They don’t have to be exciting or clever. They just have to sound like YOU.

You should be able to see that your writing voice is unique, and shines through when you relax and write freely. This is what you sound like when you are not trying too hard. This is the voice you should write in when you begin to compose your application essay.

Of course, you want someone else to read your essay and offer feedback, but that feedback should come in the form of questions and reflections, not editing and revision. Revision is your responsibility. The only way to keep your voice front and center is to make sure every word in the essay belongs to you.

So, listen to your voice. It is yours, and a college essay is a great opportunity to share it proudly.

Kim Lifton is President of Wow Writing Workshop, which specializes in teaching students how to write college essays and training professionals. You can reach her at kim@wowwritingworkshop.com.



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Feeling Burned Out?

by Daniel J. Geary, Ph.D.

Coming off of a stress filled and challenging year, perhaps as tumultuous as any year in decades, it is no wonder why many people are feeling “Burned Out”. The term “Burn Out” as it was first defined by German American psychologist Herbert Freudenberger, refers to a “state of mental and physical exhaustion caused by one’s professional life.” Charged with critical responsibilities within the school and community, school counselors are often described as “the glue that holds the school and community together”. They solve problems, confront conflicts, schedule students, advocate for the under-represented, communicate with parents, teachers, and school officials, and address a plethora of student, institutional, and community needs as they attend to the concerns of others. It is reasonable to expect that school counselors may also experience the signs and symptoms of Burn out! Headache, fatigue, irritability, isolation, feelings of insecurity, sleeplessness, and a host of other symptoms are common indicators. In trying times, school counselors are not immune to the signs and symptoms of burn out. Stress, exhaustion, and burn out may result when counselors try to balance the multiple professional requirements, provide direct and indirect services, and maintain the individual responsibilities of their job.

So, what can be done to counteract the signs and symptoms of Burn out? You may find the answer in a classic song by Sheryl Crow: “**A Change Would Do You Good**”. In essence, change can be inspirational, empowering, elevating,

and positive. I am not suggesting that you quit your job, move to a different location, or even change careers, but as a school counselor you are empowered to change your perspective, improve yourself and look for new inspiration as you renew the excitement you felt when you first entered the counseling profession. Instead of fighting against the things you can’t change, identify the things you **can** change. Use your energy to learn something new, develop a new skill, explore a new subject, investigate a new part of the state or an unfamiliar part of the country, become involved with a new group, (one that can truly use your help), or begin a new certification or degree program. Decide to be positive, proactive, and goal-directed. Resistance to change is pointless because it keeps you stuck in the past. Henry Ford is credited with saying “If you always do what you’ve always done, you’ll always get what you’ve always got”. So, move forward and create a new opportunity for yourself! This can be accomplished through professional development.

The first step in counteracting burn out is to take stock of where you are and what you hope to accomplish. School counselors should periodically assess their own needs, both personal and professional, as a way to prescribe the appropriate burn out intervention and their capacity for growth. Often, school counselors feel constrained by the mistaken belief that professional development must follow a limited and narrowly defined path. This idea can itself cause stress as

certified school counselors feel pressure to take courses, attend prescribed conferences, participate in employer scheduled programs, and log the professional development activities dictated by their employer. While these activities may indeed be useful and germane to the school counselor's responsibilities, they may also overlook the school counselor's personal needs, desire for development, growth, or renewal. It may be time for a change in the way counselors view their career and professional development. The concept of a protean career is particularly useful for individuals who want to control their own destiny. Adopting this approach may help school counselors facilitate this change.

The Protean Career

According to Douglas Hall in his article "The Protean Career: A Quarter-Century Journey," a protean career is one in which the individual controls the direction and trajectory of their work and professional life.

Three elements define this perspective:

1. The employee directs their own career.
2. The employee's personal values guide the decisions that they make.
3. The employee places more value on their subjective sense of career success than on the organization's or society's definitions of success.

When the concept of the protean career is applied to school counselors, it is easy to recognize that a burn out prevention and/ or intervention strategy should be encouraged as school counselors pursue meaningful and personally enriching professional development activities. That is, a school counselor should feel empowered to identify the type of professional development activity that will support, encourage, and renew their own excitement for their life's work. In so doing, the school counselor may become reinvigorated, renewed, and better equipped to deal with the stress and strains of the school counseling profession. Instead of relinquishing the authority for professional development to others, the protean career concept allows the professional to determine their own goals, pursue their own interests and create a plan to achieve the desired outcome in harmony with their personal, professional, family, and financial and time parameters. Indeed, in most states, the school counselor recertification process involves an option for a self-directed plan of activities to renew their license. To illuminate the recertification process in your particular state, you may want to consult this interactive website:

www.https://www.modelteaching.com/professional-development-requirements

It provides a description of the school counselor recertification process in all fifty states. For example, in the state of **Oregon**, the recertification process allows "Participating in other learning activities intended to increase the attendee's effectiveness as an educator." In the state of **Massachusetts**, professional development recertification includes the statement: "90 professional development points may be earned through either "elective" activities that address other educational issues and topics that improve student learning, or additional content and/ or pedagogy." In the state of **Kentucky**, license recertification includes a continuing education provision whereby individuals may "submit an independent professional growth plan based on their needs. This includes classes, professional development, and other professional development activities." Finally, the state of **Georgia** promotes that "professionals development and licensing renewal decisions are based on plans tied to individual teachers' learning goals.

Fortunately, in many of the states, through their respective Department of Education processes, school counselors are allowed some flexibility in creating their own professional development plans. Following a protean approach for their own development, school counselors may feel empowered to *make a change that would do them good.*

Assessment and Goal Setting

Before embarking on your professional development journey, it would be wise to consider the constraints of time, money, energy, and resources involved. It is also necessary for the counselor to consider the goal they hope to achieve. Having just survived a very tumultuous and trying year, a school counselor may be interested in testing the waters, so to speak, by enrolling in a light-hearted course for



their own mental and personal well-being. By doing so, they can learn something new and emerge better for having completed the process. Support for this approach is realized because your personal enrichment allows you to better serve your counseling clientele. For other individuals, professional development might be directed toward achieving a credential, logging hours for recertification, or exploring a different path altogether. Regardless of your motivations for professional development (renewed vigor for your job, a new certification, or to renew your counseling credential) your goals are more likely to be reached if they are specific, attainable, and measurable. The acronym SAM is a helpful way to remember. When you openly identify your specific goal, your expectations are clear. When you balance your work, home, family, time, energy, and financial constraints, you can calculate the prospect of achieving the goal. And when you identify how you will measure success, (an anticipated grade, the receipt of a certificate, or an enlivened perspective) you can determine the degree of your accomplishment. Because you are identifying what you want to learn, your goals are unique to you. After all, you are now seeking to do something for yourself. You have worked tirelessly, giving of yourself and helping countless others by solving their issues and problems, and now it's time for you to help yourself. "A Change Would Do You Good".



Listed here are the common stages of a school counselor's career; from entry into the profession, through mid-career growth and eventual disengagement. School counselors should recognize their own developmental stage and set their goals accordingly. Although these stages are often sequential, they do not necessarily follow in order and may go backward if a person moves from one school to another, relocates, or experiences a career interruption for one reason or another. The following chart can help you understand your position within the profession.

Stage	Characteristics	Needs	Tasks
Exploration	New to your organization. Not familiar with processes, procedures, the culture, and people.	Become acclimated to your new role. Need for more guidance, information, and coaching. Need experience working with people and situations.	Develop the skills, capabilities, and knowledge required for the current role. Acquire confidence. Establish relationships.
Establishment and Advancement	Each Individual has their own areas of responsibility. Ability to work independently. Demonstrates skills, competencies, and confidence. Independence and specialization.	Establish credibility, skills, knowledge and recognition in their profession. Increased sense of empowerment and an understanding of professional boundaries. Produce measurable results.	Explanation and networking. Assessment of skills and competencies for new responsibilities. Develop stronger organizational skills, competencies, and management ability.
Mid-Career Growth or Maintenance	Responsible for guiding others. Use breadth of technical knowledge to support the organization.	Ability to see the big picture. Facilitate the on development and competencies of others. Achieve results through others.	Leverage own expertise to develop other members of the department or organization. Serve as a mentor and coach.
Disengagement	Usually proficient in current role. May stagnate, plain-off or under-perform. Increased demands and changes become difficult. Career and life priorities may be altered.	Look for alternative roles. Share wisdom, experience and institutional knowledge with others. Prepare to transition.	Seek alternative options based on life's priorities.

By understanding yourself and your career stage, specific, attainable, and measurable goals for your professional development can be established. Your emphasis should be identifying exactly what you want to achieve and the time frame in which you want to achieve it. Short-term, mid-range and long-term goals may be a part of your overall scheme. More immediately, you may simply want to address your pressing ambitions. Learning that is completely different compared to a day in the office. Something to relieve your stress, allow you to practice a tactile activity or develop a new technical skill or aptitude. Each of these directions are legitimate. But you will be better served if you identify the purpose for seeking a professional development activity. You should know why you are pursuing it, if it is within your reach, and how you will know when it has been completed. A specific, attainable and measurable approach will allow you to get there.



To gauge your capacity to achieve your goal you will want to estimate the length of time that is needed. Are you looking for something uplifting, inspirational, and lighthearted, or are you focused on taking your career in a new direction? Perhaps you want to become an expert in a specific content area, develop your ability to counsel certain groups, or work with a special population. Alternatively, you could decide to earn a new credential or simply work to renew your professional license. The point is, these are all valid and worthwhile endeavors, however, they are more satisfying and will hold more potential for “change” if you understand yourself, the stage of your career, and if you construct a process through which you can grow as a professional.

If you set your expectations by rationally determining the boundaries of time, money, access, and your own capacity to achieve your goal, you are more likely to get there. In addition, your goal should be measureable and recognizable when it has been achieved. Can it be quantified?

Are there phases or flexion points where you can monitor your progress? Long-range professional development goals may need to be segmented. Formal educational offerings are categorized by semester, by the year or even longer. When partitioned into manageable segments a student can see their progress. This is also true when students design their professional development activities around the attainment of a credential, a license, a certification, or a degree.

When planning your professional development activity, and in consideration of the outcome you hope to achieve, the type of activity will define the character of the transaction. It can be purposely distributed among divergent activities or specifically targeted to achieve a deliberate outcome. Dependably, professional development activities may be placed into four different categories:

Transitory

Transitory activities often flow across subject areas, genre's and seemingly unrelated fields of study. However, a counseling practitioner may be able to coalesce each activity into a collection of understandings that help the counselor perform his/her job. An art appreciation course, the study of western literature or a course in political science could be justified as a professional development activity by enhancing the counselor's understanding of instructional approaches and learning styles.

Spiral

These activities involve a longer progression of a series of courses to include related and unrelated occupations, disciplines, or specialties. An accounting course, computer automated drafting or entrepreneurship courses spiral into very different fields, however motives for taking these courses include enhanced creativity, personal growth, or an understanding of employment trends or changes in the workplace.

Expert

Professional development activities in this category focus on the establishment of competency in a clearly defined area. Certification in a theoretical approach to counseling, obtaining a license to work with a particular population or disorder, or proficiency in a career related skill such as grief counseling or crisis management for example. Motivations may include the desire for competence and stability and expertise in a job-related activity.

Linear

Professional development in this area is targeted toward advancement into an administrative or supervisory role. Following this approach, the individual pursues a progression up the organizational hierarchy to positions of greater responsibility and authority. Motivations may include the need for achievement, influence, or control.

The final step in managing your own professional development is to determine how you can participate and where and when this will occur. This involves accessing the resources available and the sources for professional development offerings. These training and educational sources may be placed into four categories: Local and Community Based Organizations, Non-Profit Organizations, 2-yr and 4-yr Post-secondary Institutions, and Professional Organizations.

► Local/ Community Based Organizations

A wealth of educational opportunities can be found in the local community. These can include courses offered by museums, Parks and Recreation offices, and local school systems. Many large k-12 schools systems offer evening classes for adults including seminars, guest speakers' series and workshops. Varied topics such as fine arts classes, EMT classes, public speaking, grant writing, foreign language classes and other offerings can provide a rich source for enrichment or exposure to new and interesting topics.

► Non-Profit Organizations

Another source for professional development opportunities are Non-Profit organizations like the America Red Cross, The Humane Society, The Salvation Army, or the American Heart Association. Additionally, groups such as Nten (National Non-Profit Professional Development) or well-known benevolent foundations such as the Ford Foundation will offer free or inexpensive classes and training.

► Educational Institutions

For a more formal approach to education, professional development opportunities are consistently provided by community colleges, junior colleges, and schools of professional and continuing studies, both credit bearing and non-credit bearing courses. These affiliates offer a plethora of educational and professional

Sample of Sources for Professional Development Opportunities

- America School Counselors Association (ASCA)
- America's Career Resource Network (ACRN)
- American Counseling Association (ACA)
- ASCD (formerly the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development)
- Center for School Counseling Outcome Research
- Colleges' and Universities, Continuing Education and Professional Studies Programs (3 examples) Northeastern University, Harvard University, University of Richmond
- Community Colleges (undergraduate courses are great resources for recertification)
- Local and State Historical Societies
- Local/ State/ National Museums and Philanthropic Foundations
- Lynda.com - LinkedIn Learning
- MacArthur Foundation
- Non-Profit Organizations (American Red Cross, etc.)
- Parks and Recreation Department
- Professional Organizations for Teachers and/or School Counselors
- The (State Name) Department of Education-Teacher and School Counselor Education
- The Association for College Counselors in Independent Schools (ACCIS)
- The Osher Institute for Lifelong Learning
- The Center for Excellence in School Counseling and Leadership
- The Joy of Professional Learning (web site)
- The National Alliance of Pupil Services Organizations (NAPSO)
- The National Association of College Admissions Counselors (NACAC)

development opportunities and they specifically cater to working adults.

► Professional Organizations

Finally, a variety of professional organizations, such as The American School Counselor Association (ASCA), The American Counselors Association, and The National Association of College Admissions Counselors (NACAC) and others, provide regular opportunities for learning, professional development, seminars and training on a variety of topics and subjects. See the box on the preceding page for a list of additional sources for professional development.

situation, identify their goals, and understand their parameters. Once these are discovered, the school counselor should examine their career stages in relation to their own developmental needs, and create a professional development plan that is meaningful, specific, and attainable. Start small and grow incrementally to satisfy your own needs, both personally and professionally. The two are not mutually exclusive. In fact, professional development that is meaningful, positive, proactive, and goal directed, enhances the school counselor's well-being, longevity and effectiveness in their school and community. So, move forward and create a new opportunity for yourself! "A Change Would Do You Good."

Next Steps

Recognition of the signs and symptoms of "Burn out" is important for any school counselor, especially in the aftermath of a very trying and especially difficult year. It would be a tragedy and a disservice to yourself to ignore your own need for growth and development. The wisdom of time, empowered by a protean approach to professional development, encourages counselors to assess their

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“Helpers” on College and University Campuses

by Elizabeth Drucker



In your work as a counselor, you have probably noticed that there are many sorts of student affairs professionals working at universities. Sometimes, despite scouring a college’s website, it is difficult to find the answers to some of your students’ most pressing concerns about college admissions and beyond. In order to send your students in the right direction, you need to know where to look. Most post-secondary institutions have the same sorts of advisors and professionals, so learning about which one works in which area will reduce much stress for you and your students.

Admissions Officers

Whether they are a large flagship university or a liberal arts college, every postsecondary institution hires admissions counselors. At smaller colleges, especially liberal arts colleges, they are divided by geographic region. Because of this, you may find that you have the opportunity to get to know the admissions officer who manages admissions and recruitment for your high school. You can then get in touch with them if you need further clarification about admissions policies, majors at the college, and basically anything you want to know about the experience at that college. On the other hand, large universities hire a large staff of admissions professionals who spend their time evaluating transcripts and answering basic questions as they come in. Admissions officers know a lot about their

particular university, so if you (or your students) ever need clarification about anything related to that college, they would be a good place to start.

Disability Counselors

For students who will require accommodations for mental, learning, and physical disabilities, these professionals are another good place to start. Every college has a different procedure for compiling the documentation required to receive accommodations. Some require the student’s high school IEP or 504 Plan along with medical documentation, if available. Disability counselors will also be able to help your students if they need accommodations for on-campus visits and interviews. By getting in touch with disability counselors, students may also find help in securing accommodations for housing as well.

Academic Advisors

Even though most students do not have to declare a major until the second year of college (or later), it can help to explore different majors and their requirements. Academic advisors can show your students what courses might be required for a specific major and what sorts of jobs graduates might get upon graduation. They can usually answer questions about whether a student is adequately prepared to enter a certain program.

For example, for a student interested in applying as a nursing student, it may be helpful to consult with an academic advisor in that field to ensure that the student has taken the necessary preparatory coursework in high school. An academic advisor can also offer advice on how a student might remedy academic deficiencies, such as by taking a summer science class at a community college before enrolling in the university in the fall.

Exploratory Advisors

Again, many students do not start college knowing exactly which major they are interested in. You may want to contact an exploratory advisor or a professional who knows about the general education requirements at a particular college or university. You might be able to get a better understanding of how the college is structured, such as whether there is more emphasis on STEM fields or on the arts. Exploratory advisors help students sift through the masses of options they have before they need to declare their major. They can be helpful in evaluating if the college or university will be a good fit for your individual student.



Career Center/Internship Advisors

For many students, the purpose of going to college is to prepare to “get ahead” for a lucrative career. Some colleges, more than others, require an internship as part of the curriculum. Most schools have a career center with professionals who can help your students see which sorts of jobs their undergraduates are getting—before and after graduation. The career center is an important resource at every college and is especially valuable for students who are majoring in business, where internships provide necessary real-world work experience. Career centers also help students perfect their resumes, prepare for interviews, and provide a large network of alumni that current students can count on for internships and other experiential learning opportunities.

Pre-Health and Pre-Law Advisors

These advising professionals are in a class of their own. They have specialized knowledge for some of the most demanding career paths available to college students. Careers in the health professions such as medicine and dentistry require a certain sequence of courses in the physical and biological sciences. If your students are interested in a health career, it might be helpful to reach out to these advisors to make sure that they are on the right track. In order to be placed into the right science classes, at the beginning of their student’s first year, they might need to take refreshers of math or chemistry classes before enrolling. For students who want to apply to medical and other schools in the health sciences, you might also want to see some statistics about how many of their undergraduates were able to gain admission into medical school. This information can be enlightening and might help your students to choose a school that is the best fit for their aspirations.

Law school is another professional pathway that requires advisors have specialized knowledge. Unlike medical schools, law schools do not require certain coursework, but advisors can give advice on how to prepare for the LSAT (Law School Admissions Test) and which classes might be helpful for a career in law. They can also help with law school applications, including facilitating students in getting the most helpful recommendations from professors. They can also help students get focused on their law school admissions essays, such as how to get a better sense of why they want to go to law school and what sort of lawyers they hope to be. These advisors can recommend ways for your students to get involved in leadership activities while still in high school that will be relevant to law school admissions.

Independent Study



By Brittany Maschal

COVID is hindering in-person learning, forcing clubs to meet online (if not canceling them outright), and may even throw a wrench in in-person educational and extracurricular planning for this spring and summer. A primary focus of many 10th and 11th graders, beyond doing well in classes, is extracurriculars. This year, many students are missing out on these activities or feel they are not able to participate to the extent they had in years past. I am often asked what can be done about this, especially as it pertains to academic extracurriculars. I have come to learn that there is one activity that is rarely dependent on needing to be anywhere in person: the independent study.

Independent studies (IS) can be done anywhere and work with almost any student's area of interest, which is why in such uncertain times, they are our go-to EC. Like the "purpose" or "passion" projects many of our students undertake (these are really any special project a student decides to implement or goal they work toward on their own, from a book review to starting a new club at their school, to extending the footprint of one that is already in place), the Independent Studies is a create your own educational opportunity, so there is no one size fits all model to follow or template you can use to just plug and play. Below are some of the details I suggest that students think through if they are interested in conceptualizing an IS.

Who

The IS requires the student to have an area of interest that they want to explore (or explore more), as well as the time, energy, and foresight to plan it on their own. However, students may want to seek out support from a teacher at their high school or a mentor from outside of school if they desire to formalize it or have some guidance or check-ins along the way. Some might even ask a faculty member from a local community college or university to be their mentor; this is harder to pull off, but it is an option.

What

Anything goes! But I suggest an area of academic interest related to what the student may pursue in college. It might be a new topic, or it might be an extension of a topic they have already researched. The bottom line is, it should 1) be a topic/area they choose because they will need to be "into it" to make the work happen on their own and 2) if possible, it should work with their academic narrative (the academic story that unfolds in their college apps). So, for a STEM applicant, it should probably be STEM-related, and so on.

Where

Planning the IS as a remote activity is a good call given the uncertainties around COVID. Doing so also provides the flexibility to add on other activities/formal programming or have time for a job if that suits the student (or is necessary) while still working on the IS. It also gives students room to plan around camps, travel, and other activities during the summer if those become a reality again!

When

Winter break or early in the new year is the perfect time for students to start planning their independent study. As for an ideal start time? Many juniors are busy with testing so I suggest it as a summer activity, although students who may not have AP testing in May or who have finished or not yet started ACT/SAT testing could realistically start in the spring if their course load allows. The classes that appear on a student's transcript will always be the most important to colleges, so they do not want the IS to get in the way of excelling in those courses.

Why

Beyond the restrictions that might be in place around COVID, and that in-person extracurriculars, especially those that are academics may not happen as they normally would, an independent study is a great activity for a number of other reasons. It also helps demonstrate to colleges a commitment to learning, an intellectual focus and high level of curiosity, and that the student is a self-directed learner interested in charting their own course and not limiting themselves to what they can take in school (or afford to take outside of it).

Counselors are poised to be excellent guides in helping students create and conceptualize an independent study. And for those interested in education, they might even be the best project mentors!

Dr. Brittany Maschal worked in admissions and student services at Princeton, Penn and JHU, and is the founder of Brittany Maschal Consulting. <http://brittany.consulting>. She can be reached at bmaschal@gmail.com



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'Please Give Me My Space'

A School Counselor's Perspective



By Sweetie Patel

I want you to think back to when you were a student and you walked into your school counselor's office. What do you remember about his/her office? Do you remember the walls, the furniture, the seating arrangement, the atmosphere? Was there something unique about the counselor's space that moved you somehow?

Oftentimes when we are learning how to be school counselors, we are focused on the interaction between the student and us. We do not always think about the surroundings, and a lot of times we feel there is not much time to think about it either.

The reality is that many students, especially those that may be unfamiliar with the school counselor or who may not feel comfortable speaking, may gauge the energy of the school counseling experience as they walk in and sit in the office. The student may look around, observe the space, and extract a level of comfort and connection directly from it.

So, what do you have in your office? Do you have posters? Pictures? Who is represented on your walls? Do you have anything about you displayed? Do you have anything special on your desk or cabinets? What is on the floor? The ceiling? The door? Do you have windows? Throughout your time, has your office changed and if so, how? Do you change your office throughout the year?

As I think about my very small office when I first became a school counselor to my office now as a Director of School Counseling Services, I reflect on the many changes that have occurred in my physical space. When I first began, I noticed that my students, parents/guardians, and staff had to wait a lot for services because of the high volume of situations that we experience in our suite. So as everyone waited in my office, I had them pick a quote they liked from a quote book one of my graduate school friends gave to me. Whichever quote they picked, I typed it up and posted it

on my wall. Eventually, all four walls were filled with quotes. Anyone that visited loved sitting and reading the quotes chosen by others. Each quote allowed space for the person sitting in my office to think, remember and reflect. Often it would help the student to feel more relaxed and open up in the counseling session. My quote wall tore down walls and helped to build rapport between me as a new counselor and those that walked into my room.

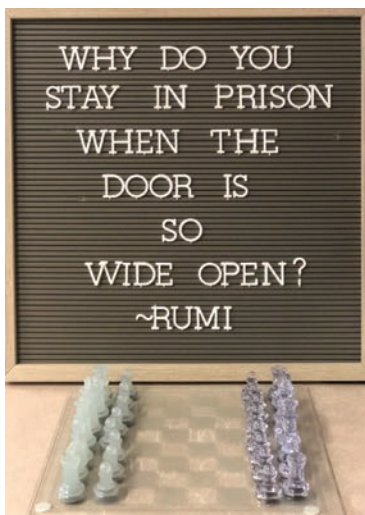
I love chess, so I also started to keep a chessboard on my desk. As students came in, many would start playing with the pieces as they talked, and I often played chess with students too. Not all school counseling has to involve speaking as we know from the different types of therapy that exist in the field. Chess often allows you to lessen the pressure of talking and eye contact; it also allows you to displace energy and ultimately release it through the game. And I have met many students who love playing it and who love to learn how to play it better.

Something else that I have found helpful for the counseling environment is posters. Whether you find posters at the mall or you order them from websites, there are many incredible posters related to all sorts of subjects that you can put up to make your cinder block or blandly-painted walls more interesting. One of the really influential things about posters is that they can demonstrate who you are and your interests to students, which is another way for them to connect with you, build rapport, and engage.

Another idea is to put up posters of prominent people in history and in current events. One of the schools I worked in had a diverse population, so I was advised by one of my colleagues, Kyle Anderson, that I should have people on my wall that reflect our student population. We put up posters of famous African-American, Hispanic and Latino/ role models. I brought these to my new district and when both staff and students saw them

and recognized the people in them, they then see a reflection of their own lives and culture.

I also displayed elements of my own Indian culture in my office, whether it be through saris draped over surfaces, dandiya sticks hung on the walls, scrolls from my trip to Dharamshala where the Dalai Lama resides, or pictures of my visits to famous landmarks in India with my family and friends. When students and staff see these things, they begin to ask questions and it sparks interesting conversations. This atmosphere that



imbibes social justice and worldliness extracts our memories and creates new ones. These carry through to important aspects of the school counseling relationship and the climate and culture of the school.

With the COVID-19 situation, the idea of office space has changed drastically. Many counselors now have virtual offices while others have physical ones with plexiglass and social distancing. Oddly, when and where we are trying to build connection, we are forced to place distance. But even when placing distance, we can create connection. The key is to find the root of the bond, and oftentimes that is just being who you are...outwardly. With social distancing it has become even more important to demonstrate ourselves and create a welcoming environment for our students, families, and colleagues. Even from far away, we can hope they notice us and perhaps in us, they notice themselves.

So, however your office is now, build it up for whoever is there now, however they are there, and plan for when all the students return. If there are social distancing measures in place, think of what you can purchase or create for your office to break down figurative barriers. Are there grants you

can apply for to buy materials? Think about the demographics of your population and reflect on what would help you connect to your own school counselor when you had one, whether it be a game or a collection of books or something else that maybe you have never seen in an office. There are so many unique ways to bring out the potential of the sessions.

In terms of evaluations, the school counseling environment plays a role in our performance and our work. Regardless of the evaluation tool or framework that is being utilized, the physical space is an important element in our profession, and it is an aspect of professional advocacy. So, consider the beautification of your office space to be a goal, not a chore.

In the past, I have gotten the notion that school counselors should be promoting college and career readiness, social-emotional learning and other professional information only; not pictures of family or perhaps anything related to our spirituality or ultimately ourselves. As a Director of School Counseling Services, I have seen that it is integral to our work to highlight the most significant aspects of ourselves that we feel comfortable demonstrating as we share the most relevant information that our students need to be aware of - who we are is part of what we do...and what we do is part of who we are. Our students realize this and appreciate our transparency. This authenticity can build trust and encourage positive movement and growth.

So, when thinking about your space, what do you have around you? And remember, it does not necessarily have to be your walls that talk. I now have a small Zen garden on my desk that many people come in and play with while they talk to me. At first it seems their playing with the sand is distracting them from why they are with me in the first place. But they are actually gaining a sense of clarity while raking the sand to and fro; this action serves their dialogue and builds their resolve.

Think of what you want to have in your space...how can it serve a purpose for your school counseling? What is already there and what is missing? How can you make your office feel and look more inviting and more comfortable? Ultimately, how can your office be a source of connection where people can find their past, their present and their future?

Sweetie Patel is currently the Director of School Counseling Services for Carteret Public Schools, in Carteret, NJ. Prior to this role, Sweetie served as a School Counselor for the Jersey City Public Schools for thirteen years.

Criminal Justice: Opportunities Abound in Careers in Law Enforcement, Criminal Justice Services or Higher Education

By Talia Harmon, Ph.D.



There are numerous career paths for criminal justice graduates. Many go on to secure traditional law enforcement positions, placements in criminal justice services and agencies, or earn advanced degrees, and/or proceed to law school.

Emphasis on High Values and Morality

Criminal justice students, regardless of which path they intend to pursue, are taught to respect the dignity of every person and all faith traditions, and contribute to social well-being, especially the poor and oppressed in local communities and in the larger world. Therefore, learning about the value of human life is central to studying criminology and criminal justice.

A well-rounded curriculum of criminal justice study, especially those folded into a liberal arts education, emphasizes citizenship-building and civic virtue. This is particularly important for those who will become criminal justice professionals or policy makers. Students must understand the importance of critically thinking about civil and human rights issues as they relate to criminal justice policy and practice.

Some institutions offer an approach that is neither a narrowly-conceived technical program nor separated from real-world criminal justice. Instead, a broad-based social science approach to teaching and learning criminology and criminal justice that introduces students to theory, research, and practice is the approach we offer. This method of teaching prepares students for the changes they are likely to confront in the areas of technology, social diversity, and legal responsibilities.

Staying Current

Criminal justice students should welcome the opportunity to be exposed to the theory and research of criminology and criminal justice while remaining current with criminal justice practice and issues they will face in the world.

Many criminal justice students also pursue minor courses of study, which may be in closely related disciplines such as forensics science, law and jurisprudence, or computer crime – or they may just be in fields that students find interesting, such as sociology, psychology, communications or a foreign language.



Career Opportunities

As previously stated, criminal justice students can progress to several different postgraduate paths. Careers may include working for law enforcement units, government agencies (FBI, DEA, Homeland Security, etc.), and victim services departments, or becoming a crime analyst, instructor, PhD, or attorney.

To increase their marketability after college, students should ensure that academic and practical experience is gained in areas such as victimology, social problems, and diversity issues, and supplement their learning with courses in psychology, sociology, or social work. All students are encouraged to secure an internship to obtain experience before graduation.

Some other tips to consider, if interested:

- ▶ Seek leadership opportunities and develop strong interpersonal skills.
- ▶ Obtain related training or certifications such as CPR, first aid, or EMT.

- ▶ Complete an internship in a crime laboratory or agency to gain experience in the forensic application of science.
- ▶ Gain related experience in employment interviewing, social casework, substance abuse, and rehabilitation.
- ▶ Learn to work well with people of diverse backgrounds and consider learning a second language.
- ▶ Maintain a blemish-free driving and criminal record.
- ▶ Become familiar with the government application process.
- ▶ Get a teaching certificate for elementary or secondary education.
- ▶ Earn a Master's degree.

Talia Harmon, Ph.D., is chair of the criminology and criminal justice department at Niagara University. She teaches courses in criminal procedural Law, substantive criminal law, principles of justice, capital punishment, and statistics. Her main research interests involve capital punishment and issues relating to innocence, death qualification, racial discrimination, and competency for execution. Niagara University offers bachelor's and master's degree programs in criminology and criminal justice.

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By Sonja Montiel



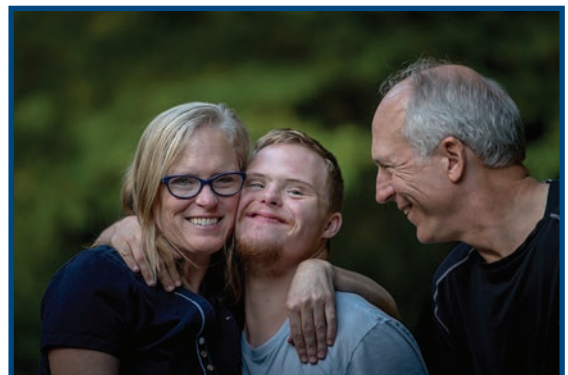
College counseling needs all the help it can get. In the 20 years of working in this profession, it has been concerning to watch how this one path after high school transformed into a huge emotional and financial burden on families. It is like the college admission process took on an identity all on its own, leaving conversations about its purpose behind.

ChallengeSuccess, published an article, *Race to the Bottom* (<https://www.challengesuccess.org/blog/race-to-the-bottom>), reporting that teens are secretly competing with each other on who feels most stressed, getting the least amount of sleep, and sacrificing the most in the name of achievement. Further, family members of teens are reporting increased anxiety and questioning if their teens are doing enough in order to be competitive for college admissions. As a result, parents are coaching their teens to be busy in order to gain access to higher education, as if the act of being busy is considered an achievement itself. And you can bet that if teens and their families are stressed, so are their college counselors.

Well, enough of that. I join many colleagues in my profession who feel a sense of urgency to change our current college-going culture, or what I call fixed-mindset-achievement-culture. While there are so many approaches to begin this work, I began with identifying my closest ally—the parents and family members of teens.

I started to focus my energy on parents and family members when I was a college counselor at Villanova Preparatory School in California. Coming from my previous role as an admission officer at a large public university and my own experience being a first-generation college student, I knew that the adults raising teens had to be just as involved and knowledgeable in college admission planning as the students were.

My college counseling programming included events solely focused on parents and family members with the purpose of giving them their own space to learn about tools, tips, and resources on how to keep college admission planning teen-centered. Through these experiences, we created a community where the adults felt safe to process their own emotions and confusion about how to support their teens. I quickly realized that if the





adults weren't given time to share (sometimes unleash) their anxiety, then they would unintentionally share that with their teens at home. Ultimately, if the adults are calm, centered, and knowledgeable, then their teens are likely to follow.

Ideas for Parent-Only Programs in College Planning

While my first two programs align with the pre-COVID days, there are valuable takeaways in terms of programming and building partnerships.

Monthly Morning Chats with the College Counselor

- Parents and family members from every grade level were invited to attend. There was no discrimination to begin connecting and learning from each other, and it was great to see parents of juniors and seniors mentor the parents of students from lower grades.
- First 10-minutes was mingle time to create opportunities to connect informally between parents and counselors.
- Next 25-minutes was me leading a discussion about one topic surrounding college admissions, which was followed by “homework” – reading an article, working on a college task and/or starting a guided conversation with their teen about admission planning. I relied on articles shared by NACAC and ChallengeSuccess, favoring research-based articles.
- Last 20-minutes was left for open discussion about anything parents had questions about. This period became pretty sacred as it transformed into a parent support group. College admission topics lured parents to attend, but what we really talked about was how we adults could maintain healthy relationships with our teens and better align our efforts between families and counselors.

PTSA Parent Education

- When I became an independent education consultant, I served on the PTSA board at my daughter's public high school. The high school counselors had too large of a caseload to be consistent with monthly events, so I was invited to work together on building the monthly agenda and host monthly Parent Education nights surrounding college admissions.
- I followed the same pattern as I did previously at Villanova, but altered the time frames between mornings and nights so that working parents had opportunities to attend. Parents reported how much they needed an outlet to learn, reflect, and realize what their roles were in their teens' academic life.



Connection in the Time of COVID

- Oh, if only we could have face-to-face connection again. When COVID hit, parents needed support more than ever. I converted these events to Zoom and found out that parents liked the ease of showing up to these events.

Reach out to me if you want me to share agendas, articles, and parent “homework” assignments. I will gladly share in the name of keeping college admission planning teen-centered as we lessen anxiety, stress, and confusion.

Sonja Montiel has served more than 20 years in the college admissions profession, having extensive experience in the areas of freshman, transfer, and international admissions. She founded College Confidence (<https://www.collegeconfidence.net>) in 2002 with the purpose of protecting the worth and authenticity of teens so that they feel ready to take on the world. Her students are more than engineers, business leaders, teachers, and doctors. They are innovators, creators, and compassionate problem solvers.



The Realities of the First-Year

by Heather Couch

Starting a new job is exciting and it is easy to glamorize it. The first six months consist mainly of learning and getting acclimated to the position. This is how the first few months of my first year were. I was in the mindset of changing everything and creating a school counseling program based on the ASCA National Model. School counseling is hard, and the work can be daunting. There were times I was ready to quit and admit defeat. It was important that I had a support system that helped during this time. This chapter will discuss the reality of school counseling (i.e. not taking student's behavior personally, applying constructive criticism, and regulating one's own emotions).

When I first took the position and looked at my schedule, I thought I would have plenty of time to work on making my program RAMP certified. I started by creating lesson plans that included prep-post tests to start collecting data. I gave a needs assessment to my sophomore class. We got a new college and career curriculum that I would have to implement at the start of the second semester. I worked furiously on researching what curriculum would be good for my sophomores because I did not want to do the same thing that the previous counselor did. I wanted to make the counseling department my own. I wanted it to reflect my vision for the school. So, I did, and I stayed busy.

Those first few months I call the honeymoon phase, because everything seems to be perfect. After all, I had a job, what more could I ask for? The teachers were welcoming, and the students were friendly. I was optimistic and hopeful about the state of our school. There was nothing wrong with my perspective, but it was a bit unrealistic and naïve. I did not have a fellow counselor to give me tips about handling frustrated teachers, students, and

parents or how to navigate the environment of the school. As I have mentioned, every school is not a "one-size-fits-all" for employment. I didn't have anyone in the school building to guide me through the ins and outs of what it meant to be a counselor there. My principal did have me reach out to a seasoned school counselor in our district and I would meet with her at least once a quarter.

Coming out of graduate school I was ready to implement the ASCA model wherever I went and advocate for the profession with gusto. If one ends up working in a school that does not implement the ASCA model, it is hard to convince the administrators and faculty to change. I realized this when I started unintentionally stepping on toes. Luckily, my principal was in favor of moving towards the ASCA model. He allowed me to do as much as I could with using Social Emotional Learning, DBT (Dialectical Behavioral Therapy) for schools, and creating my own programming. However, I wasn't going to get out of being the testing administrator. There are just some battles that won't be won. That was when reality hit me.

Real Life as a First-Year School Counselor

Morgan Capucini, School Counselor at Williamsburg Middle High School, shares her experience as a first-year school counselor. "I remember being in graduate school and seeing a fellow student wearing a t-shirt that stated 'WORLD'S OKAYEST SCHOOL COUNSELOR'. I thought it was funny and laughed to myself, hoping that when I became a school counselor no one would ever purchase that shirt for me. Fast forward about a year later when I was sitting in my first "real" school counseling job staring at a mountain

of files and reports. My eyes were tired, my head was throbbing and my heart was racing. I felt like the whole world could collapse and I wouldn't even care. As I grabbed one of the many folders in front of me to dive into the paperwork, I remembered the shirt I had seen in graduate school. In this moment, I hoped that I would even live up to being an "ok" school counselor."

As I reflect back on that first year, most of the memories are positive. For context you should know that I have a caseload of 600 students grades 6 - 12 and I am the only school counselor in my district. I am someone who loves to learn and try new things and the majority of that year was just that- trying, assessing, and evolving. I learned everything from how to create and code courses for state funding, to sitting with someone when they find out their best friend in the entire world has suddenly died. Each day brought me a new adventure, some undesired and frustrating, but ultimately those adventures reminded me of the importance of the role of the school counselor. "Knowing how important I was to my school and the students I serve was the one thing I could hold onto that first year."

As you begin your first year as a school counselor, be realistic about the job. I love being a school counselor! However, it is a bed of roses with

thorns. There are things about the job that are hard and aspects I don't enjoy. When we are taught in graduate school to counsel and not give AP tests, it is hard to love giving AP tests. I was fortunate at my first school that I didn't have to do scheduling. Many high school counselors spend a lot of time working on student schedules. The extra duties that school counselors get assigned are the ones I don't love. It takes away from our time with the students. However, we have to do them. I try to look at it from a Growth Mindset and see how I can use those duties to help further my work with the students. Take every opportunity you are given and be the best at it.

*Heather Couch is a School Counselor at Blanchester Middle School in Southwest Ohio. In 2016, Heather received her MA in School Counseling from Xavier University. As a school counselor, Heather helped create and implement the Whole Child Initiative, implement a new college and career curriculum, and spearhead the social emotional learning curriculum. She was on the Kentucky School Counselor Association board, the American School Counselor Association Position Statement Committee, and she has presented at school counselor conferences throughout the Midwest on the social emotional needs of gifted students. Heather recently published a book through Routledge Publishing titled *The School Counselor's Guide to Surviving the First Year*.*



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Finding Mental Health Resources for Students: How to Make Confident Referrals

By Elizabeth Drucker

According to the American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry, suicide is the second leading cause of death for children, adolescents, and young adults age 15 to 24. As a counselor, you are on the front lines for all sorts of emotional disorders ranging from anxiety to mood disorders (e.g. depression and bipolar illness). Every community has a different mental health infrastructure, and it will help you do your best job to make confident referrals to the best professionals located in your own backyard. To do this, you should understand the different sources of mental health treatment available to teens. To stay organized, it would be helpful if you could maintain a “mental health” file in your office with the many sources of help that are available. You do not have to take on the responsibility of providing extensive psychiatric assessment and treatment for your students. Sometimes, just spending time listening to your students’ feelings and concerns will go a long way as they wait to be connected with the mental health resources in your community.

No matter what resources you suggest, always make sure to remind your students that seeking mental health services does not mean that they are “crazy.” Many of your students may be reluctant to seek out these resources because of the stigma that is so prevalent in our society. You should try to make mental health awareness a priority at your school, by helping students see that medications and therapy can be extremely effective. There is no shame in seeking help.

Psychotherapists

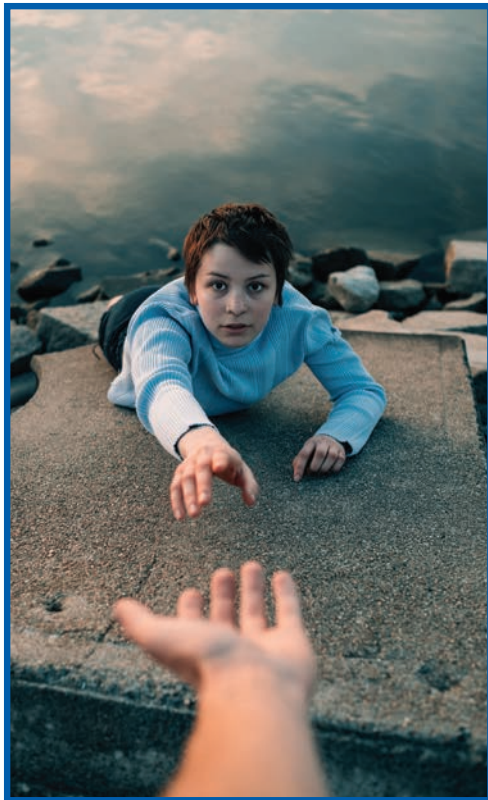
There are many types of therapists who do outpatient talk therapy. These include clinical psychologists, licensed clinical social workers, and professional counselors. Each one of these professionals has different training, but they all learn in depth information about assessing and treating mental illnesses. You should know which therapists are accepting new patients and what insurances they take. Many of them even work on a sliding fee scale, where the therapist adjusts his or her fee based on the family’s ability to afford these services. You should also know a little bit about each one of these practitioners. For example, some psychotherapists do the Cognitive Behavioral Therapy that is helpful for depression and anxiety, while others specialize in eating disorders or self-harm behaviors. It may also be helpful to have in-person meetings with these psychotherapists to get to know them better, on an informal basis.

Most people who work in the mental health field know that psychotherapy is like any strong relationship: some people are better “fits.”

Psychiatrists and Psychiatric Nurse Practitioners

Even in urban areas, it can be hard to get an appointment with a psychiatrist. This is a

professional who prescribes medication to target psychiatric symptoms like depression and anxiety. Some psychiatrists do psychotherapy too, but that is becoming rare. To treat more severe symptoms, it is more effective to combine medication with psychotherapy. These are two different strategies that work together to attack mental health difficulties. Some psychiatric nurses receive advanced training in which they can assume the role of a psychiatrist, by prescribing medications and administering psychotherapy. Another option to obtain prescription medications is to pay a visit to your pediatrician or other primary care physician. They are qualified to use medication to treat more mild manifestations of adolescent mental health issues. You may also want to encourage parents to place your students on a psychiatrist's waiting list, and work with the pediatrician until the student has that first appointment.



Students should be prepared to cope with the side effects of psychiatric medications, which can include sedation, weight gain, and dry mouth. You might want to involve the nurse at your school to provide further education on how these medications work and ways to minimize the side effects. Encourage your students to give these uncomfortable symptoms a chance to subside.

Mental Health Agencies in the Community

Again, every community differs in its availability of mental health resources. Children and adolescents may have an even harder time getting an appointment with a mental health provider. Some hospitals and clinics may offer an urgent care option where a psychiatrist or nurse practitioner offers time-limited treatment, to resolve the immediate presenting crisis. It may take several weeks (at least) for psychiatric medication to ameliorate the symptoms, so it would help to get a head start on the initial prescription. Mental health agencies may provide other services to the community such as case management and support groups that help families cope with mental illness. Case managers may assist your students and their families in getting hooked up with other resources in the community, such as low-cost healthcare and food assistance.

Hospitals/Inpatient Facilities

For students who are more unstable or whose mental health symptoms make them unsafe, you should immediately refer them to the nearest emergency room. If your students describe thoughts or behaviors about harming themselves/others, they may need inpatient psychiatric help to stabilize. Psychiatric hospitals are a good option when the symptoms are severe or you do not have an established diagnosis. You should be aware of what emergency procedures are necessary when referring a student for a mental health crisis. This could mean something as simple as calling 911 and explaining that you are having a mental health emergency. Some communities even have mobile crisis teams made of counselors and other emergency personnel who are trained to evaluate people in mental health crises. They can also transport them to the Emergency Room if that further evaluation and treatment is necessary. Always remember that safety is the number one priority.

Inpatient hospitalization also offers your students a “break” from the stressors of school so they can focus on healing from their psychiatric crisis. Adolescent psychiatric units are also helpful because your students will be with other teens who are struggling to cope with their own mental health diagnoses. When they see that other teens their age are also experiencing significant depression and anxiety, they will feel less “alone.” Hospitals may seem an option of last resort, but they are a one stop shop that offers your students expert diagnosis and treatment when there is a crisis or nothing else seems to work.

Scholarship Watch



Curated by Scholarship Owl

■ RentHop Apartment Scholarship

<https://www.renthop.com/resources/college-scholarship>

Applicants get a chance at an optional internship. Applicants must be accepted or enrolled as a full-time student.

Award: \$1,000

Deadline: April 30, 2021

Contact: Email submissions to college-scholarship@renthop.com

■ Barry P. Goldberg Auto Safety Scholarship

<https://www.barrypgoldberg.com/barry-p-goldberg-professional-law-corporation-auto-safety-scholarship>

Students pursuing any degree may apply.

Awards: \$3,000

Deadline: March 15, 2021

Contact: Email submissions to bpg@barrypgoldberg.com

■ Collegiate Powerlifter Scholarship Program

<https://southfloridaathleticclub.com/scholarship/>

Any student ages 18 and older may apply.

Award: \$3,000

Deadline: July 1, 2021

Contact: Students should send their entry to scholarship@southfloridaathleticclub.com

■ Private Real Estate Finance Scholarship

<https://hardmoola.com/scholarship/>

Applicants enrolled in college with a 3.0 GPA or greater are eligible.

Award: \$2,000

Deadline: July 15, 2021

Contact: Email submissions to hardmoola@gmail.com

■ Lozano Law Firm Scholarship

<https://www.abogadolozano.com/scholarship-for-college-students>

Applicants enrolled in college, studying Legal Professions and Legal Studies are eligible to apply.

Award: \$1,000

Deadline: August 1, 2021

Contact: Submissions should be emailed to scholarship@abogadolozano.com

■ Big Berkey Water Filters Scholarship

<https://www.bigberkeywaterfilters.com/scholarships>

Students 16 years of age or older, enrolled in college with a 3.0 GPA may apply.

Award: \$1000

Deadline: June 30, 2021

Contact: Entry should be submitted to scholarship@bigberkeywaterfilters.com

■ How Do YOU Make College Cheaper Scholarship

<http://cheapscholar.org/2011/08/15/how-do-you-make-college-cheaper-scholarship>

Students enrolled in college are eligible to apply.

Award: \$500

Deadline: August 15, 2021

Contact: Email submissions to Support@CheapScholar.org

■ Share Your Talent Scholarship

<https://www.greenlightbooking.com/share-your-talent-scholarship>

Applicants 17 years of age or older may apply for this scholarship.

Award: \$1000

Deadline: August 1, 2021

Contact: Email submissions to scholarship@greenlightbooking.com

■ Perfect Plants Scholarship

<https://myperfectplants.com/scholarship-application>

Students studying Agriculture and Related Sciences with a 3.0 GPA and greater are eligible to apply

Award: \$1000

Deadline: August 20, 2021

Contact: Email submissions to contact@myperfectplants.com

■ You Deserve It Scholarship

<https://scholarshipowl.com>

The applicant must be 16 years of age or older and be a legal resident of the United States.

Award: \$1000

Deadline: Monthly; 29th of each month

Contact: Register and apply on <https://scholarshipowl.com>

■ Celebrity Scholarship

<https://celebrityscholarship.com>

Applicant must be 16 years of age or older and be a legal resident of the United States

Award: \$500

Deadline: December 31, 2021

Contact: To apply, visit <https://celebrityscholarship.com>



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Considerations minority students should take in searching for that perfect College fit

By Jim Paterson

Nearly all college websites today have prominent pictures of a diverse group of students in an appealing campus setting, chatting, and smiling. And that often can be the experience that minority students have.

But experts say students from minority communities still may face unique challenges in college and should be aware of how their experience may be different and take that into consideration in their college search and as they head off to the institution they've selected.

Federal government data shows that in recent years undergraduate enrollment has risen recently for each racial/ethnic group. Hispanic student's enrollment rose from 353,000 in 1976 to 2,103,000 in a decade, or from two percent of the total to seven. Black enrollment rose from 943,000 to 2,269,000, increasing their share of overall enrollment from 10 to 14 percent.

But experts say while these students should be pleased with the greater opportunity, they may find that barriers still exist. "Minority students may encounter environments that are not very welcoming when they get to college," says Samuel Museus, director of the National Institute for Transformation and Equity (NITE) and a professor in the Department of Education Studies at the University of California, San Diego. He has written extensively about minority students in higher education.

"College can be a challenging time for them," he

says. "However, students who intentionally think about selecting a college where they will have access to people who understand them and access to programs that are relevant to their lives will be more likely to thrive," he says.

The issues faced by minority students can range from overt racist acts by students or discriminatory behavior by a professor to more subtle implicit bias or even an "imposter syndrome" where others – or, minority students themselves – believe they have been given special treatment and do not deserve to attend the school or gain recognition.



Paulette Granberry Russell, president of the National Association of Diversity Officers in Higher Education and a senior advisor to the president for diversity at Michigan State University, says that concerns about how they may be treated should not hinder their efforts to succeed and make the college experience rewarding. “They should never forget, these will be some of the best years of your life,” she says. “The associated struggles and growth will pay off in the end.”



Consider the environment.

Initially, every minority student should be encouraged to think about how they will feel on a specific college campus and the surrounding community, experts say. That might require them to not only visit the campus and spend time in the nearby area, but to talk to students who look like them about the comfort level those students have. They might talk to an alumni from the school, a minority student who could be contacted through the admissions office. While overt racism may have declined, it is important to just know about any concerns.

In talks with persons in a specific department, students should not shy away from asking about the number of students from minority groups and how they perform – and should ask for data.

Museus says that college officials should be able

to connect a student from a minority group with organizations that represent them, and they should be concerned if such organizations do not exist. “Cultural centers, diversity and inclusion centers and programs designed to support first-generation college students and students of color are typically effective at providing caring and validating experiences for students from minoritized backgrounds,” he says.

He notes that involvement in such groups can be valuable in several ways. “Ethnic or identity-based student organizations typically allow students of color to build valuable relationships with people who understand them, offer a space where they can be themselves and not feel like an outsider, provide opportunities for leadership experience relevant to their communities, and provide ways for students to give back to their communities.”

Russell says that they should look for a wide range of such organizations, indicating that a campus is welcoming to all types of cultures and races. Those organizations along with seminars and symposiums and guest lecturers will “provide an understanding of how to navigate in a global society”, she says.

Check the data:

Minority students might want to check or ask about data related to the number of minority students on campus, where they come from and how they have succeeded – or they may be interested in how well minorities are represented on the faculty and staff. They can check the racial makeup of college on the federal government’s College Navigator site and click on the enrollment tab for individual colleges.

A recent Money magazine article noted that minority students can have very different outcomes at different schools. At a few schools, graduation rates for students were about 60%, but for minority students only about 35%. Meanwhile, at San Diego State and the University of North Carolina the graduation rate was over 60% for both. The College Results website has information about graduation rates.

They should also look for minority study programs, Museus says, which can “provide students of color with opportunities to get an education that is relevant to their communities, which makes it easier for many students to build stronger connections with the college experience”.

Adequate support is also important, Russell says.

Does a campus understand that a first-generation student may need additional support because their family's familiarity and comfort with the college experience is not extensive? High school experiences may also be different for low income and minority students, and a college should take that into consideration in the application process and when a student from an underserved district attends.

And what are the procedures and structures available if a student faces a discriminatory practice by another student or staff member? How complex is the process for filing a complaint, who handles them and how are they processed and adjudicated? "Become aware of the university's anti-discrimination policies and offices that deal with such matters, and the Title IX office where certain behavior involving sexual misconduct is handled, Russell says. "Such behavior is never okay. Report it for yourself and be an effective bystander who assists appropriately and supports someone who has experienced such behavior."

Be optimistic

On most campuses, diversity is a key goal, and colleges are finding ways to admit more students of color, support them and eliminate those elements of higher ed that have made it harder for them to attend and feel comfortable. And Russell says while minority students should be aware of the possibilities for barriers, they should also take advantage of the higher education experience fully and not be overly wary.

"Enjoy the process of learning, make new friends, find comfort within your community. However, also understand that there are times when you may experience or are aware of others who have been subjected to offensive behavior that should not be tolerated or endured, in or out of the classroom.

Here are four key principals that were established by an Access and Diversity Collaborative organized by the College Board. They can help counselors better evaluate a college or university about its policy toward minority students, the group claims:

- ◆ Does the institution have a comprehensive inventory of all policies and programs intended to recruit, admit, and enroll a diverse student population? Is there a process owner and plan to update this information over time? How does this policy and program inventory align with broader institutional goals, strategies, and initiatives?
- ◆ How do admissions and outreach reflect the institution's mission and educational goals? How do

they align with goals, strategies, and programmatic investments for students on campus?

◆ Is race or ethnicity included in these practices? If so, in what way? If the race or ethnicity of applicants is considered when admitting students or offering tangible benefits such as financial aid, why is the consideration necessary and what does it yield that would not be attained without the consideration of race? In other words, adequate? Can the institution show that the use of race has a demonstrable, consequential impact on its progress toward achieving the institutions diversity goals?

◆ Has the institution seriously considered strategies that may advance diversity goals? With what results?

Here are some other resources for minority students about their higher education choices and experience:

- Are You a First-Generation College Student? From the Community for Accredited Online Schools for success in college and beyond.
- Young Invincibles. It works to help young people have a greater voice in politics the economy focusing on diversity in higher education.
- Race and Ethnicity as a Barrier to Opportunity: A Blueprint for Higher Education Equity. A Young Invincibles report detailing the disparities of minorities' educational opportunities, college graduation rates and success post-graduation.
- How Can We Improve College Success for Underserved Students? Through Early, Sustained, and Multifaceted Support by the Education Solutions Initiative from New York University outlines strategies that would improve underserved students' college success: early intervention, transitional support and sustained support.
- American Council on Education. Which deals with equal opportunities for minorities and underserved populations on U.S. college campuses.

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



Occupational Therapy Assistant

By Dr. Beth Wolfe

For many students, a dream of a career in health care starts with the notion of becoming a nurse or a physician. And why not? Those critical roles are the ones the average person is most familiar with. But many more specialists are required for complete and effective care, and the pipeline for those roles often needs more qualified and passionate people.

One of these pathways is that of the Occupational Therapy Assistant, or OTA. Whether a patient has an acute or chronic condition that interferes with completing day-to-day tasks, an OTA can help them utilize assistive equipment or modify movements to make those tasks easier to accomplish.

While few people who have not utilized the services of an OTA are aware of what they do, those who have been assisted by OTAs know how integral they are to improving one's quality of life. From the child with developmental disabilities whose coordination is improved to be able to play with her peers, to the Parkinson's patient who can maintain independent eating with specialized assistive devices, people from all walks of life benefit from the work of Occupational Therapy Assistants.

Now is a great time to enter the field of Occupational Therapy as the national median salary for OTAs was \$61,160 in 2019 according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, and the outlook for growth is phenomenal. The BLS anticipates the OTA field to grow by 35% between 2019 and 2029, much faster than average overall job growth. And all of this opportunity is available with the completion of a two-year associate's degree.

Because the nature of OTA work is so patient-centric, the educational path to certification includes many hours of clinical experience working with patients. In the OTA program at the University of Charleston (WV), the final three (of five) semesters place students in a variety of treatment settings from home health to hospital care. This helps students determine the area they would most like to pursue in their full-time work.

Not only do OTAs need incredible interpersonal skills, creativity and problem-solving are important components to the work as well. The director of the University of Charleston's OTA program, Jackie Hurt, described how a student's ingenuity solved a huge problem for a patient: "Being in Appalachia, we often see clients who are on fixed incomes with limited insurance. During one clinical experience, a client needed a \$75 shower extension that insurance would not cover. Our student thought about it, went to the dollar store, and with three dollars' worth of pool noodles and some duct tape, constructed an extension that worked for the patient and was easily replaceable!"

While the demand for physicians and nurses will always exist, it is important to be aware of the full range of incredible opportunities in health care, including the crucial and creative work of Occupational Therapy Assistants!

Dr. Beth Wolfe is the Executive Vice President of Enrollment Management at the University of Charleston (WV), a small, private institution with more than 40-degree programs in the Schools of Arts and Sciences, Business and Leadership, Health Sciences, and Pharmacy.

"Time travel is just too dangerous":



Helping Students Visualize their Future through Internships

By Marian G. Carpenter

Sometimes, as a teacher and college counselor at The Siena School, in Silver Spring, Maryland, I wish my students had access to Marty McFly's time traveling DeLorean so they could visit their future to see the impact of the decisions they're making and the payoff from the hard work they're putting in right now. But, as Doc tells us at the end of *Back to the Future Part II*, "time traveling is just too dangerous," so educators have to come up with creative ways to help students visualize their future in the here and now. Internships have this potential.

Siena is an independent school for bright, college-bound students in grades 4 to 12 with mild to moderate language-based learning differences such as dyslexia. All of our high school students complete an annual 60-hour internship over two weeks in March. Through these internships, students explore careers of interest and develop 21st century skills that are vital to college and career success, such as independence, self-advocacy, professionalism, adaptability, problem-solving, and critical thinking. At the end of each internship, students reflect on and evaluate their experiences, consider their strengths, and set goals for the next year. When our seniors complete their graduation surveys, they often cite the Internship Program as one of the most impactful opportunities of their high school experience. They write that their internships empowered them, and that their experiences helped them build confidence while discovering what they would like to pursue as a college major or future career.

So, how can we help students tap into the potential of internships? At Siena, I teach a class in the

fall where students brainstorm their interests, research employers, and finally pitch themselves to create partnerships with nearby businesses and organizations. I often field questions from parents about how involved they should be in the process, and I explain that their role is to engage their child in interesting conversations about their goals and possible career paths. We emphasize that it is the student's responsibility to contact potential employers and secure the internship. Parents, especially those with a student going through the process for the first time, might still be skeptical. They worry that their student will struggle with the executive functioning required to successfully complete this multi-step process. They wonder, will my child secure an internship that is actually interesting, or will they settle for something because it is easy? In our experience running our Internship Program for the past 14 years, we have found that the right structure helps students successfully apply for and complete internships that are a good match and in which they are genuinely interested.



Our students repeatedly report that chunking and modeling are the most helpful forms of structure as they work to secure internships. During the very first internship class meeting of the year, we review this graphic organizer (see sidebar page 54) that chunks and establishes due dates for each step. The students refer to the graphic organizer as they move through the process and check off steps they've completed and to begin work on what comes next.

The area about which our students, and most teenagers in general, feel the most trepidation is reaching out to potential employers. We provide students with sentence starters and an email template so they can compose emails with a professional voice and provides all the necessary details about the program, their interests, and their relevant experience. Similarly, we introduce students to making professional phone calls by having them personalize a phone call script, complete with graphic organizers in which they can enter details about why they are pursuing this particular internship and where they can take notes with important follow up information during their calls. We also have students pair up and practice calls where one student pretends to be the potential employer. Through this practice, students become comfortable deviating from or jumping around in the script. Modeling how to communicate professionally helps students take charge of contacting potential sponsors to secure their internships, and students who nervously emailed potential employers as ninth and tenth graders, become more ambitious and reach out



with comfort as eleventh and twelfth graders.

To help students consider their experiences during internships in the context of their own college and career goals, they create a reflection project that explains their experiences and takeaways to their peers. Our students are wonderfully creative, and the final projects have ranged from photography exhibits and dance performances to talk-show style interviews and videos of public service

announcements. Often, students show off the materials they created during their internships, which tells us that internships engage students in real-world work that matters to them.

In April, after the Internship Program has concluded for the year, we survey our students and parents about their experiences. Here are examples of the feedback we've received from parents:

"The students arranging the internship on their own is fantastic because it puts the responsibility in their hands. And getting a taste of professional life is wonderful. Other schools should consider this!"

"My child became very responsible. The employer took them to meet other people 'in the field' and talked to them about college, jobs and gave them ideas of what that field has to offer."

"This led to many conversations about what my child enjoys, what they want to do in the future, and the value of school."

Our students report that internships make them feel confident and empowered. They practiced the process they will go through when applying to college or for a job, they developed comfort presenting themselves professionally, and they visualized what their future could look like in a particular career.

Now more than ever, as many students during the COVID-19 pandemic feel isolated and uncertain about the future, internships can offer them unique opportunities to connect with professional mentors and to gain insights into possible paths for their futures. This year at Siena, our high school students are pursuing virtual internships, and we are encouraging them to think big and to consider opportunities beyond our locality.

Ultimately, internships empower students, and with the right structure, students may secure real-world work experiences that allow them to take charge of their futures, even if there isn't a DeLorean in the driveway.

Marian G. Carpenter (mcarpenter@thesienaschool.org) teaches high school English, as well as leads the Internship and College Counseling Programs at The Siena School in Silver Spring, MD. She earned her B.A. from Bates College where she was awarded the 2007 John Tagliabue Prize for Creative Writing. She then earned her M.F.A. from the University of Maryland after producing a book-length manuscript of original poems.

Internship Timeline

Month	Steps
September, October <u>Research Your Interests</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brainstorm ideas for internship • Research jobs and interests for internship • Use MaiaLearning • Use the Job Bank
November, December <u>Prepare Materials</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create a resume - use template • Continue researching potential internships • Contact potential employers - Email Template and Phone Call Script • Interview with potential employers (maybe)
January <u>Follow Up</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Follow up with employers and contact new employers • Phone conversations and interviews with employers
February <u>Finalize Details</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Secure internship by February 1st • Complete Internship Permission Slip (a Google form) and Internship Waiver • Schedule preview visit
March <u>Complete Internship, Reflect on Experiences, and Set Goals</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • February 26th - Preview Visit (dismissed at 1:50pm) • March 1st-12th - Complete Internship! <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Spend last 15 to 20 minutes each day during internship working on your project • Present project - Week of March 22nd • Reflect on your internship and set goals for next year's internship
Spring/ Summer <u>Next Year: Think Ahead</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brainstorm ideas for next year! • Possibly secure a summer internship or job - follow the same process and use the same tools.

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“To Gap year or Not”

by Dawn Marie Barhyte



Recently there has been an increase in students' interest in taking a gap year before going to college. If your student is interested in expanding their horizons and growing as an individual, a gap year might be a great choice. Peter VanBuskirk, author of the Admissions Game, says the increase in gap years is a positive trend. He says, one of the long-held myths is that college must immediately follow high school. The sad truth is that few are truly ready to take full advantage of the educational opportunities at that point in their lives. They might be eager for the personal independence that comes with residential college, but they have yet to grasp a sense of purpose borne out of who they are, what they want to accomplish, and how they might best accomplish their goals. Gap years afford students the opportunity to engage in self-discovery.

Maria Furtado, ex-director of Colleges that Change Lives, agrees and says gap years are a great option for students. Some students feel burned out after high school, others feel a year of work or travel will give them a better perspective on their college experience. However, students do not have to do the extensive and expensive world travel that is sometimes equated with gap years. They can work or volunteer near home and still have an incredibly valid experience.

In fact, some colleges allow students to defer admission for one year to show support for the gap year trend. Ideally, a gap year can deepen one's practical, professional, and personal awareness. But it is no small decision because gap years are gaining traction in the United States, and it is important to look at them as an option. It is not a vacation, although some students take a gap year because they need a break before heading back to the classroom. So, what is a gap year and who should take one? Should counselors be informing students of this option when starting the college application process?

The Gap Year Association says it is a focused, finite period where the student takes a deliberate break from his or her current academic path to explore other interests. Although this break can be fun, adventurous, and exciting, it should have distinct structure and goals that utilize the opportunity to develop a new skill, gain life experience, and consider how those interests fit into long-term educational and personal enrichment. A gap year is a chance to explore while considering who am I, what is important to me, and what do I want to do with my life? An intentionally designed gap year can help students develop a sense of purpose and



direction. According to the American Association of Gap Years, 90% of students who take a gap year matriculated to college within a year. Researchers say there is incredible potential for adolescent learning and growth because it is a developmental moment when significant social and cognitive changes occur. In fact, studies have shown that gap year students once enrolled have higher GPAs and are more involved on campus. This out-of-classroom experience gained from a gap year gives students life lessons that help them be more mature and self-sufficient, traits that will serve them well once on campus.

Gap year students achieve growth in maturity so that they are better prepared to benefit from higher education. Peter VanBuskirk agrees and says those students who step away from the academic treadmill reenter academic life with a much greater sense of intentionality and are more likely to fully embrace the academic opportunities then. He adds the gap year is a bit of a conundrum for most selective colleges. While they acknowledge the benefits to students in added perspective, maturity, and focus, they are wary of actively promoting the gap year due to the adverse impact it might have on their yield on offers of admission and selectivity. As a result, when a student reveals their plans for a gap year, they become a low yield candidate who, if admitted, might not subsequently enroll, thereby adversely affecting the institutions selectivity. If you are counseling the student, stress it is best not to present your gap year plans until after they are admitted.

Maria Furtado says each student gap year fills their own needs. Some need the break from academics that work, or travel can offer. Some want to begin networking experiences of an internship or volunteer job. The goal is to help the student grow and mature, preparing them for their college experience next year.

For a gap year to be successful it is important

to have a plan. The more students explore their options and understand consequences thoughtfully weighing the pros and cons of taking a gap year, the happier they will be with the outcome. Preparation is critical to having a good gap year. Similarly choosing the activities and setting goals for time off is key. The better organized a gap year, the better the experience promises to be. So, if you have students who are excited about college but not ready to begin their academic career, help them start thinking about taking a gap year early on when students start applying to universities. It makes sense then that students are more likely to be successful in college if they are excited about coursework. Indeed, a gap year can be rejuvenating, help students gain perspective, and solidify interests and goals. This out of the classroom experience can give students life lessons as they mature, make them more aware of work and become more self-sufficient, traits that will serve them well once on campus.

Here are some tips if your student is thinking of taking a pause to refresh:

◆ **Start with a self-assessment:** Coach students to look at where they are now and explore where they want to go. Ideally, where do you want to be at 30? What do you value most? What are my strengths and weaknesses? What interests do you want to pursue? What are my favorite classes and activities?

◆ **Chart a Course:** Encourage students to take the steps needed by investigating interests to prepare for the future. Develop a plan and make a gap year goal. For example, they may want to study Spanish so traveling abroad to a Spanish-speaking country to immerse themselves in the culture might be the perfect fit.

◆ **Decisions, Decisions.** Help students make up their minds by encouraging them to weigh the possibilities. Help them decide if they want to plan their gap year or enroll in a structured program. Share this guide with students so they can be more confident they are making a good decision:

- ▶ **Define the problem**
- ▶ **Gather all the info needed to make a sound decision**
- ▶ **Seek guidance from those who know more**
- ▶ **Utilize all resources**
- ▶ **Brainstorm to identify potential outcomes and consequences**
- ▶ **Evaluate how the decisions fit with goals and values**

◆ **Go for it!** Help students take charge of their future by setting goals to work on during their gap year.

◆ **Monitor progress as students work toward goals.**



Here are some activities students can engage in during their gap year that they may not be aware of:

Volunteer: There are countless opportunities that welcome youth, depending on what the student wants to pursue. They should choose based on the field they are most interested in. For example, if interested in the medical field choose a hospital or health care facility, animal shelters if interested in animals, schools if interested in education, etc. This can ignite passion for a field with lots to explore and hands-on experience.

If your students see a need in their community, they can channel their energy to find solutions. Your students will be more connected to their community, make a difference and have fun doing it. Volunteering makes them feel good, helps them broaden their circle of friends, and learn new skills, which can open doors.

Part time/Summer jobs: Can be a stepping stone to their future and will promote work ethic. It is a savvy way to determine if the student is suited to a field. Working is a way to experience the grit and glamour of an occupation while getting paid.

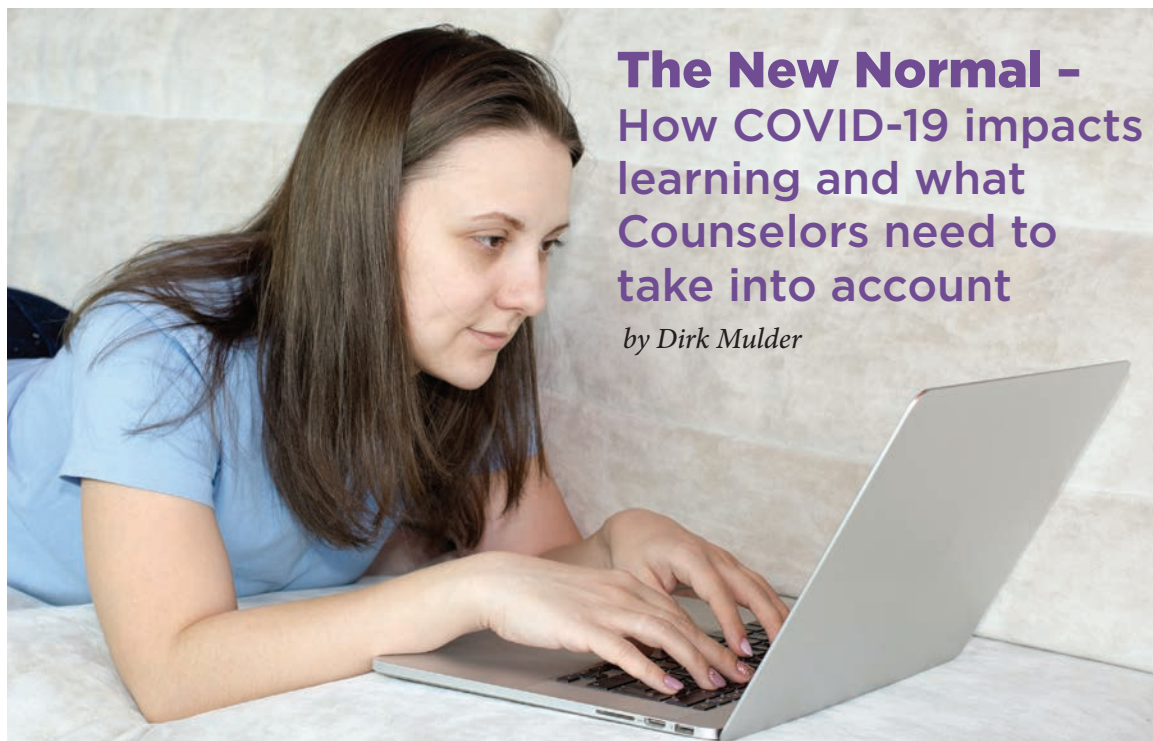
Internships: Hands-on experience will permit the student to see how the field they are interested in works and allow them to determine if their skills and strengths are a good match while offering structure and supervision. Through this experience, the student will be better prepared to make intelligent decisions about where to invest their time, energy, and skills. Can take time to explore interests before formal studying to decide how they want to spend academic years ahead.

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

THE TOP 10

The top 10 most read LINK for Counselors blog posts of 2020 (based on clicks in our e-newsletter)

- 1. Four Things to Do When Your Daughter Gets Rejected by Her First Choice College:** <https://www.linkforcounselors.com/4-things-to-do-when-your-daughter-gets-rejected-by-her-first-choice-college>
- 2. The Five Essential Components of an Effective College Application Lesson:** <https://www.linkforcounselors.com/the-five-essential-components-of-an-effective-college-application-lesson>
- 3. COVID-Era College Prep:** <https://www.linkforcounselors.com/covid-era-college-prep>
- 4. Creating a Senior Packet:** <https://www.linkforcounselors.com/creating-a-senior-packet>
- 5. The Mad Libs Cure for the College Essay:** <https://www.linkforcounselors.com/the-mad-libs-cure-for-the-college-essay>
- 6. Wait, How Do I Write This Email?:** <https://www.linkforcounselors.com/wait-how-do-i-write-this-email>
- 7. Average High School Counselor Salary by State:** <https://www.linkforcounselors.com/average-high-school-counselor-salary-by-state>
- 8. A Veteran Admission Experts Take on College During a Pandemic:** <https://www.linkforcounselors.com/a-veteran-admission-experts-take-on-college-during-a-pandemic>
- 9. The College Board and PSAT Scores: Oh, No, Not Again!:** <https://www.linkforcounselors.com/the-college-board-and-psat-scores-oh-no-not-again>
- 10. Train Your Mind to Think New Thoughts:** <https://www.linkforcounselors.com/train-your-mind-to-think-new-thoughts>



The New Normal - How COVID-19 impacts learning and what Counselors need to take into account

by Dirk Mulder

The world is a different place, at least for the time being. We see this in almost every aspect of life, from visiting the grocery store, to engaging with our family and friends and seeing our beloved professional sporting teams in empty stadiums. Education is no different and it has had to evolve quickly to ensure safety while continuing to produce outcomes of a high standard for students. These standards, while most will argue are comparable albeit delivered via very different means, need to be understood and individualised for each student to ensure the future they seek is as comparable. While the changes we see as we fight the pandemic are stark, they will no doubt reverberate and forever change the way we approach education and the support we offer to students.

Pre-COVID-19

The USA, as per other countries around the world, has an established education system and while not one system on its own can be labelled perfect, ones that exist in the western world are first class and offer opportunity for all.

The role of the high school Counselor within the system was and is still clear: to understand each student in their care, understand their ability, their options and advise accordingly. This advising is to ensure each student can reach their potential.

The system on which this is based is mature, and continually refined over time to ensure evolving

educational and societal transformations were met. While these changes have come along from time to time (example - the advent of the computer and move to smart teaching methods which are now largely accepted as positive influences in education) not one of these has been as dramatic or overwhelmingly impactful as what we have experienced over the past 11 months. COVID-19 has been a lightning rod in speeding up education's move to incorporating and relying on online learning. It has brought major challenges and opportunities. These are evident for Counselors who now find themselves navigating vastly different settings both within the school setting and outside of it.

COVID-19 and its effects on education

Covid-19 has directly impacted education in the USA and around the globe the way nothing else has in the past 50-100 years and in a much shorter time frame. The obvious impact is that education could not and, in some cases, still cannot be conducted in a traditional classroom setting with many school districts and Universities having to close their doors to this medium, almost overnight. In my part of the world, Australia, this has meant state governments (who have carriage over education) imposed extended school vacations and forced upon its schools, both public and private, a new online mode of learning.

While online learning in itself is not a new phenomenon it is a brand-new concept for most educators in the secondary setting. It is no longer a choice or nice 'add-on' for progressive schools who explored this, but rather a scaled compulsory measure for all.

Its introduction has been wide and varied. Much has been written from the teacher perspective about this new medium. Having to engage with students differently, having new pedagogical approaches to learn and it has no doubt tested the resolve and skills of many a teacher the world over, especially those who have been in the profession for a significant amount of time. The support received by the teaching community has also been wide and varied with teachers being on the frontline and student facing. The move to online is not just one for teachers though and it is important to recognize the important role of other members of the school community including students themselves, parents and other support staff including Counselors within the broad education system are being affected.



Many of your counterparts have had to re-learn how to engage with students. Their engagement isn't formal structured teaching however, it is around mental health, needs based work, and case work. Support is critical to ensure the ongoing case management throughout this massive change in the learning environment. Many have had to learn how to balance or in many cases have their world overrun with workload. We are now in an environment where staff are seemingly on call 24/7 with many 'zoom meetings' taking place after what once were considered 'normal' hours.

As teachers, administrators and staff struggle to stay on top of this change, the Counselors role has been magnified amongst the student community who also grapple with changes. Anxiety, pressure and just coping with these changes are by products of massive change on a light speed timeline.

The move to a more online based delivery model, curriculum and support of students hasn't been all bad. With it has come immense opportunities to engage in real time, albeit virtually. It allows the learning resources to be at the fingertips of those who seek them and presents an opportunity for curriculum development that was once never thought of. We can now collaborate with other schools, districts, and institutions in sharing curriculum that can be packaged for a more individualised approach to the student. That is not at all a bad thing.

With an online curriculum now firmly established in most schools there is the inherent possibility that we have seen our last ever 'snow day' with students now being able to learn from home as the need arises. Perhaps even the opportunity for students to attend classes hundreds of miles away or to take a class their school does not offer locally.

Preparing students for lifelong learning (and choices associated to it)

While within the school setting it is clear the role of the Counselor has changed, it is also evident that the world post school has also changed. This also impacts your role.

Pre COVID-19, understanding the student, their ambitions, and guiding their choices to a successful post-secondary life was generally a constant.

A place for gifted students at a nationally/internationally ranked college was fairly straight forward. Beyond shooting for an Ivy League school what information is required to understand the fit for a student at the local state University or understanding the commitments and sacrifices that choosing an out-of-state College may entail. Or, for students who may not move on to College what options present for themselves locally in terms of trade training and what trade to embark on to match their interests and skills?

While perceptions of college may not have changed too much, there is a significant shift occurring that students and their Counselors need to be wary of. Like within the secondary system, Colleges are moving to a more online based curriculum. Over the short term this may be completely online as we are seeing at present. Keeping in mind are students and parent dollars best spent on attending a 4-year college or does a more affordable Community College experience with a transfer in year three now become a viable mainstream model? How do students prepare for and participate in on-the-job trade training when major industries such as

construction are in recession?

In the longer term, 'flipped classroom' models are being implemented where lectures are largely moved online and content engaged with prior to attending tutorials, where many Colleges say their value is enhanced. The impact of this transformation will be telling as the 'typical' education received at some College's will inevitably change and so too will the experience.

What does this mean for students? Well, those who succeed at self-guided learning will continue to excel. Those eighteen-year-old kids who have the wherewithal to pass up the offer of hanging with friends to review online content prior to the tutorial will do exceptionally well. However most eighteen-year-old kids I know will be tempted and having more time to make their own decisions may not be the best!

Ensuring fit for future study has changed and it is inherent that Counselors understand this change as it will impact on the student's ability to succeed.

From a Counselors perspective, knowing your students has always been the focus of your role.

Good Counselors have an exceptional ability to do this. In the past you may have relied on reading their body language as they sat in front of you and knowing what questions to ask next. In this new online world, gauging their reactions from a computer screen may not be as easy. Things are changing fast and it is important to keep up with new apps, etc. that can help you in this new online learning world.

Hopefully with a vaccine on the way, things will return to a more personal consultative process as in the past, but most likely online learning as part of the overall experience is here to stay. The role of the Counselor in a student's life is now more important than ever... and the job has just got a whole lot harder!

Dirk Mulder is the Principal of MulderPR. He has extensive prior experience in International Education and Service Management with the University of South Australia, Curtin University and Murdoch University among many other accomplishments. His views are regularly published in the media and can be seen in Campus Morning Mail and other education focused news outlets. He can be reached at dirk@mulderpr.com



Have some knowledge you want to share with other Counselors?

LINK for Counselors is always looking for great content. Our Fall issue will be published in October 2021.

Contact us at Jason@linkforcounselors.com to find out how you can participate.

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Take a college tour

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

Be prepared

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

SCHOOL NOTES:

Read while you wait

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

Questions to ask the tour guide:

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

Ask questions

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

YOUR QUESTIONS:

Talk to students

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

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

While on the tour

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

After the tour

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

FIRST IMPRESSIONS:

Find your match

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



Focus on yourself

Consider this: *“Reputation is for time; character is for eternity.”*—J. B. Gough

College is a time when you are enjoying your independence, exploring your passions and finding your true calling. But during that time, it’s also very easy to get caught up on the wrong path and acting as a follower instead of taking the lead.

It’s possible to make college a time for discovery while still being true to yourself.

Here are a few suggestions to make the transition a smooth one:

Keep in touch with old friends

Many always say you are the company you keep. Well, there’s something to be said about your old high school friends. They were your friends for a reason — why stop working on that friendship now? Sure there may be distance between you and even new friends you’ll need to introduce to your home crew, but keeping in touch with your old friends will keep you in touch with the old you.

Try new things

Although we keep talking about

how you need to stay true to yourself, college is also a time to try out new adventures. Join new organizations, maybe try an intramural sport or even consider taking a class that’s a bit outside your comfort zone. These new experiences will help you find out even more about the real you!

OPPORTUNITIES:

Set priorities

College should be a fun time in your life—but don’t forget why you are there! Set priorities for yourself in terms of study time, grades, calls home and even hours of sleep. Although there will be lots to get involved in, you need to make sure you are taking care of No. 1 and doing your best when it comes to your schoolwork.

TOP 3 PRIORITIES:

Have fun

Lastly, enjoy every minute of this new chapter. Some days will be lots of fun. While others may bring personal conflict and new challenges you haven’t faced before. However, remember to keep in touch with the old you and you’ll make the right choice!

BUCKET LIST:



Find a career

Some of you have known what you wanted to be when you grow up for years. The rest of you are probably not even sure what your major will be in college — let alone your career! And that's OK. We're here to help. Follow these steps to find the right career and how to get started!

Follow your passion

Career decisions should be in line with your interests — not necessarily with the hottest new career in the field. Consider this: 30 percent of entering freshmen dropout, the average completion of a college degree now takes six years and 64 percent of employees under the age of 25 are unhappy in their jobs.

That's why John Strelecky, author of "The Why Café," says "you have to find a heart connection to a job." Maybe you don't have one area of interest. That's OK, too. Take as many different classes as you can. Backpack around the

world. Take a semester at sea. Try out lots of options and find one that you're most interested in.

YOUR PASSIONS:

Find your fit factor

Finding the right career fit goes beyond passion. You have to consider what you want to be doing and what you are good at, says Jim Beqaj, a recruiting consultant, career coach and author of "How to Hire the Perfect Employer." You have to have the skills to succeed. So try this exercise. If you could create a job for yourself that would leave you challenged but also satisfied, what would it be?

Tie it together

Once you figure out your passion and how that fits into the working world, it's time to work toward that career. Apply to internships and jobs in those fields and at specific companies that need what you're good at. Distinguish yourself from the other applicants by talking about your fit and your passion. Talk about why you're the best candidate strike the right "match" in terms of philosophy, vision and culture.

POSSIBLE CAREERS:



Read more!

Get more tips on how to find a career at **LINKForCounselors.com**



College Night Handout | LINK For Counselors

LINKForCounselors.com

Decide on your college or university

Use this list of five factors, which are important in the college decision, and also form the acronym REACH: Region, Estimated costs, Academics, Campus life and Housing.

► Region

Figure out what type of college you want — big, little or somewhere in between? Consider how you want to spend your spare time. Does the region offer the beach scene, mountain climbing, hiking or ice-skating?

► Estimated costs

First of all, can you afford the school? What does the online price calculator tell you? Also, although you will apply for all

the scholarships you can that will award you for your community service and SAT or ACT scores, look beyond your freshman year award potential. Do the colleges you're considering offer scholarships for your major? What are the requirements? Do you qualify for workstudy? Are there other jobs, such as being a tour guide or resident advisor that can help you offset the cost of college?

► Academics

Ask your guidance counselor or admissions counselor if the department you're considering majoring in is accredited. Also ask who teaches the courses, what the student-teacher ratio is and the average class size. Remember, not every college is equal, and it is your job to find out which colleges pass your test.

► Campus life

One of the best ways to get the feel of a campus is to attend an event. Most colleges offer a preview day of some type to give prospective students a taste of what they offer. Also, consider taking a campus tour. Don't be afraid to ask questions about your tour guide's experiences, what types of student organizations are present on campus

and the main events the campus hosts each year.

► Housing

Some colleges require all freshmen to live on campus; others don't. You may want to ask if the university offers any freshmen-only housing. Living on a freshmen floor helps ease anxiety and is a great way to make friends. You will also want to know when the dorms close, what's included in the room cost and if the halls are co-ed.

Lots of people tell you how important this decision is and they throw tons of information at you, but that really doesn't answer the question for you. So, instead, try this checklist as a starting point to narrow down your search. Happy hunting!

Excerpted from "How to pick a college" by Abby Tennant.



College Night Handout | LINK For Counselors

Read more!

Get more tips on how to apply to college at

LINKForCounselors.com



LINKForCounselors.com

Consider the military

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

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

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

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

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



to receive leadership training without incurring obligation for military service. Once you accept a scholarship or enroll in advanced ROTC courses, you make a service commitment.

No matter which branch of the military you choose—Army, Navy or Air Force—ROTC classes include officership, leadership, military history, organization and tactics. You will receive college credit for your ROTC classes. You'll also have to pass regular physical training exams and train for the tests with your peers in "PT" sessions.

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

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

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

NOTES: _____



Read more!

Get more tips on how to apply to college at **LINKForCounselors.com**

College Profiles



BAYLOR INSTITUTE FOR AIR SCIENCE

Location: Waco, TX
Website: www.baylor.edu/aviation
Year Founded: 1845

Type of Institution: Four-year Private, Christian University

Student-Faculty Ratio: 15:1
Tuition Costs: \$21,421
Room & Board: \$6,362

Baylor University offers the unique combination of a professional aviation degree and a stellar education from a world-class faith-based university.

At Baylor University's Institute for Air Science, we offer you an aviation Bachelor's degree along with opportunities to enjoy a fulfilling college experience and student life on a tradition-rich campus. Soar to new heights and discover Baylor's one-of-a-kind spirit of community and faith!

Telephone: 254-710-3563
Email: aviation@baylor.edu



GANNON UNIVERSITY

Location: Erie, PA
Website: www.gannon.edu
Year Founded: 1925
Type of Institution: University
Student-Faculty Ratio: 12:1
Institutional Designation: Private - Religious
Tuition Costs: \$33,560 - \$35,590
Room & Board: \$13,170 - \$16,420
Avg. Student Aid Package: \$26,000
Avg Scholarship/Grant Aid Awarded: \$20,000
Avg. Work-Study Aid Awarded: \$2,300

At Gannon University, we're focused on students' academic success by ensuring a high-quality education is within reach for all who are seeking to find their path and advance their career.

Gannon offers over 100 innovative online and traditional Bachelor's, Master's and Doctoral academic programs where students practice hands-on, real-world application in exceptional learning environments on campus and in the community. More than 4,000 academically talented and diverse students enjoy a personalized experience through Gannon's low student-to-faculty ratio of 12:1. Our faculty experts inspire students and prepare them for the careers of tomorrow.

Telephone: 814-871-7407
Email: admissions@gannon.edu



College Profiles



HAMPTON UNIVERSITY

Location: Hampton, VA
Website: www.hamptonu.edu
Year Founded: 1868
Type of Institution: Private
Student-Faculty Ratio: 12:1
Institutional Designation: Coeducational
Tuition Costs: \$26,198
Room & Board: \$12,986
Average Student Aid Package: \$33,680
(includes Loans, Plus Loans, and all Aid)
Average Percentage of Financial Aid Met: 42.8%
Average Scholarship/Grant Aid Awarded: \$7,115

At Hampton University "Inspiration to Impact" are more than words. We offer a rich academic environment that cultivates leaders. Through global scientific collaborations and modern research projects, our professors and students are asking questions and finding answers. We offer our students innovative courses that lead to 50 bachelor's; 25 master's programs; 1 post-master degree, and doctoral or professional degrees in nursing, physics, atmospheric/planetary sciences, business leadership and administration, educational leadership and management, physical therapy, counselor education and supervision, architecture, and pharmacy.

Telephone: 757-727-5000
Email: admissioncounselor@hamptonu.edu



JOHNSON & WALES
UNIVERSITY

JOHNSON & WALES UNIVERSITY

Location: Charlotte, NC
Website: www.jwu.edu
Year Founded: 1914
Type of Institution: Private not-for-profit,
4- year or above

Student-Faculty Ratio: 19:1
Institutional Designation: JWU is accredited by the New England Commission of Higher Education (NECHE), through its Commission on Institutions of Higher Education (CIHE).

Tuition Costs: \$35,750
Room & Board: \$8,424.00-\$13,332.00
Average Student Aid Package: \$21,210
Average Amount of Financial Aid Met: \$18,035
Average Scholarship/Grant Aid Awarded: \$18,988

JWU's mission: "Johnson & Wales University ... an exceptional education that inspires professional success and lifelong personal and intellectual growth."

Telephone: 980-598-1100
Email: charlotte@admissions.jwu.edu



College Profiles



KEAN

KEAN UNIVERSITY

Location: Union, New Jersey

Website: www.kean.edu

Year Founded: 1855

Type of Institution: Public University

Student-Faculty Ratio: 20:1

Tuition Costs: \$6,297.50 (full time, in-state per semester); \$9,885.50 (full-time, out-of-state per semester)

Application Deadlines: First-year Early Action, January 1; Preferred Regular Action, April 30; Preferred Transfer Action, August 6

Application Fee: \$75

Students come to Kean University with a singular purpose: to get the world-class education they need to climb higher in life. They acquire the skills and knowledge necessary to succeed in the classroom, in the workplace and in the world. Help your students find their passion and a path to success that lasts a lifetime.

Telephone: 908-737-7100

Email: admitme@kean.edu



LANDMARK COLLEGE

LANDMARK COLLEGE

Location: Putney, VT

Website: www.landmark.edu

Year Founded: 1985

Type of Institution: Four-year, two-year liberal arts for students with learning disabilities and attention challenges

Student-Faculty Ratio: 6:1

Tuition Costs: \$60,280

Room & Board: \$13,420 per year (based on standard room and meal plan)

Landmark College is for students who learn differently, including students with a learning disability (such as dyslexia), ADHD, autism, or executive function challenges. LC champions a strengths-based model and gives students the skills and strategies they need to achieve their goals. Landmark College offers bachelor's and associate degrees, as well as a Bridge Experience, online dual enrollment courses for high school students, and summer programs for middle school, high school, and college students.

The Landmark College Institute for Research and Training conducts groundbreaking research on learning differences and shares that knowledge with educators around the world.

Telephone: 802-387-6718

Email: admissions@landmark.edu



College Profiles



LYCOMING COLLEGE

Location: Williamsport, PA
Website: www.lycoming.edu
Year Founded: 1812

Type of Institution: A four-year, residential liberal arts and sciences undergraduate institution

Student-Faculty Ratio: 12:1

Institutional Designation: Private, Non-profit

Tuition Costs: \$41,984 (year)

Room & Board: \$6,824 (room/year); \$6,560 (board/year)

Average Student Aid Package: \$47,520

Dedicated exclusively to the education of 1,200 undergraduates, Lycoming College offers more than 100 majors and minors for students to craft cross-disciplinary, market-driven programs tailored to their interests and goals. Our emphasis on experiential learning ensures that 100% of students participate in internships, student-faculty research, fieldwork, or global study. Recognized by Princeton Review, Washington Monthly, and U.S. News & World Report, we pride ourselves on preparing students for careers of significance and lives of meaning.

Telephone: 800-345-3920

Email: admissions@lycoming.edu



MERCYHURST UNIVERSITY

Location: Erie, PA
Website: www.mercyhurst.edu
Year Founded: 1926

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

Student-Faculty Ratio: 14:1

Tuition Costs: \$38,580

Room & Board: \$12,500 - \$15,000
(depending on residence hall)

Student Aid Package: \$21,500

Average Percentage of Financial Aid Met:
More than 90% of students receive financial aid.

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

Telephone: 800-825-1926 x2202

Email: admissions@mercyhurst.edu



College Profiles

MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY

MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY

Location: East Lansing, Michigan
Website: www.admissions.msu.edu
Year Founded: 1855

Type of Institution: 4-year, Public
Student-Faculty Ratio: 16:1

Tuition Costs: \$14,516 for in-state; \$39,461 for out-of-state

Room & Board: \$10,026

Student Aid Package: \$13,208

Average Percentage of Financial Aid Met: 60%

Michigan State University Spartans work to advance the common good with uncommon will. Together we tackle some of the world's toughest problems to find solutions that make life better.

Michigan State is one of the top research universities in the world—on one of the biggest, greenest campuses in the nation—and is home to a diverse community of dedicated students and scholars, athletes and artists, scientists and leaders.

Telephone: 517-355-8332

Email: admis@msu.edu



MIDWESTERN STATE UNIVERSITY

Location: Wichita Falls, TX
Website: www.msutexas.edu
Year Founded: 1922

Type of Institution: 4-Year, Public
Student-Faculty Ratio: 18:1

Tuition Costs: \$4,790 (in-state); \$5,873 (non-resident)

Room & Board: \$4,200 per semester based on a semi-private traditional residence hall with highest meal plan

Student Aid Package: \$11,142

Avg. Percentage of Financial Aid Met: 68%

Avg. Scholarship/Grant Aid Awarded: \$5,653

Avg. Work-Study Aid Awarded: \$1,877

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

Telephone: 800-842-1922

Email: admissions@msutexas.edu



College Profiles



SALISBURY UNIVERSITY

Location: Salisbury, MD

Website: www.salisbury.edu

Year Founded: 1925

Type of Institution: 4-year, Public comprehensive

Student-Faculty Ratio: 16:1

Tuition Costs: \$9,824 in-state; \$19,526 out of state

Room & Board: \$11,950 (based on "all day, every day" meals and double occupancy renovated dorm)

Average Student Aid Package: \$7,395 (need based)

Average Scholarship/Grant Aid Awarded: \$2,773 (non-need based)

Nationally recognized for academic excellence, Salisbury University is a proud member of the University System of Maryland offering 43 undergraduate majors, 15 graduate programs and 2 doctorates in nursing practice and education. SU is ranked among the nation's "Best Value" colleges by Kiplinger's Personal Finance, Money, Forbes, The Princeton Review and U.S. News & World Report. Washington Monthly also named SU among America's "Best Bang For The Buck" Colleges. Sea Gull athletes have earned 20 NCAA Division III national team championships. Founded in 1925, SU is just 2.5 hours from Baltimore and Washington, D.C.

Telephone: 410-543-6161

Email: admissions@salisbury.edu



TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY - CORPUS CHRISTI

Location: Corpus Christi, TX

Website: www.tamucc.edu

Year Founded: 1947

Type of Institution: 4-Year Public
Doctorate

Institutional Designation: Hispanic
Serving - HSI

Student-Faculty Ratio: 18:1

Tuition Costs: \$10,534 Annual

Room & Board: \$11,870 Annual

Average Student Aid Package: \$11,276

Average Percentage of Financial

Aid Met: 65%

Average Scholarship/Grant

Aid Awarded: \$5,200

Average Work-Study Aid

Awarded: \$4,640

Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi is a premier doctoral granting institution in South Texas. More than 44 undergraduate, 31 masters, and 9 doctoral/terminal degrees make the Island University the intellectual hub of the Coastal Bend. Nationally and internationally known institutes, research centers and labs, and award-winning degree programs draw approximately 12,000 students annually to the Island University.

Email: recruitment@tamucc.edu

Telephone: 1.800.4.TAMUCC



College Profiles



TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY-KINGSVILLE

Location: Kingsville, TX

Website: www.tamuk.edu

Year Founded: 1925

Type of Institution: Public University

Student-Faculty Ratio: 17:1

Institutional Designation: 4-year, Public

Tuition Costs: \$9,694 per year (in-state for 15 semester credit hours)

Room & Board: \$8,787 per year

Average Student Aid Package: \$14,537

Average Percentage of Financial Aid Met: 76%

Average Scholarship/Grant Aid Awarded: \$7,296

Average Work-Study Aid Awarded: \$3,107

Texas A&M University-Kingsville has been ranked among the nation's best in higher education by U.S. News and World Report, Forbes and Washington Monthly. Degree offerings include well-known programs in engineering, agriculture and music, and new programs in veterinary technology and criminal justice. Classroom learning is enhanced through hands-on research opportunities at both the undergraduate and graduate level. Recognized for excellence in affordability, financial aid, athletics and more, Texas A&M-Kingsville offers a complete college experience.

Telephone: 361-593-2315

Email: admissions@tamuk.edu



TOURO COLLEGE, NEW YORK SCHOOL OF CAREER AND APPLIED STUDIES (NYSCAS)

Location: Brooklyn, NY

Website: www.nyscas.touro.edu

Year Founded: 1971

Type of Institution: Comprehensive higher education system

Student-Faculty Ratio: 19:1

Tuition Costs: \$15,380

Average Student Aid Package: \$9,000

Average Percentage of Financial Aid Met: 90%

NYSCAS is ideally suited to reflect, and respond to, the challenges of this new era. Our tradition of academic excellence has given us the foundation and confidence to reach for new and unimaginable knowledge, while the diversity of our University system community makes it possible for students, faculty, alumni, and neighbors to interact with — and thus be transformed by — the multiplicity of human perspectives. At the same time, our numerous locations in the world's most global city offers us a unique laboratory in which to study the evolution of modern society, attract and learn from the remarkable people who make New York home and, in doing so, fulfill our responsibilities as active, engaged citizens.

Telephone: 212-463-0400 ext. 55500

Email: admissions.nyscas@touro.edu



College Profiles



UNIVERSITY OF HOUSTON - VICTORIA

Location: Victoria, TX

Website: www.uhv.edu

Year Founded: 1973

Type of Institution: Four-year, public university

Student-Faculty Ratio: 18:1

Institutional Designation: Bachelor's & Master's

Tuition Costs: \$8,544 Annual Tuition and Fees (2020-2021 in-state rate, 15 hours/semester)

Room & Board: \$9,992

Average Student Aid Package: \$9,829

Average Percentage of Financial Aid Met: 66%

Average Scholarship/Grant Aid Awarded: \$2,267

Average Work-Study Aid Awarded: \$2,173

The University of Houston-Victoria offers courses for more than 80 academic programs in the schools of Arts & Sciences; Business Administration; and Education, Health Professions & Human Development. UHV provides face-to-face classes at its Victoria, Texas, campus as well as an instructional site in Katy, Texas, and online classes that students can take from anywhere. Since its founding in 1973, UHV has provided students with a quality education from excellent faculty at an affordable price.

Telephone: 877-970-4848

Email: recruitment@uhv.edu



UTICA COLLEGE

Location: Utica, NY

Website: www.utica.edu

Year Founded: 1946

Type of Institution: 4-year, private, residential college

Student-Faculty Ratio: 11:1

Tuition Costs: \$21,560

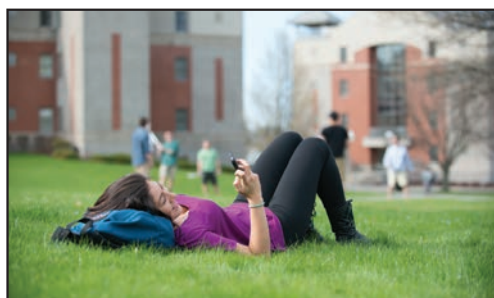
Room & Board: \$11,670

Average Student Aid Package: \$28,209

Utica College is a uniquely personal, private institution that specializes in professional education with a strong foundation in the liberal arts. UC offers innovative, career-driven programs in 16 of the 20 most desired majors, an 11:1 student-to-faculty ratio, and a four-year graduation guarantee. One hundred percent of faculty-recommended pre-med students are admitted to medical school, and the College offers hundreds of internship opportunities nationwide. Utica College awards merit scholarships or need-based aid to 95 percent of its students.

Telephone: 800-782-8884

Email: admiss@utica.edu



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HAMPTON

UNIVERSITY



For more than 150 years, Hampton University has been **THE** Standard of Excellence in higher education. Founded in 1868 by General Samuel Chapman Armstrong, Hampton has a long history of offering a strong academic program of educating the 'Head, Heart and Hand' as well as

emphasizing the development of character. This foundation has been built upon by Dr. William R. Harvey, who has served as Hampton's President of 41 years, making him one of the longest-serving presidents of a college or university in America. His extraordinary leadership is reflected in the growth and quality of the University's student population, academic programs, physical facilities and financial base.



WWW.HAMPTONU.EDU



@_hamptonu



facebook.com/hamptonuniversity



Hampton University School of Science



Athletics Department, Hampton University, where Academics and Athletics come together, to build Leaders and Champions!

Dr. Harvey has transformed Hampton University into a world-class leader in higher education. Hampton University remains committed to impacting the global community via scholarly service through various initiatives that include cancer research and treatment, STEM education and training for minorities, and inspiring the next generation of digital content creators.



Center for Innovation in Digital Media
Scripps Howard School of Journalism



Hampton University Proton
Therapy Institute



Hampton University **KNOws** Cancer.
Hampton University Cancer Research Center

THIS IS GANNON.

Gannon University is a Catholic, Diocesan university dedicated to excellence in teaching, scholarship and service. Here, your career aspirations become your possibilities through our **high-quality education** and **real-world learning opportunities**.

We offer more than 100 undergraduate, graduate and online academic programs, including **new innovative programs** in **cybersecurity** and **cyber engineering**. Each of our programs features **hands-on learning** that prepares you to **become a professional in the field** with the guidance of our **faculty experts**.

Start your journey with us today and discover how you can live a life full of possibilities.

QUICK FACTS

FOUNDED IN
1925



ERIE, PA
LOCATION

12:1
STUDENT-TO-FACULTY

\$37M
FINANCIAL AID AWARDED
ANNUALLY

150+
STUDENT CLUBS &
ORGANIZATIONS

4,251
UNDERGRADUATE &
GRADUATE STUDENTS



MAKE THIS GANNON YOURS
GANNON.EDU/THISISGANNON



VIRTUAL TOUR