



College Admissions & Career Counseling Office

COUNSELOR'S SCOOP



NOVEMBER 2008

General Information

Congratulations to **Daria Cortes** for her regular visits to *Naviance—Family Connection*. She has earned the Counselor's Student of the Month Award for October. Follow Daria's lead and take advantage of the great features *Naviance—Family Connection* has to offer.

Mini-School

There is a sign-up sheet in the school office for registering for Mini-School. A variety of topics are being offered for grades 9-12 on the following dates.

- ❑ *Wednesday, November 12 @ 9:00-9:45 am (UC & CSU Applications)—grade 12*
- ❑ *Wednesday, November 19 @ 9:00-9:45 am (SAT Optional Colleges & Universities)—grade 12*
- ❑ *Wednesday, November 19 @ 9:50-10:45 am (SAT Optional Colleges & Universities)—grades 11 & 12*
- ❑ *Wednesday, November 19 @ 1:55-2:40 pm (SAT Optional Colleges & Universities)—grades 11 & 12*
- ❑ *Thursday, November 20 @ 9:00-9:45 am (Scholarships—Get Real...I Don't Qualify)—grades 11 & 12*
- ❑ *Thursday, November 20 @ 1:55-2:40 pm (Scholarships—Get Real...I Don't Qualify)—grades 11 & 12*

College Planner

Please keep in mind the following college planning suggestions:

CSU Mentor (SENIORS)

How to plan for and apply to a CSU Campus in 3 easy steps! Application deadline is November 30th at 11:59 pm.

- ❖ Plan For College
 - Admission requirements
 - Financial aid options
 - Set up a free e-mail account to communicate with CSU campuses

- ❖ Explore Campuses

- Search for majors
- Campus facts
- Cost to attend

- ❖ Apply Online!

- www.csumentor.edu
- Username: _____
- Password: _____

General Reminders

1. Key dates (SENIORS)

Any schools on your target list offer Early Action/Early Decision, consider the option and complete any paperwork they require.

2. Improving study skills (ALL STUDENTS)

You can always improve your study skills. Developing good skills and habits in high school will help you make learning the material more effective and ease the transition to college classes. In college, learning is a much more individual effort so going the extra mile in high school will pay off later on.

Some good study skills to develop:

- 📌 Questioning.

- If a concept doesn't make sense to you, ask someone to explain it.
- Talk with a teacher or even a classmate who gets it.
- Ask questions until you feel like you have a grasp on the topic.

- 📌 Make studying a regular habit.

- Don't just focus on getting homework done.
- Really put effort into learning, understanding and applying the concepts learned in class to your daily activities.

- 📌 Take notes every day in class.

- Review your notes.
- Highlight key points.
- Write down questions you want to ask and points to study further.

Go beyond the assignment.

- Writing helps many people retain information, so take advantage of that and write down key points from reading assignments.
- Make flash cards or create your own practice tests.

Schedule it.

- Don't let studying become just another item on the to-do list that remains undone.
- Schedule a regular time and place.
- Keep distractions to a minimum.

Studying is really about developing a set of habits and skills that work best for you. Like any habit, it can be difficult to get into a routine, but stick with it and you'll find it gets easier.

3. College planning tips

Seniors—planning for college and a career doesn't happen overnight. It's a process, filled with research and exploration. I encourage high school students to do some of the work each year. You can find a college planning checklist at

<http://www.actstudent.org/college/checklist.html>.

Seniors who haven't settled on a particular career have probably narrowed to an area of focus. As you complete college applications, be sure the schools meet your needs. And remember that you won't be able to slack off after your last application has been submitted. College admissions officers are increasingly putting more weight on a student's performance during the last semester to evaluate your ability to perform consistently.

Juniors—you can do more career exploration by talking to someone in the field. See if you can spend a day with a professional to see what the job really entails. Also, you should be looking at dates to register for the ACT and SAT in the spring. These standardized tests test you on what you learn in school, so spring of junior year is the appropriate time to take it. Free SAT practice tests are available at <http://www.collegeboard.com> and ACT practice tests are available at <http://www.actstudent.org/sampletest/index.html>. You can use your scores to see areas in which you might need to improve.

Sophomores/Freshmen—many of you do not know what career you want, let alone where you want to go to college or what you want to study. Use the scores from your *EXPLORE* and *PLAN* tests to guide your planning. Talk with your counselor, Mrs. Andrews, about what those scores mean and visit the *World-of-Work Map* at <http://www.act.org/wwm> to match your interests with potential fields. You can find out

more about careers and their requirements at <http://www.actstudent.org/wwm>.

4. Writing your college essay

Like your SAT and ACT scores, the essay is just one component of your college application. An essay can say a lot—or a little—about who you are. The point of the essay is to paint a picture of you to a total stranger. Admissions officers want to get to know you and why you belong at their school.

Tips for writing sound essays can be found online from many sources. Just type the phrase "writing a college essay" into a search engine. Here are some quick pointers to help you construct a stand-out essay.

Plan

- Review application deadlines and plan ahead.
- Outline, then draft, then proof, rewrite, have someone else proof it and then revise accordingly.
- Give it one last look before submitting.
- Remember, spell check doesn't catch everything!

Stand out

- Admissions officials review hundreds of applications and the ones that pique their interest are unique.
- While the essay should single you out from the crowd, be careful not to focus so narrowly on something others cannot relate to or understand.

Be real

- This one can be interpreted a couple different ways.
- First, don't use a story or essay found online or written by a friend. Admissions officers can spot a "borrowed" essay from long distance.
- Secondly, don't write to what you think others want to hear. Show personality and individuality.

Stay on topic

- Review each application's essay question, develop a few ideas and settle on one.
- Follow that theme throughout the essay.

5. Establishing homework strategies (ALL STUDENTS)

Homework is a valuable part of learning. Though you probably think it's a pain, homework does help to cement lessons taught in class.

- ❑ Assume that you will have homework every night.

Even if you completed your assignments, take time to review them. It's easier to see any errors the second time around. Don't forget to look ahead to long-term assignments like research papers or science projects. And if you're fortunate enough to have time during the school day to finish all homework assignments, use your scheduled homework time to develop solid studying habits.

- ❑ Don't be intimidated by homework.

It's like a sporting event, but for your mind. Homework is part of your learning process. If you're having problems with an assignment, check with your teacher, attend *Help Class* or seek out peer tutoring.

- ❑ Make it a routine.

Find a place and set a consistent time for doing homework. The adage states that it takes three weeks to develop a habit.

Practice your homework routine and it should become second nature before long.

Homework is one aspect of your study skills. While homework focuses on a specific assignment, studying goes beyond that to enhance understanding of the concepts and topics taught in class.

You can find ideas for enhancing your studying skills elsewhere in this newsletter.

- ❑ Homework tips for parents

Parents can help students establish good homework skills. The National Education Association has valuable homework tips for parents at <http://www.nea.org/parents/homework.html>. And homework motivation ideas for parents are at <http://www.act.org/path/parent/motivate/homework.html>

6. Test date reminder

The next national SAT test date is December 6, 2008. The deadline is November 5. Late registration, with an additional fee of \$20, is available through November 20. Register online today at <http://www.collegeboard.com>

Other test dates during the 2008-09 school years are January 24, 2009; March 24, 2009; May 2, and June 6, 2009.

Test-day tips, a list of what to bring and approved calculators for use on the Math Test are listed on the site, too. For all your questions about the SAT test, visit <http://www.collegeboard.com>.

The next national ACT test date is December 13, 2008. The registration deadline is November 7. Late registration, with an additional fee of \$20, is available through November 20.

Register online today at <http://www.actstudent.org>.

Other test dates during the 2008-09 school years are February 7, 2009; April 4, 2009; and June 13, 2009. Registration deadlines for these dates are normally about five weeks before the test date.

An optional Writing Test is available in addition to the multiple-choice achievement test. Go to <http://www.actstudent.org/writing> to learn more about the Writing Test, including the colleges that require it.

Test-day tips, a list of what to bring and approved calculators for use on the Math Test are listed on the site, too. For all your questions about the ACT test, visit <http://www.actstudent.org>.

Attend college fairs. College fairs are a great opportunity to gather information on colleges. It is recommended that you review the list of colleges and workshops to select the ones you want to visit.

- ❑ Universities of California and California State Universities Fall 2009 Admission Application are being accepted; Filing Period ends November 30.
- ❑ University of the Pacific, Fall Preview Days
 - Saturday, November 15 @ 9:00 am to 2:30 pm
 - RSVP or for more information, visit www.go.pacific.edu/pacificpreview or call the Office of Admission at 209.946.2211
- ❑ **Vanderbilt University** expands financial aid to offer greater access. Stop by the Counseling Office for details.
- ❑ **Cal Grants** are guaranteed for all students who qualify. Cal Grants are free dollars—up to \$9,700 for college or up to \$3,000 for career training each year—that do not have to be paid back. For more information stop by the Counseling Office or visit studentsupport@csac.ca.gov

- ❑ **San Diego National College Fair**, Tuesday, April 14, 2009 from 9:00 am to 12:00 noon and 5:30 to 8:30 pm at the San Diego Convention Center.
- ❑ **Cappex.com** is a free website where colleges apply to you! It is a good way to see how your accomplishments and interests match with colleges. Cappex.com goes one step further than most college search sites by having colleges apply to you through a private, secure college center. Go to <http://www.cappex.com/> and complete your FREE profile. Make note of the scholarship section.

Scholarship Information

- ❑ **Powell Scholar**
A scholarship of \$15,000 per year awarded annually (renewable for undergraduates). Interested students stop by the Counseling Office. **Application deadline is November 15.**
- ❑ **KFC Colonel's Scholars**, Awards for outstanding seniors with financial need and entrepreneurial spirit. Awards are up to \$20,000 for tuition, fees, textbooks, room and board. The online application will be available from **December 1, 2008 to February 10, 2009**, at www.kfcscholars.org.
- ❑ **San Diego County Ford Dealers Salute to Education Scholarship**
\$1,000 scholarships will be awarded to graduating high school seniors in San Diego County. *In addition to that, one of the lucky recipients will also win a new Ford Ranger or Ford Focus that evening!* So hurry...do not delay any longer. Get to the College & Career Counseling (CCC) Office and pick up an application. You may be very happy you did!
Application Deadline – February 2009.
- ❑ **AFS Intercultural Programs USA**

- **Global Leaders Scholarship**
This is a premier need- and merit-based scholarship program, offering partial scholarships toward any year, semester, or summer program.
- **Cargill Global Exchange Fund Scholarship**
Partial scholarships for students from Cargill operating communities around the U.W. who participate in semester or year programs in select Latin American and Asian destinations.
- **YES Abroad Program Scholarship**
This is a full scholarship for one year of study in Egypt, Ghana, Indonesia, India, Malaysia, Thailand, and Turkey.

AFS offers nearly \$2 million in need- and merit-based scholarships each year. For more information, visit www.afsusa.org or call 1-800-AFS-INFO.

- ❑ **San Diego Chapter of the Sons of the American Revolution** are pleased to announce the 2008-2009 George S. and Stella M. Knight Essay Contest, designed to give **high school students** an opportunity to explore events that shaped American History. Deadline for the San Diego Chapter Contest is **December 31, 2008**. For more information, please stop by the Counseling Office.
- ❑ **Scholarship Contest**
California faces a growing demand for educated workers. Let's make sure there is a place in college for all students who seek it. This contest is
 - ❖ open to all California 6th-12 grade students.
 - ❖ Over 100 winners
 - ❖ Total of \$100,000 in scholarship awards
 Application deadline is **March 15, 2009**. For more information stop by the Counseling Office or on the Web at www.collegecampaign.org
- ❑ **The AXA Achievement Scholarship**
Awarding \$670,000 to AXA Achievers
To qualify, you must demonstrate:
 - Ambition and drive
 - Determination to set and reach goals
 - Respect for self, family, and community
 - Ability to succeed in college
 Go to www.axa-achievement.com to learn more about all of their scholarship programs. Download an application. Apply by **December 15, 2008**
- ❑ **American Legion High School Oratorical Scholarship Program**, look on the Legion web site at www.legion.org, or contact your local American Legion Post or their respective State Headquarters Office of the American Legion.
- ❑ **Need A Lift—College Financial Aid Handbook**
published by the American Legion is available in the Counseling Office. Stop by and see what financial aid is available to you.
- ❑ **McKelvey Foundation Entrepreneurial Scholarship**
This scholarship is available to all high school seniors who have demonstrated entrepreneurial spirit by owning and operating their own business (non-profits are eligible) while in high school. This scholarship offers up to \$10,000 per academic year for 4 years to any US College. Apply on-line at www.mckelveyfoundation.org