



# College — Bound

College Office  
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## The Importance of Visiting Schools

Visiting schools is one of the most important steps of the college process. Whether you are a senior, a junior, or younger, you should be taking every opportunity to go to colleges and see the campus. Nothing else gives you a better sense of if you would like to attend the school for four years.

Getting a feel for a campus in person is completely different than reading about a school or hearing someone talk about it. When visiting a school you should explore the classrooms, the library, and the dorms. Try to talk to students who go to the school. Find out how often they study, and what they do when they are not studying.

Sometimes being on a college campus can be an eye-opener. Students may think a school sounds great on paper, but find they are uncomfortable in the school environment. Or a student may have dismissed a

college based on what they have heard, but really like it in person.

Visiting schools does not have to be expensive. You can take a reasonably-priced Greyhound bus to most places upstate if your parents do not drive. There are also \$15 bus services available to Boston and Washington DC, two cities which are full of colleges.

When visiting a school try to let go of your preconceived notions. Come prepared with a list of questions to ask an admissions representative or tour guide.

Above all, NEVER make the decision to attend a school without seeing it first. You want to make sure your final decision of where to attend college is the most informed possible.

Sincerely,

Diana Uva/ College Counselor



## College of the Month: Carnegie Mellon

Pittsburgh, PA

Founded: 1900

GPA: 3.61 (approx 91)

Lists & Rankings:

-- Best Northeastern Colleges

--Best College Theatre

Most Popular Majors:

-Computer Engineering

-Computer Science

-Liberal Arts

Famous Alumni:

-Blair Underwood, actor

-Holly Hunter, actress

-Sally Jessy Raphael, TV Host

-John Nash, Nobel Prize winner

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### Important Dates in

#### February:

- Feb 10: Deadline to register for the March SATs
- Feb 21: SUNY Financial Aid Day
- Feb 27: Deadline to register for the April ACT

## Juniors: Prepare for the SATs!



Juniors—SAT time is coming up! You may be wondering when you should take your SATs for the first time. Every single junior should be taking the SATs this spring. If you don't like your scores that gives you time to take the exam a second time in the fall.

If you do not have any AP tests this year you should take the SAT in May. If you are taking AP exams in May, then you should take the SAT in June. However, you will probably want to take an SAT II Subject Test in your AP subject in May. This would make sense because the subject is still fresh in your mind.

All juniors should be taking inventory of schools they may be interested in and looking to see if these schools require the SAT II..

You may also be wondering what a "good score" is. This depends on the type of schools you are interested in. Look up the schools you might want to apply on the Princeton Review website and check out what the average SAT scores are for that school.

A good baseline for everybody to keep in mind is that a CUNY 4 year school requires you to have a minimum of

500 on each section of the SAT. Therefore, if you received under a 50 on any section of the PSAT make sure that you prepare thoroughly for the SAT.

Take advantage of free Prep classes that are available. You can go to Sunnyside Community Services or to the Queens Community House. You can look at their websites for more information. And make sure you are on the college office email list for more updates! If you do not receive emails from the Queens Gateway College Office see Ms.Uva to put your name on the list.

*"Your SAR is basically a summary of all the information you put on your FAFSA."*

## How to Read Your SAR

Your SAR is your Student Aid Report. You can view this once you have successfully submitted your FAFSA and it has been processed. This means that your report has been sent to the Federal Government as well as each school you listed on the FAFSA.

Your SAR is basically a summary of all the information you put on your FAFSA. You can view it by logging onto

[www.fafsa.ed.gov](http://www.fafsa.ed.gov) and clicking on 'View and Print my SAR Report.'

The one thing most students have a question about is the EFC number in the top corner of their SAR. The EFC is 'Expected Family Contribution.' This is the number the FAFSA has generated that you and your family should pay each year for college. For example, if your EFC is 200, the FAFSA has determined that your family can con-

tribute \$200 a year towards your education. Every school you put on the FAFSA receives this number, which is why it is important to put every single school on the FAFSA.

## Scholarships That Do Not Require Citizenship

### A. Patrick Charnon Memorial Scholarship

[www.cesresources.com](http://www.cesresources.com)

For students who value tolerance and compassion. Must write an essay about these values.

Deadline: April 13

### Ana Maria Arias Scholarship

Call: (202) 833-0060

For Hispanic women attending a 4 year college.

Deadline: April 1

### Yoshiyama Award for Exemplary Service to the Community

[www.hitachi.org](http://www.hitachi.org)

Students must be nominated; a commitment to community service

Deadline: April 1



## How To Read Your Award Letter

Your award letter is the letter that comes with your college acceptance outlining your financial aid package. It is important to know how to read this letter. If you misunderstand it you may end up paying a lot more for college than you meant to.

First, understand that scholarships and grants do not have to be paid back, while loans do. Make sure your grants will stay grants—for example, if you get the TEACH grant and you fail to provide 5 years of teaching in a high-needs area of the country, your grant becomes a loan that you must pay back, with

accumulated interest.

Second, make sure that your scholarships and grants are *renewable*, meaning that you will receive them each year. Some colleges will give a generous financial aid package to freshman, but upperclassmen end up paying a lot more.

Third, understand how much you will owe from your loans and don't forget interest! For example, if you have a loan of \$10,000 by the end of four years of college you will owe \$40,000 PLUS interest.. Also, be clear of when you need to pay your loans back. Many

loans don't need to be paid back until you graduate, but you may need to start paying off some right after your first semester.

Understanding your award letter will go a long way in helping you make an informed choice about college. You should go into your education knowing exactly how much you are required to pay and how much you will owe at the end of it. Most students graduate with some debt, but it is important that you are prepared and knowledgeable.



## Where Should I Be? February Edition

### Seniors:

- ◆ At this point you need to have submitted all your applications, transcripts, recommendations, essays, and SAT scores to all colleges you are applying to
- ◆ You should have completed and submitted your FAFSA, TAP, and CSS Profile
- ◆ You should be applying for scholarships

- ◆ You should be preparing for AP Exams
- ◆ You should be visiting schools you applied to

### Juniors:

- ◆ You should be preparing to take the SAT exam in the spring
- ◆ You should be preparing for your AP exams

- ◆ You should be visiting schools
- ◆ You should be researching colleges
- ◆ You should be thinking about topics for your college essay

*“Seniors: At this point you should have completed and submitted your FAFSA, TAP, and CSS Profile”*

## College Life: Meeting New People

College can be a very exciting time, but it can also make you nervous to go into a new environment where you don't know anyone. Here are a few ways you can get to know new people on your college campus.

A few great ways to meet people who share your interests are to join a club, an intramural sports team, or a volunteer organization. These

organizations are social and many students join them.

You can also attend religious services on campus. If you are a spiritual person you may like meeting others who share this with you, and having a social activity that does not involve drinking or partying.

Getting a campus job is a good way to meet people while making extra money for

yourself. Starting a study group in one of your classes can also be very social.

Above all, just be open to new people. Most students were relatively sheltered in high school, and they will be meeting new kinds of people in college. Keeping an open mind and being friendly can go a long way in helping you meet new friends in college.



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**Queens Gateway  
to Health Sciences  
Secondary School**

Queens Gateway to Health Sciences Secondary School, established in 1994, is a 7-12 comprehensive educational institution accredited by the New York State Department of Education. It offers an academic college preparatory curriculum featuring science and math courses. A high-level communication skills and humanities program complements the science and math curriculum. The goal of the school is to develop a pool of broadly educated health professionals who will constitute the twenty-first century's health care delivery work force.

## Frequently Asked Questions

1. *Some of my friends have heard from colleges already, but I haven't. Should I be worried?*

No, you shouldn't be worried. The average time to hear responses from colleges is in March and April. Some people may hear earlier, but there is no need to worry if you have not. If it makes you feel better, you can call the admissions office for each of your schools and ask them if they received your completed application.

2. *I got into my dream school! Shouldn't I just send in my deposit and go there?*

No! You should be happy and proud of your acceptance, but do not make any definite decisions until you see your financial aid packages from all of your colleges. You don't want to end up overpaying for college because you didn't wait.

3. *Why does the TAP form only let me put down one school?*

The TAP form goes to New York State, so it doesn't matter which school is on your form. If you go to school in New York State your TAP will be the same amount, no matter which school it is.

4. *I didn't get into the program I wanted, but I got into the college. Should I go there?*

Think about what your priorities are. If your dream was to go to NYU it may still be worth it to go to the school, even if you didn't the program you wanted. But if you know you only want to do Pharmacy, make sure you can get into that program at a later date before deciding to go to St. John's University as an undecided major. You also need to take into account where else you got it. Try to get as much information as possible before making a decision.

