

The Sidekick

NCSSM Counseling Services & Peer College Counselors

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I Need Money and I Need it Now!

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Seniors, we are in the midst of college application season. While you are submitting your applications and waiting for admissions decisions, you are probably thinking about one very important factor. How am I going to afford college? It's true that colleges are very expensive, but you have many options on how you pay for it.

Most colleges are very willing to help you attend their school. They may even give you a scholarship upon admission.

One form you are going to need to fill out is the FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid). In fact, this form is required to be completed and submitted in order to be considered for any need-based aid. You need to complete this form even if you do not think you are eligible for need-based aid. Unlike the CSS Profile, it is free to fill out. The FAFSA uses your family's tax information to determine if you need fed-

eral money to help pay for college. This application is due in February. You will need to have your tax information collected and ready by the due date rather than April 15th. The FAFSA can be found



Sadly, money does not grow on trees. It's a good thing we have financial aid.

at www.fafsa.gov. In order to help figure out how much you need, some colleges require you to complete a CSS Profile in addition to the FAFSA. The Profile will let them see how much you can contribute which helps them see how much you need by looking at your family's financial situation. The CSS Profile can be found on CollegeBoard.com. You only need to fill it out if the college requires you to because doing so requires fees. In order to find out which colleges you need to fill out a

CSS Profile for, you should go to the college's website and check. There are five colleges in the state of North Carolina that require a CSS profile: Davidson College, Duke University, Elon University, UNC Chapel Hill, and Wake Forest University. A complete list can be found at https://pro-fileonline.collegeboard.com/prf/VignetteServlet/VignetteServlet.srv?relativePath=/profile/pdfs/1213_profile_registration_guide.pdf.

In addition to these applications, you can find out how much your family would need to contribute by using financial aid calculators. All colleges have recently added these calculators to their websites for your use. They use your family's financial information along with what they could offer you in scholarships to calculate what you would end up paying. These can be very helpful when planning how you will be paying for your college education.



“Don’t let one letter denying your admission take away from the others who accept you.”



I Hit Submit. What Now?

Most NCSSM seniors have already completed and submitted a few college applications by now. College application season might seem to be over, but it is not. Yes, you have submitted your application, but there are still many other things you need to do. You need to track the status of your applications regularly. Check the college’s website to see when decisions come out. Once decisions do come out, you have a very important choice to make. Which college should you attend? You can make your decision a bit easier by do-

ing a few things. You can visit the college. Even if you have already visited the college, do it again. You now know that you could actually be there next year. That might change the way you view the college. In addition to visiting the college, you might want to research the college even more. Look it up on the internet. See what other people are saying about it. Check out what current students have to say. Some colleges use Facebook as a way to help current and prospective students communicate. Another im-

portant factor you need to look at when making your decision is if your family can afford it. You will need to start filling out scholarship applications and see how much money the college is willing to give you. However, do not let the price of the college keep you from applying. You might be surprised by how much money you can get in scholarships. After you have finally made your decision, you will need to notify each college of your final choice by May 1st. Colleges also require an enrollment deposit which is due May 1st.

How To Deal: Admissions Decisions

As college decisions come in, we as seniors are either excited beyond belief or upset. We all want to believe that every college we applied to will accept us. That is not the case sometimes, but you are not alone. It is actually very rare that a student gets into every college to

which they apply. Don’t let one letter denying your admission take away from the others who accept you. As a side note, please remember that other seniors are also getting decisions from colleges. This being said, be conscious of others and their admissions decisions.

Rather than bluntly asking if they got in, let them be the one to tell you if they want. If they tell you, make sure you congratulate them if they are accepted and be there for them if they are not.

Summer Opportunities

So...what were you planning to do this summer? Sit at home? Sling burgers at the drive-thru? Veg out at the beach house? Babysit your little brother? Hang out at the mall? Mow lawns for cash? Watch reruns on TV? Catch fireflies? Sleep?

Or you could enrich your mind by taking advantage of the interactive learning and experiences that are at your disposal. Don’t let your summer waste away. You may think it’s nice to have a break, but after being so busy at NCSSM all year, summer will get very boring at times. You could go abroad,

volunteer, take courses, visit colleges, or make your own summer opportunity! Whatever you decide to do, we’ve got your back. Check out the Summer Opps section of the NCSSM Counseling website (www.ncssm.edu/counseling) for information about summer opportunities as well as our newsletters!

It’s true, many summer opportunities are expensive, but financial aid is available so that everyone has a fair shot at having a great summer. Although you may be doing work over the summer at some of

the opportunities, the experience has proved to be unforgettable for many. Also, you don’t have to spend a lot of money or travel a long distance to make your summer worthwhile. Many students have found wonderful opportunities in their own communities.

Although summer may be far away, it’s important to start planning ahead and getting your applications for these opportunities in if you want to be a part of an amazing experience.

Senior Work Service Options

Juniors, it is time you start looking into senior work service options. Applications will soon be available. You will be learning about many different choices and must decide what you would like to do. We just want to give you an idea of what each work service is like. Here are a few. More are coming in the next issue.

Lit@com Liaisons: Lit@Com Liaisons are the middle man between students and the resources that the library has to offer. Need to connect to the school's printer because yours just died? We can help with that. Need info about a certain topic for a paper? We can help with that too. We even can set you up with someone to show you how to develop a new app. We are here to help you to access your technological and intellectual needs. The Liaisons are responsible for shelving materials, organizing, and making the library look presentable. Also, we have special projects such as bulletin boards or running the library's Facebook page. The application process for becoming a Lit@Com Liaison involves one application to be filled out, and an interview with the library staff and a current Liaison.

Teacher Assistants: Teacher assistants in various subjects (humanities, math, sciences) all generally have the same goal: to help students understand their class material better. Whether it is completing hours in tutorial teaching classmates, helping prepare and set up labs, or just helping the teacher grade labs and quizzes, TA's dedicate a good amount of time in their respective subject areas. They provide a high level of support to their departments, and in sciences, specifically to a faculty member who has chosen him or her to be their designated assistant. This can ultimately lead to benefits such as acquiring a quality teacher recommendation for college. Being a teacher assistant is a great academic leadership position and reflects well on resumes, all on top of helping fellow Unis succeed in their courses.

PCC- Peer College Counselors- PCCs work with Counseling Services to help inform the student body about college. Each PCC works in a specific area. PCC jobs include College Representatives, Summer Opportunities, Scholarships, Publicity for PCCs and Counseling Services, Research/Video, Counseling Website, and Newsletter. Each position allows for Counseling Services to effectively communicate with the student body about things such as Naivance and events like College Events. To learn more about a specific job, feel free to ask a PCC. To get in touch with us, go to the Counseling website at www.ncssm.edu/counseling and click on PCCs. In addition to helping students and Counseling Services, PCCs also learn a lot about the college process which proves very helpful as seniors. The PCC application process involves an application and group interview with other applicants. Applications will be coming out in Spring.

Attaches: Attachés work for the Institutional Advancement Office (that hallway where 1st Bryan would be if it were to exist). One of our primary focuses is to generate revenue for the school. We do this by contacting parents and alumni by phone and/or by mail. Some of the events we are involved in include the Million Dollar Match Campaign, Alumni Weekend, and various Ice Cream Socials throughout the year. Attachés have the opportunity, if interested, to specialize in communications (typically one or two individuals are selected for this). Occasionally, a couple of attachés represent the student body at Foundation Board meetings. A typical work service shift may include making phone calls, mailing letters, and other secretarial tasks, but it varies week to week depending on how busy the office is. Attaches represent NCSSM on campus and off.

Updated Test Dates

Here are some updated test dates. Make sure you check if it is offered here at school. If not, you will have to arrange your own transportation. Also, the SAT is offered on June 2nd, but Commencement occurs on that day and students are required to attend, so you will be unable to take the test that day.



Test Dates	Test	Regular Registration Deadline	Late Registration Deadline
January 28, 2012	SAT & Subject Tests	December 30, 2011	January 13, 2012
February 11, 2012	ACT	January 13, 2012	January 13-20, 2012
March 10, 2012	SAT only	February 10, 2012	February 24, 2012
April 14, 2012	ACT	March 9, 2012	March 10-23, 2012
May 5, 2012	SAT & Subject Tests	April 6, 2012	April 20, 2012
June 9, 2012	ACT	May 4, 2012	May 5-18, 2012

Save The Date: What: Financial Aid Workshop

When: January 29th, 2012 2-4 p.m.

Where: ETC Auditorium

This is an opportunity to learn more about need-based and merit-based financial aid.

Mark Your Calendars...

What: Career Expo

When: March 21st @ 3:30

Where: Around NCSSM

Campus

Visiting Colleges for Juniors

As Science and Math students, we are constantly reminded about how important college is. Our school has done a great job of helping map out the entire college application process. However, no matter how many times we are reminded, some of us forget that part of the process is visiting colleges. When you visit a college, it can make a huge difference in your decision on whether or not you would like to go there. You might not like that the dorms are so far away from the academic buildings, or that there are not very many options when it comes to food. Things like those might change your mind on whether you want to spend the next four years of your life on that campus. Most students decide to start visiting

college during their junior year. This way, you have a better understanding of where you want to apply and where you do not. For seniors, it is a good idea to visit the colleges to which you have applied. This makes your decision of which college you want to attend easier.

If visiting a college is not that likely (on the other side of the country, on the other side of the world, etc.), do research on the college. What is it close to? How many people go there? There are many sites on the internet that can help you figure out what colleges are right for you. Just remember that this could be four years of your life spent at this one place. Make sure you're getting what you want in a college.

If you have any questions, please refer to www.ncssm.edu/counseling for your answers.

Happy Holidays!
From Counseling Services and Your PCC's

