

MCNEAL SAMS COLLEGE CONSULTING NEWS AND NOTES

JUNIOR - OOPS, NO SENIOR - CHECKLIST YOU ARE NOW A SENIOR!

- REQUEST:** Be sure to request a copy of your unofficial transcript with your grades from the end of your junior year. Share that copy with your college consultant, too.
- SCHEDULE:** It is time to schedule a series of meetings throughout the summer with your college consultant. We want to make sure you enter your senior year with your applications well underway. You will appreciate the stress reduction next fall!
- RELAX.** You just ended a very challenging year. Make sure you plan to relax and refresh a little this summer!



Please note: There will not be a newsletter in July. We will be back in August.

A LITTLE ADVICE AS BOTH THE WEATHER AND YOUR JOURNEY HEAT UP...

If you have children who plan to go to college, you've experienced that moment when a conversation somehow ends up on some tricky topics: test scores, GPA's, college lists, visits to campus. "How many advanced courses is Janie taking next year? Robbie can't decide whether to take four AP's or five..." "Have you scheduled your campus tours yet? Better hurry, they fill up fast..." Sadie has a 4.5 GPA but she got an A- freshman year and now we're worried she won't be valedictorian..." And on and on—until your stomach is in a knot and you want to boycott the entire process and you might just move your family off the grid where no one asks about ACT scores.

When cocktail chatter turns college admissions, don't panic. Yes, there are some competitive souls out there. But for the most part, people bring up the topic because it's so stressful. Will it all work out? What if your child is still deciding on a major? And who in heaven's name set those outrageous tuition prices? When adults get together, the tension is so electric that if you lit a match, the room might explode.

Sometimes we talk (or perhaps over-share) on these subjects because we hope to diffuse our own anxiety. If the choices we are helping our children to make match someone else's, perhaps we've got it right after all. But most of the time, such thinking-out-loud does little more than up the ante.

If you want to lessen your application-related stress, we've got a few suggestions.

- Your children are watching! Treat the topic with sensitivity and courtesy. The decisions that make sense for your high school senior may not be the best for someone else's, and that's just fine.
- If someone reels off their daughter's college list and clearly wants you to reciprocate, change the subject. The Cardinals! The humidity! That irritating slowdown on Highway 40 right before Big Bend, or your local equivalent! There are dozens of safe options.
- Breathe. It *will* work out. With more than 2800 four-year colleges in the US alone, there is a place for everyone. Celebrate having higher education as an option in the first place, because it's a blessing. And remember that it's not so much what we have, as it is what we do with what we have.

Life is tough enough already. Be good to each other.

CONTACT YOUR CONSULTANT: NAME@MCNEALSAMS.COM

CORNELIA MCNEAL
NELIE@

BARBARA SAMS
BARBARA@

JEANIE GRIMM
JEANIE@

ELIZABETH SCHNELL
ELIZABETH@

ANN MCCURTIES
ANN@

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NEWS AND NOTES

TALK AROUND TOWN

As [this blog post](#) from [ArborBridge](#) suggests, reading is one of the most effective tools for becoming a more successful test taker and a more successful student.

To help you get started, here's some interesting lists that offer suggestions. There are all genres, and

[12 Best Books for College Students to Read in 2023](#)

[Top 10 Books Every College Student Should Read](#)

[101 Great Books Recommended for the College Bound](#)



KINDNESS CORNER – BE HAPPY: TEND TO YOUR RELATIONSHIPS THIS SUMMER

[The Harvard Study on Adult Development](#) found the number one factor leading to happiness is having healthy social relationships. According to Dr. Robert Waldinger, director of the study, “The surprising finding is that our relationships and how happy we are in our relationships has a powerful influence on our health. Taking care of your body is important, but tending to your relationships is a form of self-care too.” So, while working, volunteering, traveling, and catching up on your sleep this summer, don't forget to nurture your relationships too. Spend time with your family, hang out with your friends. Find some happiness.



FOCUS FEATURE: WHY A RESUME?

The Common Application Activity section has very limited space to list and describe your activities. Students are often surprised by what they cannot share. When you realize that the Activity section is one of the very limited areas that you can share who you are and what matters to you, you begin to see how important giving meaningful details about how you spend your time beyond your courses is.

Many colleges will offer you the opportunity to share a complete resume. For many of you, it may benefit you to share a complete and thoughtful resume.

And if you will be participating in any interviews as part of your admission process or scholarships or honors programs applications, it is a good idea to have a resume with you during the interview or to submit with the special applications.

So, talk to your college consultant about how to create a resume and what to include. We even have a specialist with whom you can work on a resume.

PROGRESS CHECK

Summer may just be starting for you, but remember time goes by fast when you are having fun. If you want to avoid the crunch time craziness of your senior fall, make sure you are on track.

- You should be starting to finalize the list of schools to which you will apply. Goal: Final list by Labor Day!
- The Common App section of your Common Application can be completed prior to August 1. Let's do it!
- You should have a final resume (except any summer activities).
- You should have a completed draft of your personal statement by the end of June at the latest.

If you are not on track to be ready for the August 1st opening of the 2023-2024 Common Application, it is time to schedule an appointment with your consultant.