

College Admissions & STEAM Guide

2020-2021
EDITION
OUR 11TH YEAR



web only



CHANGING TIMES

Shifting and adapting during the COVID-19 era

CHOOSING A COLLEGE | FINANCIAL AID | VIRTUAL COLLEGE TOURS & FAIRS |
WORKSHEETS | ESPORTS | ESSAY TIPS | MANUFACTURING

OUR PARTNERS: AAA | FARMINGDALE STATE COLLEGE

Newsday

CONTENTS

With the Right Prep, College Is In Your Future!

Eleven years ago, Newsday published the first edition of the College Admissions Guide. The purpose was simple: provide a pocket-sized guide for college-bound students and their parents that would help to reduce the anxiety and confusion involved in the college admissions process. That process has become even more challenging due to the altered landscape of higher education from the coronavirus pandemic. This guide takes into account the new reality such as virtual learning and virtual campus tours, while continuing to provide quick reads, packed with guidelines, tips, online resources, and worksheets, to help students realize their dream of a college degree. This year's 11th edition continues our mission. The guide is available online and is aimed at students, parents, guidance counselors, libraries, youth and non-profit organizations, and college prep programs. Download the digital version of the 2020 Guide at newsday.com/collegeguide.

Director, Advertising Niche Products
Estelle Lander
estelle.lander@newsday.com
631-843-2652

National College/Education
Sales Account Executive:
Samantha Lombardo
samantha.lombardo@newsday.com
631-843-3007

Editor: Jennifer Berger
jennifer.berger@newsday.com
631-843-3069

Art Director: Linda Nicol

Writers: Hilary Masell Oswald,
Jennifer Berger
Special thanks to Veronica Jennings
and John Russo

For distribution information,
estelle.lander@newsday.com

Published by
Newsday Media Group
Advertising Special Sections
© 2020 Newsday Media Group

This guide was prepared by Newsday's
Advertising Department, and did not
involve the reporting and editing staff of
Newsday's Editorial Department.

How to Work With Your School Counselor	4
Early College: Earn College Credits & Save Money	5
College Entrance Exams	6
Choosing a College: It's About the Fit.....	8
College Comparison Worksheet	10
Application Checklist	11
How to Write a Killer Application Essay	12
Esports: Get Paid to Play Video Games	13
Making the Most of a Virtual College Fair	14
Keys to a Successful College Visit	16
Community Colleges & More	17
More Than White Coats: Health Care and Medical Tech....	18
Cybersecurity: Beat Hackers at Their Own Game.....	20
Manufacturing: Robotics, AI, 3-D Printing.....	21
What Is STEAM & Why You Should Care	22
College Financial Aid Toolkit	24
Technology: 5 Steps Toward a Career in IT	32
Your LD Goes to College	34
Taking a Gap Year	35
Social Media Savvy	36
Which College to Choose?	38
College Planning Timeline	40
Top 10 Websites	43

SPECIAL FEATURES:

- **Financial Aid Toolkit sponsored by AAA**
- **Junior/Senior Timeline and Top 10 College Websites sponsored by Farmingdale State College**

Take control of Your Future

Become an Electronic
Engineering Technician
& enter exciting fields
such as:

AEROSPACE

COMMUNICATIONS

**DIGITAL COMPUTER
CONTROLS**

ENERGY CONVERSIONS



Nassau Community College

Stay home. Stay safe. Save money.

Apply today at **ncc.edu**

NASSAU
COMMUNITY
COLLEGE

THE FUTURE OF EDUCATION IS HERE
EL FUTURO DE LA EDUCACIÓN ESTÁ AQUÍ
LAVNI EDIKASYON AN SE ISIT LA
教育的未來就在這裡

THIS IS ABOUT YOU

How to work with your school guidance counselor

Lucky for you, school counselors are experts at helping students navigate these all-important years — and they don't just help with academic work. Counselors facilitate the coordination of LD services, help students manage mental-health issues, offer resources to boost students' success in the classroom, assist in the college search, guide athletes through the NCAA requirements — and more.

But don't wait for your counselor to reach out to you. As with almost everything in life, the more initiative you take, the better the results will be.

Here's what you need to know to make the most of your counselor-student relationship:

Let's face it. Getting through high school and into the next phase of life is a long journey. You're going to need all the support you can get.

Know what to expect. Depending on the type of school you attend, your counselor could be working with only a few dozen students or several hundred. Don't be anonymous. Make an in-person or virtual appointment early in the school year to introduce yourself (if you don't already know your counselor pretty well) and to find out what services are available to students.

Ask for help. Counselors have access to a lot of information and tools that help you succeed in high school and beyond. For example, if you're struggling with note-taking, ask your counselor if she knows about an online course you can take or if your school offers peer-to-peer tutoring in study skills. Maybe you're feeling unsure about the right next step for you after high school. Your counselor probably has aptitude tests you can take.

Be honest. If you're facing a serious challenge, your counselor can help. Are you unsure about whether to play sports in college? You're feeling unraveled by stress or depression? You're being bullied? Tell your counselor. Depending on the severity of your challenge, you might be referred to another professional, but your guidance office is a good place to start your search for help.

Don't be bashful. If you're planning to head to college, your counselor will have to complete a portion of your applications. Some apps require recommendations; others ask the counselor to complete data about the rigor of your coursework and your class rank. (If a college admissions officer has a question about your candidacy, he'll likely call your counselor.)

So, it's a good idea for your counselor to know you well. Let the counselor know what you're interested in studying and why. Give your counselor a sense of your creativity, values, passion, and dreams.

Create a brag sheet. Parents, jumpstart the conversation between your child and the guidance counselor with a one-page "brag sheet" listing your child's achievements, activities, interests, and goals.

3 WAYS YOU CAN HELP YOUR COUNSELOR HELP YOU:

BE VISIBLE. Talk to your counselor early and often about your college ambitions.

BE OPEN. Counselors can help you with more than just college. Share your other life-related concerns.

BE APPRECIATIVE. Send a handwritten "Thank You" note for all of your counselor's hard work.



EARLY COLLEGE

Earn college credits while you're still in high school—and save money and time completing your degree.

NY Smart Scholars Program. The New York State Education Department funds dozens of projects — essentially, collaborations between school districts and state colleges and universities — through its Smart Scholars Early College High School partnership program. Smart Scholars targets students from groups that are underrepresented in college, academically at-risk, or economically disadvantaged. For more information — and to inquire about programs available this academic year on Long Island — email smartscholars@nysed.gov.

According to the National Center for Education Statistics, about a third of students (34%) took courses for postsecondary credit in high school.

College-in-High-School Programs. Academically talented students can take college courses at their high school for college credit or dual (high school and college) credit. For example, both Farmingdale State College and LIU Post offer high school students the opportunity to earn college credit for approved courses on campus or at their home high school. To learn more, go to farmingdale.edu and search “University in the High School” to find the program page, or liu.edu and search for “High School Scholars Program.”

High School, College and Business Partnerships. New York State’s P-TECH (Pathways in Technology Early College High School) program offers you the opportunity to earn an associate degree at no cost to your family and then be first in line for jobs with participating companies. Forty-one public-private educational partnerships are offered statewide, including the Uniondale school district’s program with SUNY Farmingdale, which also is open to students of Freeport and Wyandanch schools. For more about the program visit ptech.org, which leads to a national database (from which people can choose their state).

Advanced Placement (AP) College Board Courses. More than 35 Advanced Placement (AP) courses are available to high school students—which is good news because a passing grade on an AP exam can earn you college credits. The upshot? You can enroll earlier in upper-level courses, pursue a double-major with the extra time you have on campus, and even have time to study abroad. Courses range from foreign language to literature and calculus, history, and psychology. For more information, talk to your counselor or visit apstudents.collegeboard.org.

International Baccalaureate (IB) program. This program awards special diplomas to high-schoolers who complete seven specific courses, write a 4,000-word essay, and develop and execute a project based on ideas of creativity, activity, and service. Proponents claim the IB high school curriculum provides students a global perspective and cultivates independent learning skills. The IB program is available to elementary, middle-, and high-school students. For more information, visit ibo.org.

EARLY COLLEGE
PROGRAMS CAN
SHORTEN THE
TIME IT TAKES
YOU TO EARN
A DEGREE.
WANT
PROOF?

Check out these stats:

90% OF STUDENTS WHO PARTICIPATE IN AN EARLY COLLEGE PROGRAM **GRADUATE** FROM HIGH SCHOOL vs. 78% OF STUDENTS NATIONWIDE

94% EARN **FREE COLLEGE CREDIT** WHILE IN HIGH SCHOOL

30% EARN AN **ASSOCIATE DEGREE** OR OTHER CREDENTIAL WHILE STILL IN HIGH SCHOOL

Source: Jobs for the Future, How to Scale College in High School, February 2017

COLLEGE ENTRANCE EXAMS

SAT, ACT, or test optional?

Ask your parents what they scored on their SAT or ACT college entrance exams and chances are, they remember the actual numbers. While these standardized tests were a big part of applying to college, these days a growing number of schools — more than 1,200 at last count — don't require entrance exams at all. In fact, more than half of all U.S. four-year colleges and universities will be test-optional for fall 2021 admission, according to the National Center for Fair & Open Testing. Local colleges and universities on the test-optional list include Adelphi University, Hofstra University (SAT or ACT required for some programs), St. John's University and SUNY Stony Brook and Old Westbury. Visit fairtest.org to find the complete list of test-optional schools.

Eighty-five of the U.S. News "Top 100" national liberal arts colleges are test-optional, as well as 60 of the "Top 100" national universities, including Brown, CalTech, Cornell, Dartmouth and Yale.

Source: fairtest.org

If you plan on taking one of the tests, here's exactly what you need to know to choose which test to take, prepare for it and do the best you can.

ACT or SAT? Most colleges accept either one, but double-check to find out if your schools have preferences. If they don't, it's up to you to find the one that suits you best. Each test has its advantages and many students choose to take both, the advantage being that you'll know where to focus your energy if you want to retake one to boost your score.

SAT. The College Board, which administers the SAT, totally overhauled the test three years ago. The new SAT was fully implemented with the graduating class of 2017.

What's Different? The new SAT attempts to capture more of what students learn in the classroom, rather than test "aptitude." The updated test places more emphasis on reasoning and processing information quickly, and includes sections on math, reading and writing & language, with an optional essay. Gone are the obscure vocabulary words in favor of a section that focuses on words you are more likely to see in college. Other major changes include eliminating the "guessing penalty" — no points deducted for a wrong answer — and a return to scoring on the old 1,600-point scale.

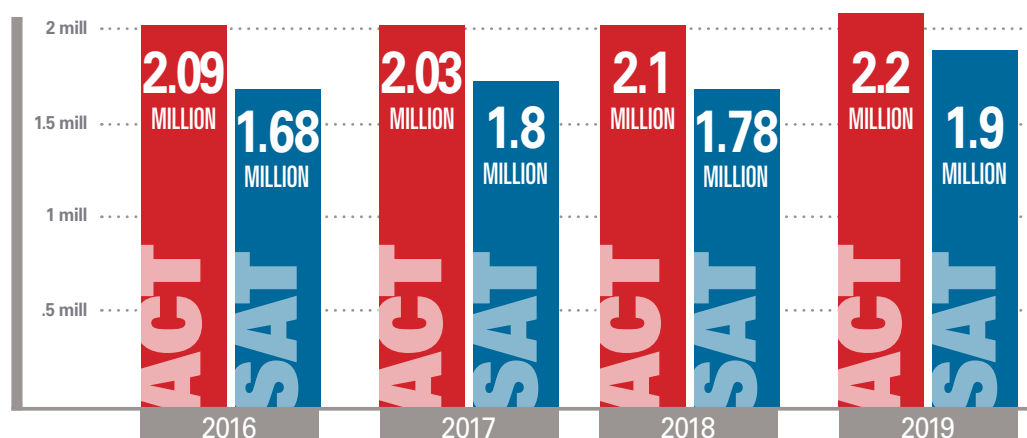
ACT. Administered by ACT, Inc., the ACT tests your knowledge in four areas: English, math (including everyone's favorite: trigonometry!), reading and science. The writing section is optional, and there's no penalty for guessing.

About those scores. Many students want to know if their scores will get them into their top-choice colleges. See how your scores compare to last year's admitted students by checking out the freshman class profiles, which colleges publish each year. There you'll find the range of scores that the middle 50% of admitted students earned on the SAT and ACT. If your score falls in that range, you know you have a shot. If they're lower, don't panic. Remember that 25% of last year's admitted students scored below that range, too.

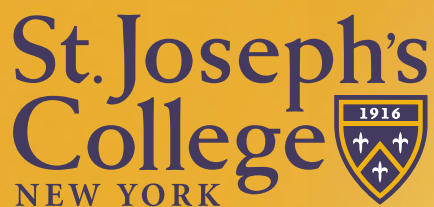
Practice. The ACT and SAT are unlike any tests you've ever taken, so you have to prepare. You can find practice exams online at educationplanner.org, collegereadiness.collegeboard.org/sat and princetonreview.com. Also, Khan Academy offers free prep materials at khanacademy.org/sat.

WHO'S TAKING WHAT?

A record number of students — more than 11 million — took the ACT or the SAT in 2019.



Sources: Education Week, ACT.org, reports.collegeboard.org



Ready to Make an Impact.

Ready. Set. Joe's®

OPEN HOUSE

SJC Long Island
Sunday, October 25

To RSVP, visit
sjcny.edu/liopenhouse
631.687.4500



sjcny.edu

LONG ISLAND • BROOKLYN • ONLINE

CHOOSING A COLLEGE

It's about the fit

Student, know thyself. Regardless of a college's reputation, it won't measure up if you can't follow your true interest or your real passion – or at least discover what they are once there. Are your life goals already set? Choose a school with a major that fulfills them. Still questioning? Choose a college with plenty of interesting options.

How should you choose your college? Think about what really matters to you now, and then select the handful of schools that are your best fit. Use our side-by-side comparison worksheet (pg. 16) to help you choose the right college for you.

These tips should start you thinking.

What's your comfort zone? Will you be at home in a school with 1,000 students, or a 30,000-student university? Bigger doesn't always mean better. Consider how much of a change you want from where you live and go to school now, how far you want to travel, and how much it costs to visit home.

What's your type? All colleges are not the same, so think about how you learn and what your interests are. Some schools offer a broad-based liberal arts education, while others specialize in engineering or fine arts. You'll want to consider how many students live on campus or commute, how old the average student is, and what drives the campus social life.

Some schools take pride in their athletic teams. At others, live music concerts, clubs, organizations and fraternities enrich campus life. Study abroad opportunities may appeal to student adventurers. Remember, you have to spend the next four years here, so make sure your personal goals are met as well as your academic goals.

About the Benjamins. Cost is probably one of the first factors parents consider. Tuition, fees, and room and board vary by school, but the price tag isn't always what you'll end up paying. If you ask, colleges will let you know about financial aid, like grants for good grades or departmental scholarships for specific talents. The bottom line? Don't let cost be the only factor in your decision.

You know what's right for you. Remember not to lose yourself in this process. If a school doesn't feel right, no matter how awesome the campus looks or how many famous alumni went there, it's probably not for you.

Go with your gut. Ask yourself, "Would I be happy living and learning with these students and professors in this environment, for the next four years?"



For each of the 3 Rs, choose 3 colleges or universities you want to apply to:

REACH

A long shot, but not an impossible dream, such as an Ivy League school when your grades and standardized test scores are average.

REALISTIC

You match the academic profile of the typical student in the most recently accepted class.

RELIABLE

Your grades and standardized test scores make you pretty much a shoe-in, and your parents can afford it.

ADELPHI

UNIVERSITY

NEW YORK



Experience Virtual Fall Open House. And let's get your journey to success started.

Saturday, October 17, 2020
Sunday, November 15, 2020

Register Now
adelphi.edu/LongIsland

COLLEGE COMPARISON WORKSHEET

		college 1	college 2
NAME OF COLLEGE			
Location	Commuting		
	Urban		
	Suburban		
	Rural		
Type of Institute	2 Year		
	4 Year		
	Special		
Enrollment	Small (under 2000)		
	Medium (2000-6000)		
	Large (6000+)		
Housing	Dorms		
	Off Campus		
	Apartments		
	Fraternity/Sorority		
Campus Life	Organizations		
	Clubs		
	Student Activities		
	Sports		
	Study Abroad		
Application Deadline	Early Decision		
	Early Action		
	Other		
Costs/Expenses	Tuition & Fees		
	Room & Board		
	Other		
Financial Aid	Grants		
	Scholarships		
	Student Loans		
Other Criteria	Degrees Offered		
	Freshman Class GPA		

APPLICATION CHECKLIST

	college 1	college 2	
NAME OF COLLEGE			
College Information	Web address _____		
	Information online _____		
	Application online _____		
	Campus Visit/Virtual Tour Planned (Date) _____		
	Info. Session Scheduled at _____		
	Comparison Worksheet Done _____		
Deadlines/Dates	Application _____		
	Transcript & School Report _____		
	Financial Aid _____		
	Last Test Dates Accepted _____		
	Early Decision/ Early Action _____		
Testing	SAT or ACT Required: _____		
	Test Date Plans _____		
	Test Scores Sent from College Board or ACT _____		
	Requested on _____		
Interview	Required? _____		
	Campus Appointment (Date) _____		
	Alumni Interview on _____		
Application Forms	Essays Written _____		
	App. Fee mailed/paid _____		
	Secondary School Report	delivered to _____ mailed on _____	
	First Recommendation	requested on _____ mailed on _____	
	Second Recommendation	requested on _____ mailed on _____	
	Personal Recommendation	requested on _____ mailed on _____	

Important Application Terms: Early Action (EA): Your admission is not binding; you can change your mind.
Early Decision (ED): Think this one through. Your decision is binding; get financial aid estimates before committing.

APPLICATION ESSAY

How to write a killer essay

Once a day for a week, read the prompt closely. Sounds crazy, right? But repeating the prompt means that even if you're not concentrating on the topic, your brain is kicking it around.

It's the bane of college-bound teens' existence: the application essay. Here are easy-to-follow tips for tackling this all-important assignment.

Write down 30 or more ideas. Finding the perfect topic requires brainstorming. Ignore your list for at least 24 hours, after which you'll know what's really interesting, and what's *cliche*.

Find a topic. Choose something you truly want to write about and can cover in 500 words. Avoid complex issues. (Go narrow and deep, not wide and shallow.) You can write a killer essay about the red

running shoes your Mom bought you for your first cross-country meet or how a Shakespearean sonnet inspired you to write a rock opera.

Talk over your ideas with a parent or your best friend. Most people feel more comfortable talking than writing, so use those well-honed storytelling skills to see how your ideas develop. Caution: Don't choose a topic because you think it's the most impressive, or because you think admissions committees want to hear it. Choose the one that best reflects who you are.

Start writing. Begin with an anecdote. Everyone loves a good story, and because stories are more concrete, they help you convey ideas easily. Just write. Nobody is going to see this draft, so it doesn't matter where you begin.

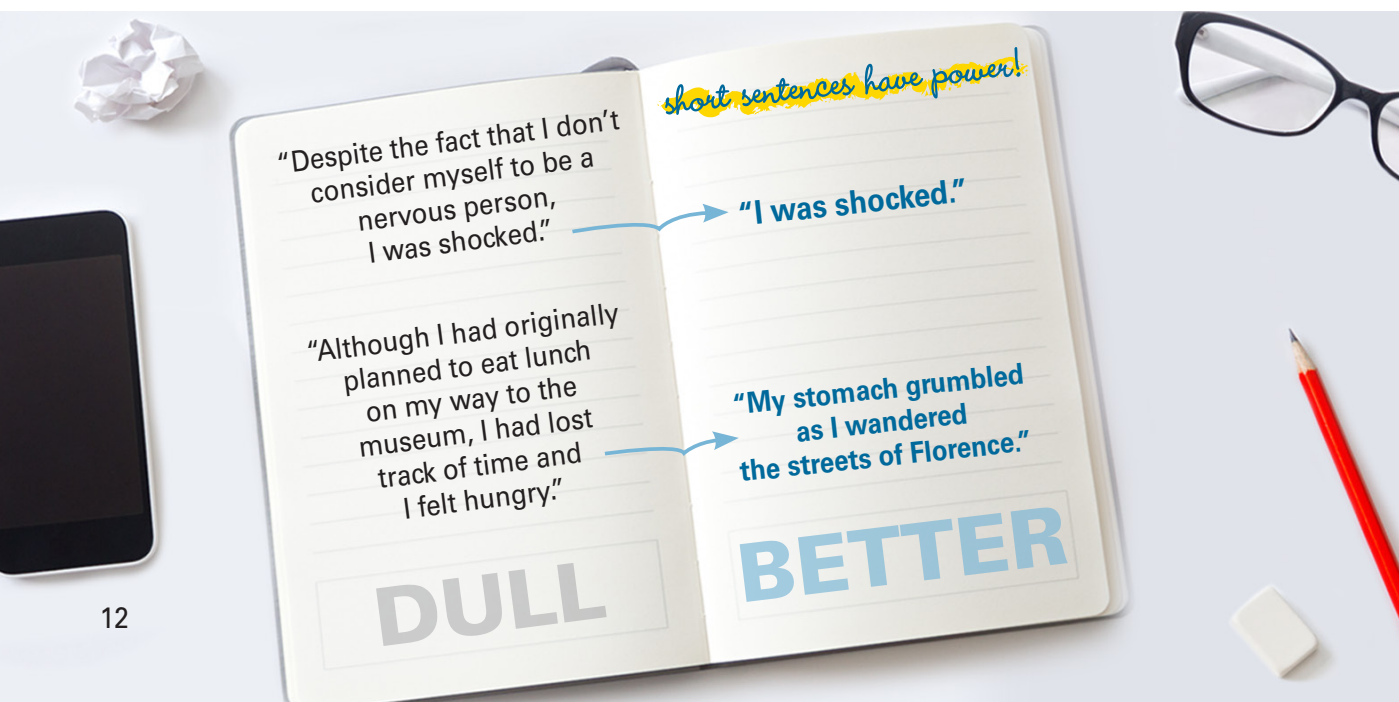
Revise. Think about big ideas. Ask yourself these questions:

- Did I answer the prompt?
- Does my essay develop, or do I restate the same ideas?
- What does this essay tell people about me?
- Did I tie the intro and ending together somehow?

Read it aloud. How does it flow? If anything sounds strange to your ear, revise it.

Feedback. Once you have revised it, it's OK to ask a teacher or parent to take a look. Revise it again. Once your essay feels organized and well developed, then proof it for grammatical and spelling mistakes.

The Clincher. Your essay should reveal something about you that the rest of your application doesn't. Don't restate your resume. Focus on one topic and dive deep!



WHAT IS ESPORTS?

Whether you're a fan of sports, video games or both, esports could be your new obsession.

By Dallas Ernst, AAA Northeast

While many professional sporting events are being postponed or canceled due to the global pandemic, electronic sports — also known as esports — are seeing a huge spike in popularity and viewership. Esports is professional, organized video gaming, and just like traditional sports, people love to watch.

Sports fans missing their teams can watch or participate in esports to enjoy a sense of competition and community. Games like FIFA, Madden NFL and NBA 2K are just a few traditional sports options, while fighter games like Mortal Kombat and Super Smash Bros. and first-person shooter games like Call of Duty and Halo are also popular among gamers.

Electronic sports has become its own billion-dollar industry as well as a form of entertainment everyday people, sports enthusiasts and gamers alike are flocking to, especially while staying at home and social distancing.

To bolster the expanding collegiate teams, high school organizations have popped up. Groups such as the High School Esports League (highschoolsportsleague.com) and PlayVS (playvs.com) help build networks. Esports players are positioning themselves for millions of dollars in potential scholarship offers from a growing number of colleges.

What Is Esports?

The origin of esports can be traced to a Space Invaders championship held at Stanford University in 1972. The event drew 10,000 participants, and the winner received a free subscription to Rolling Stone magazine. Today, professional esports players, either individually or in teams, participate in virtual or in-person tournaments to prove who's the best of the best and compete for cash prizes.

Getting paid to play video games may sound too good to be true, and while it is possible to make money, only hundreds of people (compared to the millions who play) actually make a living participating in esports. Revenue comes from sponsorship, media rights and advertisements, among other sources. Playing esports isn't all about the money though. The excitement of competition, vast gaming community and genuine fun of playing and beating games are all reasons for the growing popularity. A variety of games are featured through esports, so there truly is something for everyone.

Popularity

Electronic sports are seeing a spike in participation and viewership due to COVID-19, and that growth is only expected to continue.

"In the coming year, the global esports economy will generate revenues of \$1.1 billion, a year-on-year growth of +15.7," according to the 2020 Global Esports Market Report.

Based on live esports hours, the most popular games to watch include League of Legends, Counter-Strike: Global Offensive, Defense of the Ancients 2, Overwatch and Hearthstone. Some of the most popular live non-esports include Fortnite, Apex Legends, World of Warcraft and Minecraft.

Where to Watch

Unlike traditional sports, you don't need cable to watch esports — though some professional games have been televised on channels like ESPN and Disney XD. With internet access and a mobile device, personal computer or gaming console, you can peruse a plethora of esports through platforms like Twitch, YouTube and more.

Twitch: Arguably the most popular live-streaming platform and a subsidiary of Amazon, Twitch allows viewers to watch amateur and pro gamers in real time.

YouTube: The main platform for mobile esports, YouTube houses entire channels dedicated to esports as well as specific games.

Facebook Gaming: Facebook released its own gaming app to meet esports demands. It sends users a notification when their favorite gamers begin streaming.

Mixer: Formerly known as Beam, Mixer is a video game streaming platform from Microsoft. It features HypeZone, a 24/7 channel that changes between players close to winning popular games.

How to Get Into Esports

Though professional gamers practice anywhere from eight to 12 hours a day, such dedication isn't required of novice players.

First, find a game you enjoy playing and choose a gaming platform. Practice playing and consider watching other gamers to pick up potential tips and tricks. Try being a solo player or try joining a team.

Want to know how to join an esports team? It's simple. Your team could be made up of friends, family, roommates or form through connections you make on gaming platforms. Most importantly, remember to have fun!

Video games are an easy way to pass the time and can help improve hand-eye coordination and decision-making. However, too much gaming can lead to hand cramps (potentially carpal tunnel) as well as fatigue and migraines. Make sure to monitor your screen time, stay hydrated, get enough sleep and step away from your electronics from time to time for some fresh air, a bit of exercise or to at least give your eyes a rest.

MAKING THE MOST OF A VIRTUAL COLLEGE FAIR

Prepare ahead

If you're just beginning your college search, attending a fair is the most efficient way to scout out a wide variety of schools in a short amount of time. This year, virtual college fairs may replace in-person ones. But fear not, a virtual college fair will include big universities and small schools, those that are nearby and those from all over the world. Hundreds of college representatives are online at the same time on each virtual fair date.

The National Association for College Admission Counseling hosts some of the biggest college fairs — in real life and online. This fall, the NACAC is hosting four free, one-day virtual college fairs on Sept. 23, Oct. 12, Oct. 18 and Nov. 8. More than 600 colleges will be at each fair. Visit nacacfairs.org for more information.

Here, the NACAC offers tips on how to make the most of attending a virtual college fair.

- 1. Register for real.**

Use your real name and address when you register. This information gets sent to the colleges for their records. You'll want to make sure your digital footprint is professional.
- 2. Check out the colleges.**

See the list of colleges that will be at the virtual fair. Click around to find out more about them and check out their videos. Make a note or "favorite" the ones that sound interesting.
- 3. Create your itinerary.**

The best part of virtual college fairs are the Zoom sessions. See which colleges are offering interesting sessions and add them to your itinerary, either by clicking on them within the platform or by jotting the date and time down.
- 4. Invite a parent or guardian.**

Fairs are fun when you can attend with someone. Log in separately and text back and forth. Attend a college's Zoom presentation or meeting side-by-side.
- 5. Do a tech check.**

Make sure your technology is ready. Charge your phone ahead of time or, if on a desktop, download the required software. Practice using Zoom, plug in your headphones and use the webcam if available.
- 6. Clean your room on Zoom.**

If you're using a camera, be aware of what others can see. Use a Zoom background if you'd like to keep your surroundings private. Also, a quiet room will be less distracting to you and whoever you're speaking with.
- 7. Look around.**

Show up on the day of the fair. Enter different "rooms" to hear what the college representatives are saying. This is your chance to learn a lot in a short period of time. If others are already in the virtual room when you enter, that's OK, you're welcome to join.
- 8. Make a good impression.**

Choose clothes that are professional and comfortable — avoid heels, ripped jeans and pajamas. Arrive on time for Zoom sessions or meetings. The college representatives love meeting students and will ask you questions. Think about how you will introduce yourself and what you want to say especially about where you're from and what you hope to find in a college. Smile and nod occasionally as you would in real life.
- 9. Ask questions.**

Don't be afraid to ask about test scores, financial aid, sports, student life, diversity or other topics. Maybe you want to know what the college's coronavirus plans are for next year. Maybe

a scholarship would really make a difference to whether you could afford to attend or not. Don't forget to take notes.

- 10. Follow up.**

Did you meet a college representative who had great things to say? Make a note of their name and contact information and follow up directly if you wish. Virtual fairs that offer one-on-one meeting slots are especially helpful when you have special considerations to talk over with the admissions representative.

TOP

4

QUESTIONS
to ask a college recruiter
(Jot down their answers in a notepad.)

- What are the three best things I should know about your college?
- I want to be a (fill in your dream job). What is the best major at your college to help me enter and advance in the field?
- What are your college's most exciting activities and resources beyond the classroom?
- What's your retention rate and your 4-year graduation rate?



Fall 2020 Virtual College Fairs

The College Search Goes Online!

NACAC National College Fairs

This fall, NACAC National College Fairs has planned four virtual fairs. Each one-day, free event is open to parents and students, and you may visit as often as you like. To register, simply visit virtualcollegefairs.org and select the fair(s) you would like to attend.

Sunday, September 13	12 p.m. - 8 p.m.
Monday, October 12	1 p.m. - 9 p.m.
Sunday, October 18	12 p.m. - 8 p.m.
Sunday, November 8	2 p.m. - 10 p.m.

Long Island Virtual College Fairs

Presented by Western Suffolk Counselors' Association

The Western Suffolk Counselors' Association is offering three virtual fairs in October and November.

Visit <https://gotocollegefairs.swoogo.com/longislandvirtualcollegefair> or email wsca@optonline.net or call 631-209-0839.

Tuesday, October 13	12 p.m. - 5 p.m.
Sunday, November 1	12 p.m. - 5 p.m.
Tuesday, November 10	4 p.m. - 8:30 p.m.

Nassau Counselors' Association 2020 Fall College Expo

The Nassau Counselors' Association presents its fall expo, with attendance from a variety of colleges and universities offering their time and knowledge to students and families from Long Island. The event is free and targets students of all ages, particularly those in grades 11 and 12.

To register, visit <https://reg.ecareerfairs.com/e/nca>

Thursday, October 29	4 p.m. - 8 p.m.
----------------------	-----------------

KEYS TO A SUCCESSFUL COLLEGE VISIT

Start early, be curious

You hear it all the time: You absolutely must visit colleges during your search. And it's true. Visits are the only way to get a real feel for each place to determine whether this campus is where you'd like to spend four to five years of your life. But with many colleges closed or not allowing visitors because of the pandemic, many high school students are turning to virtual campus tours. Some college websites may offer virtual tours, but there are also additional sites where you can explore many different schools from the comfort of your couch. These tips will help you make the most of your virtual or in-person visit.

Vet your top schools. Spend time before your visit perusing the college website and reviewing the brochures, jotting down and prioritizing questions as you go. When you call the admissions office to arrange your visit (if in-person tours are available), ask to experience a chemistry class, see the athletic facilities, etc. — whatever is most important to you.

Explore the campus. The campus tour is your chance to learn about student life, campus history and traditions, from a great source of info: an enthusiastic student (he or she works for the admissions office, after all). Ask what they like least, what surprised them about the college when they first arrived and what they wish they had known before they enrolled. Eat in the cafeteria and spend some time on the quad. Write down your impressions on the College Comparison worksheet in this guide. You can get a similar experience by asking the admissions office to arrange a phone or Zoom meeting with a current student who can answer all of your questions.

Make connections. On your in-person or virtual visit, arrange to chat with an admissions counselor (although most colleges don't require it). With a counselor's undivided attention, you can ask your questions, impressing him or her that you spent time preparing.

Check out campus media. Check the school's Facebook and Instagram pages, and campus blogs. Pick up copies of the campus newspaper and literary magazine (or ask the school if they can mail you copies) and check out the posters that hang in the student union. What

issues seem to get students fired up? Are there events that interest you?

After your visit, review your notes with your parents or a mentor. If your overall impression is that you wouldn't be happy at that school, cross it off your list — unless you have a wildly compelling reason to reconsider (like a full-ride scholarship). Even then, you should arrange a second visit before enrolling. Your instincts are good. Trust them. You'll need them often in the next four or five years.

WEBSITES OFFERING VIRTUAL COLLEGE TOURS

Several websites host virtual tours of many colleges and universities, allowing a prospective student the opportunity to feel as if they are on campus. While in-person is still the preferred method, some of the following sites offer virtual reality tours, interactive maps, videos and more from thousands of colleges.

Campusreel.org

Search through more than 15,000 videos uploaded by current college students for an honest perspective of the campuses. All videos are vetted before going live.

CampusTours.com

Tour more than 1,500 colleges and universities in the U.S. and abroad through videos, interactive campus maps and mobile walking tours. Some tours also include student tutorials.

eCampusTours.com

This site features 360-degree tours of more than 1,300 colleges. You'll also find additional school information like enrollment, pricing, admissions, programs, financial aid and more.

YouVisit.com

Students have the option to view more than 600 U.S. colleges using a virtual reality headset or a regular video. You can also ask questions that are sent to college officials to respond.

Youniversitytv.com

A different take on virtual tours, this site allows you to search colleges based on categories such as "Coolest Dorms," "Best Campus Food," "Safest Campuses," "Most Active Greek Life" and more.

COMMUNITY COLLEGES & MORE

Look beyond the traditional

Community Colleges. Community colleges are a good option for students looking to save money, stay close to home, work while in school, try out a few courses before committing full-time, earn a specialized program certificate, or any combination of these reasons.

But just because community colleges are financial bargains doesn't mean you should pick just any school. Ask your school counselor for input about each school's strengths. Better yet, schedule visits or virtual tours everywhere you're considering, and speak with professors and current students.

If you're considering an educational track other than a four-year-college, here are a few good choices for students looking for alternatives — and some smart advice on finding the right fit.

If you're planning to transfer to a four-year college after earning your associate degree, ask about how the school advises students in your situation. If you're looking for a skills-based program — radiology, nursing, graphic design, for example — ask your school counselor for a list of recommended programs.

Career/Trade Schools. These schools train for specific skilled careers — many in high-paying STEM fields — such as paralegal, automotive technician, aesthetician, computer programmer and medical assistant. The good ones provide a combination of classroom (or online) learning and hands-on experience; they help students get the credentials and licensing they need to find jobs in their chosen fields. Ask for a list of the school's licensing and accrediting organizations, and then call these organizations to make sure the school is in good standing. Review the enrollment "contract" before registering, and as with all educational options, make sure you understand your financial commitment before you sign on the dotted line.

Business Certificate Programs. Check thoroughly before you commit. Some industries and businesses value these certificates; others would rather see you earn an associate or bachelor's degree and go back later for a certificate, once you've spent some time refining your skills on the job. Find a list of accredited schools and programs at ope.ed.gov/accreditation. (You can't get federal financial aid if your program isn't accredited!)

4

BENEFITS OF
TWO-YEAR
COLLEGES

VALUE. \$3,730 average annual tuition and fees vs. \$10,440 at 4-Year public colleges.

WORK/LIFE BALANCE. 64% of for-credit students attend part-time, so you can work while you plan your next step.

TRANSFER-READY. 4-year colleges allow qualified students to apply credits toward a bachelor's degree.

BREAK THE MOLD. 29% of students are the first generation in their family to attend college.

MORE THAN WHITE COATS

Health care and medical technology

In 2020, the spotlight was on healthcare professionals, as many were hailed as heroes serving on the frontlines of the coronavirus pandemic. Whether you've always aspired to be a doctor, nurse or other healthcare provider, read on to discover what's ahead — and how to prepare for a career in this giant industry.

Cool job titles. Sure, you could be a physician (and the U.S. needs high-quality care providers, so if you're interested in those fields, we hope you'll pursue them!). But if you're not sure whether you want to work in those specific roles, you should know that there are gobs of fascinating jobs and fields out there.

One such area is nutrigenomics, the study of how food and genes influence one another, which could one day reveal how much of every nutrient an individual needs. Another awesome job possibility: synthetic biologist, a pro who designs and builds new biological devices and systems. These professionals might one day create biological "robots" that produce chemicals, like biofuels, or bacteria that consume pollution.

Telehealth boom! Stony Brook Medicine was able to expand its virtual telemedicine visits from 14 a day to more than 1,300 a day during the coronavirus pandemic.

The tech angle of patient care. Now that the majority of healthcare providers use electronic health records (EHRs), a whole industry of developers, cybersecurity gurus, staff trainers, and records specialists has grown. The opportunities for helping build and improve these systems are vast.

Local (and online) resources. With so many fields to consider, you're smart to start researching even before you get to college. Local college science departments might let you visit classes (or virtually attend), talk shop with professors about available course offerings or special on-campus clubs, and tour labs. (The admissions office should be able to help coordinate such in-person or online visits.) Or call the HR departments of local healthcare systems, such as Northwell Health or NYU Winthrop Hospital, about internships or job-shadow days for high-school students. And in the meantime, check out scientific news at websites such as [sciencedaily.com](https://www.sciencedaily.com) or [eurekalert.org](https://www.eurekalert.org).

The newest technologies. Medical technologies have saved millions of lives — some with direct care, some by helping people care for themselves better and therefore prevent disease. A (very short) list: Smart inhalers for people suffering from asthma use Bluetooth technology to send data about the date and time of each dose — and whether it was administered correctly, so patients can track their symptoms and the efficacy of the inhaler. Health wearables allow people to record all kinds of health data — from resting heart rate to exercise intensity to sleep patterns. Telehealth connects healthcare providers with patients through digital devices, instead of via face-to-face care, which helps patients in rural locations or patients with chronic conditions get the care they need, fast.

TOP 20 HEALTHCARE JOBS IN 2020

- | | |
|--|--|
| 1. Dentist (Median Salary: \$151,850) | 13. Obstetrician and Gynecologist (Median Salary: \$208,000) |
| 2. Physician Assistant (Median Salary: \$108,610) | 14. Surgeon (Median Salary: \$208,000) |
| 3. Orthodontist (Median Salary: \$208,000) | 15. Nurse Anesthetist (Median Salary: \$167,950) |
| 4. Nurse Practitioner (Median Salary: \$107,030) | 16. Pediatrician (Median Salary: \$179,560) |
| 5. Physician (Median Salary: \$194,500) | 17. Occupational Therapist (Median Salary: \$84,270) |
| 6. Speech-Language Pathologist (Median Salary: \$77,510) | 18. Psychiatrist (Median Salary: \$208,000) |
| 7. Oral and Maxillofacial Surgeon (Median Salary: \$208,000) | 19. Respiratory Therapist (Median Salary: \$60,280) |
| 8. Veterinarian (Median Salary: \$93,830) | 20. Podiatrist (Median Salary: \$129,550) |
| 9. Registered Nurse (Median Salary: \$71,730) | |
| 10. Physical Therapist (Median Salary: \$87,930) | |
| 11. Optometrist (Median Salary: \$111,790) | |
| 12. Anesthesiologist (Median Salary: \$208,000) | |

Source: U.S. News & World Report, ranked by growth potential, work-life balance and salary



SMALL CAMPUS & BIG CITY



MANHATTAN
COLLEGE

When everything New York City holds lies just outside
a quintessential college campus, the opportunities are endless.

EXPERIENCE THE UNCOMMON
MANHATTAN.EDU

CYBERSECURITY

Join the good guys to beat hackers at their own game

The threat of hacking isn't new: We frequently hear about companies, financial institutions, or even major movie studios that have been hit by cybercriminals who have stolen personal information, such as Social Security or credit card numbers, or highly classified confidential files.

Want to fight back against identity theft and data breaches — and potential threats to the cornerstone of our democracy? Then take a look at a career in cybersecurity and learn to protect the enormous amounts of data we share online.

Get a Good-Paying Job in Two Years!

You could be a part of the cybersecurity field within two years of graduating from high school by earning an associate degree at a community college. For instance, Suffolk County Community College introduced a new associate degree in cybersecurity, utilizing a high-tech cyber lab on its Ammerman campus in Selden. Then, if you choose, you can continue your studies at a four-year university. Once you complete your associate or bachelor's degree, you could be working in a broad range of industries, including financial, health care, IT, education or any organization that relies on the Internet.

The hottest cybersecurity fields include information security analyst (job growth of 32% by 2028), and database administrator (9% job growth). Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics

Free Cybersecurity Programs

School and government institutions are eager to educate a new generation of cybersecurity professionals to fill those future jobs. And the programs are often free. The federal National Security Agency and the National Science Foundation co-sponsored a free GenCyber camp in past summers for K-12 students at St. John's University in Queens. Also, the NSA and the NSF co-sponsor free GenCyber camps for teachers. The goals: to increase interest in cybersecurity careers, help students understand proper online behavior (and how to stay safe) and teach cyber-smart skills. (Recently, Pace University hosted — and there are more than 100 other locations across the country.) Campers might experience a simulated cybersecurity crisis or see how hackers can access a home security camera halfway around the world. Learn more at gen-cyber.com.

HOT JOB ALERT:

BIG DATA!

Cybersecurity professionals protect our personal information from the bad guys, but companies that legally collect (and protect) data — about our preferences, choices, online habits, locations and more — can store and analyze it. That giant mound of information is called "Big Data" — and it's generally defined as data that's too complex to be analyzed by traditional data processing software.

But companies that figure out how to find patterns and relevant information in this data can gain invaluable insights into consumer

behavior, product performance, purchasing trends, public health problems, logistics — the list is really, really long. The careers that have grown from this field include data analysts (who create automated systems for retrieving information from the database and creating reports); data scientists (who analyze this data and make recommendations to business leaders so they can make wise decisions about any aspect of the company); and database managers (who understand the big picture of the database and also manage the people who work in the department).

Big Data is a big deal — and a field in need of experts who can make the most of it!

NOT YOUR GRANDPA'S INDUSTRY

A new wave of opportunities exists in manufacturing
— for those bold enough to think big.

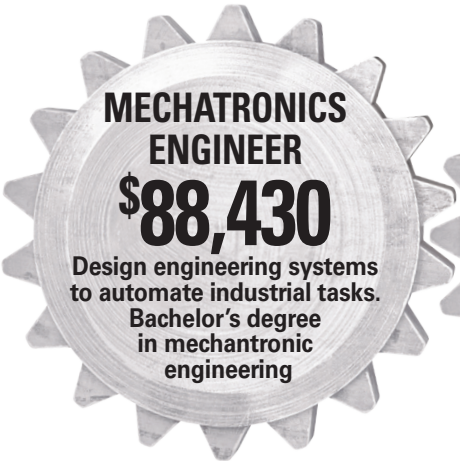
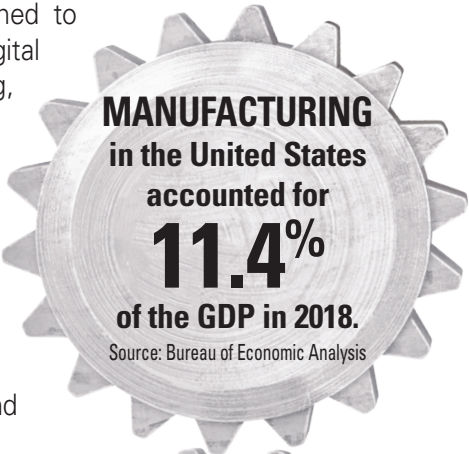
If the idea of “manufacturing” conjures up mental images of workers slogging through the same tasks over and over in a graying, dirty factory, you might be surprised to find out that the industry is actually full of exciting (and developing) technologies, such as artificial intelligence, robotics and advanced analytics.

The payoff for choosing manufacturing as your chosen field? You could be among the next generation of innovators and thinkers who use the tools of this latest industrial revolution to produce goods that make life better for us all.

To use these innovative tools and create the things the United States manufactures, the industry needs employees, which is why — if you love technology, tinkering, problem-solving, coding, analyzing data and inventing new objects and programs — you might consider taking coursework in manufacturing.

Aren't robots taking all the jobs? Nope, not exactly. Historically, technology produces more jobs than it takes; you can look back on previous eras of growth in tools — such as steam and water, electricity, assembly lines and computerization — to see evidence that innovation tends to create jobs, but those jobs are markedly different than they were in the years leading up to the “revolution.” Many economists expect the same pattern to emerge with manufacturing: The jobs that involve working the assembly line are evaporating, but careers in which people develop and control the systems and technologies that run the robots are expanding (thanks to this new era, which the experts are calling the “Fourth Industrial Revolution” or “Industry 4.0”). In fact, the Manufacturing Institute and consulting company Deloitte predict that in the next decade, there will be more than 2 million unfilled jobs in this arena.

Manufacturing and Humanities work together. As automation takes over tasks once performed by workers, the people who will be primed to snatch up those open positions will likely have a combination of digital and technical knowledge and “soft” skills, such as critical thinking, people management, emotional intelligence and creativity. (So far, despite BB-8's charm, robots haven't been able to master these more complex human talents.) One option for students eager to ride the next wave of the industry is to combine studies in manufacturing engineering with some humanities coursework, which also help cultivate those soft skills. You can also look at your nearest community college for two-year programs in such areas as robotics, manufacturing technology, 3-D printing, mechatronics (technology that blends electronics and mechanical engineering and product design).



Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics

Source: Bureau of Economic Analysis

FULL STEAM AHEAD

Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Math (STEAM) come together for a vibrant array of opportunities. Will you be ready for them?

Almost every profession you can dream up is built on STEAM. Because of the changes in the U.S. and world economies — and the rapid development of technological tools available to professionals — more and more jobs require employees to have a wide-ranging education that blends arts

Do you know who first envisioned robots and considered their place in the modern world? Writers, that's who. In 1818, Mary Shelley wrote "Frankenstein." In the early 20th century, Czech writer Karel Capek coined the term "robot" in his play "Rossum's Universal Robots." The moral of the story: Innovators come from the science and the arts.

and sciences. Aerospace engineers, architects, computer scientists, chefs, robotics engineers, product designers, educators, photographers, doctors, animators and countless more professionals rely on a combination of scientific inquiry, mathematical prowess, engineering principles, technological savvy, strong communication skills and creative thinking to do their work well.

You're not just one thing, right? Maybe you're a math whiz who writes songs; an artist who also happens to be brilliant in the chem lab; a writer with a penchant for building and engineering models of famous monuments. The push for STEAM education acknowledges that students are dynamic individuals with myriad gifts, talents and interests. Your college education should give you room to explore more than a single topic: If your counselor or advisor is pushing you to stick to a single field too soon, tell him or her that you want an opportunity to explore beyond one department.

Two words: Job security. Data from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics show that professionals in careers that blend both arts and STEM fields have more opportunity and higher employment rates than workers in other, less dynamic fields. Score!

Two more words: Humanoid robots. Starting in the 1950s, scientists and engineers began building robots, and ever since, the race has been on to create machines that look and act like human beings. Designers who can craft "faces" for robots are just as valuable to the end goal as the computer scientists who build the algorithms that instructs the machine how to respond to sound or movement.

Every job is a STEAM job. Now's the time to make a plan for how you want to use your college education: Think about developing skills, not joining a single industry — because, frankly, industries are changing about as fast as Kim Kardashian's outfits. For example, if you know how to gather and analyze big data, you could work in the cosmetics industry, analyzing trends and predicting consumer buying patterns, or you could work for an environmental protection agency, using those same skills to analyze the emissions outputs in large cities. Another example: You might cultivate skills in product development — marrying your graphic design prowess with software coding to create digital 3-D models of your ideas. You could end up working in medical imaging or architectural design. Get the gist?

FOUR HOT STEM/STEAM FIELDS

2-YEAR DEGREE

ACUTE CARE NURSES \$73,300

Care for pre- and post-operative patients.
Associate degree in nursing

DIAGNOSTIC MEDICAL SONOGRAPHER \$74,320

Make ultrasonic recordings for use by physicians. Associate degree in diagnostic medical sonography

4-YEAR DEGREE

INFORMATION SECURITY ANALYST \$99,730

Protect your agency or company from hackers and other cyber-criminals.
Bachelor's degree in computer science, information technology, or software engineering

FILM & VIDEO EDITOR \$63,780

Use digital software to edit moving images on film, video, or other media.
Bachelor's degree in film production

MOLLOY IS THE RIGHT COLLEGE. RIGHT NOW.

Virtual Open House Sunday, November 15

One of the nation's top values in higher education, Molloy is close to home but far from ordinary.

With career-focused programs, real-world connections and personal guidance, we're open and here for you – in person or online – for today's challenges and tomorrow's opportunities.

MOLLOY COLLEGE. THE RIGHT CHOICE. RIGHT NOW.

Apply Today: Molloy.edu/RightChoice



COLLEGE FINANCIAL AID TOOLKIT

As if standardized tests and college-prep courses and the search for a right-fit school aren't enough, now you have to think about paying for your education, too? It's like reaching the 25th mile of a marathon and realizing the last stretch is all uphill, right?

Not quite.

Financial aid can seem like a mystery — and a whole new obstacle to overcome — but it's actually not as overwhelming as you might expect. Armed with basic information and some good resources, you can join the millions of college-bound students and their families who have navigated the financial aid process and found resources to help them pay for school.

This special guide is an excellent place to start. You'll find dozens of details about how to hunt down scholarships, how to apply for financial assistance, what you should know about New York's tuition-free program for SUNY and CUNY students, when (and how!) to ask your top-choice college for more aid, and how to pick the right loan for you and your family — plus much more.

Once you give it a read, **save the link to this guide** to refer to it as you pass milestones, such as filing your FAFSA or receiving your aid awards. And don't hesitate to ask for help from your guidance counselor or the colleges' financial aid officers, who can answer detailed questions about your specific need.

\$12,300

average amount of aid received among undergraduate students

39% of undergraduate students received student loans from any source.

72% of undergraduate students received some form of financial aid (grants, loans, work study).

Source: National Center for Education Statistics, 2015-16 academic year

FALL

- File the FAFSA on or after October 1. (The sooner, the better.)
- If your school requires a CSS Profile (essentially, another aid application), get it done.
- Watch for your Student Aid Report and when it arrives, check it for errors.

WINTER

- Familiarize yourself with loan terms. (See page inside.)
- Talk to your parents about how much they can contribute to your education.
- Learn the differences among the many types of federal loans and private loans.

SPRING

- Review financial aid awards.
- If your family's financial circumstances have changed and you need more money, submit a formal appeal letter to your top two schools. Follow up with a phone call.
- Send in your enrollment deposit by May 1.

SENIOR YEAR FINANCIAL CALENDAR

SUMMER

- Stash some of that graduation money aside for school expenses.
- If you haven't already, notify your college of any scholarships you've received.
- Look for sales on dorm-room supplies.

Calculate your COSTS

Copy this simple chart for each school that offers an aid award. Then, compare across categories to see 1) how much your family will actually have to contribute and 2) how significant a role loans play in each package.

a COSTS

SCHOOL: _____

Tuition: \$ _____

Room & Board: Fees + \$
(Books, Lab Fees, Etc.): _____

Personal Expenses + \$
(Transportation, Off-Campus
Meals, Clothing, Etc.): _____

Total for the Year: = \$

a

b FINANCIAL AID

Scholarships + \$ _____

Grants + \$ _____

Loans + \$ _____

Work Study + \$ _____

Total for the Year: = \$

b

TIPS: New York State's 529 College Savings Program (nysaves.org) offers a convenient, low-cost, and tax-advantaged way to save for higher education. Be sure to check eligibility for federal Pell Grant and New York State TAP Grant.

c FAMILY RESOURCES

Total cost \$
from **A:** _____

Total cost - \$
from **B:** _____

Your family's cost for the yr. = \$

c

TIP: Sit down with your parents and determine together how your family will pay for the difference in **C**. Break out how much money will come from your parents' savings, your own savings, additional loans, and other resources.

SPONSORED
BY:



SCHOLARSHIPS

Extra cash for college

Never, ever pay for access to info about scholarships. There are plenty of free (legit) sites to fuel your search for free cash.

Do your homework (at school). Your guidance office should have a list of scholarships available in your community from local organizations. Even though these awards are probably smaller than national scholarships, apply for them, since the smaller pool of applicants boosts your chances of winning.

Get your parents' help. Religious organizations, unions, clubs and businesses offer scholarship programs. Ask your mom and dad to check with their human resources departments at work and with leaders of any organizations to which they belong.

Find out what the college offers. Don't assume that scholarships are only for academic or athletic talent; colleges actually offer a wide range of awards for all sorts of categories including STEM. Many schools provide money for legacies (students who are children of alumni), students of color, applicants who have strong records of community service and teens with artistic or musical talent.

Be sure to find out about departmental awards, too — that is, money from the math department to attract women students or the arts department to attract budding film producers.

Make a plan. Organize your scholarship hunt the same way you organize the college search. Pay attention to details. Write deadlines on your calendar. And, aim to submit two scholarship applications a week. If you have to prioritize, apply first for awards that are renewable, local or offered through organizations to which you or your parents belong.

Ask nicely. Once you get your financial aid award in the spring, you'll know how much each college will cost you. If your top-choice school is still too pricey, you can write a formal appeal letter to the financial aid director and follow up with a phone call. These appeals can be especially effective if 1) a revision of your award really will lead to your enrollment at that school and 2) your family has circumstances (such as significant medical bills or a parent's unemployment) that aren't reflected in your FAFSA application. (But don't "negotiate." Colleges aren't car dealerships, and trying to play College A against College B will almost always backfire.)

Never stop looking. Awards for current college students abound, so don't give up the hunt for money once you enroll. Your school's financial aid office probably has a list of scholarships available through the college and other organizations. You should also ask about fellowships and work study options to earn money by helping a professor with research or working in an administrative office on campus. The amounts might not be huge, but it's nice spending change for those little extras.

START SEARCHING

fastweb.com

scholarships.com

petersons.com

collegeboard.org

chegg.com

scholarshipmonkey.com



They're on their way – get ready with AAA.

Looking for help with the financial aid process, scholarships or the best way to apply for student loans? AAA Members have access to FREE college planning tips and tools.



Learn more at
[AAA.com/FinancialAid](https://www.aaa.com/FinancialAid)

Making sense of the New York State EXCELSIOR SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM

Introduced in the fall of 2017, the New York State Excelsior Scholarship Program is the first-in-the-nation plan to offer free tuition to eligible New York residents. Students from families with adjusted gross incomes of \$125,000 or less are eligible.

Here are the basics: The awards go to undergraduates enrolled full-time at SUNY or CUNY schools, including community colleges and the statutory colleges at Cornell University and Alfred University. Scholarship students must enroll in at least 12 credits per term and complete at least 30 credits per year to continue receiving the scholarship. And after graduation, a student must stay in New York for the number of years equal to the awards received. For example, if you get a bachelor's degree with help from Excelsior Scholarships each year you're in school, you have to live in the Empire State for four years after graduation — or watch your award convert into a no-interest loan. (Bummer!) The state will make exceptions for students who enroll in graduate or professional school out of state, but they too have to be back home six months after finishing their advanced degrees to fulfill the live-in-state requirement.

Those bound for **private colleges and universities in New York** get some help, too, courtesy of Enhanced Tuition Awards, which provide aid of up to \$6,000 to resident students and follow the same income caps as Excelsior Scholarships. Private-college recipients must meet all the same criteria as their public-school counterparts, even down to the requirement to live and work in New York for the same number of years they received funding.

Want to apply? Both scholarship programs — Excelsior Scholarship for SUNY and CUNY schools and Enhanced Tuition Awards for private colleges and universities — are administered by the New York State Higher Education Services Corporation (HESC). Bookmark the website (**hesc.ny.gov**) to check for updates on when the agency will start accepting applications for the 2021-22 academic year. HESC also offers FAQs (Frequently Asked Questions) on both programs; the eligibility rules and conditions can be quite complex. Keep in mind, both programs only cover tuition costs. Room and board and other fees are not included in the scholarship awards. **TIP:** Sign up for e-mail alerts and updates on the Excelsior Scholarship Program on the **hesc.ny.gov** website.

UNDERGRAD IN-STATE TUITION AT SUNY SCHOOLS (AS OF JULY 2020): \$7,070

TYPICAL ROOM & BOARD AT SUNY SCHOOLS: \$14,111

BOOKS AND SUPPLIES AT SUNY SCHOOLS: \$1,290

Source: suny.edu/smarttrack/tuition-and-fees

**UNDERGRAD IN-STATE TUITION AT
FOUR-YEAR CUNY SCHOOLS
(AS OF FALL 2019): \$6,930**

**TYPICAL HOUSING (FOR STUDENTS
NOT LIVING AT HOME): \$13,905**

BOOKS, AND SUPPLIES: \$1,364

Source: cuny.edu

**UNDERGRAD IN-STATE TUITION AT
TWO-YEAR CUNY SCHOOLS
(AS OF FALL 2019): \$4,800**

****Typical Housing and fees are the same for
two and four-year programs.**

Source: 2cuny.edu/financial-aid/

FINANCIAL TERMS

Crack the code

FAFSA. Financial aid gurus refer to the **Free Application for Federal Student Aid** by its acronym. You'll need to complete it in order to get need-based aid from almost any college. File it online at fafsa.ed.gov in October of your senior year.

Create FSA ID as soon as possible. The Federal Student Aid (FSA) ID is a username and password used to confirm your identity when accessing your FAFSA form and to sign it electronically. Your FSA ID is unique; it must be your own, and not a parent. To create your FSA ID, go to studentaid.gov/fsaid. Or, watch "How to Create an FSA ID" on [YouTube.com/federalstudentaid](https://www.youtube.com/federalstudentaid).

These are the financial terms you're most likely to hear and see. Always speak with a financial aid officer if you have questions about your college costs.

hesc.ny.gov. The Higher Education Services Corporation (HESC) is the New York state agency that helps students pay for college. HESC administers the Tuition Assistance Program (TAP), the Excelsior Tuition Free Program and the 529 Savings Plan.

TAP. Tuition Assistance Program (TAP) helps eligible New York residents attending in-state colleges and universities pay for tuition. TAP recipients can receive up to \$5,165 in annual awards. You should apply for TAP at the same time you complete your FAFSA. Because TAP is a grant, it does not have to be paid back.

Estimated Family Contribution (EFC). The Department of Education takes your FAFSA info and calculates an EFC, the amount of money your family is expected to pay toward your college education.

Student Aid Report (SAR). Based on your FAFSA, your SAR gives details about your EFC and your eligibility for a Pell Grant. The Department of Education will send a copy of the SAR to every school you indicate on your FAFSA. The financial aid office at each school will base your aid offers on the info in the SAR, so double-check your copy.

Demonstrated need. The difference between the cost of attending a particular school and your EFC is your demonstrated need. In a perfect world, your financial aid package would cover all of it, but many schools can't meet every student's need, a practice called "gapping."

Federal Work Study. A job! Part of your need-based aid, this part-time job on campus helps you earn money toward college expenses. (The government pays part of your hourly rate, which is why it's a federal program. Some campuses also have jobs on campus paid by the school.)

Pell Grant. This federal grant goes to students from low-income families. The best part? It doesn't have to be repaid.

Federal Supplemental Education Opportunity Grant (FSEOG). If you qualify for a Pell Grant, you might also get a FSEOG, a grant for students with very high need. Like the Pell, it doesn't have to be repaid.

Professional Judgment. Let's say your EFC doesn't reflect the reality of your family's finances because one of your parents just lost a job or got sick. You can appeal to the college for more financial aid, and a financial aid administrator can use Professional Judgment to base your aid award on your family's new financial situation. You'll probably need documentation to prove your family's circumstances.

Tips for Reading Your Aid Award. Take into consideration travel costs, books, supplies, and personal expenses when you're looking at aid awards. These expenses can add up to a few thousand dollars a year — and bust your budget.

DON'T LET THE FAFSA DRIVE YOU CRAZY

A survival guide

If your family needs help paying for college (and even if you don't — more on that in a minute), you have to file the FAFSA because schools use its results to award federal, state and institutional grants and loans.

Let's be honest: Completing the FAFSA — that's short for Free Application for Federal Student Aid — is about as much fun as showing up to your calculus class and hearing the words "pop quiz."

The FAFSA asks detailed questions about your family's income, savings, assets and expenses. Then, based on a formula established by law, it churns out a Student Aid Report (SAR) that includes your Estimated Family Contribution (EFC), what the government thinks your family should be able to pay for your education. Colleges use this information to put together your financial aid awards.

Completing the FAFSA is a job for your parents or guardian, so share these pointers with them. All of you will be less stressed out come FAFSA time.

Get organized. The application for the 2021-22 academic year will be available at fafsa.ed.gov on October 1. The form will ask for info about your family's 2019 tax year, so pull out that return and be ready.

And yes, even if you think your family won't qualify for aid, apply. At the very least, you must complete the FAFSA even to be eligible for a low-interest unsubsidized Direct loan, which might come in handy as you hash out how to pay for school. Plus: Some statewide programs or institutional grant programs require the FAFSA results, even though they don't have cut-offs for family income levels.

Don't wait. Since many colleges and grant programs award aid on a first-come, first-served basis, you want to complete the FAFSA as soon as possible.

Hunt and gather. To save yourselves time, get all the info you'll need to fill out the form. This includes your Social Security and driver's license numbers, tax returns from 2019 (if you're applying for the 2021-22 academic year), records or estimates of other household income, and current bank, investment and mortgage statements. You'll also need the appropriate college codes so your info goes to the right places. (Search fafsa.ed.gov to find them.)

Don't panic. The FAFSA bases your EFC on your prior year's tax returns. If your family has experienced a radical change in income since then — caused by a lost job, for example — don't freak out. Wait to receive your financial aid packages from colleges, then submit a letter of appeal to your top-choice schools and follow up with a phone call. Many colleges will be willing and able to adjust your award.

And the best news? Once you've finished your first FAFSA, the worst is over. You'll need to file every year you want financial aid, but from now on, you can use the "Renewal FAFSA" form — which is much less stressful for everyone.

Money Matters – Know Before You Borrow

College has never been more expensive than it is today, so you'll likely need some form of financial assistance to pay for your education. The best way to avoid taking on exorbitant student loan debt is to plan ahead and explore all your options. To help guide you through the process, Donald Kerr, AAA Northeast's Senior Manager of Student Lending, answers some of the most common student lending questions.



Donald Kerr
Senior Manager
of Student Lending
for AAA Northeast

Q&A

Q: What options are available to help me fund my education, and are some options better than others?

A: Always apply for federal student aid first by completing the FAFSA form at studentaid.gov. This is the gateway to financial aid; everyone will at least get access to federal loans that have favorable terms and repayment options. These loans generally do not cover all the costs a student requires, but they are a good place to start. Next, you should apply for scholarships and grants. There are lots of resources for scholarships, so do your research and apply often. With scholarships and grants you won't have to repay any of this money, which makes these funding options ideal. If you have some money in your monthly budget, consider a payment plan to spread out tuition payments, usually over a 10-month period. It is a great way to avoid interest charges associated with loans. If you still are short on funding after using all the options above, look at loan options such as the PLUS loan from the government or private student loans. Only turn to loans once you've exhausted all other options.

Q: If a private loan is needed, what should I look out for?

A: First, do your homework. Look at the different banks and credit unions that offer loans and read the terms and conditions each lender offers. Most importantly, look at the interest rates. Ask about any fees, prepayment penalties or benefits such as interest rate reductions for automatic payments.

Q: What are the qualifications to be approved and get a good rate for a private student loan?

A: Most loans are based on creditworthiness, including income and credit guidelines. The stronger your creditworthiness, the better your chance of being approved and getting a good rate. Your repayment choices such as immediate repayment or deferred payment, and the length of your loan will also affect your rate. Shorter term loans with immediate repayment tend to have better rates than longer terms loans with repayment beginning after graduation.

Q: What is one thing you would like people to know about private student loans?

A: Starting to repay your loans while in school could save you thousands of dollars over the life of the loan. Payments may be deferred until six months after graduation, but interest still adds up or accrues during this time. If you must choose a deferred repayment option, even making an occasional payment will help you save money.

Q: Are the interest rates variable or fixed on private student loans?

A: Most lenders will let you choose from either fixed or variable rates. Fixed rates will remain the same for the life of the loan. Variable rates are usually based on a market index and may go up or down during the life of the loan as market rates go up and down.

SPONSORED
BY:



TECHNOLOGY

5 steps toward a career in IT

Step 1: Learn to code. Coding, the first step toward a future as a software programmer or developer, is so cool that it's a hobby of celebrities like NBA star Chris Bosh and Grammy-winning musician Will.i.am (see their video on code.org).

You design your own websites. You're the first in line to buy new tech gadgets. You have an entrepreneurial drive to innovate and to create new products.

Coders manipulate things — words, numbers, graphics to make them behave a certain way for computer users. The computer is, as programmers like to say, “dumb but obedient;” figuring out how to make it do what you want it to do requires tenacity, critical thinking and clarity of thought.

Step 2: Keep your eyes open. Coding's popularity has led to more opportunities, in elementary, middle, and high schools to give coding a try. Students who start with the basics — like the Scratch language developed at MIT — don't even realize they're learning how to think like programmers. By trying coding early on — before you're in college — you'll be able to test your talent and interest before you face the high-stakes decision of choosing a college major.

Step 3: Explore college programs. Two-and four-year colleges offer a wide range of programs for people interested in IT careers. You might consider an associate degree in information technology, which could include coursework in database management, networking concepts, technical analysis and troubleshooting, and web design and development. At a four-year school, you could major in computer science, which generally emphasizes the mathematical and scientific bases for storing, accessing and analyzing information. Or you could opt for computer engineering, which uses computer-based technology to solve real-life problems or create new products, such as video games or biomedical devices.

Step 4: Reverse engineer your career path. Ask prospective colleges how their graduates are faring in the so-called real world. Are they getting jobs? Which ones? How does the college's program fit with the job descriptions you see for careers you'd like? Are you learning the programming languages you need for these careers?

Among the hottest jobs in IT right now are cybersecurity engineers (to keep all our data — and our elections — safe); artificial intelligence engineers (who develop tools to automate business or manufacturing practices to boost safety and efficiency); cloud engineers (who help companies move their infrastructure and systems to the cloud); and Java and Python developers (responsible for developing programming language, design and more).

Step 5: Keep learning. IT professionals say they never stop learning: Because their industry changes so rapidly, they're always updating their knowledge, trying out new tools and challenging themselves to improve on a project. You can start down that lifelong learning path by trying an in-person or virtual class at one of these coding schools and camps:

Check out these camps/classes

Code Long Island (codeli.oyoclass.com)

Code Ninjas (Syosset, codeninjas.com)

Future Stars of STEAM Education Camps (Multiple locations, fscamps.com)

Hofstra University's Saturday Classes for Young People (Hempstead, ce.hofstra.edu/youth)

iD Tech (Multiple locations, idtech.com)

Mindnasium (Franklin Square, mindnasium.com)

The Coder School (Commack, Roslyn, Syosset, thecoderschool.com)

We Connect The Dots (Syosset, we-connect-the-dots.org)





NEW YORK INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY

Reinvent the Future.

Your future can't wait

Our tech-infused, in-person, and virtual degrees offer a safe and affordable alternative for students who don't want to delay their college careers.

90+ PROGRAMS

BACHELOR'S

MASTER'S

DOCTORATE

**Financial Aid,
Scholarships, and
Rolling Admissions**
for undergraduate,
graduate, and transfer
students.

LEARN MORE AT:
NYIT.EDU/NEWSDAY

YOUR LD GOES TO COLLEGE

Make a smooth transition

If you have a learning disability, you have to plan and research even more to make sure you find a school that's a good fit for you. Just because you have an IEP or a 504 Plan now doesn't mean that you'll get the same accommodations in college. In fact, every college has different levels of support.

Get your paperwork in order. Call the college's office of disability services for a copy of required documentation, which generally should be no older than three years. You — not your school district — are responsible for making sure you have the right, up-to-date documentation or the proper tests for college accommodations.

Colleges have come a long way toward understanding and supporting students with learning disabilities.

Plan for standardized tests. In your sophomore year of high school, meet with your school counselor to discuss if you'll take the SAT or ACT. If you plan on taking the entrance exams, apply for any accommodations early: it can take months to process your request.

Educate yourself about the levels of support. Colleges offer different levels or "tiers" of support for LD students. Tier One support is the minimum, such as extended time on tests and some technological resources. Schools at the second tier offer services such as free peer tutoring and note-taking help. And at the top of the heap, colleges with third tier support have special programs designed to help students with attention disorders or learning disabilities. These programs often require separate applications. Your district's director of special education should have a list of these schools.

Plan a smart visit. Schedule an appointment in advance with the person coordinating support for students with learning disabilities. Take your documentation with you and find out what level of support you could reasonably expect from the campus. If you can't plan an in-person visit to the school, set up a virtual meeting instead.

Explain your disability in your application. If you think that disclosing your LD will help explain part of your application, go for it. Maybe you were diagnosed after freshman year, so your first-year grades are poor; maybe you had a bad semester because your medication wasn't quite right. Explain this briefly in your app. Colleges can't discriminate based upon disability. It's better to address a possible question.

After you've enrolled, send in your paperwork. Submit the required documentation early in the summer — in plenty of time to discuss accommodations with the disabilities services director.

Apply for assistance even if you don't plan to use it. Some teenagers want to start fresh in college, so they don't reveal their disability to anyone. But college is a major change from high school, and many students discover after a few tests that they do need help. Accommodations aren't retroactive. If you find that college is a breeze, you can skip the accommodations later. For now, give yourself every chance to succeed.

fast facts

11% of students entering U. S. colleges have some type of learning disability.

Only 17% of college students with learning disabilities take advantage of learning assistance resources at their school.

ahead.org The Association on Higher Education and Disability (AHEAD), through its partner organizations, provides mentoring for students and parents.

aypf.org The American Youth Policy Forum (AYPF) webinars and YouTube videos focus on helping students with disabilities transition to college.

going-to-college.org Video clips, activities and resources help students with disabilities plan for college.

TAKING A GAP YEAR

An alternative to starting college right away

Not sure about whether to start college right away? A gap year offers time to get new experiences through a variety of programs in the United States and around the world. But in these uncertain times, a gap year's attractions have morphed: Many now see it as an alternative to going to school right after senior year, buying time as the college situation, and the bumpy economy, smooth out.

True, there might not be as many opportunities for travel and hands-on programs, but you can still create an experience (which doesn't have to be for a full year) to be challenged and grow.

In light of the pandemic, student interest in taking a gap year has exploded, experts say, especially as colleges work out plans for the school year and families look for ways to lighten the load of starting to pay for college.

Check with your school to see whether it will allow you to defer admission and keep the financial aid package open for when you do enroll. Not all colleges will.

On Long Island, Adelphi University has launched a virtual Gap Year Experience. The program connects students with large companies such as nonprofits, hospitals, those in the computer industry and more, said Graziela Fusaro, director of the Adelphi Innovation Center, which offers the program. During three weeks of workshops and eight weeks of project engagement, participants get training in problem solving, strategic thinking, communication and decision analysis. The program is open to all.

Fusaro notes that a gap year could be a great time to try out a career. "Maybe work one semester with a big company and the next one with a nonprofit," she says. "Make the most of it."



SOCIAL MEDIA SAVVY

Tips for managing your online image

Take our advice (ASAP!) and make sure your online persona is an honest reflection of who you are and who you want to be. College admissions reps look at your social media accounts and other public online activity to determine if you're the kind of person they want on their campus. Case in point: A couple of summers ago, Harvard University rescinded admissions offers to 10 students after school officials found out about offensive memes that the teens had posted in a private Facebook group.

Pin It! Colleges and universities are using Pinterest to help boost their social media presence. Their "boards" are like ever-changing brochures. Follow your prospective colleges' Pinterest boards for inspiration to complete all of your college applications.

Here's how to make sure you're putting your best (digital) face forward:

Rule #1: There is no privacy online. The Internet, a public sphere, preserves for posterity

everything you say or do online. The easiest way to manage your online brand is to imagine the college admissions committee Googling your name. Don't post anything you don't want them to see.

Check your name. Make sure your Twitter and Instagram handles are simple and, well, appropriate, and create a simple and professional email address for all college correspondence.

Google yourself. Up to 20% of admissions officers say they Google applicants, so you should know what they're finding. If what you're finding could use a little boost, improve your online "persona" by commenting (in a mature way) on local or national news stories, or by sharing content on social media that better aligns with your goals and values.

Put your best Face(book) forward. Tighten your privacy settings. On Twitter and Instagram, you can make your profile private from anyone not following you, and on Facebook, you can customize how much of your profile non-followers get to see. While you're thinking about it, remove any questionable pictures or posts — and un-tag yourself in any other photos in which other people have tagged you.

Remember: You're not anonymous. A few clicks can reveal your real name or e-mail address. Follow your links to see what kind of image you're building. When you post a YouTube video, you must create a user name that appears as a link under your video. If a counselor clicks on your link, will your videos reinforce the image you're trying to convey?

Keep your passwords to yourself. Your BFF does not need your Facebook or Twitter password, despite her awesomeness.

Use common sense. It's a pretty bad idea to post a rant about a college that waitlisted you or to bash the tour guide on your recent college visit. And remember that humor and sarcasm are hard to decipher online, so keep your stand-up routine for live audiences only. It's like your mom always says: If you can't say something nice, don't Tweet at all.

Use social media to your advantage by joining platforms that can boost your online profile to college admissions officers:

Join the free LinkedIn professional network to show you're serious about your future.

Follow your target schools on Twitter, Instagram, and Facebook and post positive comments and questions. And if you visit the school or have another good reason to mention it online, be sure to tag the college!

Create a free profile including Snapchat videos on ZeeMee, a platform geared to college admissions.



FIVE TOWNS COLLEGE

Educating Creative Students Since 1972

FOCUS. THRIVE. *CREATE A WAY.*

CLOSE TO HOME!



Undergraduate Programs

Audio Recording Technology (concentration in B.B.A./B.S./Mus. B.)

Business Administration, A.S. • Business Management, B.B.A.

Film/Video, B.F.A • Computer Graphics, A.A.S., B.F.A. • Mass Communication, B.S.

Music Teacher Education, Mus.B. • Music Performance, A.A.S., Mus.B.

Theatre Arts, B.F.A.

Graduate Programs

Master of Music, M.M. • Music Education, M.M. • Doctor of Music Arts, D.M.A.

Follow Us:     | www.ftc.edu | 305 N. Service Road, Dix Hills, NY 11746

WHICH ONE TO CHOOSE?

The last step in your college search

Here's what college students, school counselors and admissions pros say about making the final choice:

Visit. No brochure, website or admissions counselor can give you all the details. Do visit while classes are in session, but even if you can only make it on a weekend, just go!

Talk to professors and students. Admissions counselors can arrange these interviews. Arrive armed with prepared questions, and be a hard-nosed (but polite) investigator.

It's final decision time. You're down to about a month before the May 1 enrollment deadline, and if you've conducted a smart college search (and we know you have), you need to choose where to enroll.

Examine the cost. It's time to figure out exactly how much your education will cost, not just over the next four years, but also after you graduate, if you're planning to take out loans. Online calculators like **finaid.org** will help compute your monthly student loan payments.

Know the stats. Check the schools' websites or ask the admissions counselors for the four-year graduation rates for students in the majors you're considering. Low four-year rates might mean students can't always get required classes or that advising is weak (unless the program you intend to follow is clearly designed to take five years). Your college costs will increase by 20% for that fifth year, and you'll miss a year of a full-time salary.

Imagine the moment your mom and dad drive away. This is the "gut test." Where will you feel most comfortable? If you're not happy and at ease, you're less likely to do well in your classes and participate in on-campus activities.

Don't miss the May 1 deadline. You could lose your spot after that date. Make sure you submit your deposit on or before May 1. No excuses.

Break up with the other colleges. Once you've decided which school to attend, inform the also-rans with a simple e-mail to the admissions counselor. This little courtesy might free up a wait list spot so another student can attend his or her dream school.

Waitlist. Don't despair. You're still on their radar. About a third of colleges wait-list students, according to Peterson's, to fill spots if enrollment numbers are lower than expected. Students are often ranked on the list and it's OK to call and ask where you rank.

4 REASONS NOT TO CHOOSE A SCHOOL

THE FOOTBALL TEAM ROCKS.

Football season lasts only a few months. You're looking for a great overall college experience.

YOUR PARENTS LOVE IT.

Sure, they should be on board with your choice, but they won't be living on campus for four years.

**YOUR SIGNIFICANT OTHER IS GOING.
YOU LOVE THE CHEESY FRIES.**



**FARMINGDALE
STATE COLLEGE**

#BeARAM

A Quality Education, Close to Home

FSC is located close to home and is easily accessible from both the highways and mass transit. Let us get you on the road to a rewarding career. Our degrees programs focus on emerging, high-demand careers in traditional fields as well as the sciences, technology, health, and business.

We're ranked one of the safest campuses in the nation, and at about \$7,000/year, Farmingdale is also a great value.

Farmingdale State College –
the right choice for you.

farmingdale.edu/fsc

BE
A **RAM**

**Farmingdale
State College**

State University of New York



CHECKLIST FOR SUCCESS

COLLEGE PLANNING TIMELINE

SPONSORED BY:

Farmingdale State College

State University of New York

☐ Meet with your school (or independent) counselor.

☐ Register for the PSAT/NMSQT at your high school.

☐ Attend a local college fair.

☐ Review your financial plans to pay college costs (see center insert).

☐ Take the PSAT.

☐ Make your list of prospective colleges.

☐ Create your profiles on scholarship sites.

☐ Plan when you'll take the SAT and/or ACT.

☐ Begin SAT/ACT test prep.

11

JUNIOR YEAR

sept

oct

nov

12

SENIOR YEAR

☐ Ask teachers and counselors for letters of recommendation.

☐ Polish your list of colleges.

☐ Write (and ask a teacher or two to review) your application essays.

☐ Attend a financial aid night.

☐ Request a PIN and complete your FAFSA application.

☐ If applying Early Decision, finish your application.

☐ Complete any additional financial aid forms required by colleges.

☐ Request to have transcripts sent to non-Early Decision colleges on your list.

☐ Confirm colleges have received your SAT/ACT scores.

☐ Complete applications to non-Early Decision schools. (Don't forget Common App supplements!)

☐ Check your Student Aid Report (SAR) online.



CHECKLIST FOR SUCCESS

COLLEGE PLANNING TIMELINE

SPONSORED BY:

Farmingdale State College

State University of New York

- ☐ Check your PSAT score report.
- ☐ Talk to adults about their college experiences.
- ☐ Register for SAT subject tests (for courses ending this semester).
- ☐ Continue SAT/ACT test prep.

- ☐ Register for standardized tests.
- ☐ Schedule visits to local colleges.
- ☐ Begin searching for scholarships.

- ☐ Schedule spring-break college visits.
- ☐ Talk to your school's AP coordinator to register for AP exams.
- ☐ Update your list of extracurricular activities and work.

11

JUNIOR YEAR

dec

jan

feb

12

SENIOR YEAR

- ☐ Schedule any last visits to colleges. (Cash tight? Ask about fly-in programs.)
- ☐ Act on any Early Decision acceptance and withdraw applications from other schools.
- ☐ Write thank-you notes to teachers who provided recommendations.

- ☐ Have mid-year grade reports sent to colleges to which you applied.
- ☐ Have another chat with your parents about how you'll pay for college.
- ☐ Keep studying! Don't lose admission offers for a drop in grades!

- ☐ Talk to your school's AP coordinator to register for AP exams.
- ☐ Review acceptance letters and financial aid awards.
- ☐ Keep applying for scholarships.



CHECKLIST FOR SUCCESS

COLLEGE PLANNING TIMELINE

SPONSORED BY:

Farmingdale State College

State University of New York

☐ Practice for admissions interviews.

☐ Start planning summer college visits.

☐ Investigate college credit courses.

☐ Attend Latino College Expo

☐ Plan as rigorous a 12th-grade course schedule as possible.

☐ Get a summer job and save.

☐ Talk to your parents about how you'll pay for college.

☐ Attend LI college fairs

☐ If you want to play sports, send an email of interest to prospective colleges.

☐ Register for the June SAT and/or ACT if you haven't taken it yet or need to boost your scores.

☐ Take AP exams.

☐ Register at commonapp.org.

11

JUNIOR YEAR

mar

april

may

12

SENIOR YEAR

☐ Visit (or revisit) colleges at the top of your list.

☐ Call financial aid offices to ask your questions about awards.

☐ If needed, file a financial aid appeal.

☐ Enrollment deposit due May 1.

☐ Waitlisted? Call the school about next steps (and emphasize your interest!).

☐ Create a plan for your summer.

☐ Submit final transcript to college.

☐ Send final transcript to NCAA Eligibility Center.

☐ Take AP tests.

☐ Celebrate! You made it!

TOP 10

WEBSITES

FOR COLLEGE- BOUND STUDENTS

1 NICHE: Search for schools by state and/or major, and you'll get all the deets — from basics like acceptance rates and enrollment to thousands of student-written reviews about everything from campus life to academics and majors. (The easy-to-use interface and clean presentation of info get high marks.) Create a profile, and you can add schools that pique your interest to your list of favorites.

niche.com

2 COMMON APP: The site that revolutionized applying for college, the "Common App" allows you to complete a single application and, with a quick click, apply to a wide range of colleges (Nearly 900 participate!). Teachers and guidance counselors can also submit their recommendations electronically. **Note to students:** Some schools have supplementary materials that must be completed in addition to the standard application.

commonapp.org

3 FAFSA: Get comfortable with the website of the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). Administered by the U.S. Department of Education, it's a user-friendly resource, and most importantly, it's where you apply for federal aid, including Pell grants, Direct subsidized and unsubsidized loans, and PLUS loans.

fafsa.ed.gov

4 FASTWEB: If you're hoping for a scholarship, this is a good place to hunt it down. After registering, you can custom-search a database of 1.5 million awards based on your individual qualifications and needs. FastWeb also supplies clear and helpful information about financial assistance — timelines, advice, relevant news and even a clever series on maximizing financial aid.

fastweb.com

BONUS: Ask your college admissions counselors if your prospective schools have their own apps, which generally include campus maps, schedules of upcoming in-person or virtual events, searchable course catalogues and more. After you build your list of schools, download the apps of the colleges to which you're applying, and get a sense for life on campus!

TOP 10 WEBSITES

5 NCAA: Student athletes, this one's for you. If you're hoping to play for a Division I or II school, you need to create a "certification account" to verify your eligibility and make official school visits for recruitment. Hoping to join a Division III team? You'll want to create a profile and get important reminders from the organization.

ncaa.org

6 BIGFUTURE (BY THE COLLEGE BOARD): If you're unsure where to begin your college search, or you're just feeling overwhelmed, this site is your sweet (starting) spot. Create a profile, and then use the step-by-step guide, which asks helpful questions about your preferences to build a snapshot of what's important to you. You can also search colleges directly and compare prospective schools.

collegeboard.org

7 COLLEGE NAVIGATOR: Chock-full of good basic information about colleges, this federal website is an excellent place to start your search, especially if you use the advanced search options. Build your list here, and refine it with info from other sites (and the all-important college visits).

nces.ed.gov/collegenavigator

8 THE COLLEGE SOLUTION: What began as a blog by higher-ed journalist Lynn O'Shaughnessy many years ago has now morphed into a kind of online journal for excellent advice and information about the college search process and the transition from high school to college. The site is especially helpful in its guidance on navigating financial aid offers and keeping the cost of college down.

Bonus: Parents.com gave the "College Cost Lab" course rave reviews.

thecollegesolution.com

9 FAIRTEST: An ever-increasing number of four-year schools are adopting test-optional policies, which means they don't require applicants to submit SAT or ACT scores. Currently, there are more than 1,200 accredited, bachelor-degree-granting colleges on the list compiled by the National Center for Fair and Open Testing. The site's searchable list will help you find schools that suit your other criteria and show some mercy when it comes to standardized-test scores.

fairtest.org

10 PETERSON'S: While the interface here isn't as impressive as the others', Peterson's offers clear, practical advice about the fundamentals of understanding the world of colleges (Public or private? Honors college or not? Four-year or two-year?), applying and making a good final decision. If you're feeling overwhelmed about the jargon and deadlines, head here.

petersons.com

JOIN US!



VIRTUAL
Open House
Sunday, November 8

Visit

farmingdale.edu/openhouse
to make a reservation.

BE
A **RAM**

Farmingdale
State College

State University of New York