



Inside This Week

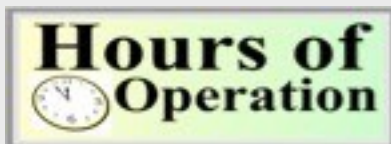
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Solutions team members have flexible working hours, which vary from week to week depending on individual schedules, events and college campus travel. Be assured that your communication will be addressed 72 working hours from the time you contact us.

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If you miss a Sunday Scholar Session, please login to our password protected member area and view the PowerPoint presentation.

Thank you to all our seniors and parents that attended our recent Application Workshops. We hope you found them helpful. Please keep the lines of communication open. Questions or concerns about testing, resume, essay, college lists, applications, finances, etc. please email us. We want to be your College Resource Team!

Solutions Website Login:

www.exploresolutions.org

Senior log in:

Username: seniors Password: 2se020Nior

Application Workshop Follow up:

There is a comprehensive PowerPoint posted on the password protected side of our website for students to review if they have additional questions. Several slides were added that were not included in the actual workshop presentation. A short video illustrating how to input your senior grades into the Common Application is also posted. If there are additional questions, please email Cynthia:
cynthia@exploresolutions.org.

Essay Feedback Process:

Before any essay(s) will be reviewed students are required to complete a short exercise and to provide an activities list, the stage of writing process and the prompt. Why is this needed?

1. Cynthia uses the student's information to help direct students in crafting an essay that best represents him or her.
2. It requires the student to put in writing what he/she feels is key information for admissions to know beyond the rest of the application. The "I want colleges to know that I..." exercise should be a guiding factor in determining stories and/or experiences for essays.

All essays will be reviewed in the order in which they are received as long as all required materials are attached with the essay. Email Cynthia with questions:
cynthia@exploresolutions.org.

College List Review Process:

Please send your working or final college list to Gail for review for academic and financial fit. It is important that we have on file:

- Highest test score
- End of junior year transcript
- EFC

Included in the handouts that were sent several weeks ago, we ask for a brief sentence from each student, on "why" that college is on your list. This information helps us to know what other colleges we might suggest and if the colleges on your list meet your academic and financial criteria. Lists are reviewed in the order they were received. Thank you for your patience. Email Gail at gaildurso@exploresolutions.org

Communications with Solutions:

To all students and parents-

- Please add all the Solutions staff to your email address book, so that you will receive our emails and they won't go into spam. Email addresses are on the left.
- Email is our preferred method of communication. Please allow 72 working hours or an appropriate amount of time for us to respond. We will often respond sooner. If you don't hear from us in a timely manner, please resend your email.
- Leave a phone message and we'll return your call.
- The Week at a Glance will arrive by email every Monday morning.
- The Newsletter will be emailed once a month.
- Above is the Login information for our website.
- Scholar Sessions are generally one Sunday a month for STUDENTS and PARENTS unless indicated otherwise. **Sign up is not required. The PowerPoint presentation will be posted on our website about a week after the session, but it is always best to hear the information in person, if possible.**

Returning students from junior year 2018-2019:

Please update Solutions so we may best assist you (if you have not already):

- High School Unofficial Transcript including final Junior Year grades (not report cards)
- New updated SAT/ACT scores
- Resume of activities to Cynthia at cynthia@exploresolutions.org Be sure to read the instructions and template on the website.
- Your family's EFC (Expected Family Contribution) using your 2018 tax return. All information is confidential. Send information to: daniela@exploresolutions.org

Key Information

What you need to know

Open and Read Emails from Colleges:

Colleges have software that can track your interest and that includes opening and reading emails. Sometimes emails offer free applications, interviews or local visits. Don't miss out. Read your emails.

SAT Subject Tests:

While SAT Subject Exams are not required for admission to UC's, some campuses recommend that students applying for competitive majors take one or more examinations to demonstrate subject area proficiency. Recommendations on SAT Subject Tests for fall 2020 UC applicants have been updated [here](#). Subject test requirements for other colleges can be found [here](#).

College Admissions Interviews:

You should be registered as an "interested student" on the website of every college you are applying to except UC and CSU campuses (they don't offer the option). This allows a college to send you additional information, invitations to special programs or the opportunity to interview. An interview can give the admission counselor a chance to meet you and get to know you better. Mostly private schools employ interviews. See below several schools that are contacted us with their local interviews. Please take advantage if you are planning to apply to these schools.

[Gettysburg College](#)
[Lehigh University](#)
[University of Tulsa](#)

Free/VIP/Priority Applications:

Some colleges may offer free applications to encourage you to apply to their college. You may receive many of these offers. We always recommend that you make sure it is a college you are truly interested in and might attend if admitted.

Local College Information Programs:

Attached with this newsletter is a list of local college information programs. We encourage you to attend if you are interested in any of the colleges. Please register ahead if it is offered as many programs fill up. This is a way to learn more, have your questions answered and show demonstrated interest.

College Rankings:

In the coming month the media will be flooded with experts releasing the lists of "BEST" colleges and ranking one college against another. We are not fans of college rankings. The results can be arbitrary and the methodology suspect. There is no one BEST college. We are interested in what colleges are BEST for YOU!

Scams:

There are unscrupulous companies preying on college bound students and families. Never pay for an award. Email us if you have a question about anything you have received.

Action Items

What you can be doing now

Signup for fall testing if you plan to retake the SAT or ACT. Choose one test to focus on. Update Solutions with new test scores.

Use your college email to register on the websites of those colleges you are interested in. Connect with colleges at college fairs, high school visits and information programs.

Download all the "Resume of Activities" handouts on our website to assist you as you work on your final draft. Complete your Activities Resume and email to Cynthia. Use the helpful handouts she has provided.

Work with Cynthia on your Essays. Make note of her requested procedure if you want feedback.

Work on shaping your college list. Use the handout "Evolution of the College List" that we sent to assist you. Email Gail your list for review and suggestions.

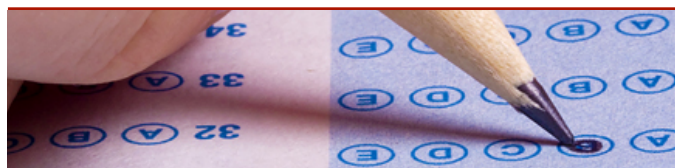
Familiarize yourself with your high school's Senior Package or Packet. Each high school has their own procedure for seniors applying to college for Naviance, college applications, teacher recommendations, sending transcripts, brag packets, etc. Follow your high school's procedure.

Request Teacher Recommendations. Check the colleges you are applying to and see what they require. You should ask a teacher in person and then follow your high school's procedure for recommendations. Junior academic teachers are recommended.

Free College Fly-ins Review the list of free college fly-ins for diverse, low-income and first generation students to see if you qualify. Take advantage of this outstanding opportunity if you qualify. Also take advantage of the list of colleges that provide flight reimbursement for you to visit. Email Gail if you didn't receive these lists.

Parents, please plan to attend the September 29th Solutions Scholar Session to learn more about critical steps for financial aid and merit scholarships. No RSVP necessary.

READ Solutions emails and newsletters. Email us with questions.



TESTING:

ACT - October 26: Register by September 20. Register [here](#)
SAT & SAT Subject Tests - October 5 : Register by September 6. Register [here](#).

What's Happening?

Save the Date

Community Events

Open to the public - not hosted by Solutions

Registration is recommend and required in some cases.

Oregon State University - Explore OSU

Sunday, September 8, 5 pm
California Center for the Arts
340 N. Escondido Blvd., Escondido
Register: [here](#)

University of Notre Dame

ND on the Road
Tuesday, September 10, 7:00 pm
Francis Parker School
6501 Linda Vista Rd., San Diego
Register: [here](#)

Carnegie Mellon University

Thursday, September 12, 7:00 pm
San Diego Marriott Mission Valley
8757 Rio San Diego Dr., San Diego
Register: [here](#)

Coast to Coast College Tour – UC Berkeley, Dartmouth, Northwestern, Princeton, and Vanderbilt

Thursday, September 12, 7:00 pm
Westin San Diego Gaslamp Quarter
910 Broadway Circle, San Diego
Register: [here](#)

Brown University and Columbia University

Monday, September 16, 7:00 pm
High Tech High Mesa
5331 Mount Alifan Dr., San Diego
Register: [here](#)

University of Southern California

Saturday, September 21, 2:00 pm
Hyatt Regency La Jolla
3777 La Jolla Village Dr., La Jolla
Register: [here](#)

San Diego Performing and Visual Arts Fair

Saturday, September 21, 1:00-3:00 pm
University of San Diego – Hahn University Center
5998 Alcalá Park, San Diego
Register [here](#)

University of Colorado, Boulder

Sunday, September 22, 1:30 pm
San Diego Marriott Del Mar
11966 El Camino Real, San Diego
Register: [here](#)

Explore Solutions Events

Not open to the public - Solutions families only

Solutions Scholar Session (PARENTS ONLY)

Sunday, September 29, 2:00 pm or 3:30 pm or 5:00 pm
Understanding College Financing

Critical information on merit scholarships, need-based aid, documents to file, timetable, what we learned from the Class of 2019, and your questions answered. No sign up required.

Solutions Scholar Session (students and parents)

Sunday, October 27, 2:00 pm or 3:30 pm or 5:00 pm

The Application

Finalizing applications:

What you need to know, but is often forgotten

What to send, how and when (testing, transcripts, recommendations)

Financial aid follow up. No sign up required.

Solutions Events

Open to the public

Explore Solutions College Showcase

Sunday, October 13, 1:00 - 3:00 pm

VIP Opening Solutions Scholars 12:30-1:00 pm

Hotel Karlan San Diego - DoubleTree by Hilton

14455 Penasquitos Dr., San Diego 92129

No registration required. Bring a friend.

List of colleges attending coming soon!

Term of the week...

What is a **test optional** college? A test-optional admissions policy means some applicants can choose not to submit SAT or ACT scores when they apply for admission. There are over 1,000 colleges that are test optional. Those colleges will evaluate a candidate based on grades, course difficulty and accomplishments rather than a single test. The rules vary from college to college.

List of test-optional colleges: www.fairtest.org

Money Matters

SCHOLARSHIP SPOTLIGHT

STAMPS SCHOLARS

STAMPS FAMILY CHARITABLE FOUNDATION, INC.

Stamps Scholarships

The Stamps Scholarships are a nationally-prestigious merit scholarship program and community that helps exceptional students become meaningful leaders throughout society.

Stamps Scholars receive annual awards that range from \$5,000-\$72,000 for four years with additional funds for study abroad, academic conferences, and leadership training.

Over 40 public and private colleges and universities partner with the Stamps Foundation to offer these scholarships.

The Stamps Foundation, with its partner schools, (see list [here](#)) seeks students who demonstrate academic merit, very strong leadership potential, and exceptional character.

Leadership development is at the core of the Stamps Scholarship program. Leadership potential is also a key part of the selection criteria for receiving a Stamps award. And, Stamps Scholars receive a separate financial award to participate in leadership activities of their choosing.

The Stamps Foundation welcomes and supports students from all backgrounds and areas of study. Financial need is not a consideration. Students should check directly with the college that they are interested in to view eligibility and application requirements. You cannot apply to the Stamps Foundation directly, but must apply through a partner institution.

For more [information](#).

Financial Aid: Need-based vs Merit Aid

Financial aid for college is classified into two types; merit-based or need-based. Financial aid consists of grants and scholarships (free money), low-interest federal student loans, and federal work-study. The largest percentage of financial aid is given by the federal and state governments, followed by the institutional aid given by the college.

Need-based aid:

Need-based aid is awarded on the basis of the financial need of the student and family based on the FAFSA and perhaps the CSS Profile or Institutional form. The Free Application for Federal Student Aid application (FAFSA) is used for determining federal, state, and institutional need-based aid eligibility. At private institutions, a supplemental application (CSS PROFILE or institutional form) may be required for institutional need-based aid. All colleges require the FAFSA and some private colleges require the CSS Profile or their own institutional forms. Be sure to check what is required by each college on your list. Financial forms are filed every year.

A student's financial need is based on their "family financial profile" and the cost of the college. A family's financial status is calculated when students submit the FAFSA and (if required) the CSS PROFILE and is assigned an Expected Family Contribution (EFC). Financial need is based on subtracting the EFC from the school's total Cost of Attendance (COA) to equal a family's financial need. A financial aid awarded based on this calculation is need-based aid. $\text{Total Cost of Attendance (COA)} - \text{EFC} = \text{Financial Need}$

A student's need will vary according to the Cost of Attendance. If a student has an EFC of \$30,000 and attends a school that costs \$25,000, he has no financial need. If he attends a school that has a COA of \$70,000, he has a financial need of \$40,000. A college will continue to provide support to students as long as financial need is demonstrated and the required forms are filed yearly. Colleges vary widely in their generosity of need-based aid. If you are a family with a low EFC, it will be important to apply to colleges that will provide the most generous need-based aid. We recommend using Collegedata.

Merit-based aid

The most common type of merit scholarship is one that is given by the college for a student's academic, athletic, talent, diversity or artistic ability. This institutional scholarship amount varies by school but can range from \$500 to full tuition, room and board. Colleges attempt to identify students who, because of a special skill, talent or ability, would be contributing members of that school's community. At some colleges, every admitted student is automatically considered for merit scholarships based on their application for admission. At other institutions, a separate application process is required. Some colleges, typically highly selective ones, do not award ANY merit aid. They usually award generous need-based aid, but no merit aid. This information is found on a college's financial aid or admissions page.

Financial need is not a condition of awarding an institutional merit scholarship. A student with extensive assets and income is just as entitled to a merit-based award from a college as a student with limited assets and income. Unlike need-based financial aid, merit scholarships do not have to be given each year and can be taken away from a student for lack of performance. Indeed most are given for all four years, but it is important to understand the criteria for renewing a merit scholarship. We often see merit scholarships of \$10,000-\$30,000 per year for four years given to students. You don't have to have a 4.0 GPA and perfect test scores. It depends on which college you are looking at.

The second type of merit scholarship is a private scholarship given by a group, organization, business, high school or parents' workplace. These scholarships usually require an application. Typically small, these scholarships are awarded only once and cannot be renewed. Sometimes they can be renewed, but that is not the norm. Private scholarships make up only 7% of aid for college. You may be better off looking for colleges that award generous institutional merit scholarships, then applying for a lot of private scholarships.

SPOTLIGHTS

College



University of Missouri

Public University
Columbia, Missouri
<http://admissions.missouri.edu/>

Undergraduate student enrollment: 24,000

College location: Small town of about 117,000

Distance from nearest airports: Columbia Regional Airport - 15 minutes; Kansas City Int'l Airport (MCI) - 2 hours; St. Louis Int'l Airport (STL) - 2 hours. (Shuttle to MCI and STL).

Average accepted GPA & test scores: average ACT 26, SAT 1120.

Acceptance rate: 78%

Application deadlines: Admission Application due June 1st; Apply to Missouri by November 15 and Scholarship Application due Dec. 1st.

Merit scholarships/Need-based financial aid: Many merit awards automatic when students apply (Mark Twain Non-Resident awards, Black and Gold Awards and the Heritage Scholarship) and a December 1st deadline for the MU Annual Scholarship Application (for departmental awards and other various scholarships). Automatic in-state tuition with at least a 30 ACT or 1360 SAT. Merit scholarships \$7,000-\$16,680 (equal to an out of state fee waiver). Need-based aid limited for OOS students.

Most popular, new or unique majors: Journalism, Business, Engineering, Health Professions, and Nursing. Colleges and Schools: Agriculture, Food & Natural Resources; Arts & Science; Business; Education; Engineering; Health Professions; Human Environmental Sciences; Nursing. More than 300 degree programs.

Student Life: Division 1 Athletics (Southeastern Conference), Greek Life 26% of campus, More than 750 student organizations (examples: MSA – Missouri Students Association, concrete canoe team, Quidditch team) with option to create your own student organization.

Total Cost of Attendance 2019-2020: \$45,494

What is unique or makes your school standout? The University of Missouri (Mizzou) is one of only 34 public universities to be selected for membership in the Association of American Universities and is one of only seven public institutions nationwide that can claim a medical school, a veterinary medicine college, a law school, and a nuclear reactor on the same campus. Mizzou has a diverse enrollment with more 33,000 total students from every county in Missouri, every state in the nation, and 120 countries while dually serving as a research and land grant institution. Mizzou is the birthplace of college homecoming and home of the nation's first Journalism School.

California Admission Representative

Tommy Rogers
Regional Representative, Office of Admissions
asktommy@missouri.edu
858.663.2896

FYI Column:

Bigger Thinking for the College Process

by Maria Furtado, Executive Director of the "Colleges That Change Lives"

Tips and Thoughts:

- Students should be **introspective and become bigger thinkers** - college is a match to be made not a prize to be won.
- Don't think that just because you, or your circle of friends, may not have heard about a certain college that no one else has! If you find that your college ideas/choices are being challenged - find three things about that/those schools that maybe someone hasn't heard of before and share it.
- By April of your senior year, hopefully you are excited **to be at any one** of the schools to which you applied.
- **Do your research**, many colleges that are unknown to you out perform "name brand" schools! Visit the [National Survey of Student Engagement \(NSSE\)](#) and discover what really keeps students engaged and on campus to complete their degree.
- At a college visit **ask who teaches** the intro classes and how do you make the connection with that adult.
- It has been shown that students are more successful at college when they have an **adult mentor**.
- Think about **where you found your people** in high school. Was it sports, music, or the debate team, and look for that in a college.
- Find a college that **matches your confidence**. Do you feel confident attending XYZ college? What do you have to offer that school?

Resources for Additional Reading:

- [Director of College Admission Shares the Truth About College Essays](#)
- [Fact-checking College Admission](#)
- [College Rankings: August College Planning Tips](#)
- [College Recruiters Aggressively Go After Out-of-State Students](#)
- [Five Blunt Truths About College Life in 2019](#)
- [Fool's Gold](#)