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WELCOME BACK!

On behalf of the Great Hearts College Counseling Department, I welcome you to the 2011-2012 school year! As three of our academies graduate their first senior class, this is an exciting year for college counseling. It is our hope that this quarterly newsletter will be an additional resource for all high school families. We will be providing relevant information for all high school students and parents on a variety of topics dealing with college admissions.

If you haven't done so already, take the time to introduce yourself to your college counselor. It is important for them to get to know you and your family early! Your college counselor will serve as your soundingboard, advocate, and advisor throughout the college process.

We look forward to working with you!

Alison Westerlind, Great Hearts Director of College Counseling

Fourth Annual Great Hearts College Symposium

by Jessica McHonnelt, Scottsdale Preparatory Academy

This fall will mark our Fourth Annual Great Hearts College Symposium, which will be held on **Saturday, October 1 from 6:30-9:00** at Scottsdale Preparatory Academy. Over 30 colleges and universities from across country will be in attendance. These schools have been hand selected with Great Hearts' students in mind and represent a wide range of locations, size, selectivity, and social environment. Students will be attending workshops led by the visiting college representatives. These sessions will cover various topics and activities, from the finding a good college match, tips and timelines, to the application process itself. Concurrently, parents are invited to attend a lecture and question and answer session from a leading dean and director in the field of college admission. The event will culminate with a college fair, where students and parents will have the opportunity to meet with all college representatives, ask questions, and pick up college material.

Additionally, seniors have a special opportunity to attend an essay writing workshop hosted by Mr. Ken Anselment, Vice-President of Admissions at Lawrence University. Mr. Anselment reads thousands of college essays each year and has seen the superb and the ones that need some work—and will be sharing his tips and insight with seniors. This workshop will be held before the College Symposium from 3:30-4:30 at Scottsdale Prep. The College Symposium is a wonderful opportunity to learn about many different colleges and the college application process.

Please note that student uniforms are required at this event. Also, remember that Scottsdale Prep has moved and the new address is **16537 North 92nd Street Scottsdale, Arizona 85260**. We look forward to seeing junior and senior families on October 1st.

Seniors: College Application Advice

by Joel Malkin, Dartmouth College (Veritas Graduate)

In the 300s, the Roman Emperor Marcus Aurelius wrote something along the lines of the following: The act of beginning is half the struggle in any task. Now, I am not going to sugarcoat the college application process: there are several aspects that are going to seem daunting at worst and terribly mundane at best. But as a Great Hearts senior looking to exercise effective time management, you can do yourself a great favor by simply beginning now. Your workload this semester is significant. Choose to manage your time well; refuse to procrastinate; and start this next weekend by taking an hour to start (or continue working on) the following.

First, if you haven't already done so, make an Excel spreadsheet listing all the important deadlines for each of your applications. This is especially important if you are applying for scholarships or financial aid, since schools may have one deadline for their general application and another for their financial aid and scholarship applications. Having all these deadlines together on one page will help you prioritize. A quick glance at the list, and I know right away what I need to focus on first and what I can leave for later.

If you already have such a list, spend that hour brainstorming for college essays. Gather together all the essay prompts, compare the topics, and write a couple ideas down for each. Develop a rough outline of what your argument or point might be, then move on to the next prompt.

If you're already past this stage, good for you. Now see how much of the mundane Personal Information section you can finish in one hour. Try to finish this section for every application you have, if you can.

All in all, remember that it's entirely possible to write a great college application without sacrificing academic performance this semester. What I've written above is just the approach I took my senior year when I applied to 8 colleges. It's not perfect; if something else works better for you, go with that. In the end my main advice is simply to remember this: Preparation prevents poor performance.

Sophomores and Juniors: PSAT

by John Riddell, Veritas Preparatory Academy

As most Juniors are already aware, the PSAT/NMSQT is quickly approaching. The PSAT is a standardized test which is both a practice run for the upcoming SAT in the Spring of 2012 and an initial screening for the National Merit Scholarship competition. We highly recommend all Juniors sit for this exam.

This test is offered to both Juniors and Sophomores, though the National Merit Scholarship consideration is only for Juniors. Please ensure all registrations are submitted on time so the correct number of test may be ordered. If your child has a religious conflict with the test being administered on a Saturday, please see your Counselor as soon as possible to make other arrangements.

Regarding the SAT next semester, we suggest that Juniors wait until the spring to start taking the SAT and ACT tests. Waiting until the spring will give your student time to evaluate his/her PSAT results and then decide what other preparation and studying needs to take place.

If you have any other questions, please email or call your student's Counselor.



The Importance of Getting Involved

by Judy Schmitt, Chandler Preparatory Academy

When we look back on our own high school days, it is often a favorite coach who taught us the meaning of sportsmanship, the choir teacher who let us sing even if our pitch was a bit off, or the debate coach who charged us with a strong voice and confidence to argue a point with fact, that we remember most. Although we all understood that academics came first, it was the after school activities, playing sports with our friends on school teams and interacting with our teachers on another level in clubs and activities often referred to as the “outside classroom”, that captured our hearts. It is during these activities that many of us found a passion, gained confidence, and became leaders.

Many of these extra-curricular activities kept us grounded, kept us healthy and kept us interested. The same holds true for the students here at Great Hearts Academies. Most of our students are highly engaged in sports, clubs and activities but if your child has not yet found an extra interest, encourage them to join one or more of the many clubs and activities at school. Each school sponsors many sports and clubs during fall, winter and springs seasons. Some possible options:

- | | | |
|-------------|--------------|-------------------|
| • Choir | Chess | Philosophy Club |
| • Newspaper | Yearbook | Key Club |
| • Orchestra | Drama | Speech and Debate |
| • Mentoring | Science Bowl | Fencing Club |

What we hope they find is one or more important areas in which they will develop a strong and lasting interest and continue that activity throughout their high school years. We have also found that sometimes the most involved student will develop the best time management. As they apply to colleges and universities, each student will be able to share with the admissions offices all that they have accomplished from volunteer work to playing volleyball.

GET INVOLVED FIND A PASSION HELP OTHERS BECOME A LEADER

Vocab 101: College Admission Options

by Roslyn Folk, Mesa Preparatory Academy

ED or early decision: Only if the student is 150% sure it is their first choice and the very best fit, as the commitment is binding. If admitted and offered an adequate financial aid package, the student agrees to enroll. Students can only apply to one institution early decision but may apply to others through the regular decision process. If accepted to the early decision institution, the student must withdraw all other applications. The early decision application deadline occurs early and the student usually finds out about the admissions decision by January.

EA or early action: This is a great choice for many students, as they will apply early and find out the admission decision well before the general response date without the commitment. Students may apply to many institutions early action and may also apply to other institutions regular decision. If accepted, the student usually has until May 1st to accept or decline the offer of enrollment.

REA or restrictive early action: May also be known as single-choice early action. The student applies early to an institution of preference and receives an admission decision well before the general notification date. Students can be restricted from applying ED, EA, or REA to any other institutions, but can apply to other institutions regular decision. If accepted, the student has until May 1st to accept or decline the offer of enrollment.

Rolling Admission: Student applications are reviewed by the institution as they are received. The sooner the application is completed and submitted, the sooner the admission decision is made and the student is notified. Students may apply to many colleges through the admission process. Rolling admission is a non-binding and the student has until May 1st to accept or decline the offer of admission.

Regular Decision: Institutions have set dates throughout the application cycle as to when applications must be submitted for review. Students will be notified of the admission decision in a clearly stated period of time. Students may apply to many institutions regular decision. Regular decision is non-binding and the student has until May 1st to accept or decline the offer of admission.

Remember, it is important for students to apply to a variety of schools: schools that will likely admit the student, schools that will possibly admit the student and schools that might be a reach for the student to be admitted. After the student makes their final decision, the student should inform all other institutions that they appreciate the offer of enrollment, but they will not be attending. For more information regarding college application options, please see your college counselor at your Great Hearts academy.

Meet Your Counselor

Mrs. Judy Schmitt, Chandler Preparatory Academy

Hometown: Philadelphia, PA

University Attended: Kutztown State University in Pennsylvania; Masters in Fine Arts from Montclair State University in New Jersey.

Mr. Kevin Randolph, Chandler Preparatory Academy

Hometown: Chicago, IL

University Attended: University of Missouri School of Journalism—I chose Mizzou because I wanted a top notch Journalism program but I also wanted a school with history, spirit, and a great sporting events. It was a decision I am so glad I made. I then attended a Master's program at Northern Arizona University where I studied Educational Psychology.

Ms. Roslyn Folk, Mesa Preparatory Academy

Hometown: Coeur d'Alene, Idaho

University Attended: The College of Idaho—I chose it for the small class sizes, the individual attention, and the access to professors.

Ms. Jessica McHonett, Scottsdale Preparatory Academy

Hometown: Orange County, California

University Attended: Chapman University--It was large enough for me to get involved in a ton of programs but small enough where my teachers knew my name.

Ms. Nicole Rizkallah, Glendale Preparatory Academy

Hometown: Southern California

University Attended: Master's: St. John's College, MD Bachelor's: California Lutheran University—it has small classroom sizes and increased opportunities to participate in extra-curricular activities.

Mr. John Riddell, Vertias Preparatory Academy

Hometown: Newport Beach, California

University Attended: University of Colorado, Boulder—studied at CU for both undergraduate (History) and graduate (MBA) degrees.

Mrs. Alison Westerlind, Veritas Preparatory Academy

Hometown: Newberg, Oregon and Richmond, Indiana

University Attended: Master's: Northern Arizona University Bachelor's: Hope College in Holland, Michigan. I wanted a small liberal arts college with a religious affiliation, a dance program, and I was able to double major with Dance and Psychology.

2011-2012 Testing Information

SAT

(www.sat.collegeboard.org)

<u>Date of Test:</u>	<u>Register By:</u>
November 5	October 7
December 3	November 8
January 28	December 30
March 10	February 10
May 5	April 6
June 2	May 8

ACT

(www.actstudent.org)

<u>Date of Test:</u>	<u>Register By:</u>
October 22	September 16
December 10	November 4
February 11	January 13
April 14	March 9
June 9	May 4

America's Pantheon: University of Virginia

by Nicole Rizkallah, Glendale Preparatory Academy

The University of Virginia boasts of being not only founded, but also designed by one of America's founding fathers. When Thomas Jefferson founded the university in 1819 he had in mind much more than had ever been attempted as far as public higher education:

We wish to establish in the upper country of Virginia, and more centrally for the State, a University on a plan so broad and liberal and modern, as to be worth patronizing with the public support, and be a temptation to the youth of other States to come and drink of the cup of knowledge and fraternize with us.

And so he did by placing a breath-taking white-columned Rotunda at the heart of the university. This pseudo-replica of the Pantheon in Rome serves as a reminder that the vision our founding fathers had for America was complex in that it both abstracted from and rooted itself in previous civilizations that are now understood as the pillars of our Western heritage.

The students who attend UVa grasp well their role in this tradition. Together with Jefferson's personal estate, Monticello, the University of Virginia is one of only three modern World Heritage Sites in America, Independence Hall and the Statue of Liberty being the other two. Though, UVa should be understood as far more than historical as it continues to engage the perennial questions of our existence in modern America.

What can Great Hearts students expect from UVa?

- Echols Scholars Program: A student works with an elite advisor to focus study and research within a particular field.
- Honors Program: Independent Study and Thesis Project for intellectually curious students.
- College at Wise: A smaller setting for those wishing to embark upon the "Western Literary Tradition" or "Arthurian Literature."
- Highly Rated Departments:
 - o School of Religious Studies: Largest faculty at a public university, and vibrant Christian Studies Center.
 - o School of Commerce: Ranked second in the nation by Bloomberg BusinessWeek
 - o Athletics Department: Highly competitive and well endowed
- Active Student Life: Over six hundred clubs are housed at UVa, including historical and philanthropic secret societies and renowned debating teams.
- Need Based Scholarships: The average students graduates with only \$15,571 in debt.

It is true that UVa is more political (in the best sense of the word) than other campuses given its founder, architecture, history of housing former presidents, such as James Madison and James Monroe, and its proximity to Washington D.C., but all in the small city charm of Charlottesville in the Blue Ridge Mountains.

