



# Newsletter

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College Admissions Educational Consultant

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## February/March Calendar

- February 17– Free College Admissions Seminar in Burlingame– 6:30 pm
- Feb. 25 & 27– Gap Year Fairs
- March 5– last day to sign up for April ACT
- March 13– SAT Test
- March 25– last day to sign up for May SAT test



## Applications Soar Nationwide

For the past couple of months, colleges have reported significant increases in applications this year. Since the current high school senior class is slightly smaller than last year’s class, this trend seems to be puzzling on its face. However, there are some explanations for the upward trend. Families are nervous about the enrollment cuts in the California public colleges. Thus, their students likely have broadened their horizons within and outside of California. The national economic

scene also has made a difference. While families continue to feel the pinch, they must really weigh college costs and financial aid packages. Even those families who were not previously too concerned about the college costs are carefully looking at and weighing the merit aid received in making college choices. This thinking has also boosted the number of colleges to which students have applied. Finally, the common application and universal application have made

applying to more than one college easier. Finally, some colleges use marketing gimmicks such as no application fees and no essay to attract more applications. While students nervously await news on their college applications, they should be reminded that a denial is not a sign of their worth or even their ability to perform at a particular college. In some ways, college admissions is just a lottery.



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## UC Introduces Waiting Lists

For the first time this year, the University of California will have waiting lists to help it control enrollment at each of its campuses. Because last year’s experiment with waiting lists at the UC Irvine campus was so successful and in light of enrollment cuts, the UC decided to administer waiting lists at all of its campuses this Spring except UCLA and UC Merced. Students may end up on more than one waitlist. This could get tricky if students end up on multiple waitlists or is accepted by one campus and waitlisted at another. Students must still accept one college by May 1st even if they end up on waitlists.

## Beware of CSU Placement Exam Deadlines

The California State University system requires all students to take English and Math placement examinations unless students are exempt. To be exempt, a student must achieve certain test scores on college ready examinations such as the SAT or already have completed a CSU transferable course in the subject area. Students can determine whether they are exempt by visiting the CSU website.

Most of the CSU campuses have set deadlines for completion of these tests. If the tests are not completed on time, the student will likely lose their admission to that CSU. Because of the budget cuts, there is virtually no tolerance this year for missed deadlines.

# Creating College Lists



Spring break is quickly approaching, a time when students, especially juniors, embark upon college visits. Students will gain so much more from these visits if they have taken the time to think about the colleges which match their interests. Thus, this is the time of year many juniors ask for assistance in creating college lists. While some students haphazardly put together college lists based upon high profile names or those suggested by friends and family, a different approach may achieve more satisfying results.

Most students come to me having no idea of what they want to study or what career to pursue. This is perfectly normal. Others have some notion of possible majors, but they are not sure. This is why assessments of students inter-

ests is so important. This may be the first time where students are allowed true input in what and where they study. Thus, they often find the assessments truly engaging.

Assessments are not meant to result in a choice of major or career. Rather, they assist me in identifying colleges that may be a good fit for the student's academic and social interests.

Some of the assessments that I use are: Do What You Are, a mini-Myers Briggs personality profile and career exploration that is geared for high school students; a couple of major explorations based upon students' interests and not expertise; a card sort that explores numerous aspects of college life; an intake questionnaire; and the Fiske Guide assessment. More important than the results of these various assessments is the discussion that follows, further refining the students' feelings and thinking.

Then, I get to work preparing a preliminary list of colleges for the students and their parents to review, research and visit. I use multiple resources to create such lists. Besides books on specific programs and majors, I conduct my own research as well as maintain computer files based upon prior research, visit many colleges each year, and save lists from professional organizations to which I subscribe. I also regularly collaborate with colleagues in the profession to find the best fits for my students.

The preliminary college list is only the beginning. It stays a work in progress until the beginning of the senior year, often refined based upon a student's final junior year academic and test statistics, and the student's own research, visits and feedback.

## Free College Admissions Seminar for Students & Parents



Sponsored by College Focus and Sylvan Learning Center

February 17, 2010  
6:30 pm

1200 Howard Avenue,  
Suite 104 (Entrance on  
Lorton Avenue)  
Burlingame, CA

RSVP (650) 343-3940 or  
Maureen@  
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## Gap Year Opportunities Fairs

Some students find that post-secondary gap year experiences can enhance their academic experience, motivate them, and lead them on a clearer path for college studies or a career path. There is an array of experiential education, ranging from travel, language immersion, outdoor adventure, community service and internships. To see if this experience may be right for you, you and your parents may wish to attend the annual Gap Year Fair at the end of this month.

Dynamy Internship Year and Thinking Beyond Borders, in collaboration with Sir Francis Drake High School in Marin County and Los Altos High School on the Peninsula, will be hosting this year's Gap Year Fairs in the San Francisco Bay Area. The Sir Francis Drake fair will be on February 25th from 6:30-8:30 pm and the Los Altos fair will be held on February 27th from 12-2:30 pm. Joanna Lazarek, a nationally known authority

on the gap year experience, will be presenting at the beginning of each session.



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