

# PREPARING FOR COLLEGE: IT'S NEVER TOO EARLY!

## Freshman Year: Plan for your Future

- ✓ Introduce yourself to your school counselor.
- ✓ Become familiar with college entrance requirements and take academic courses that will help prepare you for college.
- ✓ Do well academically! Remember, ninth grade sets the stage for your academic performance in high school and is the first set of grades college admission's officers will see on your high school transcript.
- ✓ Explore your extracurricular options and begin to get involved in activities that are meaningful to you. Join clubs, participate in sports and school activities and volunteer for organizations that match your interests.

## Sophomore Year: Begin to Broaden your Experiences

- ✓ Become involved and committed to a community service organization or project. Stick to your commitments.
- ✓ Deepen your involvement in extracurricular activities to broaden your experiences and to help build relationships with other students and with teachers.
- ✓ Meet with your counselor and make sure you're on track with grades and the right classes.
- ✓ Research careers.

## Junior Year: Test and Inquire

- ✓ Take on leadership roles in your extracurricular and community service activities or take the initiative to create your own organization or project.
- ✓ Take a practice college admissions test: the PSAT. Top scorers can qualify for college scholarships.
- ✓ Research careers and colleges.
- ✓ Attend college fairs and workshops and review college entrance requirements.
- ✓ Take the ACT/SAT. Remember that you can take these college entrance exams more than once and many students improve their scores the second and even third time around.
- ✓ Visit college campuses and take college tours.
- ✓ Use the summer for work or volunteer opportunities.
- ✓ Search and prepare for scholarship applications.

## Senior Year: Apply, Visit and Confirm

- ✓ Continue involvement in extracurricular activities and community service.
- ✓ Take/retake the ACT/SAT if you would like to improve your scores.
- ✓ Narrow down college choices to 3-4 schools, including a "back up" school in case your top choices do not work out.
- ✓ Attend college fairs and visit colleges to help you narrow down your choices.
- ✓ Apply for colleges
- ✓ Prepare/update your personal essay.
- ✓ Get letters of recommendation (from a teacher, counselor, coach, boss, etc.)
- ✓ Fill out the FAFSA form for financial aid (January)
- ✓ Apply for scholarships
- ✓ Request that your final transcript is mailed to the college of your choice.