



# American Hebrew Academy College Counseling Newsletter

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## KEEPING TRACK OF ACTIVITIES, HONORS, COMMUNITY SERVICE AND WORK

With little exception, every college application a student completes will ask students to list the activities, awards, community service and work they have engaged in during their high school years.

For many Seniors, it is difficult to recall ALL the various activities in which they have participated, let alone remember awards they may have received in a class or at the end of a school year, various community service activities, clubs and work. As early as the FRESHMEN year, students should begin to keep track of these things. Not only will this make completion of the college applica-

## CLASS OF 2008—COLLEGE ACCEPTANCES AS OF 2/28/08

So far this year, our Class of 2008 has received acceptances to the following colleges, with more to follow:

The University of Alabama at Birmingham  
 The University of Alabama - Tuscaloosa  
 Appalachian State University  
 Arizona State University  
 Brandeis University  
 Carnegie Mellon University  
 University of Central Florida  
 Central Michigan University  
 College of Charleston  
 University of Chicago  
 The Citadel  
 University of Connecticut  
 Cornell College  
 Drew University  
 Drexel University  
 Fordham University  
 University of Hartford  
 Indiana University at Bloomington  
 Indiana University-Purdue

University Indianapolis  
 The University of Iowa  
 Ithaca College  
 Louisiana State University  
 University of Maryland, College Park  
 University of North Carolina at Asheville  
 The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill  
 University of North Carolina at Charlotte  
 University of North Carolina at Greensboro  
 University of North Carolina at Wilmington  
 Northeastern University  
 Oglethorpe University  
 Ohio University  
 Ohio Wesleyan University  
 Old Dominion University  
 University of Pittsburgh at Bradford  
 Rutgers  
 Towson University  
 Tulane University  
 University of Vermont



Pictured Above:  
Oglethorpe University, Atlanta, GA

Percent of Applicants Accepted: 64%  
 Middle 50% SAT Scores for Accepted Students:  
 CR: 520-630  
 Math: 500-600

GPA's for Accepted Students:  
 46% had 3.5 (90) or higher  
 35% had 3.0-3.49 (85-89)  
 19% had 2.0-2.99 (75-84)

Virginia Commonwealth University  
 University of Wisconsin, Madison

tions much easier, it will also give colleges a much fuller picture of who the student is—their interests and passions. EVERY activity, award, service project and honor should be included at the beginning. Students can then refine, consolidate or edit the document when it comes time to apply for college. A well constructed Activity Sheet can give a much clearer picture of a student, than can a traditional

“resume” for most high school students.

Students can track activities and awards in any format that works for them, but if you would like to see an Activity Sheet that is very useful, please go to the AHA web site, and navigate to the COLLEGE COUNSELING CLASSROOM page. In the NOTES section is a sample ACTIVITY CHART which may be helpful .



“Keep track of ALL activities you work on, such as the current Clothing Drive at AHA.”

## A VIRTUAL COLLEGE FAIR

Want to “visit” some colleges and ask admissions counselors questions? Many of you may be familiar with college fairs. Historically, those are very large venues where lots of colleges come and set up booths, have an admissions representative there to answer questions, and give out brochures. They often take the student’s name and address on a postcard, then add students to their mailing lists. While these can be fun, they are sometimes a bit HECTIC, and sometimes it is hard to get to the booths you want to go to.

There is a new option on the horizon – a “virtual” college fair. A big one is coming up in March (the 25<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup> from 12 noon until 11 at night) sponsored by College Week Live. Dr. Tarbox will be checking this out. Parents and students may also want to check it out. The web address is:

<http://www.collegeweeklive.com/>

You can go to this website now and register for the College Fair. It will offer:

[Live Video Sessions with Admissions Experts](#)  
[Real-Time Q&A with Admissions Counselors](#)  
[A Virtual Exhibit Hall and College Booths](#)  
[Video Chat with Current College Students](#)

The virtual chat and Q and A sessions may be particularly helpful if you are trying to find out about Jewish life on campus.

An actual LIVE College Fair will be held in Charlotte, NC on March 30th. (See Upcoming Events for Spring).

## SOME USEFUL AND INTERESTING WEB SITES

For a list of colleges that in many cases do not require SAT scores, go to:

<http://www.fairtest.org/optinit.htm>

To use the Hillel web site to do some college searches and get information on Jewish life at college, go to:

<http://www.hillel.org/index>

And click on COLLEGE SEARCH in the left hand column.

For a website where high school students can find college students’ information, views and opinions on their colleges, go to:

<http://www.theu.com/>

This website requires you to set up a log-in account.

Many colleges subscribe to the COMMON APPLICATION. Students can complete one application and send it to many colleges. To access their web site, go to:

<http://www.commonapp.org>

To start looking for scholarships for college, set up an account with:

<http://www.fastweb.com>



Pictured at Left:

Georgia Institute of Technology  
(Atlanta, Georgia)  
Percent of Applicants Accepted: 67%  
Middle 50% SAT Scores for Accepted Students:  
Critical Reading: 590-680  
Math: 650-730  
Avg. GPA: 77% accepted had 3.5 (90) or higher  
23% had 3.0—3.49 (85-89)

Pictured at Right:

University of Rochester  
(Rochester, NY)

Percent of Applicants Accepted: 44%

Middle 50% SAT Scores for Accepted Students:

Critical Reading: 610-710

Math: 630-710

GPA: 80% had 3.5 (90) or higher

18% had 3.0—3.49 (85-89)

2% had 2.0—2.99 (75-84)



## WHAT SHOULD I DO THIS SUMMER?

Now is the time to begin thinking about how you will spend your summer. While some of you may have plans to travel or visit family, please remember that summer activities will be an important part of your college "resume." Therefore, careful consideration of how you spend your summers is important.

Colleges are going to look favorably upon two kinds of activities—those that are academically oriented, and those involving work (whether it is a paid position, or an unpaid internship or volunteer position).

Do NOT underestimate the value of having a real summer job—a "glamorous" job is not essential. Your best bet may be to work in something that relates to your interest. If you love sports, see if you can find a job in a sporting goods store. If you love animals, work at an

## SPRING TRIMESTER EVENTS AND DEADLINES

**February 29—March 2:** Parents' Weekend. Dr. Tarbox will be available for individual appointments, and will do a brief presentation for parents of Juniors on the college process and on financial aid.

**March 2, 2008:** SATs at Grimsley High School. Bring your SAT Ticket, Photo ID, Calculator, No. 2 Pencils and a snack.

**March 13, 2008:** Junior College Meeting Night. A guest panel of current SENIORS will be there to talk about the college process from their perspective, and to answer questions from juniors. ALL JUNIORS should consider this event MANDATORY.

**March 14, 2008:** Dr. Tarbox visits the University of Chicago.

animal shelter. Doing the same work every summer is beneficial if it emphasizes something you are passion-

**March 28, 2008:** Deadline for ordering AP Exams. Students must decide by this date whether to sign up for the AP Examinations in May.

**March 30, 2008:** National College Fair in Charlotte, NC. Students interested in attending this college fair should contact Dr. Tarbox so transportation can be organized. For more information on the fair, go to the NACAC website: <http://www.nacacnet.org/MemberPortal/Events/CollegeFairs/>

**April 7, 2008:** AHA co-hosts a day workshop for high school and college admissions counselors at Guilford College, with nationally known speaker, Lloyd Thacker of the Education Conservancy (<http://www.educationconservancy.org>). An evening event open

to parents and students (with Mr. Thacker, also co-hosted by AHA, Greensboro Day, New Garden Friends School and Guilford College) will be held at 7:30 pm on the campus of Greensboro Day.

**April 10, 2008:** Junior College Meeting Night

**April 13-14, 2008:** Dr. Tarbox visits Boston University, Northeastern, M.I.T., and Harvard.

**April 27-May 1, 2008:** Dr. Tarbox visits, Colgate, Rensselaer, Union, Skidmore, Syracuse and Hamilton Colleges.

**May 4, 2008:** SATs Grimsley High School

**Weeks of May 5th and May 12th:** AP Examination Week

ate about. Michelle Hernandez, a former Assistant Director of Admissions at Dartmouth, wrote in her 2002

book, [Acing the College Application: How to Maximize Your Chances for Admission to the College of](#) [cont. on pg 4](#)

## A RECAP OF WINTER TRIMESTER ACTIVITIES

**Dec 2, 2007:** Several students took a final SAT or SAT IIs in early December.

**Dec. 16, 2007:** Representatives from Nativ and Young Judaea came to talk about post high school programs in Israel.

**December 19, 1007:** Rabbis Fred Guttman and Andy Koren from Temple Emanuel came over to AHA to talk to students about incorporating thought and research on Jewish Life at college, and its importance to them, into the college search application process.

**Nov- Jan.** The Senior class submitted over 240 applications to 133 colleges and universities across the country. The average number of

applications per student was between 7 and 8.

**January 10, 2008:** Juniors met with Dr. Tarbox to do the first SAT registration. Subsequent ones can be done on line, once the student has a College Board account showing that they are Sunday test takers.

Juniors have begun to meet with Dr. Tarbox one-on-one to begin individual discussions about college.

**February 7, 2008:** Josh Blumenthal, Executive Director of North Carolina—Chapel Hill Hillel came to AHA to meet students and talk about Hillel and searching for colleges that meet students' needs.

**February 13, 2008:** Dr. Tarbox emailed each parent of a junior, information on how to log into NAVIANCE, the web-based college search and application software

used at AHA. Parents who would like help logging on, or who have questions, are invited to call Dr. Tarbox.

**February 3,10, 17 & 24, 2008:** 22 Seniors signed up to do the SAT Preparation class at AHA, with Ms. Bowers and Ms. Culclasure, and will complete this preparation just in time for the March 2nd SATs (which happen to fall on PARENTS' WEEKEND!)



Pictured Above: Josh Blumenthal, Executive Director, NC Hillel

## NEWS AND NOTES

### Jewish Education Loan Fund

Parents of seniors from Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Florida and Georgia may want to contact the Jewish Education Loan Fund about assistance in paying for college. JELF provides interest free loans to families who qualify. For more information go to: [www.jelf.org](http://www.jelf.org)

### Parents BRAG SHEET

Parents of all Juniors are asked to complete the PARENT BRAG SHEET. Information you provide on this form is helpful when writing teacher and college counselor letters of recommendation, and in helping the College Counseling Office find colleges that meet the student's needs and interests. The Parent Brag Sheet (Continued on Page 6)

## What Should I Do This Summer? (Continued from Page 2)

Your Choice, "Although admissions personnel don't like to admit it, they do harbor a prejudice against privileged students who (as they perceive it) have had many things simply handed to them on a silver platter....Whether consciously or unconsciously, admissions officers have higher expectations for students who have not had to struggle to get where they are now..." (p.24). Therefore, try to do some things with your summer that reflects your ability to give of yourself,

and that reflects a commitment to a good work ethic. Ninth grade is NOT too early to begin doing work (paid or volunteer) at least part time.

The second type of activity that may be helpful when applying to colleges, is commitment to academic pursuits, particularly more long term programs (4 to 8 weeks) than short (one week) programs. However, this has to be something that you are INTERESTED IN DOING, not something you are forced to do. Colleges will look for patterns of in-

terest in your reported activities. They will quickly be able to decipher between a program you chose to do because it reflects your actual interests, versus one you were forced to do because it might look good on a college application.

The College Counseling Office at AHA begins to receive announcements about various summer programs in the spring. Please stop by to look at some of these. If you are interested in a particular college, it may be beneficial to go to their web site, find

the Search Engine, and type in "Summer High School Programs." Many colleges offer programs in a variety of disciplines, and of various lengths. Many also offer financial aid for these programs, if cost is a consideration. Apply early.

In short, summers should be spent engaged in activities that reflect your genuine interests and commitments, and that reflect your ability to give something of yourself.

## FOR JUNIORS—A CHECKLIST FOR APPLYING TO COLLEGE

Applying to colleges involves a lot of steps and is often about juggling a lot of details. Having some system of organization will be helpful. You may want to use a spreadsheet, keep a folder, a calendar or use post-its on your computer. Whatever works for YOU is the best system. Below is a simple checklist of the major steps in applying to college. Working closely with the College Counselor (Dr. Tarbox) will be important. Make sure to email to set up appointments to see her (starbox@aha-net.org) throughout the spring and into the fall, for individual guidance and advice.

Naviance:

<http://connection.naviance.com/americanhebrew>

Use your email and personal log-in to get into Naviance. This is a GREAT tool for doing college searches. For AHA students, it is ABSOLUTELY NECESSARY to list the colleges you WILL be applying to in this system, so that your transcripts and other information get sent to your colleges.

The College View Search Service can be found at:

<http://www.collegeview.com/collegesearch/index.jsp>

The College Board Search Service can be found at:

<http://apps.collegeboard.com/search/index.jsp>

The Peterson's College Search Service can be found at:

<http://www.petersons.com/ugchannel/code/searches/srchCrit1.asp?path=ug.fas.college>

### Winter/Spring Junior Year

- \_\_\_\_\_ Begin doing some on-line college searches ( in Naviance and using the other links above) and look at college guides (e.g. FISKE Guide to Colleges, Steven Antonoff's "The College Finder," Rugg's Recommendations on the Colleges). Talk to parents, your counselor, and friends but ultimately THINK about where YOU want to be for four years. Where will you be happy?
- \_\_\_\_\_ Work hard in your classes. Your GPA (grade point average) needs to be as high as possible by the end of your junior year. Your transcript through the end of 11<sup>th</sup> grade will be the 1<sup>st</sup> grades your colleges see. (Also working hard in your classes will make your teachers happy. You want them happy when you are asking them to write your letters of recommendation in the fall.)
- \_\_\_\_\_ SAT Test Prep – do some practice tests/practice sections (SAT Booklet)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Spring SAT Junior Year
- \_\_\_\_\_ Spring SAT II Junior Year?
- \_\_\_\_\_ Activity Sheet/Resume
- \_\_\_\_\_ Review SAT Scores with Counselor
- \_\_\_\_\_ Plan Senior Class Schedule with Counselor
- \_\_\_\_\_ Plan Productive Summer Activities
- \_\_\_\_\_ Create Preliminary College List

### Spring/Summer Junior Year

- \_\_\_\_\_ Visit Colleges in the Spring or Early Summer
- \_\_\_\_\_ Finalize Summer (Work, Volunteer, etc.)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Set Up Common Application Account (7/1/08) (<http://www.commonapp.org>)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Finalize Your College List (Early Action? Early Decision? Regular Decision?), Notify your counselor
- \_\_\_\_\_ Begin working on College Essays

### Fall – Senior Year

- \_\_\_\_\_ Do another SAT or ACT or both Senior Year (Fall)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Ask Teachers for Letter of Recommendation Letters (Early Fall)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Apply to Colleges Fall into Early Winter ("Safety" schools—Academic or Financial, "Likely" schools, "Reach" schools)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Request that your counselor send transcripts to your schools.
- \_\_\_\_\_ College Board Profile Form for Institutional Financial Aid [www.collegeboard.com](http://www.collegeboard.com)
- \_\_\_\_\_ FAFSA (Fed. Application for Aid) [www.fafsa.ed.gov](http://www.fafsa.ed.gov) AFTER January 1, 2009

## Book Recommendations

The bookstores are packed with various college guides and the internet has a multitude of resources, recommendations and lists. Some good, basic advice is to use multiple sources in finding colleges that are a good "fit". Here are a few books that may be useful to have on hand as you navigate the college search and application process:

**The Fiske Guide to Colleges** (Edward Fiske). An updated volume comes out every year. 2008 is the most recent edition.

**Real College Essays That Work** (Edward Fiske and Bruce Hammond). An excellent book (and the favorite of Dr. Tarbox) on the COLLEGE ESSAY. It leaves you with the feeling that, "Hey, I can do THAT." Even more fun—six of the college essays presented in the book were written by AHA students from the Class of 2005 and were used in their college applications. (And for those who buy the book, you will find these essays on pages 55, 61, 151, 214, 232 and 244).

**Rugg's Recommendations on the Colleges** (Frederick Rugg). If you want information on colleges with specific majors, divided into those that are the Most Selective, Very Selective and Selective), try this book.

**Cool Colleges for the Hyper-Intelligent, Self-Directed, Late Blooming and Just Plain Different** (Donald Asher). This

book is packed with lots of information, not just about specific colleges, but book and web site recommendations, college rankings, thinking about the whole college process—a fun read.

**Campus Interviews and College Visits** (Zola Schneider) - the name pretty much says it all. A good book to have when you are getting ready to go on college visits or do college interviews.

**College Unranked: Ending the College Admissions Frenzy** (Lloyd Thacker) Keep this book by your bedside and read some in it every night as you go through the college search process. It will help keep you sane! AHA will be co-hosting a college workshop and an evening with Lloyd Thacker on April 7th. (See SPRING TRIMESTER EVENTS on page 3).



## News and Notes (Cont from Page 4)

can be found on the AHA web site, in the COLLEGE COUNSELING classroom page, under NOTES, or in NAVIANCE. Please download this form to your computer, complete it, and email it back to Dr. Tarbox at the email address below.

### NAVIANCE

Parents of all juniors were

emailed information on NAVIANCE in February. Naviance is the college search and application software used at AHA. Individual log in codes were sent to you in the email by Dr. Tarbox. The NAVIANCE web site is: [www.connection.naviance.com/americanhebrew](http://www.connection.naviance.com/americanhebrew)  
If you have forgotten your password or need help in

logging in to this system, please email Dr. Tarbox.

### PHOTOS OF COLLEGES

If you go on college visits and take some really nice photos, send them (electronically) to Dr. Tarbox with the name of the college or university. I will use them in future newsletters, and make them available on the

College Counseling Classroom website. Thanks!

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me:

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