

## COLLEGE RECOMMENDATION LETTERS

In the college admission process, it is natural for students to focus the majority of their attention on the actual application, their test scores, essays, and their grades. Letters of recommendation, however, play an important role in the college application process. Letters of recommendation, like personal statements or essays, allow the student to personalize his/her application and allow the college or university to see a side of them that might not be apparent from an application or transcript.

A few hints on securing the best possible recommendation:

- Ask the person that is going to write you a recommendation well in advance of when the recommendation needs to be submitted; this will help ensure that letters of recommendation will be given the time and attention they deserve.
- Ask teacher who knows you well academically; colleges want to hear from teachers who can offer specific statements about you, not statements that could apply to any number of students.
- If there is a specific recommendation form that the college requires, provide the teacher writing the recommendation with this form. If there is no form, provide the teacher writing the letter of recommendation with any information that the college articulates that they want the recommender to address.
- Provide relevant information about yourself and your qualifications.
- Include an addressed, stamped envelope for each school to which you are applying.
- On the application form, waive your right to view recommendation letters; waiving your right will make the letters of recommendation carry more weight.
- Politely follow up with the teacher/counselor you asked to write the recommendation prior to the deadline to submit letters to see if they need any additional information for their letter.
- Thank, preferably in writing, the teacher/counselor that wrote the recommendation for you.
- Let the recommender know when you have received admission decisions; if they knew you well enough to write a recommendation, they will be interested.

