

JUNIORS – OCTOBER NEWSLETTER

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Welcome to a new school year! My name is Julie Sitko and I am the College and Career Counselor. This is the time to start thinking about life after high school. My role is to advise and support students and families in the college search and to help identify “best fit” colleges and universities, and to assist students in realizing their post-secondary goals. I will send you this newsletter monthly and it will keep you on track for post-secondary planning.

Here are some things to think about as we go through your child’s junior year:

FALL - Post-Secondary Timeline for juniors

- Begin the college and career exploration process with Naviance
- Register for the SAT and/or ACT beginning in the winter (February/March)
- Register to attend college visits at Moon
- If your child is thinking of testing – do test prep

COLLEGE FAIRS

During the first week of October, there are college fairs all over Allegheny County.

Monday, October 7

North Pittsburgh College Fair

LaRoche University

6-8 PM

Tuesday, October 8

South Pittsburgh College Fair

Bethel Park High School

Wednesday, October 9

West Pittsburgh College Fair

Robert Morris University

6-8 PM

UMPC Complex

For the West Pittsburgh fair, please register for a barcode at www.StriveFair.com. Show your barcode to colleges who will scan it to send you more information about their schools. The day after the fair, students will receive a report with information about each college with whom you scanned.

College fairs are a great opportunity to explore options, gather information, ask questions, get a feel for campus culture, learn about scholarship opportunities, and compare options. They could also be an opportunity for overwhelmed or unsure students to start thinking about what type of post-secondary education is best for them. The schools will be arranged alphabetically and the best way to approach the college fair is just to wander around, gathering information and asking basis questions like:

How many students are at your school?

What are your most unique majors?

Why do students like your school?

What is the campus culture like?

HBCU (Historically Black Colleges and Universities) College Fair

Thursday, October 17, 2024

PNC Park

Over 40 HBCU’s will be there to talk with students and answer questions about the schools. Juniors and seniors are invited to attend. This fair is during the school day and transportation will be provided. Permission slips are in the Counseling Office and are due on October 10.

Networking Event with HBCUS: Students can engage with recruiters from Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs), corporate executives, industry professionals, and prominent leaders. This event aims to cultivate relationships that guide, mentor, and support students as they navigate their educational and career aspirations. A keynote speaker will give the welcome address (to be announced) and offer optional professional headshots for students. A selection of heavy hors d'oeuvres will be available.

Hosted by the

The Center that Cares invites is inviting your family to attend the Citywide High School Network Event hosted by on October 17, 2024.

The event will occur at the Jeron X. Grayson Community Center, 1852 Enoch Street, Pittsburgh, PA 15219

5:30 pm - 7:30 pm

Register here: https://www.eventbrite.com/e/cares-connects-elevate-your-future-citywide-high-school-networking-event-tickets-1003976449587?utm_experiment=test_share_listing&aff=ebdsshios

College programs in Pittsburgh:

University of Chicago in Pittsburgh

October 8

6 PM

Winchester Thurston School

Davis Center

4951 Centre Avenue

Pittsburgh, 15213

Register here: <https://prospects.uchicago.edu/register/?id=76b43e13-1a2e-43e9-8849-9d93308262b7>

U.S. Military Academy Service Event

Thursday, October 10, 2024

Robert Morris University

UPMC Events Center

5:45 PM – 8:30 PM

Representatives for the United States Military Academy at West Point, U.S. Naval Academy, U.S. Air Force Academy, U.S. Coast Guard Academy, and the U.S. Merchant Marine Academy will be hosting a **Military Service Academy Night** for students interested in attending one of our nation's Service Academies. As students begin to consider and work towards the possibility of attending an academy, this event is intended to assist in their overall preparedness.

ASVAB:

The ASVAB is a multiple-aptitude battery that measures developed abilities and helps predict future academic and occupational success in the military. It is also an excellent assessment for general career guidance. It is administered annually to more than one million military applicants, high school, and post-secondary students. The test will be administered on Wednesday, November 13. Students can register [here](#). The test will also be administered in March 2025.

FINANCIAL AID AWARENESS

PHEAA Virtual Financial Aid Night

Tuesday, October 1, 2024

6:30 PM

Join a representative from PHEAA (the Pennsylvania Higher Education Assistance Agency) for a virtual Financial Aid Night from the comfort of your home. This presentation will provide an early understanding of the financial decisions students need to make concerning higher education. Participants will have the opportunity to enter questions in the Q & A section at any time, as well as at the end of the presentation. Registration information will be available closer to the event. Join the meeting here: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86201251344>

Scholarships:

All scholarships that come through our office are listed in Naviance. To find the scholarships, log in to your Naviance account, go to Colleges>Scholarships and money>Scholarship list. The scholarships we get in the counseling center are

listed on the 'Scholarship list' page. That site is updated regularly, so be sure to check back regularly as new scholarships are posted. Your child should be checking this site regularly. My favorite scholarship search sites are: www.fastweb.com, www.goingmerry.com, and www.pittsburghfoundation.org/scholarship_search#hs. The last site is local (Pittsburgh) scholarships. You do have to search through the scholarships, but there is a lot of money available to students.

College Representatives Visiting Moon Area High School:

Colleges come to Moon to talk to students about their schools. This is a good opportunity to get general information about schools, but also a great opportunity to meet the admission counselors. Often, the counselors who do these visits are also the same people who will read your child's college application and can be a first line resource for all questions about that school.

All visits are listed on the Naviance homepage, under "What's New." Students sign up for visits in Naviance. Registration will close one hour prior to the visit. All visits are also on the announcements. Most visits are in person, but a few are virtual. To register for a visit, your child will go to the main page of their Naviance account, go to the of visits, under "What's New," click on more info beside the name of the school and on the next page, "register me." Once registered students will stop by the Counseling Center to get a pass to attend the visit.

This list will change and additional schools will be added. The most current list is in Naviance.

<u>College</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Time</u>
<u>Westminster College</u>	Tue October 1, 2024	11:03 AM
<u>Pennsylvania Western University</u>	Tue October 1, 2024	11:55 AM
<u>Villanova University</u>	Wed October 2, 2024	11:20 AM
<u>American University</u>	Wed October 2, 2024	1:30 PM
<u>Carnegie Mellon University</u>	Thu October 3, 2024	8:27 AM
<u>Community College of Allegheny County</u>	Thu October 3, 2024	9:19 AM
<u>Ohio State University-Main Campus</u>	Fri October 4, 2024	9:19 AM
<u>Robert Morris University</u>	Fri October 4, 2024	11:03 AM
<u>Wake Forest University</u>	Mon October 7, 2024	8:27 AM
<u>University of Florida</u>	Mon October 7, 2024	9:19 AM
<u>Worcester Polytechnic Institute</u>	Tue October 8, 2024	8:27 AM
<u>College of Charleston</u>	Tue October 8, 2024	1:23 PM
<u>Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute</u>	Wed October 9, 2024	9:44 AM
<u>The College of Wooster</u>	Wed October 9, 2024	1:30 PM
<u>Towson University</u>	Thu October 10, 2024	9:19 AM
<u>Franklin and Marshall College</u>	Thu October 10, 2024	1:23 PM
<u>Lycoming College</u>	Fri October 11, 2024	10:11 AM
<u>University of Miami</u>	Fri October 11, 2024	11:03 AM
<u>Youngstown State University</u>	Tue October 15, 2024	8:27 AM
<u>Vanderbilt University</u>	Tue October 15, 2024	11:55 AM
<u>Boston University</u>	Wed October 16, 2024	8:56 AM
<u>Case Western Reserve University</u>	Fri October 18, 2024	10:11 AM
<u>Juniata College</u>	Mon October 21, 2024	8:27 AM
<u>Marietta College</u>	Mon October 21, 2024	1:23 PM
<u>Slippery Rock University of Pennsylvania</u>	Tue October 22, 2024	8:27 AM
<u>New Jersey Institute of Technology</u>	Tue October 22, 2024	10:11 AM
<u>Pennsylvania College of Technology</u>	Wed October 23, 2024	8:56 AM
<u>John Carroll University</u>	Wed October 23, 2024	12:08 PM
<u>Washington & Jefferson College</u>	Thu October 24, 2024	9:19 AM
<u>Saint Vincent College</u>	Thu October 24, 2024	1:23 PM
<u>Thiel College</u>	Mon October 28, 2024	8:27 AM
<u>Gannon University</u>	Mon October 28, 2024	11:55 AM
<u>Heidelberg University</u>	Tue October 29, 2024	10:11 AM
<u>La Roche University</u>	Tue October 29, 2024	1:23 PM
<u>Virginia Commonwealth University</u>	Thu October 31, 2024	8:27 AM

Visiting schools:

If you have a chance to visit schools, here what you should think about when you're on campus:

- Talk to people in the department of anticipated study. If your child is totally undecided, talk to the schools about what they do to help pick a major. Colleges have robust career centers and advising programs which help students pick a major, find internships and eventually jobs and graduate schools.
- Ask what is the four-year graduation rate? Colleges report a six-year graduation rate, due to financial aid. Ask about the four year rate-- schools should try to get students in and out in four years -- make sure the school is going to help your child make the best use of their time and get the classes needed to get out in time.
- Ask what is the retention rate for returning sophomores? This number can tell you a lot about what schools are doing to make students happy and keep them enrolled. If a number is low, ask why students are leaving -- what's going on? If the number is high, it's safe to assume students are generally happy and the college is doing a good job of educating students and keeping them happy.
- College is not just about getting a degree. It's about so much more. Is your child going to be challenged at each school? Are they going to have to put in more effort than they ever have? That's a good thing!
- Learn the middle 50% SAT/ACT scores and GPA of admitted students at the schools that interest you. This can serve as a guide to schools that will be a good academic fit for you. Also -- remember if board scores are lower than the middle 50%, but the GPA fits in the middle 50%, in most cases, students do not need to submit test scores, if they could potentially hurt an application.

ACT and SAT testing:

If your child wants to test, go to the testing websites for information about testing and open test sites. **(SAT: www.collegeboard.org and ACT: www.act.org)**. A schedule of tests dates is in the class of 2026 Teams (under Post-Secondary Planning, then files). The same list is also on the High School Counseling Center webpage. For the graduating class of 2026, many colleges in the United States are test optional for both admission and scholarships. Before deciding if your child wants to test, check with the schools they are interested in and determine if they need to test. When students apply without test scores, schools are often examining the transcript much closer. For example, if your child is interested in studying business, colleges will look closely at the math classes they took and the grades earned in those math classes.

- Students on free/reduced lunch are eligible for a fee waiver. Have your child see their school counselor or Ms. Sitko
- Every college accepts either the SAT or ACT. There is no preference.
- When registering for the ACT, I do not recommend taking the writing portion of the exam. I do not think it will be necessary for admission.
- Check out this site to see if schools your child is interested in have determined their testing policies <https://www.fairtest.org/university/optional>.

ACT/SAT Prep:

Students taking ACT and SAT tests should do some sort of preparation prior to taking the tests. There are many resources available for test prep. All students have FREE access to Khan Academy -- an online program that partners with College Board (owners of the SAT) to provide test prep to students. <https://www.khanacademy.org/sat>. [ACT also has online test prep here. These are both fantastic resources.](#)
-[Eaton Prep](#) offers SAT prep classes at the Mt. Lebanon Recreation Center

NCAA:

If your child is an athlete considering playing sports at a division I or II school, make sure to visit the NCAA Eligibility Center website www.eligibilitycenter.org. Student athletes need to submit an official high school transcript (requested through Naviance) and official test scores, if they are available. These scores must be sent directly from ACT or College Board. NCAA will not accept test scores from the high school transcript. *This registration does not apply to students attending division III or NAIA schools.*

Emails from Post-Secondary Schools:

If you have not yet, you will be getting inundated with emails from colleges. I have a few suggestions on how you can manage the emails.

1. Create an email address just for post-secondary planning. That way, all of the emails you get from colleges won't flood your regular inbox.
2. You can create a folder in your email and filter emails from the colleges you think you want to look at later. You can also create a folder of schools that you are interested in, so you don't miss any important messages from them.
3. Check this email account once a week or every few days. Delete messages you're not interested in. You're going to be overwhelmed with information from colleges and managing the emails is necessary, so you don't miss anything important.

If you are looking for good college resources, here are two of my favorites:

Georgia Tech Admission Blog has a lot of great information not specific about Georgia Tech, but about the college search and selection process in general. The blog is insightful, educational, and humorous.

<https://pwp.gatech.edu/admission-blog/>

The College Essay Guy – another great website for assistance in writing college essays, along with general information about the college search/selection process. He is witty and has awesome advice on essays. He charges a fee to review essays, but he also has a lot of free information on his website. <https://www.collegeessayguy.com/>

POST-SECONDARY PROGRAMS

[Pennsylvania Governor's School for the Sciences at Carnegie Mellon University](#) is now accepting applications from talented high school juniors for the summer 2025 program. PGSS is an intensive, five-week summer residential program that emphasizes cooperative learning and hands-on laboratory research for high school juniors pursuing careers in science and mathematics. The goal of the program is to encourage Pennsylvania's youth to pursue careers in STEM-related fields. Application deadline is January 31, 2025.

Pittsburgh Teen FBI Academy:

The 2024 Pittsburgh FBI Teen Academy is open to high school juniors and seniors how have any interest in the FBI – not just criminal justice. Due to the vast workforce in the FBI, what they do and how a relationship with the FBI can help their school is encouraged to apply.