

SOPHOMORES – FEBRUARY NEWSLETTER

Julie Sitko, College and Career Counselor
jsitko@moonarea.net
412-264-9440, ext. 2038

Hello from the Counseling Center at Moon Area High School. My name is Julie Sitko and I am the College and Career Counselor. 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. This monthly newsletter will keep you on track for post-secondary planning. Please reach out to me with any questions.

Going Digital - Everything You Need to Know About the Digital SAT and Digital ACT

Monday, February 10

6:30 PM

ONLINE

Registration: Please register by 6PM on Monday, February 10 via the link below:

[CLICK HERE TO REGISTER FOR THE WEBINAR](#)

Please join Goldstein Test Prep founder Mike Goldstein to discuss and make sense of the recent changes in admissions testing. Topics will include: • All things digital SAT, including the shorter format, adaptive testing, logistics of taking the test, and what we know from the first cycle of digital testing • How adaptive scoring will mean different tests for different students • The new format of the combined reading/writing sections with one paragraph per question • The College Board's Bluebook App and the digital test taking tools created to assist students • Major changes coming to the ACT this spring including the option for digital and paper testing and an optional science section • The continued evolution of test optional admissions policies and how to determine where to send test scores • Decisions by schools such as Yale, Dartmouth, the University of Texas, Purdue, and others to require test scores of all applicants and what it means for admissions rates, average scores, and diversity goals.

The program will include an extensive Q&A session in which participants can type questions and have them answered in real time during the presentation. Feel free to email any questions in advance to mike.goldstein@goldsteintestprep.com.

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.

Summer Programs:

[PA School for Excellence in Agricultural Studies at Penn State](#), [University of Pittsburgh Health Careers Scholars Academy](#), [Iacocca Global Entrepreneurship Intensive at Lehigh University](#): These are excellent enrichment

opportunities for high achieving current sophomores and juniors. Click on the name of the program for more information. Application and information can be found on individual program websites. All applications are due in mid-February. But don't wait, turn them in ASAP!

[Pennsylvania Free Enterprise Week \(PFEW\)](#) is a one-of-a-kind summer program that offers in-coming high school juniors and seniors a unique and challenging opportunity to see what it is like to run their own business. Participants will make up an "imaginary" management team where they will learn first-hand about the Free Enterprise System. Their task - turn their failing company into a financial success. They will develop their own marketing strategies, design a website and, make all the decisions that are demanded of real-life company executives. This weeklong program is at Lycoming

College, in Williamsport and students have the option to choose between four different weeks. PFEW is FREE, although there is a \$295 non-refundable registration fee.

[Carnegie Mellon](#) is offering several in-person Summer Pre-College Programs in architecture, art, computational biology, design, drama, music, gaming, and game design, and writing and culture. They also offer the following programs at no-cost; computer science, summer academy for math and science, and an artificial intelligence program called AI4ALL.

[Duke University](#) offers summer academic opportunities for students. Rising seniors are invited to take classes with Duke Professors, where you can earn college credit. Students also have an option to take personal enrichment courses, with a global perspective, through the Summer Academy.

[Hillman Academy](#) is a summer research opportunity for rising juniors and seniors through UPMC. Participants will perform an authentic cancer research project and receive mentorship from university faculty and trainees. Applications are due mid February.

[The Ice-T Project](#) is an initiative of The Citizen Science Lab, Black/African-American High School Youth will learn the computational and experimental techniques required to examine the physiology, biochemistry, and voltage potential of microbial fuel cells (MFC), a living battery made powered by bacteria. Once participants learn the basics they will then build and create their own device powered by these living batteries. More information will be shared on the website as it becomes available.

The [Readiness Institute Summer Program through Penn State University](#) is a six-week paid experience for rising high school seniors that helps them become community and future ready. Participants will have the opportunity to establish relationships and rituals, participate in essential skill workshops, complete projects that address real-world problems, and create personalized road maps for future success. After the program concludes, participants will have continued access to support including mentorship, additional learning experiences, and peer networking. Each participant will receive a stipend and a laptop to use while enrolled in the program. Transportation will be provided as needed. Applications due March 31, 2025.

[The West Point Summer Leader Experience \(SLE\)](#) provides rising high school seniors with a week-long immersion into the academic, military and social life of a cadet. At SLE you'll explore West Point from all angles, including the high-tech facilities, team building athletic activities, and realistic military training. You will get a taste of Cadet life throughout the program, which is led by current West Point cadets. Application opens February 15.

[Magee-Womens Research Institute \(MWRI\) 2025 Summer Internship Program for High School Students.](#) This program provides current high school juniors and seniors with the opportunity to participate in basic science or clinical research projects with the goal of interesting students in biomedical research as a potential career. During the 4-week program (160 total hours) each student will have the opportunity to work on their own research project under the guidance of an investigator and their staff at MWRI or Magee-Womens Hospital. In addition, students will attend informal Lunch & Learn sessions, during which investigators will discuss biomedical science as a career from their personal perspectives and journeys in the field. At the end of the program, students present their research findings via a PowerPoint presentation to other participants as well as to the MWRI faculty and staff at the annual High School Internship Presentation Day. **Deadline is February 7.**

[The Wildlife Leadership Academy](#) enriches Pennsylvania teens and empowers them to become certified conservation ambassadors through a five-day residential summer field school program. Program costs \$600 for the week, and scholarships are available.

Eisenman Materials Camp <https://www.asmfoundation.org/students/materials-camps/eisenman/>
Highly motivated inquisitive learners with math and science aptitude. Camp utilizing hands on learning principles and applied math and science. Apply here: Application deadline March 31, 2025. Program July 13-18, 2025 at ASM International Headquarters (20 miles east of Cleveland). Accommodations are included.

[Summer Inspirit AI program at OLSH](#): Students will learn the fundamental concepts of AI and gain a deeper understanding of how AI is used to build ChatGPT and generative AI, predict stock market trends, power self-driving cars, recognize and create art, help first responders, and more. Students will learn to program AI using Python, discuss ethics and bias within AI, and complete a group project applying AI to a discipline like healthcare, astronomy, and finance, among others. No prior computer science experience is required to participate, and advanced cohorts are available. Program runs Monday - Friday from June 16-June 27 from 9-12:30. Cost is \$1400.

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/>