

SENIORS – APRIL NEWSLETTER

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

Here are some things to think about as you go through your child's senior year:

SPRING - Post-Secondary Timeline for seniors

- College applications should be completed and submitted. Have your children check their portal on the school's websites, to ensure their applications are complete.
- A copy of your child's most recent transcript (including first semester grades) was uploaded into the Portfolio section of Skyward. I encourage you to look over the transcript and save a copy for your records. If there are any questions or concerns about the transcript, please reach out to your child's school counselor.
- A final transcript will be posted to Skyward after graduation.
- Transcripts were updated with grades at the end of the first semester for seniors. Credits are earned when a class is complete. The GPA will only update after the completion of a class, either a semester or full year course.
- Colleges will be hosting accepted student programs. Attend those for the schools your child is interested in. You'll get additional information about your desired program of studies. If you can get on the college campuses, this is a great opportunity to see the schools before your child makes a decision.
- Determine if your schools require any additional financial aid forms and complete those as well as the FAFSA.
- Students should receive all college decisions by mid-March to early April and will also be getting financial aid award letters. Be sure to look at financial aid awards prior to picking a college. This is huge investment – do your homework, do your research, and make an informed decision. If your child has specific questions a financial aid award, contact the financial aid offices at the colleges. If you need general help understanding your child's financial aid award letter, I'm happy to look at it with them. Be sure you and your child understand what is a loan, a scholarship, a grant, and how much money they'll be paying out of pocket.
- College is all about fit. What fits what you're looking for in academics? Social life? Distance from home? Affordability?
- It's a requirement for male students, when they reach the age of 18, register for the Selective Service. More information can be found here: <http://www.sss.gov>
- Traditionally, May 1 has been the date to commit to a college. Some schools have extended that date for students. It's the student's responsibility to know the date of their deposit deadline. If your child's schools are holding to that May 1 date, you can ask them for an extension, due to financial aid. Most colleges should grant an extension. If the college will not give an extension due to financial aid, they are not putting students first, and that's a red flag (to me at least).
- When a student decides what school they'll be attending, a final transcript will need to be sent to that school, after graduation. I'll let the students know, in May how we do that. Nothing needs to be done now.

Wear Your Future Day:

Wednesday, April 30 Wear Your Future Day at Moon Area High School!

Let's celebrate the seniors!

Seniors – what are you planning on doing next year? Come dressed in appropriate clothing identifying what you'll be doing after graduation and we'll be taking a group picture during the activity period. If you're going to college or entering the military, wear a t-shirt from that school/branch. If you're going into the workforce, wear something appropriate to your profession. If you don't have clothing, you can make a small (and appropriate) sign.

FINANCIAL AID:

THE FAFSA is up and running! **Before you can actually work on the FAFSA, both the student and a parent need to create a FSA ID.** The FSA ID is the username/password you will use to log into the FAFSA. This is also your legal

signature. You will use the same FSA ID each year and if as a parent, you have other dependents in college, your FSA ID is the same for all dependents. To create the FSA ID, you will need your social security number, email address or a phone number. Once you create the FSA ID, it will take a few days for you to be able to access the FAFSA.

<https://studentaid.gov/fsa-id/create-account/launch>

To create your StudentAid.gov account, visit www.studentaid.gov/fsa-id. We recommend completing this as soon as possible! For additional guidance, please visit: <https://studentaid.gov/resources/prepare-for-college/creating-your-account>

When students are creating an FSA ID, they should NOT use their Moon email address. They should use a personal email as this will be the credentials they use throughout college and they will not have access to their Moon email account after they graduate.

You can also complete a Net Price Calculator – found on the financial aid page of every college in the US. This online tool will give families and idea of the cost of education – it is not exact, but an estimate.

Here are two good resources for paying for college and understanding financial aid:

www.mysmartborrowing.com

www.collegecosts.ed.gov

And here are some good websites for scholarship searches:

www.goingmerry.com

www.scholarships.com

www.fastweb.com

www.scholarshipamerica.org

www.finaid.org

www.thepittsburghfoundation.org

Transcripts for Scholarships: Most transcripts for scholarships can be unofficial transcripts. Check with the organization granting the scholarship. You can find your unofficial transcript in the portfolio section of Skyward (transcripts in Skyward will be updated with semester grades about a week after reports are distributed). If you checked with the organization offering a scholarship and they absolutely require an official transcript, contact Ms. Monyak at mmonyak@moonarea.net.

Scholarships:

All scholarships that come through our office are listed in Naviance. To find the scholarships, log in to your Naviance account, go to the colleges>scholarships and money>Scholarship Search. The scholarships we get in the counseling center are listed on the 'scholarship search' page. That site is updated regularly, so be sure to check back regularly as new scholarships are posted. You should be checking this site regularly.

[The Pittsburgh Metropolitan Area Hispanic Chamber of Commerce Foundation](#) is proud to offer students who are Hispanic/Latino or of Hispanic/Latino descent scholarships. Deadline is April 30.

[The Hermine Solt Student Scholarship](#) which is a \$500 scholarship for a Pennsylvania High School senior who is pursuing higher education in a business-related field (office technology, accounting, secretarial, business education (including business education teaching), business management, etc.). Complete details including criteria, guidelines, and scholarship application can be found at PAEOP's website.

Check Your Email and your college portals!

Colleges communicate with you through email or through the online admissions portal that was created when you applied for admission. You have to check your email and your portals. If you don't, you might be missing out on important information from the colleges, regarding your admission status or scholarships.

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. If students haven't had an opportunity to test, they can still gain eligibility without test scores. More information can be found [here](#). *This registration does not apply to students attending division III or NAIA schools.*

Financial Aid Programs:

PHEEAA (Pennsylvania Higher Education Assistance Agency) is offering various virtual statewide webinars that are open to any student/family here: <https://www.pheaa.org/virtual/index.shtml>. A few of these webinars are listed below. Register for these webinars at <https://www.pheaa.org/virtual/index.shtml>. All workshops take place from 6 – 7 p.m.

Summer Opportunities:

Youth Garden Internship

North Hills Community Outreach is seeking two youth Garden Interns to help grow produce for low-income families and learn more about vegetable gardening. Duties include:

- Working under the Garden Coordinator to help maintain the garden through field preparations, planting, cultivation, harvesting and packing crops to be distributed at NHCO's three food pantries
- Assist volunteers as needed
- Record amount of food grown and distributed to food pantries
- Participate in the Youth Garden Summit at the end of the season

Site Location: 119 Davis Ave, Bellevue, PA 15202

Hours and Timeline:

- Position will begin June 2025 and go through August 2025 during summer break
- 8-10 hours/week average, flexible schedule, Monday-Friday between the hours of 8am and 5pm

Compensation: \$10.30/hour

To Apply: Interested applicants should submit a cover letter and resume to Kate Robson at kerobson@NHCO.org. Applications must be submitted no later than May 1, 2025.

Education and Support Series:

The Moon Area High School Transition team is offering the following programs for our students and families. All meetings start at 6:00 PM and to join them,

CLICK: [Join the meeting now](#)

or SCAN:



Tuesday April 15 at 6pm - CCAC West Hills Center

Jennifer Cowans- Executive Director of West Hills Center

- Overview of what CCAC has to offer, College terminology, Cost of college, how do you pay for college, and highlight skilled trades/apprenticeship program options.

Wednesday May 7 at 6pm - PA CareerLink Pittsburgh

Alexis McCartney- Site Administrator

- PA CareerLink Pittsburgh will provide a general overview of the online and in person career services, resources, and skill building courses available for jobseekers.