🎓 Junior Newsletter | December 2025

Julie Sitko, College and Career Counselor
📧 jsitko@moonarea.net | 📞 412-264-9440, ext. 2038
🗓️ Book an appointment here

Welcome, Juniors and Families!
My name is Julie Sitko, and I'm here to support your journey through post-secondary planning. Whether you're exploring college, careers, the military, or workforce options, this monthly newsletter will keep you on track and informed. Please feel free to reach out any time!

🗓️ Where Should Juniors Be Now?

Here's a general timeline of important tasks for this time of year:

- Begin college and career exploration in Naviance
- PSAT results are available online (see section below)
- Free ACT prep available at: academy.act.org
- Plan to register for the SAT or ACT starting in February/March
- Do test prep if you're thinking about testing
- Visit college websites for upcoming programming & virtual events
- Review your child's transcript (uploaded to Skyward Portfolio). Questions? Contact your school counselor.

🏫 Post-Secondary Planning: Let's Get Started!

This is a key time for juniors to reflect on what they want to do after high school. Whether it's college, military, trade school, or entering the workforce—let's start building a plan.
Coming Up:

- I was in junior English classes before Thanksgiving break, to introduce post-secondary planning.
- Starting December 3, I'll meet individually with each junior. You are invited to attend the meeting—schedule here to pick a time that works for your child. Meetings can include parents via phone or Teams. When you schedule a meeting, your child will be with me in my office and you'll be virtual, on Teams. When you schedule the appointment, you'll receive a confirmation email with a link to join the meeting. You will also get an email the day before the meeting as a reminder and another link to join the meeting. You do not need a TEAMS account to join the meeting.

🎓 NACAC National College Fair – January 27-28, 2026

Location: David L. Lawrence Convention Center

- **Field Trip for Juniors:** Wed, Jan. 29 (Permission forms available starting Jan. 7)
- **Evening Session for Families:** Tues, Jan. 27, 6–8:30 PM
  🔗 Registration available in December

💻 Upcoming Virtual Program: College Counseling Series – Spring 2026

All programs are virtual evening events and will be recorded and posted to the Moon Area Counseling Center website.

Everything You Need to Know About the Digital SAT & ACT

🗓️ Wednesday, January 21 | 🕕 6:30 PM | 💻 Virtual

🔗 *Register by 6 PM on Feb. 10*

Register here

Presented by Mike Goldstein, founder of Goldstein Test Prep. Topics include:

- Updated data, scoring information, and strategies for the digital SAT and it's adaptive testing formal
- Adaptive testing and scoring
- Bluebook app and digital testing tools
- Updates to the ACT, including digital options, and the optional Science section
- Understanding today's test-optional landscape
- New format of the combined reading/writing sections with one paragraph per question
- 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

Questions can be emailed in advance to *mike.goldstein@goldsteintestprep.com*

Post-Secondary Education Planning Night

🗓️ Wednesday, February 4, 2026| 🕕 6:30 PM | 💻 Virtual

Recommended for Grades 10–11

Join counselors from Moon and Pine-Richland, plus guest speaker **Jennifer Winge**, VP of Enrollment at Allegheny College, to learn the basics of the college search process. Registration info coming soon.

🧠 PSAT Results Are In

Students who tested in October can access scores by:

- Following the text link sent by College Board (if a phone number was provided)
- Logging in or creating a College Board account

Important Tips:

- Use a personal (not school) email for account creation
- Write down login credentials and security question answers—College Board accounts are notoriously hard to recover

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🎒 College Visits: Make the Most of Your Time

When visiting colleges, ask:

- What's the **four-year graduation rate**?
- What's the **sophomore retention rate**?
- How do they support **undecided majors**?
- How do they challenge students academically?

- What are the **middle 50% GPA and SAT/ACT scores** for accepted students?

💉 SAT/ACT Information

- Check test dates and registration at:
  - www.collegeboard.org (SAT)
  - www.act.org (ACT)
- Dates are posted in Teams under **Post-Secondary Planning > Files** and the **HS Counseling webpage**.

Helpful Notes:

- Fee waivers available for students on free/reduced lunch—see Ms. Sitko or your counselor.
- No preference between SAT or ACT.
- Research test-optional policies: FairTest.org

📚 ACT/SAT Test Prep Options

- **Khan Academy** (FREE SAT prep)
- **ACT Academy** (FREE ACT prep)
- **Penn State Beaver** – In-person SAT classes
- **3RPrep** – Virtual & in-person options
- **Goldstein Test Prep** – SAT/ACT tutoring (in-person & virtual)

🎓 Scholarships

Log in to Naviance → Colleges → Scholarships & Money → Scholarship Search for current listings. New scholarships are posted regularly!

Favorite Scholarship Sites:

- Fastweb
- Going Merry
- Pittsburgh Foundation

Notable Scholarships for Juniors:

- **Hamilton Scholars Award** – Leadership, mentoring, and a $500 scholarship (app opens in December)
- **Calvin Coolidge Scholarship** – Full-ride; deadline: Dec. 11, 2024
- **Horatio Alger Scholarship** – For students who have overcome adversity
- **QuestBridge College Prep** – For high-achieving, low-income students

College Affordability Resources:

- My Smart Borrowing
- College Costs

LECOM Visit in January

A representative from **LECOM (Lake Erie College of Osteopathic Medicine)** will be visiting MAHS to share information about their programs in medicine, dentistry, pharmacy, and health sciences. Students interested in healthcare careers are encouraged to stop by, ask questions, and learn more about early acceptance opportunities. Students will also

participate in a soap carving – to teach students about tooth anatomy, and basic carving skills used by dentists.

- **Date: January 13**
- **Time:** 2nd period
- **Location:** Room 112
- All grade levels are welcome -sign up in Naviance under "What's New"

🏅 **NCAA Info**

🏈 Planning to play D1 or D2 college sports?

➡️ Register at www.eligibilitycenter.org

📩 Transcripts sent at year-end

📨 Send test scores directly from **College Board or ACT**

📬 **Managing Emails from Colleges**

You'll be hearing from A LOT of colleges! Here's how to stay organized:

1. Create a **dedicated email** for post-secondary planning
2. Use folders to **organize by interest**
3. **Check weekly** and delete what you don't need

🧠 **Helpful College Planning Resources**

- 🎓 Georgia Tech Admission Blog – smart, funny, insightful
- 📝 College Essay Guy – writing help, free resources, planning tools

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🌼 **Summer Programs – Apply Early!**

Looking for enrichment opportunities next summer? These **prestigious programs** are ideal for current sophomores and juniors. Click on each program below to learn more and apply directly through their websites.

🔹 **Pennsylvania-Based Enrichment Programs**

- **PA School for Excellence in Agricultural Studies** at Penn State
- **Iacocca Global Entrepreneurship Intensive** at Lehigh University
- **Governor's School for the Sciences** at Carnegie Mellon University
- **Governor's School for Global & International Studies** at University of Pittsburgh

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🎄 **Wishing You a Wonderful Holiday Season!**

As we wrap up 2025, I want to thank you for your commitment to your student's future. I look forward to working with you in the new year!