

Junior Newsletter | March 2026

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Welcome!

My name is Julie Sitko, and I'm the College & Career Counselor at Moon Area High School. My role is to support students and families with the college search, career exploration, and post-secondary planning. Each month, this newsletter will share important updates and resources to help juniors stay on track. Please don't hesitate to reach out with questions—I'm here to help!

Winter Post-Secondary Checklist for Juniors

- Begin exploring colleges and careers in Naviance.
 - As a family, discuss plans for after high school—college, military, or workforce
 - If your child plans to test, begin ACT/SAT preparation
 - Register for the SAT or ACT (if testing is appropriate)
 - Begin test preparation if planning to test
 - Participate in college-sponsored programs (see individual college websites)
 - Review your child's transcript in Skyward (Portfolio section). Contact your child's school counselor with concerns
 - Use **Net Price Calculators** on college websites to estimate college costs and affordability
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NACAC National College Fair – Pittsburgh – RESCHEDULED!

 David L. Lawrence Convention Center

 **March 24-25, 2026**

- **School-Day Visit for Juniors:** Wednesday, March 25
 - Students must obtain a permission slip from the Counseling Center
 - Students will leave after homeroom and return for a later lunch
 - Free for all juniors
 - Students with truancy issues or who are not in good academic standing may not attend
- **Evening Session for Families:**
 - ⌚ Tuesday, March 24 | 6:00–8:30 PMParents/guardians and students are encouraged to attend together.

 **Pre-registration required:** <https://www.nacacattend.org/26Pittsburgh>

College Counseling Series – Spring 2026

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

Pathways to Skilled Careers

 Wednesday, March 18, 2026 | ⌚ 6:30 PM |  Virtual

This will be an opportunity to hear from professionals in different industries about in-demand jobs in our region, and the pathways students can take to obtain the education and training needed to pursue those jobs.

You'll hear from panelists from various trade/technical institutions participate. Each panelist will spend time discussing the careers that their institutions are preparing students for, with particular emphasis on those that are the most in-demand. Following the presentations, participants will be able to ask questions and learn more about the schools/programs. Register here:

<https://us06web.zoom.us/meeting/register/48hwpHNWQfCXQyfz35NcYA#/registration>

ASVAB Testing Opportunity

The **ASVAB** assesses strengths and interests and is required for military enlistment. It is also helpful for career exploration.

 **Wednesday, March 4**

 Free for Moon students

 [Register here](#)

****Students who were registered for the cancelled November test have been contacted to take the March test – they do not have to sign up again.****

SAT/ACT Information

- Check test dates and registration at:
 - www.collegeboard.org (SAT)
 - www.act.org (ACT)
- Dates are posted in Class Teams page 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
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ACT/SAT Test Prep Options

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

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

Scholarships for Juniors

Notable Scholarships for Juniors:

- [Hamilton Scholars Award](#) – Leadership, mentoring, and a \$500 scholarship (app opens in December)
- [Horatio Alger Scholarship](#) – For students who have overcome adversity
- [QuestBridge College Prep](#) – For high-achieving, low-income students
- [Cameron Impact Scholarship](#) – Merit-based, full tuition. Requires 3.7 + GPA, service and leadership

Recommended scholarship websites:

- <https://goingmerry.com>
 - www.scholarships.com
 - www.fastweb.com
 - www.scholarshipamerica.org
 - www.finaid.org
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College Visits – What to Ask

- Four-year graduation & retention rates
 - Support for undecided students
 - Middle 50% GPA & test scores of admitted students
 - Academic rigor, internships, and career center opportunities
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NCAA Student-Athletes

If considering Division I or II sports:

- Register at eligibilitycenter.org
 - Submit official transcripts via Naviance
 - Test scores must be sent directly from SAT/ACT.
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Managing College Emails

- Create a separate email account for college communication
 - Use folders to organize by school
 - Check weekly and delete what you don't need
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Favorite College Search Resources

[Georgia Tech Admission Blog](#)

Great advice for students and families, with insights into the college admission process. Bonus: It's funny and easy to read.

[College Essay Guy](#)

Tons of free advice on college essays and applications. There are paid options, but many helpful tools are available at no cost.

Enrichment Opportunities

[CCAC Early College Programs](#)

Students can take select credit and non-credit courses virtually at no cost and receive a stipend. This program is part of CCAC's Early College initiative, funded by the Bank of New York Mellon, and is designed to expand access to college and career readiness opportunities. 📞 724-325-6675 📧 earlycollegeprogram@ccac.edu

Summer Programs for Juniors

These enrichment opportunities are perfect for motivated students ready to explore interests and challenge themselves. Apply early!

- [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
- [Pennsylvania Free Enterprise Week \(PFEW\)](#) – Learn business by running a simulated company.
- [Carnegie Mellon Pre-College](#) – Art, design, drama, gaming, music, STEM.
- [Hillman Academy](#) – Cancer research internships
- [Wildlife Leadership Academy](#) – Five-day residential field school for students interested in conservation leadership. Scholarships available.
- [Ice-T Project \(Citizen Science Lab\)](#)
A hands-on STEM program for Black/African-American high school students focused on microbial fuel cells.

- **[Readiness Institute Summer Program \(Penn State\)](#)**
A six-week paid program for rising seniors focused on leadership, career readiness, and real-world problem solving. Applications due March 31, 2026
 - **[West Point Summer Leader Experience \(SLE\)](#)**
A week-long immersive experience at West Point for rising seniors.
 - **[Eisenman Materials Camp](#)**
A hands-on applied math and science camp for motivated students.
 - **[Freddie Fu Sports Medicine Scholarship Program](#)** – application deadline April 11
 - **[Duke Summer Academy](#), [Eisenman Materials Camp](#)**, and more
 - Lebanon Valley College programs in [Actuarial](#) and [Data Science](#)
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Please reach out anytime with questions or to schedule a meeting. Junior year is a busy but exciting time, and I look forward to working with you!