Junior Focus - Day 1

Session 1: Future Plans





Please put your cell phones and chromebooks away. You will not need them for this presentation.

DOWNERS GROVE SOUTH

Goals/Agenda

DAY 1

1. Explore Post High School Paths
2. College & Career Resources at DGS
3. Important Dates and Activities for ALL Juniors

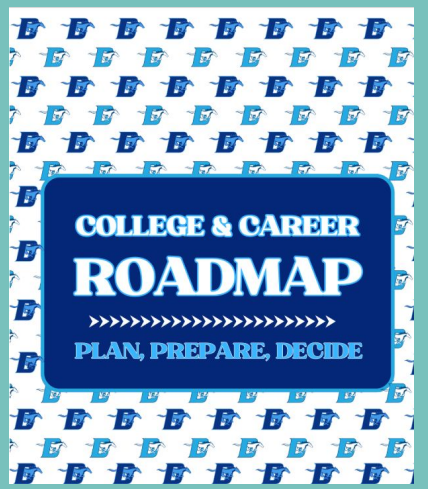


Which Career Path is for you?





What is your plan after High School?
Where do you need to START?



REFLECT

I'm still thinking about my options and what is the best fit for me

RESEARCH

I have an idea but I need to look up more information about it

YOU

EXPERIENCE

I'm working on a plan by taking classes and doing things related to my ideas

It's time to start thinking about... Life after High School!

What is your PATH and how do you start?

COLLEGE or NO COLLEGE?

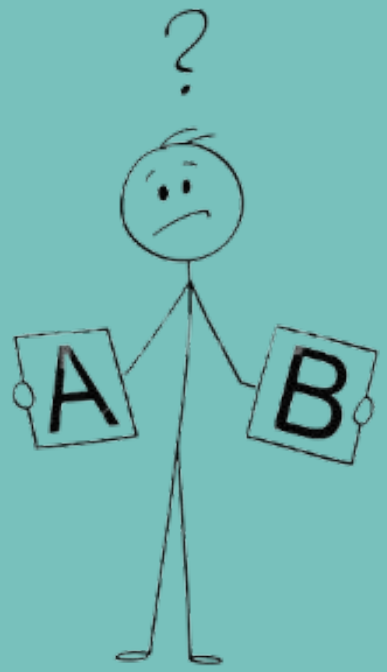


The College Path

4 Year College/University vs Community College

Things to consider...





College of DuPage



Bachelor's Degree

4-Year College or University?

It's 2 way street

YOU consider...

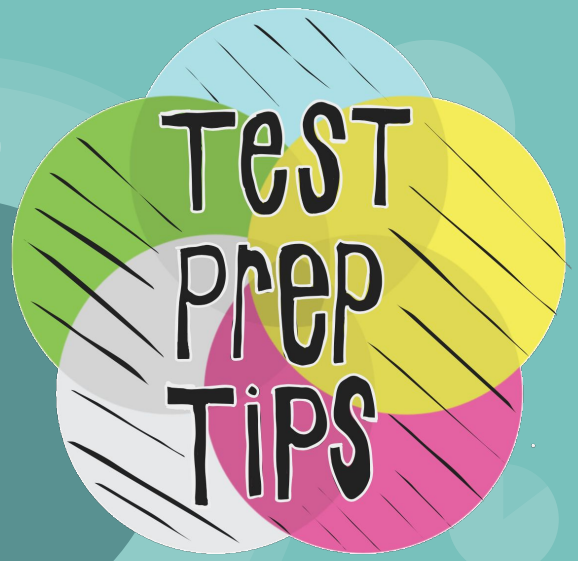
- Location
- Size
- Major/Minor
- Cost/Financial Fit
- Admission Requirements
- Activities, sports
- Religious affiliation
- Reputation



Colleges consider...

- Transcript/GPA
- Test Scores
- Recommendations
- Activities
- Essay
- Interview

Consider Test Prep



ACT FREE Test Prep Online

COD Youth Academy Test Prep

Additional options on DGS website

More Test Dates

SAT National Test Dates

ACT National Test Dates

**Fee waivers for SAT/ACT for those who qualify*

ACT Test Guide: Everything You Need to Know (2024)

Associates Degree

College of DuPage



Associates Degrees vs Certificate Programs

3+1 Programs

Engineering Pathways

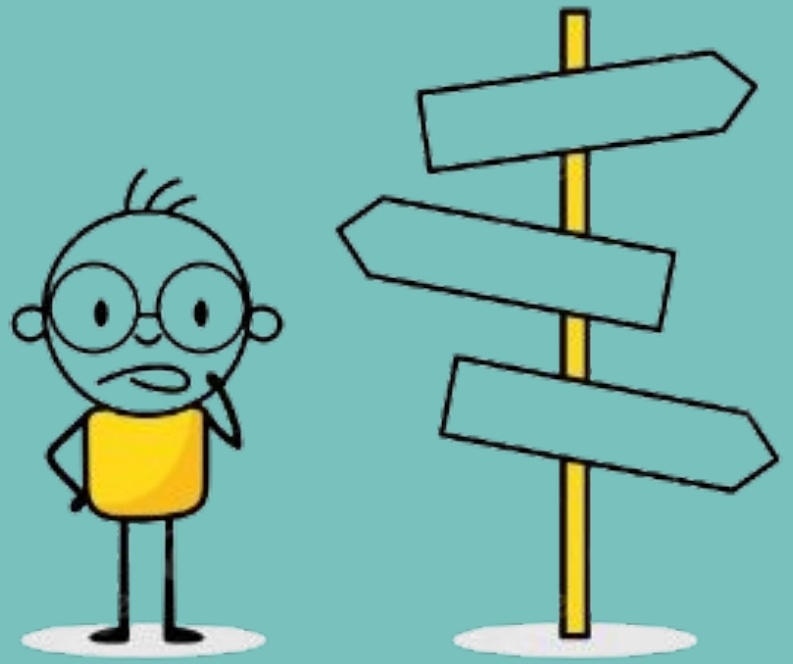
Approximately 30 students accepted each year (competitive)

Must earn a B or higher in all coursework at COD

Schedule a tour and/or view a virtual tour

What if I don’t want college

What are my options?



Non College Options

Apprenticeship Programs

A Guide to Apprenticeship Programs in Northeastern Illinois



CISCO



Gap Year



Enter the workforce

Military

Army

Navy

Air Force

Marines

ROTC

Reserves & National Guard



TECHNOLOGY CENTER OF DUPAGE

TCD Field Trip Thursday, October 22, 2026

Permission Slips are located in College & Career (A104)

Slips are due October 9th, 2026



ASVAB

The ASVAB is a multi-subject test designed to assess your current skill level and forecast how well you might perform in various military, academic, and technical careers.

Find out more by exploring the ASVAB Career Exploration Program.

This program provides tools to help students learn more about career exploration and planning, in both the civilian and military worlds of work. The program is free of charge.

All military branches will be in the building on September 25th during lunch and again in the spring.

ASVAB testing is TBD, but come talk to our reps to find out more!

College & Career Resources

DGS College & Career Center

Who is there and how can they help?



SchooLinks

Career, College and Future Planning Tool

College and Career Center: Who's Who?

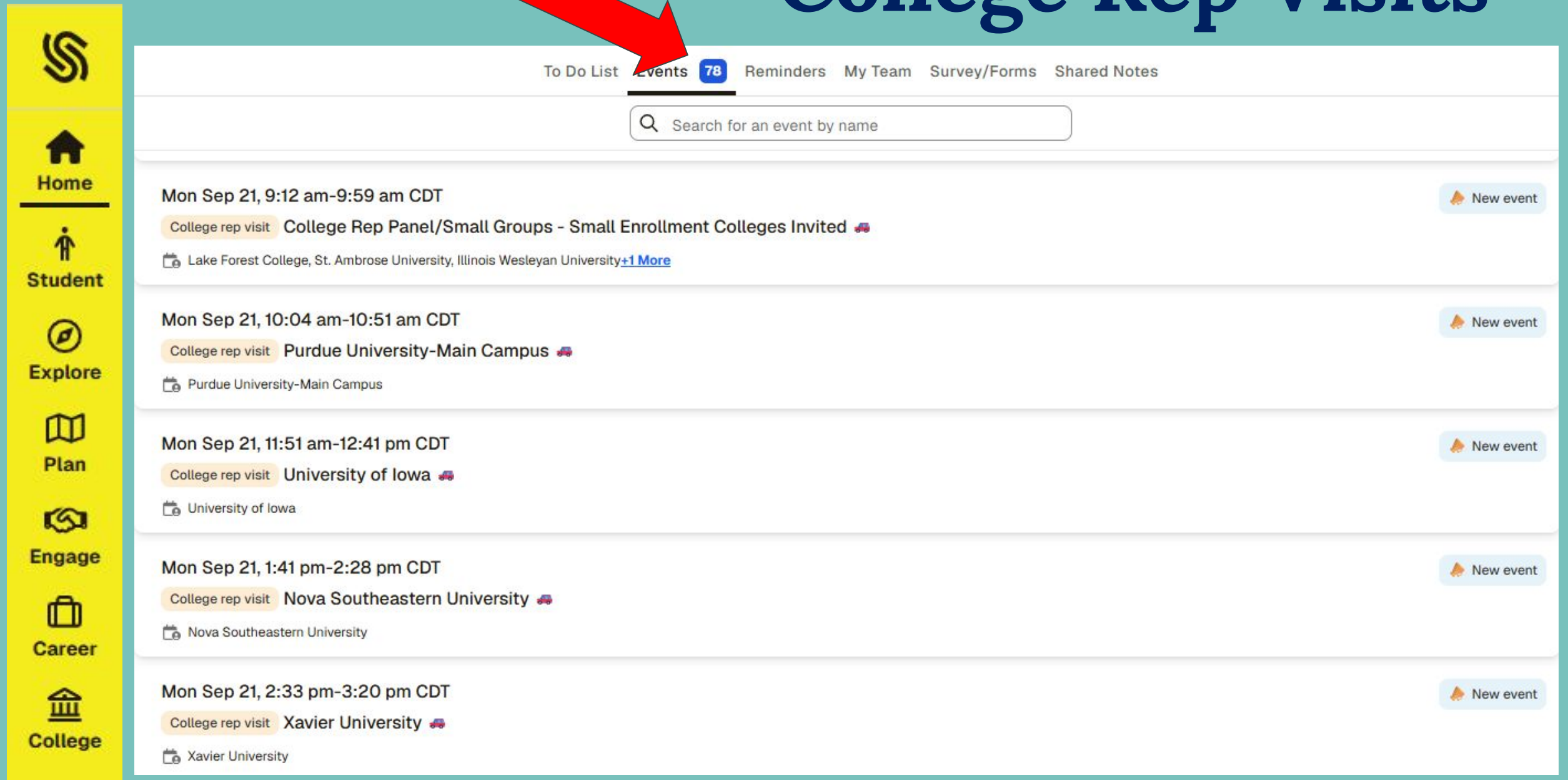


College & Career Counselor
Mr. Mustari
dmustari@csd99.org

College & Career Assistant
Mrs. Witt
jwittvanorny@csd99.org

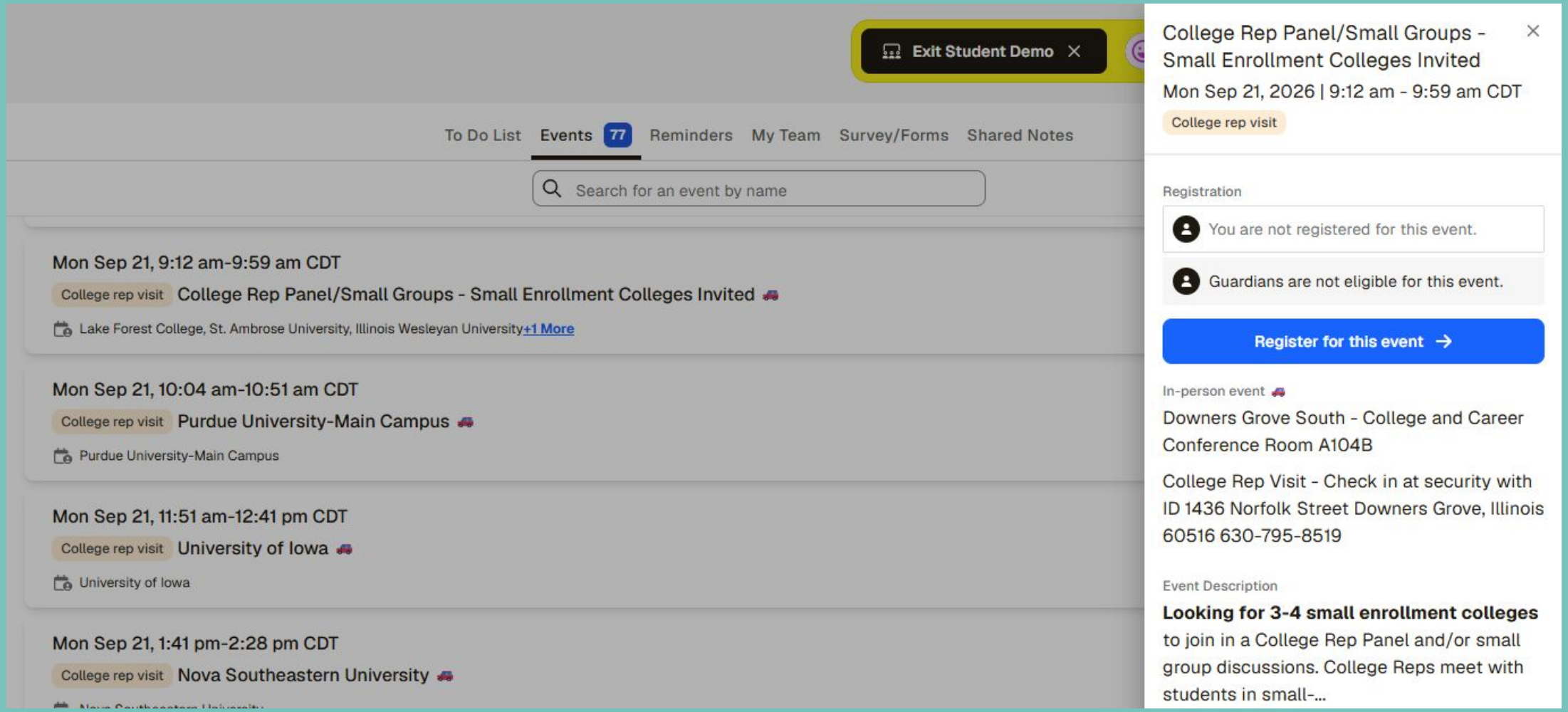
College & Career Counselor
Ms. Pellino
cpellino@csd99.org

College Rep Visits



https://www.csd99.org/dgs/counseling-support/college-representative-visits

College Rep Visits



Financial Aid Readiness for Juniors



The D99 College & Career Centers will be hosting a virtual session called Finding Colleges That Fit the Family Budget. The goal of this session is to share strategies for finding great college options that are affordable.

Finding Colleges That Fit the Family Budget

January 14 @ 7pm

Presenter: DGN Counselor, Greg Stolzer

Illinois Student Assistance Commission (ISAC) partners with our school to support your post-secondary planning.

- **Julian Reyna (Julian.Reyna@illinois.gov)**
  - **Dedicated ISAC Representative assigned to our students**
- **Monthly visits during senior year for one-on-one support**
  - **Open office hours during all lunch periods on Fridays.**
- **Workshops offered**
  - **creating a FSA ID and filling out your Financial Aid Application next fall**

ISAC
Illinois Student Assistance Commission

PSAT/NMSQT Exam



Qualifier for National Merit Program

- Top 1% of test takers in Illinois become finalists and receive scholarships
- Optional
- **Registration closes September 25 at midnight**
- **Exam is Wednesday, October 7th at DGS**
- Register here

Junior Focus- Day 2

Session II: Research & Future Planning

Revisit Career Cluster and personality fit

Start your Research!

School Links

College & Career Roadmap

Goals/Agenda



DAY 2

1. Review Resources to Help Explore your Path
2. Research your Career Cluster
    - SchooLinks
    - College & Career Roadmap

Let's get started!

REFLECT

What do you want to do after High School?

College? No College? Not sure?
Do more Research and/or Experiences



RESEARCH

College & Career Roadmap
&
SchooLinks

EXPERIENCE

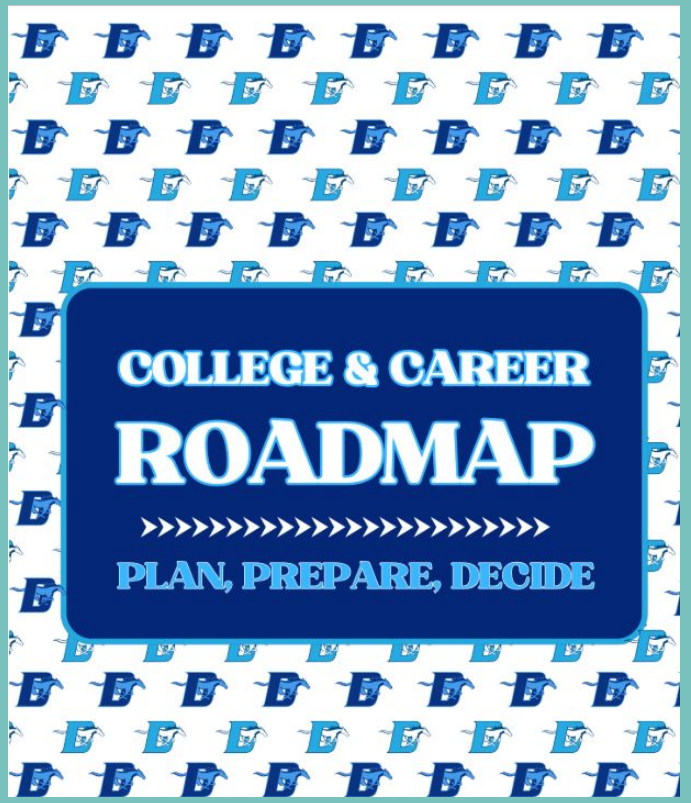
Classes, internships, jobs, speakers

TIMELINE

Planning: research, choosing a path, knowing the next steps…**Juniors Start Now!**

Taking Action: testing, applications, financial planning…**SENIOR YEAR!**

Making a Decision: committing to a post secondary path…**Spring of Sr. Year!**



College & Career Google Classroom

Research & Reflect
SchooLinks & CC Roadmap



SchooLinks

- Click on Activities & Do more Assessments

College and Career Roadmap

- Google Classroom
- College and Career Center Website

Junior Year

RESEARCH

- Talk with your parents/guardians about your interests and goals
- Meet with College Consultant volunteer Ms. Anita on Fridays
- Attend college fairs and college rep visits at DGS
- Student Athlete? Register with NCAA Eligibility Center
- Visit college campuses or do virtual tours on college websites
- Talk with Family about Paying for College (College Net Price Calculators)
- Attend Career Speakers Series (@DGS Spring 2027)
- Research apprenticeship programs
- Explore the College and Career Roadmap
- Learn more about the military branches
- KEEP YOUR GRADES UP!

Important Information to help you Research your Path

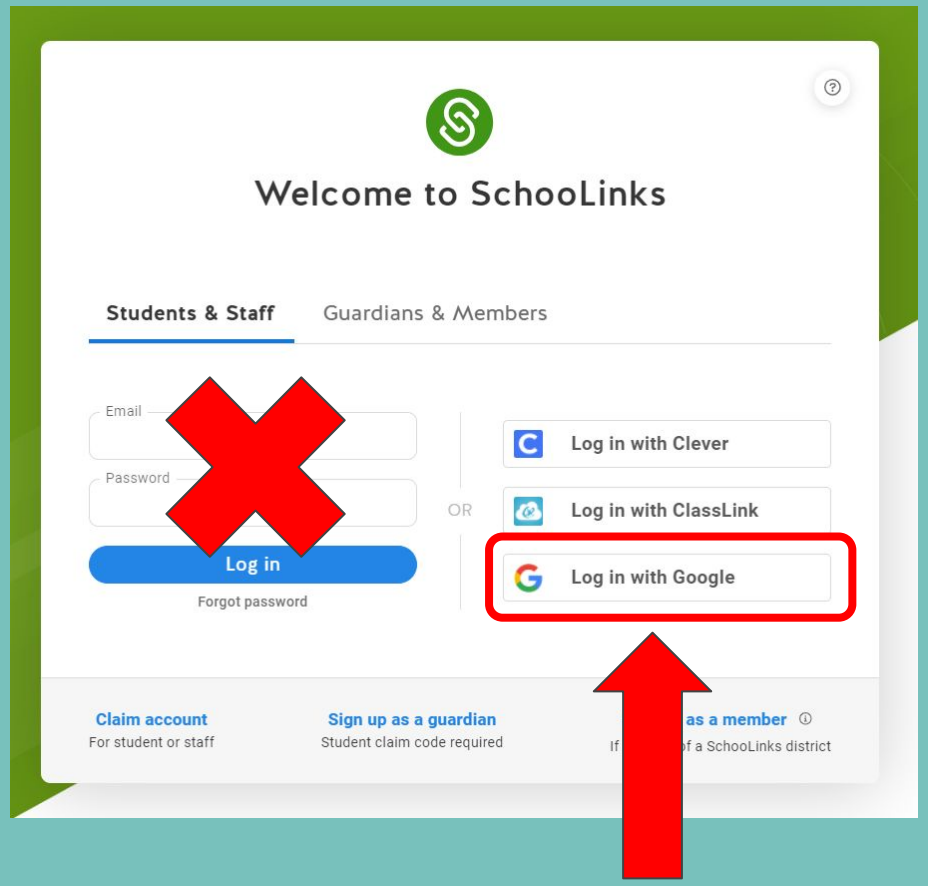
What good is the information if you don't know where to find it?

Explore SchooLinks

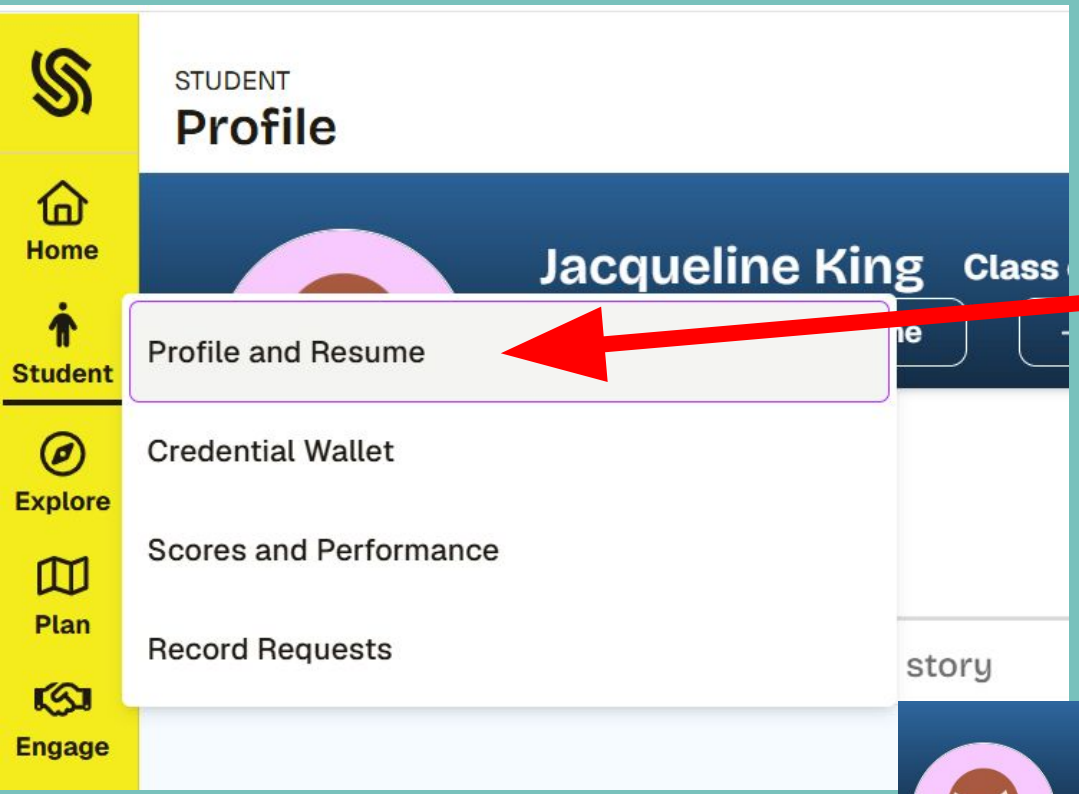
DGS College & Career Website

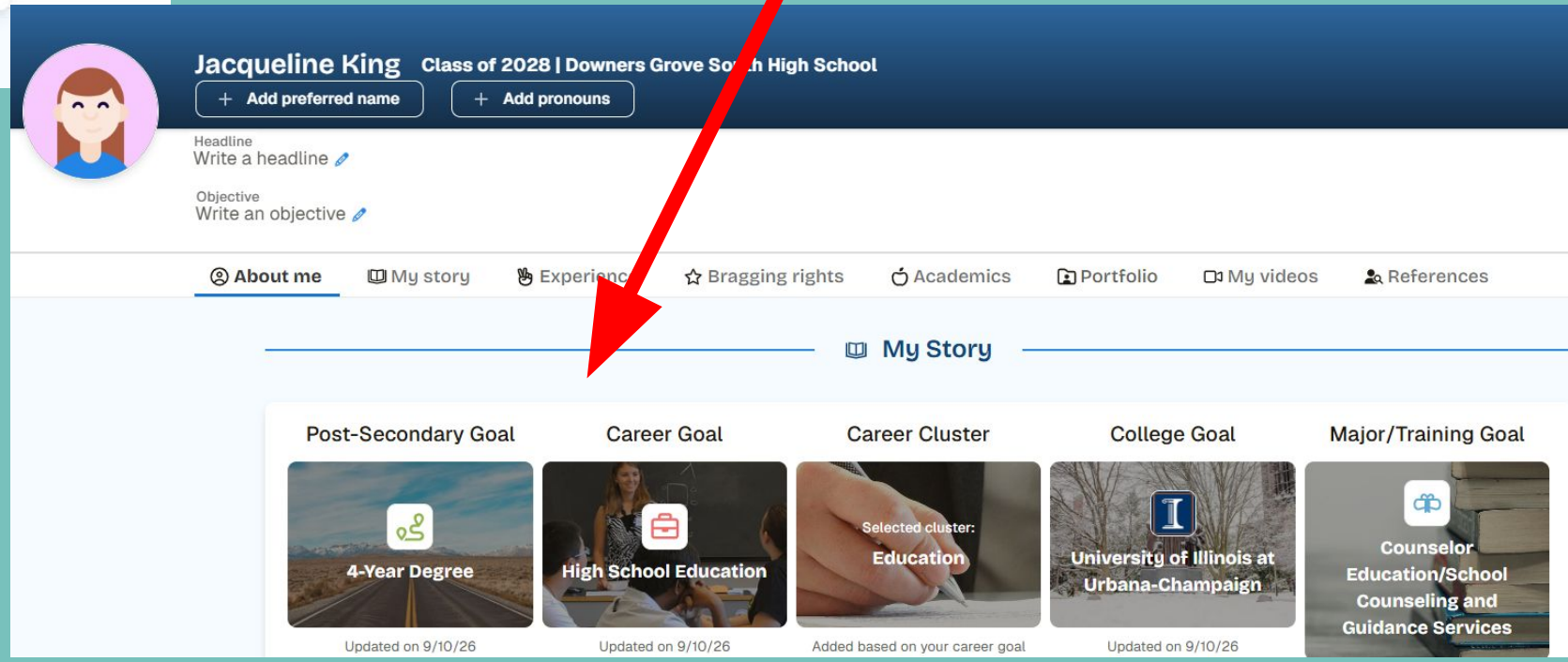


Getting Started with SchooLinks



Check Out Your Student Profile on SchooLinks



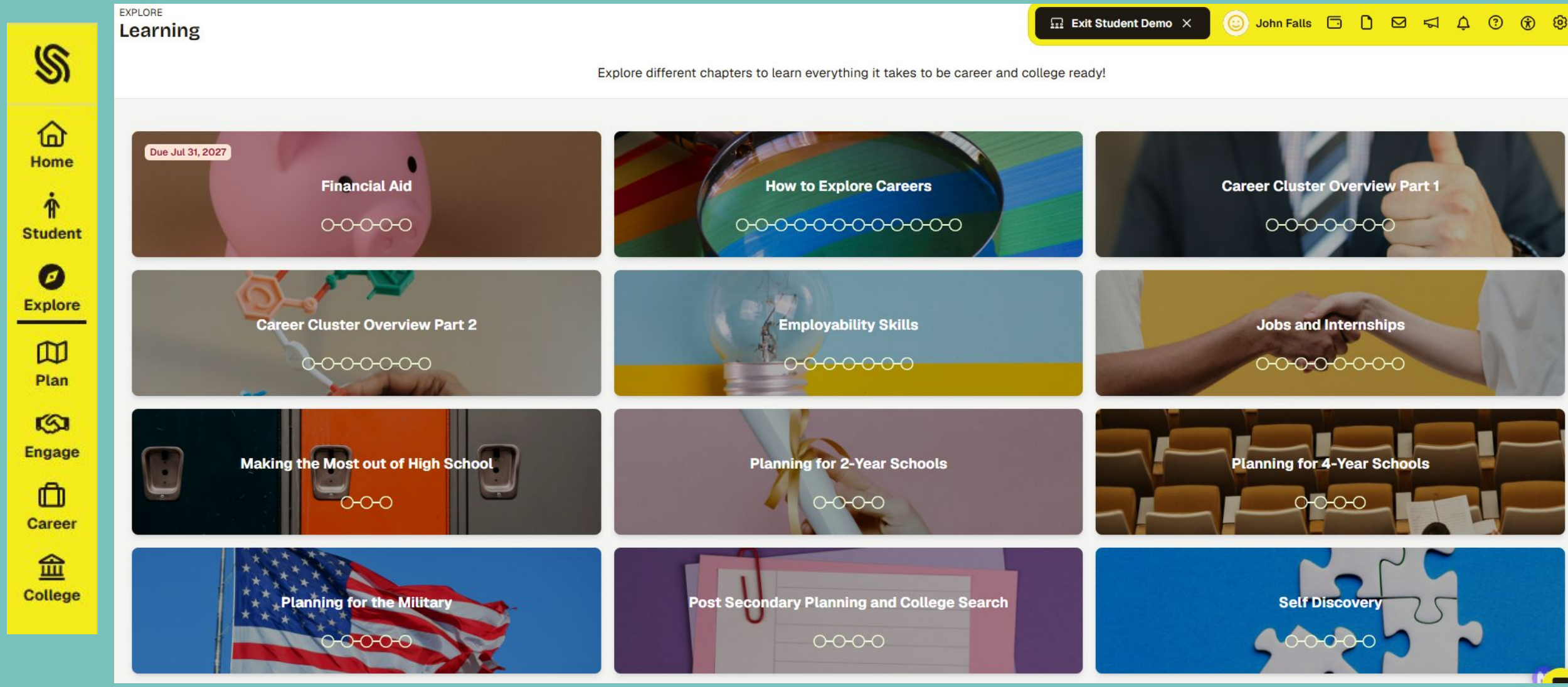


What are your SchooLinks Results?

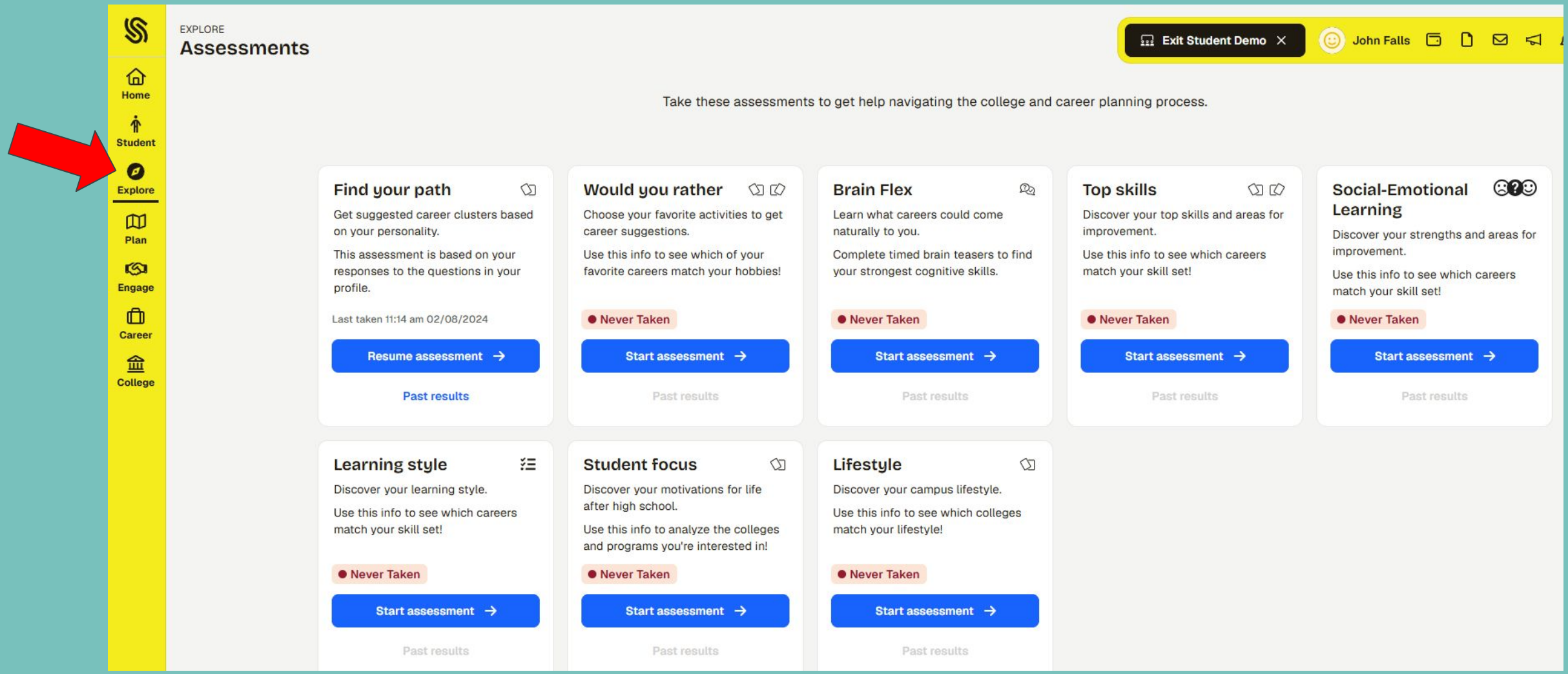
1. What career clusters are highlighted
2. Anyone have a result that surprised them?
3. Which one are you most interested in exploring?
4. Which career cluster do you have no interest in exploring?
5. What Path does the career you want to explore require? College or No College?



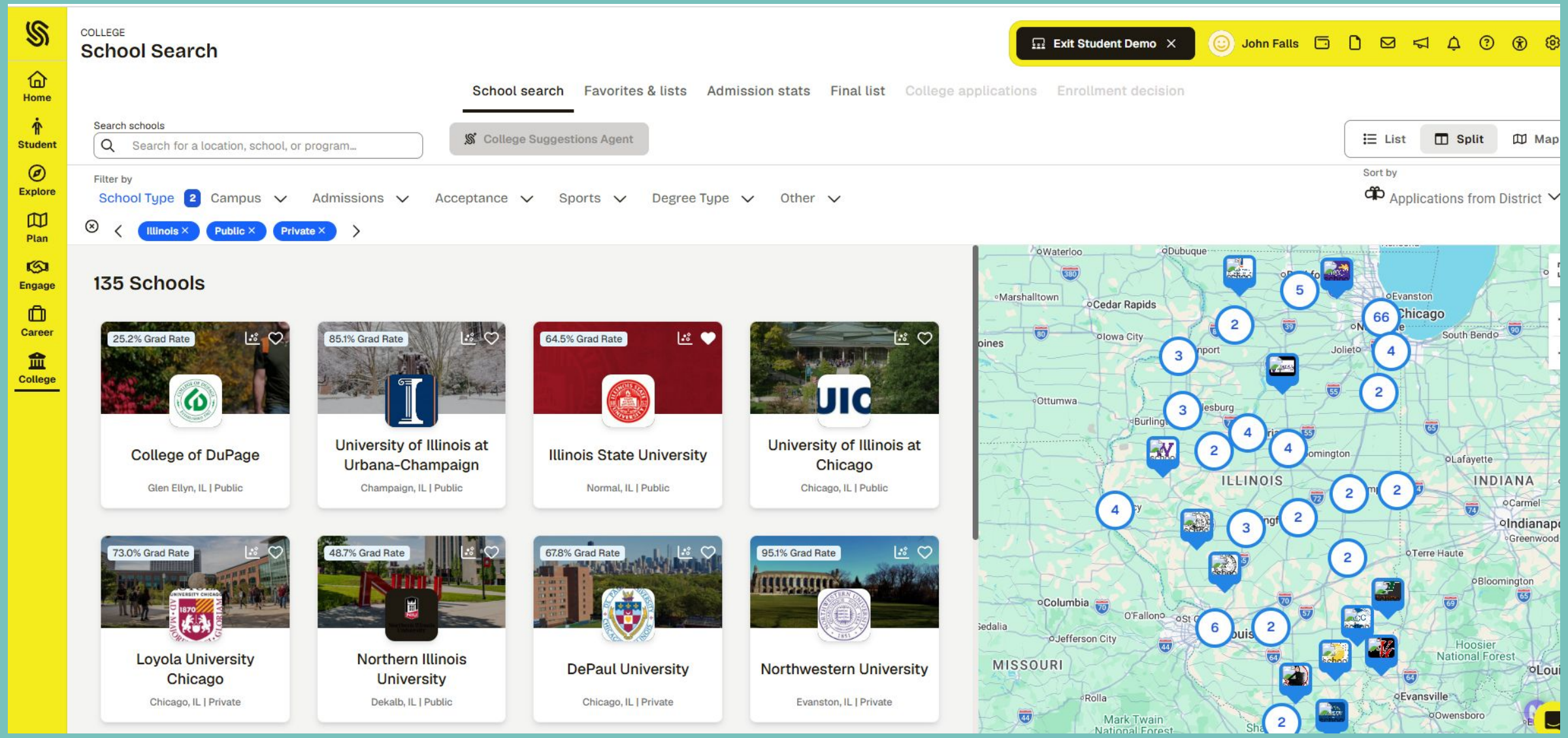
Explore SchooLinks Learning Hub



More Reflection on SchooLinks Activities



College Research



Post Secondary Pathway Actions

College Goal: Use the Schoolinks school search tool and begin favoriting colleges. Next explore events tab for College & Career College Rep Visits on Schoolinks.

College of Dupage Goal: Explore COD Degree Programs via the Degree Programs website

Certifications Goal: Research programs via the certification section of the COD website

Trades Goal: Identify local apprenticeships and processes (*Review local resources in the C&C Roadmap).*

Military Goal: Explore the branches of the Military & Register for the ASVAB test (*Form available in the C&C Roadmap).*

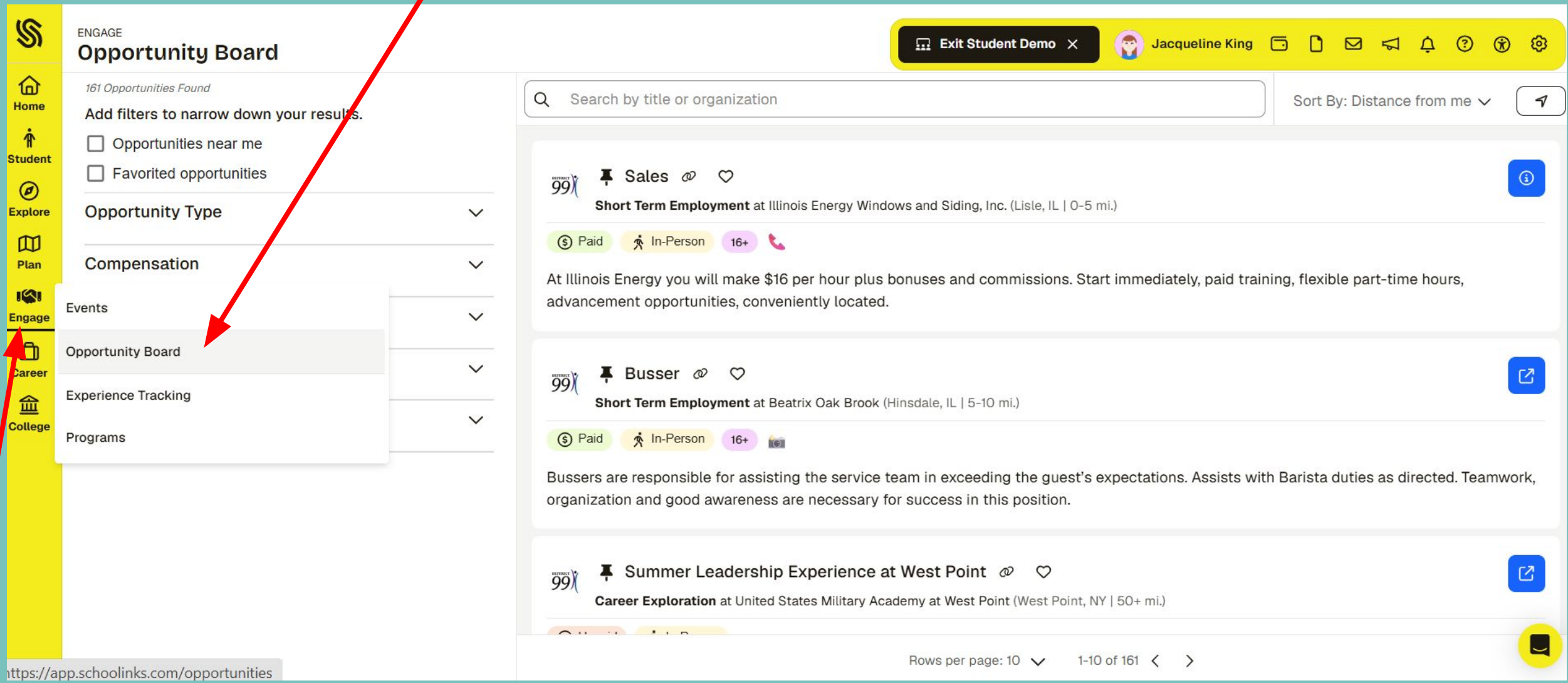
Helpful tip from an Admission Rep

A quick tip from Our Eastern Illinois University Admission Rep

"If you dedicate **just one hour on a Sunday once a month now** to researching colleges, you'd be surprised how prepared you'll be Senior year in just four months."



Looking for a Job? Explore Local Job Opportunities on SchooLinks



College & Career Exploration



Junior Focus Website

Make a COPY and add to your College and Career Folder!



Choosing a Career

Exploring Technical Careers

Researching Universities

Researching College of DuPage

Exploring the Military

Goals/Agenda

DAY 2

1. Resources to Help Explore your Path
    - Upcoming Activities/Dates
2. Research your Career Cluster
    - SchooLinks
    - DGS Website Resources

