

September 2020

Glenda Atkinson (A-Liebert)
Kern Hairston (Long – Z)

Congratulations! You are officially seniors!

None of us imagined that we would be starting the year online or that you would have to tour colleges virtually but here we are. Please take advantage of the virtual opportunities the colleges are offering. Many schools are still documenting demonstrated interest by your contacting them virtually.

We know many of you are already working on college applications based on the number of recommendation requests we have received and the essays you have sent us.. If you have not had a fall conference with your counselor, please schedule one soon. Please update your resumes in SCOIR and register for the virtual college visits as well. Colleges have had to switch to a virtual world as well and are scheduling virtual visits at RCHS. Please check the list in SCOIR and register for any you are interested in.

When asking your teachers for a recommendation, remember that they need to write only one letter as we will use it for multiple applications, AND please give them ample time to write your letter. We recommend at least a three week notice. Many teachers are asked to write for multiple students. Keep in mind that they are doing this in addition to all their other responsibilities. Always remember to follow their guidelines and to always thank them for taking their time to help you.

Please be aware of the deadlines you are trying to meet for an application and get started in advance of the approaching deadline. Again it is important that your counselor knows the deadlines you plan to meet.

Each of you should have received an email through SCOIR from your college counselor. Please read carefully as there is more detailed information in the emails.

COLLEGE INFORMATION

Please check SCOIR for an up to date list of colleges visiting Raleigh Charter. Sign up on SCOIR if you wish to attend a meeting with the college representatives. Please explore some colleges or universities that you may not know. There are wonderful colleges coming to visit so take advantage of the opportunity to learn more about them.

ARTICLES OF INTEREST

TO TEST OR NOT TO TEST - TO SUBMIT OR NOT

This is a question that has come up a lot lately in our conferences and in conversations with colleagues. Below is a statement from the National Association for College Admission Counseling (NACAC), an organization we are members of, on August 27, 2020.

*The COVID-19 pandemic has created uncertainty among students and families about nearly all aspects of the college admission process, including the role of standardized testing. At present nearly 1600 colleges and universities nationwide – 55 percent of all four-year colleges- have waived standardized testing requirements for 2020-21. By going test-optional, institutions are making a definitive statement that they will not need test scores to make admission decisions this year. Despite the change in policies, high school students and their parents are asking, “Does test optional really mean test optional?” The answer, simply is **Yes**.*

We have been assured by admission directors across the country that a student who does not submit a test score will not be disadvantaged in the process. It is your and your family's decision if you choose to submit. Your goal is to present the best application possible whether that includes test scores or not. You can access the score profiles of students who were admitted to the college you are interested in on the college or university admissions page website as well as in SCOIR.

If you indicate on your application, like the Common Application, that you do not want your scores considered, the college should suppress any score that has been previously sent from the testing agency. If you decide at a later date you want to submit your scores, you may enter them through your application portal that comes directly from the college.

Most seniors have an ACT score since it was administered at school in February. For any senior who has not tested previously but still wishes to test, an administration of the SAT is scheduled to be given by RCHS on October 14. Please check the Phoenix News for more information about registering. The test will take place at the Royal Banquet Hall and the registration fee is \$75. Registration is due by **September 9**.

The NCAA Eligibility Center is also waiving the testing policy for this year. More information on the Eligibility Center's COVID-19 response is available at www.ncaa.com/EC_COVID.

"Given the continuing impact of COVID-19, the NCAA membership made this decision with the health and well-being of incoming students top of mind," NCAA Eligibility Center Vice President Felicia Martin said. "We understand the uncertainty in the educational environment and believe these changes will help ensure students have a fair opportunity to meet the initial-eligibility standard."

TIPS FOR COMPLETING THE COMMON APPLICATION

1. Make it easy for the colleges to contact you. Choose an appropriate email address that you will check often. Be sure your email address is professional. Email is most likely the way colleges will communicate with you.
2. Phone number – Home number works but if you don't have a home phone use **your** cell number. But make sure it is **your** cell number, **not** your parents.
3. Test scores. You need to think about if you want to submit scores. If you put the scores on Common App, they will go to each of the schools you are applying to. If you are unsure or do not want to report, leave the testing section blank. If you do report, make sure you are reporting accurate scores. Don't guess. Have your score report in front of you. If colleges allow you to self report, you should to save money. In the testing section you can also report AP scores if you choose. Colleges are not determining credit if you report AP scores in this section. That will come later after you have been admitted.
4. Choose the right decision plan for you., Early Decision, Early Action, Regular Decision, Rolling Admission. Early Decision is only if you know this is the only school in the world for you and financial aid is not a consideration. You are agreeing that if you are admitted, you will withdraw all other applications. Early Action means simply that if you apply by the EA deadline, you will be notified earlier of their decision (usually January). EA deadlines are usually October 15 or November 1. This is usually also the deadline for merit scholarships and honor colleges. Regular Decision is usually the January 1 deadline and you will hear the end of March of the decision. Rolling Admission means your application will be reviewed when it is received and you will be notified. If you apply really early in the process, it may be less selective than if you wait until later in the admissions cycle.
5. Activities List – you have space to list 10 activities. Use brief descriptions; you do not have to use complete sentences. Focus on your role, not the role of the club. Know the number of hours and weeks you spend on that activity.
6. Additional Information – you may or may not need. Keep brief if there is something additional you need to provide. You can use this space to explain a grade dip, etc. Do not repeat your personal

- essay. Make sure it leaves a positive thought. If you don't have anything to add, don't worry about it.
7. Covid question – if you have not been impacted in a particular way, you don't have to put anything here.
 8. Supplemental essays – there is a reason the college is asking these questions. Be sure you are answering the question they are asking. Why you want to go to this college is important. Be thoughtful about your answer. Be sure your tone and voice are consistent throughout the essays.
 9. Optional essays – some really are optional. If you have something to contribute then you may answer it. If you don't, you don't have to.
 10. Proofread. Look for capitalization, number transposition, typos.
 11. Be sure you are presenting a consistent story.
 12. Be sure to **enable preview** so your counselor can view your application.
 13. When you submit, always screenshot the confirmation page for your records.

This information was gathered from numerous webinars we attended throughout the summer.

ESSAY TIPS

- Just be yourself. Your best is your best and that is good enough.
- Colleges can detect the voice of a 17 year old as opposed to a 40 year old.
- Don't hit the same note in each question. However your application should be consistent. If all your essays talk about how much you love biology but you check engineering as your major or area of interest, a question may arise as to what is the real story.
- Be your authentic self. Do not sound like everyone else. Colleges are looking for people with real personalities. Someone who knows you should be able to pick your essay out of a stack of others.
- It is more interesting to read about people outside their best moment sometimes. You do not have to pretend to be perfect. Your most significant accomplishments don't always reach everything about you. Demonstrate growth instead of highlighting only good things.
- You have honest authentic stories to share. Don't lie or embellish.
- The essay is not the place to list everything you have accomplished. There is a section to list your activities on the application.
- Don't complain or blame or sound negative. Use the opportunity to show growth. Don't leave a negative impression.
- This is a different kind of essay from an English class essay. It is okay to be less formal and more conversational. Think of telling a story to your favorite teacher.
- It is okay to talk about yourself. Colleges are looking for insight into who you are and how you think.
- If writing about a trendy topic, make sure it is personal to you or impacted you – uniquely you. Common App has added a Covid 19 question. Make sure you follow the above advice on this topic. What did you learn about yourself that you didn't know before the pandemic? Did you start something new during the quarantine? Did you take on new roles for your family? Help care for someone elderly? Learn a new language? Musical instrument?
- Character seems to be a big buzz word among admissions this year. Does your essay reflect your character beyond your academics?
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This information came from webinars with admissions professionals throughout the summer.

SCHOLARSHIPS

Please be aware of these scholarship search websites that our students have found useful in the past:

www.fastweb.com, www.cfnc.org, and www.scholarshipplus.com/wake.

Many colleges and universities post their own scholarships and grants. This information is generally found at the Admissions or Financial Aid links. Please be aware of the priority application deadlines to be considered for merit scholarships. These are usually in the early November time frame. Some opportunities for scholarships are taken directly from your college application but some do require a separate application. Please be sure you determine if this is the case and if you need anything additional to be sent.

Keep your counselor informed of any scholarships you are applying for, enter them in to the scholarship section in your SCOIR account, and if awarded a scholarship, you must bring a copy of your award letter to your counselor whether you are accepting it or not.

School Nominated Scholarships:

John Montgomery Belk Scholarship

RCCHS may nominate two students for the Belk Scholarship.

“The John Montgomery Belk Scholarship is one of our nation's most prestigious and generous undergraduate scholarships. The program is built around our belief that, as a Belk Scholar, you possess unique talents that should be recognized and nurtured. John Belk amassed a record of leadership and accomplishment at Davidson. Thanks to the generosity of the John M. Belk Educational Foundation, up to eight Belk Scholars are named in each entering class. The Belk Scholarship can provide you comprehensive funding (tuition, fees, room and board) plus study stipends that allow you great flexibility in the on- and off-campus opportunities you choose to explore. Those experiences, paired with our academic programs, deepen your intellect, maturity, and global understanding.”

More information is available at <http://www.davidson.edu/admission-and-financial-aid/john-belk-scholarship>.

North Carolina A&T Cheatham-White Scholarship – This scholarship will provide an outstanding educational experience for students with a broad range of interests, proficiencies in both the arts and sciences, and who demonstrate leadership potential and a strong commitment to service. Each scholarship covers tuition, student fees, housing, meals, textbooks, a laptop computer, supplies, travel and personal expenses, and provides four summers of fully funded enrichment and networking opportunities that may include international travel and study. Interested students should visit <http://www.ncat.edu/academics/honors/cheatham-white/index.html> for complete information on the scholarship and links to nominating forms. Please discuss with your counselor if you wish to be nominated. **Deadline is November 15.**

North Carolina State University Park Scholarship

RCCHS may nominate two students as school nominees. Students who are interested but not nominated are encouraged to self-nominate. Based on our in-house data, candidates had at least a 4.0 unweighted gpa. We will provide the same level of support for the self-nominated students as we do for the nominated students. In fact, self-nominated students have won this scholarship.

The Park Scholarship is a four-year scholarship awarded on the selection criteria of outstanding accomplishments and potential in **scholarship, leadership, service and character**. The application processes for Park Scholarships and NC State undergraduate admissions are separate, so be sure to follow the required steps.

Step 1: Apply for undergraduate admission to NC State by the October 15 deadline using the Common Application.

Step 2: Complete the Park Scholarships application, which is housed in NC State's wolfPAW system, by October 15. To access this, you must either be endorsed by your high school (by October 1) or you must self-endorse at <http://park.ncsu.edu/apply/#selfend>.

The Park Scholarship application requires the names and email addresses of two recommenders, information about advanced coursework completed and two essays. Your honors and activities information will be imported from your Common Application. Additionally the committee will consider your high school transcript, test scores, and your personal essay from the Common Application. More information is available at <http://park.ncsu.edu>.

University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill - Morehead-Cain Scholarship

RCCHS may nominate two students as school nominees. If interested but not nominated, please self-nominate. We provide the same support for school nominated and self-nominated applicants. Self-nominated students have won this scholarship.

The Morehead-Cain Foundation seeks motivated, courageous and inquisitive leaders interested in embracing new and unknown experiences and impacting – positively and profoundly – the people and pursuits that define their lives.

To be eligible for the Morehead-Cain, you must be:

a competitive applicant to the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, on track to graduate in the spring, unmarried and without children. Please note that Morehead-Cain candidates are not permitted to apply to other colleges or universities under a binding Early Decision application plan.

The selection criteria are:

Leadership – Morehead-Cains influence, energize, and inspire others to work together to make an impact. It's more than title held or roles played. For scholars, leadership is about courage and action. They initiate. They get things done.

Moral Force of Character – Compassion, courage, humility, self-awareness, and a sense of purpose- these are the core values of the Morehead-Cain community. Morehead-Cains embrace the fact that they are growing and learning, and are energized by the journey ahead.

Scholarship – Morehead-Cain Scholars live for opportunities to learn. They thrive in an academically rigorous environment, yet are able to contribute to their communities in other ways. They are ready to take full advantage of UNC's academic excellence.

Physical Vigor – Morehead-Cains demonstrate a sustained commitment to fitness and wellness. They value what is gained – collaboration, sportsmanship, discipline, stamina, and persistence – by preparing for and engaging in competitions and performances

These eligibility requirements are the same for all students applying for the Morehead-Cain Scholarship information and application process can be found at www.moreheadcain.org

The deadline to apply is **October 15**.

University of North Carolina at Charlotte - Levine Scholarship

Interested students must receive a nomination from their high school counselor before they can access the application for the Levine Scholars Program. If you are interested, please see your counselor before September 25.

The Levine Scholarship seeks outstanding high school seniors who demonstrate evidence of experience, motivation, and commitment toward the ideals of the Levine Scholars Program.

Requirements include:

Students must be applicants for freshman enrollment at UNC Charlotte in a baccalaureate program for the fall term immediately following their high school graduation. Applicants must be U.S. citizens or permanent residents.

Students must demonstrate a commitment to community service, hold an academic record that reflects a sustained passion for knowledge, and possess a capacity for ethical leadership that elevates fellow students to a higher standard.

While there are no minimum SAT, ACT or grade point averages to apply for the Levine Scholarship, students must excel academically. Successful candidates will likely have a grade point average of 3.8 – 4.0 (unweighted) and score 1900 – 2400 on the three combined sections of the SAT or 29 – 36 on the ACT composite.

Scholarship information and the application can be found at <http://levinescholars.uncc.edu/>

Nominations will be accepted through October 8th. Scholarship applications due by November 8th. For scholarship consideration, admissions application due November 1.

Additional School Nominated Scholarships: Please see your counselor if you wish to be one of our nominees for these:

Boston University Trustee Scholarship – Recognizes students who show outstanding academic and leadership abilities.. Those considered rank in the top of their class and demonstrate exceptional records of service and activity in their schools and communities. Please talk with your counselor if you are interested and email the nomination form to the counselor. You must submit the Common Application by December 1.

Indiana University Wells Scholars Program – We have been asked to nominate two students for this prestigious program. The scholarship awarded on the basis of merit provides tuition, academic fees, and a living expenses stipend for four years of study at Indiana University Bloomington. The program is looking for outstanding students who have shown exceptional academic accomplishment and promise, fine character and leadership, significant involvement in extracurricular

activities, a concern for their communities, and interest in the larger world. Factors that will be considered are GPA as well as the range and depth of academic courses taken; SAT and/or ACT scores; special academic honors and awards; unusual personal qualities as indicated by extracurricular activities, community service, or independent initiatives in any area; and exceptional talent in a specific area. The deadline for nomination is November 1.

Washington University in St. Louis Danforth Scholars Program – Full or partial tuition scholarships are awarded to students who embrace high ideals, whose life choices are guided by personal integrity, selflessness, and commitment to community, and a dedication to leadership and academic excellence. The program wants students who have exhibited a capacity for service and leadership, as well as academic excellence, and who will embrace the challenges of a rigorous academic curriculum. The deadline for applications is January 2.

OTHER SCHOLARSHIPS

Coca Cola Scholars Program - This is an achievement-based scholarship recognizing students for their capacity to lead and serve and their commitment to making a significant impact on their schools and communities. Most Coca-Cola Scholars share a passion for social justice and many have overcome tremendous challenges to pursue their dreams. You may apply at <http://www.coca-colascholarsfoundation.org/apply/>. The deadline is **October 31, 2020**

Georgia Tech Presidential Scholarship – To be considered for the Presidential Scholarship at Georgia Tech you must submit your admission application by **October 15, 2020**

Horatio Alger Scholarship – To be considered, applicants must be a full-time high school senior, exhibit a strong commitment to pursue and complete a bachelor's degree, demonstrate critical financial need (\$55,000 or lower adjusted gross family income is required), be involved in co-curricular and community service activities, display integrity and perseverance in overcoming adversity, maintain a minimum GPA of 2.0 and be a US citizen. For more information visit www.horatioalger.org/scholarships. Students may apply until **October 25, 2020**.

The Thomas Wolfe Scholarship at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill - This scholarship recognizes the exceptional young writer. The scholarship provides full undergraduate support for four years. The Thomas Wolfe Scholarship will receive applications beginning **September 1st**, with the deadline for submissions being **November 15**. Applicants must also submit the UNC application for admission by **October 15**. Complete information on this scholarship, including the application form, is available at <http://englishcomplit.unc.edu/creative/scholarship/tws>. If you have any questions, you may email TWS@unc.edu.