

GET STATED-101

Preparing for the next step

Fall:

- Start developing your resume. The resume should be a list of your accomplishments, extra-curricular activities and work experience. Many colleges require this as part of the admissions process.
- If you have not participated in any clubs or organizations now is the time to start. Consider all clubs/honor societies for which you would be eligible.
- Consider an ACT test prep program. Many free resources are available on line. Basic ACT test prep is available through the after-school program.
- If you have not taken the ACT, plan to do so. All registration is on line, directions on how to register can be found @ <http://www.actstudent.org/regist/>
- It's never too early to volunteer or perform community service. Many scholarships require a community service component.
- Collaborate with a senior. Ask what they are doing, what institutions they are considering and the cost of each institution.
- If you are considering the military as a career, have you asked about the ASVAB?
- Meet with your counselor to discuss any concerns you might have about the process.

January/February:

- Start thinking about what classes you plan to take your senior year. Are you considering dual enrollment?
- If you are taking a career track, have you researched all your options?
- Remember the ACT is offered multiple times a year. According to ACT 57% of people that retest score higher.
- Explore summer opportunities. Does your college of interest offer a summer program for college credit?

- It is never too early to research scholarship opportunities. There are a variety of online tools that allow you to search for at large scholarships such as: fastweb.com, scholarships.com, salliemae.com and unigo.com are but a few.

March/April:

- Start taking a more serious look at colleges and universities. Consider making a file or notebook for the schools that interest you. Look at information such as cost, scholarships available, housing policies, % of students that receive financial aid, admissions policy and campus safety just to name a few.
- Great time of the year to start planning summer visits. Contact the admissions office to ask for information and determine when campus tours are available.
- Do you have volunteer or community work on your resume? If not, summer is a great time to help out.
- Know what your major will be? If so, consider job shadowing or a limited internship just to be sure.
- Start considering running for an office or position of leadership in your clubs or organizations your senior year.

May:

- Start looking at college and university applications. Do you have the information that you need to complete the process.
- Consider who you would like to write letters of recommendation.
- If you are not familiar with FAFSA you will be. One of the most important steps of the process. The following link will soon be on your desk top <https://fafsa.ed.gov/>
- So you don't want to go to school where your parents went. Do you know that many universities offer legacy scholarships? Check out the following link for details <https://www.scholarships.com/financial-aid/college-scholarships/scholarships-by-type/legacy-scholarships/>

Food for Thought

- Most university applications are posted by August. If you are confident in your choices, begin the process. According to *U.S. News and World Report* the average cost of a university application fee is \$38.00.
- All universities set a deadline for application. Dates vary, but most are usually in November or December. This means that the application process should be completed by November or December of the senior year.
- FAFSA should be completed as soon as tax returns are complete during January of the senior year. Be sure that you have been officially accepted before listing a college or university on FAFSA.
- Scholarships have deadlines that vary, some come as early as the summer between your junior and senior year. Check out the following link for information:
<http://careerinfonet.org/scholarshipsearch/ScholarshipCategory.asp?searchtype=category&nodeid=22>
- Portions of this guide reproduced from *nacanet.org*.