

Junior Class College Night College/Career Planning Guide



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Mullica Hill, NJ 08062**

**Guidance Services
Clearview CEEB code 310-868**

CRHS Counseling Department

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CLEARVIEW REGIONAL HIGH SCHOOLS PRE-COLLEGE COUNSELING SERVICES

1. Four years of contact time from 9th through 12th grade:
 - Consult on course of study
 - Advise on educational concerns
 - Monitor social, personal, emotional growth
 - Help with formulation of career goals
2. Coordinate, administer, interpret testing program.
3. College Selection Assistance:
 - College selection software- Naviance
 - Career and major-minor finder resources
 - Library of college catalogs and view books
 - Gloucester County College Fair (October)
 - College recruiting sessions (over 63 scheduled to visit Clearview)
 - Over 70 years of professional experience, travel, personal college contacts within the department
4. Write a letter of recommendation for the counselee at the request of the counselee.
5. Work with teachers in determining the academic level placement of students in various courses.
6. Review individual applications with students if needed.
7. Package student applications, transcripts, and associated materials in a presentable manner. *Please note: **Students are responsible for reporting SAT/ACT scores to colleges.***
8. Troubleshoot concerns from submission of application to final decision.
9. Conduct a college admissions information night for parents sponsored by the Guidance Department.
10. Conduct a financial aid night for parents sponsored by the Guidance Department.
11. Conduct individual and small group pre-college student conferences.
12. Send mid-year grade reports to college upon request.
13. College acceptance record keeping and posting.

PARENT'S ROLE IN THE COLLEGE ADMISSIONS PROCESS

Communicate

One of the most important things that parents can do is encourage their sons and daughters to think through the basic questions. Why do you go to college? What are your most important needs and goals? What kind of college will best serve you? Communicating with an adolescent is not always easy, but look for the moments that present themselves. Being available to talk when your child has a question or wants to express an idea or feeling is one of the most important things you can do.

Set Financial Parameters

Paying for college is the area where parents have veto power. Try to reach an understanding early in the process as to how much each party is expected to pay (before hopes get pinned on a college that may be financially out of reach).

Be Realistic

Don't set your child up for failure by encouraging unrealistic applications. Look honestly at your child's academic record. Then study the admissions profiles of the colleges that show up on your lists. If he or she is not Stanford material, don't swing by Palo Alto on your college tour. Make it your task to be sure that your son or daughter applies to at least two colleges where he or she will definitely be accepted (and be happy to attend.) Then, even the worst-case scenario will still result in a productive college career.

Think Broadly

The United States has the best and most diverse system of higher education anywhere in the world. As we've said many times, there are scores of colleges that would be a good match for every student. You are probably in a better position than your son or daughter to understand this and help discourage fixation on a single "dream" school (that may be highly selective). Some of the best colleges for your child may be ones that neither of you has every heard of.

Let the Student Take Center Stage

In the college search, nothing is worse than a parent who steals the spotlight. Many parents, especially successful ones, are accustomed to manipulating the system to make it work for them. Resist the temptation. The admissions process is the time for teenagers to stand on their own. Parental attempts at "marketing" or influence peddling often do more harm than good.

Don't Live Through Your Child

Many parents subconsciously relive their own hopes and dreams through their children. Some want children to follow in their footsteps; others want them to achieve things that they themselves never could. Still other parents see college admissions as their shot at an A+ in parenting. Having hopes for your children is natural, but try to spare them the burden of expectations. One of the greatest gifts you can give your child is the freedom to follow his or her dreams.

Be Supportive

As the process unfolds, remind your children that they will be accepted at a good school – one where they will make friends, have fun, be challenged, and get the education they deserve. When the decisions come in, redouble your efforts on this score, and if necessary, remind them of the fickle nature of the whole selection process.

*Edward B. Fiske, former education editor of The New York Times and noted author of some of the best selling college guides.

TIMETABLE FOR JUNIORS/SENIORS

PREP FOR COLLEGE CALENDAR

Reprinted from NACAC's PACT Guide

JUNIOR YEAR

Begin college selection process. Attend college fairs, financial aid seminars, general information sessions, etc., to learn as much as you can about the college application process. Make sure you are meeting NCAA requirements if you want to play Division I or II sports in college.

September

- Save samples of your best work for your academic portfolio (all year.)
- Maintain your co-curricular record (all year).

October

- Junior year PSAT scores may qualify a student for the National Merit Scholarship Competition and the National Achievement and the National Hispanic Scholars Programs. So, even though these scores will not be used for college admission, it is still a good idea to take the PSAT. The more times you take standardized tests, the more familiar you will become with the format and the types of questions asked. If you wish to receive free information from colleges, indicate on the PSAT answer form that you want to participate in the Student Search.

November

- Junior year grades are extremely important in the college admission process, because they are a measure of how well you do in advanced, upper-level courses. Grades also are used to determine scholarships and grants for which you may be eligible. So put in the extra effort and keep those grades up!
- If you will require financial aid, start researching your options for grants, scholarships and work-study programs. Make an appointment with your guidance counselor or start by visiting NACAC's Web Resources for the College-Bound to do research on your own using the Internet.

December

- During December you should receive the results of your PSAT. Read your score report and consult your school counselor to determine how you might improve on future standardized tests. The PSAT is excellent preparation for the SAT I, which you will take in the spring.
- Consider taking the ACT. Many colleges accept the ACT (American College Test) or the SAT I. Some colleges require the ACT or both SAT I and the Subject Tests. When you begin to explore different colleges and universities, double-check to see if they prefer or require the Act, the SAT I and/or the Subject Tests.

January

- Begin to make a preliminary list of colleges you would like to investigate further. Utilize Naviance, CRHS Guidance website, surf the Internet and use the college resources in the guidance office or library.
- Ask your parents for your Social Security number (required on many college applications). If you were never issued a Social Security number, contact the closest Social Security office as soon as possible to obtain a number.

February - March – April

- Meet with your guidance counselor to discuss your preliminary list of colleges. Discuss whether your initial list of colleges meets your needs and interests (academic program, size, location, cost, etc.) and whether you are considering colleges where you are likely to be admitted. You should be optimistic and realistic when applying to colleges.
- Register for the March SAT I if you have completed the math courses covered on the SAT I. If not, plan to take the SAT I in May or June. Prepare for the SAT I or ACT by signing up for a prep course, using computer software, or doing the SAT/ACT practice tests available in the counseling office or at bookstores. But don't spend so much time trying to improve standardized test scores that grades and co-curricular involvement suffer.

- Write, telephone, or use the Internet to request admission literature and financial aid information from the colleges on your list. There is no charge and no obligation to obtain general information about admission and financial aid.
- When selecting your senior courses, be sure to continue to challenge yourself academically.
- Register for the May/June SAT I and/or the May/June Subject Tests. Not all Subject Tests are given on every test date. Check the calendar carefully to determine when the Subject Tests you want are offered. Register for the June ACT if you want that test.
- Continue to evaluate your list of colleges and universities. Eliminate colleges from the original list that no longer interest you and add others as appropriate.
- Look into summer jobs or apply for special summer academic or enrichment programs. Colleges love to see students using their knowledge and developing their skills and interests.

May

- Attend a college fair to get more information about colleges on your list. NACAC sponsors college fairs in cities across the country during the fall and the spring. Visit NACAC's Website (www.nacac.com) to check out the schedule for the National College Fairs and the Performing and Visual Arts College Fairs.
- Get a jump-start on summer activities – consider enrolling in an academic course at a local college, pursuing a summer school program, applying for an internship, working, or volunteering. If you work, save part of your earnings for college.
- Begin visiting colleges. Phone to set up appointments. Interviews are always a good idea. Many colleges will tell you they are optional, but an interview will show interest, enthusiasm and initiative on your part and provide an excellent opportunity to have your questions answered. Do a practice interview with your counselor, teacher, employer, or a senior who has had college interviews. Set up interviews as early as possible – interview times become booked quickly.
- Take the SAT Subject Tests or I.

June

- After school ends, get on the road to visit colleges. Seeing the college firsthand, taking a tour and talking to students can be the greatest help in deciding whether or not a school is right for you. Although it is ideal to visit colleges during the academic year, going in the summer will be valuable. Admission offices employ their students to give tours and answer questions from prospective students and their parents.
- Take the SAT I, the Subject Tests and/or the ACT.

July

- Visit colleges, take tours, have interviews and ask questions. Make college visiting a family event. Involve your parents and siblings in every step of your application process. Choosing the right college is a tough decision; the opinions of those who know you best can provide helpful insight into which college is best for you.

August

- Continue to refine your list of potential colleges and universities.
- Begin preparing for the actual application process: draft application essays; collect writing samples and assemble portfolios or audition tapes. If you are an athlete and plan on playing in college, contact the coaches at the schools to which you are applying and ask about intercollegiate and intramural sports programs and athletic scholarships. Complete the NCAA Initial-Eligibility Clearinghouse form if you hope to play Division I or II sports. (This form cannot be mailed until you finish your sixth semester high school.)

WHAT COLLEGES LOOK FOR IN ORDER OF IMPORTANCE AS REPORTED TO THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR COLLEGE ADMISSIONS COUNSELORS

A. GRADES IN COLLEGE PREP COURSES

The quality of work a student has done in high school is the single most important record for the college, since the colleges have found that “the past predicts the future.” It is important to remember that ninth grade marks are part of the college admission record as are poor grades and failures, even though they may have been made up later. Colleges are primarily interested in the marks received in academic subjects and in the caliber of courses taken. A minimum of 16 academic units is usually necessary. Colleges have found that high school grades in college preparatory classes indicate an ability to succeed in college work. The under-achiever and the one who has failures and poor grades will find it more difficult to secure admission to college. A student with poor grades would do well to consider taking his first two years of work in a junior or community college.

B. ADMISSION TEST SCORES

College Board Examinations (PSAT, SAT I and the Subject Tests), and/or the American College Testing Program (ACT), should all indicate potential for college work.

C. GRADES IN ALL SUBJECTS

D. ESSAY/WRITING SAMPLE

E. COUNSELOR RECOMMENDATION

F. TEACHER RECOMMENDATION

G. INTERVIEW

H. SPECIAL TALENTS, INTERESTS, SKILLS

Colleges are interested in knowing about the meaningful extra-curricular school activities, community activities, travel, and work experience of the student. Special talents are taken into consideration.

I. COMMUNITY SERVICE/WORK/EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

Colleges are looking for students who are mature, serious, enjoy learning, show intellectual curiosity, and are willing to work hard. Colleges often ask secondary school personnel to evaluate the student on the basis of these qualities.

J. ABILITY TO PAY (81% OF SCHOOLS STATE THIS HAS NO IMPORTANCE)

K. PERSONAL RECOGNITION PROGRAMS

*** REMEMBER**

In general, colleges are not as interested in the student who “plans to do better.” They are looking for students with proven abilities.

**** Please remember to meet all application deadlines.**

SENIOR YEAR

September

- Gather appropriate applications –online is preferred.
- Contact counselor to update specific plans.
- Obtain a minimum of two recommendations (teachers, counselors, coaches).
- Register for SAT, SAT Subject Tests, and/or Fall ACT.
- Review high school transcript and check for accuracy.

September – October

- Senior college planning conference with counselor.
- Attend college-recruiting conferences.

October – November

- Narrow search to final choices.
- Take SAT, Subject Tests and/or ACT.

October – December 1

- Complete applications and submit to guidance for processing. Check deadlines! Keep your grades up!

November

- *Early decision application deadlines.

November – December – January

- Take SAT I and/or Subject Tests or ACT tests, if appropriate.
- Attend Clearview High Schools Financial Aid Seminar and pick up FAFSA Financial Aid Form.

November – June

- Monitor your applications to be sure materials are sent and received on time.
- Receive college decisions.
- Confirm your intentions.
- Maintain strong senior year grades

*National Association for College Admission Counseling
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voice (703) 836-2222 fax (703) 836-8015 fax-on-demand (703) 299-6829*

COLLEGE CONSIDERATIONS FOR LEARNING DISABLED STUDENTS

Students Need To:

- Understand their strengths and weaknesses.
- Be able to articulate the nature of their learning disabilities.
- Understand the compensatory skills developed to accommodate the learning differences.
- Describe the services received in high school.
- Identify short-term and long-term goals.
- Select appropriate college choices to match individual needs.

Search and Selection Process:

- What is the student's learning disability?
- When was the disability diagnosed?
- What is the student's level of performance in high school?
- Is the student enrolled in college-prep courses, modified courses, or individualized special-education courses?
- What are the student's individual strengths and weaknesses?
- Is it easier for the student to learn from a lecture, from reading the materials, or having the material read to him or her?
- Does the student perform better on written assignments or oral presentations?
- Which subjects are easier, and which are more difficult?
- What are the student's most favorite and least favorite courses and why?
- What are the student's short-term and long-term goals?
- Are these goals realistic?
- Is the student striving to improve in academic areas?
- What accommodations are being provided?
- Is the student actively utilizing resource assistance and learning compensatory strategies?
- What does the student plan to study in college?
- What skills and competencies are required for the career goals being pursued?
- When were the last diagnostic tests given?
- What level of services/accommodations is needed in college? Structured programs, comprehensive services, or basic services?

Timelines:

Junior Year

- review achievement level
- review level of services in high school
- identify the level of service needed in college
- visit colleges
- register for the ACT/SAT: standardized or non-standardized
- see your case manager and/or counselor to register

Senior Year

- submit general applications
- submit special applications
- schedule interviews
- write essays (if required)
- disclose learning disability to college
- release current psycho-educational testing
- release documentation of other health related difficulties

CHARACTERISTICS OF EXCELLENCE

The faculty Undergraduate Admission Study Group identified the following “characteristics of excellence” that colleges and universities should seek in the students it admits.

1. Qualities of Mind

- High intelligence
- Demonstrated capacity to excel academically
- Originality; creativity
- Joyful engagement in learning; passion for intellectual inquiry, whatever the field
- Mental discipline; perseverance; willingness and ability to take on difficult challenges
- Self-motivation; eagerness to venture beyond the boundaries of assignments and stated expectations
- Ability to challenge and contribute to the learning of others by offering differing perspectives
- Disposition to make the best use of the educational resources that Princeton has to offer

2. Qualities of character

- Integrity; responsibility; sense of values
- Demonstrated ability to look beyond oneself; concern for the well being of others; concern for and contributions to the quality of life in the community

3. Capacity to Enrich and Contribute to the University Community

- Effective commitment to an activity or activities outside the classroom, whether intellectual, artistic, athletic or service-oriented in nature
- Energy
- Capacity for leadership

4. Potential for Life-long Leadership and service in One’s Community and Profession

- The Study Group agreed, further, that diversity is an essential component of long-term excellence. By diversity it means that men and women who study at Princeton should be drawn from the widest possible variety of backgrounds – socioeconomic, racial, religious and other – and should bring to the University a wide range of values, beliefs, experiences and interests. In the view of the Study Group, diversity and the experience of dealing with diversity are integral elements in the preparation of effective citizens and leaders.

* Princeton’s Faculty Undergraduate Admission Study Group, 2003.

COLLEGE ADMISSIONS TESTS: THE FACTS

	<u>SAT</u>	<u>SAT SUBJECT TESTS</u>	<u>ACT</u>
Why You Should Take It	Required for admission by most U.S. colleges. Often used to award scholarships and grants.	Most highly selective colleges require 2-3 SAT Subject Tests. University of California (UC) schools weigh Subject Tests equally with the SAT.	Accepted by virtually all colleges as an alternative to the SAT.
When to Take It	Fall, Winter, or Spring of Junior Year; Fall of Senior Year. Know your college application deadlines.	Math in Junior Year or Fall of Senior Year. All other Subject Tests right after you finish taking the related subject in school in your Sophomore or Junior years.	February, April, or June of your Junior Year; Fall of Senior Year. Know your application deadlines.
Good to Know	Unless you enroll in Score Choice, all of your scores will be reported to colleges.	Of the colleges that require these tests, most ask for a Math Subject Test plus one or two subjects of your choosing.	You can take it more than once and choose which scores get sent to colleges.
How It Is Scored	3 scores: Critical Reading, Math, and Writing, each on a scale of 200-800	1 score, on a scale of 200-800	1 score (1 to 36) on each test (English, Math, Reading, and Science), and a composite ACT score which is an average of these 4 tests.
What is the test structure?	Ten - section exam: 3 Critical Reading, 3 Math, 3 Writing, and 1 Experimental. The Experimental section is masked to look like a regular section.		Four - section exam, plus 1 optional section: English, Math, Reading, Science, Reasoning, and Writing (optional). An optional Experimental section is added to the exam only on certain dates and is clearly marked.
What's on the test?	Math: up to geometry and algebra II Reading: sentence completions, short and long critical reading interpretation passages, reading comprehension Writing: grammar rules, word usage, word choice, and a mandatory essay.		Math: up to trigonometry Science: charts, graphs, data Reading: four passages, one each of prose fiction, social sciences, humanities, and natural sciences English: stresses grammar Writing: optional essay
Is there a penalty for wrong answers?	Yes , 1/4 of a point for each wrong answer on multiple choice questions		No
How often is the test administered?	7 times per year		6 times per year

SOME TIPS ON VISITING COLLEGES

The following material is to be used as a guide in helping you gain a better picture of the colleges you visit. You will probably not want to ask every question that appears on these pages, and there are probably questions you will want to ask that do not appear here.

1. Choosing Colleges to Visit

Choosing a college to attend is a group activity, with you the student, in the center of the group. Other members of the group who will aid you are your school counselor, your teachers, and your parents. While choosing a college wisely is a group activity, college attendance is a highly individual matter. Since you are the individual who will attend college, you should start by knowing yourself, not by learning about colleges. Once you know yourself, the problem becomes one of finding several colleges that are good for you.

You should study colleges carefully to see if they are good ones for you. An important part of this study involves visiting colleges that interest you.

2. Research on Fundamentals

Before you leave to visit colleges, there are a few things you should do. In deciding upon which colleges to visit, you should have done some research on the school. Take some notes on the following:

- outstanding academic program the college may have that you are interested in
- the average cost
- a list of possible areas of major study in which you are interested (biology major, chemical engineering etc.)
- special programs available (junior year abroad, 5 year BS in Engineering etc.)
- scholarship information (if needed) including the names of one or two scholarships you feel you might qualify for. Also, what financial aid programs does the school participate in?
- admission requirements
- required tests (SAT I, SAT II, ACT)
- courses required of all freshmen regardless of major
- ROTC required or available
- Residence rules for freshmen, must live in dormitories?
- What does the college say is its educational objective or philosophy?
- special regulations for frosh (i.e. cars).
- religious character of the college is sometimes important (chapel services)
- name of Director of Admissions and school mailing address

3. When to Visit Colleges

Now that you have some notes easily accessible and ready to use, you will have to decide when to visit the colleges. The following points should help you to determine when to visit colleges. Your parents will have to help plan the exact dates.

- If possible, visit during your junior year (or the summer after). Visits during September and October of your senior year are "in time", but you are getting close to application deadlines if you wait until your senior year to do any visiting. March and April are very busy months for the college admissions office.
- Plan to visit the college when it is in session. You will learn more by seeing the students, their manner of dress, and the day-to-day life of the college. Try not to visit only on big days like Homecoming or Spring Formal.
- Possibly a family vacation trip can be combined with college visits.
- Even if the college is not in session, a visit will help you learn more than just looking at pictures.

4. Visitation

After you and your parents have agreed on a date to visit a college or university, you still have a few things to do. It would be proper to write the Director of Admissions asking if it would be convenient for you to visit the college. Many colleges have planned visitation programs. Call admissions to determine availability.

FINAL COLLEGE SELECTIONS

One of the questions asked most frequently is, “What should my final list of colleges include?” Inherent in this question are two considerations: First, to how many schools should I apply and second, what range of school should be included with regard to level of admissions competition?

Never use the “shotgun approach” of applying to a multitude of schools. Also, regardless of your academic ability, **do not** “put all of your eggs in one basket” by applying to only one institution or one level of college. As a general rule, students should apply to approximately **six (6)** schools which vary in terms of selectivity, but which have the most important features desired by the student. As long as you do not overly limit yourself geographically, finding such a group of schools is not that difficult a task considering the large number of colleges and universities found in the United States.

While there is no hard and fast rule, students should include two or three schools from Categories I and II below and at least one or two schools from Category III:

Category I Your top choice schools. It is fine to include a couple of “long shots” in this group.

Category II Schools that possess the features you desire and at which the probability of admission is even to slightly better than even. These are categorized as “realistic” schools.

Category III Schools that have most of the features you desire and at which the probability of admission is highly likely to certain. Schools in this category are referred to as your “safe” schools.

Schools that qualify as “long shots,” “realistic,” or “safe,” vary tremendously from student to student. Each student has an individual academic profile and should select schools accordingly, making sure that there are choices in all three categories. Always apply to more than one “realistic” and/or “safe” school. This will insure two or more acceptances and provide you with several “safe” choices.

COLLEGE COMPARISON CHART

USE THIS CHART TO RECORD THE FACTS AND IMPRESSIONS YOU HAVE GATHERED THROUGH NAVIANCE SEARCH AND VISITS.

Name of College Location *Distance from home				
Size *Enrollment *Physical size of campus				
Environment *Type of school (2yr,4yr) *School setting *Co-ed, male, female *Religious affiliation				
Admissions Requirements *Deadline *Test Required *Average test scores, GPA, rank *Notification				
Academics *Your major offered *Accreditation *Student-faculty ratio *Typical class size				
College Expenses *Tuition, room & board *Estimated total budget *Application fee, deposits				
Financial Aid *Deadline *Required forms *% receiving aid *Scholarships				
Housing *Residence Hall Requirement *Food Plan				
Facilities *Academic *Recreational *Other				
Activities *Clubs, organizations *Greek life *Athletics, Intramurals Other				
Campus Visits *When *Special Opportunities				

Making the most of your summer-suggestions for students

Summer Jobs-Don't settle for the norm!

Instead of settling for the nearest burger joint, use your ingenuity to find a job that is fun and will help you with your scholarship and college applications.

First, decide what interests you. This could be anything – animals, children, medicine, journalism, law, music, etc. Then phone some related professional or organizations in your community and inquire about any opportunities. If at first you don't succeed, volunteer as an intern. Frequently, what starts out as an unpaid internship ends up as a paid position.

"I approached a local radio station and pitched them an idea about commentaries from a youth's perspective," says Ben Kaplan, FastWeb's Scholastic Coach and author of *How To Go To College Almost For Free*. "Soon I was doing a regular commentary feature and getting paid for it."

Summer Vacation – Turn Travel Into Research

Taking a summer vacation this year? With a little creativity, you can turn your summer vacation into a project good for extra credit, independent study, scholarship and college essays and more.

Think that you have to study Himalayan tadpoles in Nepal in order to turn your vacation into research? Think again. Almost any vacation can be turned into a viable research topic. If you're traveling abroad, develop a project exploring cultural customs. Taking a road trip? Create a photo essay. "Even if you're just going hiking," says Kaplan, "you can create research project involving ecology or nature or conservation. The possibilities are endless."

Before you head out of town, meet with your high school or college counselor; they are frequently willing to work with motivated students on projects like these.

Community Service Can Do Double Duty

Sure, community service looks great on applications and resumes. But there's much more to it than that. Community service is a great way to become active in the causes that interest you. It can also be a fantastic way to meet people.

Think that community service has to be dull? Dreary? Indoors? Think again. This summer pick something outdoors. That way you're in the sun, having fun and helping save the world.

Can't find any good community service opportunities in your town? Create your own! If you're interested in sports, volunteer to coach or assist with a little league team. If you're concerned about the environment, volunteer at environmental agencies, forestry and park services. If you like kids, volunteer to assist with mentoring or summer programs. The list goes on and on.

Scholastic and Scholarship Preparation – Get a Head Start

Summer is an excellent time to research scholarships and colleges. With just a little preparation, you'll be one big step ahead of the competition.

Use your summer to perform your FastWeb search, to request scholarship and college applications and to survey requirements. If scholarships or colleges haven't issued new applications, ask for a copy of last year's so you'll know what to expect. "By surveying the landscape first, you'll be better prepared when it comes time to apply," says Kaplan. Also, take time out of your summer to develop answers to common essay questions – career goals, what you want out of college, etc. These themes will be coming up again and again on college and scholarship applications.

Make it Happen!

Whether it's work, vacation, community service, or scholarships, a little creativity and ingenuity can go a long way. Use these suggestions as a starting point and make the most of your summer

These suggestions brought to you by FastWeb. For more great information and access to over \$1 billion in scholarships, head over to www.fastweb.com