

2017





# WELCOME AND TABLE OF CONTENTS

You're starting an exciting new journey! Soon, you'll be graduating from high school, and moving on into the next stage of your education.

The first step of this journey is applying to college. This guide will help you choose colleges that are right for you, take steps to apply to college, and identify the next steps after you've applied.

Chapter	Page
Welcome	2
Where Do I Apply?	3
Finding the Right Fit	4
The Perfect Match	6
Footing the Bill	7
College Exploration	8
How Do I Apply?	9
Application Process	10
Residency	11
What if I'm Undocumented?	12
Writing the Essay	13
Fee Waivers	14
Fee Waivers By School	15
Deadlines	17
What's Next?	18
Post-App Checklist	19
Worksheets	20

# WHERE DO I APPLY?



# Choosing the right college for you

- ☐ Learn how to evaluate college options based on fit, match, and cost
- ☐ Find resources to help you research schools
- ☐ Choose schools to apply to

# FINDING THE RIGHT FIT

It's important to **do your homework** to select a list of colleges that suit your needs, interests, and talents. Here are some tips for how to research and decide where to apply.

#### **Does the College Fit your Preferences?**

For each school you apply to, consider size, location, culture, and academic programs. Here's an example of how you might compare schools::

School Name	Size	Location	Culture	Programs
Big State U in Urban Area Far from Home	Big schools have more services, activities, and academic programs.	Urban areas have more activities surrounding the school. Students can also use public transit. Being farther from home can give you more of a sense of independence and freedom.	Bigger schools usually have more opportunities to join fraternities and sororities.	Large schools have a broader variety of academic programs, so they can be a good option if you aren't sure what you want to study.
Liberal Arts U in Rural Area Close to Home	At a small school, you'll get more personalized attention from your professors.	Rural areas have a more laid-back vibe. You may need a car to get around. Being close to home means you'll be able to get home easily for weekends and holidays.	Small schools tend to have a more tight-knit student body. Check out the student clubs and organizations to find your niche.	Small schools may offer specialized programs not available at larger schools.

# FINDING THE RIGHT FIT

#### **Compare schools**

Based on the example from the previous page, use this table to compare how different schools you're interested fit with your size, location, culture, and academic programs preferences.

School Name	Size	Location	Culture	Programs

## THE PERFECT MATCH

#### What kinds of schools should I apply to?

Based on your academic record, you should apply to schools in the following categories:

# "Safety" Schools—Schools you're confident you'll be accepted to

- Schools that are less selective, and have higher acceptance rates
- Schools where your academic record is stronger than the average admitted student's
- Florida state and community colleges are open enrollment, meaning they admit all applicants

A good safety school for me could be \_\_\_\_\_\_

#### "Match" Schools—Schools you'll likely be accepted to

- Schools that are slightly more selective than your safety schools
- Schools where you academic record is similar to the average admitted student's

A good match school for me could be \_\_\_\_\_

#### "Reach" schools—Schools you could be accepted to

- Schools that have lower acceptance rates than your match schools
- Schools where your academic record is somewhat lower than the average admitted student's

A good reach school for me could be \_\_\_\_\_

#### How many schools should I apply to?

- Apply to at least four schools—a safety school, two match schools, and a reach school
- Use the worksheet on page XXX to gather details about each school
- Even if you have a top choice, it's good to keep your options open.
   This will allow you to compare financial aid packages and get the best deal!

# What is your academic record?

Several factors impact your academic record:

- Your average high school grade point average (GPA)
- The rigor of the courses you've taken (AP Courses, International Baccalaureate, Dual Enrollment, and Honors Courses)
- Your SAT and ACT scores

## FOOTING THE BILL

#### What will college cost?

#### It depends

- Private schools generally cost more than state schools, and state universities cost more than state colleges
- That said, many private schools offer generous scholarships and institutional aid based on both merit and need
- Students who qualify as Florida residents for tuition purposes will payer lower in-state tuition at state schools (see page XXX for more details)

#### **Consider all the costs**

- Yearly tuition/cost per credit hour
- · Books, supplies, and lab fees
- Housing, meal plans, and dorm supplies
- Transportation

#### How can I pay for college?

#### **Options for paying**

- Federal and State student loans (remember that these have to be repaid!)
- Federal and State grants (these don't have to be repaid)
- Private scholarships
- Institutional scholarships. Many schools offer scholarships based on academic record or extracurricular activities.
   Schools also may offer scholarships for students in certain populations, such as low-income or first generation college students

#### Florida's 2+2 System

- All Florida state colleges and community colleges are open enrollment, meaning they accept almost all applicants
- Students who complete an Associate in Arts (AA) at a Florida state or community college are guaranteed acceptance to a state university to finish their Bachelor of Arts (BA)
- In other words, you can start the first 2 years of your BA at a state or community college, and finish the second 2 years at a state university

#### Make sure to file the FAFSA!

- Filing the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) is the best way to qualify for federal and state grants and loans
- Students can start filing the FAFSA as soon as October 1
- · To start your FAFSA, go to fafsa,ed.gov

# **COLLEGE EXPLORATION**

#### Do your research!

Here are some tools you can use to explore schools based on fit, match, and cost.

#### **Explore Fit and Match**

- MyCareerShines can help you figure out what careers might be a good fit, what major
  you might be interested in, and which schools offer the program you need
- <u>FloridaShines</u> is similar to MyCareerShines, but provides information specific to Florida schools
- <u>BeyondEducation</u> provides information on employment and earnings outcomes of graduates of the State University System, the Florida College System and District Postsecondary Career and Technical Schools.
- <u>ACT Profile</u> combines career planning with college planning to help you find your path. It uses a series of quizzes to suggest careers that might be a good fit, and helps you figure what education you need to get there. *Note: This resource also has a social component.* Use the same caution as you would on social media.
- <u>BigFuture</u> can help look up in-depth information about schools you're already interested in. Or you can use the College Search tool to find schools based on fit, match, and cost.

#### **Calculate the Cost of College**

<u>College Abacus</u> and <u>Pell Abacus</u> can give you a personalized estimate of how much
colleges will actually cost. College Abacus allows you to compare estimated net price for
up to three schools at once. Pell Abacus works the same way, but simplifies the process
for students who receive free or reduced price lunch.

#### **Seek Advice and Guidance**

- <u>UpNext</u> can connect you with college advisors that will answer your questions about applying, financial aid, taking out loans, and more
- GetSchooled has a variety of test prep, financial aid, and college application resources

# How Do I Apply?



## **APPLICATION PROCESS**

#### **Tasks to Complete**

Make a note of <b>all application deadlines</b> , including priority deadlines
Send request for high school transcript to be sent (talk to your counselor for help)
Send request for midterm grade report to be sent (talk to your counselor for help)
Send SAT and ACT scores
Request recommendation letters from teachers and/or counselors
Write your personal essay, and have someone proofread it Submit your Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA)
Fill out online application
Print out confirmation page
Pay application fee, or send fee waiver Note: Your application is not considered complete until your application fee is paid or the fee waiver is received
If you do not hear from the college within 2-3 weeks, contact the admissions office to ensure your materials were received

# College Application Worksheet

There is a lot of information you'll likely need to complete your college application. Refer to the College Application Worksheet on page XXXX to start filling out this info. You may need help from your parents or school counselor to answer all the questions, so make sure to start early. Don't forget to bring this sheet to your College Application Week event!

#### **Requesting Letters of Recommendation**

- Letters of recommendation are a great way to highlight qualities that are not captured by the rest of the college application
- Request letters from instructors or counselors who know you well and who you have a good relationship with
- Request the letter well in advance of the application deadline so that the writer will have plenty of time
- Write thank you notes for each recommendation writer!

# **RESIDENCY**

If you are applying to a Florida college or university, you will be asked whether you are a Florida "resident for tuition purposes." This determines whether you pay the lower in-state tuition or the higher out-of-state tuition

#### Who is a Florida "resident for tuition purposes"?

- A person who has, or is a dependent person to someone who has, established and maintained legal residency in Florida for at least twelve consecutive months.
- A student applying to a public college or university must complete a residency form or affidavit to declare Florida residency for tuition purposes.
- College staff will review the information and related documentation to verify your residency and eligibility for in-state tuition.

#### Am I dependent or independent?

- If you're a recent high school graduate, you're probably a dependent, but there are some exceptions.
- If you think you might be an independent, ask your school counselor or a trusted adult for assistance.

#### Who is the "claimant," or the person claiming residency?

• For dependent students, the claimant is your parent or legal guardian.

#### What documents can verify Florida residency?

- Copies of driver's licenses or State of Florida Identification Card
- Voter registration
- Florida vehicle registration
- The admissions office will provide guidance regarding other acceptable documents

#### Special residency cases

- Members of the armed services stationed in Florida, as well as their spouses and dependent children, may qualify as residents for tuition purposes.
- For a full list of students in special situations who might qualify as an in-state resident, see Florida Statue 1009.21 (10).
- For more information, please see the Florida Department of Education's webpage: bit.ly/FLResidency
- Fl. Stat. §1009.21(10). For full text, see <a href="https://www.flsenate.gov/Laws/Statutes/2016/1009.21">https://www.flsenate.gov/Laws/Statutes/2016/1009.21</a>

# WHAT IF I'M UNDOCUMENTED?

#### Did you know?

Undocumented students can apply to and attend college! In fact, some undocumented students in Florida are eligible for waivers that allow them to pay in-state tuition.

#### Am I eligible for a waiver?

Are you on track to graduate this spring?  — Yes  — No	
Have you attended <b>public high school</b> in <b>Florida</b> for the <b>past three years</b> ? ☐ Yes ☐ No	
If you answered " <b>no</b> " to either of the questions above, or are <b>unsure</b> about your answer to your school counselor or a college admissions officer for more information.	s, talk
If you answered " <b>yes</b> " to the above questions, you might be eligible for a waiver to pay i tuition! To get this waiver, you must:	n-state
<ul> <li>□ Apply to an institution of higher learning within 24 months of high school graduati</li> <li>□ Submit an official Florida high school transcript to verify attendance and graduatic</li> <li>□ After being admitted, file an HB851 Out-of-State Fee waiver. You can find this wait the institution's website, or by talking to an admissions counselor</li> </ul>	n

#### Can I receive financial aid?

- Unfortunately, undocumented students are not eligible for financial aid from the government
- That said, there are many **private scholarships** that all students can apply for. Some are even specifically geared towards undocumented students!

# WRITING THE ESSAY

\*Adapted from <u>The College Application Essay</u> by Sarah Myers McGinty.

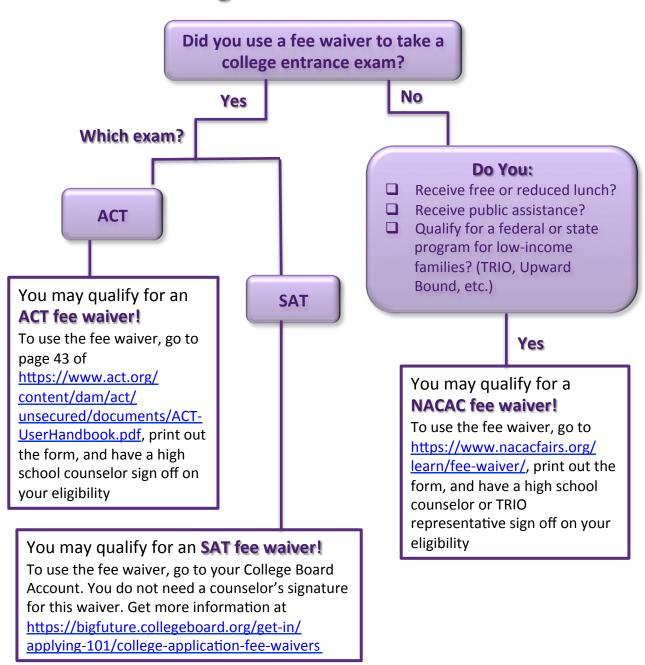
Тір	Do	Don't
Research essay requirements	Check early to see what each college on your short list requires. Take note of essay topics, word limits, and formatting requirements	Wait until the last minute to find out if you need to write an essay
Choose a topic that will highlight you	Share your personal story and thoughts. Tell a specific story that highlights your best qualities.	Focus on the great aspects of the college, the amount of dedication it takes to be a doctor, or the number of extracurricular activities you've done
Keep your focus narrow and personal	Focus on one aspect of yourself so the readers can learn more about who you are. Remember that readers must be able to understand your main idea and follow it from beginning to end. Ask a parent or teacher to read just your introduction and tell you what he or she thinks your essay is about.	Try to cover too many topics. This will make the essay sound like a laundry list that doesn't provide any details about you.
Show, don't tell	include specific details, examples, stories, and reasons to develop your ideas. For the example above, describe a situation when you were surrounded by various types of people. What were you doing? What did you take away from the experience?	Simply state a fact to get an idea across, such as "I like to surround myself with people with a variety of backgrounds and interests."
Use your own voice	Write about an experience that you had and how it made you feel you had to take action.	Rely on phrases or ideas that people have used many times before. These could include statements like, "There is so much suffering in the world that I feel I have to help people."
Ask a parent or teacher to proofread	Ask a teacher or parent to proofread your essay to catch mistakes. You should also ask the person who proofreads your essay if the writing sounds like you.	Turn your essay in without proofreading it or rely only on your computer's spell check to catch mistakes.

Remember to bring your essay with you to your school's Apply Yourself Florida event! You can bring it on a USB drive, or email the essay to yourself.

# **FEE WAIVERS**

Most colleges and universities require a **processing fee** (usually around \$30-\$50) to apply. Some students qualify for **application fee waivers** so they do not have to pay this fee. If you're not sure whether you qualify for a fee waiver, talk to your counselor!

### Am I eligible for a fee waiver?



# FEE WAIVERS BY SCHOOL

School	Waivers Accepted	How to Use the Waiver
Florida A&M (FAMU)	ACT, SAT	<ul> <li>Apply on-line using the application for FL Fee Waiver applicants. Attach the fee waiver prior to submission.</li> </ul>
Florida Atlantic University (FAU)	ACT, SAT	<ul> <li>Submit application without payment.</li> <li>Mail fee waiver to the address listed on application screen.</li> </ul>
Florida Gulf Coast University (FGCU)	ACT, SAT	<ul> <li>Complete online application and answer question about application fee waivers.</li> <li>After answering questions on application, wait for fee waiver code to be sent from admissions office.</li> <li>Mail the fee waiver to the address below, or email to undergrad@fgcu.edu</li> <li>Florida Gulf Coast University Office of Undergraduate Admissions 10501 FGCU Blvd. S. Fort Myers, FL 33965-6565</li> </ul>
Florida International (FIU)	ACT, SAT	<ul> <li>Upon reaching payment page, select the pay by check option.</li> <li>Mail fee waiver to the admissions office address on the page, or email the waiver to admiss@fiu.edu.</li> </ul>
Florida Polytechnic University	ACT, SAT	<ul> <li>On the payment page at the end of the application, select the waiver option.</li> <li>Mail fee waiver to the admissions office address listed or email to <a href="mailto:admissions@flpoly.org">admissions@flpoly.org</a>.</li> </ul>
Florida State University (FSU)	ACT, SAT, NACAC	<ul> <li>Submit Part 1 of application.</li> <li>In Part 2 of application, upload copy of your signed fee waiver. Alternatively, the signed waiver may be faxed to 850.644.0197, emailed to admissions@fsu.edu, or mailed to: FSU Admissions PO Box 3062400 Tallahassee FL 32306</li> </ul>
New College of Florida	NACAC, ACT, SAT, Common App	<ul> <li>Submit fee waiver through Common Application website</li> </ul>

# FEE WAIVERS BY SCHOOL

School	Waivers Accepted	How to Use the Waiver
University of Central Florida (UCF)	NACAC, ACT, SAT, Common App	<ul> <li>Submit application without payment.</li> <li>Mail a written request and fee waiver to the address listed on application screen or submit via email to uaoperations@ucf.edu. Please include your name and date of birth. If a Social Security Number (SSN) appears on the waiver request, please black out all but the last four digits for security purposes.</li> <li>OR If using the Common Application, submit the fee waiver through the Common Application website.</li> </ul>
University of Florida (UF)	ACT, SAT	<ul> <li>Select "mail payment" as the payment option and mail waiver.</li> <li>Address will be listed on the application screen.</li> </ul>
University of North Florida (UNF)	NACAC, ACT, SAT	<ul> <li>Bypass the payment page and submit your application without payment.</li> <li>Mail fee waivers to 1 UNF Drive, Jacksonville FL 32224</li> </ul>
University of South Florida (USF)	NACAC, ACT, SAT	<ul> <li>Submit application without payment.</li> <li>Mail fee waiver to the address listed on application screen, email to <a href="mailto:admissions@usf.edu">admissions@usf.edu</a>, or fax to 813-974-9689.</li> </ul>
University of West Florida (UWF)	NACAC, ACT, SAT	<ul> <li>Select mail in payment option</li> <li>Send waivers to UWF via email, fax, regular mail or stop by to drop it off.</li> <li>Email: admissions@uwf.edu         Mail to:         UWF Undergraduate Admissions         11000 University Pkwy.         Bldg. 18         Pensacola, FL 32514</li> </ul>

# **D**EADLINES

Each school sets its own deadlines, so make sure to research every school you apply to. For schools not listed here, check out the university's "admissions" page.

School	General Deadline	Priority Deadline
Florida A&M (FAMU)	May 1	Students must apply by November 30, 2017 for priority scholarship consideration
Florida Atlantic University	May 1	
Florida Gulf Coast University	May 1	<ul><li>Merit Scholarship Deadline: November 15</li><li>Priority Admission Date: February 15</li></ul>
Florida International University	Rolling admissions	Merit Scholarship Deadline: November 1
Florida Polytechnic University	Rolling admissions after the November deadline	Priority admissions: November 1
Florida State University	February 7	Priority deadline: November 1
New College of Florida	April 15	Priority deadline: November 1
University of Central Florida	May 1	
University of Florida	November 1	
University of North Florida	Rolling admissions	Priority deadline: October 31
University of South Florida	March 1	<ul> <li>Preferred Admissions Deadline: November 1</li> <li>Priority Deadline for Financial Aid: January 1</li> <li>Scholarship Consideration Deadline: January 15</li> </ul>
University of West Florida	June 1	<ul> <li>Priority Scholarship Deadline: December 1</li> <li>Priority Financial Aid Deadline: December 15</li> </ul>

# WHAT'S NEXT?



# Next step after you've applied

- Make sure your application has been finalized
- **☐** Apply for financial aid and scholarships
- ☐ Prepare for your first day of college!

## POST-APP CHECKLIST

#### Finishing your application

- Make sure your application fee has been paid
   If you completed an online application, you likely paid
  - If you completed an online application, you likely paid your application fee using a credit card when you submitted the application.
  - If you are using a fee waiver, make sure that you submitted it according to the college's procedures. Your application is not complete until the school receives payment or a fee waiver.
- ☐ Make sure your **transcripts** have been sent
  - Follow up to ensure each school you applied to received your transcript and other necessary documents

#### **Paying for school**

- Create your FSA ID for the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA)
  - Students and parents will each need a "FSA ID" to apply for federal financial aid
  - To create a FSA ID, go to fsaid.ed.gov
- ☐ Complete the **FAFSA** 
  - Fill out the FAFSA on or after October 1st to unlock thousands of dollars in grants and loans
  - Check your school's website for the priority aid deadline, and get your FAFSA in early.
  - Complete the form even if you miss your school's deadline, as you can still qualify for federal aid.
  - Go to <u>www.fafsa.ed.gov</u> to complete your application, or ask your school counselor for assistance.
- ☐ Apply for grants and scholarships
  - Florida offers merit- and need-based scholarship and grant programs. Examples include Bright Futures, First Generation Matching Grant, and Florida Student Assistance Grant.
  - Some of these programs require that you complete the Florida Financial Aid Application (FFAA), which will be available beginning October 1st, 2016, at <a href="mailto:bit.ly/FLAidApp">bit.ly/FLAidApp</a>. Learn more at <a href="https://www.floridastudentfinancialaid.org">www.floridastudentfinancialaid.org</a>.
  - Contact your local community foundation, local education foundation, and ask your school counselor about scholarship opportunities
  - Consider both local scholarships available in your community and national scholarships.

#### Get ready to go!

Ц	Accept an admission offer by May 1
	Get necessary supplies, like books, dorm room essentials, etc
	Attend new student orientation
	Have a great first semester!

# WORKSHEETS

☐ College Fit, Match, an	nd Cost
☐ Top 4 Colleges	
☐ College Application V	Vorksheet

### College Fit, Match & Cost

Make copies of this form and complete one for college search tools suggested on page 4.	each college you are considering using one or more of the
Name of College:	
FIT	
Location of College (City, State):	Setting:
Size of College:	Number of Undergraduate Students:
4-year or 2-year?	Students live on campus or commute?
Public or Private?	Co-ed? Women/Men Only?
Do they offer my major?	Is the campus diverse?
% Students that return sophomore year:	Graduation Rate:
What services are available on campus that are	e important to me?
Have I taken the required high school courses? How does my GPA compare with the average G How do my test scores compare with the avera	Percentage of Applicants Admitted:%  GPA of admitted students? Below Matches Above age scores of admitted students? Below Matches Above lege, this would be a: Reach Match Safety
COST	
Total estimated cost to attend: \$	
% freshmen with need who received aid:	
% of need met through scholarships/grants:	
My calculated net price: \$	
Does the cost seem reasonable?	

I plan on applying to this college: Yes No

# My Top 4 Colleges

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
ESSAY OR PERSONAL STATEMENT REQUIRED? TOPIC/REQUIREMENTS	□ YES □ NO			
RECOMMENDATIONS REQUIRED? HOW MANY?	□ YES □ NO			
SAT/ACT REQUIRED?	□ YES □ NO	☐ YES ☐ NO	☐ YES ☐ NO	☐ YES ☐ NO
APPLICATION COST PAYMENT DEADLINE	\$	\$	\$	\$
APPLICATION FEE WAIVER ACCEPTED? WHICH ONES?	□ YES □ NO			
APPLICATION DEADLINE				
FAFSA DEADLINE FOR SCHOLARSHIPS/ FINANCIAL AID ACCEPTANCE OF				
ADMISSION DEADLINE				

#### **College Application Worksheet**

# **PERSONAL INFORMATION** Legal Name: Any Other Names Used: (for transcripts, etc): \_\_\_\_\_ Social Security Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_ If you are not a citizen, do you hold a Visa? () YES () NO If no, are you applying for a Visa? What kind? \_\_\_\_\_ If you are a permanent resident, what is your alien registration number? \_\_\_\_\_\_ \*\*If you are a permanent resident, you will need to attach a photocopy of your alien registration card to the application. Do you have DACA status? () YES () NO If you have DACA status, what is your workforce authorization number? \*\*If you do not have a social security number, Visa, or DACA status, use 000000000 as your Social **Security Number** Gender: OM OF Race/Ethnicity: \_\_\_\_\_\_ Are you an active duty service member? YES NO Are you a veteran? YES NO **APPLICATION INFORMATION**

Type of Application: \_\_\_\_\_ Term: \_\_\_\_\_

Planned Major: \_\_\_\_\_

## **HIGH SCHOOL INFORMATION** Name of School: State: Expected Graduation Date: \_\_\_\_\_ OTHER POSTSECONDARY INSTITUTIONS \*includes dual enrollment Name of Institution: Dates Attended: \_\_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_ Credit Hours Completed: \_\_\_\_\_ Degree Obtained/Expected: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_ **CURRENT & EXPECTED COURSEWORK** Courses you are currently enrolled in (FALL): Courses you expect to complete before entering college (SPRING/SUMMER): **COLLEGE ENTRANCE EXAMS** SAT Subject tests: Subject: \_\_\_\_\_ Date(s) Taken: \_\_\_\_\_ Scores: \_\_\_\_\_ **DISCIPLINARY ACTIONS** Are you currently or have you ever been charged with or subject to disciplinary action for scholastic or any other type of misconduct at any educational institution? OYES NO Have you ever been charged with a violation of the law which resulted in, or, if still pending, could

If your answer to either of the above questions is yes, you must submit a full statement of relevant facts, and may be required to supply the institution with copies of all official documentation explaining the final disposition of the proceedings.

If your records have been expunged pursuant to applicant law, you are not required to answer yes to these questions. If you are unsure whether to answer yes to either question, it is strongly suggested that you answer yes and fully disclose all incidents. By doing so, you can avoid any risk of disciplinary action or revocation of an offer of admission.

#### **EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES**

, , , , , , , , ,	r activities to help you prepare for higher education vard Bound, etc)?
Do you have any special talents or skills?	Have you received any awards?
Do you participate in any sports or clubs?	)
Do you do community service?	
Are you employed?	
FAMILY INFORMATION	
Parent/Legal Guardian 1	
Name (First and Last):	
Relationship:	Email address:
Occupation:	Highest Level of Education Completed:
Mailing Address (if different from yours):	
Parent/Legal Guardian 2	
Name (First and Last):	
Relationship:	Email address:
Occupation:	Highest Level of Education Completed:
Mailing Address (if different from yours):	
Are you living in a single-parent househol	ld? OYES ONO
How many people, including yourself, live	e in your household?
Please indicate your family's gross income untaxed income.	e for the most recent tax year, including both taxed and
Do you have family obligations that preverse Please describe.	ent you from participating in extracurricular activities?