



COLLEGEBOUND FOUNDATION

To College. Through College.

DATES TO REMEMBER

SAT & SAT Subject Tests
Exam Date 12/06

Register by 12/29
Exam Date 1/24

ACT Tests
Register by 11/7
Exam Date 12/13

Register by 1/09
Exam Date 2/7

Hispanic College Fair
11/15 10 am—2 pm
University of Baltimore

Gates Millennium Scholarship Writing Workshops
11/22/2014 & 1/10/2015
9 am—12 noon
Johns Hopkins University

Way2GoMaryland
College Preparation Event
12/6 10 am—1 pm
Coppin State University

Scholarship Portals Open

CBF Scholarship/LDG
12/1/2014

Baltimore Community Foundation Scholarship
12/1/2014

Central Scholarship
1/1/2015

CollegeBound Foundation
300 Water Street, Suite 300
Baltimore, MD 21202
(p) 410.783.2905
(f) 410.727.5786
collegeboundfoundation.org

The College Connection Newsletter

BALTIMORE POLYTECHNIC HIGH SCHOOL

WINTER 2014

Choosing a college is an important decision. What you decide today will influence many tomorrows. At the least, it will determine your mailing address for the next four years. The process can be bewildering. The goal isn't to enroll at the best college (assuming that such a thing exists), but to enroll at the college or university that's best for you. You're looking for an institution that is comfortable but challenging, one that will develop your unique talents, and one where you'll feel at home. You're looking for a place that fits you like a favorite pair of jeans. You want a college where you will thrive. The good news is that you have lots of good options. For seniors the decision-making process is coming to a close as we gear up for the scholarship and financial aid phase of college access. We will host numerous financial aid workshops this winter, beginning on December 4 at 6 p.m. with Financial Aid Night at Poly.

For juniors, sophomores, and freshman this is a great time to examine the diverse opportunities available in higher education in our country. We will be hosting college fairs at Poly on November 19 (8:15-10:15 a.m.) and April 20 (6-8 p.m.). In early May there will also be a combined college/career fair at Poly. Colleges are visiting our school, so please sign up on Naviance. Finally, we will host two overnight tours, with the first taking place on February 16, 17, and 18. The second will be over spring break. The breadth and depth of colleges and universities that we visit or will visit us will mean that students can find an institution that is well suited to their particular needs, talents, preferences, and goals.

All members of the Poly family should stay tuned to our Naviance announcements regarding all of the college access activities coming to Poly.

-Anthony Harold, *College Access Program Specialist*



Anthony Harold
aharold@collegeboundfoundation.org
410.736.0755

The Mystery That Is The College Recommendation Letter

When it comes to recommendation letters, most college applicants are left in the dark. While students are required to ask - nicely! - for these formal notes from their teachers, they never actually get to see what is being written about them.

But just because you can't see it, doesn't mean it isn't a ton of work!

In The Atlantic, Andrew Simons, a writer, teacher, and musician based in California, writes that these letters, "[help] admissions officers accomplish the goal of building a class that will thrive at the school and take advantage of the opportunities it can provide."

Much like the student's personal statement, Simons notes that these letters of recommendation from teachers often "say what those grades and scores cannot."

His piece offers up helpful advice for educators who are tasked with writing these letters on behalf of students. It also serves as a reminder to students to be thoughtful when deciding which teacher to ask - again, nicely! - to write this letter to colleges. The college admissions officers are eager to learn about applicants from a different, but hopefully still positive, perspective. With this in mind, students should pick a teacher that knows them personally, and if possible, choose someone who may know about their interests outside the classroom. And students: remember to say, "Thank you!"

IMPORTANT Reminder:

November 10-14: College Application Days
November 19: Poly College Fair (8:15-10:15 a.m.)
December 4: Financial Aid Night (6-7:30 p.m.)
February 2-6: FAFSA Completion Days (8:30 a.m. - 3 p.m.)
February 7: FAFSA Completion Day (9 a.m. - Noon)
February 16-18: Poly Overnight College Tour.

Open House Dates

Capitol College

Laurel, Maryland

- November 1
- November 15

Loyola University

Baltimore, Maryland

- November 15

McDaniel College

Westminster, Maryland

- November 9

Morgan State University

Baltimore, Maryland

- November 7

Coppin State University

Baltimore, Maryland

- November 15

Towson University

Baltimore, Maryland

- November 7
- November 8
- November 15

Next Door Neighbors

Allegheny College Pa.

Meadville, Pa.

- November 15

Bucknell University

Lewisburg, Pa.

- November 10
- November 8 Engineering

George Washington University

Washington, DC

Overnight Diversity Open House

- November 13 & 14

West Virginia University

Morgantown, WV

- November 15

****Refer to the universities web pages for RSVP options****

College Open Houses

Fall is the best time for visiting colleges since students are on campus and classes are in full swing. Check out your top college picks to see when an open house is scheduled. Often you can spend the night on campus with a current student. At the very least, the chance to sit in on classes and talk with students, faculty, and staff is a plus. You will find a list of select college open houses to the left. Many open house events run through November and resume again in the spring.

Juniors

It's your first time taking the SAT, and you have a few months to prepare

Here are tips on how to Personalize your prep efforts.

1. If you've taken the PSAT/NMSQT, sign in to My College Quickstart. There you can review your previous test performance and follow a personalized study plan based on your strengths and areas for improvements.
2. Practice a little each day—Follow @SATQuestion on Twitter or download The Official SAT Question of the Day app to answer a new practice question every day.
3. Get familiar with the questions—Try answering some practice questions.
4. Try a full test—Download and take an official practice test at <http://sat.collegeboard.org/practice/sat-practice-test>. Make sure you time yourself to get a better feel of what the actual testing experience will be like. Schedule in section stops and breaks just like on test day.
5. Get more in-depth. Try Khan Academy SAT Online Course.

TRIO Programs

TRIO Programs are federal outreach and student services programs designed to identify and provide services for individuals from disadvantaged backgrounds. TRIO includes eight programs targeted to serve and assist low-income individuals, first-generation college students, and individuals with disabilities. Here are three TRIO Programs located at two local universities:

Upward Bound serves students who have demonstrated academic potential and who meet the income criteria established by the U.S. Department of Education and are first generation with a desire to obtain a four year college degree. The Program provides students and their parents with an opportunity to invest in students' futures and thus realize their potential and goals.

Talent Search identifies junior high and high school students who might benefit from intervention strategies meant to increase the chances of the student pursuing a college education. At least two-thirds of the students in each local TS program must be from low-income economic backgrounds and from families where parents do not have a bachelors degree.

The **Upward Bound** Program at the **University of Maryland, Baltimore County** was initiated in 1989. The Program's design promotes the development and enhancement of students' basic skills, academic and cultural enrichment, and the motivation necessary to matriculate at and graduate from college. To insure students' complete development, participation in program activities is mandatory. Please contact at 410-455-2700 Corris Davis, Director

The **Morgan State University Upward Bound** is designed to enhance the academic and personal skills of students while preparing them while in high school for college admission, retention and graduation. Additionally, students are provided opportunities to be exposed to cultural and career activities and experiences. Upward Bound is a supplementary program that enhances the regular high school curriculum. There is no cost to participants for the program. Please contact at 443-885-3448 or 443-885-3553 Connie McDonald, Director

At **Morgan State University**, the **Educational Talent Search (ETS)** program serves students ages 11-27 by providing academic advisement, career planning, and financial aid assistance. We proudly enroll over 600 students every year including participants from our ten target schools and the community at large. Please contact at 443-885-3828 Dr. T. Avent, Director