



The Tip Sheet

Don't blow a big opportunity with an e-mail error! Like it or not, your e-mail address contributes in a major way to that all-important "first impression." If you put your e-mail on an application for a job, summer program, volunteer position or a college, it's out there for everyone to see. So what does yours say about you? Is it too quirky...off-beat...slightly off-color? Does it imply something about you that's inappropriate or even not true? Sure, you may feel that your e-mail address says something about your personality - that it shows people you're a funny, spontaneous, unique person. But look at it through the eyes of someone who is first "meeting" you on a piece of paper. If you have an e-mail that might raise some eyebrows, why not create an alternative and neutral one for applications and other serious purposes? For example, something like **JoeSmith@yahoo.com** rather than **partylover@yahoo.com** would let the rest of your application shine without distraction!



Important Stuff

Seniors: Some of you have already submitted an application for Early Decision and heard from that special college. If so, congrats and don't forget the next steps: *if your financial aid is met*, you have to enroll in that school and withdraw any other applications you have submitted. If the aid package is not satisfactory and you have discussed any problems with the admissions office, you are a free agent again. Make sure your application is entered into the regular applicant pool if you were

not accepted Early Decision. January 1 was the application deadline for many competitive colleges. There are, however, many colleges with later deadlines. If you **aren't** finished, don't panic; work steadily and get it done!

Go over your list of colleges to make sure it's broad enough so that you have a strong chance of getting admitted somewhere. Also make sure it includes at least one school that your family can afford without substantial financial aid.

All seniors should be working on the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) with their families. You can get this form from the guidance office and on-line, and you can file it right away. This is so important because it's how schools decide who gets grants and scholarships. You also need it to get those low interest Federal loans.

Juniors: No doubt you already have college on your mind: location (urban, suburban, or rural); size (large, small, or medium); diversity (very important or not important); type (public or private). Have you discussed colleges with your counselor? Do you need to fill any holes in your course schedule?

It's time to make and prioritize college lists and go on some visits, if at all possible. So much to think about, but keep that **GPA** front and center! Your GPA and your class rank are the core credentials you present to schools in your college applications. Oh yeah, do you have any interests or activities that make you stand out?

Sophomores and Freshmen: Read the above "important stuff" for seniors and juniors - your

time is coming! Remember that grades count and colleges look at all four years - and the type of courses you are taking. What about activities? Are you into anything special?



Every Little Bit Helps!

Families that need some extra help paying for college have more options, thanks to an important financial aid bill passed by Congress last year. The maximum amount of money you can get for the Pell Grant has gone up from \$4,310 to \$4,800, and it's going to go up every year through 2012. Pell Grants are given to low income families and don't have to be paid back. There have also been changes to some loans that do have to be repaid. The interest rate for *new* Stafford loans has been lowered from 6.8% to 6.0% and will decrease yearly through 2011.

Resolutions

"Cheers to a New Year and another chance for us to get it right." That's from a woman who works hard to "get it right" -- Oprah Winfrey.

A few resolutions can help you get in gear in 2008. Do any of these speak to you?

I resolve to:

- 1 spend more than the "required" time on my school work, including weekends when necessary.
- 2 get every assignment in on time.
- 3 arrive at school on time even when I don't want to get out of bed.
- 4 arrive to class on time even when I would rather talk to friends in the hall.
- 5 prepare for tests ahead of time instead of the night before.
- 6 let go of negativity and be positive about my classes and teachers even when others are complaining.
- 7 use my Daily Planner to keep track of my obligations.
- 8 devote myself to Excellence!

"If Winter Comes, Can Spring Be Far Behind?"

The famous poet, Percy Bysshe Shelley, asked that question and sure enough, it happens every year. Get a jump on jobs and internships before winter blows by. It's time, *right now*, to check out some of the programs on the enclosed list. Also, read brochures and posters in the guidance office and ask friends and family members for ideas. If something interests you, go for it! Apply *early*, especially if you need to get some money together for tuition or need financial aid. The early bird gets the worm. (Some clichés really do say it all!)

Get Your Grammar Right!

Ever wonder if you should use "different from" or "different than" in an essay? Woe is I by Patricia T. O'Connor (a really good grammar book) says on page 96, "The simple answer is that "different from" is almost always right and "different than" is almost always wrong. You can stop there if you like."

Shout Out

Kevin D. Glenn from Ohio sent us an update on his son, Kevin, Jr., who is now a freshman at Miami of Ohio University. Kevin used to be an Associate Scholar. Mr. Glenn wrote "Pathways to College continued to be a constant reminder of the importance of a college education to Kevin during high school." Kevin's younger brother, Terrell, an eighth grade honor student and athlete, is now interested in the program. "Kevin has set such a good example for Terrell, and Terrell is now on his pathway to college," Mr. Glenn wrote. "Pathways to College is an exceptional program, and I would recommend that anyone who has the opportunity, get involved. It made a difference."



This is your newsletter -
Holla at us!

We're here... and here! questions@pathwaystocollege.org
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