



EWSIS COLLEGE COUNSELOR NEWSLETTER

MARCH 2018



Getting our Students Prepared for College- The College Visit!!!

As many of you may know, I have been planning college trips for both the middle school and high school students of EWSIS. Thus far, our previous college trips have been a valuable learning experience for both the students and colleges. College visits and tours play a significant role when students are determining if the college they are considering is the right “fit” for them. The feel once a student arrives on campus is very personal, and it is one all students should experience before deciding which school is right for them. A campus visit allows the prospective student to experience the trip involved to get to the school, the people who are there, and the actual learning environment on campus. Seeing the residential life and dorm rooms, tasting the food, walking the campus—all these elements are critical to understanding if a student will actually be happy once he/she is a student there.

I believe college visits are very critical to the process of students getting to know more about college and other post-secondary options. A campus visit is their opportunity to get a firsthand view of a college (walk around the quad, meet

with faculty and staff, explore student life, and visit the dorms). Though EWSIS is already a “College Bound” school, we would like to promote a stronger college going culture and diversify our student college options. This year alone, we have roughly 15 seniors who are being considered for highly selective institutions across the nation and internationally. To name a few: Columbia University, Cornell University, Dartmouth College, UPenn, RPI, Binghamton University, Stony Brook, New Paltz, SUNY Geneseo, Syracuse, Gettysburg, Baruch, Hunter, City College, UCLA- among others.

Although I am very excited about these milestones and accomplishments, I do want to share with you that some of the seniors discomfort or fear of stepping out of their comfort zone and expanding their horizons beyond what they know in school and at home. Several of the students who have applied to the aforementioned colleges are concerned about leaving home, not having the guidance or support while away at college, and being academically prepared to master college level work. Over 80% of our students are first-generation college students, who unfortunately cannot merely rely on the guidance of their family. That’s why I believe it is essential to expose our students to “college life” as early as middle school, whether it is affiliating themselves with colleges through co-curricular summer opportunities, campus visits, overnight college trips, taking a college course through the CUNY College Now program, etc.

As we continue to promote a college going culture and look ahead, I want to share with you some exciting opportunities that are planned for our students and share with you some

inspiring, encouraging, and life-changing experiences students have had thus far:

Last Minute College Trip that Changed Students Lives!

Through our CBI partnership six of our juniors had the opportunity to attend a college overnight trip visiting St. Bonaventure, Keuka College, and Alfred State College. Our students were greeted by staff, attended an information session, toured campus, and ate lunch in the dining halls with



current students. These six students- Dionis Afric, Valon Berisha, Juan Sebastian Mutis, Jason Moya

Rodas, Massiah Williams, and Bijan Zavieh had the opportunity to experience first-hand what it's like to attend college, as they engaged with administration, faculty, and current students. This was a great experience and has sparked interest in some who are considering applying to these colleges. Here are some statements I received via text message during the trip:

Mr.Carter I really want to say thank you for everything you did for us. You went out of your own way to do something that a lot of people wouldn't do. We learned stuff for college, and I am grateful for having the opportunity to do so. It was really thoughtful of you, so I'll just like to say thank you for everything you've done.

Awesome experience, can't wait to be able to talk to you about my future plans and see how you can guide me to my success. You do an amazing job and we obviously needed some change like this in EWSIS.

Thank you Mr Carter for giving me the opportunity to go on this weeks trip. Also thanks for going out of your way to get us home safely. We really appreciate you 🙏

Looking Ahead: College Visits

EWSIS partnership with the [College Bound Initiative](#) (CBI) provides resources for our students and families to experience visiting colleges and universities. Here are some of the remaining college trips for the semester:

- **Monday, March 19th** Select junior students are invited to attend a campus visit to SUNY Cortland.
- **Thursday April 12th - Friday April 13th** I will be taking 40 juniors on a college overnight trip to visit *Binghamton University, SUNY Oneonta, and Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute (RPI)*.
- **Wednesday, April 18th** Select junior students are invited to attend a campus visit to *Bucknell University* and learn more about this academic institution that is ranked as one of the top national liberal arts colleges in U.S. News and World Report Rankings.
- **Wednesday, April 18th**, I will be taking 30 juniors to visit *St. Josephs College* in Brooklyn. [Washington Monthly ranks SJC as the No. 9 "Best Bang for the Buck" college in the Northeast](#)
- **Thursday, April 19th**, Our middle school will be visiting select *CUNY campuses*.
- **Monday, April 30th**, I will be taking 50 sophomores to visit the University of Bridgeport in Connecticut.
- **Wednesday, May 4th**, the freshman will be visiting Columbia University (scavenger hunt).
- **Wednesday, May 4th** the juniors will be attending a college visit and fair at Manhattan College.

Raising Funds for College: Kevin's College Campaign



Kevin K. Chen is one of our seniors who recently got accepted to *Ritsumeikan Asia Pacific University (APU)*, Japan's leading international university. Although APU cost of attendance is much lower than

attending a college or university here in the states, if Kevin decides to study abroad in Japan he will not receive state or federal aid. His family is extremely supportive and wants Kevin to follow his dreams. However, after already making a financial commitment to help him with tuition, Kevin does not have the funds to cover the initial enrollment fee. After several conversations with Kevin and seeing how excited he is about this once in a lifetime opportunity we both agreed that he should start a *GoFundMe* account to raise funds to cover his enrollment fee.

**If you would like to make a donation, here is the web address below*

<https://www.gofundme.com/Kevincollegecampaign>

"Hello family, friends, and anyone who finds themselves reading this post! My name is Kevin Chen, I am 17 years old and I am currently a senior at East- West School of International Studies in Flushing, NY.

I would love to share some exciting news with you. I recently got accepted into my top college choice— Ritsumeikan Asia Pacific University (APU)! Since a child, it has always been dream of mine to study in JAPAN. Being Japanese, I've always been amazed with the language, food, people, style of dress, and cultural activities. I loved the culture so much that I decided to create and become the founding president of the Japanese Culture Club at my high school. This club is a student-run club that seeks to provide a space for students to celebrate Japanese culture, and give EWSIS students the opportunity to appreciate Japanese culture.

*I received notice that the \$5,500 enrollment deposit fee for APU is due **May 30th, 2018**. Because APU offers very little funding to*

*attend, I am trying to raise money to assist with my enrollment deposit. I am fortunate enough to have my parents contribute \$4,000; however I am still left with a gap of **\$1,500** to pay. I am starting a *GoFundMe* account to raise \$1500. This is my first time doing this and thought, "Why not give this a try? Anything helps at this point!" So, as a little social experiment, it is time for me to see if the people in my community are willing to help me out. As an old Tanzanian proverb says, "Little by little, a little becomes a lot." – Kevin K. Chen*

SAT and PSAT Day: Motivational Speaker coming to EWSIS to speak with freshmen and seniors.

In efforts to continue to promote a strong college culture here at EWSIS and prepare our students for post-secondary decisions. It is imperative that our students are continuously encouraged, motivated, and inspired to be the best versions of themselves, so in turn they can become future problem solvers, activist, scholars, formidable practitioners, and agents of change. In many ways, I like to think of EWSIS as being the incubator for leaders of tomorrow.

With that in mind, I have scheduled for guest speaker **Matthew Stephens** to speak with our freshman and seniors about being their "*Authentic Self*". Motivational speakers are a great way to inspire and encourage young people to push themselves out of



their comfort zone and teach them the importance of self-belief and a positive attitude. Motivational speakers are especially beneficial to students during poignant times during the school term; for example, when end of term exams are looming, or if they are facing any important educational choices and decisions to make, or the students are moving out of their comfort zones and on to college.

Gearing Up for Senior College Sign-In Day!!!



I am excited to share with you all the date for our *Senior College Sign-In Day* - the event will be on **Wednesday, May 30th at 6:30 PM**. Inspired by former First Lady Michelle Obama's [Reach Higher Initiative](#), Signing Day events inspire students to take charge of their future by continuing their education beyond high school. This day will be special for all of our seniors as they continue to embark on this new journey to post-secondary education. The goal of College Signing Day is to support them as they make an informed college decision, celebrate their post-secondary plans, and encourage our EWSIS underclassmen and families to prepare for college as early as possible.

On this day, seniors will announce what college they will be matriculating in the fall. This is a celebration you don't want to miss! **PLEASE MARK YOUR CALENDARS.**

MAY 2018						
SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		

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Junior Parent Night: Tuesday May 3rd

Junior Parent Night is an important tradition marking the initial transition of juniors becoming rising seniors. As a college bound school, EWSIS is deeply committed to serving students and helping provide the support they need to pursue post-secondary education. In conjunction with

grade team advisors and our Parent Coordinator, this informative session will be open to all junior students and families, and will serve as our "kick-off" to the college planning process. Important topics and pertinent information regarding senior year will be discussed.

Roundtable Discussions: A talk with some of our EWSIS Seniors:



As a seasoned College Counselor, I take pride in getting to know students and watching their maturation throughout their high school years. This year I was fortunate enough to work with extremely talented students, who strive to achieve in every field of human endeavor. My goal is to truly serve and enhance students' lives and provide unparalleled learning experiences within an inclusive and supportive environment; an environment that aspires to a high performance culture that places students first and recognizes commitment to quality and simplicity.

This section of the newsletter "*Roundtable Discussions*" will be a student run column. It will be a column consisting of student conducted interviews with teachers, staff, and fellow students on issues that peak their interested related to college. Being the first edition of this newsletter, I decided to interview three seniors who I had the pleasure of getting to know and worked with consistently for the past few months.

Yueting Liao



This academic school year has been pretty intense for many seniors, as they navigate through this very intricate college application process. You have been persistent with your goal of attending a top tier engineering university. After several

counseling sessions you decided to apply [Early Decisions](#) to *Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute (RPI)* one of the top 50 colleges in the nation. After perfecting your admissions portfolio (exceptionally letters of recommendations and compelling personal statement) you were admitted with a presidential merit scholarship. You have been also scouted by NYU and Columbia.

So, Yueting, why RPI? What made you consider applying to RPI -Early Decision?

"I decided to apply early decision for RPI because I believe it is a right college for me in terms of the major and future career, it has everything I want so, it was worth applying early decision. Also, when you apply Early Decision you have the chance of getting the most adequate amount of financial aid to help with the cost of attending. It also increases the chance of getting more scholarship opportunities while enrolled."

You are really excited about attending RPI! What are you looking forward to the most ?

"I'm extremely excited about enrolling at RPI for having the chance to participate in the student clubs and programs that are provided by RPI, like Rensselaer AI & Reasoning Lab and NASA Robot Challenges. These activities match with my personal interest and these would benefit my learning and future career."

I love to hear that! What would you recommend for any one of the rising seniors considering RPI- What advice would you give?

"For applying to RPI, I highly recommend students getting involved in extracurricular activities that could demonstrate personal

interests, ability, talent or experience in a particular area. Most of people focused on the academic part in their application, therefore highlight other special experiences that is different from the majority will makes the student stand out. Lastly, writing a compelling stating personal statement that highlights your potential, motivation, and career goals would make you stand out in a positive way"

William Lee



Mr. William Lee!!! – Or shall I say “Mr. Valedictorian”! You are someone who I worked with probably the most. As appointed Valedictorian- there must be a lot of pressure on you applying to colleges. To

name a few, you have submitted applications to Cornell, Columbia, UPenn, Princeton, Binghamton, Stony Brook- among others.

What would you say was the most challenging part of the application process?

"When you think you're done, you're actually not done. The most challenging, and most annoying, part of the application process is completing financial aid supplements. Printing out documents, answering some questions, scanning the documents, and uploading them back to the website is probably the most annoying and repetitive process I've ever done."

I've only been at EWSIS for approximately seven months and in that little time you all have made a tremendous impact in my own life. In retrospect how was your experience working with the college office thus far?

"Mr. Carter is the best college counselor I've ever worked with, probably because he has no competition in East-West, but still, he's the best. He's generous, fun, dedicated, and hilarious; he even dedicates his Saturdays to help us with our college applications. More importantly, he's always there when you need him. A day without Mr. Carter brings a day of chaos: unanswered college questions, no snacks, and no room to chill in."

Ritu Dev

Ritu, you have been a major help with assisting me in the college office with regular day to day operations and helping others with their applications and college interviews. I believe part of your expertise comes

from your experience as College Bound Summer Institute (CBSI) alumni.

How did CBSI prepare you for the college application process and how has that experience allow you to help others in this sometimes stressful and daunting process?

“CBSI was a great experience that I had. In a way the activities that were created actually helped me get a glimpse of College life with the exception of academics. Socially I felt more comfortable to go away for college. Everybody was put in groups and divided where no one person was with their friends from high school. This encouraged me to talk to people that I have never met and open up. My roommate and I got along really fast and I felt like college will be this easy to make a whole bunch of friends. For the College process that handbook I got as really helpful. It had everything in it. That handbook prepared me for my college interviews. The CBI people stressed the fact that I’m college you have to be both professional and social and I think they did a great job preparing me for the social part Of the College process.”

How has college visits effect your decision making?

“I have visited several colleges. Visiting Gettysburg College, Cornell University, Manhattan College and the University of

Bridgeport through CBI had a tremendous effect on my decision making. Every college visit was different and I knew if I wanted to go or not based on the campus style. The most effective college visit was Cornell University.

I knew that I will be able to stay there for four years because, the campus size, then reservation halls and the food! These college visits allowed me to experience a day or two of living on campus and exploring student life. If you are going to go away for college, you have to make sure you can live in that dorm, or eat the food or withstand the weather (its cold upstate). College visits are crucial if you are planning to go away for College.”

What are you most excited about going away for college?

“EVERYTHING! I’m going to meet new people, make my own decisions and most importantly I will be independent. I don’t have to come home knowing that along with College I will have to prepare my young brothers for the NYS exams. I am going to have my freedom. Going away for college will teach me how to live life on my own and I will love to have that experience. I don’t want to depend on anybody. I want to have my own job and take care of myself. I want to challenge myself to make wise decisions and see if I am capable of doing the same when I have a career. It’s all about the challenge. I get to live in another environment. The whole thing about college is going to be a new experience and an adventure for me.”



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