

Student's forum

This Week's Question:
Who is your favorite musician?

Last Week's Question:
What do you like to read in the newspaper?

The comics, along with my horoscope.

I read the sports first, then the front page stories, then business.

Job openings.

H.H.

P.D.

G.F.

Send all submissions to
students@heraldpublications.com

Facebook Can be Fatal to Your College Applications

By Michelle Lanphere Green

Social networking sites are all the rage. It seems like everyone has an account, these days. A word of caution to all of those on Facebook and MySpace, remember that not everyone is your friend, including the college admissions representatives. While most colleges aren't officially researching a prospective college applicant, you never know which counselors are stealthily checking out your profile. If you say you spend all your free time helping at the homeless shelter or playing sports, you better think about what your Facebook profile says about you. Does your profile tell a complete stranger that you have a much different lifestyle than what you have written about in your essays and on your college applications?

Don't share too freely. That means, be yourself, but don't tell every gory detail about what you did at the bonfire with that guy you just met, with pictures to go with your cryptic posts. If it might make an adult reconsider taking a chance on you for something as important as college admissions, than just say no to that incriminating post. Even innocent posts may sound bad, if taken out of context.

You never know who is reading your page. With Facebook and Myspace you should be adjusting your privacy settings so that your page isn't open to the whole world. If it is, don't be surprised when admissions and scholarships committees, future employers or others influential in helping you get into college or land a job check out your profile. You may not be happy with the results.

They call it Facebook stalking, don't they? If you don't want an admissions advisor to see that you partied this weekend and were "So, wasted, dude," your biker name, your cussing skills, saying offensive things about your teachers or coaches, or general disrespectful behavior, then don't post it on Facebook or Myspace. Ever.

You may grow up, but bandwidth stays forever. Remind your friends not to post pictures of you that would embarrass your grandma, either. (She may be on FB, before you know it!) If you are tagged in a photo that may get you in trouble, untag yourself.

Think about posting the positive things you are involved in that will remind them why they should accept you. Are you involved in community service activity? Get your friends involved. Post pictures. What about your upcoming recital or sports event? Share those details. Be your own cheerleader. Promote yourself in a good way.

Facebook is here to stay. Don't let some harmless fun crush your dreams. Think about your profile. Does your page help or hurt you, as you pursue your goals in life? If you aren't sure, go check your profile. Delete stuff. Change your privacy settings. Think about the message you are sending not only to your friends and family, but people who you may never even meet, but may have a big role in influencing your future.

My College Admissions Coach offers personalized help for students and their parents as they navigate the college search and admissions process. Follow my blog at: <http://collegeoptions.blogspot.com/>

The MCHS College and Career Center – A Resource for Every Student

By Darren Sepanek

An astounding 96 percent of graduates from Mira Costa High School enter institutions of higher learning. This is possible because students work very hard, they are provided with an excellent education and they are graduating from one of the top high schools in the country. Supporting this exceptional accomplishment are the counselors of the Mira Costa College and Career Center (CCC).

Funded by the Manhattan Beach Education Foundation, the principal goal of the CCC is the dissemination of information. With a full library of resources in the CCC, a comprehensive website, a weekly e-blast, articles in the Mira Costa PTSA e-News, workshops and individual counseling, just about everything that students and parents need to know about finding and applying to college or other areas of higher learning is available.

The two counselors, hired in the summer of 2008, Gail Currey and Katherine Folkman, have worked passionately to turn the CCC into a resource that is second to none. "The better informed our students and their parents are about preparing for and navigating the college admissions process, the more successful they will be in finding the right school," said Gail Currey, CCC Counselor. We know that choosing schools and applying can be overwhelming. It's our job to ease the stress with education, information and a little TLC.

The CCC counselors help ensure that parents and students are well-informed about the college admissions process and how to finance a college education. They host "Parent and Student Information Nights" where guest speakers cover topics such as admissions to and attending Cal State, UC and private schools; financial aid; college sports and the NCAA, and SAT/ACT test preparation. Additionally the CCC hosts the Mira Costa High School Career Expo each spring and a joint College Fair with Redondo Union High School in the fall.

One of the most important jobs of the CCC counselors is the associations they forge with college admissions officers. "Our job is to represent Mira Cost High School and our students to the college admissions community," said Katherine Folkman, CCC Counselor. "If a college admissions officer

is impressed with MCHS and is successful in placing students at his/her college, they will continue to return here year after year to recruit students. There are hundreds of schools vying for each admission officer's attention. We have to make sure that Mira Costa is at the top of their list. Our students take care of the rest."

As a result of their efforts, the number of college representatives who visit Mira Costa has increased dramatically from around 35 in 2007 to 82 in 2009. Students are made aware of the schedule of college representatives visiting Mira Costa through Naviance, a web-based college counseling resource that the CCC supports. With Naviance, students can also research and compare individual schools and learn about scholarship opportunities as they become available.

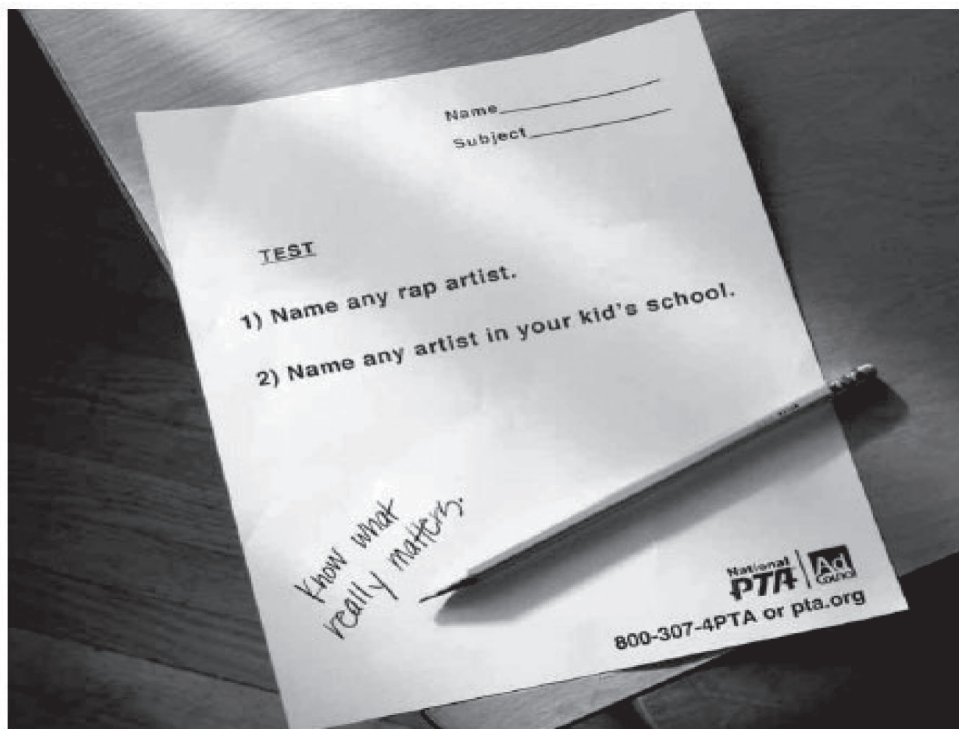
So much of what a family needs to know is now at their fingertips with the CCC website (www.miracostacc.com). A wealth of information and resources, the website includes tools to help navigate the college selection and admissions process, an outline of testing schedules and test prep resources, a master calendar, an online schedule of college visits and so much more.

Ms. Currey and Ms. Folkman meet with all students to introduce them to the CCC and help them prepare for what they need to do during each year of high school in order to apply for a program of higher learning. As part of the guidance counseling team at Mira Costa, the CCC counselors work with the education advisors to ensure students have a four-year plan that will enable them to accomplish their goals for graduation and to be eligible for college admission.

"Our goal is to help students prepare for applying to the schools or programs that best suit them and to help with financial aid and scholarship applications," said Currey. "This can't all happen in their senior year. It's a process that starts when they are freshmen and simply culminates when they are seniors. This is truly a resource for every student and it would not be here without the generous support of those who donate to MBEF."

Paying for college is often a concern and a challenge. In addition to many print and online resources, the CCC hosts financial aid workshops and provides support for "Senior Scholarship Notebooks," complete student portfolios that serve to present seniors to organizations providing scholarships.

Without the CCC, navigating the college admissions process would be a bit like crossing the ocean in a life raft. Anyone interested in donating to MBEF and supporting resources like the CCC can visit www.mbef.org.



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