Getting a summer job can work for you

Work experience—paid or volunteer—can teach students discipline, responsibility, reliability, teamwork, and other skills.

A summer job may be a good way to gain experience and earn money for college as well. If your student works during the school year, he or she should not work so many hours that the job interferes with school work.

Some students also participate in such community service activities as tutoring elementary school children or volunteering in a local hospital. Such activities make valuable contributions to society and also help students to identify their career interests and goals, gain workplace skills, and apply classroom learning to real world problem solving. Community service is a valuable part of a student’s college application.

MCPS high school students must earn 75 hours of Student ServiceLearning (SSL) to receive a high school diploma. SSL is an unpaid activity within the curriculum, school, or outside community that provides service to an individual or group to address a school or community need.

Source: ed.gov

Start with a virtual visit

The best way to see what a college or university is like is to visit. But the best time to visit is when school is in session. This summer, you can narrow your choices by taking “virtual visits” at one of the following websites. CampusTours.com and eCampustours.com provide campus tours of more than 1,000 colleges and universities. You can also visit the website of a specific college or university that interests you. On most sites, you can see videos and snapshots of campus buildings and campus life. All of the research you do prior to an on-site visit can make your decision easier—and save you thousands of dollars.

Source: nacacnet.org
Interested in the Performing Arts?

Take a class with an award-winning theatre professor. KenYatta Rogers is the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching and the Council for the Advancement and Support of Education (CASE) foundation’s Maryland professor of the year.

Rogers teaches classes in voice and diction, movement for the performer, and fundamentals of acting. He is also the advisor for the Black Box Players, a student theater group, and an annual student poetry festival held at the College, “MCSLAM!” A professional actor, Rogers has appeared in more than 50 film, television, radio, and voiceover programs. He has also been nominated for three Helen Hayes Awards.

How to prepare for admission tests

If you’ve started thinking about college, you’ve probably heard about admission tests, such as the SAT and the ACT. Colleges use scores from these tests to help them make admission decisions. So it makes sense to plan to do your best on the exam. Here are some tips to help you do that.

Know what to expect. Being familiar with the test’s format is the single best way to prepare for that test. Go to the testing organization’s website or check out books to get familiar with the various test sections and the instructions for each part.

Take preliminary tests. The organizations that offer the SAT and the ACT also offer tests that are meant to be taken in sophomore or junior year. The PSAT/NMSQT is available as practice for the SAT, and PLAN is available as practice for the ACT. These preliminary, or introductory, tests make great practice tests because they have the same formats and question types as the admission tests.

Take practice exams—for free or at low cost. The good news is you don’t need to spend a lot of money on test-prep courses. In fact, studies show that high-cost test preparation gets most students little in terms of results. You can find free practice exams on the SAT and ACT websites and in study guides from the test makers in the library, bookstores, or your counselor’s office.

See what areas need work. When you get the score from your practice test, pay attention to the types of questions that gave you trouble. You should focus on those areas as you prepare. But remember, the best way to prepare for the test is to study hard and do well in your classes. So don’t let practicing for admission tests interfere with your course work.

Check your timing. Be sure to time yourself while you are completing practice exams so you can experience real test-day conditions. Admission tests are strictly timed, and their timing is different from regular high school tests. If you find you finished early and got easy questions wrong, slow down and read questions more thoroughly.

Source: collegeboard.org

College scholarship conference

This conference offers information sessions and exhibits for high school, college, and adult students on how to compete and win scholarship money for college.

Saturday, October 10
Universities at Shady Grove
scholarshipconference@montgomerycollege.edu

The event is sponsored by Montgomery County Public Schools, Montgomery College, and the Universities at Shady Grove. At this conference, you will:
• Meet representatives from colleges, universities, and scholarship organizations
• Learn about financial aid and scholarship opportunities
Financial aid

Negotiation.
Although some colleges and universities refuse to make deals, you can, in some cases, negotiate your financial aid award. If a student is gifted in an area that is important to the school, the school might take a second look at the award. Also, students whose families experienced a drastic reduction in their income (e.g., high medical bills, job loss) may ask the financial aid office to recalculate their financial need.

Missed a priority deadline?
All is not lost.
Did you miss the priority deadline for financial aid applications at one of your college hopefuls? Think you can’t receive financial aid now? Not true. Even if you miss the priority deadline, you can still apply for and receive financial aid. Don’t give up; apply today.

Source: Montgomery College Financial Aid

Rima Sakhawala, a second-year biochemistry major in the Montgomery Scholars honors program, describes her cohort as 25 of the most amazing people she has ever met. “We’re kind of like a family,” she says, adding that many of them take classes together outside the Montgomery Scholars program. Sakhawala, a 2013 graduate of Magruder High School, said choosing to attend Montgomery College made the most sense because she could save money to pursue a PhD in neurology. She recently applied to transfer to University of Maryland, Bucknell University, University of North Carolina, and University of Maryland Baltimore County. She is a member of Phi Theta Kappa (honor society) and the Women’s Studies Club. She also tutors students in Disability Support Services lab on the Rockville Campus.

For more information on the Montgomery Scholars honors program, visit montgomerycollege.edu/montgomeryscholars

Astronomy Observatory
According to colleeerank.com, Montgomery College’s (MC) Astronomy Observatory ranks among the top 25 observatories in the nation. The structure is the center of activity for students enrolled in the College’s astronomy courses, as well as for those taking more advanced physics or astronomy coursework on the Rockville Campus. MC maintains a public events calendar as well, giving local residents the opportunity to visit the observatory during meteor showers, special celestial events, or simply to gaze into the heavens and enjoy whichever sights might await them. To provide superior educational experiences to students and local residents alike, the MC observatory leverages the power of two 15-inch Celestron telescopes, three 8-inch Celestron telescopes, and a traditional sliding-roof structure that allows for maximum visibility. The College also offers rooftop observation space suitable for smaller, tripod-mounted telescopes that both students and locals routinely take advantage of on clear nights.
**Montgomery College**

Have a question? Please contact:
Elena Saenz Nisson at 240-567-5029
elena.saenz@montgomerycollege.edu
Dr. Genevieve Floyd at 240-453-2490
Genevieve_L_Floyd@mcpsmd.org

**June**
- Ask to shadow someone whose job interests you.
- Get a summer job. Your high school Career Center may have job listings that interest you.

**July**
- Check out the websites of colleges that interest you—read the admissions section, take a virtual tour, and look at the courses offered.
- Work on special submissions for college applications: portfolios, audition tapes, writing samples.
- commonapp.org provides the Common Application, which many colleges use for admission; they may also require forms of their own.
- NACACnet.org lists regional college fairs.

**August**
- Sign up for the ACT test by Aug. 7; test is administered on Sept. 12.
- Type a personal profile so your counselor can have a guide when writing your recommendations. List your goals, academic interests, achievements, volunteer and extracurricular activities, work experience, and problems you have overcome.
- Update your resume to include summer employment and volunteer activities.
- Check out studentaid.ed.gov and MDgo4it.org for financial aid information.
- Continue planning college visits—research dates, costs, etc.
- Get organized. Make separate files for each college and scholarship program.
- Practice writing online applications: fill out rough drafts; don’t submit them.

**September**
- Sign up for the SAT test by Sept. 4; test is administered on Oct. 3.
- Sign up for the ACT test by Sept. 18; test is administered on Oct. 24.
- Mark the calendar with admission and financial aid deadlines.
- Visit colleges—and don’t just take the tour. Schedule an admissions interview if possible. Send thank-you notes to interviewers.
- Take on leadership roles in your school or community.
- Begin drafting college application essays. (Yes, really.)
- Review your transcript—check for errors and make sure it shows any high school credits you earned in middle school.

**October**
- Sign up for the SAT by Oct. 8; test is administered on Nov. 7.
- The earlier you apply to some colleges, the better your chances might be for admission.
- Should you use the Common Application? See commonapp.org and individual colleges for details.
- Keep a copy of every form you submit.
- Talk with teachers and counselors about recommendations—to ask for recommendations, discuss your interests and college choices. Give each teacher/counselor your resume along with stamped, addressed envelopes.
- Finalize portfolios, audition tapes, writing samples, or other required special submissions.
- After drafting applications, let them sit for a few days and then proofread. Proofread from a paper copy.
- Financial aid information is available from colleges; get it and check the due dates.
- Apply for scholarships.

Source: mhec.state.md.us