

RIVER VALLEY SENIOR INFO

WELCOME BACK!

This forum will update you on a regular basis on all matters that pertain to senior activities including applications, testing, and financial aid. All seniors will be seen on an individual basis during the first semester of the school year to discuss these issues and provide applications and other materials.

APPLICATIONS - The guidance office has applications for all Michigan colleges and universities and will also get any out of state applications that you may desire. However, please be aware that many schools now prefer or may require that you go to their school website and fill out the applications online. If you do this, there should be an spot for you to print out a recommendation page for the counselor. Print and bring this page to Mr. Goodman who will fill it out and send it in for you along with a copy of your transcripts. With all applications, please keep the following things in mind:

- Fill out the application in pen (if using a paper application).
- If you are not sure how to answer a question, leave it blank and ask Mr. Goodman.

It may be that the particular question does not even apply to you.

- If there are essays to write, do them on a separate sheet of paper first. Feel free to let Mr. Goodman see them and he will be glad to give you suggestions on how to make them better. **Don't be afraid to say good things about yourself; the purpose of the essay is to help sell yourself to the admissions counselor.**
- It is a good idea to use a word processor to make a list of activities, awards, and honors. You can then attach this information to the application.
- Get your recommendation letters now. Mr. Goodman will be happy to write one and you should ask at least one other person to do one for you.
- If the application has a fee, make a check out to the college (if using a paper application) or you can pay with a credit card.
- Finally, let the guidance office send in everything for you. We will include your transcript, ACT scores, and any other needed information. If you are using a paper application, it will be checked over for you to make sure that it is complete.

ACT TEST DATES 2006-2007

Test Date	Registration Deadline	Late Fee Required
October 28, 2006	September 26, 2006	September 23-October 6, 2006
December 9, 2006	November 3, 2006	November 4-16, 2006
February 10, 2007	January 5, 2007	January 6-19, 2007
April 14, 2007	March 9, 2007	March 10-23, 2007
June 9, 2007	May 4, 2007	May 5-18, 2007

ACT TESTS - The dates that the ACT is given are listed on the bottom of the previous page. It is recommended that any senior that has not taken this test or wants to retest consider the October or December test dates. Applications are available in the guidance office or you can register online at <www.act.org>.

form. Do not assume that you make too much money to be eligible. Some colleges will not even consider you for any other money until you have demonstrated that you won't receive anything from the federal government. The FAFSA will be available shortly before Christmas break.

Does it help to take the ACT test more than once?

In many cases, you can add up 3 or 4 points to your score if you retake the test. Remember, there is no risk to taking the test again because colleges will take your best set of scores. What you **can't** do is combine scores from two different tests to come up with the best composite. If you are unhappy with your test results, then try it again. But remember that test scores are just a part of the application process and poor test results can often be overcome by other factors such as strength of schedule, grade point average, and extracurricular activities.

Scholarship Search Services: These services will typically ask the student to provide some personal information, such as religion, heritage, and hobbies. Based on this profile, the student will typically receive a computer printout which will list different scholarship possibilities. It is then up to the student to write to the address provided and request an application. You will receive many advertisements in the mail for this type of service, asking you to send anywhere from \$80.00 to \$500.00 to do a search. Usually there is a guarantee involved, in

FINANCIAL AID - Trying to figure out how to pay for college can be one of the most stressful activities that you may ever face. One of the biggest mistakes that people make is assuming that the family makes too much money to qualify for aid. There are tons of scholarships, grants, and work study options available, some based on need and some based on other factors.

which they state that if you don't receive a certain number of awards they will refund your money. Unfortunately, in order to take advantage of that guarantee, you have to prove that you applied to all of the possibilities sent to you. In most cases, this is impossible because many times the places listed will not respond to your inquiry. However, there are search services on the web that will do this for free.

The major component of this process is the federal form known as the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). Awards based on this application are made on a need basis. Academics are not taken into consideration. Eligibility for any need based award from the federal government will be determined by simply filling out this one application. This form is also used by the State of Michigan to help determine the Michigan Competitive Scholarship winners, an award based on ACT scores and financial need. It is important for everybody who desires financial aid to fill out this

FASTWEB - Simply point your browser to the following URL: <www.fastweb.com>. The opening screen will ask you to provide a username, password, and e-mail address. You will then fill out their search form online and scholarship possibilities will be sent to your fastweb mailbox, along with a form letter that you can use to write for applications. There is no guarantee, but it easily provides as much information as the services that charge a fee.

MI-SEARCH - This search service will bring up national and Michigan specific scholarship

possibilities. The site is at www.michigan.gov/mistudentaid. Once at this location, there will be a link to the MI-SEARCH scholarship search program. Using this service, a Michigan student will receive information about any Michigan specific scholarships listed in the database that match the student's profile information. This is an addition to any scholarships available to students nationwide.

ELKS NATIONAL FOUNDATION MOST VALUABLE STUDENT AWARD - This scholarship is based on academics, leadership, and financial need. Any high school senior who is a US citizen is eligible. Male and female students compete separately for identical awards. 500 four-year awards are available, including 494 runner-up awards of \$1,000 per year, 2 third place awards of \$5,000 per year, 2 second place awards of \$10,000 per year, and 2 first place awards of \$15,000 per year. **The deadline to apply for this scholarship is January 12, 2007.** Applications are available from the guidance office or can be downloaded at www.elks.org.

COCA-COLA SCHOLARS FOUNDATION SCHOLARSHIP - The Coca-Cola scholars program is a merit-based scholarship awarded to 250 high school students per year. Fifty of these are worth \$5,000 per year for four years and 200 are worth \$2,500 per year for four years. To be eligible to apply you must be a current high school senior, planning to pursue a degree at an accredited US post-secondary institution, and have a minimum 3.00 GPA at the end of your junior year of high school. Applications can only be filled out online at www.coca-colascholars.org. **The deadline to apply for this scholarship is October 31, 2007.** Please check with the guidance office if you have any questions.

HORATIO ALGER SCHOLARSHIP - The Horatio Alger Association seeks to assist stu-

dents who have demonstrated integrity, perseverance in overcoming adversity, strength of character, financial need, a good academic work record, commitment to pursue a college education, and a desire to contribute to society.

The eligibility criteria to be considered for this program are as follow:

- ◆ Enrolled full time as a high school senior, progressing normally toward graduation in spring 2007.
- ◆ Intend to pursue a bachelor's degree at an accredited institution (students may start their studies at a two-year school and transfer to a four-year college or university).
- ◆ Critical financial need, preferably \$50,000 or lower adjusted gross income.
- ◆ Involvement in co-curricular and community service activities.
- ◆ Minimum GPA of 2.0.
- ◆ US citizen or permanent resident.

To apply for this scholarship, the following items must be completed by October 30, 2006.

- ◆ Students must submit an online application at www.horatioalger.org/scholarships.
- ◆ Students must mail one letter of support from an adult who understands your adversity and can describe the unique circumstances in your life. This form can be downloaded from www.horatioalger.org/scholarships/requiredforms.cfm.
- ◆ Students must download the certifications page, complete it and obtain the proper signatures before mailing.
- ◆ All applicants must submit a photo copy of the front page of their parent/guardian's federal tax return from the 2005 tax year.

Please check with the guidance office if you have any questions.