

## Barbara Snider College/Career Center News

### By Terri Fenech

#### **National Merit Students Honored**

On October 12 we honored the following students for National Merit.

National Merit Finalist, Catherine Yi, National Hispanic Recognition, Rolando Del Poso and National Merit Commended students: Vivian Chen, Daniel Choi, Sophia Cross, Hanna Evensen, Erin Gerber, Katherine Hsu, Manohar Jois, Chelsea Meacham, Katherine Patterson, Romil Singapuri, Ellen Spartz, Barbara Storch, Carolyn Sy, Carina Traub, Steffan Voges, Nicholas Wetherbee.

Mrs. Shiu presented each student with a framed certificate. They celebrated with the counseling department, and school administrators, and most important, a chocolate cake.

**UC and CSU Applications should be filed no later than Nov. 20<sup>th</sup>.** In the last two years it has become tradition at SMHS for seniors to file their public college applications no later than Nov. 20<sup>th</sup>. Students have become aware of the problems that they might face if they wait until Thanksgiving Week end. Let's keep the tradition of having all Bearcats admitted if they are public university eligible and they have a safe school listed. **GO - BEARCATS!!!**

**What Happens after Seniors Submit their College Applications** Students will receive application emails (some campuses will send a letter) including application ID #. **Save this email.** If something is missing in the application. (test scores, etc.) Students will receive an email giving them a short time to supply the missing data. Students must check their email regularly to ensure that they don't miss their communications and deadlines. The California State Universities firmly stated that they will send only one reminder to students this year.

#### **College Interviews**

Some private universities invite students to personal interviews (few require them). It is a good idea to schedule one if it is suggested to you by the university even if they say that it isn't mandatory. An interview is an opportunity! How many times in your life are you invited to talk about yourself to share the best of yourself with others? A college or scholarship interview is not to be dreaded or feared but enjoyed. See Mrs. Fenech or Mrs. Furgiuele for an appointment for a practice interview and you will be well prepared

#### **College/Financial Aid Check List for Seniors**

- College entrance tests must be completed no later than December for seniors applying to UC and CSU campuses
- Find out which financial aid applications colleges require and when the forms are due. Many private schools require the CSS Profile which is available through [www.collegeboard.com](http://www.collegeboard.com). Look for link under "Pay for College." Many merit-based scholarship applications are due as early as November.
- Seniors should apply for a PIN now by visiting [www.pin.ed.gov](http://www.pin.ed.gov).** In order to apply for federal and state financial aid, seniors need to file a **Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) in January.** This is best done online, see [www.fafsa.ed.gov](http://www.fafsa.ed.gov) . **The student**

**and parent can obtain a PIN code now** in order to electronically sign the FAFSA and to be able to go online to make any necessary changes to their FAFSA data when they apply in 2012

- Check with individual colleges and universities for on-site Preview Days and other local events. Most campuses include this information on their website. The Career Center has a wealth of information and listings.
- Students should visit their top school choices. Be sure to interview some students, faculty and staff from those schools.  
Continue to search for scholarship opportunities. Seniors check the listings both in Naviance and in the Career Center often.

**FREE Money for College** Scholarship information is accessible in the Career Center and updated on a weekly basis. Lists are also posted in senior English and Social Science classes and Naviance for parents and students. Many local scholarship opportunities become available now and in the spring semester, **San Mateo students are encouraged to apply.** The scholarships are based on many different qualifications, such as financial need, merit, ethnicity, religion, career goals, community service, leadership, athletics, creativity and more. **Students should check the Career Center and Naviance (Scholarships) regularly.**

**All Students and Parents: Beware of financial aid scams!**

- Almost all scholarship information is available for free.
- Do your own research.
- Never give your credit card information to someone to hold a scholarship.
- Seniors: Do not pay for the **Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA)** or pay someone to fill it out for you.
- Finally be skeptical of college financial planning “seminars.”
- Feel free to contact Mrs. Fenech if you have any questions about financial aid scams.

**DATES TO REMEMBER**

**FAFSA -Free Application for Federal Student Aid** Available online Jan. 1, 2012

**Financial Aid Night in the SMHS Main Gym, Jan. 18, 2012, 7-9 p.m.**

Come to this informative presentation given by the Assistant Director of Financial Aid, Norm Caito, from University of San Francisco. You will leave this presentation well prepared to file the FAFSA for your student.

**Deadline for Cal Grant Eligibility** March 2, 2012

Students should turn in their Cal Grant form **now**. They were included in the summer mailing. If you need another, they are available in the Career Center. SMHS files these forms electronically for seniors.

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