**SENIOR CORNER**

*Blue Sheets:* Seniors—all blue sheets should be turned into the College office. While there may be a rare exception here and there, at this point you should know all the colleges to which you will apply. This class did a great job on being so timely in turning in your blue sheets. We greatly appreciate you adhering to the deadlines. Parents, later this month we will send home a final list of colleges that your child indicated to us he/she was applying.

*Mock Interviews:* If you are a bit nervous or want to do a practice run in anticipation of interviewing with a college or scholarship competition, sign up for a mock interview. Please take advantage of this opportunity with a college counselor. We ask that you schedule an appointment with someone other than your own college counselor so you experience interviewing with someone new.

*Testing should be Complete.* By now all seniors should be done with their standardized testing. In rare cases a student might need to test into 2020. Please visit [www.collegeboard.com](http://www.collegeboard.com) and/or [www.actstudent.org](http://www.actstudent.org) to find test dates and locations that work best with your needs. Please remember that when you send your scores from College Board or ACT it can take about three weeks for your test scores to reach the college or university. **Do not wait until the last minute to send scores and risk your application being incomplete after the admission deadline.**

*Dealing with a Defer:* If you were deferred from a college, the good news is you are still being considered! There are a few things you can do to improve your chances for admission. The most important is to finish strong with your semester grades! **Semester grades will be sent out to all colleges where a student applied the week of January 21.** We ask that you see your college counselor to discuss handling a defer for those schools you are still very interested in attending.

*Update your College Counselor:* In addition to letting your college counselor know of any admissions decisions and scholarships received, please let her/him know of any new awards or accolades you have received since you submitted your application. During the winter months we reach out to the colleges where admissions decisions are still outstanding. We offer updates, check on credentials, advocate for our students and try to glean information about colleges’ applicant pools. Please make sure you let us know if you decided not to apply to a school or it is no longer under consideration. Thank you!

*Scholarship Opportunities:* Please continue to check the Gilmour portal and read Mr.DeCrane’s weekly email alerting you of scholarships known to our office. We tend to see an uptick in scholarships spring semester.

**JUNIORS CORNER**

*Meet your College Counselor:* In order to schedule your first college meeting, students must complete and turn in both their Junior College Questionnaire and College Preference Form to their college counselor. Both of these forms were passed out at our Junior College Kickoff or can be found in the portal under the “Resources Section”. Select “College Counseling” to gain access to both forms and more. As a reminder, students with the last name A-B and all resident students will work with Ms. Reidy, C-Man with Mr. DeCrane and Mar-Z with Mrs. Stockard. We look forward to meeting up with you!

*PSAT:* PSAT results came out the week of December 9. You can access these by logging into your Collegeboard account. If you have problems receiving your scores, you can see your college counselor. Your PSAT score results will be further discussed at your one-on-one college meeting.
Two Test Prep Opportunities: Students, now is the time to get serious about test prep. We have two great and convenient opportunities for you utilizing community block!

ACT Test Prep Class: Offered by Seeley Test Pros. These sessions will run on various dates during Mod 2 & 3 of community block starting Feb. 18 in preparation for the April 4th ACT. Please see the attached flyer for more details and registration instructions.

Khan Academy Test Prep: We all know practice makes perfect, or at least improves test scores. The College Office will be offering time and space during Mod 1 on Tuesdays starting January 28th for you to do free test prep using Khan Academy. Link your PSAT results to Khan Academy for free and individualized test prep. Check the attached letter for more information and instructions on how to register. While you won’t receive a grade, there is an attendance policy to participate.

Navigating the College Process: On Wednesday, January 29 at 7:00 p.m. the college counselors from the CCIS schools are proud to sponsor our annual event: Navigating the College Process. The event will be held at University School’s Upper School campus. Join admissions leaders from Allegheny College, University of Richmond, The Ohio State University and Santa Clara University. The event will be moderated by Dan Moulthrop of the City Club of Cleveland and promises to offer an in-depth look into the world of college admissions. Please register using this link: https://us.myschoolapp.com/page/event-detail?siteId=1217&ssl=1&register=29495. Space is limited.

Gap Year Fair: While the college office is here to support your college plans, we can also help with your interests in a gap year, time off before college. On Sunday, Jan. 26th the Lawrence School in Sagamore Hills will host a Gap Year fair. A presentation will be held from 1 p.m.-2 p.m. while a fair will be held from 2 p.m. 4 p.m. We encourage you to learn more about gap year programs and all the offerings available to you. Visit this website to register: https://www.eventbrite.com/e/usa-gap-year-fair-2020-cleveland-oh-registration-79659887869?aff=HostSchoolCleveland

COLLEGE CORNER

Mrs. Stockard spent a few days in sunny Florida learning about three very different colleges in the greater Orlando area. Read to see if any of them would suit your needs and interests.

With over 65k students across all campuses, the University of Central Florida is one of the largest campuses in the country. Originally founded to help the US with their growing space endeavors, UCF has blossomed over the years to provide over 200 degrees through 13 colleges. Some of their more popular offerings include hospitality management, which is housed in their campus close to Disney, of course! They also have a vast health sciences campus at Lake Nona and recently opened a campus in downtown Orlando for those interested in emerging media. Free transportation is offered so students can easily access these locations.

Students have a very resourced campus, both academically and personally (food, clubs, amenities) and the riches that come with being close to Orlando in terms of entertainment and internships. For those wanting a big school experience in Florida, it is certainly worth a visit to UCF if the size doesn't scare you.

Full Sail University in the greater Orlando area may be small in size, but it is powerful in its academic offerings for those interested in audio, design, animation and business. This for profit school originally was founded in Dayton, Ohio but was moved to Florida and continues to expand its offerings, now conferring degrees at the associate, bachelor and master level. In 2019 Full Sail opened an 11,200 square foot facility to house their e-sports team. While their list of famous alums
might not be well known to the average person, they do have a nice corner in the market of who is who in the world of audio engineering, producing, and songwriting.

Located about a ten minute drive from the University of Central Florida, Full Sail’s proximity gives students everything they want from eateries, shopping, internships and the Orlando International Airport. If these majors and location are of interest to you, consider researching Full Sail University.

**Beacon College** has the corner of educating those with neurodiversity experiences. If ADD, ADHD or learning differences impact your educational experience in profound ways, consider looking into Beacon College. Typically students with learning issues graduate at the rate of about 30% in eight years. Students at Beacon College have about 70% of students graduating in four years! With about a population of four-hundred, students are ensured the care and attention they need to succeed. From small classes, an academic and life advisor, to wrap around services impacting the student’s life in the community and at home, Beacon College has every aspect of the college experience covered.

Located in Leesburg, Florida, Beacon College is about an hour from Orlando. The small town has certainly embraced the college as many of the campus buildings are converted old buildings that once belonged to the town. Founded in 1989, the school is relatively young but has gone through a recent growth spurt acquiring new buildings and seeing an increase in their student population; the goal is to reach 500 students within the next few years. Beacon offers majors at both the Bachelors and Associate level. Perhaps the most interesting major there is Anthrozoology, which studies the relationship between humans and animals.

Clearly, good work is being done at Beacon College. It is apparent from the inspiring stories of the students and in the dedication of the faculty and staff. If Beacon sounds like it can offer you a chance at a successful college education, I urge you to consider a visit.
Increase your ACT scores with strategies proven to succeed!

Students who receive higher scores on ACTs:
---Create greater college admissions opportunities
---Qualify for and can maximize scholarship offerings

**Prepare to Test Your Best at Gilmour Academy!**

Learn valuable test techniques and tips to navigate the tests quickly and accurately. Review the essential content necessary to perform at your best. Increase confidence and reduce test anxiety.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ACT Mastery Class @ Gilmour Academy</th>
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<tr>
<td>Practice test: Monday, March 2 (9:00am-12:00pm in the Middle School Assembly Room)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Classes: February 18, 19, 25, 28, March 3, 4, 6, 10, 31, April 1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Room: Classroom Building</td>
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<tr>
<td>Time: All classes are from 11:40am-12:40pm (mods 2 &amp; 3 community block)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cost: $399.00</td>
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<tr>
<td><em>This class will prepare students for the April 4 ACT test date.</em></td>
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</table>

- **Space is limited. Register early to ensure a spot in the class.**
- **Students will be provided with instructional materials and official practice tests.**
- **Additional one-on-one tutoring services are available and can be scheduled during free periods at school, across Greater Cleveland and Akron, or via FaceTime or Zoom online.**
- **Call 216-965-5162 or email amy@seeleytestpros.com for more details.**

**Register online at www.seeleytestpros.com**

SEELEY TEST PROS provides a full-range of instructional services for standardized exams, including SAT, PSAT, ACT, HSPT, ISEE, GRE, GMAT and LSAT.
Dear 9th, 10th and 11th Grade Students and Parents,

By now you should have received your student’s PSAT scores and you might be wondering where to go from here.

Research has shown that students who spend 20 hours on Khan Academy’s free Official SAT Practice is associated with an average score gain of 115 points. Shorter periods of time also correlate with meaningful score gains. Six hours of study on Official SAT Practice is associated with an average 90-point increase! While prepping through Khan Academy is manageable and easy, finding time to do so can often be difficult.

Consequently, the College Counseling Office will offer a pilot program for students during Community Block during Mod 1 on Tuesdays, starting Jan. 28th-May 19, which will amount to eight hours of test prep towards the illustrious goal of twenty. At this time, students will bring their electronic device and headphones to CB08 and spend thirty minutes each week, working on individual test prep using Khan Academy. For those who took the PSAT, they can link their scores to Khan Academy and be given free individualized test prep. For our 9th graders who took the PSAT 8/9, testing outcomes will not link to Khan Academy but they still can utilize the myriad of videos, practice questions and tests to improve future scores.

When a student signs up to participate in our pilot program, they will be linked to our college counselor virtual classroom so we can monitor their progress. While the college counselors will not be doing the actual instructing, they will be providing oversight and supervision in a venue that affords students the chance to self-study. Obviously the higher a student’s scores, the more opportunities available in college admissions and for scholarships.

Since space is limited, we will open this new program up to the first twenty-five students who register by contacting Kathy Lynch at lynchk@gilmour.org and then offer a waiting list to those who have an interest in participating. While there is no grade for this session, attendance will be a requirement. If a student enrolled in the program misses three sessions, they will be removed from the class so as to offer space to a student on the waitlist.

We thank you for your interest in considering our pilot test prep session. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact Mrs. Stockard at stockardt@gilmour.org or 440-473-8092.

Tracy Stockard
Director of College Counseling