



September 1, 2021



## College Planning Begins...

...for the Class of 2023! **What now?** Isn't that next year? The actual application process does commence next fall, **but** the whole "thinking about college" thing really, really kicks into high gear for most students this year. Your options after high school will develop from the foundation you create junior year. **Show the world what you can do academically!** Choosing to focus on academics while exploring/expanding upon your interests outside of class will set the stage for a senior year that feels "busy" vs. one full of unnecessary....



Taking these steps over the coming months...

- Research programs/schools.
- Consider short- and long-term career aspirations.
- Learn about at least some of the potential pathways toward your goals.
- Evaluate if you are on track to achieve them.

can make what often feels like a challenging, expensive, complex, and time-consuming process senior year a little more manageable. The goal? **College options that are both affordable and best positioned to meet each student's academic needs and career interests in the future.**

Over the coming months you will receive a series of newsletters designed to help you begin thinking about your ideal list of schools, learn about and prepare for the college entrance exams (ACT and SAT), as well as become informed about the college and financial aid application processes.

May 1, 2023 (your National College Decision Day!!!) and graduation ...



... may seem like a looonng way away, but both will be here in (relatively speaking) no time at all. Your future takes planning.

**It's time to get started!**

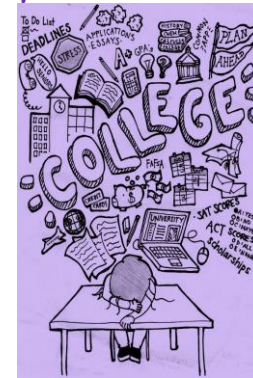
### Important information for college applications:

SPCPA School Code: 242 284

Counselor: Alison Green  
(greena@spcpa.org)

School Information:  
16 W 5<sup>th</sup> St  
St Paul, MN 55102  
(651) 290-2225

### Does just the thought of college applications make you feel like...



Will you be the first (or one of the first) in your family to go to college after high school? Do you worry finances will prevent you from achieving your college dreams?

**Lucky you.....College Possible is here to help!!!** College Possible (CP) provides SPCPA students who qualify with Tech-Connected Coaches who will help you navigate everything college. Founded in Minnesota in 2000, this AmeriCorps affiliate provides college planning and support services including ACT test prep to more than 2,500 high school students annually. 99% of CP students have college acceptances. CP students are also 4 times more likely to graduate from college than their low-income peers, because CP makes a commitment to every student they serve through college



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graduation. Their early application deadline is typically early October. Click [here](#) to apply!!!



### College 101: The Importance of Campus Visits

To make an educated college decision requires more than studying a certain school's website or perusing the latest *US News* "Best College" edition. Without a clear understanding of what a particular student wants and needs to be successful, this information is too impersonal to be much of a guide. Developing a student's unique vantage point – what matters to one prospective student may be irrelevant to another, yet both opinions are valid – takes time and experience.

On-campus visits are once again becoming an option. On-campus visits are worth taking advantage of at any point in the year. They are the best way for students to develop a fuller sense of what the college universe has to offer. The Twin Cities area has a wealth of possibilities for students and families to begin assembling their personalized guidebook. Scheduling a visit at the **U of MN-Twin Cities** and one of the local urban liberal arts schools (**Augsburg, Concordia U, Hamline**) can help the student answer the question "**Big school or small?**"

Adding a trip to a local community college such as **St Paul College** or **MCTC** in downtown Minneapolis can help the student decide "**2 years or 4?**" Minnesota community colleges offer a wealth of 2-year (or less) degrees in business, health sciences, communication, the arts and technology that may provide a stable financial foundation without a big investment of time or money. Through the **MnCAP** agreement, students who complete the Minnesota Transfer Curriculum (45 credits) or an associate degree (60 credits) that includes specific required courses are guaranteed admission to the U of MN-Twin Cities, Augsburg and MNSCU schools such as St Cloud and Mankato State. A 4-year education at a significant savings!

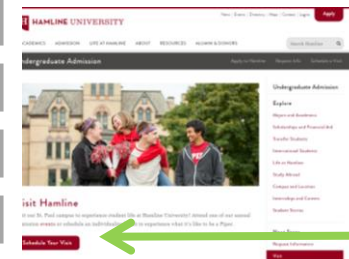
For students and families able to go a little further afield, combining a visit to **St Johns/St Bens** with one at **St Cloud State** could answer the question "**How important is location? Do I really need to be in a big or medium-sized city to have opportunities?**" Love being in nature? Heading down to **Luther College** in Decorah, IA (2.5 hrs) can help a student consider the opportunities a rural setting provides. The U seem too big? A visit to **UW-River Falls** (30 min) is a great way to step into the world of a smaller-sized public university. Wondering whether a **BA or BFA** is best for you? **Mankato State** offers both in dance, music, art, theatre and musical theatre. **Gustavus** (just up the road from Mankato) provides scholarship options for these majors.

The schools you're interested only offering virtual visits? Fine. Taking advantage of whatever is available over the next year can still lighten the load next year. **It's your impressions and personal checklist of what matters that will guide you in your application journey next fall.**



### College Admissions Representatives...

- Are good people to get to know!
- They are the first person to call if the student has a question about the college or university, the application process, or possible financial aid concerns and scholarships.
- They often act as the "first reader" and may "speak for" SPCPA applicants in front of a larger admissions committee.
- Admissions representatives attend college fairs, visit high schools and host smaller gatherings at a variety of locations.
- Admissions representative name and contact information is listed on most college websites under "Admissions".



Scheduling on campus visits is relatively easy. Goggle "(college name) admissions campus visit" and follow the instructions.

**MEA** (October 21<sup>st</sup> – 22<sup>nd</sup>) can be an ideal time to visit campuses near and far!!!



**COLLEGE POSSIBLE™**

Not sure if you qualify for College Possible holding you back from taking advantage of this great FREE service? Rest assured. [There's absolutely no harm in applying.](#)

Applying for college is expensive. [College Possible](#) students have access to fee waivers as well as personal ACT tutoring and college planning advice. SPCPA's tech connected coaches have all been awesome! We are lucky to be able to offer this FREE service to our junior class. Did I mention it's FREE?