Wesleyan
Christian Academy

AUGUST 2026 Senior Newsletter

Welcome back, Seniors! We are going to continue pressing forward so that you can have the best senior year of high school! We are looking forward to getting to know everyone better and begin planning your bright college years! We are here to support you! Remember, we are using SCOIR to send documents to colleges. It is VERY important that you check your email to update your SCOIR account. If you have not signed your FERPA waiver, please do so immediately. This is the only way we will be sending transcripts. You will find your updated GPA here, information about colleges, a career interest inventory you can take, and many more helpful tools for applying to college.

Senior Announcements:

Senior Sunrise is September 23. Seniors can come in pajamas, watch the sunrise, and drink hot chocolate on the soccer field in preparation for See you at the Pole!

College Applications

A number of you have already begun and perhaps completed some college applications. Remember when you apply for admission, an official high school transcript must be submitted. (Please do not request a transcript until you have completed and submitted the application). Transcript requests need to be submitted online via SCOIR. Typically, we send transcripts to colleges/universities along with letters of recommendation, forms, and a school profile.

Teachers have signed up to be recommenders for specific students. Please use your assigned teacher if you need a recommendation letter for college. You have received your recommender names and you may contact them if you need a recommendation letter. When you ask teachers to write your recommendation letter, please provide them with a Teacher Recommendation Letter Survey (this office has provided you with the form) and a thank you note (an optional gift card can be included as well). This will notify teachers that you want them to proceed with writing your recommendation letter.

SCAM Alert

The National Society of High School Scholars is NOT National Honor Society where we honor students who have achieved a specific GPA in high school. Please be aware that if you choose to subscribe to this it does not make you eligible or a member of the NHS at our WCA.

College Essay Guy is a great tool to use in helping you write your college application essay. He has a lot of tips to help you get started on it. Check out his website: https://www.collegeessayguy.com

The Common Application

There are over 1000 institutions of higher education that have adopted the Common Application for the 2026-2067 academic year. Members are from almost all 50 states, the District of Columbia, and many other countries. This group includes several NC public institutions. Information about the Common The Common Application Essay prompts are also available online. Please refer to this site: https://www.commonapp.org/apply/first-year-students

FAFSA – Federal Application for Student Aid

Here is the information we have received regarding the FAFSA for this year's seniors: The Department of Education's office of Federal Student Aid (FSA) announced the 2027-2028 FAFSA will open on October 1, 2026. As changes become available, we will let you know via the newsletters.

FERPA Reminder

Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) is a Federal law that protects the privacy of student education records. The law applies to all schools that receive funds under an applicable program of the U.S. Department of Education. FERPA also gives parents certain rights concerning their children's education records. These rights transfer to the student when he/she reaches the age of 18 or attends a school beyond the high school level. Students to whom the rights have transferred are "eligible students."

When you are submitting your college applications, especially on the Common App and SCOIR, make sure you check to waive your rights to FERPA. If you do not waive your rights, it lends less credibility to your recommendation letters.

SAT and ACT

With the test-optional policies at many colleges, students often do not consider taking the test – even though we require all of our juniors to take the ACT. Be sure to check your college's policy regarding test scores. Some are going back to requiring them. However, if you want to be considered for certain scholarship opportunities that require SAT/ACT scores (which will vary depending on the school and their policies; see their website for details) or you are an exceptional test taker, then you may want to consider registering for the SAT/ACT if you can take the test by December. WCA's College Board (CEEB) code, which is the same for both the SAT and ACT, is 342018. Remember you already have one ACT score that you took last spring at WCA. You will need to register to take the exams on a Saturday at another school of your choice.

SAT and ACT Test Dates

SAT Exam Date	ACT Exam Date
September 12	October 17
October 3	December 12
November 7	February 27
December 5	April 10
March 6	June 12
May 1	July 10
June 5	

Extended Time Testing

Students with documented learning disabilities who have been approved by the College Board and ACT may register to take the SAT and/or ACT with extended time. Please see Mrs. Murray (jmurray@wcatrojans.org) or Mrs. Davis (ndavis@wcatrojans.org) for registration details.

AP Exam Format for 2027

AP exams we offer will continue to be fully digital (no paper testing option), or hybrid. As more information is received, I will let you know in future newsletters.

VISITING COLLEGES

Remember that WCA allows two excused absences for college visits per year for juniors and seniors. Before your visit, please pick up a College Day Form (located in the hanging bins outside Mrs. Russell's office) and have it signed by your teachers before your college visit. You must then return the form signed by a college official to count the absence as a "college day" to Mrs. Russell.

Appalachian State University will now be reviewing all applications on a rolling basis. So, you do not have to meet a specific deadline. However, you should probably get your application in soon for it to be considered early and not get rejected because they have accepted their maximum number of students!

The **University of Miami** no longer requires a supplemental essay but does require a 650 word, personal statement in response to one of the common app prompts. This essay will also be visible to any school that you apply to through the common app. http://admissions.miami.edu/

The **University of Pennsylvania** will require the SAT or ACT for the 2026-27 application cycle. Some of their school-based essays are changing. They have two deadlines: early decision – November 1 and regular decision – January 5.

Guilford College will be conducting an Open House on September 26 and November 7. While on campus students will take a tour of campus and learn more about academics and team advising. They'll also have the opportunity to get to know their Admission Counselor, and **will receive a $500 grant to your first year at Guilford College!**

Open House dates for **Western Carolina** are October 31st, November 14, March 6 and April 3rd. Their early action date is November 1 which guarantees a decision by December 15. And they are waiving the application fee for those applying by the early action date. Their scholarship application opens October 1st and closes February 1st.

The **University of Rochester** is hosting a free visit to their campus through the Meliora Visit Program (MVP). Prospective students who are accepted to MVP receive free travel to and from Rochester, a two-night stay with a current student host in a residence hall, and specialized MVP programming on top of Research Rochester (Open House) sessions. The fall 2026 MVP experience will be held Thursday, October 22 – Saturday, October 24. Applications for MYP are due on September 15.

The **University of Alabama's** priority application deadline is December 4. SAT is only required for students who have a cumulative GPA lower than 3.0. The university will be hosting campus visits (University Days) on September 21, October 12, and October 16.

SEARCHING FOR SCHOLARSHIPS

The sooner you begin looking for scholarships, the more you'll know about what's available. Searching for scholarships can seem like a daunting task; if you invest the time and energy, though, it may pay off (literally) in substantial ways. There are many search engines (e.g., www.fastweb.com) that provide information about national scholarship programs. Looking locally may also prove to be fruitful. We recommend that you consider checking with local banks and businesses, community foundations, parents' employers, and even your home church to see if they have a college scholarship program. If you educate yourself on all scholarship opportunities, you'll be in better shape to submit your applications when the time comes. Another helpful website is www.affordablecollegesonline.org **Be sure to keep up with the scholarships – names and amounts throughout the school year.**

The **Voice of Democracy** scholarship program, which is sponsored by the Veterans of Foreign Wars, is an audio-essay contest for students in grades 9-12. Awards ranging up to $35,000 were granted last year! The 2026-2027 theme is *""What a veteran taught me about America."* and the deadline for submission is midnight, October 31, 2026. Check out more information here: https://www.vfw.org/community/youth-and-education/youth-scholarships

Washington University offers the **Danforth Scholarship**, which provides full or partial tuition scholarships, renewed each year, provided students "progress academically and uphold their high standards of character." Though this scholarship is based on merit and requires a short essay. See the link below. For best consideration, they encourage students to submit applications by January 4, 2027. More details can be found here https://admissions.wustl.edu/Financial_Aid_Scholarships/First_Year_Academic_Scholarships/Pages/Danforth-Scholars-Program.aspx

Students can fill out the short form on the website https://christianconnector.com/chs, and be automatically entered into the annual $5,000 **Christian College Scholarship Drawing** and can selected to receive information from over 90 Christian college partners.

Athletic Eligibility

Students who plan to play a sport in college need to be familiar with eligibility requirements. Those who intend to participate at the NCAA Division I or II levels must be registered with the NCAA Eligibility Center, which can be done online at https://web3.ncaa.org/ecwr3/ . Similarly, students who wish to participate in intercollegiate athletics at an NAIA institution should register with the NAIA Eligibility Center at www.playnaia.org. Enter the code 9876 when registering for the SAT or ACT to have scores sent to the NAIA Eligibility Center.

Factoids

Research suggests that up to 80% of entering freshmen aren't certain of what they want to major in, even if they've already declared a major. Furthermore, over half of all undergraduates change their major at least once during their college careers. Does this mean you're destined to follow the same path? Not necessarily. However, it does suggest that your major interest should not be the primary driver of your college search. Instead, search for a school that's the "best fit" for you in a variety of areas. If you would like to research more about your interests and majors, many tools can help you discover college choices and career avenues. SCOIR has great research tools under the Careers tab. Check it out!

Suggested Readings

There are scores of books and hundreds of articles about various aspects of college search and college life. We hope these resources will be helpful as you think about and plan for this important stage in life.

Make College Count is a great little book written by Derek Melleby, Director of the College Transition Initiative (CTI), which is a part of the Center for Parent/Youth Understanding (CPYU). CTI's mission is to "provide resources to students, parents, pastors, and educators to think more deeply about the transition from high school to college," and that's precisely what this thoughtful, easy-to-read book does.

Get Some Sleep! (But not in class.)
Intuitively, we all know that sleep is important…but our actions don't always affirm this intuition. A recent study provides further evidence that "without adequate sleep, students don't learn as well." Read about the study and pick up a few tips for getting good sleep here: http://www.npr.org/blogs/health/2012/08/21/159435167/high-school-daze-the-perils-of-sacrificing-sleep-for-late-night-studying

HELPFUL WEBSITES

There's a tremendous amount of college information available on the web. While access to all of this information can be helpful, it can also be a bit overwhelming. Where do you start? Here are a few places we'd like to suggest:

College Board – www.collegeboard.com
At the College Board site, you'll be able to learn about SAT registration deadlines, test dates, and fees, as well as score report options and other services. You can also register for SAT Program Tests online, search for scholarships, and access college planning tools.

College Foundation of North Carolina – www.cfnc.org
The CFNC website is a great place to explore the more than 110 colleges and universities in the state of North Carolina, access information about financial aid and careers, and plan for college.

Council for Christian Colleges and Universities – www.cccu.org
Clicking on the "Our Institutions" will enable you to search for CCCU schools and check out the study abroad and off-campus program options available to students who attend member institutions.

www.findyourchristiancollege.com – This website is run by the organization (NACCAP) that sponsors our Christian college fair. One of the features is a blog with posts from admission professionals at Christian colleges. There's some great stuff here!

More Scholarship Opportunities

If you are interested in NC State, UNC-Chapel Hill, UNC Charlotte, or the University of Virginia and you have excellent grades, exceptional SAT/ACT scores (which are optional this year), leadership experience, athletic experience, and volunteer hours, see the information below regarding information for the Parks scholarship, the Morehead-Cain scholarship, Levine Scholars program and the Jefferson Scholarship at the respective schools. Please contact me if you are interested.

- **NC State University** offers the Parks Scholarship. This scholarship is a four-year scholarship, including tuition and fees, room and board, books and supplies, travel, and personal expenses. It is awarded based on outstanding accomplishments and potential in scholarship, leadership, service, and character. They are no longer asking for school endorsements. If you are interested in applying for this scholarship and believe you possess the characteristics they require, then you should apply. The application deadline is November 1. The application and more information can be found here https://park.ncsu.edu/

- **UNC-Chapel Hill** offers the Morehead-Cain Scholarship. This four-year merit scholarship to the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill covers full tuition, room and board, books, and many more expenses. This prestigious four-year scholarship also entails a Summer Enrichment Program made up of diverse, customized experiences that begin the summer before freshman year. Overall, Morehead-Cain scholars reflect accomplished intellectuals, mentors, and adventurers. The application opens on August 15 and the deadline is October 1, 2026 if you would like to self-nominate. We have already endorsed one candidate for this year's scholarship. More information can be found here http://www.moreheadcain.org/
- **UNC Charlotte** offers the Levine Scholars Program. Such scholarships will be awarded to 20 incoming UNCC freshmen who will receive full tuition, room, and board for eight semesters of undergraduate study. Scholars will also have access to funding for four summer experiences and a service grant. The combined value of the scholarship over four years is $105,000 for NC residents. The nomination portal will open on August 15 and close on October 15, 2026 for nomination by the counselor or for self-nomination. More information can be found here http://levinescholars.uncc.edu/
- The University of Virginia offers two scholarships - The Jefferson Scholars and the Walentas Scholars (first-generation students). These programs will award those students who show the most promise of becoming future leaders and scholars and are intended to cover the entire cost of attendance for four years at the University of Virginia plus coverage of the supplemental enrichment experiences. All students must receive a counselor recommendation; furthermore, all counselors and Jefferson Scholar nominees must complete the nomination form by December 1, 2026. More information can be found here http://www.jeffersonscholars.org/scholarship

To find and apply for scholarships, sign up for **Going Merry** (https://www.goingmerry.com) -- it's free! Going Merry has thousands of national, regional, and local scholarships. There are also opportunities for every grade level, from freshmen to seniors.

Application Deadlines

Application deadlines are going to vary from place to place, so be sure to check the deadlines at each school to which you apply. Plan and don't procrastinate; waiting until the last minute to apply can cause stress and other undesirable consequences! If the college/university offers an Early Action application process, take advantage of this opportunity to apply early!

Helpful Hints

No matter what career or field of study you may be pursuing, there are universal qualities, and skills that colleges and future employers look for in college students. According to the National Association of Colleges and Employers 2020 research, here are the top ten career readiness competencies:

- Ability to verbally communicate with personnel inside and outside the organization
- Ability to work in a team structure
- Ability to make decisions and solve problems
- Ability to plan, organize, and prioritize work
- Ability to obtain and process information
- Ability to analyze quantitative data
- Technical knowledge related to the job
- Proficiency with computer software programs
- Ability to create and/or edit written reports
- Ability to sell or influence others

Perfecting these skills starts in the classroom, and it is never too early to start!

From College Guidance Network:

Key takeaways and action steps to strengthen your college essay:

- **Start brainstorming now**: Journaling, reading memoirs, or listening to storytelling podcasts builds the muscles for personal writing. The 2026—2027 Common App essay prompts are unchanged from last year, so have a look!
- **Any topic is fair game**: You don't need to focus on a dramatic or tragic experience. Aim for something not already visible in your activities or recommendations. The essay works best when it shows something new.
- **Sound like yourself**: The "drop test"—would a friend recognize the essay without your name on it?—and the "stranger test"—give your essay to someone who doesn't know you and see if their summary matches who you are—are both useful checks.
- **Use AI at the bookends, not in the middle**: Brainstorming and grammar-checking are reasonable uses. Having AI write or rewrite the essay defeats the purpose, and admissions readers, including Davidson, can often tell.
- **Don't underestimate supplemental essays**: They often carry more weight than the personal statement because they're school-specific. Check school websites or reach out directly—many prompts are already available.
- **Your summer timeline**: Brainstorm and start writing drafts in June, revise and gather feedback in July and August, and return to school with a strong draft of one or two personal statements.

Featured College of the Month

Bluefield College offers a challenging academic and co-curricular experience within a climate of diverse Christian tradition. In covenant with the Baptist General Association of Virginia, the college is committed to developing students' potential through academic excellence and the integration of faith, the liberal arts, career-oriented programs, and service to God and the global community.

Located in the beautiful Appalachian Mountains in southwestern Virginia and accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools, Bluefield College boasts 40+ academic offerings, including business, forensic science, graphic communication, criminal justice, teacher education and Christian studies. Bluefield College is touted for its classroom technology, affordability, personalized instruction, and learning settings on the mission field and in countries abroad. At Bluefield College, your experience is not just about college. It's about destiny or a calling. It's about exploring and finding your passion at place where you can *know and be known*. Whether you have identified your passion or are looking for a place to discover it, Bluefield College is a place that is dedicated to your pursuit of passion. For more information, visit here http://www.bluefield.edu/

***See the next page for the current listing of colleges and universities scheduled to attend the National Christian College Fair in September!

National Christian College Fair Participants
Tuesday, September 22, 2026, 5:30 – 7:30 pm

Anderson University (SC)
Asbury University (KY)
Bluefield University (VA)
Bob Jones University (SC)
Cedarville University (OH)
Charleston Southern University (SC)
Colorado Christian University (CO)
Covenant College (GA)
Gardner-Webb University (NC)
Geneva College (PA)
Grove City College (PA)
Johnson University (TN)
Lee University (TN)
LeTourneau University (TX)
Liberty University (VA)
Lipscomb University (TN)
Mid-Atlantic Christian University (NC)
Montreat College (NC)
North Greenville University (SC)
Olivet Nazarene University (IL)
Palm Beach Atlantic University (FL)
Regent University (VA)
Southeastern University (FL)
Southern Wesleyan University (SC)
Toccoa Falls College (GA)
Trevecca Nazarene University (TN)
Waynesburg University (PA)

Please look for an updated list as this may change in the next few weeks with additional schools!