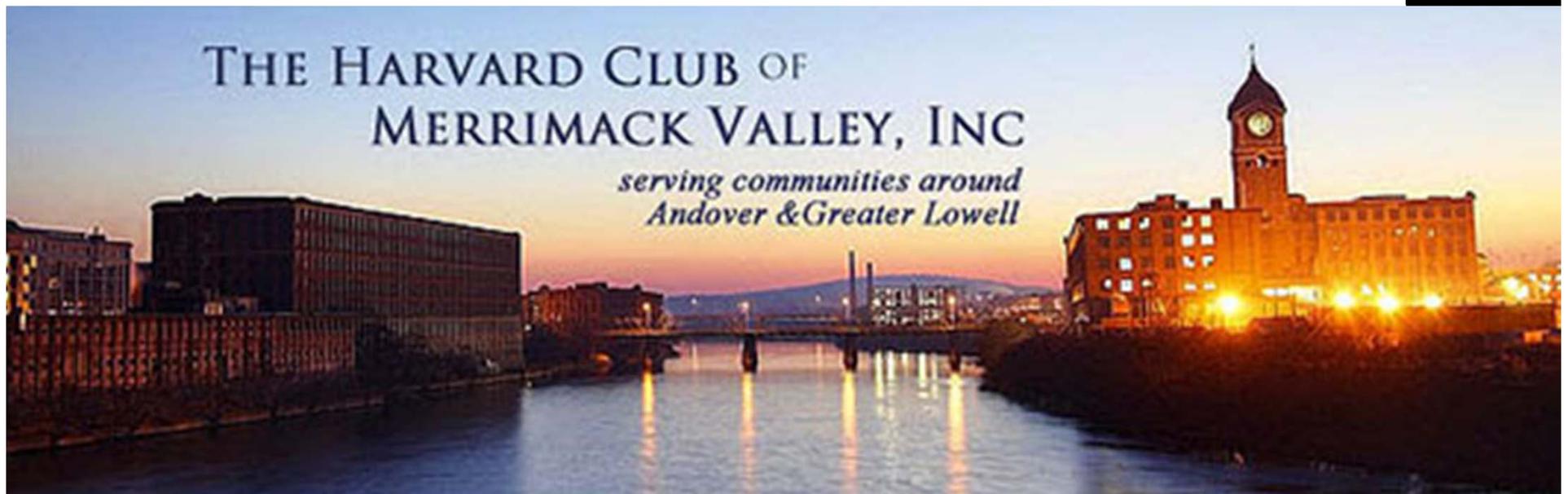




COLLEGE OUTREACH PROGRAM

PRESENTED BY



WHAT WE DO FOR STUDENTS



- **Interview applicants to Harvard College**
- **Give Harvard Book Awards**
- **Provide information on how to prepare students for elite colleges like Harvard**
- **Attend college fairs**

INTRODUCTION



- **It is very difficult to be accepted into highly selective colleges, such as Harvard, Stanford, MIT, Duke, Brown, Tufts, Williams, Amherst, Wellesley and many other excellent colleges and universities.**
- **Our goal is to help you understand what Admissions Officers at these highly selective schools are looking for, as they decide which students to accept.**
- **IF YOU WORK HARD** during the next four years, you can be rewarded by going to the college of your dreams with excellent financial aid.

Here is what you need to know to be accepted ...

ACADEMICS



- **Admissions Officers want to know if the student selected the most difficult courses available.**
- **Selective schools evaluate what AP, Honors or dual enrollment courses are offered in your school and how many you chose to take.**
- **This tells Admissions Officers about your effort, motivation, and desire to challenge yourself.**

COURSES



- **Most selective schools prefer 4 years of the following subjects:**
 - English
 - Mathematics
 - Science
 - Foreign language
- **And a combination of 5 years of:**
 - Social Studies
 - History
- **According to Harvard, it does not consider the following in making application decisions:**
 - Class rank, state residency (it uses regional geography), religious affiliation, or Applicant's level of interest

GRADES (GPA) AND CLASS RANK



- **Admissions Officers want students who achieve high grades in difficult classes, so both your grades and the level of difficulty of your classes are very important.**
- **Over 75% of high schools in the United States no longer use class rank, including nearly 100% of private schools.**
- **Each year more public schools discontinue the use of class rank, as it can harm highly qualified students.**

SAT SCORES



- **Scores for Critical Reading, Mathematics, and Writing should be at least 600, although most students score over 700.**
- **The SAT is being changed. Students will need to speak with guidance counselors to understand these changes.**
- **Some selective schools require SAT II Subject Tests. Your guidance counselor can help you determine when to take these tests.**

EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES



- **Admissions Officers are not interested in a wide variety of activities.**
- **They want to see consistency of interest over 4 years and leadership and excellence in your activity of interest.**
- **These activities can include:**
 - Student Government
 - Talent in Fine Arts (music, art, drama, dance, etc.)
 - Sports
 - Community Service
 - Entrepreneurship

STUDENTS IN UNUSUAL CIRCUMSTANCES



- **Some students must work to support their families, care for sick relatives, recover from or manage illness, or engage in other activities that could prevent them from participating in extra-curricular activities.**
- **Selective schools are still interested in you! It is up to you to use your student essays, interviews, and recommendation letters to describe your situation.**

PERSONAL QUALITIES



- **Selective schools want to understand your character; they do this by evaluating:**
 - Recommendation letters
 - Student essays
 - Extra-curricular achievements
 - Life story
 - Courses you have chosen over entire 4 years of high school
 - Academic performance in your courses



RECOMMENDATION LETTERS

- **Two should come from teachers you've had during 11th or 12th grade.**
- **One should come from your guidance counselor.**
- **One should come from someone who knows you well.**
- **You may submit more than four, but generally four are recommended.**
- **These letters from teachers and guidance counselors are very highly evaluated. Be sure that the teachers and guidance counselors are willing to write a letter that provides a strong, personal description of you.**

Admissions Officers do not want letters that appear to be form letters. This will hurt your chances in the admissions process!



ESSAYS

- **Admissions Officers are NOT expecting essays describing extreme experiences.**
- **You will be required to write an essay for the Common Application. Many schools require additional essays specific to their school.**
- **Essays should focus on helping Admissions Officers to understand:**
 - Who you are as a person
 - Your character
 - What you will add to their school
 - Whether you will be a good roommate

OTHER INFORMATION FOR ADMISSIONS OFFICERS



- If you have art work or other materials, many schools will allow you to submit them.
- Use services like www.slideroom.com to send in art work with your application.
- You may also mail in art, videos, etc.
- You may start submitting materials in your **FRESHMAN YEAR** to many schools, so that they will begin to build a profile on you.

INTERVIEWS



- **Selective colleges have different policies on interviewing applicants because of the limited availability of Admissions Officers. Check your prospective colleges' interview policies, which may include:**
 - No admissions interviews
 - Skype interviews
 - Alumni or alumnae interviews
 - On-campus interviews (informational or evaluative?)
- **The admissions interview is an opportunity for you to **TELL YOUR STORY** and enable a representative of the college to get to know you as a person. **ALWAYS ACCEPT** an admissions interview if the college offers or recommends it.**
- **Harvard offers almost all applicants in-person interviews with alumni in the local community. Members of the Harvard Club of Merrimack Valley interview applicants to Harvard from local public and private high schools.**



FINANCIAL AID

- **Most selective colleges are need-blind: they do not look at a student's financial resources in deciding whom to accept.**
- **Most selective colleges will meet your demonstrated financial need for all four years, based on information that they receive from your family each year.**
 - To receive financial aid, you must submit standard aid and/or scholarship forms to each school's Financial Aid Department.
- **For many students, and most students with a family income under \$60,000, it is cheaper to attend a highly selective college than a state college, because highly selective colleges provide MORE financial aid.**

FINANCIAL AID AT HARVARD



- **60% of Harvard undergraduates receive Harvard Scholarships.**
- **20% of students have family incomes less than \$65,000 and are not expected to contribute ANYTHING! (IT'S FREE!!!)**
- **Families with incomes between \$65,000 and \$150,000 will contribute from 0-10% of their income.**
- **Families with incomes above \$180,000 will be asked to pay proportionately more than 10%, based on their individual circumstances.**
- **Families at all income levels who have significant assets will continue to pay more than those in less fortunate circumstances.**
- **Two-thirds of students work during the academic year.**



SUMMARY

- Select the most difficult courses available ... **you need great grades AND a challenging workload!**
- SATs and standardized tests count ... **prepare for them.**
- Take **leadership positions** in your extra-curricular activities.
- Be prepared to **sell yourself** in the application process. What makes you special or unique? What will you add to that college or university?
- Ask for **personalized recommendation letters** from people who know you well.
- Great **financial aid** is typically available at highly selective schools, so don't use that as an excuse to not apply.
- **Work hard and have fun!**



ANY QUESTIONS?

<http://clubs.harvard.edu/university/andover>

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WE WISH YOU GREAT SUCCESS!

