

# Getting into College 101

- **Freshman/Sophomore Year:** What you should be thinking/doing
  - Set up academics
  - Eligible for AP or IB programs?Where do most graduates go?
  - Get to know your counselor, and let them know your goals (don't worry they can change)
  - PSAT or the ACT equivalentConsider SAT/Act Prep classes (rule of thumb it is worth 100 pts on the SAT)
  - Let your coaches know your goals/map out strategy Start thinking about colleges, and programs of interest
  - Whenever possible, take an unofficial visit. Particularly easy if we attend meets at/near institutions of interest to you, or accompany a parent on a business trip and make a visit.
  - If at a national/sectional meet, you can approach a college coach as long as these two items are true:
    - You have completed your last event for the meet
    - Your NJ Wave coach has released you to go talk to that college coach.
  - What Colleges can do:
    1. Send you a questionnaire or profile in the mail through school or club. Fill them out, and return them. The school will add you to their mailing list and you will get information about that School and Team. You can always let a school know you are no longer interested later.
    2. Keeps track of swimmers of interest to them, both locally and nationally.
    3. Can talk to swimmer or parent if you initiate, either by phone or in-person.
    4. Cannot return a phone message left, you must successfully initiate contact
- **Junior Year:** What you should be thinking/doing
  - Should have a list of schools that you have whittled down a little bit. No magic number, but something you have been working on.
  - Create a swimming resume documenting your improvement in events and any academic statistics/scores. This document will be easy to forward to coaches all necessary recruiting information.
  - As part of the process, you have researched the conference results for each school of interest, and are comfortable you can compete at that level and above for that school. Swimming Results are easy to find through websites. Coaches want athletes who can score at the conference level. If not scoring the first year, then potential to maintain current improvement level then score in the second year. You may have to sell yourself a little if that is not the case.
  - Make sure academics are set and match up with schools you are looking at. It is okay to reach for a school you really want to attend! Compete.
  - Register with the NCAA Clearinghouse through your High School Guidance Office. This establishing your academic eligibility for College Athletics.
  - You have, to the best of your ability, tried to make an unofficial visit to your Top Choices. Communicate to the coaches when you are planning to be on campus, they may be able to meet with you and tour the facilities, and maybe set you up with an academic advisor/admissions person for more information.
  - Check out the applications for your Top Choices a year out. Are there essays? What are they like?
  - Take ACT/SAT. Take early in the year, so you can consider retaking without going into your senior year.
  - Let NJ Wave coaches help you by letting the college coach of your Top Choices know of your interest, and act as your advocate.
  - What Colleges can do:
    1. Send you a media guide/questionnaire.
    2. Correspond by US Mail and Email (personal and bulk letters), not limited at all.
    3. Some colleges will arrange a 'junior' day unofficial visit that you may want to attend.
    4. This one is new, tricky and only applies to the top 1-2% of recruits: College coach can make one phone call to an athlete in March of their Junior year, in order to set up:
    5. One visit in April of the recruits' junior year that must be at the recruits High School. College coaches can meet with Athletes and Parents, as well as school personnel and coaches.
    6. A lot of college coaches will take advantage of the call in March, but the visit in April has not become a widespread practice as of yet.

- **Senior Year:** Most of the work should be done by now! What you should be thinking/doing
  - Have your list whittled down to 5+/-.
  - Work with your parents, counselors, our coaches and your Top Choices to determine if you are interested in Fall Decision or Spring Decision.
    - Most schools will have to offer you Fall Decision for it to be an option.
    - Spring Decision (April) may be better situation for most, if you can wait.
  - Applications should have been acquired through the summer, completed and submitted in a timely manner. Most will require your high school to fill out a section, as well as teachers. Give them plenty of time to complete, and monitor their progress in relation to due dates.
  - Schools may offer you an 'Official Visit'. Set up a schedule of visits in the fall. Most visits happen then, regardless of Fall/Spring Decision, and you are limited to 5 official visits to 5 separate Universities. Set up any Unofficial Visits.
  - What Colleges can do:
    0. As of July 1, after junior year, college coaches are allowed to contact a recruit by phone, one call per week. Not all schools will call once each week.
    1. Set up their Official Visits.
    2. Walk the athletes through their Applications, and keep apprised of its progress.
    3. Set up In-Home visits with some of their recruits.
    4. Let the coaches work as your advocate during the process!
    5. Unofficial Visit: Visit to campus that is not financed at all by the institution. You can still see coaches and administrators, and athletes. You may make an unlimited number of Unofficial Visits, though college coaches are limited to a certain number of contacts (face to face) with each recruit.
    6. Official Visit: Trip to campus financed by the host school, including transportation, meals and housing. The trip is limited to 48 consecutive hours. Parents may accompany at their own expense. Limit of 5 visits to 5 different Universities