

QUAPAW TRIBE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

"What would you attempt to do if you knew you could not fail?"

Look in this issue and upcoming issues of *The Quapaw Tribal News* for articles parents and students will find useful. Articles will discuss subjects including, but not limited to, the following:

- Financial Aid, Saving Money for College, Scholarship Data Base
- Helping Your Child With Reading
- Helping Your Child With Homework
- Helping Your Child with Test Taking
- Learning Checklists
- Dealing With Early Adolescence
- College, University, Technical/Vocational School News and Updates
- Philosophical meanderings on education

This issue's article discusses a college planning timeline from 9th grade through the 12th grade summer. Students will be better prepared to select a college and earn admission to that college if they pay attention to these timelines.

If parents or students have questions regarding any of the above mentioned topics, Quapaw scholarship opportunities, Native American scholarship opportunities, or are simply looking for a liaison between themselves and an educational institution, please contact me at 918-542-1852 ext. 211 or at pleptich@quapawtribe.com. As Director of Education, my job is not limited to processing scholarship applications. I am here to help with all facets of your higher education experience.

As evidenced by the recent decision of the Business Committee to approve scholarship monies to fund summer school, it is abundantly clear that your tribe is committed to education and to helping Quapaw students with their educational ambitions. Borrowing from an old saying...Your tribe can lead you to the water, but you must learn to drink.

I am here to help. If I don't know the answer, I will find someone who does. May all Quapaw students discover new knowledge, new direction, new purpose, and new promise.

Pam Leptich
Director of Education

College Planning Timeline: Freshman...9th GRADE

(adapted from a timeline prepared by the Choctaw Nation)

Fall

- Form a relationship with your high school counselor. These counselors, along with teachers and family members, will be able to assist and guide you while you prepare for college over the next four years.
- If you didn't sign up in 8th grade and you are an Oklahoma resident, sign up for Oklahoma's college tuition aid program called Oklahoma's Promise. Other states have similar programs.
- Take a challenging, but realistic, course load that will interest you and develop your skills. If you are in a state program, such as Oklahoma's Promise, be sure you are taking the required courses.
- Find out about Advanced Placement (AP) and other honors-level courses. Learn what classes are available at your school and if you are eligible to enroll.
- Look into college preparation programs that assist low-income or first generation students, such as Upward Bound or Talent Search.
- Start thinking about the colleges you would like to attend. Learn about courses to take and grades to make in high school in order to qualify for admission to these colleges.
- Be an involved member of your community and your tribe.
- Begin building your student resume, which should include information on your education, honors and awards, extracurricular activities, community and tribal involvement, volunteer work, internships, and summer jobs.
- Study for the SAT or ACT exam. Most colleges require you to take one of these exams before you can apply. The Quapaw Tribe Department of Education can guide you to resources that will help you prepare for the tests.

Spring

- Keep your grades up!
- Register for the SAT or ACT.
- Once you have narrowed down the list of colleges you are interested in attending, start visiting the campuses.
- Research and apply to summer activities that can help boost your readiness for college.
- Meet with your guidance counselor and make an academic plan of the classes you plan to take in 10th grade. Also, discuss what classes you plan to take in the future.

Summer

- Participate in summer activities that will help boost your readiness for college and enrich your education.
- Consider getting a summer job to save money for college. Try to find a job in a field that interests you and will prepare you for the future.
- Sign up for a savings account and begin saving money for college. Have fun but be productive-study for the ACT/SAT, read, and volunteer at local events.

College Planning Timeline: Sophomore...10th GRADE

Fall

- If you haven't signed up in 8th or 9th grade, this is your last opportunity to sign up for Oklahoma's Promise, which provides funding for college.
- Be sure you are on track for high school graduation. If you are in a state program, such as Oklahoma's Promise, be sure you are taking the required courses.
- Take Advanced Placement classes (AP) if your high school offers them.
- Take the PSAT and PLAN exams. These practice exams will help you prepare for the ACT and the SAT.
- Study for the SAT or ACT exam. Most colleges require you to take one of these exams before you can apply. The Quapaw Tribe Department of Education can guide you to resources that will help you prepare for the tests.
- Continue researching colleges you are interested in attending. Visit campuses if possible or check out websites for more information. Make a list of reasons why you like different colleges' degree programs, location, cost, etc.
- Continue building your student resume- this includes extracurricular activities, volunteer work, and tribal involvement. College admissions officers not only look at grades, but at all the "extra" things you're involved in.

Spring

- Keep your grades up!
- Register for the SAT or ACT. Try both exams and see which one you prefer and score better on. Then focus on studying for and retaking that particular exam.
- Start thinking about and applying for summer programs that will prepare you for college, such as College Horizons. Enrichment programs with specialty focuses such as music, arts, science, mathematics and literature or drama are available.
- Visit colleges that you are interested in attending. Although you may have more free time in summer to tour colleges, visiting during school terms allows you to see the campus buzzing with students and activities.
- Meet with your guidance counselor and make an academic plan of the classes you plan to take in 11th grade. Also, discuss what classes you plan to take in the future.
- Investigate participating in concurrent enrollment next year, which allows juniors and seniors to enroll in select college courses and gain college credit.

Summer

- Attend College Horizons or other educational summer programs.
- Look for summer activities being hosted on college campuses. You will be able to tour the campus and build your resume all at once.
- Work a summer job to save money for college.
- Relax, read, volunteer at a charity organization, and try something new (photography, cooking, tennis). Expand who you are.

College Planning Timeline: Junior...11th GRADE

Fall

- Review the courses to take and grades to make to gain admission to the colleges of your choice.
- If you are in a state program, such as Oklahoma's Promise, be sure you are taking the required courses.
- Take Advanced Placement classes.
- Consider taking concurrent classes at a local college to earn college credit.
- Meet with your guidance counselor. Ask for a preview of your academic record and profile (class rank, GPA, etc.) from your school. Discuss how you can improve your profile.
- Take the PSAT. By taking the PSAT your junior year, your scores will be considered for the National Merit Scholarship Program, which selects over 8,000 students for college scholarships.
- Study for the SAT or ACT exam. Most colleges require you to take one of these exams before you can apply. The Quapaw Tribe Department of Education can guide you to resources that will help you prepare for the tests.
- Continue researching colleges you are interested in attending. Narrow your list of colleges to include a few colleges with requirements at your current student profile (GPA, ACT/SAT scores, etc.), a few with requirements above your current profile and at least one with requirements below your profile. You want a combination of dream schools, realistic schools, and safe schools.
- Continue building your student resume. This includes extracurricular activities, volunteer work, and tribal involvement. College admissions officers not only look at grades, but at what students are passionate about and involved in as well.
- Register for the SAT or ACT.
- Schedule interviews with college admissions counselors. If possible, schedule tours of the campus on the same day. Some high schools consider a campus visit an excused absence, so check with your counselor.

Spring

- Keep your grades up!
- Discuss your college plans with your parents.
- Attend a college fair.
- Start thinking about and applying for summer programs that will prepare you for college, such as College Horizons. Enrichment programs, such as LEAD, that focus on business, engineering, or global issues may interest you.
- Register for the SAT or ACT. Find out from each college on your list its admission deadline and test requirements. Make sure your test date gives college admission offices ample time to receive your test scores. It is a good idea to take the ACT/SAT by your junior year to allow you time to review your results and retake the exams in the fall of your senior year, if necessary.
- Visit colleges that you are interested in attending. Although you may have more free time in summer to tour colleges, visiting during school terms allows you to see the campus buzzing with students and activities. Have questions prepared in advance and take notes on your visits. Call ahead for appointments with the financial aid, admissions, and academic advisors at the colleges in which you are most interested. During your visits, talk to professors, sit in on classes, spend a night in the dorms and speak to students about the college. Doing these things will allow you to gather the most information about the colleges and the atmosphere in which you

would be living, should you choose to attend. Some colleges have preview programs that allow you to do all these. Find out if any of the colleges on your list offer these programs and take advantage of them if they do. Remember to send thank you notes after every college visit.

- Meet with your guidance counselor and make an academic plan of the classes you plan to take in 12th grade. Make sure you are on track for graduation. Investigate participating in concurrent enrollment next year, which allows juniors and seniors to enroll in select college courses and earn college credit. Many states will pay for high school seniors to take concurrent courses. This will save you time and money in college, plus allow you to become familiar with the college process.
- Talk to your teachers, counselors, and others about writing letters of recommendation for you.
- Think about what you would like included in these letters and politely ask your chosen references if they can accommodate you. Be sure to give them a copy of your student resume to review while writing the letter.

Summer

- Attend College Horizons or other summer camps that enrich your academic and leadership skills, such as the free summer academies the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education offers.
- Explore careers by taking a summer job or internship in your field of interest.
- Continue saving money for college.
- Make a list of colleges you plan to apply to. Create a calendar with all application, financial aid, and scholarship deadlines for each school. This will help you organize your application and ensure you do not miss any important deadlines.
- If you have a clear first choice college, decide if you are going to apply for early decision or early action. Be aware that if you are accepted for early decision, you are likely committing yourself to attending that school.
- Update your student resume regarding education, honors and awards, extracurricular activities, community and tribal involvement, volunteer work, internships, and/or summer jobs.
- Begin working on the Common Application.
- Draft your college essay and supplemental essay questions. Ask family, friends, and educators to review your essay for grammar, punctuation, readability, and content.
- Research scholarships. Contact the Quapaw Tribe Department of Education for access to our Native American Scholarship Database which has links to thousands of scholarship applications.
- Work on a portfolio or audition piece if you are applying to a degree program (such as art, music, drama, photography or dance) that requires one.
- Study SAT and ACT prep materials.
- Plan any remaining college visits and interviews for the early fall.
- Start researching financial aid options. You will need to apply for financial aid in January of your senior year but it's best to start preparing early.

College Planning Timeline: Senior...12th GRADE

Fall

- Update your counselors on summer college visits and activities.
- Review courses with your school counselor to make sure you are meeting high school graduate and college entrance requirements. If you are in a state program, such as Oklahoma's Promise, be sure you are taking the required courses.
- Consider taking concurrent classes at a local college to earn college credit. Many states, such as Oklahoma, will pay for high school seniors to take concurrent classes.
- Take the ACT/SAT again. Make sure your scores will meet the application deadlines of the colleges on your list and the official test scores are being sent to the colleges to which you are applying.
- Attend a college information event, such as a college fair, and meet with recruiters from colleges you may be interested in attending.
- Visit any remaining colleges on your list.
- Draft a final list of colleges to which you will apply. Many students select three to five schools to apply to- their dream school, their realistic school, and their safety school, and two to three other choices.
- Look into Fly-In and Visitation Programs at schools on your final list. Some universities will provide funding for Native American students to visit campus.
- Apply to the Coca-Cola Scholars Foundation by October. It provides college scholarships to
- 1,400 students each year, totaling over \$3.4 million.
- Keep your grades up!
- Check deadline dates on all college applications. Early Decision deadline for many schools is November 15th.
- Work on college applications. Feel free to ask your counselors for help.
- Check with your counselor about application fee waivers at the colleges on your final list.
- Finish your college essays, student resume, and portfolio/audition piece, if required.
- Give any recommendation forms to the appropriate teachers or counselors with stamped, college-addressed envelopes and make certain that your portions of the forms are filled out completely and accurately.
- Begin college interviews.
- Review college applications with your counselors prior to Christmas break.
- Research scholarships. Contact the Quapaw Tribe Department of Education for access to our Native American Scholarship Database which has links to thousands of scholarship applications.
- DO THIS EARLY IN THE FALL. MANY SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAMS HAVE EARLY DEADLINES.
- Ask your school counselor about local scholarship opportunities.
- Begin working on the Gates Millennium Scholars Program application. A thousand minority students are selected each year to receive a "good through graduation" full scholarship to use at any college of their choice. Scholarships can even continue through graduate school.

Spring

- Submit your completed college applications and the Common Application. Many schools have a January 15th deadline, while others can be as late as April 1.
- Request that your high school send your official transcripts to the colleges to which you applied.

- Verify that your final official ACT/SAT test scores were sent to the colleges to which you applied.
- Make sure your parents complete their income tax forms as early as possible, so you can complete your financial aid applications.
- Submit the Gates Millennium Scholars Program application the first week of January.
- The Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) should be completed between January 1 and February 15. This will determine how much funding you will receive for college. If you do not fill this out, you will not receive aid from the government or your university for school.
- Complete the college's financial aid application between January 1 and February 15. In order to be considered for financial aid, you will need to submit these forms even if you have not yet been notified of your acceptance to the colleges to which you applied.
- Once you complete the FAFSA, you should receive your Student Aid Report (SAR) within four weeks. Make the necessary corrections and return it to the FAFSA processor as soon as possible in order to have your forms processed quickly.
- Contact the financial aid offices of the colleges to which you have applied and make sure your information has been received and that they have everything they need from you.
- Take exams for any AP and other honors-level subject(s) you studied in high school. A high score on the exam may count as college credit.
- Research scholarships. Contact the Quapaw Tribe Department of Education for access to our Native American Scholarship Database which has links to thousands of scholarship applications.
- DO THIS EARLY. MANY SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAMS HAVE EARLY DEADLINES.
- You should hear from the colleges as to whether or not you are accepted by April 15. Compare acceptance letters and financial aid/scholarship packages you have received. Seek support from your counselors while making your final college decision.
- Commit to a college by May 1st. Respond promptly, in writing, to secure admission, course enrollment, housing, scholarships, and financial aid.
- From the Quapaw Tribe website (www.quapawtribe.com), complete the Education Fund Scholarship Application and submit it and supporting materials to the Quapaw Tribe Department of Education. This scholarship awards \$100.00 a credit hour up to \$2,100 per semester.
- Graduate from high school.

Summer

- Have your high school send your final transcripts to the college you will be attending.
- Contact your college to determine the total costs and due dates for your fees, tuition, and room and board.
- Plan for transportation and housing.
- Write thank you letters to the organizations that offered you scholarships.
- Get a summer job to save money for college.
- Explore your interests through an internship.
- Continue researching scholarships. *Contact the Quapaw Tribe Department of Education for access to our Native American Scholarship Database which has links to thousands of scholarship applications.*
- Participate in any summer orientation programs for incoming college freshman.

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