



## Top Strengths and Experiences Colleges look for in a High-School Student

- 1. A high school curriculum** that challenges the student. *Academically successful students should include several Honors and Advanced Placement classes.*
- 2. Grades that represent strong effort** and an upward trend. *Grades should show an upward trend over the years. However, slightly lower grades in a rigorous program are preferred to all A's in less challenging schoolwork.*
- 3. Solid Scores** on standardized tests (SAT, ACT). *These should be consistent with High School performance.*
- 4. Passionate involvement** in a few activities, demonstrating leadership and initiative. *Depth, not breadth, of experience is most important.*
- 5. Community Service** showing evidence of being a "contributor." *Activities should demonstrate concern for other people and a global view.*
- 6. Work or out-of-school experiences** (including summer activities) that illustrate responsibility, dedication and development of areas of interest. *Work or other meaningful use of free time can demonstrate maturity.*
- 7. A well-written essay** that provides insight into the students' unique personality, values and goals. The application essay should be thoughtful and highly personal. *It should demonstrate careful and well-constructed writing.*
- 8. Letters of recommendations** from teachers and guidance counselors that give evidence of integrity, special skill, and positive character traits. *Students should request recommendations from teachers who respect their work in an academic discipline.*