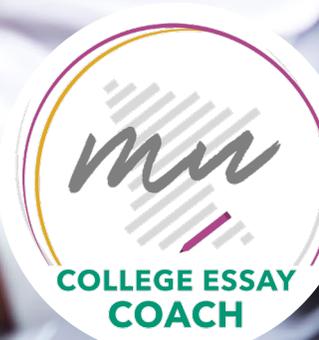


*parent night*

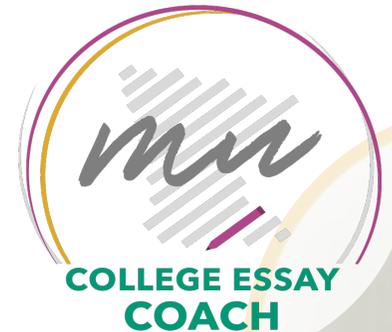
Making the Transition  
to College -  
For Students and  
Families



HI! I'M

Step Tschida

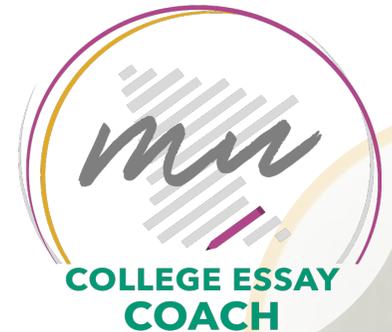
- I was a continuing education college student
- Many advantages but still faced some similar challenges
  - Underperforming high school > **academic struggles** at college
  - Far from home, stressed about academic performance > **social isolation**
- Gave me an appreciation for the significant challenges first-generation students face



HI! I'M

Step Tschida

- Passionate about **helping students stand out** through their college application essays
- Enjoy **working with first-generation** students and their families to help them understand what to expect



# academic readiness and eligibility

## Did you know first-generation students:

- Often have **lower expectations** about their prospects for postsecondary education?\*
- May be ineligible for college when they graduate high school because they **haven't planned ahead** to attend?\*\*

**That's why it's important to encourage our students EARLY in their high school careers**

# academic readiness and eligibility

## Encouraging students EARLY means:

- They can **take advantage of opportunities** throughout high school to prepare for college:
  - Algebra 1 in 8<sup>th</sup> grade\*
  - AP courses - college-level classes taken in high school\*
  - College-preparatory programs, e.g. QuestBridge\*\*

We all have a role to play to  
*encourage* our students.

*your role*

**Be involved and encouraging**

It will make your student more likely to:

- Take rigorous high school courses\*
- Enroll in college\*

*my role*

**Help them see college as attainable and remove barriers to applying\*\***

It will make your student more likely to see college as a real option for them

# paying for college

- **Ways to pay:**

- Financial aid - FAFSA
- Scholarships
- Grants
- Loans
- Work-study
- Pre-college programs
  - *Often pay for application fees, etc.*

## **More than tuition\*!**

Costs include books, lodging & meals (often called room & board), miscellaneous fees (e.g. tech, transportation), etc.

# transitioning to college

## Challenges:

- **Social isolation**

- Socioeconomic differences cause many first-generation students to feel alone at first\*
- It can be hard for them to meet new people from new places if they haven't left home much

- **Emotional**

- It's normal for you to miss them and vice versa
- They may even experience guilt about leaving\*\*
- They may doubt their ability to succeed when it gets hard\*\*\*

\*Pappano (2015) \*\*Banks-Santilli (2017)

\*\*\*Harrell & Forney, 2003; Martinez, et al., 2009; Pascarella et al., 2004, as cited in Galina, B. (n.d.)

# transitioning to college

## If it's going to be hard, why should we still encourage college?

- Students with college degrees **earn more** than those without them\*
- Entire **cultures and communities are elevated** when there's more opportunity for our children
- Many educated students don't leave forever – they **return home** after college, bringing their education with them

# Transitioning to college

## What can help ease the transition to college?

- **Pre-college programs** help students get familiar with campus and customs before school starts\*. Examples:
  - TRIO
  - GEAR UP
  - Talent Search
  - Upward Bound
  - QuestBridge
- Proactively seeking out **advisors, tutors, mentors**\*\*
- Special **programs for at-risk students** provide extra support\*\*
- Seek out other first-generation students for community\*\*\*

\*Engle, Bermeo and O'Brien (2006)

\*\*Engle (2007)

\*\*\*Pappano (2015)

# transitioning to college

## What can help ease the transition to college?

- Teaching our students how to **advocate for themselves** and how to **ask for help** when they need it
  - They're not bothering professors; that's what they're there for
  - Needing help is nothing to be ashamed of
- How to **manage time** between work and school effectively\*
  - May involve a temporary "pause" on social life

# bringing it all together

## One first-generation student's perspective



Alma

“At some point along the way I figured out that private schools had more money to offer so I applied to them even though they seemed more expensive at first glance. Private ended up paying for most things plus there was a stipend for books that I qualified for. That made my decision easy – I didn’t want the debt that going to a state school would incur.”

“It was hard to explain to my friends that I couldn’t go out because I had to work, and then I had to study when I wasn’t working.”

“I was trying to be honest with [my mom] about the fact that I was changing because I knew lying to her wouldn’t help. Before I left to go back to school, she came around to the fact that I’m changing but it would be ok.”

“[It would have been helpful for my school to let] parents know all the options and that sometimes not staying home is a good thing from a cultural perspective – especially as a woman and a Latina. They could have explained all the options and how it benefits us in the long run because if we go to a better school, we could make more money. It also would have been helpful for them to help me emotionally manage my parents around all of it, because it all fell on me.”

Q & A

Thank you!



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