PROVIDENCE CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL
1800 W. Lincoln Highway • New Lenox, Illinois 60451 • (815) 485-2136 • www.providencecatholic.org
COUNSELING DEPARTMENT

Dear Parents of Seniors, January 19, 2016

It's hard to believe that second semester has begun. Your seniors have only a few months of their high school career left to enjoy. There is much work left for them to do and many life choices to make.

At this time of the year it seems finances become a common focus. We're paying Christmas bills, gathering tax information, etc. With this in mind, we have included some general information about financial aid we thought you might find helpful. Additional resources may be downloaded at https://studentaid.ed.gov/resources.

APPLICATIONS AND COLLEGE DAYS

Now is the time when seniors should be completing the application process to schools and arranging their visits to campuses in order to make a final decision if they have not done so already. Seniors planning to take a college day to visit a college or university of their choice must do so **before May 1**. A note from a parent must be given to Mr. Murphy or Mr. Palmasani **one week** prior to the planned visit for approval. Please keep in mind that students are only allowed **one** excused college day.

If a college you applied to has asked to see your 1st semester grades (also called a 7th semester transcript or mid-year report,) please bring in the necessary documentation (i.e. the email or mailed request from the college) to Mr. Murphy's or Mr. Palmasani's office by **Friday, January 22.**

FAFSA (Financial Aid Forms)

The first day to file the FAFSA was **January 1, 2016.** Early submission maximizes your chances of receiving aid. This form should be completed online at www.fafsa.ed.gov. If your family will be applying for **any** kind of college financial aid, this form needs to be completed.

The PDF version of the 2016-2017 FAFSA is available for download on various Federal Student Aid Web sites, such as www.fafsa.ed.gov and www.studentaid.gov/resources in January.

The FSA ID – the username and password a student needs for signing the FAFSA and for various other uses on Federal Student Aid websites – replaced the Federal Student Aid PIN in May 2015. Visit www.studentsid.gov.fsaid to learn about and create a FSA ID.

The Federal Student Aid Information Center may be called for technical questions about submitting an electronic FAFSA, general questions about information requested on the FAFSA or to correct up to six processing errors and for questions about the status of your student's application. Additional information can be found at the U.S. Department of Education's web site at www.studentaid.ed.gov.

Don't forget to keep a copy of your completed FAFSA for your records.

Currently in addition to federal student aid, you may also be eligible for a tax credit which you claim when you file your taxes. For more information on these tax credits and the U.S. Department of Education's student aid programs, go to www.studentaid.ed.gov or call the Federal Student Aid Information Center at 1-800-4FED-AID (1-800-433-3243) Monday through Friday between 8:00 a.m. and 12:00 midnight EST or on Saturday between 9:00 am and 6:00 pm EST.

The Department of Education will stop giving colleges information from the federal form about students' college preferences, which critics said disadvantaged some students during the admissions and financial aid process. The department plans to stop sharing the "FAFSA position" information with colleges starting with the forms that are processed this coming January for aid that will be awarded during the 2016-17 school year.

Other points for future use:

- When you file for financial aid for the academic year 2017-18, you will be able to file after October 1, 2016. This would be for your student's second year of college. You will be able to use the official tax results from the 2015 tax return.
- Beginning in 2017, the tax return system will move from prior year income to what they are calling "prior, prior."

Please feel free to contact Mr. Murphy or Mr. Palmasani if you have any questions about the financial aid or scholarship process.

The FAFSA may not be the only application or form needed to receive a loan or grant although it must first be completed to determine any financial eligibility. Financial Aid offices at individual colleges and universities may require additional forms.

CSS/FINANCIAL AID PROFILE SERVICE

A service of the College Scholarship Service is the CSS/FINANCIAL AID PROFILE SERVICE. The PROFILE, separate and distinct from the federal system, was developed to address the needs of colleges, universities and scholarship programs that award their own non-federal student aid funds. Although this form will not be used by all schools, there will be some schools requiring it (i.e. Northwestern, Notre Dame). The school your student has applied to will notify you if it is required. PROFILE applications may also be completed online at www.collegeboard.com.

It is very important for colleges and programs that do use the PROFILE for the College Scholarship Service to successfully merge data from the FAFSA and the PROFILE. Be sure the PROFILE is required by the college your son or daughter wants to attend before completing it.

HINTS ON APPLYING FOR FINANCIAL AID

YOU SHOULD:

- ♦ Check with each college to find out what financial aid forms are required and their deadlines.
- ♦ Submit the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) as soon as possible **after** January 1, 2016. (You cannot apply before this date.) NOTE: You may file this form using estimated income information from 2015.

After you file the FAFSA, you may want to develop an appeal strategy. There are a number of variables worthy of an appeal, but here is a common example. If you are currently paying tuition to a grade school or high school for other children in your family, you may want to send a letter to the financial aid offices to each of the colleges explaining this additional expense that the FAFSA did not take into account.

SELECTIVE SERVICE AND FINANCIAL AID

For many years now, there has been a requirement in the State of Illinois that young men are to be registered with Selective Service to be eligible to receive state student financial aid or to seek employment in Illinois. These laws are similar to federal legislation which links registration to federal student aid and federal employment. Young men must register at the post office within 30 days of turning 18 by filling out a simple card. They can also sign up by answering #22 on the FAFSA form or by going to www.sss.gov. Failure to register is a felony punishable by a fine of up to $250,000 and/or up to five years in prison.

UPCOMING TEST DATES

TEST	DATE	REGULAR DEADLINE	LATE DEADLINE (additional fee required)
ACT	**April 9***	**March 4**	**March 18**
ACT	June 11	May 6	May 20

***Providence is a Test Center for this date.**

TEST	DATE	REGULAR DEADLINE	LATE DEADLINE (additional fee required)
SAT	March 5 (SAT I only)	January 9	February 12
SAT	May 7	April 8	April 22
SAT	June 4	May 6	May 20

SCHOLARSHIPS

Information and/or applications for the following scholarships may be found in the "Scholarship List" on Naviance Family Connection or by clicking on the links below. Paper applications for scholarships that are not "apply online only" may also be obtained from Mrs. Brassil in the Counseling Center.

Abri Credit Union Scholarship – (2) $1000 - Student or parent must be an Abri Credit Union member in good standing for at least (6) months. Must submit either a 500 word essay OR a 60 second video/commercial that conveys a clear, clever message of your financial knowledge on one of three topics (see application for details.) The submission will not be judged on the quality of the production, but the message itself. Two letters of recommendation required. Apply online only at www.idmyway.com. **Deadline January 29.**

AXA Community Scholarship – (12) $2500 - Open to students who have demonstrated outstanding achievement in their activities in school, the community or the workplace. Apply online only at www.axa-achievement.com. **Deadline February 1.**

Buick Achievers Scholarship Program – (100) up to $25,000 per year renewable for four years – Open to students planning to major in Engineering/Technology or select Design and Business related

majors (see eligible list of majors here.) Students should demonstrate an interest in pursuing a career in the automotive or related industries using these areas of study. Based on academic achievement, financial need, leadership in school and community activities and work experience. Special consideration will be given to first generation college applicants, female, minority, or dependents of military personnel. Apply online only at www.buickachievers.com. **Deadline February 27.**

Chicago Roofing Contractors Association Scholarship – (2) $3000 - Open to students who plan to major in liberal arts and sciences, engineering, architecture or business. Based on academic performance, extra-curricular activities and employment experience. Two letters of recommendation with evaluation forms required (teacher or counselor and non-related adult outside of school community.) Applications available in the "Scholarship List" on Naviance Family Connection or from Mrs. Brassil in the Counseling Center. **Must be postmarked by March 4.**

George M. Pullman Educational Foundation Scholarship – Up to $5000 - Open to students who are committed to their academic goals. Must have a minimum 3.0 GPA and strong financial need. A strong applicant is involved in his/her school and community, and is driven, goal-oriented, and responsible. Essay and two recommendations required. Apply online only at www.pullmanfoundation.org. **Deadline February 5.**

Golden Apple Scholars of Illinois – (250) $2500/yr. for freshman and sophomore year; $5000/yr. for junior and senior year plus $2000/summer stipend for attending (4) summer workshops. (Total financial package is $23,000.00.) Open to students who are planning to pursue a teaching career. Must have a minimum GPA of 2.5 and ACT 22+ composite score with a combined 19 in English/Writing (on the same test). (This is a State requirement.) Must attend one of (52) participating Illinois colleges. You may self-nominate or be nominated by a teacher at www.goldenapple.org. Nomination deadline **January 31.**

IACAC Scholarship – (5) $1000 – Based on demonstrated involvement in school, community and/or service to others with a motivation to achieve personal goals and minimum GPA of 3.0. Essay on specific topic, resume and counselor letter of recommendation required. Apply online only at www.iacac.org/scholarship. **Deadline February 19.**

Illinois Elks Children's Care Scholarship - Awards for PT or OT majors: $500 for freshman year, $500 for sophomore year, $500-$1500 for junior year, $1500-$2500 for senior year, $2500-$3000 for graduate level. Awards for PT or OT Assistants: $500 for freshman year, $800 for sophomore year. Must have a minimum GPA of 3.0 and show financial need. Tax forms for 2014 or 2015 tax year required. Applications available in the "Scholarship List" on Naviance Family Connection or from Mrs. Brassil in the Counseling Center. **Deadline March 4.**

Illinois Odd Fellow-Rebekah Scholarship – (3) $1500, (10-15) $1000 – Based on financial need and scholastic ability. Statement of goals and (3) recommendations required (counselor, teacher and non-school community member.) Copy of most recent Federal Form 1040 required showing only pages referring to dependents and adjusted gross income. More information available at www.ioof-il.org. Applications available in the "Scholarship List" on Naviance Family Connection or from Mrs. Brassil in the Counseling Center. **Deadline February 28.**

Illinois Special Education Teacher Tuition Waiver (SETTW) program – full tuition - Must teach full time in the field of special education at a nonprofit public, private or parochial preschool, elementary or secondary school in Illinois within one year of graduation and continue to teach for at least 2 of the 5 years following. More information at www.isac.org. Applications available in

the "Scholarship List" on Naviance Family Connection or from Mrs. Brassil in the Counseling Center. **Deadline March 1.**

Leopold Education Project Scholarship Program - $1000 – Open to students who plan to study a natural resource field such as fish or wildlife biology, conservation or management, air quality, botany, forestry, pollution control. Must have a minimum GPA of 3.0. Three letters of recommendation and statement of goals is required. Applications available in the "Scholarship List" on Naviance Family Connection or from Mrs. Brassil in the Counseling Center. **Deadline February 15.**

Lockport Township Government College Scholarship – up to (4) $1000 – Must be a resident of Lockport Township. May NOT be a Lockport Government employee or close relative to a Lockport Government employee or official. Based on work experience, school and extra-curricular activities, awards and recognitions. Essay on specific topic and two letters of recommendation required. Applications available in the "Scholarship List" on Naviance Family Connection or from Mrs. Brassil in the Counseling Center. **Deadline February 5.**

Will County Farm Bureau Foundation Scholarship – (23) $1000 – Parent, guardian or student applicant must be a member in good standing of the Will County Farm Bureau by January 1, 2016. Short personal statement (150 words) required. Application must be typed (not handwritten) and returned via postal mail to above address. Emailed applications are NOT accepted. Applications available in the "Scholarship List" on Naviance Family Connection or from Mrs. Brassil in the Counseling Center. **Deadline March 4.**

Will-South Cook Soil and Water Conservation Education Scholarship – (2) $1000 – Must plan to major in agricultural or natural resources related field of study and live within the boundaries of the district (i.e. in Will County or in South Cook County, south of 22nd St.) Short essay (250 words) and two letters of recommendation required. Applications available in the "Scholarship List" on Naviance Family Connection or from Mrs. Brassil in the Counseling Center. **Deadline February 1.**

As your students learn of scholarships they have been awarded, please have them bring the award letter they received to Mrs. Brassil in the Counseling Center. We will then make a copy of the letter so that we may keep track of **all** scholarships that are awarded to our seniors. **We ask that you notify us of every scholarship that your student is offered even if you are not sure if they will be accepting them.** These letters will also be used as verification for the graduation program. **We need to have copies of all award letters by Monday, May 2, 2016.**

In addition, we are tracking **all** college acceptances of our seniors. Because we are not notified by most colleges of your student's admission, **please have your student bring in a copy of their acceptance letters to our Counseling Center as well even if you are not sure where your son/daughter will be attending school.**

Mr. Murphy will be available to parents by appointment Monday through Friday from 7:30 am until 4:00 pm. If you are interested in meeting about particular college questions, Mr. Murphy can be reached at kmurphy@providencecatholioc.org or at 815-717-3187.

Mr. Palmasani will be available to parents by appointment Monday through Friday from 7:30 am until 3:00 pm. If you are interested in meeting about particular college questions, Mr. Palmasani can be reached at fpalmasani@providencecatholioc.org or at 815-717-3148.

The Counseling Department has additional information on our school website (www.providence catholic.org). Under the Academics tab, click on Guidance (Counseling) Department. Here you will be able to see past newsletters, contact information, test dates and much more. Check it out!

On behalf of the Counseling Department, we wish you a happy and healthy New Year. May the Lord bless you in 2016.

Sincerely,

Pamela J. Ryan	Kyle M. Murphy	Frank Palmasani
Director of Counseling	Senior/College Counselor	Senior/College Counselor

PJR/KM/FP:lb

NUMBER OF TRANSCRIPTS SENT: 1427