

Impressive Extracurricular Activities:

Student Government

Colleges are impressed by students with leadership skills. What better way to demonstrate such skills than holding a position in student government? It's a great way to participate in school matters, show you're both capable and responsible and that other students look up to you.

Academic Teams and Clubs

Joining an academic club or team shows that you're passionate about learning and gaining a competitive advantage. When it comes to rigorous academics, you don't shy away but, rather, embrace a challenge. Whether your subject preference is math, science or any other focus, demonstrating your love for learning is always in your favor.

The Debate Team

Students on the debate team are more likely to be engaged in the issues of today, able to think critically on their feet and are not afraid to speak out – all qualities that colleges look for in prospective students. Also, students that participate on debate teams are often outspoken within class, leading classmates into thoughtful discussions.

The Arts

Creativity is always an asset when it comes to college applications. Students active in creative arts, like music, drama and visual arts tend to be open-minded, eccentric and think outside of the box. These qualities add to campus life, which is a bonus in the eyes of a college admissions officer.

Internships

Obtaining an internship while in high school is impressive any way you slice it. An internship shows you're capable, dedicated and mature enough to enter the work force. Demonstrating such qualities in turn allows college admissions officers to assume you'll be more than capable of handling heavier course loads and actively participating in your curriculum, since you've already demonstrated initiative.

Culture Clubs

With all of the focus on anti-bullying campaigns and acceptance of others, colleges value students active in promoting diversity and culture now more than ever before. Such clubs demonstrate your willingness to learn about and accept others, while creating awareness for those who may be different from you. It also reveals that you have compassion for others and the strength of character to speak up for what you believe in.

Volunteer Work and Community Service

Most colleges consider some form of volunteer work or community service a must-have for all applicants. The best way to gain volunteer experience is to consider the activities you enjoy and find a way to apply them into your service hours. For example, if you enjoy art, volunteer at a local children's center to help kids with their creative processes. If you love to play music, volunteer to play at a local senior center. Are you a sports fanatic? Coach your local little league team. An animal lover? Shelters are always in need of great volunteers. There are so many easy ways to apply whatever you love to helping out in your community – just think creatively!

The Student Newspaper

Being published in any form – whether it's the student newspaper or another form – is an impressive accomplishment. Most college courses require writing as a basic skill and being published demonstrates you're not only capable of writing, but actually good at it. Mastering this critical college skill looks great on your application because it shows that you're active outside of the classroom in an activity that will translate to the likelihood of academic success in college courses.

A Part-time Job

If you're concerned about your lack of extracurricular activities because of your job, don't be. Colleges know that many students don't have the luxury of participating in extracurricular activities because they must work to help support their families.

Athletics

Participating in sports is a great way to showcase your teamwork, leadership skills and that you place an emphasis on athletics and physical fitness. While athletics are a platform to demonstrate these important traits, it is common for students to participate in them and may not hold as much significance as when balanced with other activities. As with anything in life, balance is very important to keep in mind. It's ideal to try to choose activities from different categories, both social and academic, so that colleges are able to see your wide range of talents and strong character traits. All of your effort can be applied to student financial aid opportunities in the future. We're talking essay prompts within a scholarship or institutional merit scholarships based upon club or sport team involvement!