



## A+ Test Prep and Tutoring Newsletter

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### Online College Search Resources



Are you the parent of a high school junior or, if you are *very* ambitious, the parent of a sophomore who is ready to hit the road this summer to visit colleges? Before you map out where you plan to visit, it's a great idea to first do some research.

Every college now has a website and that's a great way to see how that school presents itself, but there are also many useful sites that collect and evaluate information about colleges that can add another dimension to your research.

For example, some sites have matching services that allow you to plug in information about your preferences and your interests, and they will then generate a list of schools that fit those criteria.

Other sites help you find scholarships, offer information about financial aid, or allow you to network with students who attend schools that interest you. The following is a sampling of some of the better known sites:

[BeRecruited](#) This site advertises itself as the largest and most successful online network connecting

high school athletes and college coaches. Rather than taking a passive approach to being recruited, athletes can upload information about themselves and their high school athletic performance in order to attract the attention of team recruiters. Athletes can also research athletic scholarships and collegiate athletic programs throughout the United States.

[CollegeAnswer](#) This site is a 6-time winner of the Forbes "Best of the Web" award. Owned by college financial-aid company SallieMae, CollegeAnswer is an extremely comprehensive collection of information about all facets of the college search: preparing, selecting, applying, paying, deciding, and financing! It also has information about community colleges and information for adults who are returning to college.

[Princeton Review](#) Princeton Review is known for its ranking of colleges and universities, but this site offers a quirky array of categories such as "Best Northeastern Schools," "Most Politically Active Students," and "Birkenstock-Wearing, Tree-Hugging, Clove-Smoking Vegetarians." Their site offers the usual information too: enrollment, student/faculty ratio, campus size, percent of classrooms with Internet access, and much more.

[ReviewSchools](#) This site offers a unique insider's perspective to the college search. ReviewSchools allows students to review their school and post their own stories and opinions about what college life--socially and academically--is really like.

[ScholarshipExperts](#) Their tag line is "Fast. Easy. Free." This site has been matching students with scholarships and free college money since 2001. Students register for free and then get matched to various opportunities that are available on their frequently updated database.

[Zinch](#) Here is how one reporter summarized this unique interactive site: "Zinch is a Facebook-like Web site that allows aspiring college students to post profiles that reveal far more about themselves than a standardized test score will, while aiding college admissions officers to recruit students more effectively." (Paul Beebe, *The Salt Lake Tribune*). Zinch allows students to learn about, get recruited by, and interact with more than 670 colleges and universities around the world. Given the popularity of social networking sites, this resource may be more appealing to your teenager than some of the more traditional websites.

## Featured Student



### **Ashley Feldman**

We are pleased to congratulate Ashley Feldman, a junior at Pennridge High School in Perkasie. All of Ashley's hard work paid off when she received her November 2008 SAT scores, which were 290 points higher than her scores on the PSAT taken prior to her tutoring program!

Ashley began preparing for the November SAT late last summer. She worked with A+ tutors Brian Kirchner and Beth Ann Olesen (see our Featured Tutor story) at our Gwynedd office to strengthen her Verbal and Math skills.

Brian, her Critical Reading and Writing tutor, described Ashley as very bright and an auditory learner who stayed focused during their sessions and asked good questions. Beth Ann, her math tutor, enjoyed working with Ashley because she was always willing to work, but sensed that she initially lacked confidence in how to approach math problems.

Ashley had a very good rapport with both tutors and felt that they made an effort to establish a bond with her right from the beginning that made tutoring more fun.

Learning A+'s strategies and tips for taking the SAT, as well as reviewing grammar rules and math formulas, were all extremely helpful to her on test day. Ashley felt far more prepared and confident after completing the program, and her scores reflect that.

Congratulations again to Ashley on her outstanding achievement and kudos to Brian and Beth Ann!

### **Featured Tutor**



### **Beth Ann Olesen**

Beth Ann Olesen is a relative newcomer to A+, having joined our tutoring team just one year ago. She tutors both Math and Verbal SAT prep and works primarily out of our Gwynedd office.

Beth Ann graduated in 2005 with a B.B.A. in Hospitality and Tourism Management from James Madison University. She is currently attending Gwynedd-Mercy College where she just completed her certification in Secondary English and is pursuing a Master's Degree in Education.

In addition to being a student there, Beth Ann also works as an instructor in the Gwynedd-Mercy tutoring center on weekends. She just finished a 15-week stint as a student teacher at Plymouth-Whitemarsh High School and recently began a new job as an 11th and 12th grade English teacher at Renaissance Academy, a charter school located in Phoenixville.

In her spare time, Beth Ann is involved with the Susan G. Komen Breast Cancer 3-Day, an annual fundraiser to which she is very committed. In addition, Beth Ann just took up a new hobby--skydiving! She took her first plunge a few weeks ago in South Jersey and is completely hooked. She can't wait to try it again.

Beth Ann enjoys one-on-one tutoring because she likes instilling confidence in her students. Very often at the beginning of the test prep program, students see a math problem and immediately assume they can't figure it out. Beth Ann encourages her students to approach problems in different ways. She says that "students are usually smarter than they think they are" and she enjoys the process of guiding them along so that, with practice, they trust themselves to be able to solve problems on their own.

Beth Ann lives in Blue Bell with Nick, her husband of three years.

### **A+ College Reference Corner**



We have assembled a collection of college-related reference books of interest to parents and students alike. The A+ Book Corner can be found in the reception area of each of our two office locations, in Jenkintown and Gwynedd.

The next time you stop in or wait for your child as he or she is tutored, feel free to browse through the following books:

[Fiske Guide to Colleges 2009, 25th Edition](#)

[Colleges That Change Lives: 40 Schools That Will Change the Way You Think About Colleges](#)

[Fiske Guide to Getting Into the Right College, 3rd Edition](#)

[The College Application Essay](#)

[Paying for College Without Going Broke, 2009 Edition](#)

[Self-Advocacy Skills for Students with Learning Disabilities: Making It Happen In College and Beyond](#)

### **School and Community Partnerships**



A+ Test Prep and Tutoring provides in-home One-to-One Test Prep and Academic Subject Tutoring throughout the Delaware Valley.

We also partner with schools to provide test preparation, remedial reading and math, and study skills courses to students throughout the region. Courses offered include SAT, ACT, SSAT, and ISEE.