



Executive Summary for: Student Sheungying Mai

Sheungying Mai is an academically outstanding AP student at Shanghai Experimental School – Cambridge International Centre. With a near-perfect GPA of 3.98 and a flawless 4.0 GPA in her most recent academic year, Sheungying has demonstrated elite academic consistency across science, mathematics, economics, and humanities.

Her top-choice university is **Stanford**, and her profile positions her as a strong candidate. However, due to the competitive nature of top-tier admissions and the unpredictable international applicant landscape, we recommend a dual-path strategy that includes both a **front-facing early admissions effort** and **contingency planning via spring transfer or gap-year hybrid enrollment**. Sheungying is currently waitlisted at several top universities, including Brown, Cornell, Duke, Wellesley, Barnard, and others. She has been rejected by None yet (targeting Stanford), meaning those options are closed for this year.

This document outlines what must happen next and how IDFS can help your family ensure Sheungying ends up at a top school.

1. Student Background

- **Name:** Sheungying Mai
- **Date of Birth:** September 24, 2007
- **High School:** Shanghai Experimental School – Cambridge International Centre
- **Graduation Date:** June 2025
- **GPA:** 3.98 cumulative / 4.0 current
- **Program:** Advanced Placement (AP)
- **Language Fluency:** English & Mandarin



- **Target Major:** TBD – Likely STEM, Pre-Med, Biotech, Economics, or Interdisciplinary Sciences
 - **Dream School:** Stanford University
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2. Strategic Timeline

✓ **Primary Path: Fall 2025 / Regular Admissions**

- **July–November 1, 2025** – Finalize application materials; submit Stanford REA and top-tier early applications - (if we do Stanford, Harvard, Yale, Princeton REA then we can only apply to public schools early UC Berkeley, UCLA or every other high profile school Regular Admission. If we do not apply REA we can apply Early Decision to one school, Duke, Rice and regular Early Action to others like U Chicago, Georgetown, Cal Tech, MIT, U Michigan, UVirginia, Georgia Tech
- **November–December 2025** – Submit regular applications; initiate donor advocacy for all schools other than REA selected school.
- **Dec-2025** – Decision released
- If accepted: Send deposit and donation soon thereafter
- If deferred or rejected: Activate backup track below

🔄 **Option 1: Gap Year + Online + Emory Transfer**

If Sheungying is not admitted to Stanford REA or equivalent Tier 1 options, she will begin a structured **gap year with academic continuity** via:

- **Fall 2025:** Enroll in Purdue Global Online Undergraduate Track (if needed) or a top-ranked virtual or hybrid academic program while University
 - Suggested Courses: Biology, Chemistry, Writing, and Math to demonstrate college-level performance



- **Winter 2026–Spring 2027:** Apply as a **transfer candidate** to Stanford or peer schools with full support from IDFS
- **Summer 2026:** Participate in a U.S.-based research program or lab internship (sponsored by IDFS)

Benefits: Maintains academic momentum while positioning Sheungying for a **curated transfer strategy**, avoiding any institutional stigma of “traditional gap year.”

Option 2: Spring Semester (January 2026 Start) Lobby Track

Some elite U.S. universities offer **January entry** for a limited cohort. If Sheungying is attending Emory or has decided based on IDFS efforts to sit out the fall and wait for a Spring Admission through Lobbying or attend one of the target schools for the year while waiting for Lobbying effort to attend top tier school in Regular Admission for Fall 2026.

- Target Schools: USC, NYU, Emory, Northeastern, Rice, UChicago, Harvard, Yale, Princeton, Duke, UC Berkeley, UCLA, Stanford, U Penn, Cornell, Brown, Columbia, Johns Hopkins
- Process:
 - Maintain academic continuity (online/hybrid or No attendance in the fall at Emory or stay in China)
 - IDFS initiates soft lobbying in Fall 2025
 - Lobby and secure Spring 2026 start at one of Top Tier schools the schools above

Benefits: Avoids a full-year delay; leverages our donor relationships for out-of-cycle admissions.

3. School Tiers & Advocacy Strategy



Tier	Institutions	Contribution Guidance
Tier 1	Stanford (REA & Regular), MIT, Yale (REA & Regular), Princeton (REA & Regular)	\$500K (IDFS) + \$2M–\$7M (School)
Tier 2	UChicago, Duke, Johns Hopkins, Columbia, Brown	\$500K (IDFS) + \$1.5M+ (School)
Tier 3	USC, NYU, Rice, Emory (Jan Entry), Northeastern	\$500K (IDFS) + \$500K–\$1M (School)

Note: Stanford lobbying applies only pre-rejection. If rejected, only transfer or gap-year reapplication remains viable.

4. Deliverables from IDFS

- Full Application Package (Common App, supplements, resume, essays, recommendations)
- Personal Narrative and Field of Study Strategy
- Interview Preparation & Persona Coaching
- Stanford-specific alignment, lobbying, and philanthropic planning
- Optional: U.S.-based summer research or immersion programs
- Gap Year Structuring (Emory/Online)
- Spring Semester Lobbying Plan
- Transfer Application Strategy (if needed)

What We Will Do

- ☐ Speak directly with universities where Sheungying is waitlisted.



- ☐ Use our network to explore dorm availability and influence decisions.
 - ☐ Help your family with decisions and backup options
 - ☐ Create a strong pathway for either immediate enrollment or a guaranteed admission the following year.
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5. Immediate Questions for Family

1. What major or academic concentration does Sheungying wish to pursue?
 2. What are her top 3 schools in order of preference (besides Stanford)?
 3. Does the family have alumni or philanthropic connections with any of the above schools?
 4. Would the family support a gap year strategy that includes enrollment in online U.S. coursework?
 5. Is Sheungying open to transferring to Stanford if not admitted directly?
 6. Is the family open to considering January admission as a springboard to top schools?
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6. Final Statement from IDFS

Sheungying Mai is a rare academic talent, and with the right timing, story, and strategy, her profile can stand out in even the most competitive admissions cycle. Through IDFS's multi-tiered approach—balancing advocacy, early decision strategy, and carefully planned contingencies—we ensure that Sheungying has multiple high-probability pathways to success. Whether through direct admission, January start, or strategic transfer, we will be with her every step of the way.

Sincerely,
IDFS Admissions Team