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150 Extracurricular Activity Examples From Successful College Applications

When I was in high school, I knew that extracurricular activities would be crucial to building a well-rounded college application. I was involved in a wide variety of activities: from Math, Biology, and Chemistry Olympiads to Model United Nations, debating, and even running a student newspaper called The King's Echo. I also took part in sports like tennis and hockey — not necessarily my strengths, but I gave it my all. These experiences taught me discipline, teamwork, leadership, and so much more that went beyond the classroom.

In this blog, I'll discuss what extracurricular activities are, why they matter, and share examples of activities that our Crimson students have done that helped them get into the top universities. Whether you're just starting out or trying to level up your activities, I hope this gives you some inspiration!

What Are Extracurricular Activities?

An extracurricular activity is **anything that falls outside the scope of a regular curriculum**. They include a wide range of activities, such as school clubs, sports teams, volunteering, hobbies, and creative projects. These activities may not give you academic credit, but they help you grow, explore your interests, and develop important skills like teamwork, leadership, and time management.

Why Do Extracurricular Activities Matter?

Extracurricular activities make up **30% of your overall college application**. They play a crucial role in helping applicants stand out beyond their academic achievements. Participation in these activities demonstrates key qualities such as **leadership, passion, commitment, and time management**—traits that admissions officers value.

- [The Benefits of Extracurricular Activities](#)

[Colleges want well-rounded individuals](#) who can contribute meaningfully to campus life, and extracurriculars **provide insight into your personality, values, and dedication**. The activities you choose can give admissions officers a deeper understanding of who you are as a person and how you will contribute to their campus community.

To inspire you, we have compiled a list of **150 examples** of extracurricular activities that were **undertaken by real students who got accepted into top universities**. These examples cover a wide range of categories, from academic and artistic pursuits to social activism and leadership initiatives. Whether you're just starting to explore your interests or looking to expand your existing activities, this list will provide you with ideas and motivation to take your extracurriculars to the next level.

Below, you'll find examples of extracurricular activities that helped students stand out in their college applications. These activities are organized by category, making it easy to find ideas that align with your own passions and interests.

Examples of Extracurricular Activities by Category

Here are some examples of extracurricular activities organized into categories based on the interests they represent. These activities were undertaken by students who got accepted into top universities, providing you with inspiration for your own pursuits!

Academic

- **Physics Club:** Led experiments and discussions on physics topics, helping students understand complex concepts in an engaging way.
- **History Research Project:** Conducted in-depth research on the impacts of World War II, presented findings to classmates.
- **Science Fair Project:** Designed and presented an experiment to test the effectiveness of various water filtration methods.
- **Economics Club:** Participated in discussions and competitions focused on macroeconomic policies and current events.
- **Mathematics Club:** Led a team of students in organizing weekly problem-solving sessions and preparing for math competitions.
- **Chemistry Olympiad:** Participated in national-level competitions, reaching the finals through dedicated study and preparation.
- **STEM Outreach:** Organized outreach programs in local schools to promote interest in STEM subjects, inspiring younger students.

- **Data Analysis Project:** Analyzed publicly available data sets to identify trends in environmental changes, mentored by a local college professor.
- **National Honor Society:** Member actively involved in peer tutoring and community service projects.
- **Fun Maths Problem Solving Society:** Founded and led a group of 40+ members, organizing weekly problem-solving sessions and inviting guest speakers.
- **Maths Competitions:** Competed in various competitions, including the British Maths Olympiad, qualifying in multiple years.
- **National Ocean Sciences Bowl:** Served as Team B Captain, organizing biweekly practices and preparing the team for competitions.
- **College Prep Courses:** Completed college-level courses in Behavioral Neuroscience and Social Psychology, wrote an analysis on "Narcissism and Social Media."
- **Neuroscience Society:** Founded and led the society, organizing weekly workshops, recruiting members, and shadowing a clinical neurologist.
- **Physics Study Guide:** Authored a 50-page study guide on physics concepts, reaching over 3000 downloads.
- **Astronomy Club:** Organized stargazing events and lectures to foster interest in astronomy.

Art

- **Calligraphy Club:** Practiced calligraphy techniques, creating personalized greeting cards for community events.
- **Pottery Workshop:** Created pottery pieces for community events, showcasing artistic skills and craftsmanship.
- **Graphic Design Club:** Designed posters and digital artwork for school events, contributing to the visual branding of campus activities.
- **Photography Project:** Completed a series of wildlife photos for a community exhibit, highlighting local biodiversity.
- **Piano:** Took lessons for thirteen years, performing both contemporary and classical pieces at community recitals.
- **Environmental Paintings:** Created a series of paintings focused on environmental conservation, exhibited at a local gallery to raise awareness.
- **Community Theater:** Participated in multiple theater productions over four years, taking on various acting and backstage roles.
- **Animated Film:** Produced a short animated film using digital software, showcased at a local film festival.
- **Art Club:** Founded and led a club to teach drawing techniques to students at the community center.
- **Mural Painting Project:** Created a mural in the school cafeteria to promote environmental awareness.

Community Service

- **Senior Center Volunteer:** Organized recreational activities and events for elderly residents at a local senior center.
- **Community Sports Coach:** Coached a youth soccer team on weekends, helping young players develop skills and teamwork.
- **Food Bank Volunteer:** Organized donations and distributed food to families in need, supporting community food security.
- **Park Restoration Volunteer:** Assisted in cleaning and restoring local parks, including planting native trees to improve green spaces.
- **Animal Shelter Volunteer:** Helped care for animals and organized adoption events to support local animal shelters.
- **Community Clean-Up:** Organized a community clean-up event that attracted over 100 participants, improving the local environment.
- **Habitat for Humanity:** Worked as a member to help build homes for underprivileged families in the community.
- **Charity Work:** Collaborated with a local charity to distribute food packages to families in need during the holiday season.
- **Mentorship Program:** Established a mentorship program for underprivileged middle school students, providing academic and emotional support.
- **Kalliope Organization Committee:** Vice President, initiated and organized the school's first charity green fashion show, raising funds for the bursary fund.
- **Youth-run Charity:** Founded and managed a charity providing literature to rural and developing areas, expanding educational access.
- **Violinist:** Played in a string ensemble to raise money for the NSQ Kids in Need program and the Australian Chamber Orchestra Music Education Program for disadvantaged children.
- **International Student Association:** Vice President of Community Service, hosted orientation events and organized fundraisers for international social issues.
- **Service Trip:** Raised over \$10,000 through fundraising, assembled school supply packages, and taught classes at schools in East Timor.
- **NGO Project:** Vice Chair, supervised 20 students, collaborated with an NGO to develop a machine that converts plastics into bricks to address pollution.
- **Book Drive Organizer:** Collected and distributed books to local schools and libraries in need.

Government & Leadership

- **Mock Trial:** Participated in a mock trial competition, gaining insight into the legal process and courtroom procedures.
- **School Event Coordinator:** Planned and coordinated school events such as talent shows and fundraisers to enhance student life.

- **Debate Club:** Competed in local and regional debate tournaments, winning multiple awards for effective argumentation.
- **Youth City Council Member:** Represented youth interests in local government meetings, contributing to community decision-making.
- **Student Council:** President leading school-wide initiatives to improve student life, including new programs and events.
- **Youth Advisory Board:** Worked with local government to create a board that addresses community issues from a youth perspective.
- **Voter Registration Drive:** Organized a voter registration drive at school to increase youth involvement in local elections.
- **Leadership Group:** Co-founded a group focused on helping new students transition into high school through mentorship and support.
- **Model United Nations:** Represented different countries in international policy discussions, developing negotiation and diplomacy skills.
- **Congresswoman Internship:** Interned in Washington, D.C., wrote letters addressing constituent concerns, and attended hearings and briefings.
- **Bilateral Safety Corridor Coalition Internship:** Spread awareness about human trafficking by delivering seminars at community centers.
- **Ammar Campa-Najjar Campaign:** Intern and Office Manager, managed daily tasks, trained volunteers, and crafted promotional materials in both English and Spanish.
- **Entrepreneurship Summer Program:** Prototyped a smartband for individuals with panic disorder, conducted market research, and pitched to investors.
- **News Service Internship:** Conducted research on Neural Networks for named entity recognition as part of a summer internship.
- **Law Firm Internship:** Conducted economic research and prepared memos in the competition department of a law firm.

Media

- **Yearbook Committee:** Helped design and edit the school's yearbook, capturing key moments from the school year.
- **School Blog Contributor:** Wrote articles for the school's blog, covering various student events and activities.
- **School Newspaper:** Editor-in-chief overseeing content creation, writing articles, and managing a team of student journalists.
- **Podcast:** Produced a podcast discussing political and social issues relevant to teenagers, engaging peers in meaningful conversations.

- **Magazine Articles:** Wrote articles for a local magazine on environmental and social justice topics, raising awareness in the community.
- **News Anchor:** Worked as a news anchor for the school television network, reporting on school events and announcements.
- **Social Media Management:** Managed social media for a school club, increasing engagement by 40% through creative content.

Music & Performance

- **School Orchestra:** Played violin in the orchestra, performing at school concerts and community events throughout the year.
- **Spoken Word Poetry:** Wrote and performed original poetry at school talent shows and local community events.
- **Jazz Band:** Played trumpet in the school jazz band, performing at various school and community events.
- **Garage Band:** Founded a band with friends, performing at local events and festivals to raise funds for charity.
- **Choir:** Participated in school and community choir performances, contributing as a vocalist in multiple concerts.
- **Dance Showcase:** Choreographed and performed dance routines for the school's annual dance showcase.
- **Community Theater:** Took on lead roles in multiple community theater productions, gaining experience in acting and stage presence.
- **School Music Council:** Co-President, organized and promoted musical events across campus, collaborating with the music faculty.
- **Acapella Group:** Co-President, led a group of 17 performers, arranged music pieces, and organized performance opportunities.
- **Choir:** Alto singer, participated in six performances annually, including holiday and spring concerts.
- **Violin:** Played in the first violins section of various orchestras, including school and regional groups.
- **Piano:** Classically trained pianist, earned diplomas, and placed in regional and state competitions.
- **Cello:** Selected as lead cellist for the Youth Orchestra Philharmonic, performed in semi-professional concerts.

Sports & Recreation

- **Ultimate Frisbee Club:** Practiced regularly and competed in local ultimate frisbee tournaments.
- **Archery Team:** Trained weekly and competed in regional archery competitions, developing precision and focus.
- **Badminton Club:** Competed in local tournaments, consistently improving skills through practice.
- **Rock Climbing Team:** Practiced climbing weekly and competed in regional climbing competitions.

- **Soccer:** Captain of the varsity team, leading the team to the regional championships and mentoring younger players.
- **Tennis:** Competed in regional tennis tournaments, achieving a top-ten ranking in singles matches.
- **Hiking Club:** Organized and led weekend hiking trips to nearby trails, promoting outdoor activities among peers.
- **Martial Arts:** Practiced Taekwondo for six years, achieved a black belt, and competed in state-level competitions.
- **Swimming:** Competed in state-level swimming competitions, winning multiple medals in freestyle and butterfly events.
- **Cross Country:** Captain of the cross country team, led training sessions and motivated teammates during competitions.
- **Basketball:** Played as a Power Forward in the first and second squads, competed in the GPS/CAS competition.
- **Lacrosse:** Played as a defenseman, attended daily practices, started in games, and was chosen as captain for multiple matches.
- **Softball:** Team Captain and Starting Pitcher, led practices, and played a key role in regional competitions.
- **JV Girls Basketball:** Team Manager, organized game schedules, managed scorebooks, and assisted coaches during practices.
- **Netball:** Played for the school's netball team, reaching the finals in multiple seasons and contributing as an offensive player.
- **Kayaking Club:** Participated in weekly kayaking trips and led safety workshops for new members.

Social Activism

- **LGBTQ+ Advocacy Group:** Organized events to promote acceptance and equality within the school community.
- **Anti-Bullying Campaign:** Created posters and led workshops to raise awareness about the effects of bullying.
- **Climate Change Campaign:** Organized a campaign to raise awareness of climate change, involving local schools and community members.
- **Amnesty International:** Participated in activities advocating for human rights, including letter-writing campaigns and protests.
- **Recycling Program:** Created a school-wide recycling program to promote environmental sustainability.
- **Social Justice Protests:** Participated in protests advocating for social justice and equality in the community.
- **Girls Who Code:** Founded a local chapter to encourage young women to explore computer science and technology.
- **Oaktree:** Community Leader, raised funds and developed educational curricula for use in developing countries.

- **Cancer Action Network:** Secretary and Spokesperson, advocated for legislation to improve palliative care access for low-income families.
- **Tikkun Olam:** Co-President, organized Holocaust awareness events and cultural activities, including field trips.
- **Child Rights Group:** Founded a group working with NGOs in India to address issues like child abuse and food insecurity.
- **Special Needs Charity:** Founder and Executive Director, set up chapters in seven countries, led inclusion campaigns, and published articles.
- **Climate Activist Group:** Regional Director, organized global events to raise awareness about climate change.
- **Fair Trade Club:** Advocated for fair trade practices by organizing awareness campaigns at school.

Extracurriculars Around the World

Technology

- **Game Development Club:** Worked with a team to create a video game using Unity, showcased at a school event.
- **3D Printing Project:** Designed and printed 3D models for use in science classes, integrating technology into learning.
- **Volunteer Website:** Built a website to connect local community members with volunteer opportunities.
- **Hackathon:** Participated in a 24-hour hackathon, developing an app to help students track and manage their homework.
- **Robotics Club:** Lead developer, competed in national robotics competitions, building and programming robots.
- **Coding Platform:** Created an online platform to teach basic coding to middle school students.
- **Machine Learning Project:** Developed a machine learning model to analyze social media sentiment as an independent research project.
- **Drone Building Workshop:** Led a workshop teaching students how to build and pilot drones, focusing on engineering and aerodynamics.

Special Interest

- **Bird Watching Club:** Organized bird-watching trips and documented local bird species, sharing findings with the community.
- **Gardening Club:** Grew vegetables and flowers in the school garden, donating produce to local food banks.
- **Dungeons and Dragons Club:** Organized weekly campaigns, creating an inclusive space for students interested in role-playing games.

- **Civil War Reenactments:** Participated in reenactments, researching historical figures and portraying them at events.
- **Chess Team:** Competed in local and state-level tournaments, developing strategic thinking and problem-solving skills.
- **Book Club:** Founded a club focused on discussing classic literature and modern novels, fostering a love for reading.
- **Renaissance Faires:** Participated in Renaissance Faires, sewing costumes, and acting as a historical character.

Drama & Theater

- **Improv Club:** Participated in weekly improv sessions, developing quick-thinking and performance skills.
- **Costume Design:** Designed and created costumes for the school play, contributing to the visual aspect of the production.
- **Royal National Theatre of London:** Selected for an international dramatist network, attended workshops, and performed in productions.
- **House Drama Captain:** Wrote, directed, and organized a school play, managing all aspects of the production.
- **Musical Theatre Group:** Trained in dance and acting, restaged musicals in Off-Broadway theaters, performing as a member of the group.
- **Drama Productions:** Played lead roles in various productions, including street plays and dance performances.

Entrepreneurship

- **School Store Manager:** Managed inventory and sales for the school store, gaining experience in retail and customer service.
- **Social Enterprise Founder:** Created a business selling handmade crafts to raise funds for a local charity.
- **Startup Founder:** Founded a small business providing eco-friendly products, managing a team of five employees.
- **E-Commerce Platform:** Developed an online store to sell handmade crafts, learning about web development and digital marketing.
- **Business Plan Competition:** Participated in a business plan competition, developed a plan for a social enterprise, and won second place.

Environmental & Sustainability Initiatives

- **Recycling Awareness Campaign:** Led a campaign to increase recycling within the school, including organizing educational workshops.
- **Tree Planting Initiative:** Organized a tree-planting day, engaging students and community members to promote environmental awareness.
- **School Garden Project:** Created a community garden on school grounds to promote sustainability and teach gardening skills.
- **Beach Clean-Up Leader:** Organized monthly beach clean-ups, involving community volunteers to help reduce pollution.
- **Composting Initiative:** Started a composting program at school to reduce food waste and promote sustainable practices.
- **Water Conservation Campaign:** Led a campaign to promote water conservation at school, including installing water-saving devices.

Health & Wellness

- **Meditation Club:** Founded a meditation club to teach stress-relief techniques to students.
- **Nutrition Workshop Organizer:** Organized workshops on healthy eating habits and nutrition for students.
- **Yoga Club:** Founded a yoga club to promote physical fitness and mental well-being among students.
- **Mental Health Advocate:** Led workshops to raise awareness about mental health issues and provided resources for students.
- **First Aid Volunteer:** Volunteered at local events, providing first aid support as part of a community health organization.

Cultural & Language

- **Spanish Poetry Club:** Organized weekly meetings to read, write, and discuss Spanish-language poetry.
- **Japanese Cultural Club:** Hosted events celebrating Japanese culture, including traditional tea ceremonies and festivals.
- **Language Exchange Club:** Organized weekly meet-ups for language practice between English and Spanish-speaking students.
- **Cultural Festival Coordinator:** Planned and coordinated a school-wide cultural festival to celebrate diversity and different heritages.
- **Heritage Dance Group:** Participated in a traditional dance group, performing at cultural festivals and school events.
- **Korean Language Club:** Organized cultural exchange events and taught basic Korean language to interested students.

STEM Competitions

- **Robotics Competition:** Built and programmed a robot to complete specific challenges, competing in a regional competition.
- **Chemistry Challenge:** Competed in a state-level chemistry competition, solving complex chemical problems.
- **Science Olympiad:** Competed in regional Science Olympiad competitions, winning multiple medals in various science categories.
- **Engineering Design Challenge:** Participated in a local engineering design challenge, created a working prototype of a bridge.
- **App Development Competition:** Developed a mental health awareness app and presented it at a technology competition.