



January 2026 Newsletter

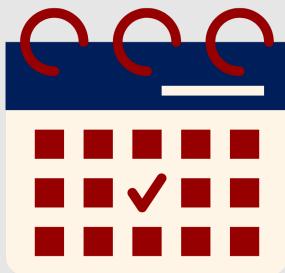
Important Dates

Friday, January 16
SDP Half Day for Staff Development

Monday, January 19
SDP Half Closed for Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Day

Wednesday, January 21
SDP Term 2 Ends

January 29-30
SDP Half Days for 2nd Term Report Card Conferences



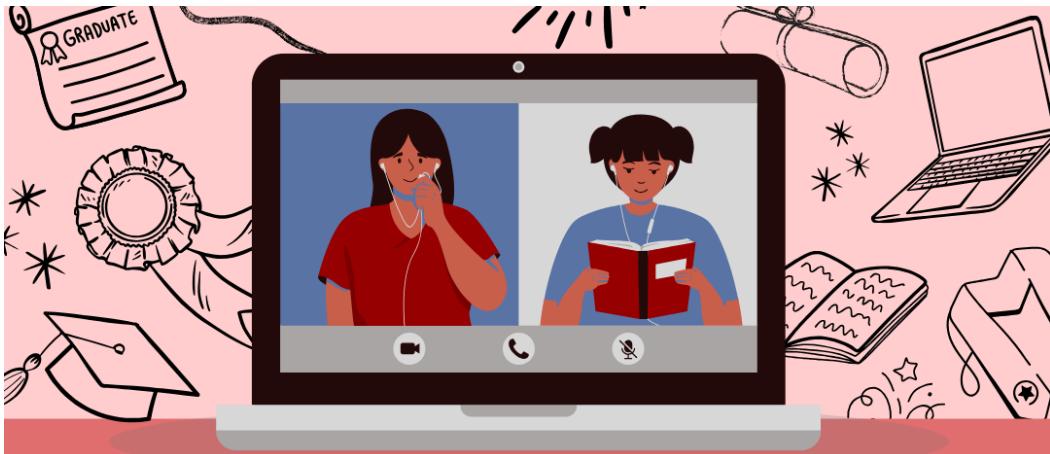
Greetings, Scholars and Families —

Happy New Year, and thank you to all those who turned out for last month's Cards, Cookies, and Cocoa event! Together we made more than 150 cards to send to senior citizens living in area nursing homes and care facilities.

We have more fun and rewarding events planned for this spring! Read on for information on this spring's College Corner lineup, earning a bachelor's degree with the 2+2 model, and summer opportunities for students interested in law and science.

Have questions or need assistance? Email us any time at vpse.talentsearch@upenn.edu.





SPRING 2026

COLLEGE CORNER

- Jan. 21 Paying for College
- Feb. 11 Scholarships
- March 18 Financial Aid Letters
- April 8 Classes and Majors
- April 29 Dorms, Meal Plans, & More

Wednesdays 6-7pm

Zoom link in Canvas!

Mark your calendar with the dates for this spring's College Corner sessions! This month, on **January 21**, we'll cover everything you need to know **Paying for College**.

Join on Zoom:

<https://upenn.zoom.us/j/92100309823?pwd=x5LHaixCb1wn8EvSeieFjp7nPvwaNF.1>

College Corner meets on select Wednesdays from 6:00 to 7:00 p.m. Though sessions are geared toward helping 12th graders accomplish their college application goals, younger students are welcome to join for a preview of what's next.

Earn Your Bachelor's Degree with the 2+2 Model

Planning to continue your education after high school? Consider how community college can be part of your journey toward an associate or bachelor's degree!

Community colleges are higher education institutions that offer two-year programs leading to the Associate of Arts (AA) or Associate of Science (AS) degree. The **2+2 Model** **allows students to earn a bachelor's degree** by completing two years at a community college for an associate degree, and then transfer to a four-year college or university for a final two years of study culminating in a bachelor's degree.



Benefits of Community College:

- Community colleges offer **significantly lower tuition and fees** (typically less than half as much) than four-year institutions.

- Many community colleges are “open admission” institutions, and are equipped to provide necessary prerequisites to help students become eligible to enroll in college level courses.
- Many community colleges provide academic and English language assistance and other support services to **prepare students for the demands of studying at the university level.**

Benefits of the 2+2 Model:

- Students who complete a 2+2 program obtain **the same bachelor's degree** from a four-year college or university as they would have if completing all four years at that school.
- Students who complete general education requirements for their bachelor's degree at the community college level can focus on coursework specific to their chosen field of study once enrolled at a four-year college or university.
- Many four-year colleges and universities offer **merit-based transfer scholarships** to community college graduates.
- Some community colleges offer dual admissions programs, where students apply to both the community college and four-year institution simultaneously with the guarantee of admission upon completion of the associate degree. **Community College of Philadelphia has dual admissions transfer partnerships with Cheyney, Drexel, Lincoln, Temple, and other schools.**

Source: educationusa.state.gov

Advocate for Talent Search and Other TRIO Programs

Did you know that Penn Talent Search is a federal TRIO program?

TRIO programs operate in all 50 states, Washington, D.C., the Pacific Islands, and Puerto Rico.

Collectively, **more than 3,400 TRIO programs**

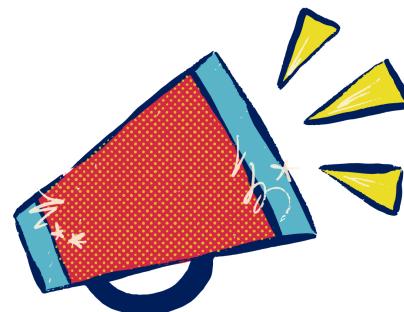
nationwide help nearly one million students enter and graduate from college each year. Penn Talent Search alone serves 583 students in Philadelphia.

Recently, the White House issued a **budget proposal** that would **eliminate all TRIO programs** in the coming year. Across the country, TRIO students could lose access to the academic advising, career guidance, and personal support that make success possible for so many first-generation and low-income students.

Policymakers in Congress need to hear from YOU — the TRIO students, parents, and families — about the importance of protecting Talent Search and other programs, so we can continue to support every one of our participants along their educational journey!

Use this link to contact your senators and representative asking for continued support for federal TRIO programs.

Thank you for being a TRIO advocate!



Opportunities for Talent Search Scholars

Penn Carey Law 2026 Pre-College Academy Scholarship

The University of Pennsylvania Carey Law School's Pre-College Academy offers **high school students** a unique opportunity to immerse themselves in a law school

Penn Summer Science Initiative

The FREE Penn Summer Science Initiative, (PSSI) is sponsored by the Penn Materials Research Science and Engineering Center, which is funded by the National Science Foundation. It will accept **14 students entering**

environment. This program is the only of its' kind where classes are held in an actual law school with standing faculty members and high-level legal practitioners providing students a comprehensive introduction to the American legal system and specialized areas of law.

The 2026 program dates are July 11 through August 1 (residential) or July 13 through July 31 (commuter). Classes are held on weekdays from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

A limited number of **program scholarships** are offered to qualified students based on need, academic merit, and interest in studying law. A set of scholarships will be specifically awarded to eligible students attending a high school within the City of Philadelphia (public, private, or charter high school).

These scholarships **cover all program fees, housing, meals while on campus, and all activities and trips associated with the program**. The scholarship does not cover expenses associated with travel to and from the Law School campus in Philadelphia.

[Click here to get more information and apply by January 31.](#)

MITES Summer Program

Join MITES Summer (MIT Introduction to Technology, Engineering, and Science) for a six-week, on-campus program that immerses students from across the country in life at MIT, Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

Students take five rigorous, rewarding math, science, and humanities courses; participate in lab tours and social events; and benefit from college admissions counseling.

All program-related costs are covered by generous individuals, foundations, corporations, and MIT. **Students only pay for transportation to and from MIT.** To be eligible to apply to MITES Summer, applicants must be **high school juniors** who are U.S. citizens or permanent residents.

The details:

- Six weeks over the summer—late June through early August
- Classes, recitations, workshops, and tours on weekdays 9:00am to 5:00pm
- Social events, office hours/homework, and exploration of the Greater Boston area on evenings and weekends

their junior or senior year of high school from the greater Philadelphia region for a **four-week intensive materials science course**.

The course will run from July 6 through July 30, Mondays through Thursdays from 10:00 AM to 3:30 PM.

The course may include formal lectures from Penn faculty and affiliated researchers, materials science workshops, lab report writing seminars, projects, hands-on activities, and field trips. Students will get exposure to a variety of materials characterization techniques, such as scanning electron and optical microscopies, thermal analysis techniques, mechanical testing, and x-ray diffraction. Students will be expected to work on reports, projects, and other assignments outside of program hours.

Students will be selected for this program based on their scholastic achievements, resume, interest in science, and recommendations. Students must have taken chemistry and/or physics courses.

[Click here to get more info and apply no later than February 1.](#)

Forensic Sciences Mentoring Institute

At the Forensic Sciences Mentoring Institute (FMI), a program of the Fredric Rieders Family Foundation, high school students spend **seven weeks investigating and solving a crime using actual forensic techniques and instrumentation**.

Students in the FMI Summer Science Program learn through interactive, hands-on experiences using the same state-of-the-art instrumentation and techniques used in the world's top forensic laboratories in three different forensic science disciplines: forensic biology, forensic chemistry, and forensic toxicology.

The FMI Summer Science Program is **offered at no cost** to attending students. Admission is based on merit determined by submitted application, transcript, essay, and recommendation letter. Students are responsible for their daily meals and transportation to our lab facility. Travel to-and-from scheduled tours and trips are covered. Students accepted to the program who qualify for financial aid will be provided a **travel**

- Room and board provided free of charge

At the culmination of the program, each student receives a **written evaluation from their instructor**, outlining strengths and growth areas, as well as highlighting the student's contributions to the class. Many students choose to submit this as supplemental material with their college applications.

[Click here to get more info and apply no later than February 1.](#)

scholarship to aid in their attendance of the program.

Applicants must be **high school students 16 years of age or older** by June 17, 2026, with completion or evidence in enrollment in algebra, biology, and chemistry (and passing grades). You must be available for the duration of the program from June 17 through July 31, weekdays from 9:00 am to 4:00 pm.

[Click here to get more info and apply no later than February 13.](#)



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