

Important Dates

Monday, Sept. 7
SDP Closed for Labor Day

Friday, Sept. 18
**SDP Closed for Staff
Professional Development**

Monday, Sept. 21
**SDP Closed for Yom
Kippur**



Greetings, Scholars and Families —

Welcome back! We hope your school year is off to a great start and look forward to another semester of learning, growth, and new experiences as you continue along your educational journey.

Are you a 9th grader starting high school or did you switch schools this year? Let us know by emailing us with your name, grade level, and school name.

Remember, once you are enrolled in Talent Search, you stay enrolled through high school graduation. No need to submit another application this year!

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



Fall Fly-In Programs for High School Seniors



Visiting a college in person is one of the best ways to see if a school is the right fit for you. Although traveling to campuses can be pricey, these no-cost college fly-in programs have you covered! All of the programs listed below include free transportation, accommodations, and meals unless otherwise noted.

Even better, you still have time to apply! While many fly-in program deadlines happen over the summer, we found a few with applications that are still open. Be prepared — these forms may require your high

school transcript, SAT scores, responses to short essay questions, and/or counselor recommendations. Some programs have specific eligibility requirements, so be sure to check each school's website for details.

Students attending fly-in programs can generally expect to stay in a dorm with a current student, eat meals in campus dining halls, and sometimes attend actual classes!

Oberlin College (Oberlin, OH) | Oberlin Overnight: Diversity & Access

Program Dates: 10/11 through 10/13

Application Deadline: **Monday, 9/7**

Oberlin's financial aid packages meet 100 percent of demonstrated need for every admitted student.

Smith College (Northampton, MA) | Women of Distinction

Program Dates: Friday, 10/16 through Saturday, 10/17 or Friday, 11/6 through Saturday, 11/7

Application Deadline: **Friday, 9/11**

Smith meets 100 percent of demonstrated need with a loan-free financial aid package for accepted students. Beginning in fall 2026, tuition will be free for undergraduate students whose families make up to \$150,000 annually.

University of Rochester (Rochester, NY) | Meliora Visit Program

Program Dates: Thursday, 10/22 through Saturday, 10/24

Application Deadline: **Tuesday, 9/15**

College of the Holy Cross (Worcester, MA) | Perspectives Overnight Program

Program Dates: Saturday, 11/7 through Monday, 11/9

Application Deadline: **Wednesday, 9/16**

Students must be accompanied by a parent/guardian who is 25 or older. Travel grants, available upon request, cover transportation and hotel stay. Meals will be provided for all attendees.

Holy Cross meets 100 percent of demonstrated financial need for accepted students. Students whose families have a total income of \$100,000 or less will receive a full tuition grant.

Boston University (Boston, MA) | Boston University Overnight

Program Dates: Thursday, 10/22 through Friday 10/23

Application Deadline: **Sunday 9/20**

BU's financial aid packages meet 100 percent of demonstrated need for first-year and transfer students.

Trinity College (Hartford, CT) | Bantam Bound

Program Dates: Sunday, 11/8 through Monday, 11/9

Application Deadline: **Friday, 9/25**

University of Vermont (Burlington, VT) | Discovering UVM

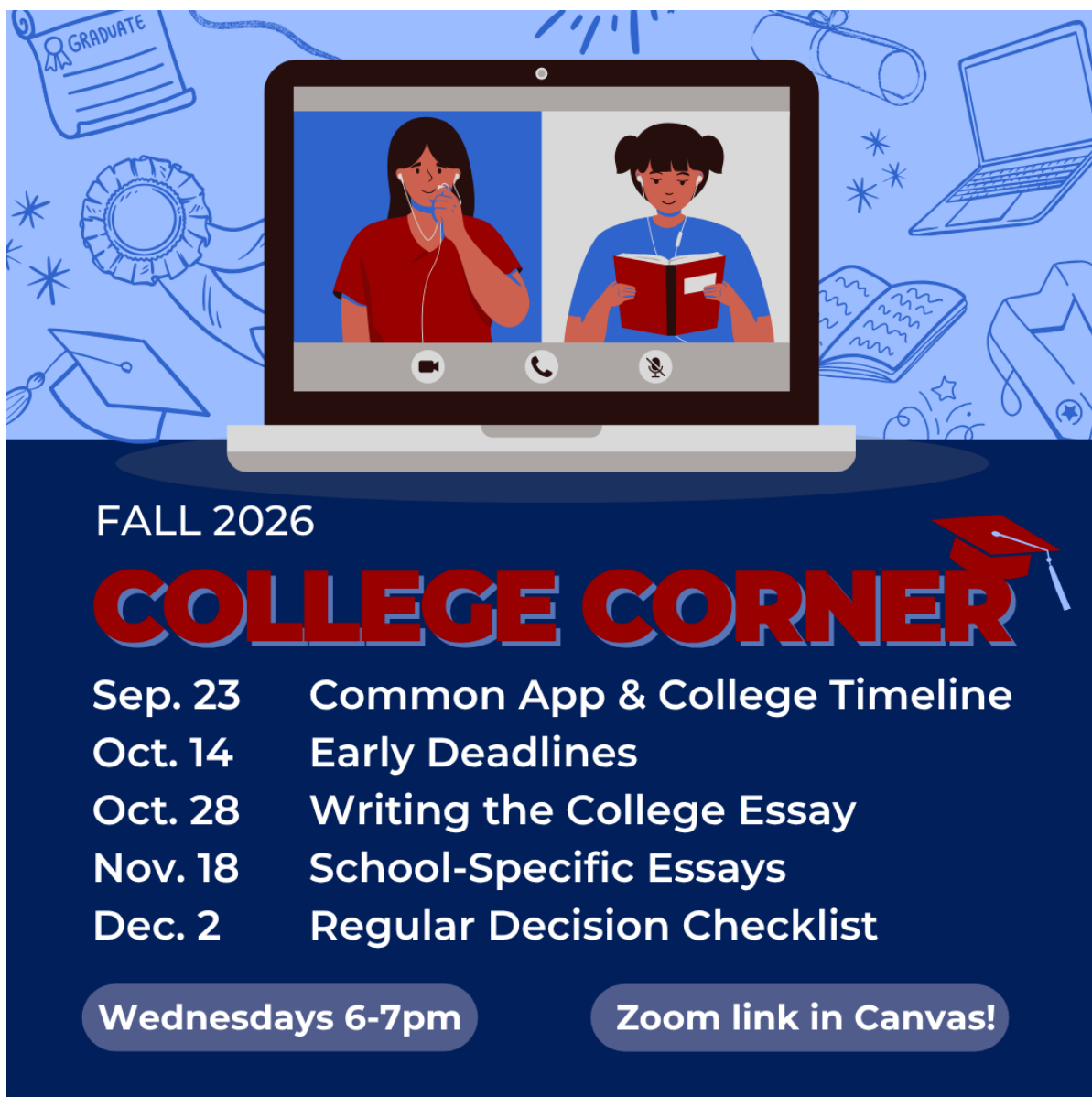
Program Dates: Sunday, 11/1 through Tuesday, 11/3

Application Deadline: **Friday, 10/2**

Travel grant reimbursements up to \$500 are available upon request. Hotel accommodation and meals are provided at no cost.

We love to share in your good news! Please email us at vpse.talentsearch@upenn.edu if you are accepted to attend one of these programs. **High school juniors (Class of 2028), look for your own fly-in opportunities starting in the spring.**

College Corner Fall Lineup

A graphic for 'College Corner' featuring a laptop screen showing two students in a video call. The background is blue with various school-related icons like a graduation cap, diploma, laptop, and books. Below the laptop, the text 'FALL 2026' is in white, followed by 'COLLEGE CORNER' in large red letters with a graduation cap icon. A list of dates and topics is shown in white text on a dark blue background, followed by two buttons: 'Wednesdays 6-7pm' and 'Zoom link in Canvas!'.

FALL 2026

COLLEGE CORNER

Sep. 23	Common App & College Timeline
Oct. 14	Early Deadlines
Oct. 28	Writing the College Essay
Nov. 18	School-Specific Essays
Dec. 2	Regular Decision Checklist

Wednesdays 6-7pm

Zoom link in Canvas!

College Corner with Ms. Sofia is back! Save the date for this semester's sessions, starting with September 23.

This series of live webinars covers everything you need to know about the college application process. Each session has a specific focus, full of helpful information and opportunities to ask questions.

Students will learn about their college options while they receive timely support with their 12th grade milestones. Though sessions are geared toward helping 12th graders accomplish their college application goals, juniors and sophomores are welcome to join for a preview of what's next.

High School Selection for 8th graders

Eighth graders who would like to attend a high school other than their catchment (neighborhood) school will need to go through the School District of Philadelphia's School Selection process.

This year, school selection opens on Monday, October 5 at 4 p.m. and closes on **Tuesday, November 24 at 11:59 p.m.**

[Click here for official details](#), including information on upcoming Town Hall meetings where you can learn what to expect when applying.

Other helpful links for school selection:

- [**School Directory**](#)
- [**School District of Philadelphia Portal**](#)

SCHOOL SELECTION

RESEARCH SCHOOLS

- Use the [School Directory](#) to search schools by location and programs offered.
- Schools may be criteria-based (only accepts those who meet requirements) or citywide (accepts any student).



FILL OUT THE APPLICATION



- Log in to the [School District of Philadelphia](#) and locate the School Selection icon.
- Check that personal information, grades, test scores, and attendance are uploaded and correct.

SUBMIT APPLICATION

- Rank your schools in order of preference.
- The application is due on November 24th, 2026.



November 24, 2020.

- Don't forget to submit before the deadline!



ACCEPTANCES & WAITLIST

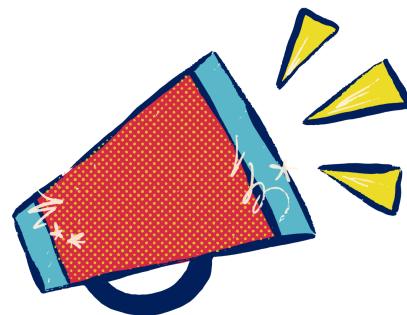
- You will receive your results in early 2027.
- You will remain on the waitlist for any schools you ranked higher than the school that offered you a spot.



Talent Search and TRIO Advocacy Update

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

With grant funding from the federal government, 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 more than 500 students in Philadelphia.



This month, we have great news — **Penn's Talent Search program was just refunded for another five years!** We are thrilled to be able to continue serving you all and to welcome more new students each year. This positive outcome is due, in part, to the work of our community members who have reached out to members of Congress letting them know how valuable Talent Search and other TRIO programs are to our participants.

We still need your support! Recent proposals from the U.S. Department of Education would fundamentally change TRIO—shifting it away from its core mission of college access for low-income and first-generation students and toward a workforce pipeline model. **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 serve every one of our participants along their educational journey. **Enter your address and zip code at the top of this page to send a message to your elected officials in support of Talent Search and all TRIO programs.**

Thank you for being a TRIO advocate!

Opportunities for Talent Search Scholars

Gates Scholarship

The Gates Scholarship is a highly selective, last-dollar scholarship for outstanding high school seniors from low-income households. Each year, the scholarship is awarded to exceptional student leaders, with the intent of helping them realize their maximum potential.

Scholars will receive funding for the **full cost of attendance** that is not already covered by other financial aid and the Student Aid Index, as determined by the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA), or the methodology used by a Scholar's college or university.

To apply, students must be:

- A high school senior
- Pell-eligible
- A US citizen or permanent resident
- In good academic standing with a minimum cumulative weighted GPA of 3.3 on a 4.0 scale (or equivalent)

Additionally, a student must plan to enroll full-time, in a four-year degree program, at a US accredited, not-for-profit, private or public college or university.

An ideal candidate will have:

- An outstanding academic record in high school (in the top 10% of his/her graduating class)
- Demonstrated leadership ability (e.g., as shown through participation in community service, extracurricular, or other activities)
- Exceptional personal success skills (e.g., emotional maturity, motivation, perseverance, etc.)

[Click here to get more information and apply no later than September 15.](#)

Estudio Youth Artist Program and Photography Without Borders

Estudio YAP at Taller Puertorriqueño is a **free studio art program** that empowers teens (**grades 9-12**) to express themselves, build creative skills, and grow as artists and entrepreneurs. Through workshop-style classes, students engage in semester-long

Coca Cola Scholars Program Scholarship

The Coca-Cola Scholars Program scholarship is an achievement-based scholarship awarded to students in their final year of high school. Students are recognized for their capacity to lead and serve, as well as their commitment to making a significant impact on their schools and communities. 150 Coca-Cola Scholars are selected each year to receive this **\$20,000 scholarship**.

Applicants must be:

- Currently enrolled high school/home-schooled students attending school in one of the 50 U.S. states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, or select DoD schools who will graduate high school during the 2026-2027 academic school year
- U.S. Citizens, U.S. Nationals, U.S. Permanent Residents, Refugees, Asylees, Cuban-Haitian Entrants, or Humanitarian Parolees - based on the guidelines utilized by U.S. Department of Education for Federal Financial Aid eligibility
- Expecting to receive high school diploma during current academic year
- Planning to pursue a degree at an accredited U.S. post-secondary institution
- Able to verify a minimum overall B/3.0 GPA in high school coursework

The first phase of the application requires no essays, transcript, or recommendations. Semifinalists will be invited to complete a Phase 2 application due in November with essays, a transcript, and a recommendation.

[Click here to get more information and apply no later than September 30.](#)

PennRSSA Neuroscience Enrichment Program

The 2026 Fall PennRSSA Neuroscience Enrichment Program provides Philadelphia high school students in **grades 10-12** with an immersive introduction to neuroscience, brain science, and neuroimaging research.

projects while exploring different art disciplines. Each semester includes opportunities for hands-on creative learning, guest artist visits, and field trips to colleges, galleries, and studios that inspire students to connect with the wider art community.

Photography Without Borders (PWB) is centered around youth & young adults (**ages 14-24**) telling their own stories through photography and video. We are a diverse community who encourages creative play, inquiry, and the expression of your identity. Students get access to:

- High level, professional gear
- Exhibit opportunities
- Potentially getting published
- Professional Development as Artist/Photographers
- As students progress over the years they may also get offered paid gigs

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

This **free program** will run for 10 weeks, from September 28 - December 11, 2026. Students will meet virtually once per week for approximately 60-90 minutes. Participants will attend two required hands-on sessions on Penn's campus, with these in-person sessions lasting approximately two hours or more.

The PennRSSA Neuroscience Enrichment Program will enroll about 15-20 Philadelphia high school students in grades 10-12. No prior neuroscience or research experience is required.

[Click here to get more information and apply no later than September 11 at 5:00 p.m.](#)



Follow us on social media and visit us online at **<https://vpse.upenn.edu/ets!>**

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