



The Ultimate **EXTRACURRICULAR GUIDE**

for US Admissions



A CRIMSON EDUCATION PUBLICATION

Introduction

“What’s the difference between an application that gets accepted, and an application that gets rejected?”

“What does it take to get in?”

Tens of thousands of students each year ask questions just like this when they start applying to top US universities. Equipped with high grades and impressive test scores, thousands of these same students will make it past the first round of admissions standards, and move onto the next stage of evaluations.

It’s at this point that Admissions Officers will begin to explore the student’s extracurricular activities list. This is because they want to know who you are outside of the classroom, what you’re passionate about, and the impact you’ve made on your community. They want to know if you will maximise the immense resources available on their campus, and contribute to their school in a productive way. These judgments they make about who you are, inside and outside the classroom, will ultimately lead to either an acceptance or rejection.

Without strong extracurriculars, it’s impossible for admissions officers to assess who the applicant is as a person, which unfortunately, may put the application into the rejection pile.

At Crimson Education, our global network of experts update us with the most recent admissions trends and statistics — ensuring that every single one of our students crafts a powerful application that resonates with admissions officers at the world’s best universities. As such, we’ve put together this eBook that covers how extracurriculars can be used to set candidates above and beyond the competition, and how you can become the student that admissions officers fight to admit.

This includes:

- 01. What extracurriculars are**
- 02. The holistic US application process**
- 03. Why they matter**
- 04. How extracurriculars are evaluated**
- 05. Real activities lists of admitted students**
- 06. The power of capstone projects**
- 07. How Crimson can help**

Let’s get started!

01.

What Are Extracurricular Activities?

An extracurricular is any activity that isn't required for high school credit. Think "extra-curriculum" - anything the student does beyond required school assignments.

In short:

- ▶ Extracurricular experiences help convey who the applicant is beyond their academics
- ▶ This includes activities completed during high school, at school, or outside of school
- ▶ They can be online or in-person, and formal or informal
- ▶ They help Admissions Officers determine the applicant's fit and how the student will contribute to the university's community

Examples of extracurriculars:

- **Academic** - clubs, competitions
- **Arts** - visual arts, performance, creative writing
- **Activism** - social movements, campaigns
- **Science** - science fairs, olympiads, competitions, research
- **Language & Culture** - language classes, exchanges
- **Debate** - debate club, Model United Nations
- **Sports** - Intramurals, clubs, eSports
- **Entrepreneurship** - competitions, internships, starting your own business
- **Media & Journalism** - blogs, columns, school newspaper
- **Music** - band, lessons, composing
- **Politics** - activism, student council
- **Religious** - youth groups, retreats
- **Family Responsibilities** - taking care of siblings and/or relatives
- **Technology** - coding, apps, websites, hackathons
- **Volunteering** - NGOs, charity work, fundraising



02.

The Holistic US Application Process

It is important to understand the unique, holistic application process that US universities are renowned for. Top US universities look for students who possess a combination of intellectual vitality, leadership, initiative, and creativity. This is demonstrated through:

30%

- **Essays**

Essays are an opportunity for students to showcase their personality, experiences, and aspirations. Top universities look for students who can write thoughtfully and reflectively about themselves.

- **Interviews**

Some top universities also conduct personal interviews with applicants. These interviews allow the university to get to know the student better and assess their fit with the institution.

- **Letters of Recommendation**

Letters of recommendation from teachers, counsellors, and other mentors can provide valuable insights into a student's character and potential. Top universities look for students who have strong recommendations from people who know them well.

30%

Extracurricular & Leadership Activities

Top universities seek students who are actively engaged in their communities. This is demonstrated through a diverse range of extracurricular activities, as defined above. They value students who demonstrate initiative, teamwork, and a commitment to making a positive impact. This could include involvement in sports teams, clubs, community service projects, or other endeavours that align with their personal aspirations.

03

40%

- **Academics**

Top universities seek students who have consistently demonstrated academic excellence through outstanding high school grades, top school ranking positions, and participation in advanced courses, such as AP, A-Levels, or IB classes.

- **Standardised Tests (SAT/ACT)**

Standardised tests, like the SAT and ACT, are used to help measure a student's aptitude for college-level studies. While top universities typically have high average SAT and ACT scores among their admitted students, many of these institutions have transitioned to test-optional policies in recent years.



03.

Why Do Extracurriculars Matter?

Admissions Officers at top US universities want to see a well-developed profile that demonstrates intellectual curiosity, leadership skills, and commitment to making an impact on the community. Furthermore, they want to see that the applicant went beyond passive involvement and took on a higher level of responsibility. The applicant's ability to demonstrate extracurricular involvement across these categories will communicate to admissions officers how they will be an asset to the campus community.

Here are a few things top US universities have to say about the importance of extracurriculars:

COLUMBIA

Students often ask us, "What are you looking for?" Just as you are looking for the college that is the best match for you, we are looking for students who are the best matches for us. Your application is our instrument of evaluation, and beyond the opportunity to list your academic credentials, we believe your application allows you to express yourself: your passions, interests, background and, most important, what you might add to the Columbia community."

STANFORD

Learning about your extracurricular activities and non-academic interests helps us understand your potential contributions to the Stanford community. Students often assume our primary concern is the number of activities in which a student participates. In fact, an exceptional depth of experience in one or two activities may demonstrate your passion more than minimal participation in five or six clubs. In general, we want to understand the impact you have had at your job, in your family, in a club, in your school or in the larger community, and we want to learn of the impact that experience has had on you."

UC BERKELEY

What we look for:

- Initiative, motivation, leadership, persistence, service to others, special potential and substantial experience with other cultures
- All achievement in light of the opportunities available to you
- Any unusual circumstances or hardships you have faced and the ways in which you have overcome or responded to them. Having a hardship is no guarantee of admission. If you choose to write about difficulties you have experienced, you should describe:
 - How you confronted and overcame your challenges, rather than describing a hardship just for the sake of including it in your application
 - What you learned from or achieved in spite of these circumstances"

► Extracurriculars - The X-Factor

Academics will unlock your “door”

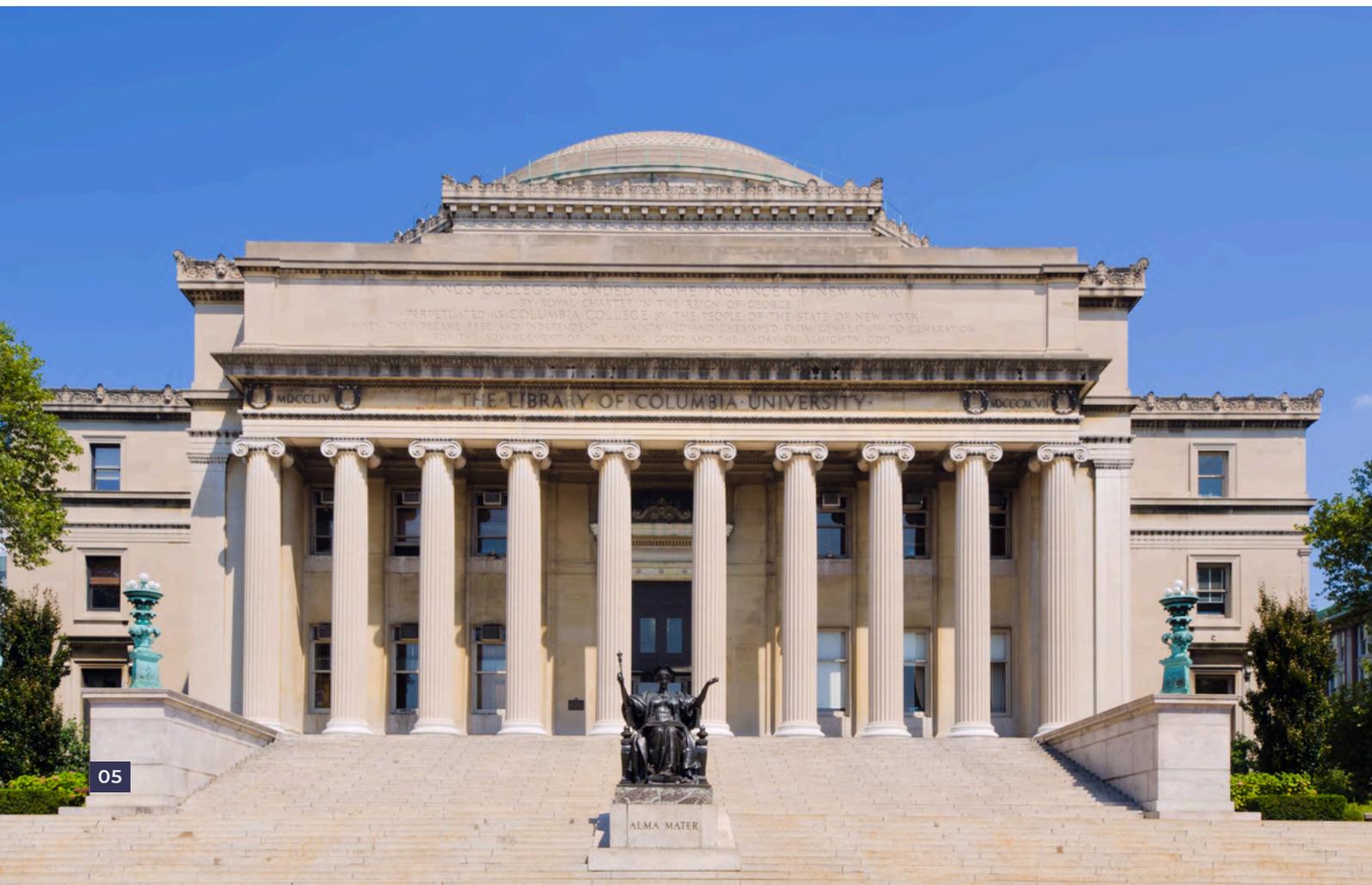
- Grades
- Class Ranking
- Curriculum Rigor
- Standardised Test (SAT, ACT)

For example, approximately **85%** of Harvard applicants have a very similar academic level!

Your extracurricular activities will distinguish you from other candidates.



In other words, the vast majority of candidates who apply to top US universities are excellent students with similar academics. While that is enough to get an applicant through the first round, it is their extracurricular activities that will distinguish applicants from one another, hence determining whether or not they get accepted.



Here are some examples of various extracurricular activities that many world-renowned icons have participated in. As we mentioned earlier, it's important to go above and beyond passive involvement. Just take a look at these celebrities whose impactful high school extracurriculars greatly contributed to their current careers:



Meryl Streep
Yale University

With 21 Oscar nominations and 3 wins, critically acclaimed actress Meryl Streep began her acting career in high school. She seized every opportunity to become the lead in every play and musical, joined the cheerleading squad, and was eventually elected as Homecoming Queen.



Michael Jordan
UNC Chapel Hill

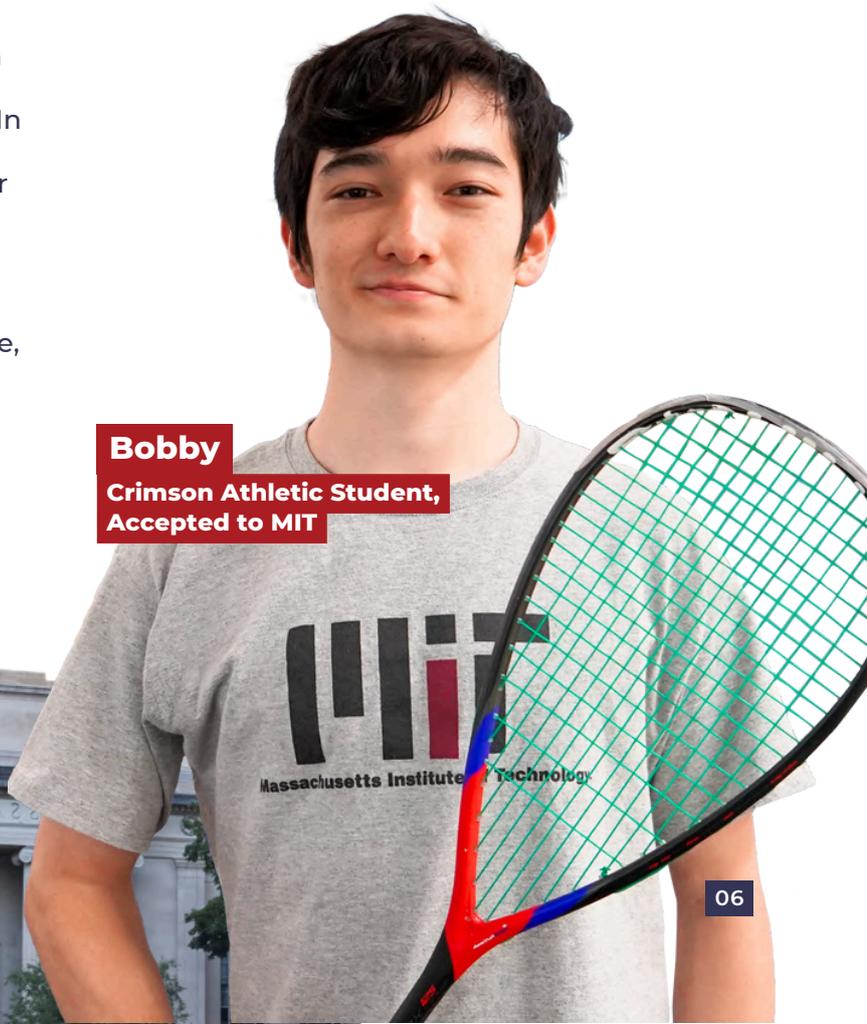
Known as one of the greatest basketball players of all time, Michael Jordan came from humble beginnings. In high school, he excelled in football, basketball, and baseball. In Grade 10, he was rejected from the varsity basketball team, which ignited his passion for the sport and he decided not to quit. He became a star on the junior varsity team that year, and practised in the school gym before morning class. That summer, he made the varsity team, scored 35 points in his first game, and never looked back.



Mark Zuckerberg
Harvard University

Multi-billionaire CEO, founder, and creator of both Facebook AND Meta, Mark coded his first messaging platform when he was 12. Also known as “Zucknet”, he used Atari BASIC to create this messaging program that his father would use at his dentistry practice and his family would use at home. While still in high school, he and a friend built an early music streaming platform, Synapse Media Player, which both AOL and Microsoft showed interest in, and PC Magazine would go on to review in 2002. Mark’s track record reflected his long-term passion for programming, and his ability to stay focused on his interests would eventually culminate in his mastery of the subject — the crux of what would ultimately become his acceptance letter to Harvard.

Top US universities want to bring students to their schools that they know are going to make a big impact both during and after college. The main way they can measure this is through the passion and impact demonstrated in the applicant’s activities list, essays, and interview.



Bobby
Crimson Athletic Student,
Accepted to MIT

04.

How Extracurriculars Are Evaluated by Admissions Officers

► Commitment

This factor indicates the level of dedication and time commitment the applicant has allocated to their extracurricular activities. Admissions Officers also consider the duration of your child's involvement with the activity, which indicates their sustained commitment and passion over time.

► Leadership

Here, evaluators assess whether your child has held leadership positions within their extracurriculars. Holding leadership roles demonstrates an applicant's ability to take initiative, collaborate with others, and to make a positive impact. In general, leadership might be:

• Institutional

Institutional leadership is when a student has joined an existing organisation, and taken the initiative to oversee and govern it. The student can further demonstrate institutional leadership by guiding the organisation and its constituents towards new directions.

Here are a few examples of institutional leadership:

- + Student Body President
- + Organization Ambassador
- + Club Leader
- + Team Captain

• Innovative

Innovative leadership is rooted in creativity, and is most commonly demonstrated when a student has started something on their own. The most powerful forms of innovative leadership are demonstrated when the student has created something unique and unheard of.

Here are some ways students can demonstrate innovative leadership:

- + Startup Founder
- + Competition Creator
- + App or Program Developer
- + Campaign Leader

• Independent

Independent leadership is demonstrated when an individual creates, develops, and executes an initiative with little to no involvement from any other parties.

Some examples of independent leadership include:

- + Launching a Successful Blog
- + Conducting Research
- + Producing a Successful Fundraiser
- + Competitions & Internships/Work

► Consistency with the Applicant's Profile

This criteria examines how well your child's extracurriculars align with their overall profile, and if this establishes a cohesive personal narrative. Does the applicant's chosen activities reflect their genuine interests and aspirations?

► Impact and Reach

Top universities also want to see evidence of impact within an applicant's school, local community, and on a national/international scale. This has become especially important since the pandemic. Here are some examples:

School

- Raising \$5,000 for new library computers
- Leading a tutoring club with 30 tutors supporting 100 peers
- Lobbying for Meatless Mondays at the school cafeteria, and succeeding!

Local

- Increasing involvement amongst your peers as a City Youth Council member
- Starting a travelling library that reaches underserved communities
- Organising a 5K race to fundraise for a local charity or small business

(Inter)National

- Launching an educational YouTube channel that reaches a nationwide or global audience
- Representing your state or country at Model UN
- Winning a major academic or arts competition

► Recognition

Under this category, the focus is on any awards, honours, or notable achievements your child has received through their extracurricular pursuits. It also demonstrates their ability to improve over time, showcasing their dedication to excel in their chosen activity.



+ Extracurriculars: Key Takeaways

In the Common Application portal, the candidate's activities list will provide context to who they are, and what they are passionate about. Each candidate will have ten slots to list activities, using the following format:

- **Position description: 50 character limit**
- **Organisation: 100 character limit**
- **Activity description: 150 character limit**

A well-developed Activities List will contain:

- Activities that show their intellectual curiosity (eg: research with a college professor)
- Activities that show their leadership (eg: starting a club, school leadership positions, launching a business)
- Activities that show their determination to improve the lives of others (eg: philanthropy)
- At least 1-2 non-school affiliated activities (eg: reputable summer camps or internships)
- Activities that have a relationship to their indicated chosen major



+ Imagine Yourself as an Admissions Officer!

► Case Study

Below is an example of a Crimson student's extracurricular profile. If you were an admissions officer at a top university, would you let this person into your program based on their extracurriculars? Continue on to see our analysis!

Activities List of a Successful Yale, Stanford, Columbia, Brown, UPenn, Duke, Cornell, and UChicago Admit

01. INTERNSHIP

Intern, Congresswoman

Interned in Washington DC in a team of 3; wrote 25+ letters addressing constituent concerns; attended 20+ hearings & briefings; toured constituents.

06. INTERNSHIP

Bilateral Safety Corridor Coalition

Spread awareness & outreach regarding human trafficking; delivered 5+ bilingual seminars at Mexican Consulate on recognizing signs of forced labor trade.

02. CAREER ORIENTED

Dir. of Outreach, The Barrio Impact (Ed.Nonprofit)

Afterschool tutoring & guidance to Latino students; personally liaised with 100+ universities to request promotional materials; searched for scholarships.

07. ATHLETICS - JV / VARSITY

Lacrosse, Defenseman, MDCHS Crusaders Varsity Lacrosse

Attended daily practices; started in games twice a week; chosen as captain in 3 games during season.

03. ACADEMIC

Captain & President, MDCHS Quiz Bowl Team

Recruited 15+ members; lead weekly practices; elected Captain '17; under captaincy, improved to 3rd Place Quiz Bowl Metro League '17.

08. DEBATE / SPEECH

Vice President, Speech & Debate Club

Organized biweekly meetings; recruited 25+ students; debates on current affairs & religion; facilitated public speaking improvement in peers.

04. INTERNSHIP

Intern & Office Manager, Ammar Campa-Najjar Campaign

Managed day-to-day tasks such as training volunteers for congressional campaign; crafted promotional materials in English & Spanish; phonebanking.

09. RELIGIOUS

Member, Ambassador for Christ Corps

Represented school at various events such as Open House, Fall Festival, G8 Visitation; served as bilingual tour guide for Spanish speaking families.

05. OTHER CLUB / ACTIVITY

President & Founder, College Awareness Club

Founded club and recruited 50+ students in regular attendance at meetings; invited prominent college alumni to speak about experiences at schools.

10. ACADEMIC

Team B Captain, National Ocean Sciences Bowl.

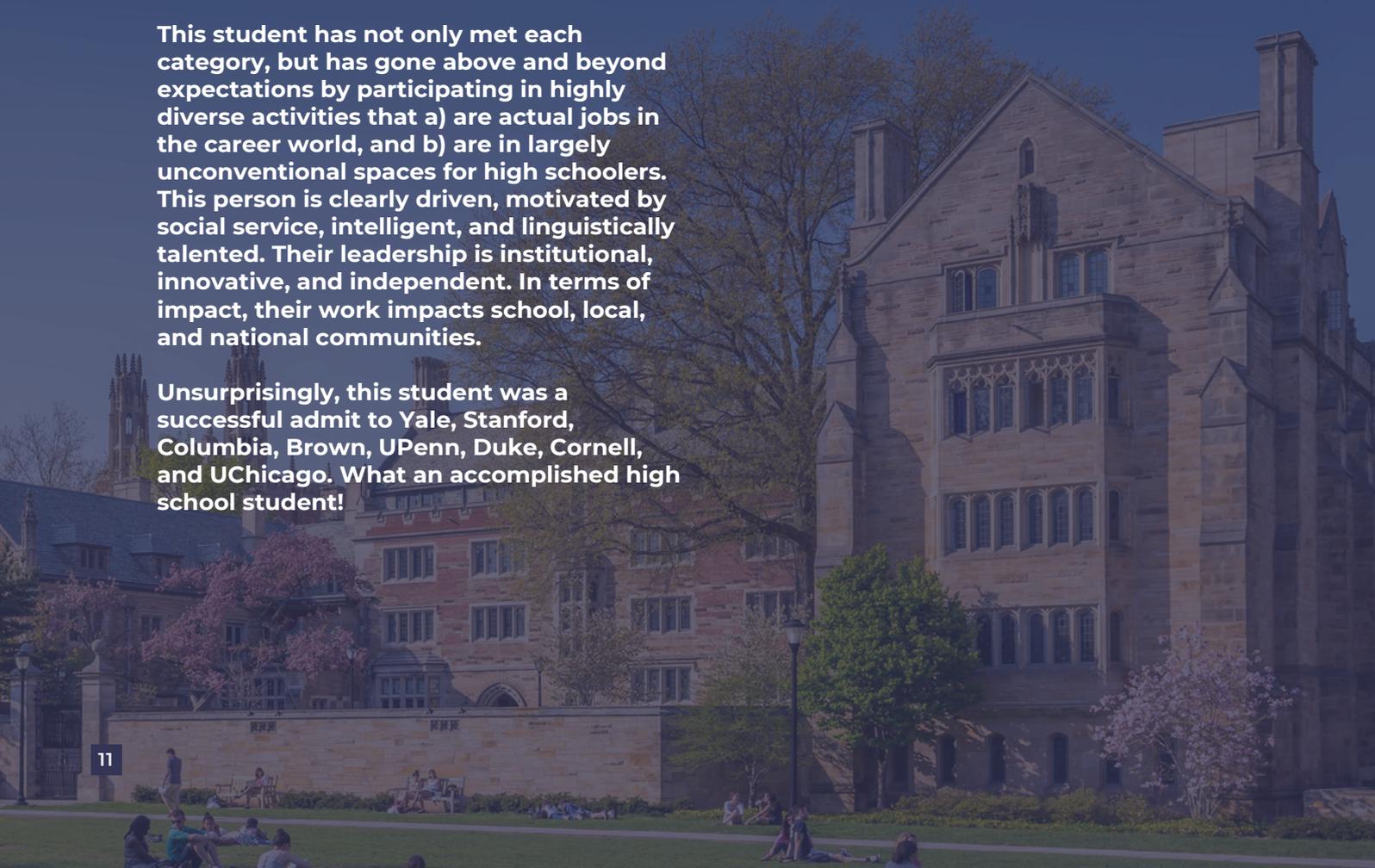
Organized biweekly practices & prepared team of 5 for competition; expanded knowledge on environmental science topics such as marine policy & geography.

Let's look at how this profile lines up with the strategy outlined in the last section.

Category	Activity
2 activities related to volunteering	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ambassador for Christ Corps • Bilateral Safety Corridor Coalition
3-5 activities in which you are a leader	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Director of Outreach • President and Founder of College Awareness Club • Captain and President of Quiz Bowl Team • Vice-President of Speech and Debate Club • Team B Captain of National Ocean Sciences Bowl
1-3 academic activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vice-President of Speech and Debate Club
1-2 non school affiliated activities (reputable summer camps)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Intern for Congresswoman • Intern and Office Manager
At least 1 quirky activity reflecting more unusual skills or hobbies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lacrosse Defenseman

This student has not only met each category, but has gone above and beyond expectations by participating in highly diverse activities that a) are actual jobs in the career world, and b) are in largely unconventional spaces for high schoolers. This person is clearly driven, motivated by social service, intelligent, and linguistically talented. Their leadership is institutional, innovative, and independent. In terms of impact, their work impacts school, local, and national communities.

Unsurprisingly, this student was a successful admit to Yale, Stanford, Columbia, Brown, UPenn, Duke, Cornell, and UChicago. What an accomplished high school student!



05.

Real Activities Lists from Top Admits

Activities List of a Successful Stanford and Princeton Admit

01. SOCIAL JUSTICE

Sec. and Spokesperson, Cancer Action Network

Advocated NSW gov. to pass legislation for \$100m AUD for palliative care access to lower socioeconomic classes; collected 150K sigs; lobbied MPs.

06. RESEARCH

Australian Educational Research, U. of Newcastle

Researched contemp. education issues w/ Prof. Gore; Halogen Foundation International Comp Winner.

02. COMMUNITY SERVICE

Youth Ambassador, Cancer Council New South Wales

Increased yth. participation by 250% in the region through outreach; raised \$11K AUD through Relay for Life.

07. COMMUNITY SERVICE

Deputy Mayor, Newcastle Youth Council

Launched Youth Online Survey w/ Newcastle Council; 4000 participants. Young Citizen of the Year Award Winner.

03. JOURNALISM / PUBLICATION

Freelance Journalist, Group Co-leader

Published in The Huffington Post, Sydney Morning Herald, The Age on various youth & sociopolitical issues.

08. DEBATE/SPEECH

Leader, MHS Debate Team

Leader, National Team UN Evatt State Winner & National Finalist '16; Rotary MUN 2nd Nationally '17; Premier's Debating Challenge State Semi-Finalists '15.

04. SOCIAL JUSTICE

Community Ldr, Oaktree (largest youth. led org).

Worked closely with CEO to develop alternative curricula for use in developing countries; raised \$5K AUD.

09. ACADEMIC

Student, Harvard Summer School (7 week programs)

Received A grade in two college level courses: Leadership in War & Peace, Introduction to Philosophy.

05. DEBATE / SPEECH

Club Leader (MHS Speaking Club)

Winner Nat/State Cmlth of Aus Speech Comp: 1st nationwide '17; Lions Youth Quest State Winner & Nat. Finalist '16; ATCL Int. Diploma w/ Distinction & 90 credits.

10. INTERNSHIP

Intern for Minister for Environ. & Heritage

Wrote speeches that were delivered by MP in Parliament; compiled daily briefs on electorate needs; visited constituents to learn about key issues.

Activities List of a Successful Duke and Tufts Admit

01. STUDENT GOVT. POLITICS

Prefect, House Captain, Peer Support Leader

Lead 140 students in School Spirit Competitions and won Spirit Cup. Organised 15+ events, lead fundraising \$6,000+ for school in Kenya vis Goods for Girls.

06. ATHLETICS JV / VARSITY

Tennis Varsity Doubles Player in Tildsley Rep Tennis

Private tennis and selective squads to complete in IGSSA representative tournaments (30 schools).

02. THEATRE / DRAMA

Lead Actor, Knox School Academy of Performing Arts

Lead female: Musical 'Bye, Bye Birdie'. 4 dance solos, cast of 85, 10 schools, trained jnr cast, sold tickets for production.

07. ATHLETICS JV/VARSITY

Basketball Varsity Second Team Shooting Guard

Won IGSSA regional comp in 2016 (30 schools). Awarded silver honors for sport commitment.

03. THEATRE / DRAMA

Lead Actor, Abbotsleigh School for the Performing Arts

Music Theatre: 'The Little Mermaid'. Leading role 'King Triton'. 2 solo numbers. Cast of 80, sold tickets for production.

08. COMMUNITY SERVICE

Volunteer: Habitat for Humanity Fiji

Selected as 1 of 10 (50 applied) to go to Fiji and spend 2 weeks building/planning house for single mother living in small rural community.

04. DANCE

Member of Team 'Abbotsleigh Crew' School of Competitive Dance

Varsity, Jazz, Hip-Hop teams. Hip-hop 2 x 1st 2016, 1 x 2nd 2017 in regional comps (30 schools). Toured USA in 2015.

09. STUDENT GOVT. POLITICS

Petition for Women in Government

Initiated school movement to petition Julie Bishop/MP after Prime Minister resigned - need for women in parliament.

05. MUSIC VOCAL

Member of Choir, Jazz Ensemble, Chamber Choir

10+ solo performances at major school events. (Speech days, Chapel services, Parent concerts.) Extended tuition, AMEB honors.

10. OTHER / CLUB ACTIVITY

PADI Scuba Diving Certifications

Advanced Open Water Rescue Diver. Enriched Air, underwater photography certifications.

Activities List of a Successful Princeton, Brown, UChicago, and Johns Hopkins Admit

01. MUSIC VOCAL

*Co-President, Allegro Council
(Music Council)*

Led team of 20 students to organize & promote 20+ events all across campus: vocal & jazz concerts, musical showcases; coordinated with music faculty.

06. THEATER / DRAMA

*Cast Member,
Various School Musicals*

Played lead role of Tobias in Sweeney Todd '19; ensemble member in Guys & Dolls '17; featured role in Urinetown '18; designed all posters.

02. COMPUTER / TECHNOLOGY

*Member, Lawrenceville Computer
Programming Club*

Taught 10+ members languages such as Python, Javascript, CSS/HTML; competed in local competitions; placed 5th in competition at Rowan University.

07. JOURNALISM / PUBLICATION

*Managing Editor, Working Title
(Literary Magazine)*

Managed publishing and submission schedules; coordinated writers, editors, and artists; personally contributed to every single issue (7+).

03. MUSIC VOCAL

*Co-President,
Rouge Acapella Group*

Led team of 17 all girls performers; arranged all pieces; arranged performance opportunities within school: revisit days, fundraisers, concerts.

08. ATHLETICS - JV / VARSITY

*Softball, Team Captain,
Lawrenceville JV Softball*

Starting pitcher; elected team captain in Junior year; planned and led practices with coaches; learned a brand new sport.

04. COMPUTER / TECHNOLOGY

*Software Developer,
Lawrenceville 24H Pass System*

Utilized Javascript to create a centralized mobile/web app to share course info between teachers & 800+ students; replaced antiquated paper system.

09. OTHER CLUB / ACTIVITY

*VP of Community Service, Int.
Student Association*

Hosted orientation events for 100+ students; organized fundraisers for international social issues; raised money for Save the Children.

05. MUSIC VOCAL

*Singer (Alto),
Lawrentians Choir*

Weekly practices; 6 performances a year, including during revisit days, choral concerts, and Christmas gatherings.

10. ATHLETICS - JV / VARSITY

*Basketball, Team Manager,
JV Girls Basketball*

Organized game schedule with opposing teams; managed scorebook during games; assisted coaches with managing practices.



Activities List of a Successful Dartmouth, University of Michigan Ann Arbor, Tufts, and Northeastern Admit

01. COMMUNITY SERVICE

President, Best Buddies International (WY Chapter)

Spearheaded music therapy initiative; raised \$3000 for therapy for students w/ disabilities; facilitated and developed 100+ mentor-buddy relationships.

06. COMMUNITY SERVICE

President, NJHS (WY Chapter)

Coordinated service opportunities for 200+ students at school and in local community; fundraised over \$2000 for Chicagoland charities.

02. MUSIC INSTRUMENTAL

Violinist, Chicago Youth Symphony Orchestra

Selected through rigorous audition process; prestigious Chicagoland youth orchestra; 14+ free community concerts for public schools; weekly rehearsals.

07. COMMUNITY SERVICE

Junior Exec. Board Officer, Misericordia Home

Social media chair for springtime fundraiser; 150+ hours of service; organized teen outreach camp for prospective residents.

03. SCHOOL SPIRIT

President, WY Freshmen Mentors

Organized annual freshman orientation (500+ new students) and BBQ; coordinated team-building activities; paired new students to peer advisers.

08. WORK

Gymnastics Coach, IK Gymnastics

Progressed from assistant coach to coaching own recreational classes; part-time job.

04. ATHLETICS CLUB

Gymnastics, Captain, IK Gymnastics Chicago

Ranked Top 50 '16 '17 USA Gymnastics Men's Trampoline; led practices of 15+ athletes; coordinated team travel and timetables at competitions.

09. ACADEMIC

Student, Yale Young Global Scholars

Studied Frontiers of Science and Technology; advanced topics in gene editing and public health; final group presentation on food insecurity.

05. COMMUNITY SERVICE

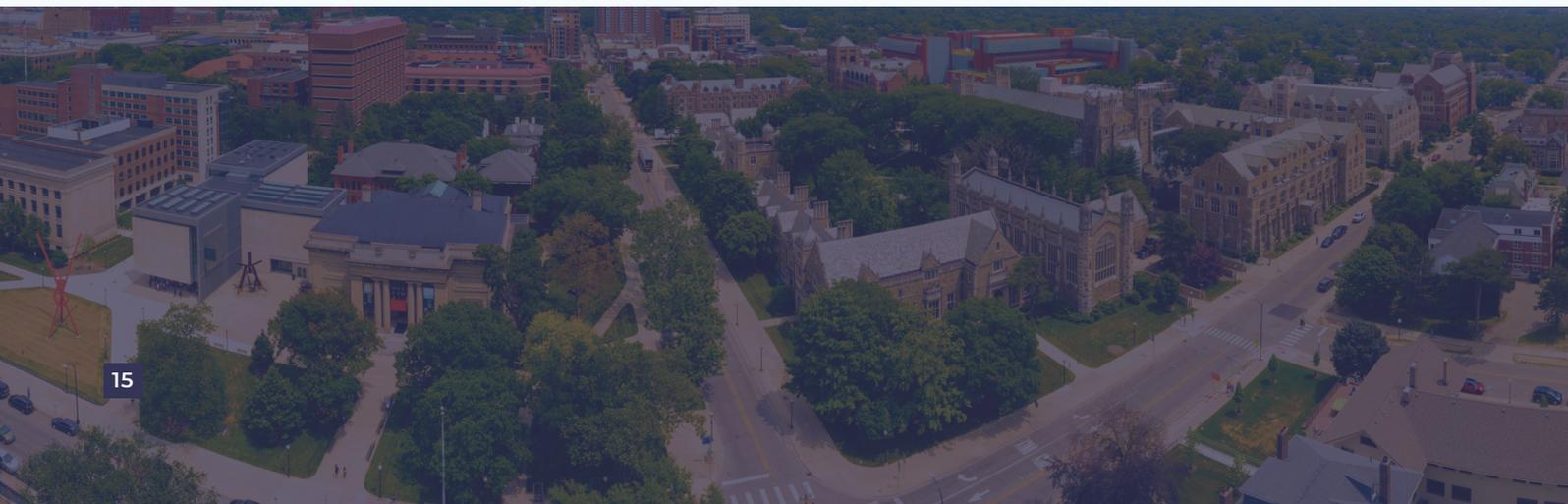
ESL Tutor, Heartland Alliance Human Care

Taught advanced ESL to adult learners; weekly classes; only high school aged volunteer; 100+ hours of tutoring.

10. ATHLETICS - JV / VARSITY

Sailing, Founding Member, WY Varsity Sailing Team

1 of 15 initial team members; organized transportation to practice on Lake Michigan; fundraised gear and startup costs.



Activities List of a Successful Columbia Admit

01. JOURNALISM / PUBLICATION

*Creative Editor,
The Picador (School Newspaper)*

Selected as Creative Editor; oversee Outside The Bubble and Culture column; responsible for layout management; wrote articles on socialism.

06. COMMUNITY SERVICE

*Volunteer Mentor,
Camp Blast (Children's camp)*

Lead children through scientific, artistic, and wilderness activities; served as photographer and shot videos for camp's promotional use.

02. ART

*Vice Organizer,
MUSE Exhibition (Hanoi)*

Art exhibition with over 10,000 attendees; 40 pieces displayed; raised \$3000 for gender equality awareness; oversaw PR campaign & liaised with sponsors.

07. JOURNALISM / PUBLICATION

*Reporter & Photographer,
Shades of Hanoi (Magazine)*

Reported on local events and issues for magazine; oversaw visual layout including photos; wrote article on demolition of local historical bridge.

03. INTERNSHIP

*Economics Column Intern,
TienPhong.vn (VN News)*

Conducted interviews with prominent economists; attended banking & economic conferences; collated materials for column; translated articles to English.

08. THEATER / DRAMA

*Actress, Bring it On & All Shook Up
(Musicals)*

Performed as Bridget and Lorraine in annual school musicals; attended daily practices; member of set design team.

04. THEATER / DRAMA

*Composer, Writer, Producer,
Fragments (Musical)*

Oversaw the production of a completely student run musical; composed 4 songs; developed script; managed 30 actors & 20 backstage volunteers.

09. SOCIAL JUSTICE

Leader, Annual Student-Led Conferences

Organized workshops with team of 15 on raising awareness for disabilities (G11) and privilege (G10); moderated debates on prominent social issues.

05. COMMUNITY SERVICE

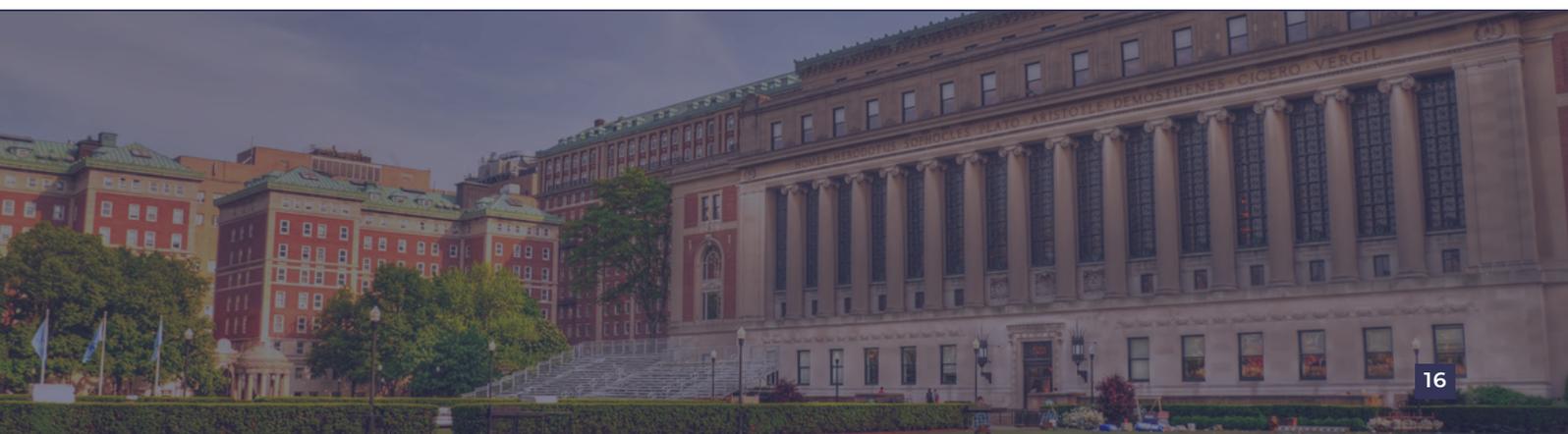
*Co-founder,
Share Org. (Sex Ed. Nonprofit)*

Wrote, designed, printed over 200 sexual education awareness pamphlets for distribution in underprivileged areas of Northern Vietnam; ran 5 workshops.

10. MUSIC VOCAL

*Soprano Vocalist,
HolderNotes (A-capella)*

Attend weekly practices; arrange contemporary music for a-capella performance; perform at school events.



Activities List of a Successful Yale, Stanford, Columbia, Brown, UPenn, Duke, Cornell and UChicago Admit

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Intern, Congresswoman

Interned in Washington DC in a team of 3; wrote 25+ letters addressing constituent concerns; attended 20+ hearings & briefings; toured constituents.

06. INTERNSHIP

*Bilateral Safety
Corridor Coalition*

Spread awareness & outreach regarding human trafficking; delivered 5+ bilingual seminars at Mexican Consulate on recognizing signs of forced labor trade.

02. CAREER ORIENTED

*Dir. of Outreach,
The Barrio Impact (Ed. Nonprofit)*

Afterschool tutoring & guidance to Latino students; personally liaised with 100+ universities to request promotional materials; searched for scholarships.

07. ATHLETICS - JV / VARSITY

*Lacrosse, Defenseman, MDCHS
Crusaders Varsity Lacrosse*

Attended daily practices; started in games twice a week; chosen as captain in 3 games during season.

03. ACADEMIC

*Captain & President,
MDCHS Quiz Bowl Team*

Recruited 15+ members; lead weekly practices; elected Captain '17; under captaincy, improved to 3rd Place Quiz Bowl Metro League '17.

08. DEBATE / SPEECH

*Vice President,
Speech & Debate Club*

Organized biweekly meetings; recruited 25+ students; debates on current affairs & religion; facilitated public speaking improvement in peers.

04. INTERNSHIP

*Intern & Office Manager, Ammar
Campa-Najjar Campaign*

Managed day-to-day tasks such as training volunteers for congressional campaign; crafted promotional materials in English & Spanish; phonebanking.

09. RELIGIOUS

Member, Ambassador for Christ Corps

Represented school at various events such as Open House, Fall Festival, G8 Visitation; served as bilingual tour guide for Spanish speaking families.

05. OTHER CLUB / ACTIVITY

*President & Founder,
College Awareness Club*

Founded club and recruited 50+ students in regular attendance at meetings; invited prominent college alumni to speak about experiences at schools Internship.

10. ACADEMIC

*Team B Captain,
National Ocean Sciences Bowl.*

Organized biweekly practices & prepared team of 5 for competition; expanded knowledge on environmental science topics such as marine policy & geography.



Activities List of a Successful Columbia Admit

01. ACADEMIC

Founder & Leader, Fun Maths Problem Solving Society

Recruited 40+; weekly problem solving sessions; devise sets from "Superbrain Collection"; invite guest speakers; share passion for maths.

06. ACADEMIC

Competitor, Various Maths Competitions

Qualified for British Maths Olympiad in Y12; Qualified for Intermediate Maths Olympiad in Y11; High Gold Intermediate Maths Challenge in Y11.

02. STUDENT GOVT. / POLITICS

Y13 Vice-Captain, Dulwich College

Voted by teachers & students from shortlist of 40 candidates; manage Senior Prefect Body, Charity & Union Committees; report weekly to Headmaster.

07. COMMUNITY SERVICE

Reading/Maths Mentor, City Heights E-ACT Academy

Volunteered during lunch period to read to students at school in disadvantaged area; tutored basic maths and helping with homework.

03. COMMUNITY SERVICE

Organizer, Foundation Schools Maths Competition

Spearheaded multi-school competition involving 140+ competitors across 3 schools; raised 350 GBP for Magic Bus charity, supporting further education.

08. JOURNALISM / PUBLICATION

Senior Editor, DC Mathematica (Annual publication)

Reviewed 35+ submitted STEM articles; editing, proofreading, designing, publishing; wrote 2 articles; proceeds donated to Affcad UK charity.

04. ACADEMIC

Member, Physics Society

Attend weekly meetings; gave presentation on 'The Cheerio Effect' and piezoelectric technology; assisted recruitment efforts by making posters.

09. OTHER CLUB / ACTIVITY

Writer, House Poetry Competition

Won 1st place in consecutive annual House Poetry Competitions in Y10 and Y11; Headmaster's award for best poem: "As I Return" sonnet in Y11.

05. CULTURAL

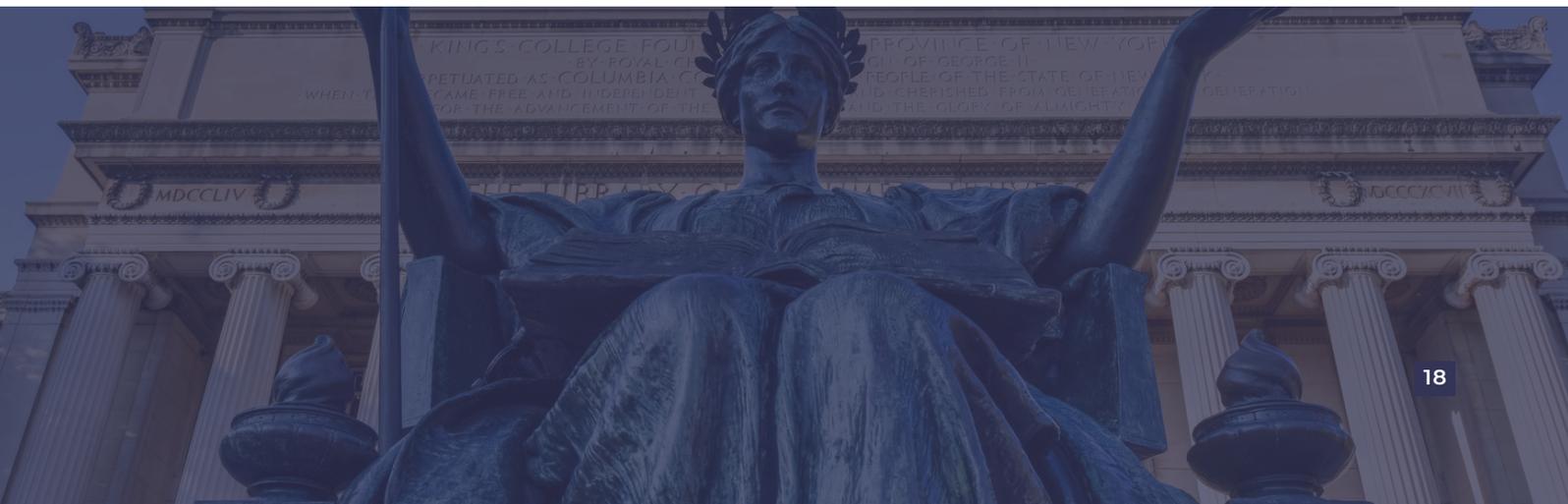
Founder & Co-Leader, Russian Culture Society

Recruited 60+; regular presentations on language, food, history; invited guest speakers; designed most desirable tie; organize club stall for fair.

10. RELIGIOUS

Member, Religion, Theology, Ethics Society

Presentation on 'The Issue of Homophobia in Russia'; selected to present to all Y10&11 students; attended weekly meetings; awarded society tie.



Activities List of a Successful Harvard Admit

01. RESEARCH

Research on Diet and Skin Health

Co-authored a journal article and submitted to Journal of the American Academic dermatology.

06. INTERNSHIP

Intern, Newnan Dermatology Institute

Shadowed derm processes; assisted NPs with writing patient notes; performed non-surgical processes — sterilized surgical tools; prepared equipment tables.

02. COMMUNITY SERVICE

Volunteer, Stepping Stone Mission

Assist with preparing and distributing food at soup kitchen for the homeless; awarded President's Volunteer Service Award (silver level).

07. RELIGIOUS

Audio Technician, Worship Team

Operated a mixing board at Sunday and Friday youth services; produced and edited Worship Team's sound to contribute in servicing the youth.

03. CULTURAL

Founder and President, Origami Club

Teach origami to 33 members to promote cultural diversity; organised origami events at Stepping Stone Soup Kitchen; fundraised \$91 for Stepping Stone.

08. DEBATE / SPEECH

Selected Participant, Harvard Pre-College Program

Took "Speaking with Power, Passion and Purpose"; performed a speech on four different occasions on issues such as conserving food resources.

04. STUDENT GOVT. POLITICS

President, Student Government Association

Organised first ECHS Cancer Run; restored interclub Committee; oversaw homecoming decorations and parade; represent study body at faculty meetings.

09. COMMUNITY SERVICE

Chairman of Community Service, Key Club

Served as liaison between Key Club and local organizations — Abby's Angels (Teen Driving Safety), Soles for Cole (Awareness for Cystic Fibrosis).

05. SCIENCE / MATH

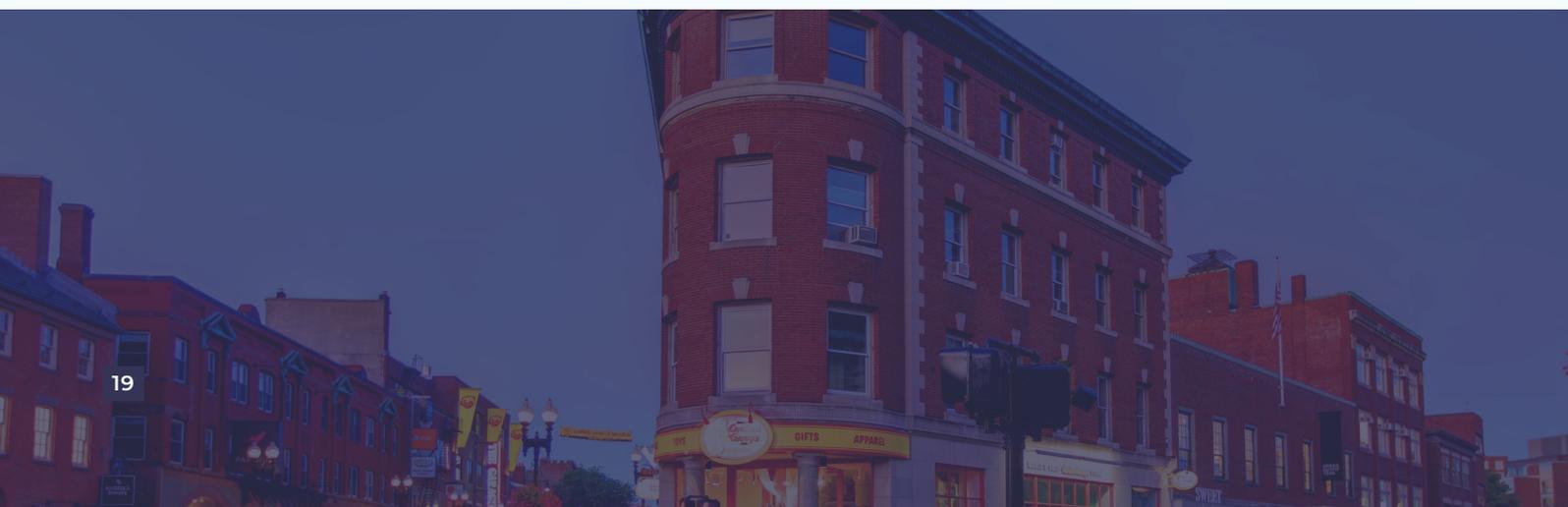
Captain Math Team

Spearhead the Math Team in regional competitions; became the first captain to lead the team to Fayette Invitational.

10. SCIENCE / MATH

President, Mu Alpha Theta

Organized tutoring sessions and meetings; tutor students struggling in math classes to promote youth academic achievements in mathematics.



Activities List of a Successful UChicago Admit

01. INTERNSHIP

*Microbio Research Intern CHN
Academy of Sciences*

Conducted experiments on the production of plant-derived chemopreventive-precursor glucoraphanin; used gene knockout and recombination techniques.

06. SCIENCE / MATH

*Student, Stanford Pre-Collegiate
Summer Institutes*

Top performer in Discrete Math course; excelled in college level course work in cryptography, programming, algorithms, number and graph theory.

02. OTHER CLUB / ACTIVITY

*Co-founder and President,
Transfer Student Club*

Founded Club; mentored over 5 students in acclimatization; spearheaded creation of FAQ page, guidebook and blog for students to share stories.

07. MUSIC INSTRUMENTAL

Violinist

Played violin and attended weekly lessons since age 10; performed in school orchestra.

03. SCIENCE / MATH

Captain, Math Team

Captained team of 15 in multiple regional contests; recruited 5 new members; developed advanced training materials; top individual scorer.

08. COMPUTER / TECHNOLOGY

Member, Robotics Team

Self-taught C language and programmed robot; constructed robot; performed tests; competed in regional Botball competition.

04. SCIENCE / MATH

*Member,
Science Olympiad Team*

1st place Bedford HS Annual Women in Science Comp.; led team for monthly competitions; led experiments for optic lab event; structured study guides.

09. COMMUNITY SERVICE

Member, Key Club

Attended weekly meetings; performed 30 hrs of community service per year; helped events such as town musical, lunch for the homeless, and book sale.

05. COMMUNITY SERVICE

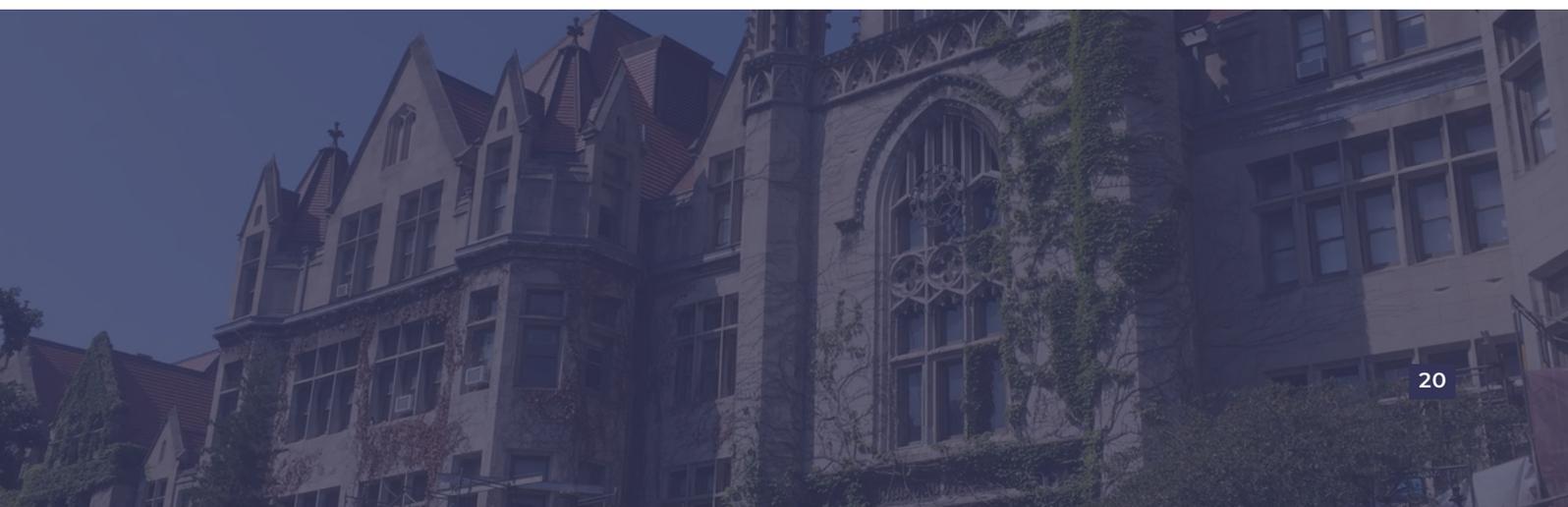
*Member,
National Honors Society*

Passed selective admission; attended regular meetings; performed 20 hrs of community service per year; organized school events such as Seminar Day.

10. WORK

Private Chinese Tutor

Tutored 7 year old in Chinese; taught basic reading, listening, speaking and writing; derived lesson plans and homework; shared cultural activities.



Activities List of a Successful Harvard Admit

01. COMMUNITY SERVICE

*Founder Eduklase Online
Education Info Portal*

Recruited 8-ppl eboard; built & regularly updated website for the underprivileged; promoted it to gain 10k + visits in 6 months; partnered w/ local NGOs.

06. COMMUNITY SERVICE

*Vice President,
Kalliope Organization Committee*

Initiated schL first charity green fashion show; liaised with designers, models & performers; attracted 600+ audiences; raised 1k+ for bursary fund.

02. CAREER ORIENTED

*VP, HK Youth Law & Current
Affairs Association*

Recruited and supervised eboard operations; initiated 2 day mock trial workshop for 70+ underrepresented students; invited local lawyers to lecture.

07. DEBATE / SPEECH

Speaker TEDx Youth@AISHK

Compiled stats and anecdotes of third-world volunteering; delivered speech on maximization of service impact; conducted panel discussions w/ 100 audience.

03. DEBATE / SPEECH

*President,
School MUN Club*

Wrote global affairs reports; recruited and tutored 50+ juniors; assigned prepwork to 10 ppl; chaired 4 intra & inter schL MUNs.

08. ACADEMIC

*Participant, Stanford Summer
Humanities Institute*

Discussed intersectionality of racial identity w/ prof & peers; wrote final paper on evolution of transracial identity; daily creative writing.

04. SCIENCE / MATH

*Team Leader, Dyelectricity
Science Research Team*

Rsrched on replacing metallic dye of dye-sensitized solar cell w/ kitchen waste; lowered cost by 45% ; presented in Intl Student Science Conference.

09. ENVIRONMENTAL

*Organizing Committee, HK Youth
Environmental Summit*

Designed promo material to attract 80+ peers; negotiated to gain food sponsorship, promoted environ awareness on campus to local and intl students.

05. DEBATE / SPEECH

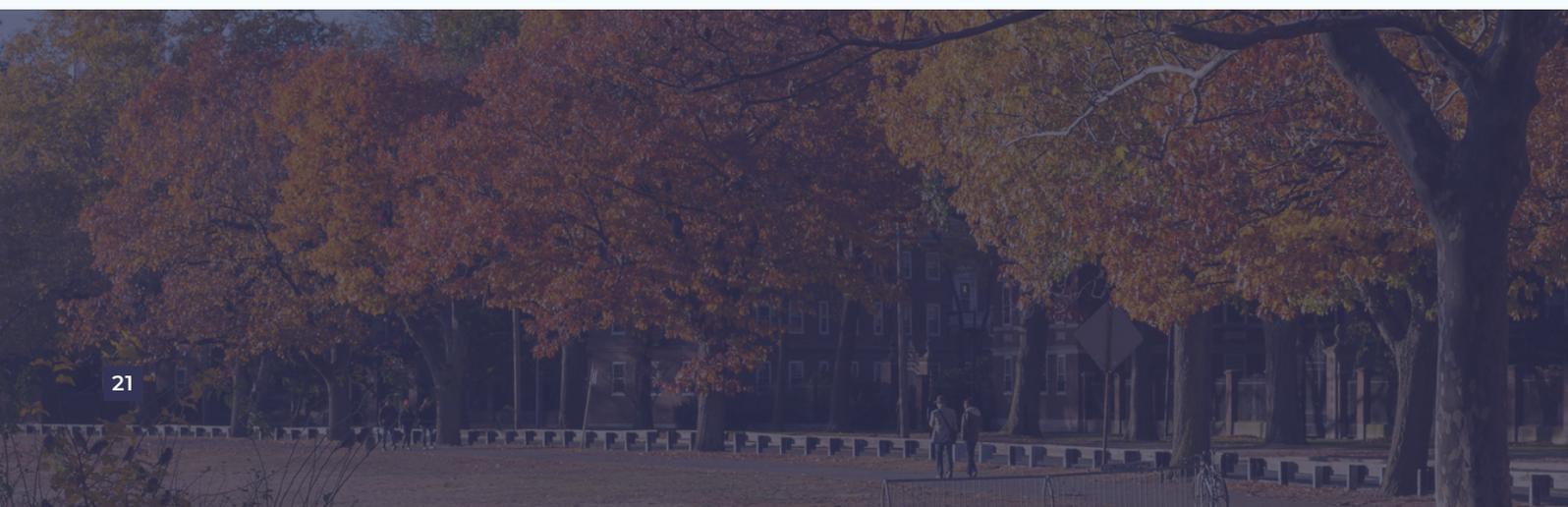
*Captain,
School Mock Trial team*

Delegated rsrch tasks amongst 5 members; prepared and delivered written and oral arguments in the High Court before full jury and judge.

10. DEBATE / SPEECH

*Volunteer,
Crossroads Foundation*

Sorted, tested and repaired donated electronic appliances; arranged, packed and loaded goods for shipping; assisted poverty simulations for the public.



Activities List of a Successful Stanford, UPenn, and Johns Hopkins Admit

01. COMMUNITY SERVICE

IYOW Charity Converts Founder and Director

Leader of 90 students; raised \$4121 over two years for the Aboriginal Literacy Foundation; plan/organise rehearsals, technicians, venues, equipment.

06. MUSIC INSTRUMENTAL

Piano and Viola

Viola AMEB 8th Grade; piano AMEB 7th Grade; chamber music trio member, charity concert musician.

02. DEBATE / SPEECH

Member of the Victorian State Squad for Debating

Victorian State Squad member (Top 13 in state); Victorian British Parliamentary grand finalist (Top 4 in state); Australian intervarsity participant.

07. COMMUNITY SERVICE

Local Community Service

St Catherine's Aged Care weekly with severely disabled; Lentil As Anything non-profit charity restaurant; Junior School Writer's Club mentoring.

03. DEBATE / SPEECH

Middle School and Senior School Debating Captain

Run trainings; volunteered as House Debating adjudicator; debating coach for school teams; multiple best speaker awards; regional finalists Year 11.

08. THEATRE / DRAMA

House Drama Captain, Playwright and Publicist

School Performing Arts Festival; Proficiency and Publicity award; cast. Wrote, directed organised rehearsals, lighting/sound for school play.

04. JOURNALISM / PUBLICATION

Writer and Editor for various publications

Text editor and writer for school newspaper; writer for The Signal Express and BQ Australia Chinese Weekly (China Southern Airlines inflight paper).

09. ATHLETICS CLUB

Badminton

Badminton for leisure and fitness; weekly classes; competed in Girls Sports Victoria; played interschool competitions.

05. ART

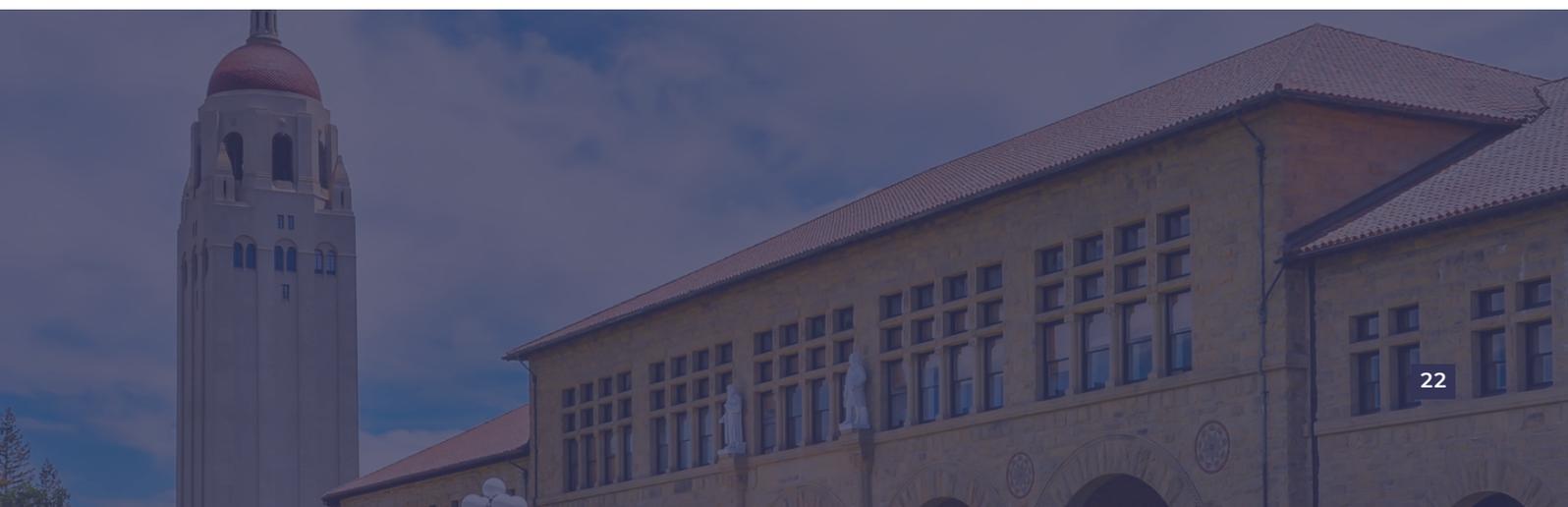
Visual Arts

Self-directed projects; weekly art classes; five artworks shortlisted for IB Top Arts exhibition (Top 20 IB artists in state).

10. COMMUNITY SERVICE

Volunteering with Hand Up Australia Udaipur

Building school in rural India; interacted and taught local children; initiated planning, team building, fundraising.



Activities List of a Successful UPenn (Huntsman Program) Admit

01. OTHER / CLUB ACTIVITY

AFI International Youth Ambassador (UN and EP)

Chair the 35th Youth Human Rights Summit in the United Nations, representing young people's voices at the forefront of international discussions.

06. DEBATE / SPEECH

Debating Competitions and Trinity College Diploma

Through competing in Rostrum Public Speaking, Mock trial, Voice of Youth and Speech and Drama, I have practiced for and completed my ATCL diploma.

02. COMMUNITY SERVICE

President and Founder

Founded a youth-run charity that provides literature opportunities to rural, migrant areas and developing countries that cannot afford English texts.

07. OTHER / CLUB ACTIVITY

International Courses, Programmes and Leadership

Stanford summer course, Oxford Law summer course, Dale Carnegie Leadership course, President of Harvard Model United Nations (honourable mention).

03. INTERNSHIP

MEP EP Internship (One Belt One Road Initiative)

Interned at the European Parliament, presented the reports of Guangdong for the One Belt One Road Initiative and attended Programmes independently.

08. MUSIC - INSTRUMENTAL

Lead Cellist, Organ, Piano, Flute, Harpsichord

Played on the organ weekly for chapel services, in orchestra for Cello and Flute and volunteer at North Haven Nursing Home by playing piano.

04. STUDENTS GOVT. / POLITICS

SRC Prefect - Students Representative Council

Represent the student voice by organising initiatives (school charity), fundraising events (color run) and fundraising for the Smith's Family.

09. CAREER ORIENTED

Youth Parliament (Minister for Women's Affairs)

Led the unanimous passing of a resolution in the Senate after creating a report into the underrepresentation of Women in STEM fields.

05. ACADEMICS

Published Fictocritical Thesis

Produced a published major work that challenged dominant constructions of Chinese diasporic identity in Australia.

10. ATHLETICS - JV / VARSITY

Fencing, Sports and Activities

Trained and competed in Fencing (National), Badminton (Firsts), Volleyball (Firsts), Chess (Founder), Swimming (Squad team), Netball (Seconds).



Activities List of a Successful Harvard Admit

01. STUDENT GOVT. / POLITICS

Senior Prefect (School Captain)

Whole school responsibilities, Managing Prefect Group (23 boys) / Running major whole-school events / Public Speaking / Directing charity activities.

06. ATHLETICS - JV / VARSITY

Basketball, Power Forward in First/Second Squad

Playing in the Firsts and Seconds throughout the basketball season in the highly competitive GPS/CAS competition.

02. MUSIC INSTRUMENTAL

Music Captain

Helping run concerts / Liaising with music department staff / Organising a charity concert / Running music committee (8 boys).

07. ATHLETICS - JV / VARSITY

Track and field / Sprints /Middle Distance

State 800m bronze / Regional 800m silver / Kenny Cup for Best All-round Senior Sportsman / Open 100/200 Championship School Representative.

03. MUSIC INSTRUMENTAL

Assistant Concertmaster (School Orchestra)

Helping lead the First Violins or School Orchestra and Senior String Orchestra

08. FOREIGN EXCHANGE

Participant

Living / Going to school in Paris for 3 months / Hosting French exchange students for 3 months in Sydney.

04. MUSIC VOCAL

Tenor in 'Grammarphones' (Senior A Cappella Group)

Singing and rehearsing as a tenor in the most selective vocal group within the school.

09. DEBATE / SPEECH

Debating A Team / Mooting Team

Debating as a member of the As / Runners-up in the Independent Schools Debating Association / Participating in Regional Mooting.

05. ATHLETICS - JV / VARSITY

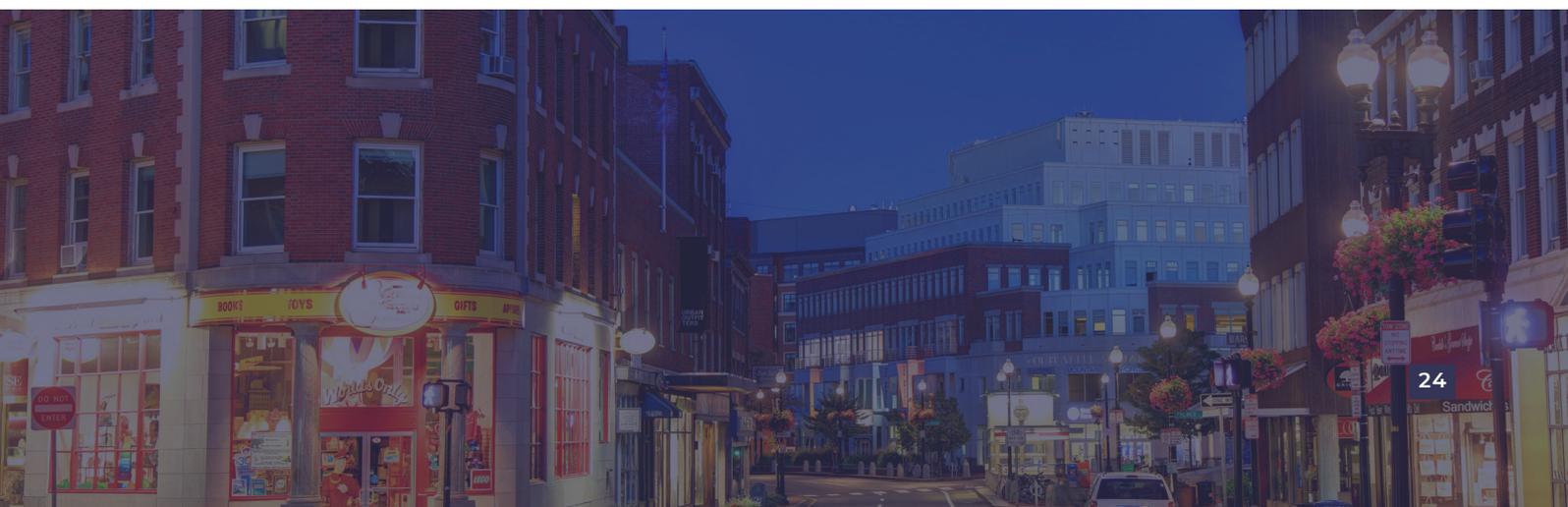
Cross Country, Cross Country Captain

Leading the Cross Country squad / Finishing second in the competition / Qualifying for the Independent Schools Representative Team.

10. COMMUNITY SERVICE

Violinist

Violinist in a string trio to raise money for NSW Kids in Need and Australian Chamber Orchestra Music Education Program for Disadvantaged Kids.



Activities List of a successful Art/Theatre/Music applicant who gained admission to Top Liberal Arts colleges Oberlin College, Grinnell College, and Kenyon College

01. THEATRE / DRAMA

*Benvinda Drama Group,
Member*

Group dynamics, improv/voice/body training. Studied makeup, hair, script writing, and performance techniques (e.g. viewpoints, masks, storytelling).

06. DEBATE / SPEECH

*Model UN Delegate,
Secretary, and Chair*

City, State, National conferences. Became the School's MUN Security Council Director and Secretary-General: organised conference for 235 participants.

02. THEATRE / DRAMA

*Connections, Royal National
Theatre of London*

Selected to intl. network of dramatists and actors; attended workshops; performed in theater festivals (including Brazil Connections Festival '18).

07. STUDENT GOVT. / POLITICS

*Student Council, Senior Year
Representative*

Had weekly meetings with the School Board; defended projects at Assembly of Representatives from all grades, then presented to school admin.

03. THEATRE / DRAMA

*Musical Theater Group,
Member*

Vocal coaching, backstage, jazz/tap/contemporary dance training, and acting w/ former Broadway actors. Restaged musicals in Off-Broadway theaters.

08. STUDENT GOVT. / POLITICS

*Political Commission,
Founder and Spokeswoman*

Organized presidential debate simulations, moderated controversial topics and workshops to 100+ students (jrs/srs), hosted university professors.

04. SOCIAL JUSTICE

*Coletivo Maria Quitéria,
President and Co-founder*

1st Feminist Collective of 150-yr Catholic school; started with student debates to 10 girls; did lectures to 200+ people, video with over 17k views.

09. COMMUNITY SERVICE

*Fraternity Experience Program,
Charity Outreach*

Worked at daycares, asylums, refugee centers. Planned weekly activities for 20+ volunteers; fundraised; organized child protection projects.

05. CULTURAL

*Brazilian Leadership
Bootcamp, Participant*

Selected among 150+ applicants to participate in immersive leadership and social innovation development program; co-founded the non-profit Pont.E.

10. COMMUNITY SERVICE

*Volunteers' Association of Hospital
das Clínicas*

Responsible for weekly interventions at the pediatric ward, ICU, and CCU. Organized games/exercises that were carried out by 20+ other volunteers.

06.

Capstone Projects

One of the best ways you can set yourself apart from tens of thousands of other academically qualified applicants is through a capstone project. Admissions officers love seeing Capstone Projects on an application because it shows that the applicant is a leader who is passionate, driven, and independent.

+ What is a Capstone Project?

A Capstone Project is a large, intensive, self-driven initiative that a student pursues for several months. It is a way to thoroughly investigate a topic, cause, or organisation that the applicant is passionate about. It showcases their ability to independently explore their interests and is often the most impactful extracurricular on an Activities List.

When Crimson students and their Extracurricular Mentors develop a Capstone Project, we use the United Nations “5 Ps” framework used to shape their Sustainable Development Goals. These include:

- **People**
- **Planet**
- **Prosperity**
- **Peace**
- **Partnerships**

In the context of an application strategy, a successful Capstone Project is:

- **A memorable solution to an existing issue**
- **Oriented towards community service**
- **Interdisciplinary: combines the student's passions, interests and skills in a unique way**
- **Measurable in its impact**
- **Fits into the student's application theme and Personal Narrative**



+ Timeline of a Capstone Project

Here is an example of how a Grade 9 student can develop their Capstone Project.

+ Grade 9

- Explore an issue that you take a strong personal interest in
- Apply the UN's 5P Framework to the issue and identify the three ideals that resonate the most with you and your chosen issue
- Join a global youth community which focuses on the same issue

+ Grade 10

- Decide on the goal of your project
- Develop your impact framework through the 3Ps you've chosen
- Mobilise and build a team through your network
- Share your project with the world

+ Grade 11

- Develop a list of partners through a multi-stakeholder approach
- Participate in annual festivals or conferences
- Publish research related to the global issue
- Participate in global competitions and aim to be recognized through winning an honour or an award

+ Grade 12

- Get nominated into a youth leadership position within a world-renowned organisation using the knowledge you have gained
- Continue attending and presenting at high level conferences, and building a global network



If you are not sure how to get started, our experts can help you break these down to actionable items. Book a consultation to learn more.

Book Now

+ Evaluating a Capstone Project

You can evaluate the success of your capstone project through the following 3 categories:

Impact

- Number of Participants
- Number of Activities
- Number of Partners
- Number of Views (Social Media)

Innovation

- Number of Ideas Generated
- Number of Articles Published
- Number of Prototypes Developed
- Number of App Functions

Inclusion

- Number of Countries
- Number of Volunteers
- Number of Languages Employed
- Number of Open-Source Resources

+ Crimson Students' Successful Capstone Projects

Maya

► Global Leadership Project

- **Name:** TerraYouth
- **Mission:** Dedicated to helping young people learn about and get involved in environmental entrepreneurship and innovation, with the objective of starting an eco-business in the future
- **Reason:** As this student is pursuing an environmental studies and engineering dual major, it is important to demonstrate that the student embodies both the “left” and “right” brain required to become a successful changemaker in tackling these issues.
- **Activities:**
 1. Launched a green-focused magazine called the Eco Enquirer
 2. Created the Time with the Trees Podcast featuring NGO experts
 3. Started a “Adopt-A-Tree” Tree Planting Initiative in Local Community that is tied to a RaaS (Reforestation-as-a-Service) platform
- **Impact:**
 1. Published 5 times in national and international media
 2. Over 250 individuals engaged in their events
 3. More than 500 subscribers to Podcast
 4. Presented at 3 global conferences, including one with UN Foundation

► Global Extracurriculars

- **Global Competition** - Global Finalist at Learning Planet's ASPIRE 2030 Hackathon
- **Global Conference** - UN Foundation's Better Together World Congress

► Global Honor/Award

- Youth Councillor of a UN SDSN (Sustainable Development Solutions Network) NGO

► Student Outcomes

- Top 5 US
- This outstanding result is due to a dual approach of environmental studies and engineering, and then using the Top 10 Activities list to demonstrate and action across both sides



► Global Leadership Project

- **Name:** Early Voting Initiative
- **Mission:** Advocating for youth to play a stronger role in political and economic activism, starting the earliest voting age of 18, in order for them to create the systems change they wish to see in their lifetime
- **Reason:** As a student aiming to pursue a dual degree in political science and social entrepreneurship, this Initiative was custom made to highlight the importance of integrating political and economical issues to create long-term change
- **Activities:**
 1. Supported web platform development of two political activism related NGOs, one of which is funded by Google.org
 2. Created a do-it-yourself political activism kit to help students start a movement at school
 3. Authored a series of articles educating how youth can “vote with their wallets” in the most impactful way
- **Impact:**
 1. Five NGOs as partners
 2. Twenty-five student-led initiatives created across three countries
 3. Three conferences attended and presented

► Global Extracurriculars

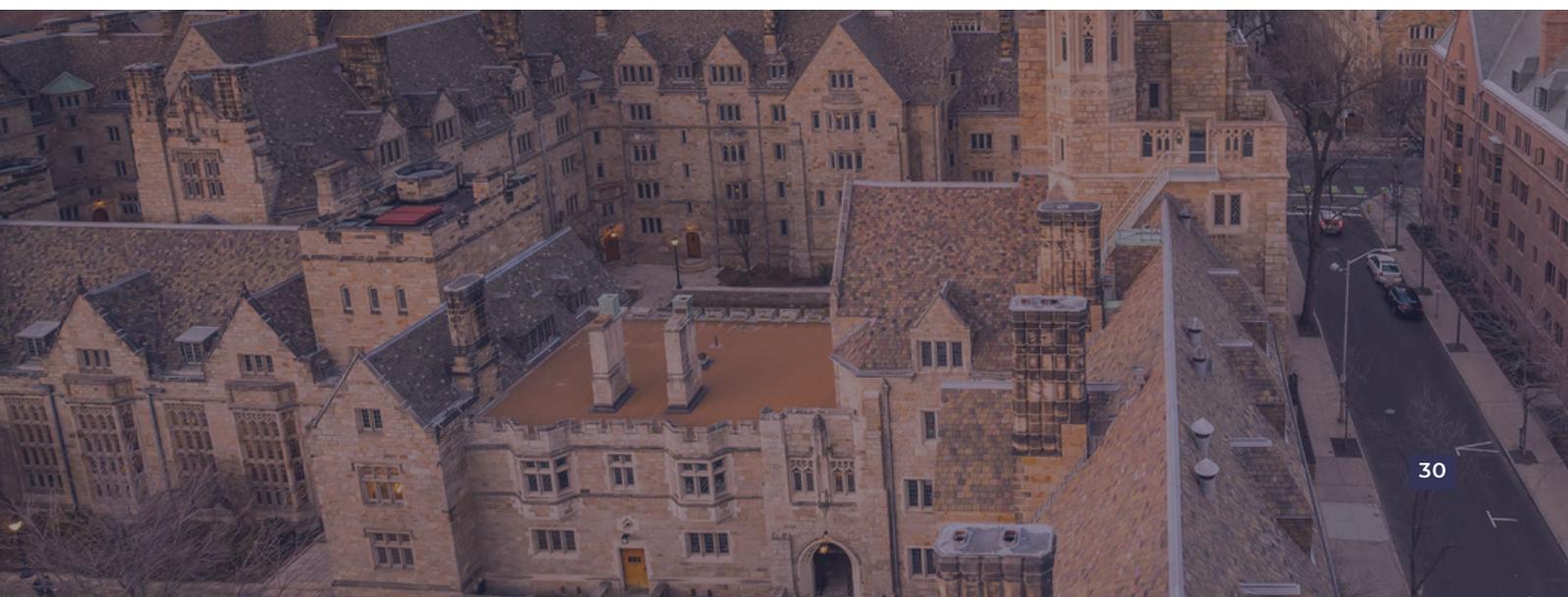
- **Global Conference** - UN Foundation's Global Goals Week
 - **Global Authorship** - UNICEF Published, with more than 150 media activations
 - **Global Club** - Study Abroad Club connecting students in boarding schools
-

► Global Honor/Award

- Youth Council Member for KIDSforSDGs, a global awarded NGO
-

► Student Outcomes

- Top 5 US
- This outstanding result originates from the focus this student project has in addressing current and urgent needs of Generation Z, as well as the maturity shown in designing an interdisciplinary leadership initiative

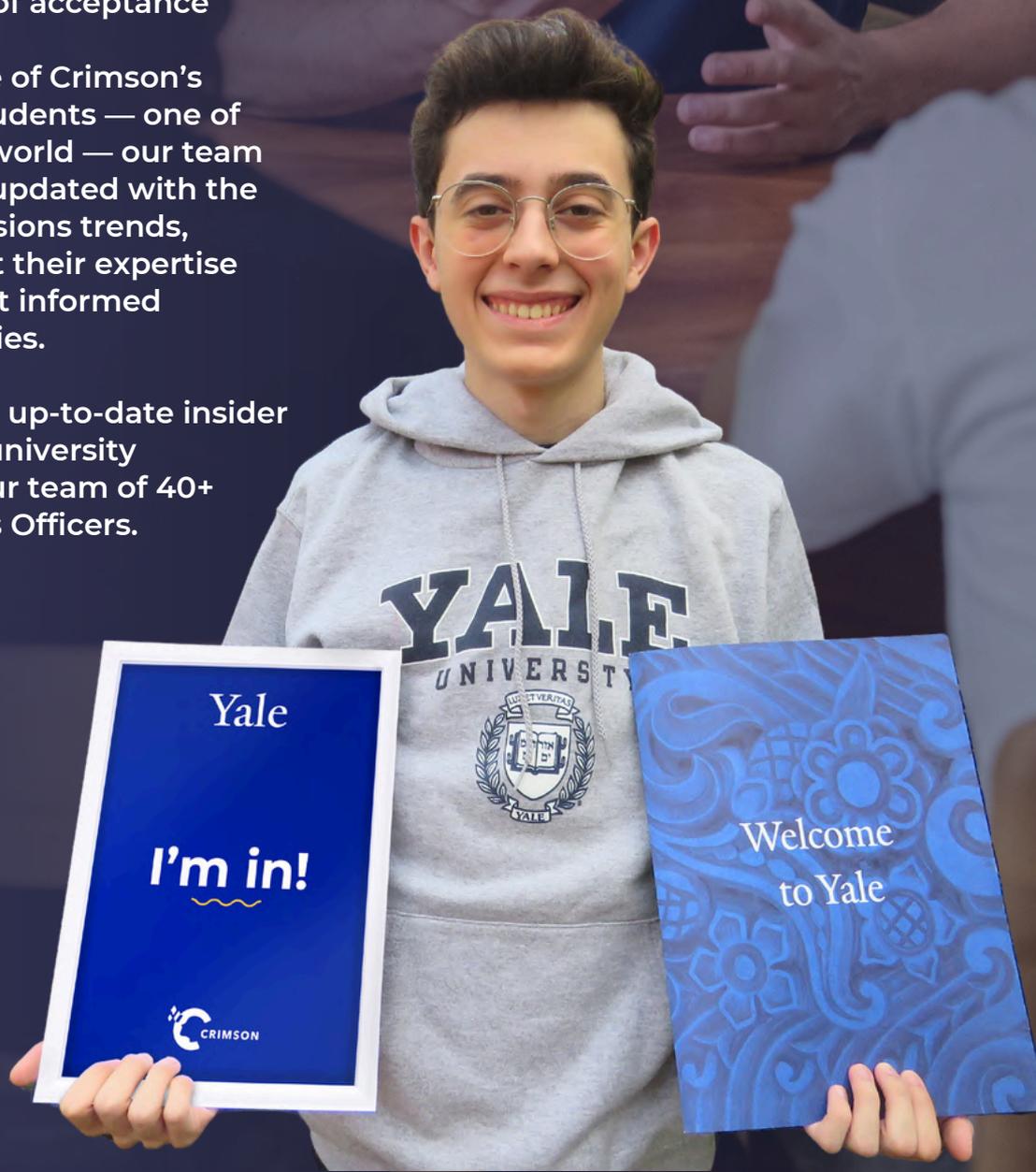


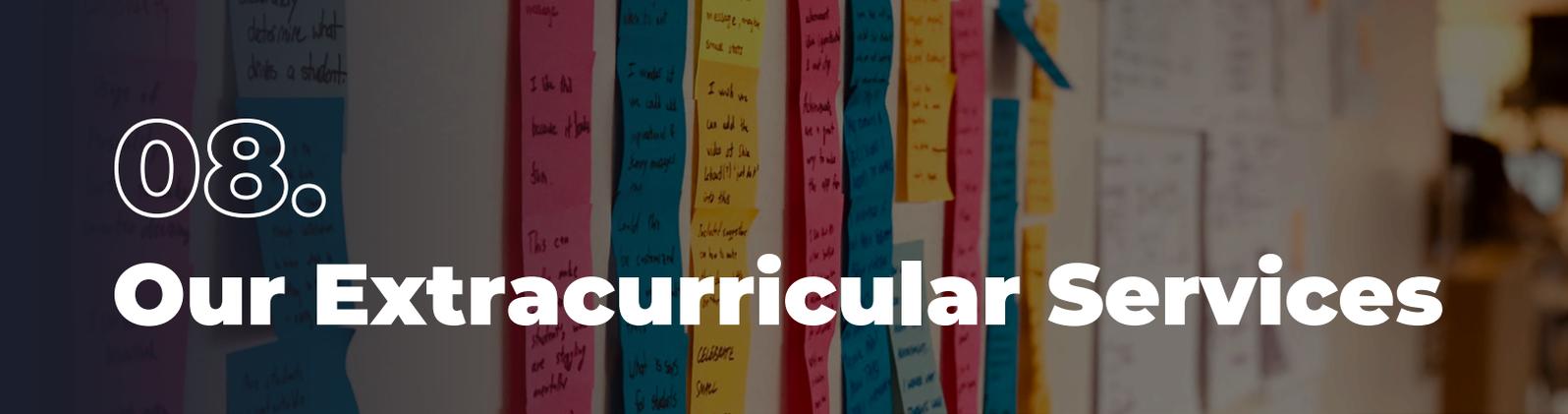
07.

Crimson Students' Unique Position

Crimson students receive a 360° strategic evaluation from their team to help students maximise their chances of admissions. This is done by:

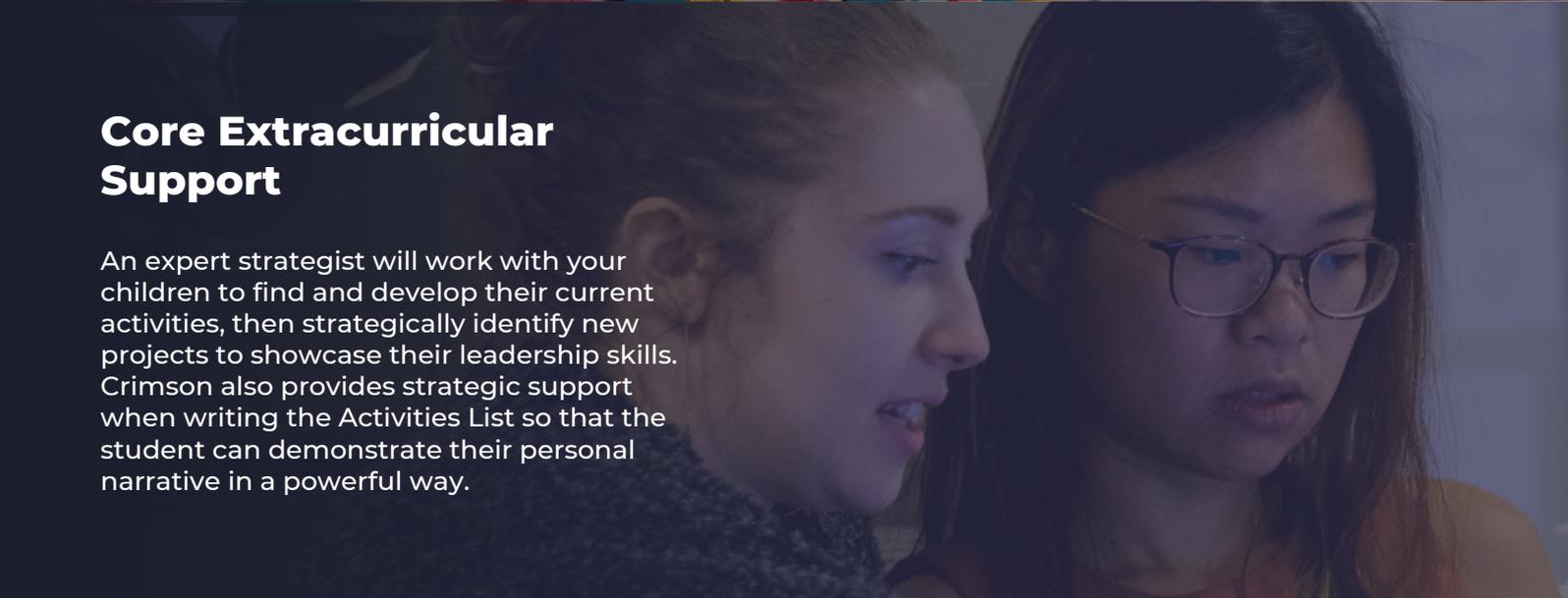
- Evaluating their goals, profile, and overall candidacy to understand where and how we can maximise the student's chances of acceptance
- Using our database of Crimson's 6000+ accepted students — one of the biggest in the world — our team of Strategists stay updated with the most recent admissions trends, which complement their expertise and help them craft informed admissions strategies.
- Applying exclusive, up-to-date insider knowledge about university admissions from our team of 40+ Former Admissions Officers.





08.

Our Extracurricular Services



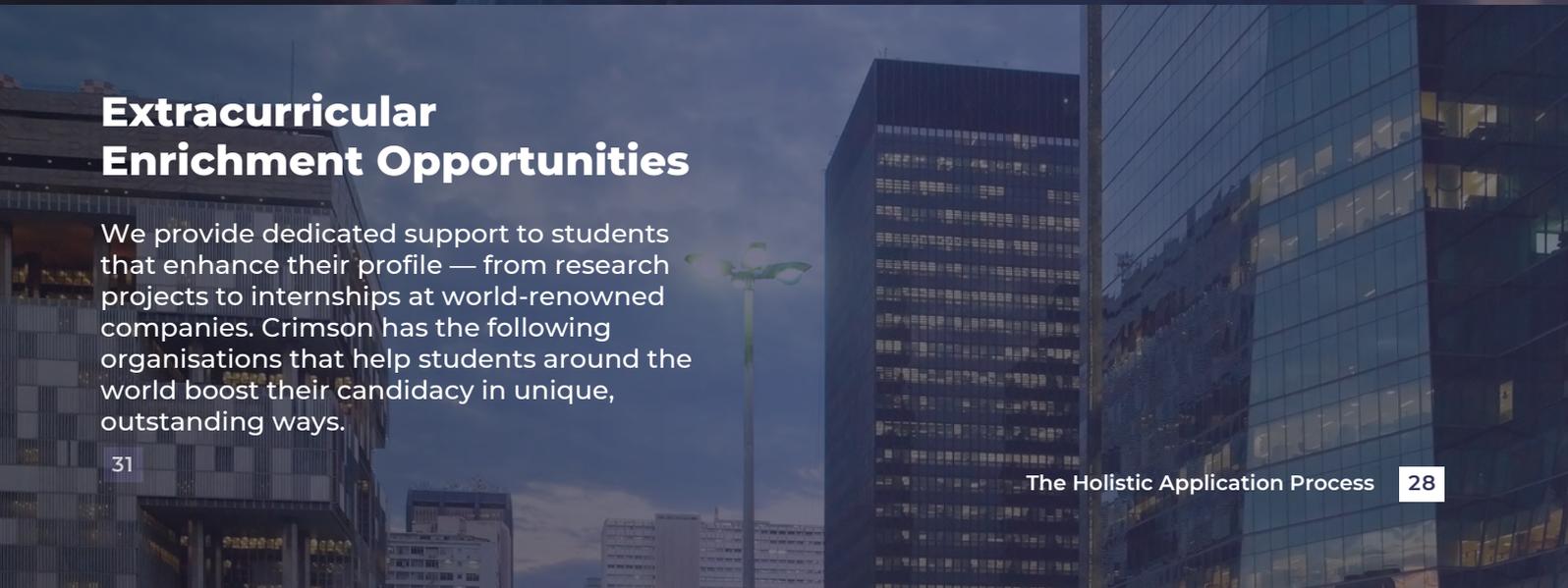
Core Extracurricular Support

An expert strategist will work with your children to find and develop their current activities, then strategically identify new projects to showcase their leadership skills. Crimson also provides strategic support when writing the Activities List so that the student can demonstrate their personal narrative in a powerful way.



Capstone Advising

Our in-depth, 1-on-1 mentorship service is provided by an expert tutor who will help your children identify, create, and complete a Capstone Leadership Project.



Extracurricular Enrichment Opportunities

We provide dedicated support to students that enhance their profile — from research projects to internships at world-renowned companies. Crimson has the following organisations that help students around the world boost their candidacy in unique, outstanding ways.

Final Takeaways

In this eBook, we delved into how Admissions Officers at top US universities evaluate the most subjective parts of each application: extracurriculars and an applicant's personal narrative.

In the highly selective world of US college admissions, we know exactly how challenging it can be to cultivate an application that stands out to admissions officers. As stated at the beginning, tens of thousands of applicants to top US universities have both perfect grades and test scores. As such, admissions has become highly dependent on extracurriculars: who are you outside of the classroom, what kind of impact have you made, and will those aspirations grow if you become a member of their university?

This is where things can be challenging — building a compelling personal narrative through extracurriculars that explicitly showcase both who you are and your future potential requires time, creativity, and a well-crafted strategy.

Crimson understands the complex intricacies of US university admissions and is committed to providing all students with the personalised guidance and strategic support they need to excel. Each student is uniquely matched with a comprehensive team of experienced experts who work closely with each student to develop a comprehensive application strategy — ensuring that their application stands out, thus increasing their chances of acceptances at top US universities.



About Crimson Education

Crimson Education is the world's leading admissions consultancy. From admissions strategies to research opportunities to a global high school, we offer the most comprehensive scope of admissions services available in the world. We employ over 900 full-time staff in over 20 countries and work with all students, no matter where they live.

Every one of Crimson's students are uniquely matched to experts who will best-fit their needs. This includes Exam Tutors, Extracurricular Mentors, Essay Prep Specialists, and Application Strategists. Our approach cultivates a highly personalised service that leaves no stone unturned in the application process.

All our experts come from the same top universities our students apply to, including Yale, Columbia, Stanford, MIT, Oxford, Cambridge, and many more. This highly individualised approach has resulted in our students gaining admission to the Ivy League, Oxbridge and other top universities at up to 5x the general applicant rate.

Our commitment to our students goes beyond the college admission process. We facilitate internships, ambassadorships, and career opportunities that stretch every student's lifetime. We are dedicated to providing students with the opportunities they need to perform masterfully on the international stage, utilising the education system of the 22nd century to build the leaders of tomorrow.

This is the Crimson Effect:



**The power to transform lives
through world-class education**



OUR RESULTS

Every year, we are amazed by what our students accomplish. In fact, many of our students receive not just one, but two or three offers to the world's best universities. They are faced with the wonderful dilemma of needing to choose between several highly competitive universities!

In general, Crimson students are 4.5x more likely to gain admission to a top university than those who apply alone. Those who worked with us for four or more years are 9x more likely to gain admission to their target university compared to those who joined us later in the application cycle. Check out our statistics below

797

Offers to Ivy League Universities

6,000+

Offers to the US Top 50 universities

1,280+

Offers to the US Top 10 universities

287

Offers to Oxford and Cambridge

1,850+

Offers to the UK Top 10 universities

Crimson Student Admissions Rates Compared to General Applicant Rates (2023)

School	General Admit Rate	Crimson US Student Admit Rate
Princeton	3.90%	15%
MIT	4.7%	27%
Harvard	3.4%	15%
Stanford	4%	14%
Yale	4.30%	21%
UChicago	~4.5%	15%
Johns Hopkins	6.0%	28%
UPenn	~5.70%	27%
Caltech	3.90%	16%
Duke	6.0%	20%
Northwestern	7%	22%
Dartmouth	6.0%	21%
Brown	5.50%	21%
Vanderbilt	6.70%	35%
Rice	8.60%	25%
Washington U. in St. Louis	13%	50%
Cornell	~7.5%	28%
Columbia	3.70%	26%
UCLA	9.7%	41%
UC Berkeley	11%	45%

How do Crimson students compare to international averages?

4.5x

More likely to gain acceptance to the most competitive universities in the world than the average general applicant

2-3x

More likely to get accepted into Oxford or Cambridge compared to the average general applicant

IVY LEAGUE

24.75%

The average acceptance rate of Crimson students who applied to the Ivy League

VS.

~5.2%

compared to the average acceptance rate of general applicants who applied to the Ivy League

US TOP 10

24.55%

The average acceptance rate of Crimson students who applied to the US Top 10

VS.

~4.85%

compared to the average acceptance rate of general applicants who applied to the US Top 10



WHAT SETS US APART

We understand that choosing the right education is one of the most important decisions a student and their family will ever make. That's why Crimson is committed to providing you with the best support and guidance you need to succeed.

There are three distinct qualities that set us apart from every other admissions consultancy in the world. These include:

Personalised Approach: We take the time to understand each student's individual needs and goals, then develop a personalised and comprehensive plan to help them achieve them.

Global Network of Experts: Our team of experienced experts includes former admissions officers, strategists, and mentors from the world's top universities.

Advanced Education Technologies: We create and invest in education technologies that help students reach their full potential and increase their chances of admission to top universities.



01. Personalised Approach

Crimson offers strategic support for students looking to apply to top universities in the United States, United Kingdom, Canada, Europe, and more. From initial assessment to post-acceptance guidance, all support is tailored to maximise students' chances of success. In our dedication to helping every student reach their full potential, we provide individualised services for all students, regardless of the stage they are at.

University Admissions Consulting

When a student begins their journey with Crimson, they will receive unlimited, individual support from a Strategy Consultant, an Application Mentor, and a Student Success Manager— all of whom are part of the student's core team. Together, these team members provide the following services:

✓ Full Application Strategy

Our counselors have over 350 years of combined experience, many having served on admissions committees at Ivy League schools, Oxbridge, Stanford, Duke, and others. Beyond university selection, they work with students to develop a strong overarching theme for their applications that aligns with their personal passions, achievements, and ambitions.

✓ Customised Roadmap

Extensive planning of the student's admissions journey using our tailored in-app roadmap in order to develop a differentiated and clear pathway in preparation of the applications. The roadmap will be updated regularly to accurately reflect student journey.

✓ Candidacy Positioning

Evaluation of the student's candidacy and application strategy based on relative strengths and unique characteristics, specifically compared to other candidates in their country, community, and school.

✓ University Selection (Pre and Post Application)

Guidance through the university selection process by making recommendations based on university characteristics, resources, acceptance rate statistics, and personal preferences.

✓ Essay Development

- Access to our extensive essay database for analysis on best practice, guidance on topic selection and interpretation for all application prompts, as well as brainstorming creative approaches tailored to the student's personality, experiences, and to the institutions applied to.
- Ongoing revisions of essay drafts to deliver core ideas in a concise and targeted manner, leaving a lasting impression on admission officers.

✓ Holistic Application Oversight

Assistance navigating the intricacies of the student's application, constructing résumés, writing activity lists, and ensuring all information is correctly submitted to the target institutions.

✓ **Extracurricular Activity Advice**

Prioritisation of current extracurricular involvements and creation of new projects premised on a thematic narrative complementary of the student's interests and passions in conjunction to present a clear, focused, and differentiated profile.

✓ **Admissions Test Strategy and Support**

Choosing the standardised tests most suitable for the student (SAT/ACT/AP) and optimising target test score range with respect to their school selection and availability.

✓ **Post Application Mentorship**

Submission of post-application supplementary materials, guidance for post-application correspondence with colleges, drafting of deferral letters (if necessary), and further school choice consulting if the student is admitted to multiple programs/colleges/universities.

✓ **Strategic Advice on Letters of Recommendation**

How to approach and inform potential recommenders to write letters that highlight the student strategically and are in alignment with other components of the application.

✓ **Academic Advising**

- School grade analysis and advising on curricula/subject selection to maximise results in conjunction.
- Advising on academic opportunities beyond what's offered at the student's school.

✓ **Regular contact with students and their parents**

All students and their parents receive regular reports to ensure satisfaction with Crimson services, and to track progress.



Supplementary Services

Outside of core services, students and families may choose to add on the following additional services:

✓ Academic and Test Tutoring

Crimson provides a wide range of tutoring services for a wide range of subjects. These include, but are not limited to:

- Standardised Test Tutoring (SAT, ACT, AP)
- Curriculum Tutoring (IB, AP, A-Levels)
- Aptitude Test Tutoring (Medicine, Dentistry, and Veterinary Medicine)
- MedView UK UCAT
- Medview UK BMAT
- Graduate School Test Tutoring (GRE, GMAT, LSAT, MCAT, IELTS, TOEFL)
- IELTS, TOEFL, and general ESOL Tutoring
- Subject specific tutoring
- Debate and Model UN Tutoring
- Olympiad Tutoring

✓ Financial Aid

Crimson's Financial Aid service pairs students with an expert who helps students research scholarship opportunities, develop aid strategies, and guides students through their forms and applications prior to submission.

✓ Former Admissions Officer (FAO) Services (US and UK)

Students will receive personalised feedback from Former Admissions Officers (FAOs) through the following services:

- **FAO Hours** - One-on-one virtual meetings with FAOs to discuss candidacy advice, academic insights, extracurricular guidance, and application support.
- **FAO Review** - A comprehensive assessment of a student's application to a single university, including an admissions officer's perspective, academic evaluation, extracurricular analysis, Common App personal statement, and supplemental essay reviews, all aimed at enhancing the application's competitiveness.
- **Crimson FAO Review Board** - For VIP students, the Crimson FAO Review Board involves a thorough assessment by three FAOs, complemented by a summary from the strategist.

✓ Capstone Advising

An in-depth, outcomes-focused 1:1 mentoring is provided by a dedicated expert tutor with the goal of developing a comprehensive and impressive extracurricular activity list (consisting of 8-10 activities) and completing a Capstone Leadership Project throughout the duration of our collaboration.

✓ Informational Interviews (US, UK, EU)

Prepare for college interviews with research techniques, personal responses, bespoke answers to key questions, mock interviews with successful admits, and tailored resources for nuanced interview formats.



Eileen D.

**Former Ivy League
Admissions Officer**

✓ US Boarding & Day School Admissions

Crimson BDSA Strategy includes support for students looking to apply to private US boarding and day schools. We also support applications to private Canadian schools, whose process is very similar. This service includes:

- Candidacy development (academic and extracurricular)
- School selection and visits
- Letters of recommendation strategy
- Application oversight
- Essay support
- Interview preparation

✓ Academic Enrichment (UK and EU)

Students will work through 1:1 sessions with a subject-specialist Academic Enrichment Mentor. Each session will be a deep-dive into subject knowledge and content that is of utmost importance for UK and EU University Admissions. Each module involves:

- Guiding the student on appropriate Media (books, journals, podcasts etc) to compliment the curriculum.
- Leading the student through a series of authentic learning tasks that will help them to integrate knowledge, skills and attitudes.
- Preparing them for the academic rigours of university lectures, tutorials and beyond.

✓ Summer Program Support

Includes support for G9-12 students identifying and selecting summer programs, along with application essay support and final application review. This service includes:

- Strategist guidance identifying and selecting summer programs
- Application Mentor support when writing application essays
- Strategist final review of the application

✓ Graduate School Admissions (US, UK, EU)

Crimson's Graduate School Admissions program features expert admissions strategy and hands-on support for students applying to Masters and Doctoral programs in every field including: STEM, Social Science, Humanities, MBA (& related Business programs), Law, and Medicine.



Our Subsidiaries

At Crimson, we pride ourselves on being a one-stop shop for all students. Whenever a student or their family has a need, we are able to meet those needs expeditiously and at a very high standard. Our subsidiaries work to meet our students' needs, no matter where they are in their admissions journey.

✓ Indigo Research

A competitive high school research program that provides high school students with 1:1 mentorship from top professors and PhDs to transform your academic passion into publishable research.



✓ Delta Institute

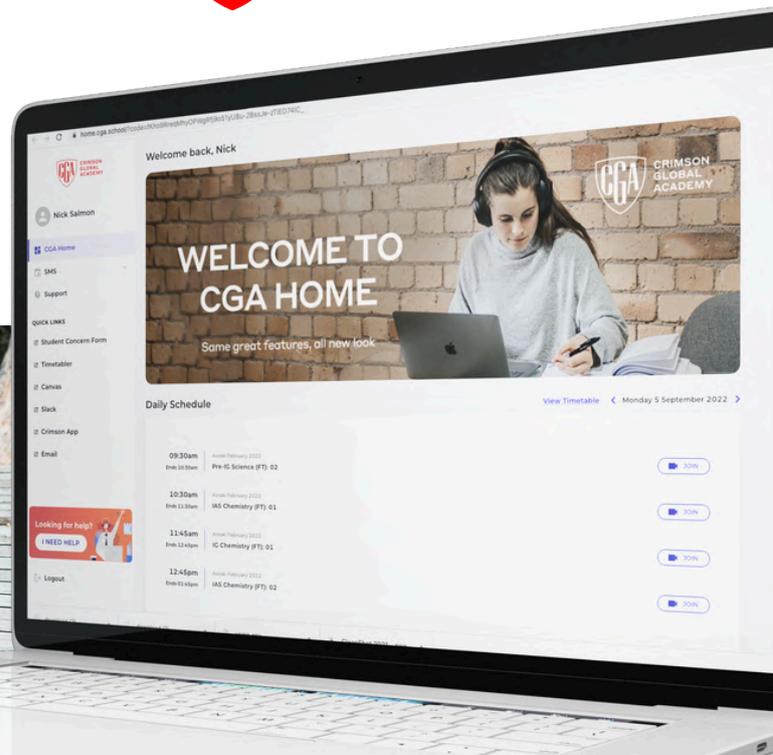
Delta Institute offers work experience programs with top global companies at the pinnacle of their respective industries. We offer students first-hand experiences in career pathways they are interested in, which helps them develop an experience-driven understanding of what their potential future career would look like.



✓ Crimson Global Academy (CGA)

Crimson Global Academy (CGA) is an internationally accredited, world-class online private school delivering live, real-time learning to students all over the world. Designed to challenge, students graduate with the International GCSE and International A-Level qualifications which are globally recognised for their academic rigour, flexibility, and breadth of learning.

It is a transformative schooling experience that aims to serve as many students as possible through its global networks, diverse extracurriculars, and access to cutting-edge educational technologies.



✓ **Crimson Rise**

A strategy service for students ages 11-14. Rise includes tracks for hard-hitting uni admissions preparation, earlier-stage skills development, and interest exploration.



✓ **Medview: Medical School Consultation Bundles (UK, AUS, NZ)**

This includes consulting, test prep, interview/core paper/revision prep, and experiences prep for students applying to medical programs in the UK, Australia, and New Zealand.



✓ **Revision Village**

Dedicated to providing the highest quality IB Maths resources in the world, Revision Village is an award-winning education website that has helped over 1.3 million IB students prepare for their IB Maths Exams. Over 50% of the resources created by Revision Village are made free for all users worldwide.



✓ **Admit Yogi**

Created by students at Stanford, AdmitYogi is a lower-cost service that lets students access successful application profiles from students who got into top universities. This service aims to provide students with insights on what highly selective universities are looking for including essays, awards, activities, demographic data, GPA, and more!



✓ **Crimson Athletics**

The Crimson Athletics department provides 3 services that target admissions strategy for student athletes:

- Athletic Strategy Consulting
- Athletic Campaigning
- Athletic Recruitment Video



✓ **SummerApply**

Students often struggle to figure out where the world's best, most reputable summer programs are. SummerApply compiles all of these programs into one catalogue- from Pre-Med Academies by Harvard to internships with Uber, students can easily research and apply to summer programs that are unique and will help them stand out from the crowd.



02. Global Network of Experts

As a policy, all Crimson Strategists, Mentors, and Tutors must have graduated from a Top 30 university in the world. From world-leading university alumni to PhDs, Former Admissions Officers to multi-degree academics, every student's team will guide their students through the entire application journey.



Alisha M.

 **University of Illinois, UCLA**

Alisha has a BS in Community Health with a concentration in Health Planning and Administration from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign and a Master's in Health Policy and Management from UCLA. Most notably, her students have received admissions to Yale, Harvard, Princeton, Columbia, NYU, USC, and UCLA.



Abbigail C.

 **Oxford, LSE**

Abbigail graduated from Oxford University with a BA in English Language and Literature. She then completed her Master's in International Social and Public Policy at London School of Economics (LSE). Most notably, she has helped students secure offers to Oxford, Cambridge, LSE, UCL, Imperial, King's, and many other top Russell Group Universities.



Heitor S.

 **Swarthmore College, Stanford**

Heitor graduated from Swarthmore College with a BA in Political Science and Educational Studies with a Minor in French. He is currently completing a PhD in International Comparative Education at Stanford (2025). Most notably, he's helped students gain acceptances to Harvard, Princeton, Yale, Stanford, Princeton, Columbia, and UCLA.



Beatrix S.

 **University of Texas at Austin, Columbia**

Beatrix graduated with honours from the University of Texas at Austin with a Bachelor's in Business and Corporate Communications. She is currently pursuing a Master's in Social Work at Columbia. Most notably, her students have received acceptances to Duke, UChicago, UT Austin, and UCLA.



Christine L.

 **Brown University, Oxford**

Christine graduated from Brown with a BA in East Asian Studies and International Relations. She then graduated from Oxford with an MPhil in Modern Chinese Studies. Christine is based out of Seoul, South Korea, and mentors students looking to attend universities in the US and UK.



George B.

 **Harvard, UCL**

George graduated from Harvard with an AB in Sociology and African American Studies. He then completed an MSc in Public Policy with a concentration in LGBTQ+ Health at University College London. Most notably, he has helped students gain acceptances to Harvard, Stanford, Columbia, UPenn, Yale, Cornell, and UChicago.



Natalie S.

 **UC Berkeley, Hong Kong University of Science and Technology**

Natalie received a Bachelor's degree from UC Berkeley and a Master's in Social Science from the Hong Kong University of Science and Technology. Most notably, she has helped students gain admission to schools including UPenn, Cornell, and UChicago.



Pandora L.

 **Cambridge University, University of the Arts London, Royal College of Art, UCL**

Pandora graduated from Cambridge with an MA in History, an MA in Painting from UAL, an Master of Research from RCA, and PGCE from UCL, and is currently completing a PhD at Cambridge in Architecture. Most notably, her students have received acceptances to Cambridge, Oxford, Durham, Imperial, and UCL.



Carolina L.

 **Duke University**

Carol graduated from Duke University with a double major in Psychology and French and a Minor in Education. Most notably, she has helped her students gain acceptances to all Ivy League schools, Stanford, and Duke.



Brenda H.

 **University of Michigan, Cornell**

Brenda graduated from University of Michigan with a double major in Psychology and Economics. She then went on to receive her Master's in Management in Marketing at Cornell University. Brenda's students have received acceptances to Columbia, Dartmouth, Johns Hopkins, UCs, Penn, NYU, and USC.

The Crimson Team

The Crimson team will coordinate and communicate internally to ensure the student is receiving the best, most personalized support possible. Each contributor will help the student with different aspects of the preparation and applications.

For our University Admissions Consulting service, every Crimson student's team features the following:

Strategist



As the leading expert in every student's team, the Crimson Strategist is responsible for developing a personalised strategy that highlights the student's unique strengths, achievements, and goals. Equipped with a deep understanding of university admissions requirements and a proven track record of success, the Crimson Strategist will help the student stand out from the competition and increase their chances of being accepted into the world's top universities.

During formal strategy consulting sessions, the Strategist will:

- Support the student by developing a comprehensive preparation plan for their university admissions, including individual targets and milestones for their academic and personal goals, and a strategic timeline for completing the application process.
- Develop a compelling personal narrative to maximise chances of acceptance.
- Help the student select universities based on their goals, preferences, likelihood of acceptance, and personal narrative.
- Monitor the student's grades and test scores, and ensure extracurricular activities are aligned with the student's passions and aspirations.

Student Success Managers



Students receive ongoing support from the Student Success Team via multiple contact methods to ensure the quality of their program and experience. This includes:

- Ensuring that they are on track to meet all of their admissions milestones and deadlines
- Keeping their parents informed of all key steps and accomplishments
- Monitoring their performance
- Making relevant changes as needed
- Allocating or replacing members of their team
- Responding to requests and inquiries from Crimson parents and students

Application Mentor



The Application Mentor will review the student's profile and help the student prepare for all their Admissions Essays and Interviews during the application year. This includes:

- Brainstorming, planning, and revising the student's university admissions essays to ensure they play a crucial role in the student's application
- Preparing the student for university interviews, providing invaluable advice on how to approach each questions and guide the student through practice interviews.

If the student and their family decides to purchase additional Crimson services, the student can receive guidance from more specific experts, such as an In-Depth Extracurricular & Leadership (ECL) Mentor; Financial Aid and Scholarship Mentor, Academic and Test Tutor, Former Admissions Officer Reviewer, among others.

03.

Advanced Technologies

To meet the standards of our outstanding students, Crimson has developed and improved high-level education technologies that facilitate access to a diverse range of experts and resources from around the world, adapt to individual learning needs, and promote a more inclusive and personalized educational experience.

✓ The Crimson App

The Crimson App is an exclusive learning management system that helps students achieve their admission goals through customized learning plans, progress tracking, and vast resources. Data on student performance is collected and reviewed to ensure informed decision-making.

- **Student-Mentor Matching**

Students are paired with best-fit mentors based on psychometric, expertise, interest, and performance data.

- **Roadmap**

Easily keep track of upcoming tasks and activities, to best optimise your time.

- **Applications**

Manage the school list and track the application process easily.

- **Exclusive Resources**

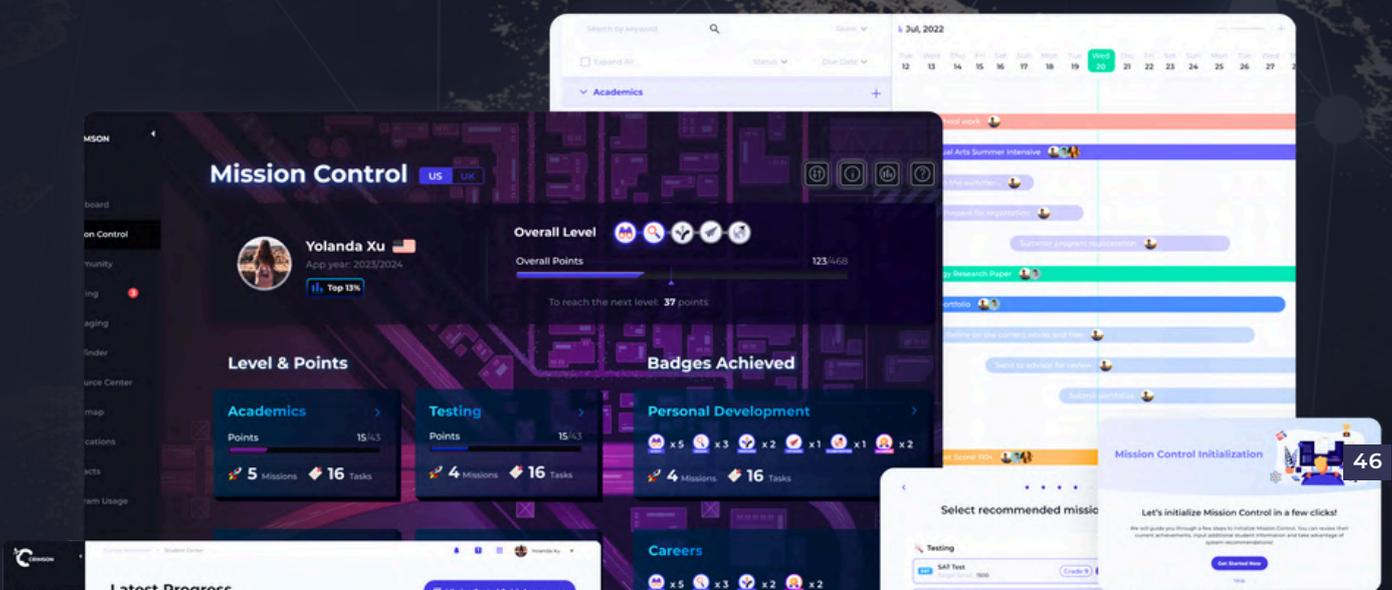
We provide access to exclusive video content and interviews with world-renowned business leaders and entrepreneurs.

✓ Pathfinder

Contained within the Crimson app, Pathfinder is a master list of everything a student can do during high school to increase their chances of admission to top US universities. Pathfinder includes over 280 goals, each with an assigned point value based on how much admissions officers will value that achievement. As students complete goals and accrue points, they move up through 'levels' in Pathfinder, which correlate with increasingly competitive universities.

✓ Launchpad

We offer a unique and engaging community for students from around the world to learn, grow, and connect. Access premium content, including webinars and expert presentations, join groups with students who share your passions, and participate in community events like Crimson Shark Tank and online MUN competitions. Plus, connect directly with Crimson alumni at top schools to find mentors, project partners, and more.



STARTING YOUR JOURNEY WITH CRIMSON

01

Discovering the educational goals

In our free initial consultation with the Academic Advisor, we will get to know the student's interests, goals, and strengths.

While the Academic Advisor is there to understand the student's academic goals and aspirations, the family can ask as many questions as they like in return!

02

Identifying the strengths and weaknesses

Now that we've discussed the student's goals and aspirations, it's time to evaluate the student's odds of admission to their initial preferred university choices.

Based on the student's profile, a personalised program tailored to their individual strengths and weaknesses is built.

Examples:

- ✓ Extracurricular Mentoring
- ✓ Application Strategy
- ✓ Test Prep
- ✓ Essay Prep
- ✓ Best-fit University Selection

YOU
ALONE



YOU
WITH
CRIMSON



04

Success!

It's time to take action! With the Crimson team by the student's side, they can start their journey to acceptance at the best universities in the world!

At Crimson, we don't believe in the adage that 'one size fits all.'

Instead, we design a personalised programme tailored to each student's individual strengths and weaknesses. Every student's journey at Crimson looks unique.

Following the consultation, we will develop a customised Crimson programme for the student, taking into account their academic goals and budget.

Once the student is satisfied with their individually crafted programme, their educational journey begins!



Ready to Get Started?

[Talk to Us](#)