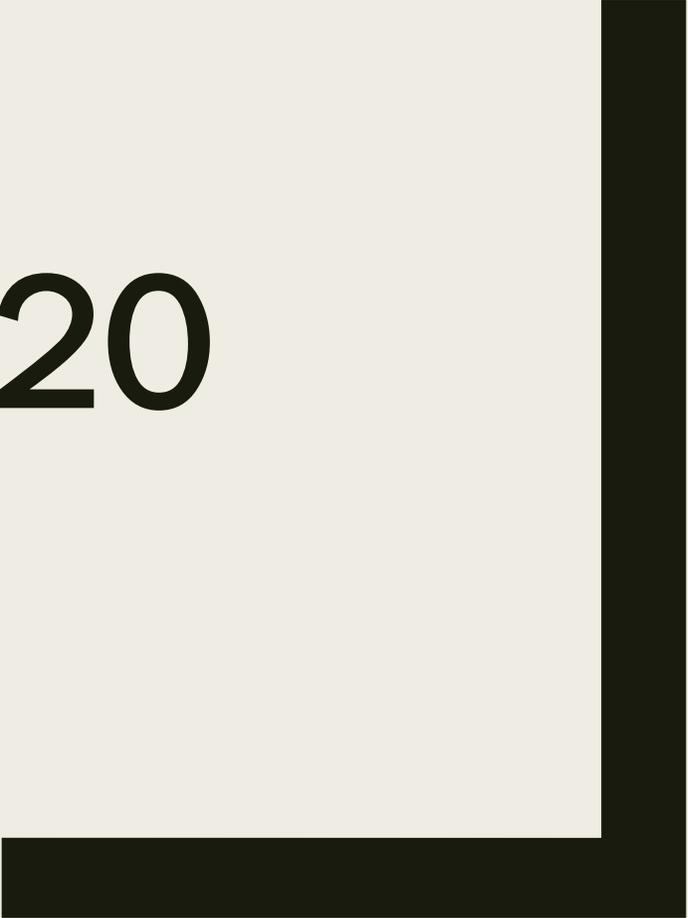




# CLASS OF 2020

SENIOR PARENT MEETING

September 10, 2019



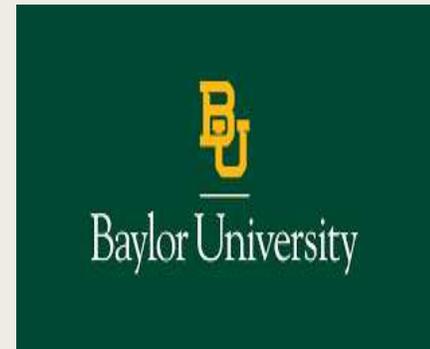
# College Admissions Panel

Rebecca Rother

Froylan Silva

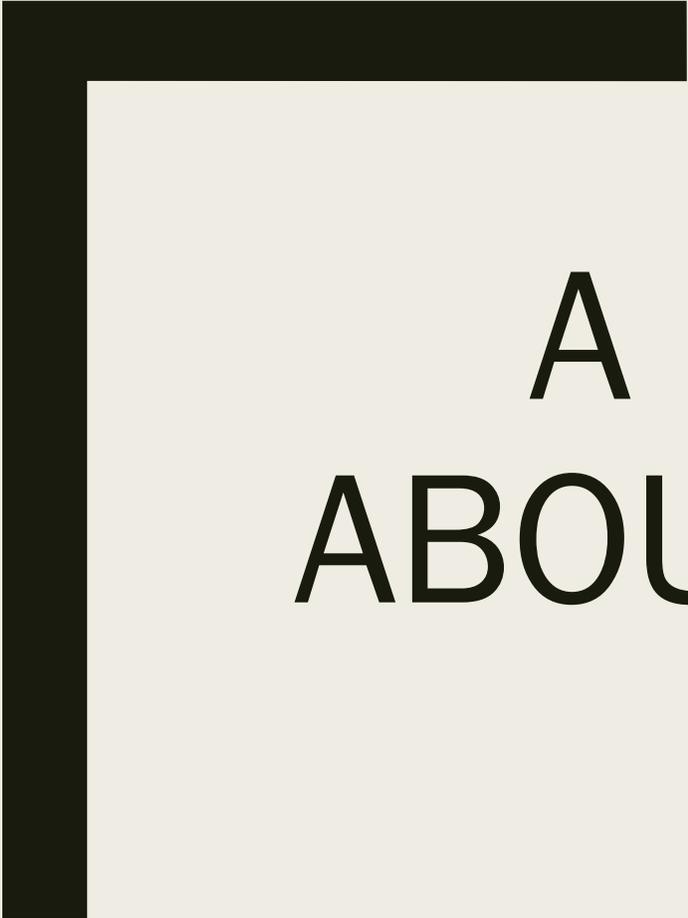


Clairissa Talley



Charlotte Williams





# A FEW WORDS ABOUT GRADUATION

Casey Ryan, Assistant Principal





# PROJECT GRADUATION

2020

MAY 28TH



THE FUTURE IS BRIGHT

[WESTLAKEPG.COM](http://WESTLAKEPG.COM)

# SAVE THE DATE:

WHS Baccalaureate 2020

Sunday, May 24<sup>th</sup> 2020

5:00 – 6:15 PM

Riverbend Centre

Questions? Donations? Volunteer?

[Ardenharkins@gmail.com](mailto:Ardenharkins@gmail.com)

# We are here to help ...

Lisa Saunders (A-B, Will-Z)

Caty Broderick (C-F)

Kristen Williamson (G-J)

Heidi Sauer (K)

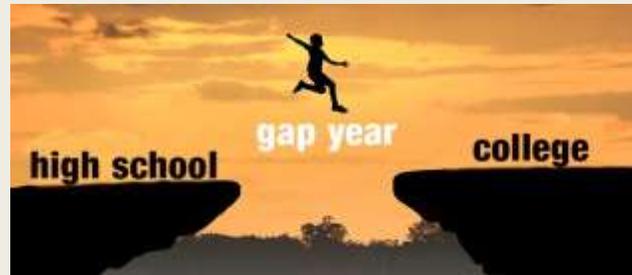
Teri Ochoa (L-M)

Trisha Uhler (N-Sa)

Lisa Arronge (Sb-Wilk)



... whether your student's post-secondary plan is to work, join the military, take a gap year, or go to college.



# The Class of 2019



is attending 155 different colleges

# Breaking Down the Class of 2019

- 61% of students attending college stayed in Texas
- The top states for out-of-state college attendance (10 or more students) are:
  - *Arkansas*
  - *Colorado*
  - *Georgia*
  - *California*
  - *New York*
  - *Massachusetts*
  - *South Carolina*
- Students are attending colleges in 20 states and 5 other countries
- 93 students chose to attend a college that none of their peers are attending

# Breaking Down the Class of 2019

## Top Texas schools

■ UT	358/313/108
■ A&M	297/265/50
■ TCU	87/58/8
■ Baylor	77/58/14
■ TX State	70/58/17
■ Rice	68/11/5
■ SMU	68/44/13
■ Tech	67/63/15

## Top Out-of-State Schools

■ U Arkansas	97/92/27
■ U Georgia	80/47/16
■ Auburn	48/44/3
■ U Michigan	48/5/0
■ UC Boulder	47/38/11
■ USC	47/8/1
■ Stanford	44/3/3
■ Georgia Tech	42/12/1

**applied / accepted / attending**

# TYPES OF COLLEGE APPLICATIONS

Terms you need to know



# Types of Admission Decisions

- **Early Decision (ED)** – students are allowed to apply to ONE school ED; this is a binding commitment
  - *Statistically, a slightly better chance for admission*
- **Restricted Early Action (REA)** – students are allowed to apply to ONE school REA, but it is nonbinding
- **Early Action (EA)** – apply by an earlier deadline (usually late October or early November) and find out earlier whether or not they are admitted
  - *Not offered by all schools, but we encourage this if it's an option*
- **Regular Decision (RD)** – most common option
- **Rolling Admission** – decisions are rendered on a “rolling” basis at regular intervals throughout the year
  - *As soon as your child's application is complete and has been reviewed, he/she can be offered an admissions decision*

**\* Not all colleges offer all decision options; check individual websites for more information \***

# The Online Application – it does not matter which one **your child** uses

- **ApplyTexas** – accepted by all public (and many private) colleges/universities in Texas
  - [www.applytexas.org](http://www.applytexas.org)
- **Common Application** – accepted by more than 800 colleges/universities across the country
  - [www.commonapp.org](http://www.commonapp.org)
- **Coalition Application** – accepted by approximately 140 colleges/universities
  - [www.coalitionforcollegeaccess.org](http://www.coalitionforcollegeaccess.org)
- **Individual college application** – many institutions have their own application. If your child is applying to just one institution, this might be the most practical option.

# STEPS TO COMPLETING YOUR APPLICATION

This is a process, not a race.



# Just the facts

- **Class size:** 702
- GPA is **weighted**
- GPA is calculated on a **100-point scale**
- Westlake is a **non-ranking** high school
  - *State law requires ranking the top 10% for automatic admission*
  - *If your child is ranked, he/she can request a Statement of Rank to be sent to any college(s) he/she chooses*
- ApplyTexas asks students to identify their graduation plan. Most Westlake students will select the first option:
  - *Foundation Program – Distinguished Level of Achievement*
  - *Students who are not sure should see their counselor*

**SIDENOTE: Application deadlines are non-negotiable. So are housing, scholarship, and financial aid deadlines.**

# Sections of the Application

- Biographical Information
- Educational Background & Info
  - *Self-report senior transcript (in some cases) and schedule*
- SAT/ACT information – If your child hasn't taken a test, he/she will list the date he/she will test
- Residency
- Activities/Resume (extracurricular, volunteer, employment, internships, hobbies etc.)
- Essays and/or custom questions or short answers
- FERPA release – applicants have a right to request to read confidential letters of recommendation sent to the college
  - *Students are encouraged to waive this right to assure colleges that they do not plan to make this request and that they trust their recommenders to be candid in their evaluation*
- Fee – if your child receives Free or Reduced Lunch, the application fee might be waived (they should see their counselor for more information)

# A few comments about college essays

- Be sure your child's voice comes through – their essay should sound like him or her
- Essays do not have to be perfect examples of writing
  - *Do need to prove your child's literacy*
  - *Proofread to catch silly mistakes*
- Your child might tell a story or share an insight that cannot be picked up on from their application or resume
  - *Applicants are more than their GPA and test scores*
- It's okay to be creative
- College admissions representatives read thousands of essays a year, so your child should strive to make his/hers memorable

# A few comments about the **resume**

- It should highlight accomplishments and or activities not shown (or elaborated on) in the application
- Be concise; the resume should not be more than two pages – no one has time to read an extended resume
- Be sure to explain activities that might be unique to Westlake
  - *i.e. Pedernales or CUTE Club or Epicosity or Hyline – no one outside Westlake knows what these words mean*
- For ApplyTexas, your child likely will need to mail in the resume (unless the school allows for uploads into a portal once he/she has submitted the application)
- For CommonApp, resumes are uploaded as part of the application
- There is a resume-builder in Naviance if your child need a good place to start (and doesn't have special skills or talents with other creative software)

# What influences admission decisions?

- Transcript: GPA and grades
  - *Did the student challenge himself in subjects of interest and aptitude?*
    - This does NOT mean that all courses should be PreAP and/or AP
  - *Do her electives reflect interests she already has or show that she has been exploring possible interests?*
- Standardized Test Scores (SAT and ACT)
- Resume or list of activities
- Essays
  - *These can reveal the applicant's personality and suggest how he or she might fit in and contribute to the campus culture*
- Overall, they are looking for authenticity – who are you and why do you want to attend their college?
- Recommendation Letters – when they add to something to the application

# Your child has submitted the application: Now What?

- If necessary, send SAT and/or ACT scores to the college(s) applied to
  - *These must come directly from CollegeBoard or ACT (student will need to login to his/her account)*
- Update his/her Naviance account
  - *Move colleges from “Interested In” to “Applying To.”*
  - *Indicate the application being used (CommonApp or Direct to Institution)*
  - *If applying via CommonApp, link the CommonApp account to Naviance*
- **If required**, request letters of recommendation from teachers and/or counselor
- Remind your student to check his/her email and/or account portals for important information from colleges

# Your child has submitted the application: Now What?

- Request that his/her counselor send a transcript by filling out a **Transcript Tracking Sheet**
  - \$5 fee per college
  - Student **MUST** have submitted the application before requesting a transcript
  - No cost if student receives Free or Reduced Lunch (let the counselor know)
  - Look for Mrs. Montgomery!

## WESTLAKE TRANSCRIPT TRACKING SHEET

This form is due at least 2 weeks before the application deadline for your schools. There is a \$5 fee per transcript (there is no fee for students who receive free or reduced lunch). This covers the cost of sending the initial transcript, mid-year transcript (if applicable), and final transcript. By submitting this request, you and your parent consent to have your transcript shared with the colleges listed on this sheet of paper. **In order for transcripts to match up electronically at their destination, students must have completed their application – do not submit a transcript request unless you have already completed your application.**

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

ID # \_\_\_\_\_ Cell Phone # \_\_\_\_\_ Counselor \_\_\_\_\_

Name of College/Scholarship \_\_\_\_\_

City, State \_\_\_\_\_

Application Deadline \_\_\_\_\_

- regular decision     early action     early decision (complete form in CommonApp)  
 CommonApp     ApplyTexas     other online application

Do you need a counselor's letter of recommendation?  YES  NO  
(You and a parent must have completed the Student Form and Parent Form and given it to your counselor)

If you are in the Top 10% of your class, do you want us to send a **Statement of Rank** to this college?  YES  NO

### FOR OFFICE USE ONLY

Method of delivery:  TReX     Mail     Other    Date \_\_\_\_\_    Initials \_\_\_\_\_

# What Westlake sends to colleges

- **Transcript** (once the student has filled out the Transcript Tracking Sheet)
  - *Some colleges (Texas A&M, UC schools, and others) allow students to self-report instead of sending a transcript*
- **Secondary School Report** – this is automatically completed by the counselor as part of eDocs in Naviance
- **Senior Schedule**
  - *If your child changes his/her schedule after submitting college applications, he/she may need to contact the college to report the change.*
  - *Listing the senior schedule on the application is a contract of sorts – they will make an admission decision based on what has been reported (or sent)*
- **School Profile** – a brag sheet explaining the awesomeness and rigor of Westlake
- **Recommendation Letters**

# Teacher Recommendation Letters

- If **required**: colleges typically want letters from teachers of academic subjects (core and language)
- If **optional**: student can usually ask for a letter from a coach, program director, elective teacher, employer, etc – but not from a family member
- Always ask teachers first, in person, and write a “Thank You” note later
  - *Students then invite teacher recommenders through Naviance*
- Students must be specific about which teacher’s letter should be sent to which college(s)
  - *Some colleges only allow a single recommendation letter – so you want it to come from the most relevant teacher*

# Counselor Recommendation Letters

- Check college websites to be sure a counselor letter is required
  - *Typically, counselor letters are not required at public colleges and are at private colleges*
- *If a counselor letter is not required, it is to your student's advantage to get the recommendation from someone who knows him/her better and can add depth to the application.*
- The student should ask his/her counselor, preferably in person, to write the letter and say thank you!
- Student needs to complete the "Student Questionnaire" and you need to complete the "Parent Questionnaire" (found on the Westlake counseling website under Senior Information > [Applying to College](#))
  - *These documents give us excellent information in order to write a richer, more meaningful letter*
  - *Send us the forms electronically*
- Counselors do not start writing a recommendation letter until we receive the Transcript Tracking Sheet , the student questionnaire and the parent questionnaire. This means the student needs to turn in the information at least 10 school days prior to the due date (which also means your child needs to have his/her applications completed at least 10 school days before the due date!)

OTHER STUFF



# Outside Credits

## ■ Correspondence Course online\*

- *Scores must be in the counseling office no later than April 24, 2020.*
- *Students may earn a total of two credits by correspondence.*
- *Students must make a minimum score of 70 in both the course and on the final exam.*

## ■ Credit-by-Exam (CBE)\*

- *Scores **for remediation** must be in the counseling office no later than April 24, 2020.*
- *It is too late to take a CBE for a class that your child has not had before.*

## ■ ACC Dual Credit – they give us a spreadsheet with grades at the end of the college semester

*\* Athletes planning to play at DI or DII colleges may not be able to use correspondence course credit or CBE credit for eligibility. See your counselor if you have questions.*

# College Visits

## ■ College Reps visiting Westlake

- *Students will receive notice in Naviance if the college is in their list of “Colleges I’m Interested In” or “Colleges I’m Applying To”*
- *Important to attend if possible (must communicate with teacher)*

## ■ Visiting a college (seniors are allowed 2 visits between now and May 1<sup>st</sup>)

- *Download a **College Visit Form** or have your student pick it up in the Attendance Office – get signatures from teachers and a parent*
- *You student will return this form to the Attendance Office and trade it for a **College Visit Verification Form***
  - *While you student is on the visit, he/she will get this verification form signed*
  - *When back at Westlake, he/she will give the form to Ms. Sanders in the Attendance Office (this is the proof of attendance so the absence can be coded as College Visit, which does not count against final exam exemptions)*

# Hills of Austin College Fair

Weird day: it's our first early release day and school gets out at 1:15.

Seniors will attend the college fair in the Chap Court and Courtyard from 9:40 to 10:10 (the last part of 2<sup>nd</sup> period and first part of 3<sup>rd</sup> period).

This is an excellent opportunity for students to ask questions of reps and make a positive impression: many of them will be first readers of the college application.



# Perspective for a Stressful Process

- Finding the right fit is what matters
  - *Geographical location*
  - *Public, private*
  - *School size, class size*
  - *Extracurricular options*
  - *Special Services*
  - *Available majors/programs*
- Don't draw comparisons to older children or to same-age peers
- For many students, college will be as much about self-discovery as about education

# Perspective for a Stressful Process

- It's okay not to declare a major – many colleges welcome students who apply “undecided,” or “undeclared,” or “exploratory” (varied terminology)
  - *80% of college students change majors at least once*
  - *On average students change their major three times*
  - *Only about 27% of college undergrads are working in fields that match their major*
- Many careers require advanced degrees, so this is just the first step
- It might be worth considering cost – maybe in-state for a bachelor's degree and out-of-state for an advanced degree, for example

# QUESTIONS?

**You can find a lot of information on our website at**  
**<http://westlakecounseling.weebly.com/>**

**Counselors are here to help!**