



How to Help Your Student Start the College Search

Presented by Linda Dowley,
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Goal of this program:

- Provide information to parents...because knowledge is power!
- We do NOT want families to be stressed by the college process.
- The more families know, the less anxiety and the more empowered they will be!
 - We all see the world through a prism of our experiences and knowledge to date. This is true for parents AND students. And often they don't know what they don't know!
 - Be strategic about the process and understand that it has evolved since you were in school.
 - Be engaged in the process and educate yourself – but do NOT take over!
 - Enjoy the process! Support your child and watch them grow and mature!

What makes a “good” college?

- **Depends what the student is looking for!**
- What is a great place for one student might be purgatory to another.
- **Talk to your student** and evaluate their interests, aptitudes and priorities. LJHS counselors have been presenting in 9th and 10th grade classes showing tools such as interest profile surveys in Naviance.
- Keep an open mind and don't just look at schools you have heard of...consider Liberal Arts colleges, out-of-state public and private schools even schools over seas or in Canada.
- Start with a large number of schools and narrow down and focus to create a list by senior year.

Starting the conversation – great questions to ask your student:

- **Why do you want to go to college?** To be a: journalist, doctor, engineer. Or maybe I'm not sure why, which can spark more of a conversation.
- **What do you want to learn more about?** Maybe they don't know what they want for a career but know subjects they enjoy. Less intimidating than “what do you want to major in?”
- **How have you done your best learning?** When were you excited – particular subject? Great teacher? Extended discussions? Competitions? Group projects? Individual research?

More great questions:

- **How hard to you want to work academically?** Not a trick question! Both in terms of high school rigor and college choices. Do you want to be a big fish in a small pond? A top student academically or with the pack.
- **Do you want to be in a place similar** to where you currently live or very different? Same for student population?
- **What is your family's budget?** This should really be near the top – but don't discount a colleges based on its "sticker price" without researching your EFC and the college's Net Price.

Resource to help you start: www.ljhscollegeinfo.com

← → ↻ 🔒 https://www.ljhscollegeinfo.com ☆ ☆ 🌐 👤 ⋮

Home About Where to Start? Year by Year Applying To College Financial Aid Information More...

LJHS Website

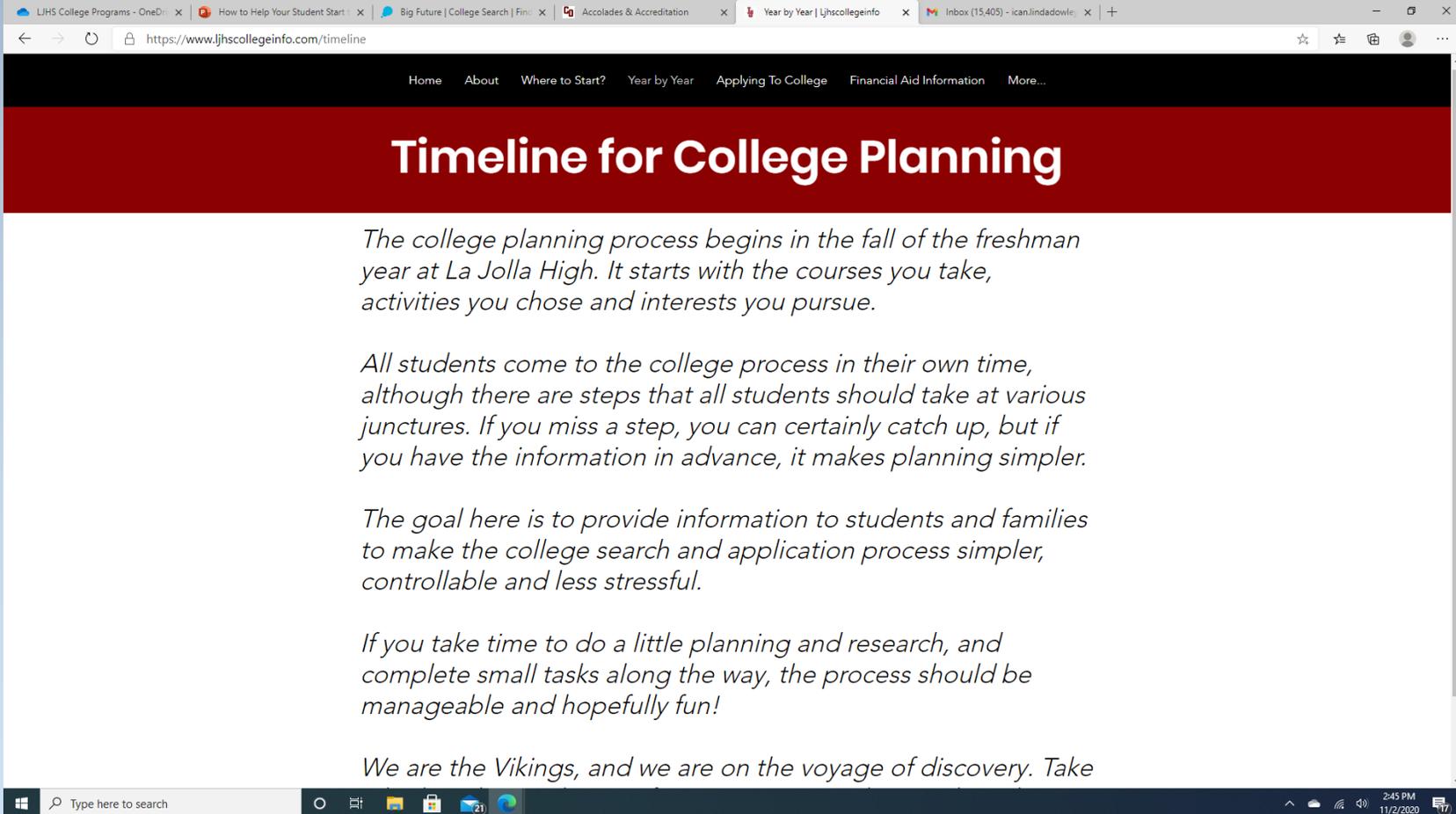
La Jolla High School College Information

IMPORTANT INFO:

- It is Fall and Financial aid forms are live and can be filled out now and submitted. Go to the Financial Aid pages to learn more and get started!
- Senior students and parents - please fill out your Parent and Student Input Survey on Naviance ASAP! Counselors can't write your letters of recommendation without them.
- Juniors and Seniors - College representatives visit LJHS, virtually! Check the schedule and register on Naviance ASAP.

10th grade info 11th grade info 12th grade info

Helpful timelines and step by step guidance:



The screenshot shows a web browser window with the URL <https://www.ljhscollegeinfo.com/timeline>. The browser's address bar and tabs are visible at the top. The website's navigation menu includes links for Home, About, Where to Start?, Year by Year, Applying To College, Financial Aid Information, and More... The main heading of the page is "Timeline for College Planning" in white text on a dark red background. Below the heading, there are four paragraphs of text in italics, providing guidance on the college planning process. The Windows taskbar is visible at the bottom of the screen, showing the search bar and system tray.

Home About Where to Start? Year by Year Applying To College Financial Aid Information More...

Timeline for College Planning

The college planning process begins in the fall of the freshman year at La Jolla High. It starts with the courses you take, activities you chose and interests you pursue.

All students come to the college process in their own time, although there are steps that all students should take at various junctures. If you miss a step, you can certainly catch up, but if you have the information in advance, it makes planning simpler.

The goal here is to provide information to students and families to make the college search and application process simpler, controllable and less stressful.

If you take time to do a little planning and research, and complete small tasks along the way, the process should be manageable and hopefully fun!

We are the Vikings, and we are on the voyage of discovery. Take

College Entrance Requirements:

SDUSD Course Requirements -

- Students who graduate with a "C" average from high school in our district will meet basic course requirements for UC and CSU schools.
- These course requirements mirror requirements for all colleges across the country.
- Meeting basic requirements does not guarantee admission. Grades and class rigor are the most important factors in college admissability. Keep in mind, if a student has a particular interest or goal, choice of classes should reflect that.

Additional College requirements:

- Extracurriculars – colleges want to know how you spend your time outside of the classroom. Do what YOU love, not what you think a college wants to see.
- Standardized testing – SAT/ACT - mostly suspended in time of COVID. See next slide...

Some things have changed due to COVID – particularly the role of testing...

- With the inability to safely administer SAT or ACT tests, over 1,650 colleges in the US are test-optional this season. Check out the National Center for Fair and Open Testing for a list: www.fairtest.org.
- Some schools are piloting test-optional policies for a single year, some for several years and some permanently. Check the college's website and the website for the National Association for College Admissions Counseling www.nacacnet.org.
- Students used to take the PSAT in the fall of junior year. In the past several years, our district has paid for 10th graders to take it as well. There will be an announcement later this month with information whether the test will be offered this year.
- Juniors can take a practice of each (SAT and ACT) to see which they "prefer" so that when testing is available (after January? Or in the spring?), they will know which test to prepare for...

Highly selective schools:

- College Rankings are bunk but sadly we are (as a society) obsessed with “big name” or “sweatshirt” schools.
- The “Ivy League” is an athletic league – like the Pac12 or SEC. The schools are very different from one another. A student who applies to all 8 just because of the name/reputation hasn’t done their research.
- There are highly selective colleges including large public universities and privates of every size. But if you think that “college is SO hard to get into”, think again. There are only 58 schools which admit fewer than 25% of applicants (when you subtract service academies and specialized schools such as Julliard). **That means only 1.57% of colleges admit fewer than 25% of applicants.** And those highly selective schools offer NO merit financial aid! A student who can be admitted could get generous financial offers elsewhere.

SO Many Options!

- There are over 3,600 four-year colleges and universities in the US
- Additional terrific options in Canada and in Europe
- Approximately 70% of colleges admit 70% of those who apply
- Many colleges are anxious for California students (dozens of out of state reps come to LJHS and RACC partners for programs)
- Don't limit your search to selective or highly selective schools! Think about the benefits of being a big fish in a small pond.
- **We all think our children are outstanding, but help them build a balanced list of schools and look outside of those you are familiar with!**

Types of students, types of schools

- Liberal Arts Colleges, and Colleges That Change Lives (www.ctcl.org)
- Schools for students with learning differences and programs within schools such as SALT at University of Arizona
- Religious colleges – Jesuit, Presbyterian, Methodist...research how much (if any) religious rigor is part of the curriculum or campus life to be sure the campus culture aligns with your student
- Special interests: visual or performing arts require portfolios or auditions. Know the timeline and requirements.
- Athletes – learn about the recruiting process. Have your student talk to their current coach. More information on the NCAA Eligibility Center's website: <https://web3.ncaa.org/ecwr3/>
- Military Academies or ROTC – have student talk to their counselor early. Early summer programs are important as well as recommendations.

https://bigfuture.collegeboard.org/college-search

CollegeBoard BigFuture Sign In Search

Get Started Find Colleges Explore Careers Pay for College Get In

Home / Find Colleges / College Search

College Search

Save Selections Clear All Selections

SELECT FILTERS

- Test Scores & Selectivity
- Type of School
- Location
- Campus & Housing
- Majors & Learning Environment
- Sports & Activities
- Academic Credit
- Paying
- Additional Support Programs

You have 3,691 college options. Choose a category on the left to find the right ones for you. We'll help along the way.

Not sure where to start? Go to College Search Step-by-Step an interactive guide.

How do you search through all these college choices?

Start with Naviance. Another good search tool is Big Future from College Board which has a great "College Search" feature. Use the filters along the left-hand side to mark your priorities from "must have" to "don't care".

Decide your priorities (through "Filters") then results are revealed!

The screenshot shows the BigFuture College Search interface. The main heading is "College Search" with "78 results" displayed. A sidebar on the left lists various filter categories: "Test Scores & Selectivity", "Type of School", "Location", "Campus & Housing", "Majors & Learning Environment", "Sports & Activities", "Academic Credit", "Paying", and "Additional Support Programs". A modal window titled "Test Scores & Selectivity" is open, allowing users to refine their search. It includes a "Test Scores" section with dropdown menus for SAT Math, SAT Evidence Based Reading & Writing, and ACT Composite, all currently set to "No Preference". There is a checkbox for "Include colleges that don't report SAT and/or ACT scores" which is checked. The "Selectivity" section offers radio button options for admission selectivity: "Open admission (all or most admitted)", "Less selective (>75% admitted)", "Somewhat selective (50-75% admitted)", "Very selective (25-50% admitted)", and "Most selective (<25% admitted)", with the last option selected. A tip on the right states: "TIP: You're more than your numbers. Admission offices look for well-rounded students with unique things to offer the college community." The browser's address bar shows the URL "https://bigfuture.collegeboard.org/college-search". The Windows taskbar at the bottom indicates the time is 1:49 PM on 11/2/2020.

Understanding College Costs

- *College costs have risen dramatically with many schools having sticker prices of \$75K per year (and Columbia University is currently \$87,000/year)!**
- *However, 89% of freshman do not pay full “sticker” price.**
- *Research college costs and financial aid as part of your college search. Use tools to estimate your Expected Family Contribution and use College Data to find generous schools.**



It is so important to be informed about costs! Educate yourself about financial aid...



Financial aid info in one place...

The screenshot shows a web browser window with the URL <https://www.jhscollegeinfo.com/copy-of-where-to-start>. The page has a dark red header with the text "Financial Aid Information" in white. Below the header, there is a navigation menu with links: Home, About, Where to Start?, Year by Year, Applying To College, Financial Aid Information, and More... The main content area is white and contains the following text:

Financial Aid is the term for getting help paying for college. This help can come from the federal government, state government, the college itself (also called institutional aid), or private scholarships.

Financial aid comes in two forms: need-based aid and merit aid.

- Need-based aid** is provided when the federal government, state government and/or college have determined that a family has a need for financial assistance in order for the student to attend college (based on information they receive on your financial aid forms – FAFSA and CSS Profile). Unfortunately, financial need is not based on what a family thinks they can or cannot afford to pay!
- Merit aid** is provided by the college to students identified as having a special talent or academic merit (ex: high grades, recruited athlete). Used to woo students.

[Helpful Websites for Financial Aid and Paying for College:](#)

Federal Financial Aid:
<https://studentaid.gov/>

Consumer Finance Protection Bureau:
<https://https://www.consumerfinance.gov/paying-for-college//>

Finaid:
<https://finaid.org/>

The browser's taskbar at the bottom shows the Windows logo, a search bar with "Type here to search", and the system tray with the date and time "5:17 PM 11/2/2020".

Expected Family Contribution

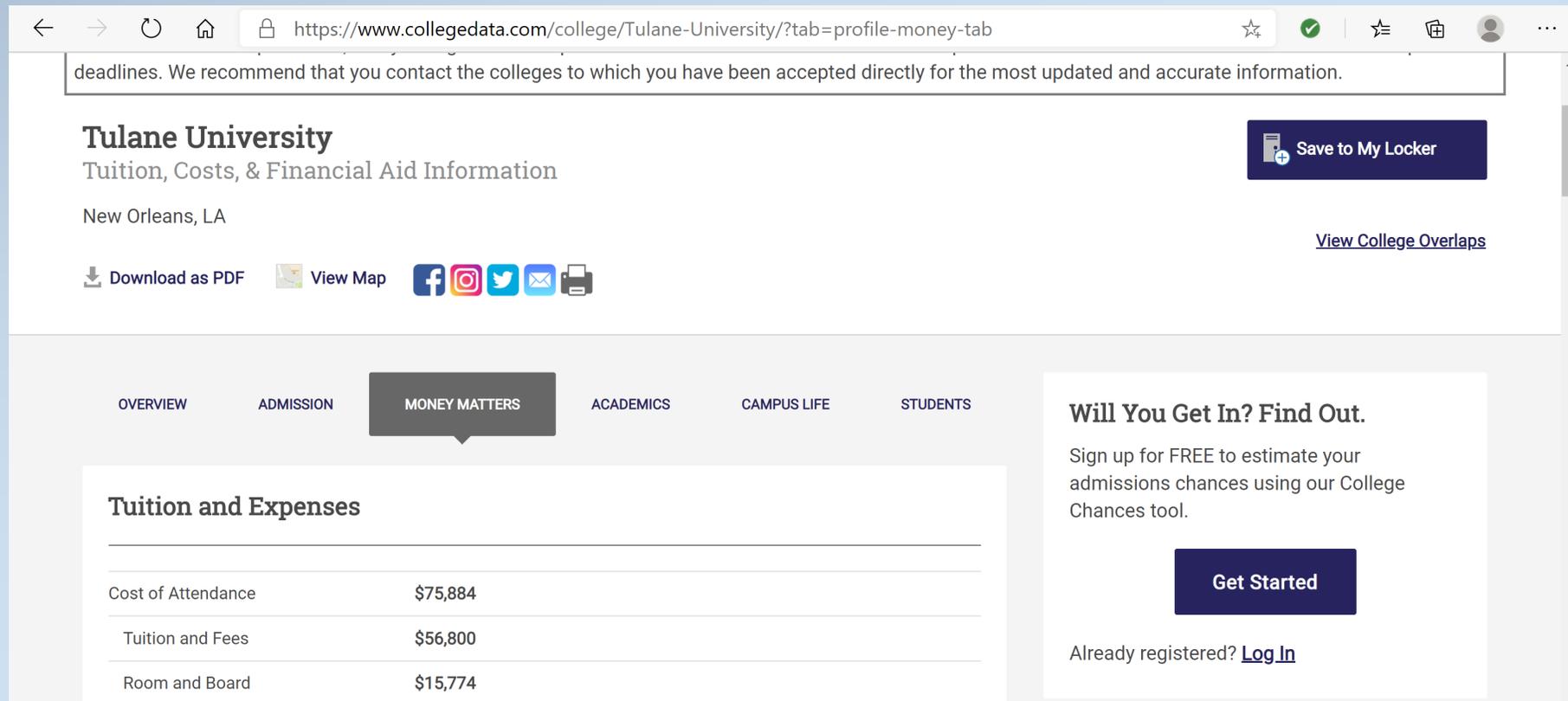
- Amount the Federal Government feels you can afford to pay for a year of college as determined by the information you submit on the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA – the form required by colleges to determine financial need).
- You can estimate your EFC. Visit:
<https://studentaid.ed.gov/sa/fafsa/estimate>
- If you have a high EFC, you should look for schools which offer generous merit aid. If you have a low EFC, you will be in line for need-based aid (and possibly merit aid as well).
- One school of thought suggests that families begin the college search with their EFC and using Net Price Calculators.

Net Price Calculator

- Colleges are required by the government to have an NPC on their websites, although you might have to search for it.
- What is it? “Net price calculators are available on a college’s or university’s website and allow prospective students to enter information about themselves to find out what students like them paid to attend the institution in the previous year, after taking grants and scholarship aid into account.”
- US Department of Education has a site to help you find your school’s NPC: <https://collegecost.ed.gov/net-price>
- Families should take the time to complete NPC for their student's schools of interest to get a better idea of what they might actually pay (as opposed to the college's quoted "sticker price" - full cost of attendance).

College Data – Search for Financially Generous schools

- Find schools which offer a large amount of non-need-based aid (i.e. gift aid or merit scholarships).



The screenshot shows a web browser displaying the profile for Tulane University on the College Data website. The URL is <https://www.collegedata.com/college/Tulane-University/?tab=profile-money-tab>. The page title is "Tulane University" with the subtitle "Tuition, Costs, & Financial Aid Information". The location is "New Orleans, LA". There are social media icons for Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and Email, along with a "Download as PDF" button and a "View Map" button. A "Save to My Locker" button is also present. The navigation menu includes "OVERVIEW", "ADMISSION", "MONEY MATTERS" (which is highlighted), "ACADEMICS", "CAMPUS LIFE", and "STUDENTS". The "Tuition and Expenses" section is visible, showing a table with the following data:

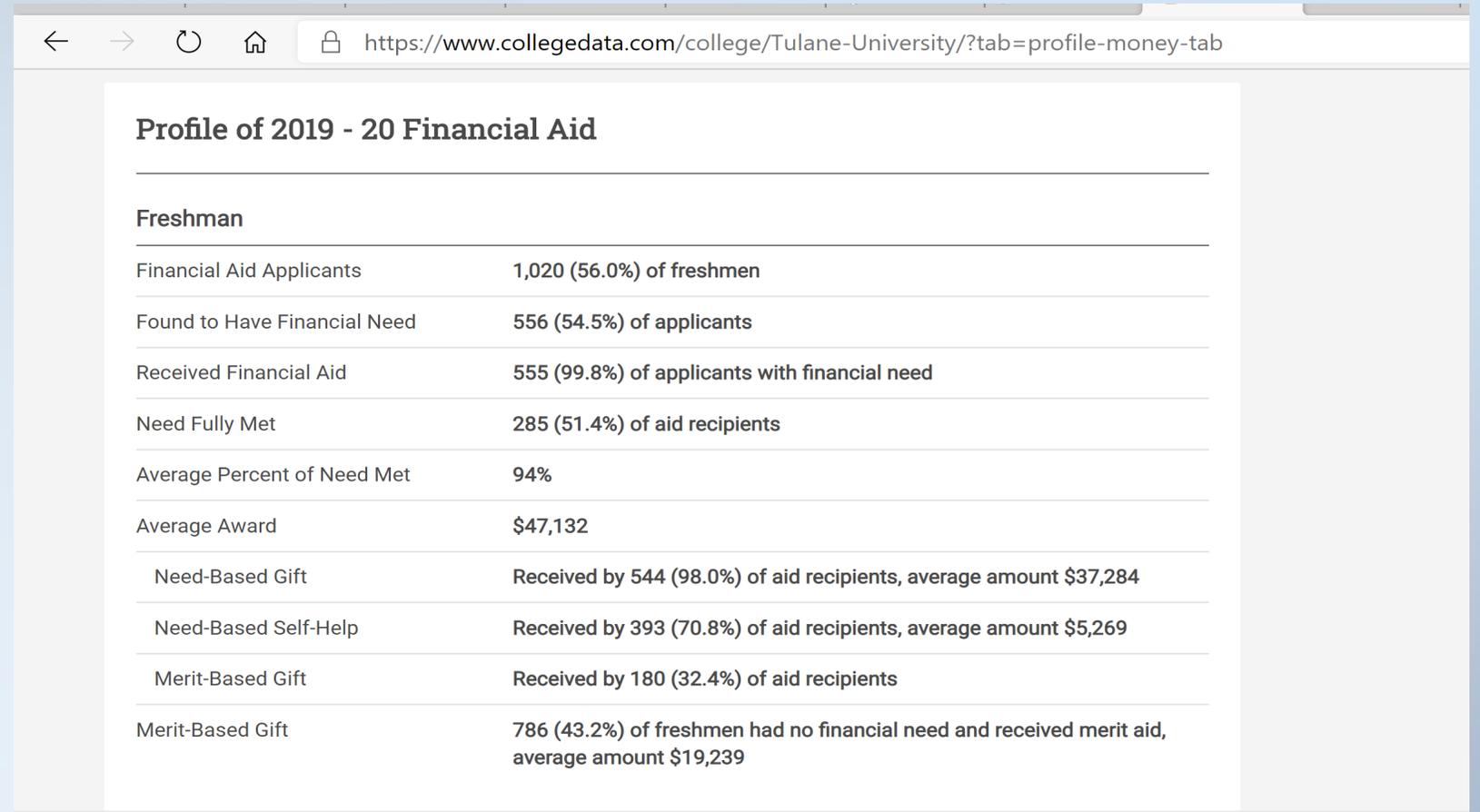
Tuition and Expenses	
Cost of Attendance	\$75,884
Tuition and Fees	\$56,800
Room and Board	\$15,774

On the right side of the page, there is a promotional box titled "Will You Get In? Find Out." with the text "Sign up for FREE to estimate your admissions chances using our College Chances tool." and a "Get Started" button. Below this, it says "Already registered? [Log In](#)".

Looking for Non-need-based aid:

Bottom row – Merit-Based Gift Aid...

Best way to qualify for merit aid is to be in the top 25% of a school's student profile.



← → ↻ 🏠 🔒 <https://www.collegedata.com/college/Tulane-University/?tab=profile-money-tab>

Profile of 2019 - 20 Financial Aid

Freshman

Financial Aid Applicants	1,020 (56.0%) of freshmen
Found to Have Financial Need	556 (54.5%) of applicants
Received Financial Aid	555 (99.8%) of applicants with financial need
Need Fully Met	285 (51.4%) of aid recipients
Average Percent of Need Met	94%
Average Award	\$47,132
Need-Based Gift	Received by 544 (98.0%) of aid recipients, average amount \$37,284
Need-Based Self-Help	Received by 393 (70.8%) of aid recipients, average amount \$5,269
Merit-Based Gift	Received by 180 (32.4%) of aid recipients
Merit-Based Gift	786 (43.2%) of freshmen had no financial need and received merit aid, average amount \$19,239

Western Undergraduate Exchange Scholarship

- Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education – <https://www.wiche.edu/wue>
- Public schools – not every school, not every major
- Usually automatically considered for a scholarship – no extra application, but check schools' websites to be sure.



Community College – a great place to start

- Least expensive option for higher education
- Can make highly selective schools accessible
- Transfer Admission Guarantee (TAG) program still in effect at six UC campuses (not UCLA, Cal or UCSD)
- Must work hard and achieve at a CCC – have a plan. Meet with an academic advisor and transfer coordinator
- California Community Colleges also offer a wide range of Associate's degrees, Professional Certificates and Career Education programs.

Importance of Visiting Colleges

- Hopefully, visiting colleges will soon be possible and safe. When it is, please visit schools whenever you go on vacation.
- Take a day trip to Orange County or LA to visit schools (Chapman, Redlands, Occidental, Claremont colleges, UC Irvine, Riverside, UCLA, LMU, USC...)
- If not able to travel visit local schools to get an idea of different types of colleges:
 - San Diego State University
 - University of California, San Diego
 - University of San Diego
 - Point Loma Nazarene

Demonstrating interest...

- Colleges want to know students are interested!
- Join a college's email list to receive information. (First, students, have an appropriate email address and check it at least weekly!)
- If going on a tour, sign up in advance and attend the information session too.
- Follow schools of interest on social media.
- Identify our regional representative for your colleges of interest and reach out with questions. Attend info sessions at LJHS if possible.

Important Tips -

- Don't let your student fall in love with one college. There should and will be many places where they will be happy and thrive.
- Don't tell your student "apply wherever you want and we'll figure out how to pay for it" unless you have unlimited resources. And recognize that if your student can be admitted to a top school which offers no merit aid, they could doubtless get generous offers at other, less selective schools.
- Realize that Community Colleges offer a cost effective and accessible path to selective four-year colleges.
- Explain to your student that their GPA is their most important asset, so it is important to do their best.

Things to look for in college snapshots...

- **Graduation rate** – preferably 4-or-5-year, realizing that some programs (architecture) often require 5 years as do schools which offer co-op or internship programs (Drexel, Northeastern).
- **Freshman retention rate** – are students happy and supported? If so, they will return.
- **School's Mission Statement** – important that it aligns with your student's goals.
- **Schools' lists of majors** – especially if your student has a specific interest. Understand dual-degree (3+2) year programs – often Engineering (Emory+Georgia Tech, Tulane - Physics + Vanderbilt or Johns Hopkins – Engineering).
- **COVID Response** - Research how your colleges of interest have responded to the pandemic and what steps they have taken to support their students (or not).

Things to think about:

- **Long-term goals.** If grad school is in the picture, don't break the bank on the undergrad education.
- Similarly, looking at **grad school** (med school, for example) have students research where med school students have done their undergraduate work and what it takes to get into med school (like undergraduate mentorship and research opportunities).
- When students have a **career interest**, have them research what it takes (just u/g degree, or master's or higher?) to be successful, and where those successful in the field have gone to school. They might be interested to learn that Apple and Google hire more grads from San Jose State than from Berkeley, UCLA or MIT.
- And will students be “weeded out” of a major early? Tends to happen at large, public schools with organic chemistry or various engineering or math classes. Or will they have access to classes if computer science is their interest? **What majors are impacted?**

An unscientific study - #unbranded

- Difficult to get a real sense of what is important to students and how they are influenced by a college's name
- At an event summer before last, colleges obscured their name and students talked to reps in a college-fair type setting.
- Without knowing the school name, students were more receptive to information.
- Small sampling but interesting results, with students admitting they gave more serious consideration to what they were looking for in a college.



Important (and helpful) Books:

Where You Go is Not Who You'll Be: An Antidote to the College Admissions Mania by Frank Bruni

Who Gets In and Why by Jeffrey Selingo

David and Goliath: Underdogs, Misfits and the Art of Battling Giants by Malcolm Gladwell

The Truth About College Admissions: A Family Guide to Getting In and Staying Together by Brennan Barnard and Rick Clark

College Essay Essentials by Ethan Sawyer

The Fiske Guide to Colleges by Edward Fiske

Informative Web Resources and Blogs:

- **College Navigator**
<https://nces.ed.gov/collegenavigator/>
- **National Center for Data Statistics -**
<https://nces.ed.gov/ipeds/use-the-data>
- **College Data** <https://www.collegedata.com/>
- **The College Solution**
www.thecollegesolution.com
- **DIY College Rankings**
www.diycollegerankings.com
- **College Scorecard**
<https://collegescorecard.ed.gov>
- **Georgia Tech Admissions Blog -**
<https://sites.gatech.edu/admission-blog/>
- **Tulane Admissions Blog -**
<http://tuadmissionjeff.blogspot.com/>
- **Grown and Flown -**
<https://grownandflown.com/>
- **Road2College -**
<https://www.road2college.com/>
- **Facebook pages** – LJHS College Info; Paying for College 101

Please take advantage of all resources at LJHS!

- Dedicated College Website: www.ljhscollegeinfo.com
- Weekly eNews column “College Corner” - good for parents of younger students to check out to know what is on the horizon.
- LJHS Facebook page – LJHS College Info – articles on all aspects of college are posted.
- LJHS Counselors! They meet with students, and offer information sessions for students.
- Naviance begins freshman year with specific tasks (interest surveys, resume building, college research) but becomes essential senior year during college application season.
- LJHS website – under “Counseling” – both “College Information” and “Financial Aid for College”



Thank you for
attending!