

COLLEGE CORNER

Avoid Common Mistakes When Applying To College

(NAPSA)—Applying to a college or university can be one of life's most important and stressful times. To help smooth the application process for students and their families, J. Leon Washington, dean of admissions and financial aid at Lehigh University, offers the following advice:

- **Start Early**—Give yourself ample time to get through the college selection and application process. A great time to begin is spring of your junior year of high school, although some students start sooner. Make a short list of colleges where you plan to apply and take time to visit each college to determine the right fit for you. Ideally, start early enough to allow yourself time to reflect on the application and put your best foot forward.

- **Check Application for Accuracy and Completeness**—Common errors such as typos or incomplete information can make or break your opportunity. Before you submit your application, be sure to review it carefully. Don't depend solely on spell-check—be sure you proofread the application to avoid careless mistakes. Many colleges offer an online checklist for students to check the status of their application and ensure that all required items have been submitted. Take charge of the process and actively keep track of your application.

- **Keep Copies of What You Submit**—Even in this technologically connected world, items can get misplaced. If you apply to eight



Don't let an avoidable mistake, such as missing a deadline, keep you from getting into the college of your dreams.

schools, you should have copies of all eight applications. In addition, with the increase of online applications, be sure you get a confirmation of your submission. This way, if a college or university says that they did not receive your application, you can resend proof.

- **Be Aware of Deadlines**—What are the deadlines for early decision vs. regular decision? What are the deadlines for applying for financial aid? Meeting deadlines is so critical that you should consider submitting your application days or even weeks before the due date. Ultimately, being organized can make the difference between your application being seriously considered or not.

Most importantly, be sure to take time to enjoy the process. "Amidst all the hype, drama and angst of today's world of college admissions, it's critical to remember to take a deep breath and have fun," said Washington.