

# COLLEGE CORNER

## The College Application: Take The Time To Do It Right

(NAPSA)—Students are learning that the college application is a key opportunity to make a lasting impression on the people who count: those at the college admissions office. To improve your chances of gaining admission to the college or university of your choice, it's important to do your homework and take the time to make your college application stand out from the rest.

"A college application is your chance to shine," says Martha Holler, spokesperson for Sallie Mae, the nation's leading saving-and-paying-for-college company. "Schools look at a variety of factors when deciding on their incoming freshman class, so students need to present themselves on paper in the very best light—that means making sure the application is complete, error free, signed and meets the school's deadline for submission."

Crafting a successful application involves careful planning and organization. To make the most of the college application process, Sallie Mae offers the following tips for students and families:

- **Do your homework:** Organization is a must. Once you've done the research on where you think you want to attend college, confirm the application deadlines for each school. Creating a master calendar is helpful, so that you can check off various tasks as they're completed. Depending on your college selection, you may be able to submit one application to multiple schools. Nearly 300 colleges and universities accept the Common Application form. To see if your school is one of them, go to [www.commonapp.org](http://www.commonapp.org).



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- **Read the application carefully:** Check the deadline requirements for each school, and leave extra time to get forms and transcripts, obtain letters of recommendation and write essays.

- **Take plenty of time for the essay portion of an application:** The essay questions on a college application are specifically designed to help admissions officers understand a student's motivations, creativity and personality. That's why it is important to start writing the essays as early as possible.

- **Check for spelling and punctuation:** Proofread your application carefully—even ask family members or friends to help. Also, double-check the answers you've provided on the application and make sure each section has been completed in its entirety. Lastly, make copies of everything before sending the application package to the school.

"The college application is a critical step in the higher education journey," says Holler. "With a little organization and careful planning, students can ensure they are putting their best foot forward and that their college application is a winning one."