

Editorials



Student Scientist, An All American

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Original peer-reviewed and published research is an important aspect for those involved in the scientific community. For a high school student to have original research in a professionally reviewed publication is the equivalent to being an All American athlete.

Colleges and universities are seeking out “the best and the brightest”. Much of the world today emphasizes math and science, and those students who are doing original research and have this research published are one of “the best and the brightest” and therefore extremely desirable. Subsequently, it is understandable why colleges would be interested in students who can boast of being published in a reviewed publication.

College admissions officers are seeking students with a strong academic background and great leadership skills, who are problem solvers and good communicators. The schools look for those who have been involved in extracurricular activities, community service or other areas that contribute to both the outside community and the college. Students who are involved in scientific research exhibit these characteristics. They are writers who can communicate the results of their experimentation and research. They show consistency, perseverance, and a desire to contribute.

When a student is applying to schools any research and publication information should be conveyed on the college application. There are several places where this can be done. It may be included in the area for extracurricular activities. The guidance counselor and/or the teacher can also reference this accomplishment in the letters of recommendation. It may also be possible to talk about the publication of the research in college essays.

A student, who has published a research paper and been involved in experimental research in their high school career, should be able to choose one of the prompts on the Common Application and showcase their accomplishment. Other schools, which do not utilize the Common Application, should have a prompt or a secondary essay which will give the student an opportunity to write about their scientific prowess.

Another way to bring attention to your application and emphasize your interest in science is to look for colleges that are doing research similar or related to your field of research. You may want to contact professors whose work you have read and referenced when doing your own original research. If you do contact a professor whose work is of interest to you, you might want to include a copy of your published journal article for his or her perusal. Staying in touch with the university admissions office and making them aware of your interest in their school and its research, is certainly another way of staying in the mix and improving your chances of acceptance at that college.

Students who are published are “the best and brightest” and usually stand out from the crowd. Unfortunately, admission to college is not always what we think it should be. There are no guarantees of acceptance to a particular college, but being a published researcher will not hurt. A student who has been involved in research, experimentation, and publishing of the research in a reviewed publication has much to give to any college.

Remember that grades are important even if you have been accepted at a particular school. Colleges have been known to withdraw acceptances and college scholarships because a student has not maintained their grade point average. Senior year is not a time when you want to lose focus on the ultimate goal of the college admissions process, attending the college of your choice.