**News From Guidance**

**March/April 2014**

**College Information Boot Camp for Junior Students** –

The Diocesan school counselors are putting together a college information boot camp for juniors which will take place on March 25th at Catholic Central High School. Local area colleges will present information to all the juniors throughout the Diocese of Albany at this event. Sessions will include: 1) writing the college essay 2) finding the right college 3) NCAA eligibility and criteria 4) interviewing skills 5) what to do while on a campus visit. These sessions will conclude with a panel discussion with representatives from 2yr/4yr public/private institutions of higher education. We will be sending home permission slips to be signed and returned to their homeroom teacher. This is a wonderful and informative opportunity for our students and we are thankful to the numerous college representatives who will be sharing their time and knowledge.

**Junior Parent (College Information Session)** – There will be a college information session for parents with a presentation by guidance to discuss what to expect senior year (Naviance, college application process, common app, letters of recommendation and any additional questions you may have). **SAVE THE DATE: April 1st at 6:00 pm** - you will also receive a letter in the mail with more detailed information. Please make every effort to attend this meeting as it has proven to be valuable to parents as the college search / application submission process continuously changes.

**College Financial Aid:** (seniors)

Please fill out the FAFSA form ([http://www.fafsa.ed.gov](http://www.fafsa.ed.gov)) to be considered for college financial aid. Forms are available January 1st 2014. FAFSA on the Web edits your application before you transmit; ensuring that the data you transmit to the U.S. Department of Education is ready to be processed.

**College Acceptances:** (seniors)

Please have your son or daughter bring in their acceptance letters and scholarship letters to guidance. We will make a copy and return the original. We want to make sure that the students are recognized for their accomplishments. This includes ALL acceptances, not just acceptance letters to the college he or she will be attending.

**2014 Spring College Fair:** (freshman – seniors)

Begin the college selection process! The College Fair is an opportunity to speak with representatives from over 160 colleges and universities. There will be public and private, four-year and two year, large and small, liberal arts and vocational colleges represented as well as the military. Also represented will be a number of institutions presenting financial options. This program will be held at Hudson Valley Community College on Wednesday **April 30th from 6 – 8pm**. Admission is free, visit [www.cdcany.org](http://www.cdcany.org) or check with guidance for more information.
**SAT:** (juniors)
All juniors are advised to take the SAT the end of their junior year and the beginning of their senior year. Taking the SAT late in your junior year will allow you to have more exposure to the difficult level of math questions and critical reading/writing before you take the SAT. The next testing date for the SAT is May 3rd. In order to meet the registration deadlines for that testing date, students must go to www.collegeboard.com and register by April 4th. The SAT is offered here at ND-BG in November only, so students can take the test at our school in their senior year.

**College Financial Aid:** (juniors)
**High school juniors** can take advantage of our FAFSA4caster Web site and learn about the financial aid process, gain early awareness of aid eligibility, and much more at http://www.fafsa4caster.ed.gov/ or www.hesc.ny.gov

**Naviance -Family Connection:** (freshman - juniors)
The Junior Class has now been registered on Naviance and a brief tutorial has been given by the guidance department and Mr. Harrigan with greater detail to follow as the year continues.

Family Connection - a service designed especially for students and families. Family Connection is a comprehensive website that you and your child can use to help in making plans about courses, colleges, and careers. Family Connection is linked with Naviance™, a service that we use in our office to track and analyze data about college and career plans, so it provides up-to-date information that’s specific to our school.

Family Connection will allow your student to:

- **Get involved in the planning and advising process** – Build a resume, complete online surveys, and manage timelines and deadlines for making decisions about colleges and careers
- **Research colleges** – Compare GPA, standardized test scores, and other statistics to actual historical data from our school for students who have applied and been admitted in the past
- **Research careers** – Research hundreds of careers and career clusters, and take career assessments like the Do What You Are® test.
- **Create plans for the future** – Build course plans, create goals and to-dos, and complete tasks assigned to you by the school to better prepare yourself for your future college and career goals.

Family Connection also lets us share information with you and your student about upcoming meetings and events, local scholarship opportunities, and other resources for college and career information.

Mr. Honsinger is available after school (at least) once a week to work exclusively with students on Naviance and help them navigate their career or college goals.
**Summer Programs:** (freshman, sophomore, juniors)
Please visit the following link for a list of colleges that offer summer opportunities [http://www.summeroncampus.com/main/ActivityList.asp](http://www.summeroncampus.com/main/ActivityList.asp). Also, the summer leading into senior year is a great time to visit college campuses (at least 3) to get a feel of where you might be comfortable in the future. Senior year moves quickly and it is nice to get a foundation before the school year begins. If your son or daughter has a certain career field in mind, try to set up an internship or a day to job shadow, these are great ways to find out if it would be the right career field for them.

**AP Exams:** (juniors, seniors)
The AP Exams will be taking place Monday, May 5th through Friday, May 16th 2014. We will be sending home a letter regarding payment for the AP exams – please make sure you adhere to the payment deadlines noted in the letter.

**Foreign Exchange Program:**
Over the past few years, Notre Dame – Bishop Gibbons has partnered with the World Exchange Program (www.wep-usa.org) to house students from other countries and provide them with the unique experiences offered by our culture and school community.

Thousands of families welcome their new WEP sons or daughters each year. Why should YOU consider hosting?

- Discover a new world and culture through the personality of an international student.
- Gain a deeper understanding of a lifestyle and way of thinking different from yours.
- Enrich your family's life by ‘traveling’ the world from the comfort of your own home.
- Establish long lasting friendships.
- Share your country, culture and traditions.
- See your student master his/her English, while working on your own foreign language skills.
- Promote mutual understanding and respect by sharing your daily life with a young person from overseas.
- Re-discover the beauty of your own country.
- Make a difference for your family, your student, your neighbourhood and your country!

If you think you may be interested in this life-changing experience, please contact Mr. Honsinger at 518-393-3131 x115 or honsinger@nd-bg.org for more information.