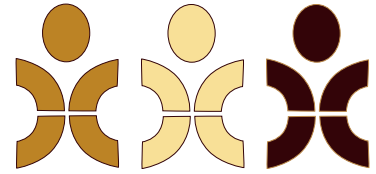




Im-PACT-ing News



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Editor: Violeta Borowski

FAFSA REMINDER

January 1st is the first day to submit your '10-'11 FAFSA. The deadline is **March 2nd**, but it is strongly advised that you submit your application **ASAP!**

PRESIDENT OBAMA AS PACT'S COLLEGE GUIDANCE COUNSELOR-IN-CHIEF

*By: Everett Brandon, J.D.
PACT President & Co-Founder*

Among his many laurels, President Obama has been named the college Guidance Counselor-in-Chief, primarily because of his aggressively supporting college-going and providing an increase to America's higher education system of over \$30 billion.

When addressing Congress on February 24, 2009, the President said, "Whatever the training may be, every American will need to get more than a high school diploma, and dropping out of high school is no longer an option. It's not just quitting on yourself, it's quitting on your country." PACT, Inc. (Plan of Action for Challenging Times/or Pathway to Academic and College Transformation) has always shared this sentiment, has long been an instrument for this change through the Federal TRiO Programs and has been providing college guidance counseling for over 44 years. We have played a crucial role in providing college counseling and guidance services to over 40,000 economically and educationally disadvantaged students.

(Cont'd on page 2)

Joanna Bustamante: QuestBridge Scholar

This fall, PACT student Joanna Bustamante was selected as a finalist for the QuestBridge National College Match, a program designed to assist high-achieving, low-income high school seniors obtain admission, and full 4-year scholarships, to some of the nation's Ivy League colleges. Last year alone, partner colleges with QuestBridge offered more than \$100 million in financial aid to over 1,000 students. Soon to be a Lowell High School graduate, Joanna has applied to a myriad of universities, among them: Stanford, Columbia, Brown, University of Pennsylvania, North-



western University and Rice University. In addition, she has applied to the Students Rising Above scholarship, aimed toward exceptional students who have proven to overcome obstacles during their lives.

Angie Holbrook and Shane Maldonado, PACT Educational Advisors, worked diligently with Joanna in filling out the extensive QuestBridge application. According to Ms. Holbrook, "Joanna is a good candidate for this scholarship because she is so dedicated to success. She was able to juggle her tough school schedule with all of the work involved for the QuestBridge National

(Cont'd on page 4)

(Obama cont'd from page 1)

PACT provides individual counseling, educational workshops, interest and aptitude assessment tests, family meetings, college tours and fairs, financial aid workshops, information on postsecondary education and mentoring programs, information on financial assistance, assistance in preparation for college entrance exams, tutorial services and a number of other related services.

Under the Educational Talent Search Program, one of seven TRiO programs, PACT's highly experienced, creative and dedicated staff of 7 College Guidance Counselors is currently servicing 12 high schools in San Francisco, 2 high schools in Vallejo, and 1 in Richmond. In collaboration with school officials, we are currently servicing approximately 3,000 students annually by using our unique knowledge and professional experience to help underserved students gain acceptance to a college of their choice.

Under the leadership of our Tutorial Program Coordinator, the PACT tutorial program employs 10 part-time tutors who provide tutoring services at 2 middle schools in San Francisco and 1 in Vallejo.

As school districts try to make ends meet in these times of economic retrenchments, our counselors are an even more important part of the entire high school experience for underserved students. In accordance with the President, advising them on which classes to take, and how to prepare for their academic and career future, is a cornerstone of what we do. In addition, early intervention by our counselors is of immeasurable importance to students from educationally and economically disadvantaged backgrounds. This is necessary to prepare them for the rigorous coursework and college readiness skills needed to successfully graduate from high school and meet the

various college entrance requirements.

To this end, PACT seeks to increase its capacity to provide services and expand financial assistance programs to a larger number of students. We have a number of programs that we will be announcing, but in the meantime, we are seeking financial support to help build capacity, provide financial scholarships and ensure our sustainability. Thus, we are looking for grants, endowments, gifts, bequeaths, contributions and public donations to do so. We thank you in advance for your help. If you would like to provide support for our educational non-profit, please contact us at [\(415\) 922-2550](tel:4159222550), or make checks payable to:

PACT, Inc.
635 Divisadero Street
San Francisco, CA 94117

Have you, or someone you know, received assistance from PACT prior to 2004? If so, we would like to invite you to join our mailing list. Simply e-mail your first and last name, along with an e-mail address to: info@pactinc.org

Art & Wine at PACT



"It's now important for students to be exposed to the arts more than ever. We need to help young people understand that creative expression and higher education provide the way toward a vibrant, expansive, meaningful life. It was a wonderful opportunity to support PACT, Inc. at the fall Art Walk!"

-Sarah Pedlow

On the evening of Thursday, September 3rd, PACT welcomed neighbors, friends and community members into their San Francisco office for the PACT Art and Wine event. This event, organized by Rachel Ross, PACT Administrative Assistant, was held in collaboration with the quarterly Divisadero Art Walk, which takes place on the Divisadero

Street corridor displaying the artwork from members of the local community. Sarah Pedlow (www.sarahpedlow.com) and Corey Scott provided photography, while David Cook, PACT advisor, had his paintings on display. Along with their artistic displays, donations and raffle items helped PACT successfully raise over \$300 for the PACT Scholarship Fund.

We would like to thank our supporters and donors of this event, which include: Dee Vine Wines, Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco, Funky Door Yoga, City Lights Bookshop, Blue Bottle Coffee, Nopalito and William Ross, who provided food items. Thank you for your assistance in making this event a success.



CALLING ALL SFUSD SENIORS!

MAISIN SCHOLAR AWARD

DUE: MARCH 5, 2010

Do you have a 2.0 GPA or higher? The Maisin Scholar Award is intended to support at least 1 student from each SFUSD high school, by awarding them \$1,500 per year, for up to 4 years while attending a university. Last year, 25 PACT students won this amazing award! For more information, visit www.maisinscholars.org. Completed applications must be submitted to:



Maisin Scholar Award
c/o San Francisco School Alliance
114 Sansome Street, Suite 800
San Francisco, CA 94104

MERITUS COLLEGE FUND

DUE FEBRUARY 5, 2010

Meritus Scholarship Fund provides 50 scholarships, annually, to SFUSD seniors who face significant financial need and, in spite of difficult circumstances, achieve a GPA of 3.0 to 3.7. Awards are paid over 4 years, for a total of \$12,000. For more information about the online application process, visit www.meritusfund.org.

NEED MONEY 4 COLLEGE?

Log on to these great websites for thousands of resources!

---> www.fastweb.com

---> www.collegeboard.com

1. Click on "For Students"
2. Select "Pay for College"
3. Get started on your scholarship search!

STUDENT RESOURCES

IMPORTANT TEST DATES

SAT Test Dates 2009-2010

**\$23.00 Late registration fee*

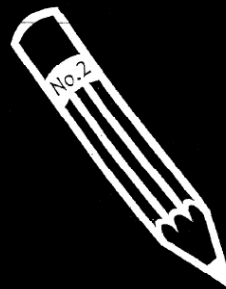
Test Date	Deadline	Late Deadline*
Jan. 23	Dec. 23	Dec. 30
Mar. 13	Feb. 4	Feb. 18
May 1	Mar. 25	Apr. 8
June 5	Apr. 29	May 13

ACT Test Dates 2009-2010

** \$21.00 Late registration fee*

Test Date	Deadline	Late Deadline*
Feb. 6	Jan. 5	Jan. 15
Apr. 10	Mar. 5	Mar. 19
June 12	May 7	May 21

In the past, all you needed was a Number 2 pencil...



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the internet's first source
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SAT and ACT test prep

(Joanna cont'd from page 1)

College Match on very short deadlines, not to mention the hard work she put in her previous years in high school. She also has a very positive attitude, which will help her succeed not only in college, but further on in her life.”

PACT had the opportunity to gain a more in-depth look into Joanna’s goals and aspirations. Here is what she had to say:

What academic subjects are you considering majoring in?

I would like to major in Biology or Anthropology, maybe even both. I have always been curious about the world that surrounds us. Science is a tremendous tool to better both human life and the environment and to explore and learn more about our earth and beyond. Anthropology interests me because I have always been fascinated with learning about the past and with the development of our human civilization over time.

How were you informed of the QuestBridge Scholarship?

I discovered the QuestBridge Scholarship two years ago while doing my own research for scholarships on the Internet.

Where do you see yourself upon graduating from college?

I see myself working for the Peace Corps.

What difficulties have you had to overcome while attending high school?

I come from a low-income family. Despite being financially disadvantaged, I am motivated to work hard both in and outside of school. I have taken advantage of the resources and opportunities around me, and I have learned to be optimistic for the future ahead. My mother has helped me overcome these challenges through her support. She has always encouraged me to do my best and has been proud of me regardless of success or failure. My mother has faced so many obstacles in life but has overcome them. For this reason, I see her as a role model. Seeing her strength has inspired me to find strength within myself when I face my own challenges in life.

How have our advisors at PACT supported you?

PACT has been so supportive of me during the college application process, which can be a very stressful time for many high school students. Whenever I have questions, they are there to answer them. They have helped me edit my personal statement and fill out the Common Application, taught me how to send my transcripts, and advised me on which SAT II subject test scores to submit. These are just a few of the many items with which PACT has helped me. I highly recommend PACT to other students. The advisors truly care about their students and they are there every

step of the way to support you. They are not just a great college resource, but they are great people. The college application and scholarship process would have



been a difficult struggle without their help. I am extremely thankful to PACT for what they have

helped me accomplish with regard to the college application process these past two years!

What advice would you share with other students with regard to scholarships?

When applying to scholarships, try to get started on them as soon as possible and avoid procrastination. Look over each section of the application and know these sections well, being careful to note all requirements. Developing good relationships with teachers and your counselors is also very important. Good communication with teachers and counselors is key. Give your teachers and counselors enough time to complete their recommendations and other documents. Remember that they will be busy writing recommendations for other students as well.

To find out more about opportunities available from QuestBridge, please visit www.questbridge.org.

Q & A: RAYNARD CAYETANO, TUTORIAL PROGRAM COORDINATOR

What highlights has the program experienced since the beginning of this school year?

This year, we have helped James Lick middle school with field trips to UC Berkeley and SF State. All 7th graders attended UC Berkeley and 6th graders visited SF State. Valerie Robinson, Assistant Tutorial Program Coordinator, took part in Willie L. Brown’s Thanksgiving Feast on November 24th. She helped serve all of Willie Brown’s students with plates of food. It was a great success as there was a huge turnout and students enjoyed the feast.

What is one of your main goals this year?

Each year, over 450 students are served through our tutorial program. One of our main goals for this year is to develop a deeper connection with the students that we are servicing under PACT. We are not just tutors, but mentors as well, who create a positive change in the lives of the students we help. We want to especially promote college-drive and college-going students. As Tutorial Program Coordinator, I want to capitalize on the momentum and success of last year.



CONGRATULATIONS!

Bonnie Blankenship, PACT educational advisor at Richmond High School, held a raffle during student orientation at the start of the school year. Students who completed an intake form in a timely manner, received a raffle ticket. Prizes included a PACT USB flash drive and a PACT book bag. Here are the winners according to grade:

9th: Romelia Loaiza & Luis Barrier

11th: Luis Ricardo Ansala & Cesar Martinez

10th: Ricky Carr & Erica Ramas

12th: Marvin Click & Marleni Morales

It sure pays off to manage your assignments promptly. Again, congratulations and keep up the good work!

What's Happening at Our Vallejo Office?

The staff at Vallejo is in full swing this year! Along with assisting students with college applications and conducting financial aid presentations, students had the opportunity to tour San Francisco State and CSU East Bay universities on October 15th.

Meanwhile, Diedre Carter, Assistant Tutorial Coordinator, continues to conduct her weekly Homework Club on Wednesdays for Solano Middle School students in addition to their daily in-class tutoring sessions. In past years, the Homework Club was held at the Vallejo PACT office, considering that Wednesdays are minimum days for students. However,

this year, Diedre has been able to secure a spot at Solano, where students convene in the library, or designated classroom, to obtain one-on-one assistance with homework.

In addition, Sharon Arvie, Educational Advisor, has created a Rewards Incentive Program (RIP) at Jesse Bethel High School for 9th grade students. RIP was developed to help advance students successfully from one grade level to the next, while preparing them for college. One main goal of the program is to decrease the number of D and F grades among students to help avoid the possibility of this becoming a recurring

pattern throughout high school, which would then leave students off-track from meeting the A thru G requirements needed to apply to colleges. Meeting every Thursday, subject discussions include scholarships, college exploration, SAT tests, and career exploration, with assignments such as seeking scholarships geared toward 9th graders. Future activities will include campus visits and guest speakers. Gift cards will be awarded to the top 5 students who earn a high GPA, receive C's or better, and refrain from any suspensions or referrals. Way to go PACT staff!

University Campus Visits

"I would recommend it to a friend because it's a great experience and you learn a lot." -Tatiana Menjivar

"It gives you a new perspective on college and a sense of what colleges are like." -Yubing Jiang

"All of the PACT advisors were great, very warm and friendly!" -Denisha Mason

On Tuesday, October 27, our students had the opportunity to tour and take part in information sessions at two private universities, Santa Clara University and Saint Mary's College, located in Santa Clara and Moraga California. College students responded to any questions our high school students had. "During the tour, the students were very excited that Santa Clara has a very high-tech library, which includes a robot that finds your book for you from your request on a computer inside the library," said Angie Holbrook, PACT Educational Advisor.

Santa Clara, whose academic calendar is based on the quarter system, is

comprised of over 8,700 undergraduate and graduate students, allowing for an average class size of 25. Tuition fees at Santa Clara, for the 2008-09 school year, were \$34,950 for undergraduates. Saint Mary's on the other hand boasts just over 3,800 students, with an average class size of 20 students. With approximately 57% of full-time undergraduates receiving financial aid, the average freshman financial aid package is \$29,754. Although both universities have ties with the Roman Catholic Church, students of all backgrounds and religious practices are welcome to apply. It is important that prospective students understand that religious affiliation is not a determining

factor during the enrollment process. For more information on either campus, please visit:

www.stmarys-ca.edu and www.scu.edu.



WHAT IS FAST WEB ?

FastWeb is a FREE national scholarship search engine, which has been around for over 15 years. It is available to all students, whether you are a high school student or a parent returning to college. Over 16,000 high schools and at least 3,600 colleges recommend FastWeb.

So how does it work? Current or potential college students can sign up online at www.fastweb.com, free of charge, by providing information such as high school attended, intended major, age, grade level, and so forth. Parents may also register their child themselves for this service. Once your information is in the FastWeb database, an account is created for you, giving you a list of scholarships for which you may be eligible. Scholarships may then be viewed by due date, GPA requirements, etc.

Still wondering how this may help you? FastWeb contains approximately 1.3 million scholarships, worth over \$3 billion. In addition, you will find a plethora of information to guide students through the college application process, finding an internship or job, up to date news on financial aid, among many other topics. Please make sure to take advantage of this free informational resource. It could save you thousands in college fees!



Don't know what to do with all those extra pennies? PACT is holding a penny drive to raise funds for the PACT Scholarship Fund. Donations can be dropped off or mailed to the San Francisco PACT office (see box on the right for address). Pennies are also being accepted at most of our advisors' school sites. For more information, please call: 415-922-2550.

If you would like to help support PACT, Inc.'s student services, please make a check payable to PACT, Inc. of San Francisco and mail to:

PACT, Inc.
635 Divisadero St.
San Francisco, CA 94117

Or, feel free to visit our website at:
<http://www.pactinc.org/> and click on the
“**Donate Now**” button located at the bottom
of the home page.

PENNY DRIVE



Promoting community empowerment by increasing access to higher education since 1965.



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