



College Prep Program at APL

Our 11th Summer!

**Do you dream of going to college,
but don't know what to do?**



Don't be scared, be prepared!

**Apply to colleges • Write winning essays • Find money • Learn
about STEM careers • Visit colleges • Learn study skills • Get
mentoring • Work on yourself • Have fun!**

Apply online @ trailblaze.org

In partnership with JHU/APL STEM office and Preparation Meets Opportunity Foundation
All volunteer staff! \$50 program fee (waivers available)

**2019
Edition**

Questions? Please contact us at info@collegeprepprogram.org



2019 College Prep Program Application Packet

The College Prep Program at APL (CPP) will help you prepare for success in college. You will learn how to pay for college, develop a school list, fill out applications, practice for the SAT test, learn study skills, and have lots of fun. Nearly all of our program graduates are on track to earning college degrees!

*We will discuss different Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) careers, and you will hear about the paths that engineers and scientists took to become successful from mentors and guest speakers. We will also visit area colleges! Please fill out the application and return it no later than **April 8th (postmark)**. **This is our 11th program session!!!***

College Prep is a partnership between the Johns Hopkins University Applied Physics Laboratory STEM Program Office and the Preparation Meets Opportunity Foundation. Our program is completely volunteer-powered! We are excited to meet you and help you achieve your dreams.

Program Information

ALL current high school sophomores and juniors (members of 2020 and 2021 graduating class) are eligible and invited to submit an application to be part of the College Prep Program. We especially encourage applications from **trailblazing** students who are the first in their families to attend a four-year college, students from low-income backgrounds, students who are underrepresented in STEM fields, students interested in STEM careers, and/or students in need of mentoring or advice about the college application process.

We are often asked for tips on how to be a successful applicant. Although our review process is holistic, we look primarily at the following areas: evidence of academic achievement and potential (not necessarily straight-As!), dedication and passion for future dreams, a willingness to work hard and make the most of this opportunity, and demonstrated need. We're especially looking for students who need help taking their next steps in applying for and succeeding in a top 4-year college. But there are no fixed requirements, and students are invited to define "need" as it applies to their situation.

Classes will be held every Saturday **from 8:45am-5:30pm, beginning June 1st and ending August 17th, 2019** at the Johns Hopkins University Applied Physics Laboratory, Laurel, MD. All CPP classes, including the award ceremony, are mandatory. Missed class material cannot be made up, and missing classes may result in program dismissal.

Attending College Prep has been one of the greatest opportunities ever presented to me.
-Travis, CPP2011

Over the past 10 years, we have found that students who have the best attendance, attitude, and willingness to work hard are very successful in the program. These students are currently pursuing their dreams at top universities...you can do it too! ☺

This is the best decision I ever made.

-Rachel,
CPP2012

The program requires significant work outside of class to fully prepare for college. Students are expected to prioritize College Prep if accepted and are strongly discouraged from participating in other activities with significant requirements (such as a full-time job or summer school) to allow enough time to succeed in this program. Students should expect to **spend an average of 4-6 hours per night during the week** during the program, with less during the school year and more in the summer.

Program Cost

Free to apply. Please DO NOT include a check with the application.

\$50 per student to register IF admitted. If you cannot afford this fee, we will waive it for you upon request and give you a full scholarship!

Program Dates

- April 8th: Completed applications due (postmark or online submission – plan ahead)
- April 20th: Finalist interview notification date
- April 27th-28th: Interviews for students **and parents** (required)!
- May 15th: Acceptance/rejection notifications sent to students via email
- June 1st: First class and first parent workshop
- August 17th: Program award ceremony and last class
- *There will be three parent workshops (during class) and 2-3 mandatory weekday trips*
- Recommended (not required) workshops will be held periodically through the fall

Announcements

- **We recommend using our online application this year. If you use the paper version you MUST email us at: info@trailblaze.org to register your application or it will not be reviewed.**
- This year, all program finalists will be required to come to an in-person interview.
- Parents/guardians are also required to be briefly interviewed as part of the process.
- Applications must be mailed (not emailed, not dropped off in person).
- Do not send your application via registered mail (certified mail is ok, but not required!) Registered mail is often delayed, which may result in you missing the review cycle.

Please visit us at trailblaze.org for more information and to apply.

We hope that you choose to apply! This is our 10th summer - we are a fun bunch and this program will be an experience that you will never forget. Good luck! 😊



Please submit your completed application materials to:

College Prep Program at APL

c/o William Gray-Roncal
JHU Applied Physics Laboratory
11100 Johns Hopkins Road
Mailstop – MP2 (ISC)
Laurel, Maryland 20723

Paper Application Checklist:

- Application form (or online submission)*
- Counselor information form*
- Essays (or online submission)*
- High School Transcript*
- Grade Report for Current Year*
- Register app after mailing (if using paper form)*

We recommend using our online application instead of this paper version!!

Paper and online applications will be considered equally!!

Do NOT send money – there is no application fee! Interview decisions will be EMAILED to you!

CPP Frequently Asked Questions

Please read the following before emailing us questions. This document answers most of the questions that are asked each year. If your question isn't answered, please write to info@collegeprepprogram.org. We do not have an office phone number to respond to questions, but we will promptly respond to any inquiries that you may have.

Due Dates and Application Submission:

- *Q: I heard about the program late or had another conflict that prevented me from turning in my form by the deadline. Can I still apply?*
 - A: We prioritize applications that are postmarked by the due date. We will consider late applications received by the late deadline **after on-time applications, if space is still available**. If you have a special circumstance, please email to ask for an extension prior to submitting the application. Because of our program deadlines, no extensions beyond the late deadline can be offered.
- *Q: Can I apply for the program by fax or email?*
 - A: Due to the information required on this year's application, all applicants must mail their paperwork. Please make sure that enough postage is affixed - you may need two or more stamps.
- *Q: Is the application deadline a postmark or received-by deadline?*
 - A: The regular deadline is a postmark deadline. The late deadline is a received by deadline.
- *Q: When will I hear if I have been accepted into the program?*
 - A: We will notify you as soon as the review process is complete. If you have not received a response 1 month before the program starts, please email us.
- *Q: Should I send in my check for \$50 with my application?*
 - A: **No! Please do not send in payment prior to program acceptance. This causes us an administrative problem. Any checks received will be securely shredded upon receipt.** The fee is NOT an application fee and is only charged for students who enroll in the course. This fee helps us to offset program costs. It is not charged to students who are eligible for the free and reduced lunch program.

Program Eligibility:

- *Q: Am I eligible for the program?*
 - All rising high school junior and senior students are eligible and are invited to be a part of our program. We especially encourage students who may need extra help preparing for college to apply, such as those students who are first in their families to attend college, those with limited financial resources, or those who would benefit from mentoring and extra encouragement. We also encourage those students who are interested in Science, Technology, Engineering and Math careers to apply. Students from all high schools, ethnicities, genders, and backgrounds are welcome!
- *Q: What if my GPA is "low"?*
 - A: All students will be considered for the program, taking into account their individual strengths and weaknesses. Our average unweighted GPA is a 3.5, with a historical range of 2.8 – 4.0. We encourage you to apply, explain the reasons for your grades and how you plan to improve.
- *Q: What if I cannot make all of the program sessions?*
 - A: We have a limited number of slots and will give preference to students who can commit to all of the sessions. If you are unable to make all of the classes, you will still be considered for admission – please indicate your reason for missing class on the application. Students who miss more than one program session may be dismissed from the program.
- *Q: I am a freshman, can I still apply?*

- A: No. Our current program is targeted toward rising juniors and seniors. We thank you for your interest and invite you to reach out if you have any questions! Keep your GPA up! It's critical! And apply next year.
- *Q: What if I do not have transportation for the program?*
 - A: Unfortunately, we have limited resources and are unable to offer transportation to the program. We encourage you to explore public transportation and carpooling options with other applicants (please indicate the student you would carpool with on your form). If you are unable to arrange transportation, we won't be able to accept you into the program.
- *Q: Can I fill out the application for my son/daughter?*
 - A: No. Applications must be completed by the student.
- *Q: Is there a limit to the number of students who are chosen for the program?*
 - A: Due to limited space and resources, we are only able to accept approximately 15 of the excellent students who apply each summer. We hope to expand the program in the future. Small class sizes help us to mentor and fully support each student.
- *Q: Do I need to submit proof of my eligibility for free/reduced lunch?*
 - We ask that you provide some documentation of your choosing. A signed statement from the school counselor (see Counselor Reporting Form) is sufficient.
- *Q: I currently do not get free/reduced lunch. How do I know if I am eligible?*
 - A: Check with your counselor. You may also visit the following website:
<http://www.fns.usda.gov/cnd/Governance/notices/iegs/IEGs.htm>.
 Please use the latest year's table. For 2013-2014, the corrected table is here:
http://www.fns.usda.gov/cnd/Governance/notices/iegs/IEG_Table-032913.pdf
- *Q: I live in _____. Can I still apply?*
 - A: Yes, as long as you have transportation and can make all program sessions!

Essay:

- *Q: Do I really have to write the essay?*
 - A: The essay is a required part of the application. A good essay can greatly improve your chances of being accepted into CPP.
- *Q: What should I write about?*
 - A: Please write about who you are, what is important to you, why you would benefit from the program, and plans for your future. The details are left to you.
- *Q: How long should my essay be?*
 - A: Your essay should be approximately 250-500 words in length. Remember that we use this to help us understand who you are and best evaluate your application. Also, this is the place to explain any special circumstances or unusual information about your application.

Transcript/Grades/Counselor Form:

- *Q: Do I really have to send in a transcript?*
 - A: It is required that you provide your transcript and your latest grade report. Additionally we need your GPA. This information should be provided by a school counselor or your guidance office, using the included form.
- *Q: What if I can't get a transcript?*
 - A: Transcripts can be obtained from your guidance office or school counselor. Unofficial copies are fine. This is a required part of the application. If you absolutely can't obtain one, please email us with a brief explanation. We will help you find a way to send us the information we need to evaluate your application.
- *Q: Why do you need grade reports?*
 - A: We require documentation of all of your recorded high school grades. This helps students who have made improvements during this academic year.

We recommend using our online application (see trailblaze.org) instead of the paper application, if possible, but please choose whatever is most convenient for you. DO NOT fill out both versions!

You will need a free google account to use the online form and will need to upload a short video.

If you use the paper version you MUST email us at: info@trailblaze.org to register your application, including your name and date mailed, or it will not be reviewed.

We are here to help!!!



College Prep Program High School Counselor Report

To the Registrar, School Counselor, or Guidance Department:

This student is applying to the College Prep Program at APL, a summer-enrichment program designed to help high school students prepare for college. As part of our application review, we require information about the student’s academic performance.

Please complete this form and return it to the student. If you have questions, please email William Gray Roncal at info@collegeprepprogram.org. Thank you for your help.

Student Name: _____

School Name: _____ School County: _____

Unweighted GPA: _____ / _____ Weighted GPA: _____

Class Rank: _____ / _____ Student does not currently have a class rank

GPA and class rank calculated through (check one):
_____ End of last school year
_____ Using current year grades

Please include a copy of the student’s latest transcript. Please also include the latest grade report from the current academic year. This information helps us to best evaluate each student. Unofficial copies of the documentation are acceptable.

Is this student eligible for the Free or Reduced Lunch Program? YES NO

Please write a brief statement of student need for the program, or how they will benefit from CPP, if known:

Counselor Name: _____ Position: _____

Contact Phone or Email: _____

Signature

Date