

Four college visit must dos

By Elizabeth LaScala, PhD

There is no better way to find out if a college is a good match for you than by scheduling a campus visit. Today's busy families make sacrifices in time and money to tour campuses, so make yours count.

First, work closely with the admissions office. The student should register for the visit using his or her dedicated college email account, one used only for college admissions purposes. Registering allows the college to record your interest and to properly schedule your visit. If you have questions in advance, contact the admissions officer assigned to work with students from your area. Most admissions officers will take the time to answer your questions and help you to

make appointments to meet with students who share your interests, speak with faculty in your intended major or meet with a counselor in the career development center. Many keep detailed records of each visiting student's interests. These records might make a difference in an admissions decision.

After the campus tour, tour some more. Walk around and find out where students go to socialize and take breaks from classes. You will want to try a meal in the dining hall, find out where students go for medical care, notice campus safety and how students get around campus. It's easy to walk around a smaller school, but students take shuttles to get around many larger, more spread-out universities.

Next, check out the extended campus community.

There are many differences between a school in a large city versus one in a smaller "college town" including variations in cultural life, school spirit and food and entertainment options. Be sure to notice how easy or hard it is to get into the community surrounding campus. Can you walk right into town? Or do you need to rely on public transportation or a car to get around? As you venture on your own, stop and talk to students. Ask them their likes and dislikes about their school. Was it easy/hard for them to get into the major that they wanted? To transfer to a different major? To see a professor for help on a paper or exam?

Finally, it is hard to remember everything about a college when you visit a couple a day for a week on spring break! So be sure to document

your visit by taking photos and making detailed notes.

College admissions offices try to make the campus visit experience as pleasant as possible. But it's up to you to make it a truly informative and memorable experience – one when you gather the informa-

tion you need to place a school on your final application list and write strong essays. The time to visit is worth the investment, given the investment that you will make in higher education.

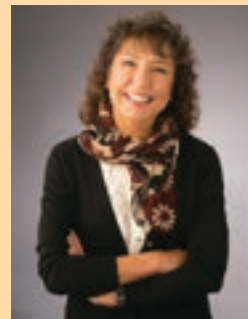
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Elizabeth LaScala, PhD, brings decades of admissions expertise to personally guide each student through applying to well-matched colleges, making each step more manageable and less stressful. She has placed hundreds of students in the most prestigious colleges and universities in the US. Elizabeth attends conferences, visits campuses and makes personal contacts with admissions networks to stay current on the evolving nature of college admissions. She and her professional team offer resume development, test preparation, academic tutoring, value analysis, merit and need-based scholarship search and more.



Orinda students take home Excellence in Acting award at JTF-West



Photo provided

From left: Alice Olson (Miramonte freshman), Ava Dhaliwal (Miramonte sophomore), Hannah Johnson (Miramonte senior), Diego Aguilar (Miramonte junior); Across: Bella Verrico (Orinda Intermediate School)

Submitted by Ingrid Ramos

Over the president's day

weekend, five students from Orinda Intermediate School and Miramonte High School participated in the Junior Theatre Festival (JTF) West. JTF is a three-day festival and the largest celebration of young people performing musical theater. This year there were 38 teams competing and representing 13 U.S. states as well as an international team from South Korea. These kids are part of the Advanced Performers students for Bay Area Children's Theater (BACT) which currently enrolls 24 students. They took home one of the five awards for Excellence in Acting for their performance of "Xanadu JR."

All five kids participate in the arts programs offered by Orinda public schools and have done so since their elementary school days. BACT cast for "Xanadu JR." ranges from sixth graders through high school seniors. It is very impressive to see the camaraderie and support they offer to each other despite the age range, and as they all have described it this has been a life changing experience for them. "Xanadu JR." was presented to the public March 10 and 11 in Berkeley.

Miramonte students volunteer in Chinese New Year Parade



Photo Jarret Zundel

Submitted by Emma Wong

Miramonte students Jarret Zundel and Nicole Guo volunteered in San Francisco's annual Chinese New Year parade held Feb. 4. The event, which included lion dancing and band marching, featured several student volunteers from

Miramonte High School. The procession is the largest Chinese New Year parade outside Asia, occurring yearly at the end of the Lunar New Year's month-long celebration. Depending on moon cycles, the Lunar New Year begins a set of 12 years that, in Asian mythology, corresponds with animal icons, with 2023 the Year of the Rabbit.

◆ Not to be missed ◆ Not to be missed ◆ Not to be missed ◆ Not to be missed ◆

Art

Art Gallery at Wilder: Hilary Mills Lambert's "Carnival of Animals". Lamorinda Arts Council presents a virtual gallery of original oil paintings by featured artist Hilary Mills Lambert in the Art Gallery at Wilder, Saturday, March 4 through Saturday, April 1. Lambert's life-long love of animals is evident in all her work; it pulls you in. To view her work go to <https://lamorindaarts.org/online-galleries>.

Art Gallery at the Orinda Library 20th High School Visual Arts Competition. The Lamorinda Arts Council is thrilled to kick off the 20th High School Visual Arts Competition through March 31 in the Art Gallery at the Orinda Library. The competition showcases and acknowledges art in four cate-

gories: 2D, 3D, Photography, and the Lamorinda Arts Alliance Digital Art category. Student artist reception and awards ceremony March. 16 from 7 – 8:30 p.m. All work is by high school students who live in or attend school in Orinda, Lafayette, or Moraga, including all schools in the Acalanes Union High School District. Learn more at <https://lamorindaarts.org/vac/>.

Art Embraces Words: Saturday March 18, 2 – 3:30 p.m.; Featured Poet & Scientist David Seaborg. The Lamorinda Arts Council features poet and scientist David Seaborg with writers Alvin Ziegler and Quynh Trin; artists Kim and Jeanette Lavoie plus Jennifer Lothrigel at its first program in 2023. Lafayette Library Arts & Science Room, 3491 Mt. Diablo Blvd. Reception follows outdoors in the

Library Courtyard. Visit <https://lamorindaarts.org/art-embraces-words/> for more information or call (925) 359-9940.

Music

Pacific Chamber Orchestra (PCO) presents "Passionate," Saturday, March 25 at 7: 30 p.m. at St. Stephens Episcopal Church in Orinda and Sunday, March 26 at 3 p.m. at Livermore's Bankhead Theater. Tickets at <https://livermorearts.org/events/pco-passionate/> and for the performance at www.pacificchamberorchestra.org. (925) 373-6800. See story on Page B1.

Diablo Ballet celebrates its 29th Anniversary with a one-night only performance featuring a mixed bill including the premiere of Con-

fetti by Gerald Arpino in honor of his Centennial Celebration, Paquita and the premiere of company dancer, Amanda Farris' ballet, Elevator Operator. One night only on March 31 at 6:30 p.m. at the Leshler Center for the Arts, 1601 Civic Drive in Walnut Creek. Single tickets (\$25 - \$52) with senior and youth pricing available. Early bird pricing through March 8. For performance tickets, call (925) 943-SHOW (7469) or visit www.lesherartscenter.org or <https://diabloballet.org/anniversary-gala/>

Final Gold Coast Chamber Players concert, "Souvenir." Saturday, April 15, Concert- 7:30 p.m. Pre-concert talk- 7 p.m. Reception follows performance DTCH at Lafayette Library. Purchase Tickets: <https://www.gccpmusic.com/>

Leather jackets, poodle skirts, and Greased Lightnin'! Watch out, Orinda, Rydell High is coming to Miramonte! One of Miramonte High School's most anticipated annual events returns in March when more than 80 cast, crew, and band members will be cruising the halls of Rydell High, dreaming of "Summer Nights" and "Beauty School Dropout" as they perform the rollicking musical "Grease." Since 1999, Miramonte has had a tradition of producing high-quality musicals that are student-centered. Friday, March 17 at 7 p.m., Saturday, March 18 at 7 p.m., Saturday, March 25 at 7 p.m., and Sunday, March 26 at 4 p.m. Purchase tickets here: www.showtix4u.com/event-details/70947

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