

28 WAYS TO

STAND OUT,

Get NOTICED,

(HOPEFULLY)

And [^]GET INTO

**TOP
COLLEGES**

Katy Huller

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***28 Ways to Stand Out, Get Noticed, and (Hopefully)
Get Into Top Colleges***

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For my two extraordinary daughters,
Kate and Anna, who never cease to
amaze me with their talents,
intelligence, kindness, and love. May
you always strive to brighten this
world with your many gifts,

and

for my husband, who helps make my
every dream a reality.

Intro

Let's be real. It's not that hard to get into a college if you don't care which college you go to *and* you have all the money you need to back up that coveted acceptance letter. You just have to get decent grades and decent test scores. The higher they both are, and the more activities, clubs, sports, and/or leadership positions you have been involved in, the easier it is.

BUT, if you have your heart set on going to a more competitive college where the acceptance rate is staggeringly low (Think: Princeton, Harvard, Yale, Stanford, Duke, Johns Hopkins, Brown, Emory, Vanderbilt, etc.) ...or if you are going to need one of those extremely rare, extra-juicy scholarships your college of choice is bound to be handing out to a lucky student or two, you are going to have to stand out a little more. Did I say "a little more?" Scrap that. As my soon-to-be college freshman and I have found out in recent months, you are going to have to stand out a LOT more.

Not only do you have to:

1. Get great grades (as close to an unweighted 4.0 GPA as possible).
2. Take the most rigorous course load available at your school.
3. Be in the top 10% of your class.
4. Get high test scores (within or above the middle 50% of enrolled students).
5. Attain leadership positions.
6. Be meaningfully involved in some sort of extracurricular activity (sports, band, clubs, etc.).
7. Get awesome letters of recommendation.
8. Write excellent essays.
9. Interview well.

You ALSO have to:

Be EXTRAORDINARY in some way!

What does being “extraordinary” mean? To put it simply, it means that you are going to have to be MORE THAN ORDINARY.

Unfortunately for many Ivy League and/or prestigious college wannabes, “ordinary” for these esteemed institutions often equates to having a near perfect GPA as well as near perfect test scores...AND a near perfect resume’ full of extracurricular activities, leadership positions, and community service.

To separate yourself from all of the other high school standouts vying for YOUR acceptance letter and/or YOUR generous financial gift, you are going to have to prove that you are more than just a great, well-rounded kid with an awesome intellect. That description fits just about everyone who applies.

Rather, you are going to have to show that you are EXCEPTIONAL somehow – that you are a STEP AHEAD of most kids your age, that you are DESTINED for GREATNESS, that the college of your choice would be making a HUGE MISTAKE by not accepting you.

You are going to have to show the college of your choice that you are:

- ✓ A SELF STARTER
- ✓ AN ENGAGED LEARNER
- ✓ AN ADVANCED ACHIEVER
- ✓ AN ACCOMPLISHED LEADER
- ✓ A CARING COMMUNITY MEMBER
- ✓ A PLEASANT POTENTIAL ROOMMATE

To make the FINAL CUT at many TOP schools, you will basically have to prove that you are:

- ✓ EXCELLENT AT SOMETHING (other than school and testing)
- ✓ UNIQUE IN SOME SPECIAL WAY
- ✓ FULL OF PROMISE

The question is, how are you going to do this? What are you going to get involved in during your high school years that will show the college of your choice just how special and unique you are? How are you going to STAND OUT to your future college admissions officers?

After all, TOP colleges have the luxury of rejecting THOUSANDS of straight A students with near perfect test scores every year. It's no longer just about admitting the smartest, most successful students. Now, that's a given. Now, you have to be MORE than just a top student. Now, you have to be EXTRAORDINARY in some way. And, no, being your school's valedictorian isn't "extraordinary" enough; that just shows that you are good at school. Don't get me wrong, it's a good first step and will certainly count in your favor; it's just not enough. TOP colleges want to see more than that. They want to see that you are passionate, highly motivated, deeply engaged, curious, and personable. They want to see that you love learning for the sake of learning, that you challenge yourself, that you take on leadership roles, that you EXCEL at something.

Once you make it over the initial hurdle of being academically qualified for a TOP school, college admissions officers faced with your application are going to look at the clubs, sports, afterschool activities, and leadership positions you have been involved in to figure out what you do in your free time and what you might add to their particular campus. They are also going to pour over your letters of recommendation, personal statements, and essays to confirm who you really are and if you would be a good fit for their institutions.

This is where many gifted, involved students get cut. Yes, they held leadership positions. Yes, they were in several clubs, the school band, and/or an athletic group. Yes, they wrote decent essays and got good letters of recommendation. But did they do anything UNIQUE while they were in high school? Did they achieve anything SPECIAL in their afterschool activities and clubs? Did they START anything? EXCEL in anything? Create any SIGNIFICANT CHANGE? Did they take any CHANCES? STAND OUT in any way?

Remember, TOP colleges are looking for EXTRAORDINARY individuals – not ordinary ones. They are looking for kids who are different from the norm – the true learners, movers, shakers, and doers. They are looking for INNOVATORS, LEADERS, SCIENTISTS, EXPLORERS,

THINKERS, and HARD WORKERS. They are looking for people full of *grit, passion, hope, courage, generosity*, and a *distinct desire to BE SOMEONE GREAT*. They are looking for people who are going to change the world, bring credibility to the university, and, preferably, donate LARGE CHUNKS of money to their endowments one day in the not-too-far-off future. (Just keeping it real here.)

Only you know if this describes you. If it does, you are probably ALREADY doing many of the things in this book. If not, and you WANT this to describe you (or you simply feel you MUST get into a TOP school for whatever reason), you need to get BUSY! This does NOT mean that you should go out and pretend to be someone you are not or that you should feign interest in something that you couldn't care any less about. It also doesn't mean that you should stress yourself out getting involved in EVERYTHING you can get involved in. Rather, it means that you should figure out what interests YOU and begin exploring whatever that is in a meaningful and productive way.

If you're a "math guy" (or gal), join the Math Team and help lead your school to the highest victory possible. Or go tutor underprivileged kids who could use some assistance. Or use your super savvy math skills to create an app, build a robot, help a community organization keep their books, or do something else that only math loving geniuses can do. While you're at it, get elected Treasurer of your high school or become the treasurer of whatever clubs you are in. Love reading? How about visiting an afterschool center each week to help kids learn to read? Or reading to senior citizens who can no longer see well enough to read? Or creating a YouTube channel or website that promotes new and interesting titles? Or sponsoring book drives that help to get books into the hands of those who can't afford them? Get the idea?

There are so many things that YOU can do to make a difference in this world, regardless of what YOU find interesting and are naturally gifted at doing. Do these things. Share your talents. Become a LEADER in these areas. Make a name for yourself in these areas. You don't have to do EVERYTHING, you just need to do a few things really, really well. Think about what you are interested in, what you are good at, and how you can start making a DIFFERENCE in these areas. Think about what you can DO to help your school and/or community.

You could help your school win national competitions. Or bring awareness to a special cause. You could raise TONS of money to help support something that is meaningful to you. You could put your special skills to work to build something, write something, draw something, or create something useful, touching, amazing, funny, and/or significant in some way. The point is, GET INVOLVED and start DOING SOMETHING with your many special talents and abilities. That's what leaders do. That's what caring community members do. That's what YOU need to do if you want to stand out to your future college admissions officers one day.

Just don't make the mistake of trying to appear to be someone or something that you aren't in order to impress TOP colleges. Rather, work to be more of who YOU are, who you would LIKE to be, who you COULD be with a little extra effort thrown in. Colleges want to know the REAL you and what you might bring to their individual campuses.

So be yourself. Get involved in the activities or clubs that YOU care about, and make a difference in THOSE clubs or activities. If your school doesn't offer those clubs or activities, create them or take part in them somewhere else. Work your way up and become a LEADER in them. Make an IMPACT in them. EXCEL in them. GIVE BACK to your community at large through them. This is what TOP colleges crave – bright and/or extremely talented kids who have taken full advantage of the opportunities around them and have used THEIR special skills and talents to give back to their communities in some significant way or another.

Think you're up to the challenge? If so, flip through the pages of this book and settle in on the ideas that call out to YOU. Twist them. Stretch them. Restructure them to fit your needs. Let them be a springboard to your own imagination.

That's what this little book is for – to help YOU come up with ways to STAND OUT, GET NOTICED, and (HOPEFULLY) GET INTO the college of your choice. I say "hopefully" because even if you prove your extreme excellence and set yourself apart from the "norm" in some significant way, you still may or may not get accepted into the school of your choice. That's just an unfortunate reality. After all, many of these highly sought after TOP schools only have an acceptance rate

of somewhere between 6-15%, and each of these selective schools is looking for its own particular brand of “excellence.” Plus, each school can only take so many gifted kids in each field of study and/or area of accomplishment.

All this to say, you may do everything right, and STILL be waitlisted or rejected. Be prepared for this. Plan for this. Apply to some “safety schools” you would enjoy attending just in case you don’t make the final cut at your preferred schools.

In the meantime, do everything you can to give yourself the best shot of getting in by fully applying yourself in school and using your “free time” to put your special skills, strengths, and talents to work. Don’t just join clubs, make them better. Don’t just show up for community service activities, plan them and ensure their success. Don’t just smile with satisfaction when you become a leader, actually DO SOMETHING with your position to help others and/or bring about needed change.

Get involved. Take risks. Work hard. Persevere through difficulties. Explore. Think. Create. Envision. Give back. Make the world a better place because you were in it. Not only will sharing your particular brand of awesomeness with the world help to give you a better chance at getting into the TOP college of your choice, it will also help you discover more about your personal strengths, power, and passions along the way. This is sure to help you no matter where you end up going to college.

Wishing you all the best and much success,

Katy Huller



Please keep in mind that the ideas presented in this book are merely that – ideas to help you stand out, get noticed, and (hopefully) get into the college of your choice! PROCEED AT YOUR OWN RISK!

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Special Note: There are certain rules and regulations you must follow when fundraising or doing other acts of community service. Check with your parents, school, and local government officials as necessary to ensure you are fully aware of any rules and/or regulations that might exist in your area, and are operating within the law. Also, please be aware that performing any of these activities is AT YOUR OWN RISK. Also, be aware that following through with these activities will NOT guarantee you an acceptance letter from a TOP college! Acceptance into college will depend on a number of variables and cannot be guaranteed. The author and publisher advise readers to take full responsibility for their safety and to know their limits.

1.

Go on an AMAZING adventure.

Showcase your talents and/or passions while exploring the world around you.

- Hike the Appalachian Trail.
- Bike across America.
- Sail somewhere fabulous.
- Trek deep into the Amazon Rainforest.
- Observe wildlife in Africa.
- Study endangered species in their natural habitat.
- Go on a leadership adventure.
- Volunteer in a foreign country (Use your language skills!).
- Zip line through forests, over canyons, and across amazing terrain.
- Backpack through the wilderness.
- Rock climb in the mountains.
- Paddleboard down the coastline.
- Go whitewater rafting down remarkable rivers.
- Take part in an environmental education adventure.
- Climb one of the tallest mountains in the world.

***Top colleges value RISK TAKERS, ADVENTURERS,
and UNIQUELY SKILLED students!***

2.

Start a CHARITY.

Meet a need in your community, state, nation, or foreign land. Keep up with how much you raise, donate, etc.

- Collect food, books, toothpaste, coats, shoes, used clothing, learning games, etc. to pass out to underprivileged children, homeless shelters, etc.
- Raise money to build schools, churches, wells, mini-farms, etc.
- Raise money to fight a disease that has touched your life in some way.
- Help feed and house the homeless.
- Host a sporting event (running race, shoot-a-thon, board break-a-thon, etc.), and donate the proceeds to help the cause of your choice.
- Bag or box up essential items for the group of your choice (military, hospitalized kids, orphans, homeless, cancer patients, etc.).
- Help save endangered animals.
- Help improve and/or save the environment.

***Top colleges value CONCERNED CITIZENS,
GIVERS, and DRIVE!***

3.

Get PUBLISHED.

Share your expertise/passion through your published works.

- Write articles covering unique students, organizations, sporting events, community benefits, etc., and submit them to your local newspapers and town magazines.
- Craft fictional stories and submit them to magazines or publish them online.
- Create comic strips and submit them to your local newspapers or publish them yourself.
- Write/produce songs.
- Write and publish a novel.
- Pen thoughtful and/or fiery op-eds, and send them to your local newspaper.
- Write a how-to book about something you know (*how to get straight A's, make jewelry, apply make-up like a celebrity, play a sport, train a guinea pig, shoot an arrow, cook something, etc.*). Publish it yourself or send to a publisher.
- Get your research published in an academic or trade journal.

Top colleges value PASSION, DEPTH OF SKILL, DRIVE, and a MEANINGFUL use of FREE TIME!

4.

Start Your Own YouTube Channel.

Broadcast your talents on YouTube.

- Voice an opinion about an issue that's important to you.
- Teach others how to do something you are an expert at (how to operate the newest electrical gadget, cook bakery-quality desserts, make exotic jewelry, play an instrument, build a robot, take better pictures, excel at a sport, get better grades, do skateboarding tricks, get through gaming challenges, draw horses, exercise, lose weight, design a book cover, fix something, increase their SAT scores, etc.).
- Make people laugh by sharing jokes, funny experiences, parodies, bloopers, pranks, etc.
- Inspire others to do more, be more, think bigger, etc.
- Write, produce, and publish your own music.
- Interview successful people and share their secrets.
- Publish "challenge" videos to help raise money for a cause that's important to you. (Think "Ice Bucket Challenge.")
- Create new dances and help others learn to perform them.
- Review books, movies, restaurants, etc.
- Inform voters about upcoming elections and hot topics.

Top colleges value EXPERTS who are passionately pursuing their field of interest!

5.

Write a BLOG.

Share your passion and/or help others through a well-written blog.

- Self defense blog
- Technology blog
- Sports blog
- Astronomy blog
- Book review blog
- Movie review blog
- Restaurant review blog
- Travel blog
- Dating blog
- Cooking blog
- Gluten-free blog
- Science blog
- Education blog
- Art/Creative Crafts blog
- Advice blog
- Photography blog
- Gaming blog
- Health blog
- Adventure blog
- Exercise blog
- Healthy eating blog
- Wilderness blog
- New vocabulary blog
- Do-It-Yourself blog
- Interesting facts blog
- Political blog

***Top colleges value SPECIAL SKILLS,
CONSISTENCY, CURIOSITY, and PASSION!***

Thanks for READING!

**To read more, please
purchase a copy!**