

## Don't Melt Away This Summer

I'm sure we would all agree that this summer has been a scorcher! I myself am very grateful for the invention of air condition! With rising temperatures, the one thing that we want to make sure that doesn't melt is your postsecondary education. We want you to stay completely frozen in those goals, dreams and aspirations.

Every year we see so many students overcome obstacles and defy the odds in high school by being accepted to college. We write student success stories about their hard work, determination, how much financial aid they have received. These stories are posted and family and friends comment their congratulations. Graduation happens, pictures are posted, gifts are given, perhaps there is a fun beach trip....and then those students settle into just a normal summer. There are no more morning announcements, guidance counselors, or teachers pestering students to make sure they check their college student accounts, email, or to keep applying for scholarships. Unbeknownst to them, deadlines are creeping by them. Then before they know it, it's the end of July or the beginning of August and by time they go check their accounts, they no longer can attend college. Or some students may be having the time of their lives the summer after graduation and suddenly the thought of going back to school for another 2 to 4 years seems too much for them to handle on their own.

There is an amazing amount of students who walk the stage in May with plans to attend college and they never get there. Too many of them overlook the letters and emails that colleges send out all summer, asking them to complete financial aid forms, health documents, orientation, etc. If a student misses one of these deadlines or steps, the college will assume they are no longer interested in attending their school and will remove them from their database. Within a push of a button, that student's goals and plans for the future halts.

We call this the "summer melt" and it affects more students than you think. According to reports, up to one third of all students who leave high school with plans to attend college never arrive at any college campus that fall. Summer melt tends to hit low-income and first generation students (much like yourselves) the most. Students who are the first to attend college in their family can often feel very overwhelmed by all the forms and information that colleges ask for. While motivated to help, parents may be unable to help students push through some of those summer hurdles.

So here are some things that you may need to do ASAP:

- Check your email and student account! Your college has probably sent you tons of emails about deadlines and important information that they want you to know about
- Call Admissions and Financial Aid office! Double and triple check that they have everything that they need. Make sure that they have your final transcript, verification forms, and any other documentation that they might need.
- Call housing! Make sure that deposit is in and that your room is reserved. Make sure you also turn in immunization forms. You won't be able to stay on campus without those shot records on file. Also if possible get in touch with your roommate and try to get together before school starts.
- If attending a community college, TCAT or using TN Promise, make sure that you have turned in your 8 hours of community service. Also remember to put in your calendar your final TN Promise meeting that will happen in the fall (around October).

- If you have changed your mind about where you want to attend, make sure you go into your FAFSA to make sure you have that school listed and go in through your TSAC account and do a change of institution so that your state money will go to the correct school.
- Make sure to attend orientation!!!! This is key! No orientation means no school in the fall!
- If you already have your schedule, see if you can figure out what books you may need for that class and start looking for them on Amazon, eBay, Chegg, etc.
- If you were assigned work-study, contact the college to find out those details. Some colleges will have you sign up for a job while others require you to find it yourself. If your college requires you to set it up, ask for a list of names and numbers so that you can contact them and get things arranged.
- Never stop applying for scholarships! (Take a look at the scholarships tab! Amy has put up some great ones for you all!!!!)

These are just a few important things that you need to do immediately. For you brand new alumni, your Upward Bound Adviser will be contacting you this week or the next to make sure that you have indeed got all of this complete. But for all of you older alumni, please make sure to do this as well. And remember that your UB family is always here for you! This website is one of the many resources that you have at your disposal. When you feel yourself getting overwhelmed and stressed out, or if you don't understand something, contact your adviser or send a message via the website on the *Ask Amy and Abby* tab and we will immediately answer your questions. Reach out to us and we will help you. You are not alone. Let's stay frozen my friends!!