



Sophomore Year Checklist

Photo Courtesy of: Ouachita Baptist University

- **Take the ACT.** In the Spring of your Sophomore year, take the ACT. Consider this a practice test to learn the testing environment and identify areas you may need to practice on for future tests. Utilize free test preparation resources available online and elsewhere. The ACT web sites both offer free practice tests as do web sites that focus specifically on college entrance exam test preparation, including www.number2.com and www.march2success.com. (Check to see if the school you wish to attend requires the SAT. If so, you should consider taking the pre-SAT.)
- **Think careers.** Talk with your school counselor and others about your interests and find out the kind of education you will need to meet your career goals.
- **Start to learn more about colleges.** Begin to consider what you may want in a college. What school offers programs that prepare you for your desired career? Search websites and other resources for more information on colleges that peak your interest.
- **Review college saving plans.** You and your family should continue (or start) to put extra dollars into a college fund. (See page 11 for more information on savings and how savings can affect financial aid.)
- **Tax Benefits?** Learn about the tax benefits of cashing in savings bonds to pay for your child's education; search for "Publication 970" at www.irs.gov.
- **How much does college cost?** Start reviewing tuition, fee, and housing costs to get an idea of the real cost of college.
- **Want to play college sports?** Visit your high school counselor and obtain the eligibility criteria on what it takes to be an eligible college athlete.
- **Visit your counselor.** Make sure your high school course schedule is on the right track for preparing for college.
- **Be involved in your school and your community.** Begin keeping a list of your awards, honors, activities, volunteer work and paid work. You will be asked to list these on college applications as well as write essays reflecting on the experiences.

Study and do well in school. Your grades matter and will impact the amount of scholarship dollars you receive when you are ready to go to college.