

Mercy High School  
Counseling Department

# GOOD NEWS

December 2019



A MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

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**Mercy High School Counseling Department**

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# Important December Dates

## December 1<sup>st</sup>–20<sup>th</sup>

Junior College Interviews continue through end of January

## December 4<sup>th</sup>

1:34 Dismissal for students

## December 13<sup>th</sup>

1:34 Dismissal for students

## December 16<sup>th</sup>

Cocoa & Cram study event for 9<sup>th</sup> graders, 3-4pm (Sign Up Required)

## December 18<sup>th</sup>

1<sup>st</sup> hour Exam 8:30-9:50, 2<sup>nd</sup> hour Exam 10-11:20

## December 19<sup>th</sup>

3<sup>rd</sup> hour Exam 8:30-9:50, 4<sup>th</sup> hour Exam 10-11:20, 5<sup>th</sup> hour Exam 11:30-12:50

## December 20<sup>th</sup>

6<sup>th</sup> hour Exam 8:30-9:50, 7<sup>th</sup> hour Exam 10-11:20

## December 21<sup>st</sup>

Begin Christmas Break

“It is impossible to live without failing at something,  
unless you live so cautiously  
that you might as well not have lived at all,  
in which case you have failed by default.”

—J.K. Rowling

# Fail. (\*seriously, do it)

I know, what a strange message to send to this high achieving, remarkably talented school community, right?! I truly do mean it, though; there can be so much personal development value in failing and I hope (with love) that each and every one of you have the opportunity to experience failure at some point in your human development.

Perhaps my perspective would best be explained through some real life examples. There are so many samples of fantastic, successful human beings who have endured personal or professional failure.

Here are a few:

## Oprah Winfrey:

As told in *Oprah Winfrey: A Profile in Failure*, by author Jeff Stibel, USA Today

Prior to setting TV Show records and running one of America's most successful businesses, Oprah Winfrey experienced notable failure. Oprah's first TV gig was in a prime-time news co-anchor spot with ABC. This was a huge opportunity for any journalist, and especially for a young, black, female, aspiring journalist. This groundbreaking accomplishment came along with a major publicity campaign, throwing Oprah Winfrey right into an intense spotlight on billboards, busses, and TV ads, as her journalist debut was anticipated. (talk about pressure!!) This extremely important opportunity

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unfortunately did not launch Oprah Winfrey into the powerhouse career we know today. Miss Winfrey had conflict with her co-anchor and low ratings with her viewers, ultimately leading to low show ratings. Oprah was fired a few months later. Thankfully, this set back did not stop this incredible woman.

## Walt Disney:

As told in *12 People Who Failed Before Succeeding*, WanderlustWorker.com

I cannot believe that Disney, the King of all things animated, was fired by one of his first Editors because he “lacked imagination and had no good ideas”. What might our entertainment world be like if Walt Disney had allowed this failure to end his career aspirations?!

## JK Rowling:

As told in *12 People Who Failed Before Succeeding*, WanderlustWorker.com

Did you know that in 1995, all 12 major book publishing companies rejected JK Rowling’s *Harry Potter and the Sorcerer’s Stone*?! Had she accepted this failure experience as defeat, we may have never known this game changing series of literature and films!

## Jim Carey:

As told in *12 People Who Failed Before Succeeding*, WanderlustWorker.com

Jim Carey faced multiple failures in his personal and professional life before finding success. He was booed off stage during his first shot as a stand-up comedian and lived through years of failed auditions, including one for Saturday Night Live. It was roughly seven years later when he landed a notable acting/comedy job.

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And a less famous example...

**Me** (Mrs. Irish Brown):

One giant failure experience I am proud to share involves my first semester of College. I went into my first year of Undergrad with super hero level confidence and feeling totally ready. Prior to that year, school was kind of always my thing-I did really well and loved to learn. Simply put: College life was just way harder than I anticipated; I found my 3 hour, 200-500 person lectures to be extremely difficult to learn from, I really struggled with the lack of student-instructor relationships, I realized that since I never needed them, I really never developed strong study skills, I was supporting myself financially, and got caught up in the distractions of complete independence and social freedom. Needless to say, my first semester GPA was abysmal. (And not like, “Oh, I got my first B!” bad, like...*bad, bad.* )

I was devastated. I was disappointed in myself and uncertain of what to do next. I came back to school in January and immediately set up an appointment with my Adviser, certain I would be removed from my program. I remember nervously pouring my embarrassing experience and subsequent feelings all over my Adviser’s desk and will never forget her reaction... **she laughed at me!** I do not remember everything she said after that, although I remember one moment of her lecture, and it has stuck with me ever since; she asked me: “You’ve never done this before. Why did you assume that failure was not an option for you?”

I did not have an answer for her. She was right, I had never been to College before, so why was it so shocking to me that it would be such a challenge? She also asked me why I had not sought out help, as soon as I started to struggle in school. Then it hit me-it was not about me assuming that College would be easy, it was more about my *fear of failure* and the assumption that if I was not successful, **I** (as a student, future Counselor, person etc.) **was a failure.** Together, we evaluated my experience. We talked about what lead to my lack of success, what I could do differently

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the next semester to improve, and what resources were available to help me accomplish my goals. Yes, second semester went much better and the rest of my College career went very well. More valuable than that improvement, though, was the lesson I learned about life and failure. I learned: 1. Failures will happen and experiencing failure does not mean that I am a failure. 2. There is so much growth and learning that can come from a failure experience. and 3. That is what failure is: a learning opportunity.

For what it is worth, here is how I would advise one to approach future failures:

## 1. Mope, pout, cry, yell, & feel bad

You are allowed to feel however you feel about your failure! Failure hurts! The trick here is to give yourself a deadline in your moping. I like a 24-48 hour window of pouting. After those 2 days, I force myself to move on to the next step.

## 2. Evaluate

Pause and ask yourself (in your head, in writing, or in conversation someone you trust): how did this happen? What can I learn from this? Was there anything that I or someone else could have done to prevent this failure? How will I do things differently from this point on?

## 3. Refresh

Now, with your self-reflection and learnings noted, you move on. You live life, you pursue your goals, you get back at it. TRY AGAIN. This time, though, you are wiser, you are more experienced, and you are more prepared.

I do not think I said it then, so I'll say it now: Thank you, failure.

**Written by Mercy Counselor, Mrs. Trish Brown**

# PSAT/NMSQT Update

## PARENTS:

On December 2, your students' PSAT/NMSQT® scores will be available to you online in the [K–12 score reporting portal](#).

Help your students take action on their scores by attending our live webinars the week of December 2 and checking out our resources. You'll learn tips for accessing, understanding, and using scores before your students receive theirs online beginning December 9.

## STUDENTS:

Scores from the PSAT/NMSQT will be released online to you December 9–11.

Students who shared their email address on their PSAT/NMSQT answer sheet will receive an email reminder from us explaining where and how to view their scores.

If you do not have one, you will need to create a [College Board account](#) to view your score.

Paper copies of PSAT/NMSQT scores will be distributed in January.

If you have any questions, you can reach out to:  
[k12reports@info.collegeboard.org](mailto:k12reports@info.collegeboard.org).



It is **COLD** out there, so let's think about **SUMMER!!**

Here are a few Educational Summer Program offerings:



## **APPLY NOW FOR SMASH ACADEMY OUR FREE STEM COLLEGE PREP PROGRAM**

SMASH Academy is a 100% FREE STEM intensive college prep residential program that empowers students like you to thrive in STEM careers, so you can be the change you want to see in your community.

Starting the summer after your 9th grade year of high school and beyond, you will:



Live and study at a top university campus for 5 weeks during the summer



Focus on building the academic and life skills essential to succeed in STEM



Build core technical skills, including computing, needed to participate and succeed in the future workforce



Connect with STEM professionals



Build a robust community of peers and support that will last a lifetime



Have access to college and work readiness opportunities, including paid internships with leading companies in Tech & other robust industries

9th grade students from underrepresented communities in STEM are encouraged to apply

**APPLY NOW FOR 2020 SMASH ACADEMY**

**[smash.org/apply](https://smash.org/apply)**

**Application closes February 28, 2020**

# SMASH = OPPORTUNITY

## Did you know?

**100%**

of SMASH  
scholars  
graduate  
high school



**86%**

of SMASH  
scholars  
graduate  
college  
within 5 years



All SMASH Academy sites are  
now accepting applications

### California:

- UC Berkeley
- Stanford University
- UCLA
- UC Davis

### Illinois:

- Illinois Institute of Technology in partnership with Southern Illinois University Carbondale

### Pennsylvania:

- The Wharton School, University of Pennsylvania

### Michigan:

- Wayne State University
- University of Michigan\*

### Massachusetts

- Northeastern University\*

### Georgia:

- Morehouse College\*\*

SMASH alumni graduate with a STEM degree  
**2X higher** than the national average!

## Eligibility

- GPA: Must have a minimum 8th grade 3.0 GPA or equivalent
- Grade Level: Must be in the 9th grade at the time of application
- Math Skills: Have strong mathematics skills appropriate for your grade level, as determined by your state standardized math test scores
- School: Attend a public high school or private high school via scholarship
- Location: Reside in the United States within 50 miles of a SMASH site as determined by your zip code\*\*\*

For more information, visit us at [smash.org](https://smash.org)  
For any questions, email us at [info@smash.org](mailto:info@smash.org)

*SMASH is the signature education program of the Kapor Center. SMASH fuses STEM education, mentorship, social justice curriculum and workforce opportunities, to help scholars hone their knowledge while building the networks and life skills necessary for a career in technology and entrepreneurship.*

\*Northeastern University and University of Michigan: Sites launch in 2020.

\*\*Morehouse College: Applicants must identify as male.

\*\*\*Illinois: Applicants must be an Illinois resident and reside within 25 miles of the Chicago, Carbondale, and East St. Louis Metro Areas.

\*\*\*Wayne State and University of Michigan: Visit website for geographic specifications.

# THE JOYCE IVY FOUNDATION

## SUMMER SCHOLARS PROGRAM

The Summer Scholars program provides scholarships for talented female high school students to participate in a summer academic program at one of our partner programs – some of the most rigorous and selective colleges and universities in the country.

Scholars receive a full or partial scholarship, based on demonstrated financial need, to cover tuition, room and board, travel expenses, and supplies. The Joyce Ivy Foundation works directly with our set of program partners to combine Joyce Ivy scholarships with additional financial aid provided by the summer program.

### DATES & DEADLINES

|                  |                                      |
|------------------|--------------------------------------|
| December 8, 2019 | 2020 application available<br>online |
| March 1, 2020    | Application deadline                 |
| Late March 2020  | Decisions sent                       |
| April 22, 2020   | Scholars reply deadline              |

To learn more about the Joyce Ivy Foundation, visit  
<https://www.joyceivyfoundation.org/>

# THE PRINCETON SUMMER JOURNALISM PROGRAM

## About the program:

The Princeton Summer Journalism Program (PSJP) is a free residential journalism and college preparatory program for high-achieving current juniors from low-income backgrounds who are interested in journalism. Over 10 days, students live on campus at Princeton University and learn reporting skills from professional journalists. They also attend lectures on liberal arts topics led by Princeton U professors. Participants hold a press conference, produce a short documentary, report on a professional sporting event from the press box, attend a play or theatrical production, visit 3-4 major news outlets, and interview subjects for their feature stories in the Princeton Summer Journal. After the program, students are paired with a volunteer college adviser, a professional journalist, to help them through their application process.

**Program dates:** Friday, July 31 – Monday, August 10, 2020

**Cost:** None. All program expenses, including meals, housing, airfare or train tickets to and from campus, are covered by the program.

**Eligibility:** To apply, students must be:

- Current high school juniors (Class of 2021)
- living in the United States
- with an unweighted GPA of 3.5/4.0
- who have an interest in journalism (no experience required)
- and meet one of the financial eligibility requirements below:
  - The custodial parent(s)/guardian(s)' combined income (including child support received) must not exceed \$60,000 annually
  - The student must be eligible for Free/Reduced-Priced Lunch.
  - The student is eligible for a SAT or ACT fee waiver.

## Applying:

The online application is available via [website](#) and due no later than **Monday, February 17, 2020**. Please note that students must submit an unofficial transcript to be considered. You may read about the full [application process here](#).



# REASONS to STAY POSITIVE

@POSITIVELYPRESENT

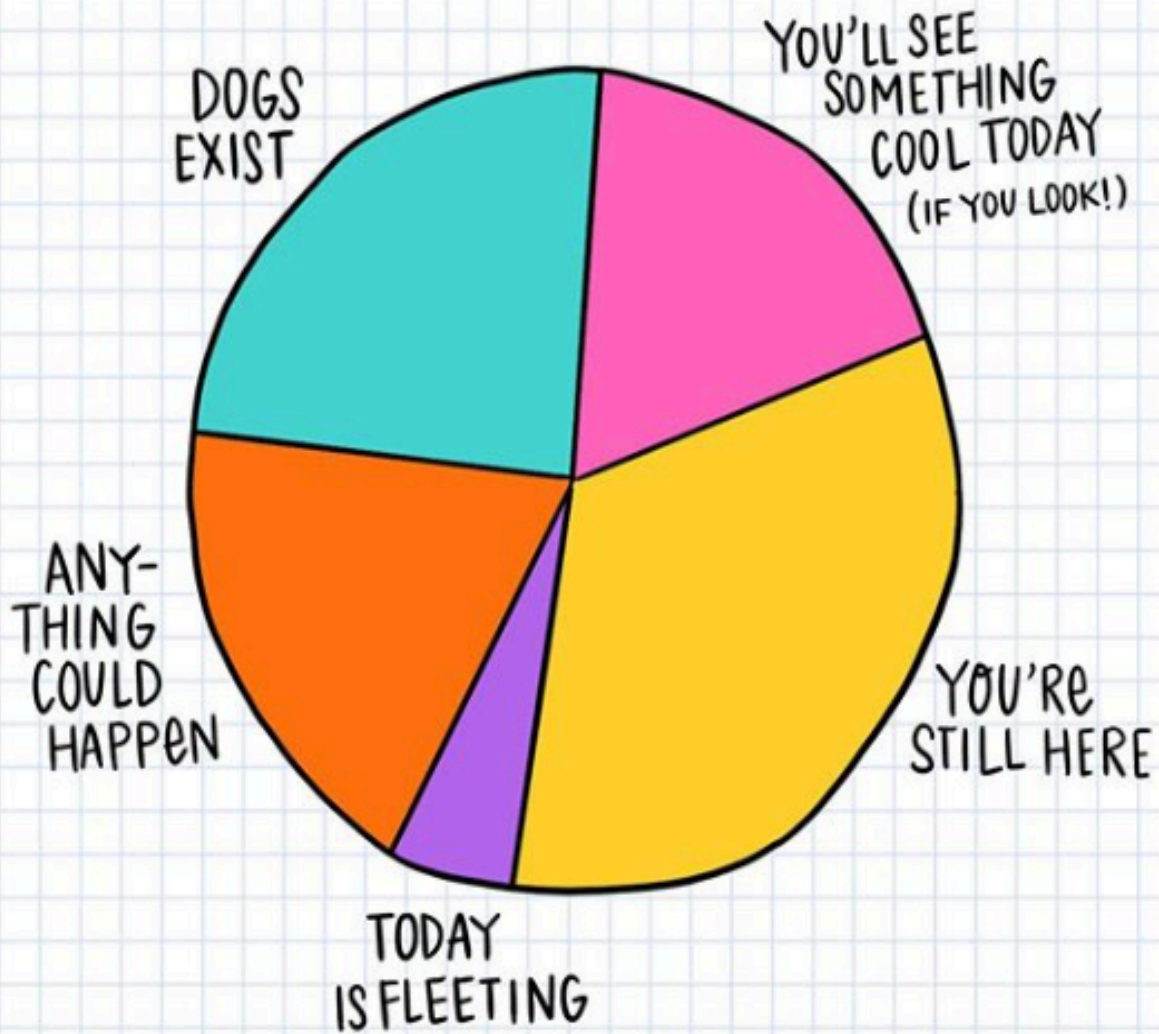


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