



fall | 2011

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Meet Some of Our Clients

THE SHORT LIST'S success stories: Harvard New York



Empowerment: Maddie

The Planner

The day we met Maddie, we knew she was someone special, driven to do her best in everything.



She was the top student in her class, taking additional high school classes at a local university. She also served as president of her class and a leader in many other activities.

At the time, Maddie was a sophomore in high school, and we quickly saw what drove her success: She took the time to plan. She wanted to visit quite a number of schools, so we mapped out a two-year college visit strategy that took advantage of her school breaks and summer vacation. We spaced her visits so they would be manageable for both her and her family, and did the same with her SAT and ACT testing strategy, helping her attend college fairs and complete any homework we assigned her between calls. Maddie was always ahead of the game and, as a result, exhibited very little stress.

Maddie had prepared academically to apply to the best schools in the country, but she also wanted the schools on her final list to be those where she could imagine spending four years. As she

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Greetings from THE SHORT LIST

Letter from Our Founder

Most of our clients come to us through **referrals**, and we often build up a client base in a community where clients know each other. We place a high priority on **client confidentiality**, a philosophy that was challenged this year when we began working with **three students who attended the same boarding school** in the United Kingdom and were close friends.

These clients came to us through unrelated sources and from three very different parts of the world. We discussed with them the need for client confidentiality and emphasized that we would never discuss one girl's process with the other two.

All three were high achievers and deserving of attending an elite university. We put together **three specific and different programs that each yielded success**. Today, **Christine** (Beijing) is at **Cornell**, while **Alison** (Hong Kong) is at **Dartmouth**, and **Chloe** (the UK) is at **Georgetown**. They proved to us that three students from the same high school could have not only a confidential experience but also **equal success** in the process.

The Short List also places a high priority on helping students **stay true to themselves and minimize their stress**. Many families succumb to the pressure of believing their students must apply to a binding Early Decision program in order to get accepted to a top-choice school. Each of the students featured in this newsletter, however, was accepted to a wonderful school without applying early, which allowed them to **keep their choices open** and reduce their stress. They are proof that all students can make the process work for what matters most to them.

The Short List wishes all our clients much success in the coming year, whether they are starting college, graduate school, or new jobs. And **we thank you** sincerely for your continued support.

— **Bill Short, Founder and President**



Christine (Cornell), Alison (Dartmouth), and Chloe (Georgetown) wearing their new school colors.

THE SHORT LIST'S

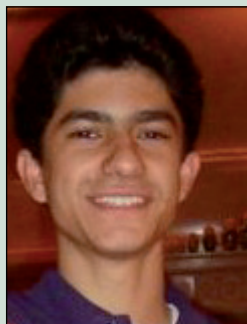
success stories: **Villanova**

Lebanon

**Reduced Stress: *SOUHAIL*****The Coach**

Souhail is Lebanese and was a junior in high school in Beirut when he was referred to The Short List. He was hoping to earn a degree in engineering from a U.S. college, so his parents engaged The Short List to help guide their son through the admissions process. We started by trying to uncover what made Souhail special.

The more Souhail shared with us, the more we could see that he loved soccer. He had been playing since he was a little boy and was now the captain of his high school team. But his leadership extended well beyond his school team. He organized his teammates to build a soccer field for boys at a local refugee camp and was able to obtain donated soccer balls for their practices and games. The boys were not



level, and arranged games. Slowly, Souhail gained the boys' trust and saw changes in them that most people would not have dreamed possible.

One day, Souhail and his teammates showed up for a practice only to find the refugee camp abandoned. The boys had been taken away the day before, and

accustomed to being organized or disciplined, and had little trust for anyone outside the camp. Over the next 18 months, Souhail and his friends organized regular practices, helped the boys build their skill

Souhail was given no further information on where they had gone. He was devastated because he had bonded with many of the boys and worried about their future. The experience changed his life, and Souhail wanted to find a way to continue community outreach in college.

Souhail's family dissuaded him from applying to binding Early Decision programs because he had not been able to visit many schools. They asked The Short List to come up with a list. We looked for schools with strong engineering programs, as well as strong outreach programs. Souhail was accepted to several schools but chose Villanova, a Catholic school outside Philadelphia, for its Top 10 engineering program and its reputation for having one of the most community service-oriented student bodies in the United States.

THE SHORT LIST'S

success stories: **Cambridge**

France

**Unique Approach: *Anne-Claire*****The Artist**

It is rare that we work with teenagers who are singularly focused on a specific profession, but Anne-Claire was the exception. She was absolutely in love with art,

and she was always clear that she wanted art to help shape her career.

Anne-Claire is French and, in Paris, was surrounded by some of the finest art museums in the world. As a young girl, she moved to Barcelona and was struck by both the beauty and oddity of Gaudi's architecture on the grand Paseo de Gracia Avenue. She would spend hours outside contemplating the distinctive nature-inspired, organic shapes and forms that

characterize his famous buildings. Her family also moved to London, where she became acquainted with the National Museum and was captivated by the Portrait Gallery. She began to keep a sketchbook and design costumes based on the many images she saw in the galleries. Finally, Anne-Claire discovered the world of modern art when her family moved to New York City while she was in high school.

Anne-Claire looked to The Short List to help her find schools that would allow her to explore her passion for connecting art with the world around her. We introduced her to a former career client who had secured a job at Sotheby's. She saw the business side of art and was smitten.

Anne-Claire wanted to explore schools in both the United States and United Kingdom. While most U.S. colleges require students to explore many academic areas through a core curriculum, students in England enter a specific

college with a singular academic focus. Anne-Claire was open to both options as long as the schools had strong art history or art management programs. She made it clear that she would not apply Early Decision to any school because she wanted to keep her options open.

The Short List helped Anne-Claire research her list of schools and programs, and then plan her visits. She was keen to have interviews so she could better understand each school's philosophy. We took her through our interview prep, helped her formulate questions, and then role-played many of the questions she was likely to encounter. She received tremendous feedback from several schools indicating that her interest and background made her a strong candidate.

Anne-Claire was accepted to many premier schools. She chose to attend Cambridge University in England, where she will spend the next three years at Christ's College reading the history of art.

THE SHORT LIST'S

success stories: **Middlebury**

Ohio

**Happiness:** *William***The Raconteur**

William's family contacted The Short List during his junior year. He was a bright student near the top of his class, and we learned a few key things about him very quickly: He is extremely mature, a great writer, and a music lover. He is also able to find good in most things.



The Short List explored several options with William and began to make recommendations. The challenge was that William

found a reason to attend nearly every school on his growing list. We encouraged him to visit schools and attend the college meetings at his school. He began basing his college list on how well he felt he connected with the schools' representatives. The problem was that he connected with nearly all of them. We asked him to dig deeper and consider the programs that they offered.

William loves language, which is clear in his writing, as well as his study of Mandarin Chinese. He exhausted every Mandarin course at his high

school, and he emphasized that he wanted to attend a school with a strong Chinese language program.

William did not have a clear favorite among the schools he was considering. We recommended Middlebury and, characteristically, William was ready to apply early before even visiting. We encouraged him to reconsider that decision, despite our feelings that Middlebury might be a great school for him.

He took our advice and focused on completing and submitting applications to all the schools on his final list. When William was accepted to Middlebury in early spring,

among other schools, he was ready to send in his deposit. Again The Short List stressed the importance of visiting different schools before committing. The family decided to visit the three top schools on his list. Middlebury was the first of the three, and by the third night William had made his decision. Before he could even reveal his choice, his parents gave him a Middlebury T-shirt, telling him it was obvious how happy he was on the campus. They had been so certain of his choice that they slipped into the bookstore and bought him the T-shirt while he was occupied at a meeting during their campus visit.

THE SHORT LIST'S

success stories: **Columbia**

Washington DC

**Future Success:** *Sara***The Advocate**

When Sara, a University of Michigan alumna, engaged The Short List to help her with her graduate school search, it was the second time we had worked with her. Her family first engaged our services when she was a senior in high school.

Sara was working at a prestigious Washington, D.C., law firm and studying for the LSATs, so we began to explore law schools together. She had majored in psychology and envisioned a career advocating for young people in the courtroom. However, the more we worked with Sara, the more we began to feel law school might not be the correct path for her.

The Short List challenged Sara to think more deeply about why she wanted to pursue law. She has always been a driven individual with a very clear direction, one of the reasons she was always successful in her academics and extracurricular activities. A feeling of uncertainty was new for her.

Sara grew up in an affluent town and graduated from one of the country's premier public high schools, but she always felt pervasive pressure throughout her schooling, especially among the female students. Like many of her peers, she experienced feelings of self-doubt and struggled with low self-esteem. Even now, she attributes her success to the counseling she received in high school that helped her work through the

challenges of those years. In discussing these experiences with The Short List, Sara began wondering if she should instead be a psychologist working with teenage girls.

Sara found an internship at The George Washington University Hospital and worked closely with a clinical psychologist. The deeper she delved into the profession, the more certain she became that psychology was the right path for her. She considered several schools, researched their programs,

and visited their campuses, narrowing the list down to six schools to which she planned to apply.



We could see that it would be important for Sara to communicate her own teenage struggles in her essay and describe the steps she undertook from counseling to internship that led her to pursue psychology as a profession. Sara was accepted to several of the nation's top psychology programs and settled on Columbia University, where she will have the opportunity to pursue one of several tracks as she moves deeper into the program.

THE SHORT LIST'S

success stories: *Maddie*

New York



Continued from page 1

began to visit schools, she looked for ways to connect.

There was nothing The Short List suggested that Maddie wouldn't try. We explained the importance of demonstrated interest, so she took notes and photos, and collected contact information. She established relationships, and the schools learned about her well before she applied.

In the end, Maddie did not want to apply to any school with a

binding decision. She wanted to give herself the option to choose rather than getting caught up in the frenetic "Early Decision" game that she saw so many of her classmates and friends pursuing. In the end, she was accepted to nine of the schools to which she applied, including four Ivy League schools. She ranked three schools, all excellent options, as her top choices, and asked her family to allow her to visit each of the three one more time. Ultimately Maddie, now a freshman, chose to enroll at Harvard College.

Update: Ned — San Francisco (Harvard Business School)



Often we hear from clients who come off a wait list or change their minds at the last moment. Ned is one of those clients. We last reported that Ned was getting ready to attend Northwestern's Kellogg Business School.

He had submitted his deposit, was busy wrapping up things at work, and had plans for a relaxing summer when his last acceptance came through. Ned made a significant change of direction and is now enrolled at Harvard Business School.

The Short List College Fund



Eight years ago, Founder Bill Short started what was intended to be a two-month assignment working with a senior class at Humanities Preparatory Academy, a New York City public high school. He is now working with his ninth senior class as they prepare their college applications.

Many of you have donated to The Short List College Fund, making it possible for several

of these students to visit schools, pay their application fees, buy textbooks, and pay for other incidentals that can place a heavy burden on families. Each year, the Fund makes a big difference in these promising young lives. You may donate to the Fund by contacting Bill Short directly at wshort@theshortlist.org.

Highlighted below are just a few of the Humanities Prep 2011 graduating class:

Sherrieka—Sherrieka's father brought her from Jamaica to the United States where he essentially abandoned her with an "aunt." In order to eat, Sherrieka often visited the local food bank, where she was introduced to a nutrition program that she then taught for two years at Humanities Prep. Today, Sherrieka is in the nursing program at Villanova and dreams of becoming a school nurse.

Belinda—Belinda spent two summers in New Orleans working to connect New York and New Orleans public school students after Hurricane Katrina. She fell in love with the Big Easy and is now a freshman at Loyola University. Bill Short visited with Belinda when he



attended a national conference in New Orleans this past fall.

Jean—Jean always had high hopes for playing basketball, but Humanities Prep does not have the budget for organized sports teams, so he mostly played in his neighborhood league. Jean is now attending one of Penn State's campuses, and he reports that he made their Division III basketball team.

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