

## Reach High Scholars Program

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March 31, 2020

Dear Friends:

In these tumultuous times, the Reach High Scholars Program is reassessing ways to carry out its mission to provide opportunities and resources to RHS students to enable them to reach higher in their educational pursuits than they otherwise would have imagined possible.

RHSP brings together two constituencies: (i) student members in RHSP and (ii) highly competitive colleges (“HCCs”) with financial resources that enable them to provide excellent academic opportunities and significant need-based financial aid. Dozens of RHSP members have attended those colleges in the past ten years.

The existence and long-term goals of our two constituencies have not changed as a result of the Covid-19 virus. The world around them has.

Nearly all U.S. colleges have closed their campuses with varying statements of hope for eventual reopening. Meanwhile, most have moved classes online, which, to be effective, requires knowledgeable faculty capable of adapting their approach to a new delivery format and significant financial resources to implement the required technology.

The 100+ HCCs favored by RHSP have the intellectual and financial resources to make this transition. The UNH System should succeed due to the financial backing of the State.

Hundreds of other U.S. colleges, with small (and rapidly shrinking) endowments and reliance on tuition income to stay in business, will be challenged by the interim transition costs and the reduced ability of students to pay after the return to on-campus classes. For the past ten years, many colleges have presented a questionable aura of being real. Warren Buffet said of people being caught out by an unpredictable investment market that it was like skinny dipping in the sea: “Only when the tide goes out do you discover who's been swimming naked.”

Here is how RHSP is adapting its initiatives to the current environment:

- We are developing a system of “virtual tours” of several HCCs using video clips provided by the colleges, supplemented by text and our comments, all of which can be accessed from home.
- In our Winter SAT Prep course, we had already created, with Academic Approach, a method for individual tutorials by AA instructors using the internet and phone. If

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necessary, we will work to adapt a similar approach for the fall PSAT and SAT Refresher courses.

- About a dozen RHSP members are awaiting news about acceptances to summer academic enrichment programs at Brown, Phillips Exeter and St. Paul's School. As of this writing, all those programs are on schedule to take place.
- We are monitoring the viability of conducting Raymond Roundtables, our summer academic enrichment program for rising 8th, 9th and 10th graders in Raymond and nearby towns. RR is conducted in collaboration with Phillips Exeter and has been held in each of the last ten years. We have teachers and proposed courses lined up for this year. Major challenges are (i) a likely reluctance of parents to commit to a summer group activity in the current environment, (ii) the inability for RHSP to develop interest in the various schools while they are closed; and (iii) the uncertainty of available classrooms in July.

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Although we're unable to meet with students and parents in person for now, we remain available by email and phone to talk about the various initiatives of RHSP and the college process. With life rather on pause, it's good to use the time to plan for when it resumes!

Stay well -



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