



2018 newsletter
www.THEshortLIST.org

Meet
Some
of Our
Clients

THE SHORT LIST'S
success stories:

**Pomona
College**

South Korea



Client Empowerment:

Wonjai

The Social Scientist

We met **Wonjai** during his freshman year attending an international school in Seoul. Wonjai is an extremely bright young man who did exceptionally well in school. He had a near-perfect GPA and was a two-sport athlete, but found his greatest joy as an active member of Global Issues Network and Model United Nations.



Wonjai loved both classroom and experiential learning, so we encouraged him to explore summer programs in global politics. Prior to high school he enjoyed a three-week Global Issues Network program on the John Hopkins University campus. We recommended he spend part of sophomore summer at Georgetown University's two-week summer MUN development program, followed by a Habitat for Humanity build in Cambodia, to continue broadening his worldview.

Wonjai entered his sophomore year understanding firsthand how economically divided the world is. He became more involved in both MUN

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Greetings from THE SHORT LIST

Letter from Our Founder

College admissions experienced a revolution in 2016 – 2017 with redesigned standardized testing and a revamped common application. Now, in 2017 – 2018, The Short List is undergoing its own revolution.

We introduced a **customized online planner**, so our college-bound students can organize their college research, calendar, notes, deadlines, and essay prompts. We also brought on **additional counselors** to help guide high school and transfer students through the process.

Our **test prep division** now includes **tutoring for AP, IB, and academic subjects as diverse as AP Psychology, Physics, and Russian**. Across the board, students are seeing **increased test scores** and improved academic performance.

Our **10th Annual Monday Night Group Class** for students needing help with their applications was extremely successful. **Sarah**, a Monday Night senior in Western **Massachusetts**, and Founder Bill Short traveled to the **State Capitol** to meet with **Governor Baker** after he profiled Sarah in his 2018 State of the Commonwealth address.



Governor Baker, Sarah and Bill

We assisted **middle-schoolers applying to boarding schools** by recommending schools, working through applications, and prepping them for their **S-SAT**.

We expanded our career counseling offering by **partnering with career specialists who helped us launch Career Designer and Get the Job**, two unique programs for college seniors and young career-seekers. We also saw a rise in clients looking for **summer college internships**. And we worked with multiple clients applying to **grad school**.

We traveled to places as far-reaching as **Seoul, Reykjavik, Lisbon, and Krakow**, where we shared tips and strategies with families and students eager to learn about the process.

While things are changing, our core values remain the same. You can read some of the amazing stories from the **15th senior class at Humanities Preparatory Academy** to work with Bill Short. Their small **New York City** public high school was profiled in the movie **From Homeless to Harvard**.

We will always challenge ourselves to **find new ways to help our clients** realize their dreams. It's exciting to **introduce you to a few seniors** in this newsletter, including a social scientist, two applying to the same school through different Early plans, a multidisciplinary and a student we are sure will be a future Governor. **We wish the entire Class of 2018 all the best.**

— **Bill Short, Founder and President**

THE SHORT LIST'S

success stories: **UChicago (Early Decision I)**

New York

**Minimize Stress:** *Zoe***The Junior Olympian**

Zoe comes from an international family in the heart of New York City. Her father is Colombian and Cuban, and her mother Ecuadorian. Zoe loves everything about living in the city, especially the Natural History Museum where they began to know her by name. She is a visual and experiential learner.

As a young girl, Zoe was diagnosed with hypotonia—a condition that results in low muscle strength—that would leave her weak and listless. Her family enrolled her in Taekwondo, and she took to it immediately. She practiced every day and watched her body get stronger. Her growing confidence carried over to competitions. She quickly climbed the ladder at



her dojang and began entering national and international competitions. She qualified for the Junior Olympics at age 11 and took a silver medal. By the time she was a junior in high school she was winning gold medals.

We began working with Zoe as a junior and could immediately see she was a prolific writer and debater, with a love for economics and the social sciences. Despite her intelligence, Zoe's challenges often left her frustrated. Once identified, however, she was given the tools that allowed her

to soar in everything, including academics. She understood others suffered the same and decided to independently research education policy reform around special education. Amazed by her research, her school asked her to present her findings to the entire student body.

We recognized it would take a unique school to match her academic ambitions, urban sensibility, and drive to succeed. She is accomplished in so many different ways that we challenged her to consider schools she might not have thought of. She visited the University of Chicago and immediately fell in love. UChicago has a rigorous core curriculum, a quarter calendar that moves twice the speed of a semester calendar, and

world-renowned social sciences departments, particularly in economics. Zoe's mind was made up when she found she would be able to conduct research as a freshman.

We showed Zoe how to demonstrate her interest and build a relationship with the school. She had the GPA and test scores, and now just needed to complete her application. Like everything in Zoe's life, she jumped in with great intensity. Every word of every essay had to be just right before she would hit the Early Decision I submit button. Zoe received the good news she had been accepted just before the December holidays and knew she had submitted her last application. She is already planning for her move to Chicago in the fall.

THE SHORT LIST'S

success stories: **UChicago (Early Decision II)**

Hong Kong

**Unique Approach:** *Jack***The Gap Year**

Jack was born in Australia, and his parents make their home in Hong Kong. He was home-schooled for several years and often joined his parents on their global travels. In a world of adults, Jack found his personal escape in books. Those books motivated him to become a storyteller.

Jack's family enrolled him in a boarding school in England at the age of eight, where he learned to adjust from a world of all adults to one of only kids his age. Jack still loved stories, and by the time he got to high school, he was telling them through photography. His classmates began asking him to photograph their events. They

often joked that, while Jack followed their moves on the football pitch, they followed his movements up and down the sidelines capturing them in action. After the games, Jack's room would come alive with students eager to relive the game through his photos.

We met Jack in the spring of his junior year and began helping him plan a gap year. In late summer, Jack suddenly announced he wanted to apply to university now, instead of during his gap year. Jack hadn't visited a school, taken a standardized test, or done any preparation to apply. We knew he—and we—needed to move quickly.

We helped Jack register for the SAT and lined him up with



our test prep division. We then helped him research schools. He had a growing list with no demonstrated interest, so we recommended he plan some visits and helped Jack put together a college tour for the fall of his senior year. He fell in love with the University of

Chicago and wanted to apply Early, but meeting the Early Decision deadline with the quality application we knew he needed was going to be difficult. Thankfully, UChicago has an Early Decision II deadline. It would still be binding but would give Jack six more weeks to prepare.

Jack worked hard on his essays and activity resume and secured recommendations from his teachers and counselor. We held our collective breath until we saw his SAT results were within range. Jack stayed focused and submitted his application before the deadline. In mid-February, we received an email confirming that Jack had been accepted, and will join Zoe at UChicago after his gap year.

THE SHORT LIST'S

success stories: **Tufts University**

Japan

**Total Happiness: TUCKER****The Multidisciplinary**

Some people are born performers. **Tucker** is one of them. His mother is Japanese and his father American. They raised Tucker and his older brother in both Japan and the States. Both boys were young musical prodigies. We worked with Tucker's older brother, now a student at the Berklee School of Music in Boston, when he was attending an international school in Japan. Tucker attended the same high school in Tokyo but transferred to a boarding school in Massachusetts after freshman year.

Tucker is known throughout his school as an actor, singer, and musician. He has played the violin since he was four and composed music for as long as he can remember. He has been a member of numerous jazz bands, orchestras, and a capella

groups and has played the lead in countless school productions. Whether it's *Grease*, *Spamalot*, or *Hairspray*, Tucker's classmates expect to see him front and center.

Tucker's world off stage is very different. He is an unassuming, quiet student who cares deeply about the world around him. He spent six weeks prior to 10th grade in a language immersion program in Spain, and half of sophomore year as the only Western student at the African Leadership Academy in South Africa. Tucker attends school in rural Massachusetts where environmental protection defines the area. He is the president of his school's Environmental Action Club and helped write the school's environmental policies. This combination of music, culture, and environment has come to define his goals.

Tucker longed to find a way to combine his interests in a meaningful way. He knew of schools with strong environmental science or music programs, or even cultural or international programs, but longed to find one that combined all three. Tucker visited many schools, but always came back less than enthusiastic. He would rave about aspects of the school but never about the whole school. The Short List refused to give up on helping him find a school that could offer everything he was seeking.

One weekend, Tucker was visiting his brother in Boston, and we encouraged him to visit Tufts, a school renowned for its international focus, strong



musical partnerships, and environmental programs. Tucker discovered a world where he could pursue environmental studies in close collaboration with professors and classmates, audition for a dual degree with the New England Conservatory of Music, and even design and teach his own course in the Experimental

College, affectionately known as the ExCollege. Tucker took the holidays to consider his options and eagerly applied Early Decision II.

Tucker found a way to communicate his background and interests in one of the best-written essays we had ever read. He communicated the same in his supplement essays, always viewing them as a way to express himself. He eagerly hit the submit button. Six weeks later he sent a text that simply said, "I got in!"

THE SHORT LIST'S

success stories: **Harvard**

Massachusetts

**Future Success: Sarah****The Future Governor**

Sarah was a member of The Short List's Monday Night Group Class. She loved working with five other students and two counselors each week to craft her story in an application that would get her noticed. Little did we know Sarah's story would go well beyond her applications.

Sarah grew up in an unconventional mountain town in the middle of a state forest. Her town is the second-smallest town in Massachusetts with only 150 year-round residents, and no one in her family has ever gone to college.

Sarah is a National Honors Society student who took every advanced course her school offers. She then enrolled in several online courses to go beyond her school's offerings. Like many rural areas, Sarah's

town does not have high-speed Internet, and much of Sarah's homework and class assignments, especially her online courses, required her to go online. Sarah would drive a few miles to the parking lot outside the one-room town hall where she could access the Internet through the town's satellite Wi-Fi service.

There were many nights her mother had to drive over to the town hall to ensure Sarah would come home and get some sleep.

Sarah is a born leader. She is senior class president, a three-sport athlete, and team captain. However, her resume is dominated by community

service. She has coached soccer every Saturday morning, worked with the homeless, and helped organize her town's summer church fair. When her community suffered particularly hard during the economic downturn, with factories and local businesses shutting down or moving away, Sarah led the local chapter of Students Against Destructive

Decisions (SADD), helping provide positive alternatives to young people losing hope and turning to opioids and alcohol.

Her story caught the attention of Massachusetts Governor Charlie Baker, who invited Sarah to his State of the Commonwealth (State) address. Sarah thanked him for the

invitation but couldn't attend because her basketball team was playing a critical game to determine their playoff chances. Much to Sarah's surprise, [the Governor shared her story in his speech](#) and then invited her to the state capitol to personally meet with him and his wife. They asked Sarah about her ambitions and life on the mountain, including what it was like sitting in the car late at night doing her homework. Sarah humbly replied, "It wasn't so bad. I just turned on the heat in the winter, but in warmer weather I would sit outside." Listening, we completely agreed with the Governor's assessment of Sarah: "You are an incredible young lady." On March 28, Ivy League notification day, Sarah sent a text that said it all, "I got into Harvard!"



THE SHORT LIST'S

success stories: *Wonjai*



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and GIN, attending MUN conferences in Seoul, The Hague, and Beijing during his remaining high school years. He also organized an annual Habitat trip to Thailand. Junior summer he participated in a four-week social internship for low-income communities in the Boston area.

Junior year is often the most difficult year of high school, and Wonjai reached a point where his intense academic and extracurricular commitments threatened to overwhelm him. He decided to hit the pause button and give himself permission to dial back on his club commitments and take a more relaxed approach to his studies. The change worked for him. As Wonjai focused on learning rather than grades, a surprising thing happened—his grades actually went up.

Between his junior and senior years, Wonjai was accepted into Notre Dame's selective GIN program, "Towards A Just Peace," where he met equally passionate

students. He also went on several college visits and had settled on an Early school, but we encouraged Wonjai to make one final trip to visit Pomona College in Claremont, California, before returning to Seoul. By the end of the visit, Wonjai's entire college outlook changed. He discovered a diverse international community focused on the liberal arts and learning. He walked off the campus knowing it was the school for him.

We were equally excited but knew he had an uphill battle. It had been years since Pomona had accepted a student from his high school. Wonjai was fearless and determined, so we worked with him to tell his story through his application and leverage the support of his teachers and counselor. In December we received an email from Wonjai with the subject line, "AMAZING NEWS!!!" followed by, "Forgive the all-caps, I figured the occasion warranted it!" We couldn't have agreed more.

The Short List College Fund

Founder **Bill Short** has been the **volunteer college counselor** at **Humanities Preparatory Academy**, a small public high school in **New York City**, for the past **15 years**. There are too many impressive students to include them all by name, but here are quick **updates on two students** who are well on their way to success in college and beyond.



Raul (Dartmouth '19) spent the fall semester studying in Paris. This was his second study away program, having studied in South Africa between freshman and sophomore year.

Cristian (NYU '19) is a campus leader, tour guide, and ambassador. He is spending the spring semester in Shanghai, China.



These students are receiving an education that a few years ago seemed unimaginable. **The Short List has promised to pay each Prep student's textbook expenses** as long as they remain in college. This offer is made possible through the **generous donations of people like you** who contribute to **The Short List College Fund**, a non-profit extension where every donation is **100% tax deductible**.

To learn more about **The Short List College Fund Program** or to make a **tax-deductible** contribution, please email us at fund@theshortlist.org.

The Short List on the Road



International Dates

- **February**
Tokyo, Shanghai, Hong Kong
- **April**
France, Italy
- **October**
Montreal
- **March**
Singapore, Phnom Penh, Seoul
- **May**
Berlin
- **November**
Paris, London

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