



fall | 2010

www.THESHORTLIST.org

Meet
Some
of Our
Clients

THE SHORT LIST'S

success stories:

Massachusetts



Client Ownership: *Emma*

The Activist



We first met Emma when she was a senior in high school. She already had a good sense of her college list; she just needed

guidance on applying. Emma had singled out the University of California Santa Cruz.

Part of the top-rated University of California public university system, UCSC is a popular school—and nearly impossible to get accepted into from out of state. UCSC honors its commitment to California applicants, maintaining a 97% to 3% ratio for in state vs. out-of-state acceptance.

Emma is from Massachusetts, so The Short List pointed out that she faced an uphill battle and urged her to consider other schools as well. The more we got to know Emma, the more we understood why UCSC, with its focus on activism and social responsibility, appealed to her. She was a student leader, enjoyed community service, and had traveled abroad to help build homes for those less fortunate. Emma loved to learn and was more motivated by what she was learning than by grades. She also exhibited maturity and independence in the way she approached potential schools and her life goals.

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Greetings from THE SHORT LIST

Letter from Our Founder

Fall is one of our favorite times of year. College and career clients are starting new phases of their lives, while high school seniors are busy with the college application process. We enjoy the sense of optimism that goes along with these important transitions, and are excited to share some of our clients' experiences with you.

We noticed several key developments in 2010. There was a real split among our college-bound students who decided between big universities and small liberal arts colleges. Use of the common application continued to expand to include many new public schools. Columbia University, the last of the Ivy League schools, and the University of Michigan are also set to join. Accordingly, **more schools will see their applicant pool expand exponentially.** A recent *New York Times* article cautioned applicants against rushing applications with little thought given to the schools to which they are applying.

The economy started to show small signs of recovery, with many of our college graduates starting new jobs in their chosen fields and more clients pursuing graduate school as a means to improve their opportunities. **All of this means both graduate schools and career opportunities will become more competitive.**

The Short List continued our international expansion and now works with families throughout Asia, Europe, South America, the Caribbean, and the Middle East. Our most recent additions include Lebanon, Turkey, and Haiti. We also added two new counselors to our staff. **Barrie Harper** comes to us with years of experience in international college admissions and study abroad planning. **Tim David-Lang** has worked on both the high school and college sides of the college admissions process, allowing him to bring the best insights of both perspectives to the table for our clients. **You can learn more about all of our counselors at www.theshortlist.org.**

We are especially pleased to report that **The Short List College Fund has now paid the textbook fees of nearly 50 of our current scholarship college students, and helped fund several college visitation trips this year.** These trips, in particular, made the difference for several students who were admitted to colleges where they might not have otherwise had a chance of acceptance.

As always, we hope you enjoy reading some of the success stories that highlight our guiding principles: *client ownership, reduced stress, unique approach, total happiness, and future success.* **We congratulate all of our clients and wish them the best this fall and throughout the coming year!**

—Bill Short, Founder and President

THE SHORT LIST'S

success stories: **Hong Kong****Reduced Stress:** *Curtis***The Swimmer**

When we first met Curtis, he defined himself as a swimmer. He swam for his school, swam for a club program, competed in international

swim meets, and became an assistant coach to younger swimmers. He tested his skills by traveling to San Francisco to compete with the elite Terrapin Swim Team.

The competition made Curtis a stronger swimmer every day. He returned to Hong Kong with incredible confidence and a desire to swim in college. His father had attended schools in New England while his mother had familiarity with the West Coast, so Curtis pursued schools on both coasts. All seemed fine until Curtis started coming

up short of breath in his practices and was eventually diagnosed with exercise-induced asthma. As a result, Curtis felt that he had to make a decision to pursue a college swim program or pursue a college. The Short List saw things differently and began suggesting schools where he might be able to do both. Curtis eventually found Claremont McKenna, a Division III school where he might be able to swim if he felt the desire, but where, more importantly, he would receive a great education. He would also have access to four other nationally ranked schools in the Claremont system.

Curtis knew Claremont McKenna was among the most selective liberal arts colleges in the U.S. He traveled to the school to attend an information session and take a tour, met the admissions rep when she visited his high school, and developed an email dialogue with the admissions staff. His efforts paid off: When The Short List spoke with the Claremont McKenna representative at a national college counseling conference and mentioned an

interested student from Hong Kong, the admissions rep interjected, "Oh, you mean Curtis!" Curtis had made an impression in person, but now needed to do the same in his application.

He wrote about his love for swimming, the challenges he encountered, and the many lessons he learned along the way. He discussed other activities that rounded out his life and his love for learning. The Short List could see this was no longer just about his college application, but a true celebration of the young man Curtis had become. He applied Early Decision to CMC because he felt certain it was his school.

The Short List encouraged Curtis to have other applications ready...just in case. In the end, he didn't need them. Curtis is now happily settling in at Claremont McKenna, and may yet join their swim team someday.

THE SHORT LIST'S

success stories: **New York City****Unique Approach:** *Grace***The Dancer**

Grace is an appropriate name for this talented dancer. She comes from a family of entertainers and has danced, modeled, acted, and mentored other

young performers most of her life. When it came to helping her pick a college, The Short List knew it would have to be a special place.

Grace wasn't certain she wanted a career in dance but did want a strong dance program. She also talked about other interests and her desire to run a business someday. Knowing a conservatory wouldn't meet her needs, we started with a long list of schools ranging from large universities with multiple academic choices to small schools with more focused

liberal arts programs. Grace knew she might want to dance outside of school, so we suggested she focus on schools in big cities.

Grace visited schools in other cities but always found herself missing New York. We could see her enthusiasm for schools closer to home, so we helped her focus her energies on New York City. The Short List suggested Grace visit Barnard College, a small women's college that is part of Columbia University. The more she researched the school, the more her interest was piqued by Barnard's liberal arts education, ability to empower women, and affiliation with the famed Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater. Grace also loved that students could enroll in classes at Columbia University and participate in activities on both campuses.

The Short List discovered that Barnard was hosting a selective preview day to which students had to apply with an essay describing why the visit was right for them.

Grace worked as hard on this application as she did on her college applications and was invited to the special two-day event. She met similar-minded women from all over the world and began to see that Barnard was a place where she could become a well-trained dancer and receive a broader, top-notch education.

Performing artists, like athletes, pursue a college on two tracks. Grace had the regular applications to complete, but also the auditions to attend. Early in her senior year, she decided to apply to Barnard Early Decision. She continued to attend auditions and work on applications for other schools, but waited eagerly for news from Barnard. Finally, word arrived that Barnard was excited to have her join their dance program.

For Grace, Barnard offered the best of all worlds. Her call to let us know of her acceptance attested to her excitement at enrolling at Barnard this fall.

THE SHORT LIST'S

success stories: **Thailand****Total Happiness:** *Nicholas***The Global Nomad**

Nicholas has lived in Jamaica, Turkey, Greece, Switzerland, and Thailand. Never a local and never a citizen, Nicholas became a "third culture" kid—a global nomad who combines elements of several different cultures to create his own unique identity.

His diverse upbringing gave Nicholas interests in history, political science, and international relations. He knew he wanted to attend school in the U.S. but didn't know whether a small liberal arts college or a large university would be best. Believing a college tour could help him decide, The Short List helped Nicholas research schools and plan a trip; he asked us to focus on schools in or near Washington, D.C. The trip helped Nicholas see advantages in both small and

large schools, and he decided to apply to both.

Streamlining Nicholas's upbringing, experiences, and academic interests into a singular story was challenging. He designed an activity sheet with subcategories that told parts of his story in fascinating ways. He wrote an activity essay highlighting his Model United Nations leadership and experiences traveling in Asia. His personal statement brought it all together as he shared what it meant to be a global nomad.

Nicholas set his sites on an elite small liberal arts college and an acclaimed public university. To have a chance at both, he took the risk of not applying Early Decision. Nicholas was accepted

to both his top-choice schools and made the decision to go big. He is now part of the proud tradition of the University of Virginia, experiencing what all UVA students call "first year," learning about secret societies, and living in an international dorm on one of the most beautiful grounds in America.



THE SHORT LIST'S

success stories: **Haiti****Future Success:** *Jude***The Survivor**

Jude grew up in Haiti and worked the streets of Haiti's capital, Port-Au-Prince, with his street-vendor grandmother when he wasn't in school. His grandmother's example still motivates him.

Jude moved to the U.S. as a teenager. He was mocked for his French accent in school, so he became quiet and learned to express himself through

hip-hop dance. However, other than dance, Jude found he had little in common with the other dancers, many of whom seemed lost and distracted.

Luckily, a teacher encouraged Jude to aspire to college. He graduated from Babson College, one of the nation's top undergraduate business colleges. At Babson, he discovered finance, which he saw not just as a subject but also a way to make dreams possible, knowing that his grandmother built her business through micro-financing.

After college, Jude worked in financial services. We met him when he decided to pursue an MBA. The Short List helped him put together an application strategy. His list of schools was challenging, including only the nation's top schools. He struggled to articulate his story. It wasn't until Jude realized his real goal was to return to Haiti someday and provide micro-financing to other entrepreneurs that his essays came alive.

Jude held off applying to his top choice until he became more comfortable with his

essay writing. This also gave him a chance to visit schools and interview. In the end, Jude was accepted to nearly all of his schools, including Harvard Business School, his top choice. Within weeks of his acceptance, an earthquake left Haiti devastated. Seeing the extent of the damage and knowing the challenges his fellow Haitians face in overcoming the disaster, Jude feels more driven than ever to use his education and career ambitions to help his country recover.

THE SHORT LIST'S

success stories: *Emma**Continued from page 1*

The University of California requires all applicants to apply regular decision but on an early decision timeline – November! UC also has its own application with unique questions. We had our work cut out for us to get Emma prepared.

Emma was already working on her application when we met her. Her writing was good but lacked the personal details that would set her apart. The Short List suggested that Emma find a way to convey a story that truly represented her. She crafted countless essays until she

finally felt she achieved the right approach. We also used the activity sheet to help Emma share her contributions outside the classroom. She found a theme that more clearly expressed her strong sense of connection to UCSC.

Since Emma had to wait until spring to hear from UCSC, we used the time from November forward to help her research and apply to other schools. Her work on the UCSC application had clarified what was truly important to her, and The Short List helped her identify other schools that

could provide a similar type of experience. It was exciting to see her define why each school was right for her and open herself to additional possibilities.

In the end, Emma was accepted to nearly all of her schools, including UCSC. Having real options made her final decision to attend UCSC even sweeter, shifting her decision from "I have to attend this school" to a much more positive, "I want to attend this school."

Prep Update

The Valedictorian

Frank – Washington & Lee

Meet Frank and you'll believe anything is possible. His mother was a police officer injured at the World Trade Center on 9/11. He grew up as the man of the house to both her and his younger sister, but this did not stop him from working hard in school and aspiring to greatness. In June, Frank was named valedictorian. He told Bill that he wanted to study engineering, but also might want to become a lawyer. Bill spoke to the Dean of Admissions at Washington & Lee, one of the few elite liberal arts colleges that also has an engineering program. The Dean came to visit Prep and met Frank. He was impressed enough to have Frank come down for a visit. Frank is now enrolled as a freshman and has begun his studies at Washington & Lee.

The Doctor

Whitney - UCLA

Whitney was Bill's first Prep student and knew even then that she wanted to become a doctor. She earned her B.S. from Bryn Mawr College, attended Stanford Medical School, and this fall started the UCLA Neuroscience PhD program.

The Standout

Angela – University of Chicago

Angela grew up in New York's foster care system. She earned her degree from Knox College in Illinois before being accepted to the University of Chicago's prestigious Social Services Master's program. Angela wants to create change, and she is certainly off to a good start. Read more about Angela on the University of Chicago School of Social Service Administration website.

Click here.

Prep Commitment



This past year, Founder and President Bill Short completed his eighth year as a volunteer college counselor at Humanities Preparatory Academy in New York City. Thanks to your generosity, The Short List College Fund helps many of these students tour colleges, apply, and pay for textbooks.

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