



2019 newsletter
www.THESHORTLIST.org

Meet
Some
of Our
Clients

THE SHORT LIST'S
success stories:
Brown
Hong Kong



Client Empowerment: Michael

The Stand Out

Parents typically contact us for guidance for their student. However, Mike reached out to us on his own. His parents empowered him to be the decision-maker. We provided updates, but never actually spoke to them.



Mike spent most of his early childhood in and around New York City, where he said everyone looked and acted just like him. "The key," he said, "was not to stand out if you wanted to fit in." Mike took challenging classes, but not too challenging. Got involved, but not too involved. Thought about college, but with little clarity. That would change the day Mike's family moved to Hong Kong following Mike's 9th grade year.

Mike was the only African-American student at his new international high school. His classmates worked hard to excel in their academics, got involved in activities both in and outside of school, and were already thinking about college. Mike wondered how he would survive in a place where he didn't blend in.

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Greetings from THE SHORT LIST

Letter from Our Founder

The Wall Street Journal reported last January that elite colleges and universities spend on average **just 8 minutes reviewing each application**. Students will spend weeks, perhaps months, writing their applications, and admissions will spend **just minutes rendering a decision**.

I spent time with **NYU's Dean of Undergraduate Admissions**, and here's what he had to say about this discrepancy: "We received **84,000 applications** this year. Applicant numbers that high are usually reserved for public universities. I have **34 admissions officers**, hired **45 additional readers**, and told them **they have eight minutes to read an application**. If after eight minutes they aren't close to making a decision, they need to get a cup of coffee or pass the application on to someone else."

How can a student impress admissions in just eight minutes? They need to make it easy for someone reading the application to see immediately their **ability to compete in the classroom**, how they will **contribute to the college or university community** and a **true desire to attend** the school if accepted. This newsletter highlights the stories of **five very talented students who did just that** and earned an early acceptance to their top-choice school.

**SOME ELITE COLLEGES
REVIEW AN APPLICATION
IN 8 MINUTES (OR LESS)**

► **THE WALL STREET JOURNAL.**

The Short List test prep division continues to build **one of the strongest reputations in the country**, with students seeing big jumps in their SAT and ACT scores.

Our **grad school and career divisions** are having success guiding clients beyond college, including **Gillian**, who was accepted into a **master's program at Cambridge University** this past fall and will attend **Columbia University Law School** next fall.

Finally, The Short List remains **committed to underserved markets**, especially students attending **New York City's under-resourced public schools**. Last year's pro bono students are enjoying life at four-year colleges in cities like Washington, DC; Philadelphia; New York City; and Boston. Their group picture on page four says it all.

All our clients have demonstrated impressive commitments to their future goals, especially considering **they had just eight minutes to make an impression**. It's an honor to work with every one of them.

— Bill Short, Founder

THE SHORT LIST'S

success stories: Duquesne

Pennsylvania



Minimize Stress: Emma

The Teacher

We often hear from students, "I would love to get as much done this summer as possible because I know senior year will be busy." As we got to know, Emma, however, it became clear that "busy" was an understatement. Our first priority became reducing stress for her and her family.



Emma was a cheerleader throughout high school and elected team captain. She was part of a three-year leadership academy that included teaching second-graders in Belize. She joined Kids Helping Kids and was twice selected to travel to

the Dominican Republic. She progressed upward through the organization, serving first as a junior mentor, then one of seven super mentors training other mentors, before being elected a natural helper and finally to the executive board.

Emma thrived working with others, so we recommended she join The Short List's first-ever summer group class for families looking to expedite the early application process. Emma's group consisted of six students and two counselors. Each week they tackled another step in the process

and collectively completed their common applications shortly after Labor Day. Weekly assignments kept the process moving forward in a manageable way so Emma could maintain a summer job as a lifeguard. She quickly stood out as the student who came to each call prepared, spoke up during the group sessions, offered feedback to others in her group, and welcomed their feedback in turn.

At school, Emma served as a teacher's aide and had long considered becoming a teacher herself. The Short List helped her research schools with strong academics, school spirit, and affordability. She visited several and took careful notes, comparing one school to the next. She was

accepted to every school she applied, even one to which she hadn't applied but that offered her an acceptance because her application was so outstanding.

Emma was thrilled with her choices, but one school stood out from the rest because it based tuition rates on academic major and earning potential after graduation. That meant she could get the education she wanted without becoming burdened with student loan debt that would make teaching less feasible as a profession.

Emma decided Duquesne University was the perfect school for her goals. She announced her decision at a family gathering toward the end of 2018, and then got back to her busy senior year.

THE SHORT LIST'S

success stories: DigiPen

South Korea



Unique Approach: Oliver

The Game Designer

Oliver attends an international school in South Korea. He came to us somewhat lost as to what he wanted to study in college. The more The Short List learned about Oliver, the more we understood why.

Oliver was about to enter junior year and his school's two-year International Baccalaureate (IB) program. His three higher-level courses—psychology, economics, and French—highlighted the breadth of his curiosity. His extracurricular activities demonstrated his creativity: He served as set designer for various school theater productions and participated in Tech Crusaders, a club that designed the school's website

and taught coding to middle schoolers.

Oliver was slow to reveal his passion for video games, believing we wouldn't understand. But we clearly saw how video games combined stagecraft, coding, and design. Once we validated his passion, Oliver took us deep into the world of video game production, storyline, and user experience.

We traveled to Korea to meet with Oliver and his family, and we encouraged Oliver to consider summer game design programs, including one at the University of Washington.



The Short List also researched both traditional universities and renowned game design schools for Oliver to visit while in the U.S. Finally, we brainstormed Oliver's IB program extended essay.

Oliver settled on researching how the gaming industry has influenced French culture, adding a twist by deciding to write the paper in French.

Oliver spent several weeks on the University of Washington campus collaborating with award-winning designers and passionate classmates on the design of a new video game.

When he returned home, he poured his energy into his applications, highlighting how his academics, extracurricular activities, and summer program connected him to game design.

After submitting his applications, Oliver turned his attention to completing his IB essay. He also organized an in-school Super Smash Bros charity video game tournament, with all proceeds supporting Compassion International, a charity that supports service work globally. Oliver was beginning to see how he could turn his passion into meaningful action. DigiPen Institute of Technology saw the same and, in December, accepted Oliver into their award-winning game design program.

THE SHORT LIST'S

success stories: Northwestern

Bermuda



Total Happiness: Léa

The Urban Islander

Léa grew up in Bermuda and attended one of the top international schools on the island. She believed she would be happiest attending college in the United States but knew nothing about the U.S. admissions process. Léa was a freshman, so we had plenty of time to help her explore and prepare.

Léa was a leading student in her school and community. At the end of her freshman year, she was recognized with the President's Award for her top GPA, nominated for Bermuda's Youth Volunteer Award for her work at an autism community center, and elected by her classmates to one of three prefect positions.

Léa was clearly talented and driven, so our goal was to keep her focused. She was a strong STEM student but also loved art. The Short List encouraged her to use the summer to explore her interests outside the classroom and helped her research summer programs. She was accepted to a photography program at NYU and boarded a plane with her Nikon D3400 ready to explore the city.

Manhattan is about the size of Bermuda, but couldn't be more different. Léa was inspired and used every opportunity to photograph her new environment. She then returned to the U.S. the following summer for another

photography course and to continue exploring colleges.

Léa was particularly drawn to city schools where she would face a high volume of competition in the admissions process. She needed to match her top GPA with top standardized test scores, and was not happy with her initial results. We paired her with one of our test prep division, and Léa saw her scores soar. Things were coming together nicely when she entered the application season.



Léa visited several schools over her three high school summers and felt she would be happiest at Northwestern with its strong STEM, art, and communication programs. She loved the easy access to Chicago and vibrant urban life. Léa says

her first summer in New York turned her from an island girl into a city girl but also helped her realize she never wanted to venture too far from the beach. Northwestern, with its sandy Lake Michigan campus beach, provided the best of both worlds, and offered her admission in December.

THE SHORT LIST'S

success stories: Columbia Law School

England



Future Success: Gillian

The Patent Lawyer

We first worked with Gillian when she was a high school student applying to college. She eventually attended Colby, a liberal arts college, to study both art and sociology. She contacted us again after graduating Colby for help planning her future.

Gillian shared how her interests in the sociological applications of art led her to intern at the Art Institute of Chicago prior to senior year. She worked closely with the photo editor in clearing reproduction rights for images and other copyrighted material. She gained some understanding of the rules by which artistic knowledge was circulated and replicated, discovering in intellectual property (IP) laws a key aspect of the relationship between art and society.

During her senior year, Gillian met the Associate Director for Conservation at the Whitney Museum of American Art. The director showed her how new technologies and digitization were changing the understanding of how art should be conserved and replicated at an unprecedented rate. The museum's Rights and Reproduction Department faced complicated issues when it came to securing artists' copyright protection given the new forms by which art was being produced and the proliferation of unmonitored online exchange.

Gillian came away from the discussion believing she



was intersecting with a crucial moment in the history of art and law. She applied for an internship at a top law firm with a renowned IP practice. She read through case files and discovered IP law offered her the chance to grapple with the questions raised during her visit to the Whitney. After giving a presentation on artificial intelligence's influence on redefining traditional practices of copyright authorship, Gillian knew she wanted to become an IP lawyer.

Gillian's time at Colby made her aware an education in law would not be enough, so she applied for post graduate studies in sociology of media and culture at Cambridge University in England. She believed the master's program would

provide her with theoretical and analytical skills to understand the impact of technology on both art and IP law.

We also worked with Gillian to identify the best law schools for her future practice area. She decided to apply Early Decision to Columbia because of its Kernochan Center for Law, Media, and the Arts. The Short List helped her craft her resume and work through her essays to highlight how Columbia would provide her a distinct opportunity to engage with issues of authorship, new forms of cultural production, and the dissemination of artistic knowledge. Gillian's focus and commitment paid off when she received word just before the holidays she had been accepted and would soon be moving to New York City, one of the world's artistic capitals.

THE SHORT LIST'S
success stories:
Michael



Continued from page 1

Mike first joined the Entrepreneur Club because he liked business and math. His club created two small businesses and organized a case study competition for 13 international schools in Asia. He also got involved in MIT LaunchX, a club that teaches high school students how to develop and pitch new business ideas. He founded the Stock Market Initiative and organized a school-wide stock market competition. Mike's classmates took note of his leadership skills, electing him to student government and eventually to the executive committee, where he serves as Senator of Discipline.

Mike told us he wanted a school that encouraged independence and had a strong math program. The Short List helped organize a summer college tour that included Brown University. Brown stood out for its open curriculum and self-directed student body. Mike needed to connect his background and interests to the school, and, under our guidance, took a carefully measured approach to every step of the process, down to the last word of his essay.

Reflecting back on his three years in Hong Kong, Mike said, "It's funny, but in trying to fit in, I somehow learned to stand out." We believe Brown took notice: Mike was the only student from his school accepted Early Decision out of more than a dozen who applied.

The Short List College Fund



Bill and college-bound clients in Times Square.

Founder Bill Short has been a **volunteer college counselor at Humanities Preparatory Academy**, a small public high school in New York City, **since 2003**. He runs marathons in part to **raise money for The Short List College Fund**, which helps pay for **student college tours, standardized testing and application fees**, and textbooks throughout college.

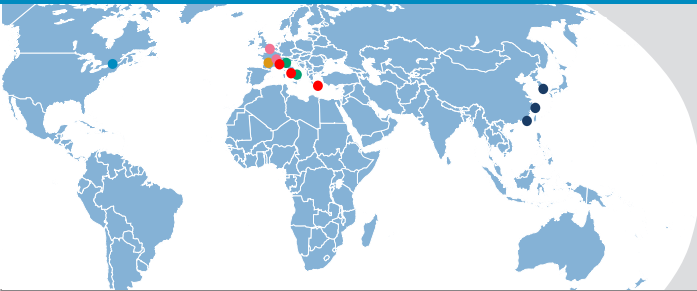
"The Fund sponsored eight college trips in 2018, including overnight visits to Philadelphia and Washington, DC. Prep and other Fund-sponsored students discovered schools they might never have considered, while college admissions had the opportunity to meet the students in person.

Each year Humanities Prep seniors create a legacy project. Last year's students created a **Summer Program and College Fair**. This year's group created a **College Awareness Program** for underclassmen. Through these legacy projects, they pay it forward to help the next generation of graduates.

Every donation to The Short List College Fund is 100% tax deductible. Your generous contributions help The Short List continue to **make a difference in so many lives** of students who otherwise might not have the same opportunities.

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

The Short List on the Road



International Dates

- March
Shanghai, Hong Kong, Seoul
- May
Venice, Vienna
- August
Florence, Geneva, Athens
- October
Montreal
- November
Berlin, London

Contact us for more information.

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