



THE SHORT LIST

COLLEGE & CAREER COUNSELING

www.THESHORTLIST.org

THE WOMEN ARTISTS  
2023-2024

Meet  
Some  
of Our  
Clients

THE SHORT LIST'S  
success stories:

Brown

South Korea



## Aileen

### The Singer Songwriter

On our first call with Aileen, she shared her passion for singing, dancing, and art—though calling it a “passion” hardly does justice to her extraordinary talent.

Aileen excelled at her international school in Seoul, thriving both academically and as a vibrant community leader. She led the Arts Council and the Tri-M Music Honor Society, competed in dance across Asia, and founded a club addressing mental health taboos in South Korea. Outside school, she flourished as a multilingual songwriter, artist, and performer. Her accolades included awards in songwriting, art, writing, and design, with multiple works published.

One of her proudest moments came when she submitted [Don't Say](#), an original R&B song, to the prestigious [John Lennon Song-writer's Contest](#). Competing outside South Korea's K-pop scene, she wrote, arranged, and performed the song, capturing the raw emotion of an impending breakup. Six months later, she won.

Aileen faced a challenge in finding

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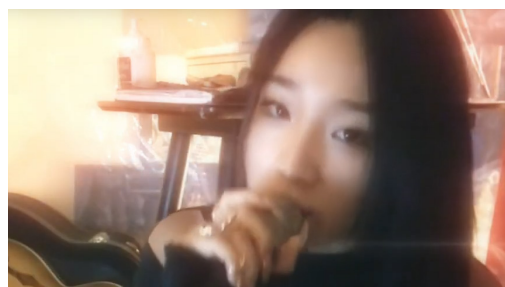
# Greetings from THE SHORT LIST

## Letter from Our Founder

After a global **pandemic** that forced students into **remote learning**, families were **thrilled** to see their children **return to school** and reengage with activities that fostered a sense of **community**.

To celebrate this **resurgence**, we've dedicated this issue to the extraordinary **women artists** who have graced our client roster over the past two years.

Meet **Aileen**, an award-winning multilingual **singer-songwriter** accepted to **Brown University** while securing a **recording contract**; **Elaine**, a **fine artist** creating bold, message-driven works addressing **complex issues**; **Colette**, a talented **ballerina** accepted to **The Boston Conservatory at Berklee**; and **Pearl**, an **actress** and one of only 7 undergraduate students admitted to **Julliard**, one of the most **prestigious acting programs** in the country. We're excited to follow the **promising futures** of these remarkable women.



▶ Watch **Aileen's** beautiful bilingual music video of **Lonely**

We also profile **Aziza**, a **refugee** from **Afghanistan**, whose story **transcends art**. We first met Aziza after she fled during the war and was living in a **camp** in Albania. Today, she is a **sophomore** at **Temple University**, pursuing a degree that once seemed **unimaginable** when the **Taliban** seized control of her country. Her **journey** is a testament to the **resilience** and strength of the **human spirit**.

This past year, the **NYC Department of Education** granted an **award-winning documentary film crew** access to **Humanities Prep**, a **public high school** where I am a volunteer college counselor. The filmmakers followed seven **first-generation seniors** navigating the process amidst recent **Supreme Court decisions** and evolving **admissions policies**. The project, **Admission Possible**, is now in **post-production**. Visit [www.admissionpossible.net](http://www.admissionpossible.net) to view **profiles**, and watch a compelling **four-minute trailer**.

The students in the film embody the **perseverance** and **success** I've witnessed during my 22 years of **volunteering** at the school. All seven are the **first in their families to attend college** and are now thriving as **freshmen**. Your **support** can help ensure this film is **completed** and its **powerful message** is shared with the world. Contributions are **100% tax-deductible** and can be made through the **Admission Possible** website.

As we step into another year of **uncertainty**, we hope these stories inspire **optimism** and remind us of the extraordinary **potential** in all of us.

— Bill Short, Founder

THE SHORT LIST'S

## success stories: Julliard

USA



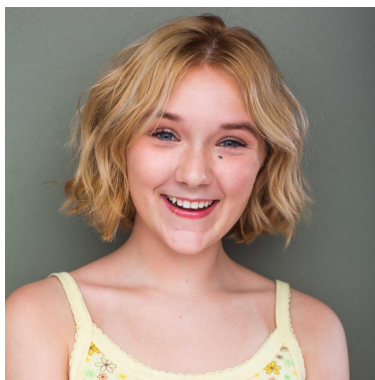
## Pearl

## The Actress

There was no doubt that Pearl's immense talent would lead her to a top conservatory for acting. However, navigating the complex application processes of such selective programs posed a significant challenge. With her free-spirited nature and open mind, Pearl was equally comfortable considering opportunities in Minnesota, Scotland, or staying rooted in NYC. The Short List quickly recognized that our role was not only to help refine her list of schools but also to establish a structured

approach in collaboration with Pearl and her parents to keep her on track.

Managing the Common App for US schools, the UCAS application for UK schools, and multiple independent applications required an "all-hands-on-deck" approach. With earlier-than-usual performing arts deadlines, we also tracked numerous portfolio platforms and audition portals, both in the U.S. and the U.K., especially those with less streamlined systems. A key focus was refining Pearl's essays to showcase her creativity and align them with the overarching narrative of



her applications.

Throughout the process, Pearl stayed true to herself and her passion for the craft. She excelled in auditions and callbacks, traveling as far as London to attend an invitation-only session at the

Royal Academy of Dramatic Art and tackling NYU's notoriously competitive audition day. But it was a long weekend at Julliard—spent with a select group of prospective students—where she felt most at home.

When decisions came in, Pearl had multiple offers but earned the rare distinction of being one of just 7 undergraduate students invited to join Julliard's Class of 2028. We can already see that Pearl is destined for greatness whether that is on stage or screen, and we are cheering her on every step of the way!

THE SHORT LIST'S

## success stories: Northeastern

China



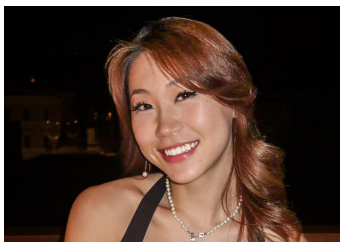
## Elaine

## The Fine Artist

We began working with Elaine during her sophomore year, shortly after her school reopened for in-person learning. Within a year, her world would change dramatically.

In our first session, we planned her junior-year courses, summer activities, and encouraged her to finish strong. Elaine excelled academically, balancing AP and IB courses, but her true passion was art—bold, message-driven pieces tackling complex issues. She earned Scholastic awards for her innovative work, including a piece depicting the pressures of education through a boy constructed from homework and seated in front of a UPC code symbolizing the manufacturing of

students. She was also the only high schooler to exhibit at China's first art show on body dysmorphia and eating disorders.



Eager to explore her multidisciplinary interests, Elaine took an Abnormal Psychology course at a U.S. college, toured campuses, and returned to China for a month-long workshop on sustainable fashion. China

went back into lockdown midway through junior year and her family spent four months living in a hotel. To restore stability, we helped her navigate the process for transfer to a U.S. boarding school.

By August, Elaine agreed to repeat junior year at her new school in the US—a transformative decision. She thrived, joining the golf team as its only female member, founding the school's first AAPI Club, and creating a powerful art piece titled *Railroaded*, contrasting the contributions of Chinese migrant workers to U.S. railroads with the Covid-era media backlash against Chinese Americans. She also created a TikTok documentary celebrating



her mother's hometown in China, garnering over 100K views.

Elaine sought a college blending her passions for art, psychology, culture and experiential learning. Accepted early to Northeastern University's "NU In" program, she began her freshman year in Rome, where she continues to immerse herself in art, language, and culture, broadening her worldview and shaping an extraordinary future.

THE SHORT LIST'S

## success stories: Boston Conservatory at Berklee

USA



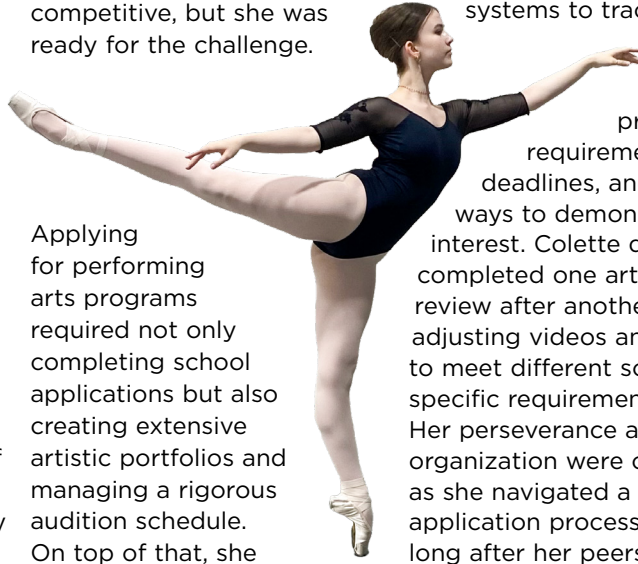
## Colette

## The Ballerina

Colette, a California native, has danced since she was a toddler. When she started working with The Short List in her junior year, she knew she wanted dance to play a role in her life post-high school but was unsure of what that would look like. She was deciding between attending college, a conservatory, or joining a dance company, so we helped her explore all three options. After extensive research, she created a list of colleges and conservatories with ballet and contemporary programs, as well as a

few dance companies as potential backups. She knew each path would be highly competitive, but she was ready for the challenge.

Applying for performing arts programs required not only completing school applications but also creating extensive artistic portfolios and managing a rigorous audition schedule. On top of that, she



squeezed in campus visits when possible. The Short List helped her implement systems to track each

program's requirements, deadlines, and ways to demonstrate interest. Colette diligently completed one artistic review after another, adjusting videos and essays to meet different schools' specific requirements. Her perseverance and organization were crucial as she navigated a lengthy application process long after her peers had

finished and submitted all their applications.

We often joked, "With your talent, 90% of this process is staying organized." And it was true. Thanks to her talent and focus, Colette was accepted into numerous BFA programs, including the highly sought-after University of California programs.

However, after an impressive visit, she chose The Boston Conservatory at Berklee and its renowned Contemporary Dance Performance program. We are thrilled for Colette and excited to see where her dedication to dance takes her.

THE SHORT LIST'S

## success stories: Temple University

## Aziza

## The Refugee

We were introduced to Aziza in early 2022 through an NGO aiding her resettlement in an Albanian refugee camp after fleeing Afghanistan. Aziza was seeking U.S. asylum and was looking for guidance applying to colleges. Her journey is one of extraordinary resilience.

In Kabul, Aziza attended a co-ed high school where girls studied outside in gravel yards, sharing textbooks without access to a library or science labs, and boys studied inside out of the hot sun.

In May 2021, she survived a Taliban bombing that killed 85 students, mostly girls. (You can read more about

the school bombing [here](#).)

Three months later, the Taliban took over the country, closing all girls' secondary schools. Fearing for her safety as an educated female, Aziza fled to Pakistan, then to



► [View a compelling short documentary about Aziza's school in Afghanistan.](#)

the Albanian refugee camp, where she lived for nearly two years.

For over a year, we remotely assisted Aziza in researching U.S. colleges open to refugees, guiding her through applications and writing recommendations.

After receiving asylum, she arrived in the U.S. in May 2023, in time to enroll at Temple University by August. We helped her organize dorm essentials and navigate financial aid. She excelled and finished her first year with honors. At the end of her freshman year, we helped her secure an accounting internship at a summer camp that also provided her with food and housing.



Aziza is now a sophomore majoring in Economics with a minor in Accounting. Though safe in the USA with no certainty she will ever see her family again, she remains hopeful as she builds a future, gaining access to the education and opportunities the Taliban had put out of her reach. Aziza's journey reflects the courage and strength of the human spirit as she forges a new life in the United States.



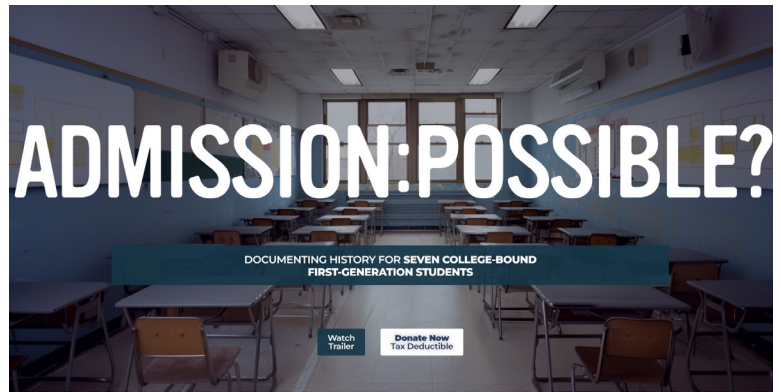
# Admission Possible: A Film Celebrating 22 Years of Triumph

Our Founder, **Bill Short**, has volunteered as a **college counselor** at **Humanities Preparatory Academy**, a NYC public school for **22 years**. What began as a **short-term assignment** grew into a **lifelong commitment** to guiding each senior class through the **college admissions process**.

This past year, the NYC Department of Education granted an **award-winning documentary film crew** access to the school to follow **seven seniors** and their families as they navigated the process amidst **significant changes in admissions policies** and **recent Supreme Court decisions**. Filming wrapped in August, and the project, **Admission Possible**, is now in **post-production**. The film's website—[www.admissionpossible.net](http://www.admissionpossible.net)—features profiles of the **students, faculty, and administrators**, along with a **powerful four-minute trailer**.

The **seven students** in the film reflect **22 years** of remarkable stories from students who overcame **challenges** to achieve **great success**. Many have pursued **advanced degrees** and now serve their communities as **doctors, nurses, teachers, lawyers, social workers**, and even **college counselors**. Their **perseverance** and **triumphs** deserve to be celebrated, and this film is a **meaningful way** to honor their journeys.

You can support this project with a **100% tax-deductible donation** through the [PayPal Giving Fund](#) link on the [Admission Possible website](#).



The Short List Founder **Bill Short** and cast of **Admission: Possible**

## THE SHORT LIST'S success stories: *Aileen*

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the right college—one that valued her creative passions while offering flexibility for broader interests. She applied Early Decision to Brown, drawn to its interdisciplinary focus. We helped her craft an application with the same care she poured into her songwriting. When Brown offered the option to submit a video,

we encouraged her to create a lively, unforgettable introduction. She was thrilled to be accepted.

Then came a surprise: Aileen competed in a singer-songwriter contest that garnered more attention. She was given the opportunity to record an album with a top South Korean producer. We supported

her through the tough decision to defer her Brown admission to spend the year in the studio.

We are confident that Aileen has a bright future ahead—whether she chooses to tour after her album's release, enroll at Brown next fall, or pursue both paths!

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