

## College Applications



**Chance Hall**  
Del Valle High School

When Rihanna sang "And you can feel my heart beating / You can feel it through my chest"? I felt that! I well and truly felt my heart just sitting there, beating along to the sound of it's own drum.

But all jokes aside, I listened to a lot of Rihanna while filling out college applications and I think I finally realized why, many months later.

I want to begin the basis of my idea based off of the song I probably listened to the most: Russian Roulette. According to Genius, a website that delves into the meaning behind song lyrics, the song tries to compare a relationship to a game of Russian Roulette, where one person wins at the expense of the other. Building on this idea of a parasitic relationship, I thought about how these colleges view applicants like me: one of many hopefuls trying to get a better education than what the state can give us through free public education. With my application it's my turn to go and audition for them, with very little time to think; the last sentence of the first verse of the song.

In fact, the song is riddled with these moments of connection, however fleeting they might be: "If you play, you play for keeps," relates to the simple yes or no on your college acceptance, and any later enrollments, "I know that I must pass this test" is an obvious reference to the SAT and ACT college acceptance tests and any later qualifying tests a university may ask for, and "I'm wondering if I will ever see another sunrise" is a metaphor on your educational career, will you be

able to stay a student for a few more years, or will the sun "set" on all your hard academic work?

As you can tell I had a lot of free time to be writing out these applications.

But I also had a lot of free time to be wondering about the stress and unbalanced power dynamics in this exchange between the applicant and the applier, something that only increased when I checked my Twitter feed and saw a tweet that talked about a hiring officer who said that she went by a simple rule: If she didn't receive a thank you email after the interview, she didn't hire them.

Now, a lot of people (rightfully) called her out on this form of gatekeeping, especially when many companies don't send followup or feedback emails. Looking through all of the replies to the tweet, it's obvious that people are growing more and more aware of the unbalanced power dynamics between who's hiring and who wants to get hired.

And then I thought about Rihanna again. In the second verse of Russian Roulette, the song takes a quick look at her opponent, the other person in the relationship, and has an epiphany: "And then I get a scary thought / The fact he's here, means he never lost."

And now taking into account the unbalanced nature of applying to something, whether it's a job, college, or something else, with the lyrics of Russian Roulette, we see a different story than a romantic relationship gone wrong; we see a very qualified hopeful, looking for opportunities and being rejected due to less-than-fair means. The hiring officers are stacking the deck against them, and at the end of the day, something has to give.

Luckily for me, a college didn't play this game with me and actually accepted me. However, many other colleges did play a quick game of russian roulette.

Guess who lost? Certainly not them.

## NCAA Championship



**Jackson Owens**

This Texas Tech will face off against Virginia in the NCAA mens basketball championship game. The Red Raiders finished their season 31-6 while Virginia went 34-

3. Texas Tech finished 1st in their conference (Big 12) and Virginia finished 2nd in their conference (ACC).

This will be Virginia's chance at getting their 6th national championship and it will be Texas Tech's first time making it to the national championship. After both teams managed to beat five different opponents, the ultimate test will determine who the true king of college basketball is of the 2018-19 season.

## SAT Prep



**Averill Topps**  
Stephen F. Austin H.S.

Hello everybody, today I would like to share my experience taking the SAT and all the studying I did.

The SAT is a standardized test that helps students get scholarship opportunities from various colleges that would be interested. The SAT is split into two parts - En-

glish and Math - that are each worth 800 points. These parts are split into a couple different segments that tests your knowledge on said subject.

When I first took the SAT I got a 720 on the English section and a 650 on the Math section. This surprised me because I thought that I would get higher on the English portion and lower on the Math section because I'm a avid reader. Taking this test really helped me understand what I needed to study in order to get a higher score so that I can get more scholarship opportunities.

That's all for this week. Until Next Time. Go Austin High Maroons.

## The Surprise Birthday Party



**Zaila Pearl Rowland**  
TOPS

Two weeks ago, my aunt had a surprise party at Olive Garden. Before church we had to buy the cake, balloons, and bought a present for her from my cousin. Of course, my little brother asked who the cake, balloons and presents were for, and I accidentally told him, Oops. Good thing he was not paying attention to me. Well, I thought he wasn't paying attention. After church he told everyone, and I mean everyone.

Before he was able to tell my aunt, my mom told my dad to get him and take him to the car. We had to get to Olive Garden early because we had to wait for a table. My Uncle called and said he was not coming, but my mom told him it was a surprise party for his wife. We had not told him, because he would have told her. He called my aunt and told her to turn around and come back, this gave people time to get there. She had about 30 people come to surprise her. When she finally showed up, she was so surprised. We had a lot of fun with family and friends. Her present from me was a candle and photo album with pictures of the two of us from the day I was born in 2009 to 2019. I love her so much and hope we have many more years together.

## Black Freedom and American Democracy

**Tuesday, April 16th @ 11:30 am**  
LBJ School of Public Affairs  
Bass Lecture Hall

"BLACK FREEDOM AND AMERICAN DEMOCRACY, 1619-2019: A 400 YEAR STRUGGLE" IS A ONE DAY CONFERENCE THAT BRINGS TOGETHER SOME OF THE NATION'S LEADING SCHOLARS OF AFRICAN AMERICAN HISTORY, RACE, DEMOCRACY, AND PUBLIC POLICY TO CRITICALLY RECONSIDER THE FOUR CENTURIES BETWEEN THE ARRIVAL OF ENSLAVED AFRICANS, STOLEN BY THE PORTUGUESE FROM ANGOLA AND THEN STOLEN ONCE MORE BY BRITISH PRIVATEERS, ON THE SHORES OF JAMESTOWN COLONY IN BRITISH NORTH AMERICA.

THE CENTER FOR THE STUDY OF RACE AND DEMOCRACY IS PROUD AND HONORED TO BE ABLE TO BRING THIS COMMUNITY OF SCHOLARS TO THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT AUSTIN AND THE LBJ SCHOOL OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS TO SHARE THEIR RESEARCH, INSIGHT, AND ANALYSIS ON THIS MONUMENTALLY IMPORTANT AND POLITICALLY RESONANT SUBJECT.

11:30AM KEYNOTE SPEAKER  
12:15 – 1:45PM SESSION ONE: ENVISIONING RACIAL JUSTICE, 1619-2019  
1:45-2:30PM BREAK  
2:30 – 4:00PM SESSION TWO: REIMAGING AMERICAN DEMOCRACY, 1619-2019  
For Details Call 512-471-0289

## Standardized Testing



**Tyler Allen**  
Gus Garcia YMLA

This is STAAR test week. These test are considered very helpful. Yet there are some con to taking them. Some of them are as following. These test can cause major stress. Students fell the pressure when it comes to performing well on test. Test score can affect student confidence.

This can lead to stu-

dents developing a negative attitude about their abilities and dislike school. Some say that teachers may be "teaching to the test" rather than giving students a deeper understanding of a subject.

Another problem is that evaluating a student's performance without considering external factors is not good. Some students have test anxiety, home life problems or just don't test well. These test only consider a single test performance upon evaluation. Lastly Standardize test only measure specific areas like reading, writing and math. They don't provide a full picture of soft skills needed to learn such as creativity, motivation and cooperation.

## Middle School Choir UIL



**Sarah Robertson**  
Connally H. S.

On Tuesday and Wednesday, April 2<sup>nd</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> Connally High School hosted the middle school choir UIL. Choir UIL consists of concert singing and sight-reading. I volunteered on Tuesday to help with sight reading portion of UIL. There were a lot of middle schools there

from the area Hutto, Pflugerville, Manor, Round Rock, etc. I was able to hear different choirs in various sizes, some had 10-13 people while others had 20-25 people in the choir.

Majority of the choirs I saw were mainly treble voice parts, which means mainly altos and sopranos. I had the job of passing out music and collecting music. For the sight-reading portion, the choir receives a piece of music that they never saw before and must sing the musical piece before three judges. I enjoyed myself listening to the musicality that these middle schoolers have. I can't wait to volunteer next year.

## Jay-Z's 2019 Shawn Carter Scholarship Program Now Open



**Nationwide (BlackNews.com)** — Created by rapper Jay-Z and his mother Gloria, the Shawn Carter Scholarship Fund (SCSF) was founded on the belief that any motivated individual in need should have the opportunity to further his or her education. By removing some of the financial burdens associated with going to, surviving in, and graduating from college, the SCSF plays a vital role in increasing college access and success for many motivated yet underserved youth and young adults.

The SCSF provides individual grants, paid directly to the educational institution, to every student who qualifies and reapplies yearly, from admission to graduation. The grant can be used to cover tuition expenses and related supplemental educational expenses such as books, lab fees, travel and select costs of living.

Eligibility requirements:

- \* High school seniors, students with GED diplomas, undergraduate (2 year or 4 year) college students, and students at vocational or trade schools

- \* US citizen or Permanent Resident

- \* 25 years old or younger

- \* Minimum 2.0 GPA

The deadline for this scholarship is usually in APRIL, and the award amount is usually up to \$7,500.

For more details and/or to apply, visit:  
<http://www.jayzscholarship.com>