

Preparing for College: the SAT and beyond

By Danielle Bouchat-Friedman

Getting into college is becoming more competitive than ever. Students not only need to get the best grades and be involved in numerous after school activities, but their scores are what colleges and universities use to compare students all across the country. It is a standard that most colleges and universities use these days to assess the students applying to their schools.

If your child's SAT scores are lacking, there are plenty of services located throughout Westchester County promising to boost their scores and confidence levels.

Ivy Bound

Mark Greenstein, the creator of Ivy Bound, has been teaching high school students how to take the SAT for 20 years. "I was just out of college and looking for a job, and worked for Kaplan," said Greenstein. He always liked teaching, and decided to start his own tutoring company. "Ninety percent of our business is the SAT," said Greenstein. According to Greenstein, SAT no longer stands for the Scholastic Aptitude Test, and hasn't since 1994. "I think people are uncomfortable with the word aptitude," said Greenstein.

Greenstein believes Ivy Bound possesses two qualities that make it different from other SAT preparation courses: flexibility and small at-home classes. "We offer private and semi-private classes," said Greenstein. Families can also get together to form an "at-home class," and split the cost of the course. "They need a minimum of four students, and the instructor will come to you," said Greenstein.

Ivy Bound also licenses all their practice tests from the College Board. "We pay a lot of money to do that," said Greenstein. The instructors at Ivy Bound are considered by Greenstein to be top notch. "We have a top one percent instruction standard – they need to have received a 1500 or better on their SAT," said Greenstein.

Ivy Bound offers its students a standard goal

– a 100 point improvement on an SAT test compared to a previous score, or half their money back.

Greenstein asks those who are interested in improving their SAT score to give Ivy Bound a three to five month commitment. Students should expect to spend between 30 and 40 hours of classroom time, and between 40 and 60 hours of home study.

The next Ivy Tutoring class begins September 7, and is being held at Rye Neck High School on Fridays from 3:00 until 5:30 p.m. The cost of the class is \$1050. For more information, visit www.ivybound.net.

The Princeton Review

The Princeton Review has been helping students in the Westchester County boost their scores since 1981. The Princeton Review boasts personal attention, expert instructors, and a satisfaction guarantee. "If students are not satisfied, they can take a refresher course for free, which offers 12 hours of instruction, plus two diagnostic tests," said Sarah Bodtmann, Assistant Director of Marketing for the Princeton Review.

While The Princeton Review's central office is located in Scarsdale, classes are offered all over in all counties. The typical SAT course provides 30 hours of classroom instruction, plus 4 diagnostic tests.

The next SAT course, which will prepare students for the SAT on October 6, begins August 25. The cost is \$1199, and a \$299 refundable deposit is required. The course is offered in Scarsdale and Yorktown on Saturdays, Mondays and Wednesdays until October 3, and in Mamaroneck on Saturdays, Tuesdays and Thursdays, until October 4.

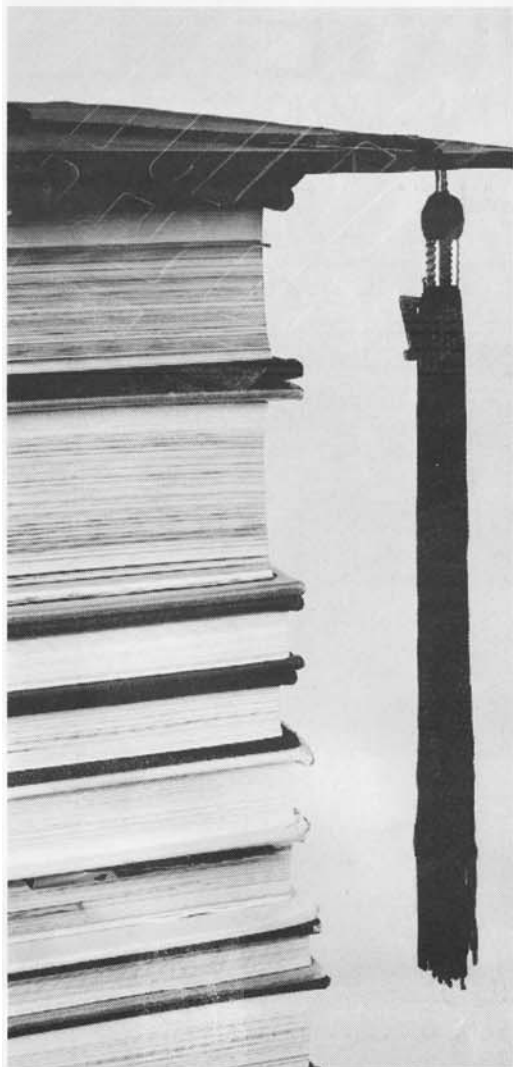
The Princeton Review is also holding its annual free PSAT Day on September 8. "It doesn't count, but we will give you a detailed score report," said Bodtmann. To register for the free PSAT, visit www.princetonreview.com, or call (800) 2-REVIEW.

Uniquely U College Essay Consultants

As colleges and universities are using the SAT test as a standard to compare students from all over the country, many are still looking for that 'x' factor that makes a particular student stand out from the rest. One way a student can do that is through his/her college essay. Ten years ago, Maxine Mulford helped her next door neighbor, Anand Ahuja, with his college essay. He was admitted to all the top Ivy League schools, but Princeton University told Ahuja that it was his college essay that got him in.

Mulford was an English major in college, and received her Master's from the University of Pennsylvania. "I taught creative writing, and have an understanding of how narratives work," said Mulford. Mulford and Ahuja became business partners 10 years ago to create Uniquely U College Essay Consultants, which is located in Stamford, Connecticut.

Mulford said it usually takes students between 5 and 7 sessions to finalize their essays. "I help them say what they haven't said," said Mulford. Mulford charges \$200 per hour, and she is the only college essay consultant on staff. To reach Mulford, visit Uniquely U's website at www.uuessay.com or call Mulford toll free at 1.866. UUESSAY.



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