August 2023 Issue 1

# Vestal High School Counseling and Guidance Newsletter







# RESTED, RELAXED AND READY

Welcome to a new school year. One that will bring many mixed emotions for both parents and students. There will be many questions answered throughout the year during our parent evenings, newsletters, and emails. It is imperative for families to keep up to date on senior happenings as it can get a bit overwhelming and confusing. One thing the pandemic taught us was that our Google Classroom is a very successful tool. While we plan on continuing using that platform to begin with, we will be transitioning to SchooLinks to get messages out regarding jobs, college applications, scholarships, financial aid and much, much more. Please see more information later in the newsletter.

The Counseling and Guidance Office is excited to announce some staffing changes for this school year. Ms. Merryl Wallach has officially retired after 30+ countless devoted years to Vestal School District. She is truly an irreplacable member of our department. We wish her all the best in her retirement and thank her for her service to the 1000's of students she has worked with over the years.

We also want to recognize Mr. Malvasio for his four years of service to our Counseling team. Mr. Malvasio returned to his alma mater as a Union- Endicott Tiger serving as an Assistant Principal at Jennie F. Snapp. We wish him all the best.

We are pleased to announce the arrival of Mrs. Kathryn Yezzi who will be joining our counseling team. Mrs. Yezzi grew up in Binghamton, NY. She graduated from Binghamton High School and St. Bonaventure University. Mrs. Yezzi holds a B.S. in Elementary/Special Education and a M.S.Ed in School Counseling. Mrs. Yezzi spent this past year working with Vestal Middle School students. Prior to her work in Vestal, she worked at Binghamton High School as a special education teacher and school counselor for many years. While in her previous district, she was a senior class advisor, club advisor and coach. She was a member of the school's leadership team and worked with local community resources to help assist students in various capacities. Mrs. Yezzi worked with all students to ensure their social/emotional, academic and career needs were met. She is very excited to start her new chapter at VHS!

Counselors are excited to welcome students back to a new school year. We will guide seniors through the many questions and concerns that arise during the year. The counselors are committed to helping each student with their postgraduation plans. Please feel free to reach out if you have any questions or concerns that arise during this school year. We are all here to help.



Mrs. Kathryn Yezzi

# SENIOR YEAR COUNSELOR

Students are assigned to their School Counselor based on the first letter of their last name. Please see the list below:

A-B will have Ms. Schneider

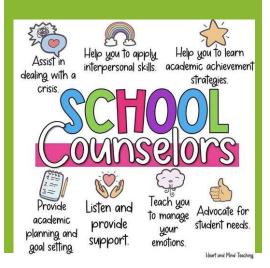
C-G will have Ms. Yezzi

H-L will have Ms. Smith

M-Se will have Ms. Jablonowski

Sh -Z will have Ms. Martino

Seniors in full-day alternative education programs will work with Ms. Martino



# Greater Binghamton COICEGE DELY at the Arena

On Wednesday, October 18, 2023, local School Counselors and Binghamton High School are sponsoring a College Information Day at the Visions Veterans Memorial Arena.

In previous years over 180 colleges and universities were represented, giving students and parents a chance to talk to people with firsthand knowledge of each school's requirements for admission and financial aid and what makes that school unique. We strongly encourage students to attend this event either during the school day with the counselors or in the evening with

their families.

Permission slips will be attached to this newsletter. Transportation will be provided during the school day. Feel free to check out the website at <u>www.binghamtoncollegeday.com</u>

#### **College and Military Representatives**

Last year, the Counseling and Guidance Office hosted over 50 college and military representatives in the office. College Admission Representatives typically come throughout the year to recruit and answer questions from students who may be interested in a variety of different majors, sports, and activities that each school has to offer. Information will be posted in our Google Classroom, school website, and announcements on upcoming visits.

Students should make every effort to participate in these opportunities if they are interested in that school or program. These meetings will help students decide whether a college or military program is a good fit. They will also help students understand admissions procedures and give some advice on possible majors and noteworthy programs. In regard to college admissions, often, the Admissions Counselor that is presenting will be the one to read our students' applications. This gives the Admissions Representative a chance to get to know our students on a personal level before reviewing their application file. You do not have to apply to a college before vising with a representative from that school.

If you wish to speak with a representative, please obtain a pass in the Counseling and Guidance Office.

# Senior Fundraising



This year's senior class will be participating in many fundraising events. Please keep your eyes out for more information. Students can check the Counseling and Guidance Google Classroom as well as the announcements for more information on upcoming fundraising opportunities to help with end of the year senior expenses. If you have any questions, please see Mrs. Gaylord or Mrs. McAllister in the Main Office.



The Counseling and Guidance Office in conjunction with the Vestal School District will be moving towards using the SchooLinks platform. We are excited to offer this opportunity for college/career searching, tracking activities and scholarship information. Please look for more information soon. This will replace our Google Classroom in the future.

# The College Application Process

Where to begin?

# <u>Vestal High School College Planner</u> (check out the online planner for more information)

Deciding where to apply to college can seem like a daunting task, but there are a wide variety of resources in print, on the web, and in the Counseling and Guidance Office to help you through the process.

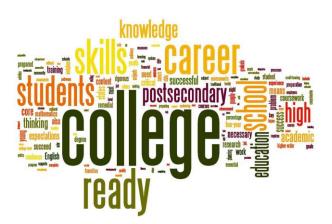
A good place to start is on the College Board website This site offers a program called Big Future (www.collegeboard.org/bigfuture) that helps student's focus on what is important in terms of college and career. In addition, a college search tool allows students to enter your preferences for location, size, selectivity, and other factors, and then gives a list of possible colleges. Students will also find sections on financial aid, tips for writing essays and completing applications, and more. Students will be able to save preferences and searches, along with standardized test scores, to their College Board account.

School Counselors are here to help throughout the application process. We will be visiting classrooms and meeting individually with students throughout the fall. We will also hold a Senior College **Information and Financial Aid** Night on Tuesday, September 26, 2023 at 6:30 p.m. in the High School Cafeteria to review the process with parents and answer any questions. A representative from SUNY Broome's Financial Aid Office will be here to give families an overview of the financial aid process and to answer general questions regardless of where your student is going to college. Students should feel free to make an appointment with their counselor at any time if they need extra assistance.



For Your Information...

Please plan to attend the September 26<sup>th</sup> Senior College Information and Financial Aid Night. School Counselors will provide general information on how to navigate the college application process. This will be followed by a Financial Aid presentation given by Richard Griffis Jr. from SUNY Broome. They will help you get started with your FAFSA and give important guidance on all aspects of financial aid.







#### NATIONAL HONOR SOCIETY NEWS

Declaration of Interest forms for National Honor Society will be available on September 7<sup>th</sup> in the Principal's Office and are due back to the Counseling and Guidance Office by 3 p.m. on Friday, September 25<sup>th</sup>.

# **IMPORTANT DATES**

IB and AP exam registration will take place in October. The fee for IB exams is \$119. The fee for AP exams is \$98 per exam. Detailed registration information will be sent to your home in October, but you should be aware that the fees for both exams will be due no later than Wednesday, November 1, 2023.



## Excelsior

## Scholarship

Some eligible students may qualify for the new Excelsior scholarship offered by New York State. This scholarship allows students to attend SUNY or CUNY colleges tuition-free. Families can check out <u>www.hesc.ny.gov</u> for more information on this scholarship opportunity.

# ANXIETY MIGHT LOOK LIKE.



Anxiety and stress look different in every person. These are some examples of how anxiety and stress can affect your students throughout the year. School Counselors are available to assist during these difficult times. Feel free to reach out if you or someone you know needs help. Contact us at 757-2214 or you can email your counselor. Now is the time for seniors thinking about playing intercollegiate Athletics in a Division I or II school to fill out the NCAA Clearinghouse form. This form is necessary to determine a student's eligibility to participate in college athletics as a freshman.

The Clearinghouse form is available online at <u>www.ncaaclearinghouse.net</u>. You must print out a Transcript Release Form and bring it to Mrs. Braun in the Counseling and Guidance Office. We will attach your transcript and submit it to the Clearinghouse.

### The College Application Essay

According to the College Board website, the application essay "is your opportunity to show admissions officers who you are and to provide information about yourself that didn't fit in other areas of your application. The essay also reveals what you can do when you have time to think and work in a writing project." The College Board website lists multiple resources and tips for essay-writing. Most importantly, remember that the essay is a way for colleges to see you as an individual, not just a set of statistics. You need to be sure that you shine through!

Some colleges are recommending <u>NOT</u> writing about COVID unless it significantly impacted you and your family. They want you to reflect on your previous experiences and who you are as a person.

Plan to have a teacher, counselor or family member review your essay before submitting. The 2023 - 2024 Common Application essay prompts can be found directly on their website at <u>www.commonapp.org</u>



Many students are deciding to work during this time. If your student is interested in getting a job and needs working papers, please have them stop into the Counseling and Guidance Office. Students must have a physical on file within the last 12 months in order to get their working papers.

## STEPS FOR SUBMITTING COLLEGE APPLICATIONS



There are several steps involved in actually submitting a complete application to a college:

1) You will need to start with the college's application. Most colleges use the Common Application for their application. Typically, applications are completed online and can be found at <u>www.commonapp.org</u>. However, be sure to read each college admission's website very carefully to determine their requirements.

2) In order for your School Counselor to submit the transcript and other required materials, you will need to complete a College Application Checklist and submit it, along with any necessary forms, to our office. A copy of the checklist is on at the back of this newsletter. This checklist must be submitted whether or not you apply online, as it is the key for our staff to forward all pertinent documents. Please use the hot pink form for Early Action/Early Decision and the white form for Regular Admissions.

3) If you applied online through the SENDedu, the Coalition App, the SUNY website, or the SUNY Broome website, you can request that your School Counselor submit materials online, as well. This is the preferred method as it saves time and postage, and also provides a record of submission dates. For online applications, you still need to complete a College Application Checklist, as this will serve to confirm that your request to the counselor was received and processed. Be sure to indicate whether the application was submitted through the Common App, Coalition App, SUNY, SUNY Broome, or SENDedu website.

4) You should work directly with your selected teachers to have them submit their recommendations as they are not sent through the Counseling and Guidance Office. If they need to submit the recommendations by mail, please be sure to provide them with addressed, stamped envelopes for mailing.

5) Be sure to apply well before the colleges' deadlines to avoid any last-minute panic.

6) Keep track on the college website, Common Application, Coalition App, or SUNY website to be sure that all materials have been received, but be aware that there is frequently a lag between when transcripts and recommendations are sent and when they update your application status. Contact the college, your counselor, or teachers if you want verification that the materials were sent.

## **Reflection and Activities Forms**

The last few pages of this newsletter include Student and Parent Reflection Sheets as well as an Activities and Awards Summary. Please take the time to fill each of these out and return to your School Counselor. This information is an integral part of writing letters of recommendation and supporting scholarship applications. Counselors use these tools all the time! If you have a resume already created, feel free to submit the resume instead of the Activities Sheet to your counselor.



# <u>SAT and ACT Testing</u>



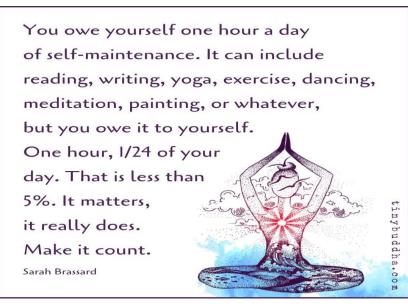
There has been a lot of information floating around regarding standardized test scores. More and more colleges are stating that they are going test-optional and that it is at the student's discretion on whether or not they submit scores. The Counseling and Guidance staff recommends that students attempt an SAT or an ACT at least once. Student can decide to submit them to each school based on their performance.

Some colleges are still requiring applicants to submit standardized test scores directly from the testing agencies. You should check carefully with each college you are considering to see what they require and be sure to register accordingly. Test dates and registration deadlines for the SAT Reasoning and for the ACT are listed in this newsletter. Please review this information carefully so that you do not miss any deadlines.

To register, you will need to go online to either <u>www.collegeboard.org</u> or <u>www.actstudent.org</u>, or contact the Counseling and Guidance Office for help with the registration process.

Please note that the first exams this fall are given in early October, so you will need to register soon if you want to take these early tests.





#### Reporting Your Standardized Test Scores

All students must have a form on file with the Counseling and Guidance Office indicating whether or not Vestal should include SAT and ACT scores on the transcript. A copy of the required form is included with this newsletter.

Even if the test results appear on a student transcript, some colleges require that the scores be sent to them directly from College Board or the ACT organization. If any of the colleges to which you are applying require them to be sent directly, you can request that by going online to <u>http://www.collegeboard</u>.

http://www.collegeboard. org or

www.actstudent.org.

If you tested last year, scores were sent to the colleges you indicated. If you test this fall, you can indicate up to four colleges free of charge.

Releasing scores may take three weeks. Early Decision candidates should check their college websites to determine if they need to pay the additional fee to rush their scores to those colleges.

# HIGH SCHOOL SENIOR YEAR

#### SEPTEMBER

#### Get psyched for senior year!

Meet with counselor — make preliminary college list, double check graduation requirements

Create calendar of admission and financial aid deadlines

Plan final campus visits

Register for Oct., Nov. or Dec. test dates If retaking SAT or ACT

Request teacher recommendations

Draft Common Application essay

Work hard in your classes

#### OCTOBER

Attend admission rep visits at the high school

Complete financial aid forms (FAFSA, CSS Profile)

Polish Common App essay; begin supplemental essays (If required)

Finalize list of schools to apply to

Complete Early Decision and/or Early Action application(s) If applying early

Keep up with and enjoy extracurricular activities

#### NOVEMBER

Prepare to submit regular decision applications in advance of deadlines Schedule Skype or alumni interviews if

unable to interview in person Clean up social media accounts

Research and apply for scholarships

Take care of your health

Have a happy Thanksgiving with your family!

## SEPTEMBER 09

OCTOBER

## FEBRUARY

10

01

04

DECEMBER

MARCH

travel?)

and family

Follow up with teachers/counselor about recommendations

Send test scores and transcripts

Complete Common Application and supplements

Celebrate your offers of admission!

Think about summer (job? Internship?

Make graduation party plans with friends

Compare financial aid awards

Celebrate If you received an offer of ED or EA admission

Submit applications before winter break so you can enjoy the holidays!

#### JANUARY

Submit applications to colleges with late deadlines

Send fall semester grade reports Follow up with schools to make sure your

applications are complete

Considering a gap year? Research options

JANUARY

#### Stay engaged with high school (watch out for senioritis)

NOVEMBER

Plan something fun for spring break Continue to apply for scholarships

Order graduation announcements

## DECEMBER 12

#### APRIL

Attend "admitted student" events at colleges you're considering

Decide whether to accept wait list spots (if offered)

Keep grades up — the college you accept will require a final transcript

Choose your college and mail the deposit by May 1sti

#### MAY

Take AP tests (your college may accept scores for course credit)

FEBRUARY

Inform counselor/teachers who wrote recommendations of your choice (and write thank-you notes)

Research first-year housing options; connect with potential roommates

Happy graduation! You're a college student now! Collegiate Parent 2018

05

MAY

11

02



APRIL



# PLEASE FILL OUT AND RETURN



Vestal High School Counseling & Guidance Department

#### Vestal High School Counseling & Guidance Dept. 205 Woodlawn Drive, Vestal, NY 13850

Vestal students have a choice of including standardized test scores (SATs and ACTs) on the high school transcript that is sent to colleges. Some colleges and universities accept these scores from the Vestal transcript, while others require students to forward them directly from the College Board or ACT organization. The College Board now offers a service called "Score Choice" where a student can elect to send scores from specific testing sessions rather than all of them. If the scores are included on your Vestal transcript, scores from *all* testing sessions will be sent.

In order to best meet the needs of all students, the Vestal High School Counseling and Guidance Department is requiring students to designate whether or not they want these standardized test scores included on the transcript. If a student decides to take advantage of Score Choice, or if they simply do not want all their scores sent, they should check the box below to indicate that Vestal should *not* include standardized test scores on the transcript. Please note that the students themselves will then be responsible for sending those scores directly from the College Board or ACT organization and that there is usually a fee attached to this service. If a student chooses to have the scores included on the transcript, please note that *all* scores will be sent, including any SAT scores and any ACT scores.

One further consideration: Scholarships frequently require students to report SAT and ACT scores. If a student elects not to include these on the Vestal transcript, he/she will be responsible for forwarding the scores to those scholarship committees, as well.

Thank you in advance for your prompt completion of this form. Your son or daughter can return it to the Counseling and Guidance Office at any time.

I did not take SAT's or ACT's and have no scores to report.

Please do *not* include my child's standardized test scores on his/her transcript. I understand that we will be responsible for requesting that the scores be sent directly from the College Board or ACT organization. Please also be aware that some colleges request that scores from all testing sessions be included, so check carefully before you submit scores.

Please include my child's standardized test scores on his/her transcript. I understand that all scores will be reported (SAT and ACT, as applicable). I also understand that some colleges/universities require that these scores be sent directly from the testing organizations, even if they are listed on the transcript.

Printed Name:	 	
Student Signature	 Date:	
Parent Signature:	Date: -	

8



Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Counselor: \_\_\_\_\_

## Senior Student Reflection Sheet

Please complete this questionnaire honestly and thoroughly. This will help the counselors in writing letters of recommendations for college or jobs. Important!! The more detail, the better. If you don't have enough room for any of these questions, feel free to add a separate sheet.

- 1. Are there any factors related to your grades or special circumstances in your life that you would like colleges to be aware of?
- 2. Are there any factors about admission test scores that you would like us to address?
- 3. What are your proudest accomplishments? For example, community service project, helping someone in need, accomplishment at school or home, work, athletics, etc.
- 4. *List five adjectives that describe something about you as a person.*

- 5. What extracurricular activity and/or job experience has been the most meaningful to you? Why?
- 6. What makes you happy? Why?
- 7. Future career plans? Possible college majors? Why did you choose this path?



Student Name:\_\_\_\_\_

## **Senior Parent/Guardian Reflection Sheet**

Please complete this questionnaire honestly and thoroughly. This will help the counselors in writing letters of recommendations for colleges or jobs.

Important!! The more detail, the better. If you don't have enough room for any of these questions, feel free to add a separate sheet.

1. What do you consider to be your student's outstanding accomplishments or areas of personal growth during the past three or four years? What are you most proud of? Be sure to include those accomplishments outside of school.

2. What are your student's outstanding personality traits? Please use five adjectives to describe this.

3. Are there any unusual or personal circumstances that have affected your student's educational or personal experiences?

4. Anything else you would like the counselor to be aware of that is important to you or to your student?

#### Activities and Awards Summary Vestal High School Vestal, New York 13850

Counselor:

(please print) (last)					(first)	(	M.I.)	ſ		1				
IB Diploma		1	1		Scholar Certificate	-								
Service Clubs	9	10	11	12	Interest Clubs	9	10	11	12	Codes: 1 = varsity,	2 = IV	<b>3</b> = fr	eshm	an.
Nat'l Honor Society Tutor					Art Club					<b>4</b> = intramurals,				
Student Government					Backgammon Club							1	1	-
Exec. Council - St. Govt.					Chemistry Magic Show					Athletics	9	10	11	12
					Environmental Club					Baseball				
Committee Member - St. Govt.					French Club					Basketball	_			-
Other:					FBLA (Business)					Bowling	_			-
	_				Gay/Straight Alliance					Cheerleading	_			-
Honors and Awards					German Club					Cross Country	_			-
Commended Scholar					Interact Club					Field Hockey	_			-
Honor Roll					Mathletes					Football	_			-
Nat'l Honor Society					Mentoring Program					Golf	_			-
Nat'l Merit Semi-Finalist	_				Mock Trial					Gymnastics		-		
Other:	+				Odyssey of the Mind	+		$\vdash$		Ice Hockey	+			┢
	+				P.E.A.C.E. Club	_				Indoor Track	+			┢
Music	+				S.A.D.D.	+		$\vdash$		Lacrosse	+			┢
A. Capella	+				Science Club	+		$\vdash$		Martial Arts	+			┢
Band					Science Olympiad					Soccer	_			
Choir					School Bookstore					Softball	_			
ColorGuard		-			School Musical					Sports Manager			-	
Drumline	_				School Newspaper					Swimming		-		
Jazz Band	_				Ski Club					Tennis		-		
Jazz Choir					Spanish Club					Track	_			
Marching Band		-			Student Store					Volleyball			-	
Orchestra	_				Talent Fest					Weight Training		-		
Pep Band		-			Technology Club					Wrestling			-	
Vestal Voices		-			Varsity Club					Other:				
Winterguard	-				Yearbook									
Community	9	10	11	12	YES! Leads (A.D.S.I.P.)					Accomplishments/A	wards:	1	r	T
Boys/Girls Club	_				Other:						-			
Civil Air Patrol	_											-		
Cultural Youth Groups											_			
Religious Youth Groups	_											-		
Scouting		-			Additional									
Volunteer Firefighter/EMS					Accomplishments and Travel Experiences:									
Volunteer Work														
YMCA/YWCA														
Other:														
Offices Held		<u> </u>		l	Work Experience			Leng	th of	Time		-	_	_
Activity Position			Employer			Start		End		Hou	rs/Wk	¢		
														Γ
Comments about special interests and	duiller													

#### VESTAL CENTRAL SCHOOLS VESTAL, NY 13850

A trip to **Broome County Arena – College Day** will be held on **October 18, 2023**. This trip is being conducted in connection with the work of the **Counseling and Guidance Department**.

The group will leave on Wednesday, October 18, 2023 at 10:25 am and return at approximately at **12:35 pm.** The chaperones and supervisor who will accompany the group will be <u>All Counselors and 1</u> paraprofessional. Please sign below if you grant permission for

(Student Name)

\_\_\_\_\_ to go.

(Parent Signature)

Home #

Work #\_\_\_\_\_

(Parent Address)

#### FIELD TRIP NOTIFICATION FORM

Students who are participating in a field trip must complete this form and present it to the teacher of each class missed one week prior to the trip. Each teacher must sign the form. The teacher's signature indicates that the teacher is aware of the trip.

I will be attending a field trip with the **<u>Counseling and Guidance Dept</u>** on the dated indicated below. I agree to make up all assignments missed as a result of this trip.

#### Wednesday, October 18, 2023

(Student's Signature)

Period	Class	Teacher	Conditions (if any)
4			
5			
6			
7			

#### VESTAL CENTRAL SCHOOLS VESTAL, NY 13850

#### **Emergency Medical Authorization**

(Student Name)	(Address)	(Phone)
	College Day	<u>Vestal High School</u>
(Grade/Age)		C
		mergency treatment for children who n parents or guardians cannot be reached.
(Parent/Guardian)		(Physician)
(Phone)		(Phone)
attempts to contact m treatment deemed need	e have been unsuccessful, I hearby g	REATMENT: in the event that reasonable give my consent for the administration of any r, in the event the designated preferred entist and be transferred to:
PREFERRED HOSPIT	AL: (or any reasonably accessible hospi	ital)
OF TWO OTHER LIC		RGERY UNLESS THE MEDICAL OPINIONS S CONCURRING IN THE NECESSITY FOR ORMANCE OF SUCH SURGERY
6	child's medical history including alle to which a physician should be alert	ergies, medications being taken and any red:
DATE:	SIGNATURE:	
	e .	ergency medical treatment of my child. In the wish the school district authorities to take no

DATE:\_\_\_\_\_

SIGNATURE:\_\_\_\_\_

# **VHS Chem-Free All Nighter**

Dear Parent or Guardian,

A long standing tradition for Senior Class students is the opportunity to attend the Vestal High School

**Chem-Free All-Nighter.** Although it is an after-the-prom event, attendance is not limited to VHS Senior Prom goers. Any Vestal Senior student and their date may attend, provided they sign a contract with their parent or guardian stating that they will not consume any alcohol or drugs before or during the events (The Prom Promise). This is a FREE event for the students. Alumni have declared this a wonderful send-off as their Senior year concludes.

The prom is Saturday, June 8, 2024 at the W and W Cornerstone. It is directly followed by the Chem-Free All-Nighter at Vestal High School, scheduled to run 12AM – 5:30 AM.

The cost to host such an event can aggregate to well over \$15,000. The evening consists of entertainment such as games and a hypnotist, raffle prizes, and a variety of food. To make this party a reality, we need VHS parents/guardians and the Vestal community to contribute their time, talents, and gifts.

What we need from you to help make this fun evening for our Seniors a great success:

- Financial donations
- · Volunteers to plan and run the event

Please let us know below what you can contribute by completing this form and bringing it to the VHS Main Office or mail to: Vestal High School, 205 Woodlawn Dr, Vestal, NY 13850, Attn: Chem Free All Nighter.

Thank you for your time and attention to this very worthwhile event for our departing Seniors!				
	~PTO Chem-Free All-Nighter Committee			
MY NAME				
STUDENT NAM	ΛΕ			
EMAIL				
Monetary Dona	ations			
(Please make o	hecks payable to: Vestal PTO Chem-Free All-Nighter. Donations are tax-deductible)			
□\$10 □	\$20 🗌 \$30 🔲 \$40 🗌 \$50 🗌 \$75 🗌 \$100 🔲 Other \$			
Yes! I would like to help plan or volunteer for the event! I can help with (please circle):				
Fundraising	Soliciting Prize Donations Decorating Games/Activities Food			
14				