



INSPIRED
PATHWAYS



Spring Newsletter

INSIDE / APRIL 2023

- *How you can help your high school graduate transition to college*
- *Summer is pivotal for rising seniors*
- *Why college visits are important*
- *Is getting support from a pathways college advisor important?*
- *An interview with a member of our first graduating class*

Supporting a First-Generation College Student

Son of Dan's Prize Plant Manager Credits Hormel Inspired Pathways Scholarship with Career Jumpstart

Luke Woodard

As the graduation ceremony came to a close, MaCoy Reimer and his high school classmates stepped down from the stage, diplomas held high as they waved to their families in the crowd. They had been thinking about this moment for years, looking forward to their triumphant send-off with excitement and pride. In the back of their minds, however, these graduates were also grappling with questions of the future. MaCoy knew that once he left the gymnasium — once the celebrations ended and life resumed its normal course — he would need to begin forging a path of his own. In search of guidance, MaCoy turned to the person whose advice he valued most of all: his father, Jason Reimer.

I work with people who started their journey with Pathways, and I've never once had any of them come tell me that they can't do something, that something is too complicated.

Jason Reimer

Plant Manager, Dan's Prize

As Jason tells it, MaCoy knew he wanted to work after high school, but he was less certain about what field he would enter. Jason, a Hormel Foods team member for 25 years, would have welcomed the chance to work with his son at the Dan's Prize plant he manages, but he was enthusiastic when MaCoy expressed a different interest. "He wanted to try some kind of trade," Jason says, "so he spent a summer working for a local gentleman doing plumbing and heating work. After that, MaCoy knew it was the right fit for him."

MaCoy's summer apprenticeship is an example of what has long been the traditional path toward a career in the skilled trades. And while this model of on-the-job instruction still offers a viable entry into a meaningful and lucrative career, more and more Americans are pursuing trade degrees in order to gain an advantage as they enter the workforce. This is happening at the same time that other college subjects are struggling with shrinking enrollment, according to 2021 data. While overall enrollment declined, two-year programs for construction

trades and technical mechanic work grew by 17.5% and 7%, respectively. This growth is largely driven by the increasing complexity of trade work.

All traditional trades, from car mechanics to wind turbine maintenance, are becoming more technologically advanced. Modern workers need to understand entire bodies of knowledge that were not nearly as important a generation ago. For example, while MaCoy will still be expected to master the age-old fundamentals of plumbing, he will also need to be comfortable working with water recycling systems, computers and the other smart technologies that are now commonplace. Trade colleges offer students the chance to develop the full range of skills they'll need to participate in today's high-tech world.

But for all its benefits, college costs money. Tuition fees and related expenses can place families under financial strain, especially in trades where students are expected to supply their own tools. To help ease this burden and promote equality in education access, Hormel Inspired Pathways offers community college scholarships and college guidance to the children of Hormel Foods employees. Since 2021, the program has helped support over 1,100 students on their college journeys. Once program applicants fill out an online questionnaire, a member of the Pathways team guides them and their families through the next steps. The program is designed to accommodate all kinds of students, whether they are interested in entering trade school, community college or a four-year college.



MaCoy, his father Jason and his mother Kimberly at his high school graduation

In addition to helping ease the financial concerns that college presents, the Inspired Pathways program is designed to guide students and parents through the application process which can be complex and challenging. "MaCoy is the first child I put through advanced schooling," says Jason, who began work directly out of high school. "It's new to me and I had a lot of questions, but then Pathways came along. Nate Lockett, the program director, does a great job of keeping you calm and giving good advice. He was very supportive."

Through his work at Dan's Prize, Jason was familiar with the kinds of hard workers that have passed through the program. "I work with people who started their journey with Pathways, and I've never once had any of them come tell me that they can't do something, that something is too complicated."

Pride, Wisdom, and Experience

MaCoy is currently studying plumbing and HVAC at Northwest Technical College in Bemidji, Minn. He and his father talk frequently, and Jason is grateful for the advantages that the program offers his son. "I think it teaches him to be a little sharper. The instructors have real-life experience, and I think there's a benefit from spending time with them and hearing their stories." In addition to teaching skills, trade colleges often provide students with a smooth entry into the workforce. "There's already been quite a few companies that have visited the school looking to hire students," Jason says. "MaCoy is set up to start a well-paying job right out of college."

Knowing that MaCoy's financial obligations are covered has left Jason feeling like a weight has been lifted from his shoulders. "The program gets him such

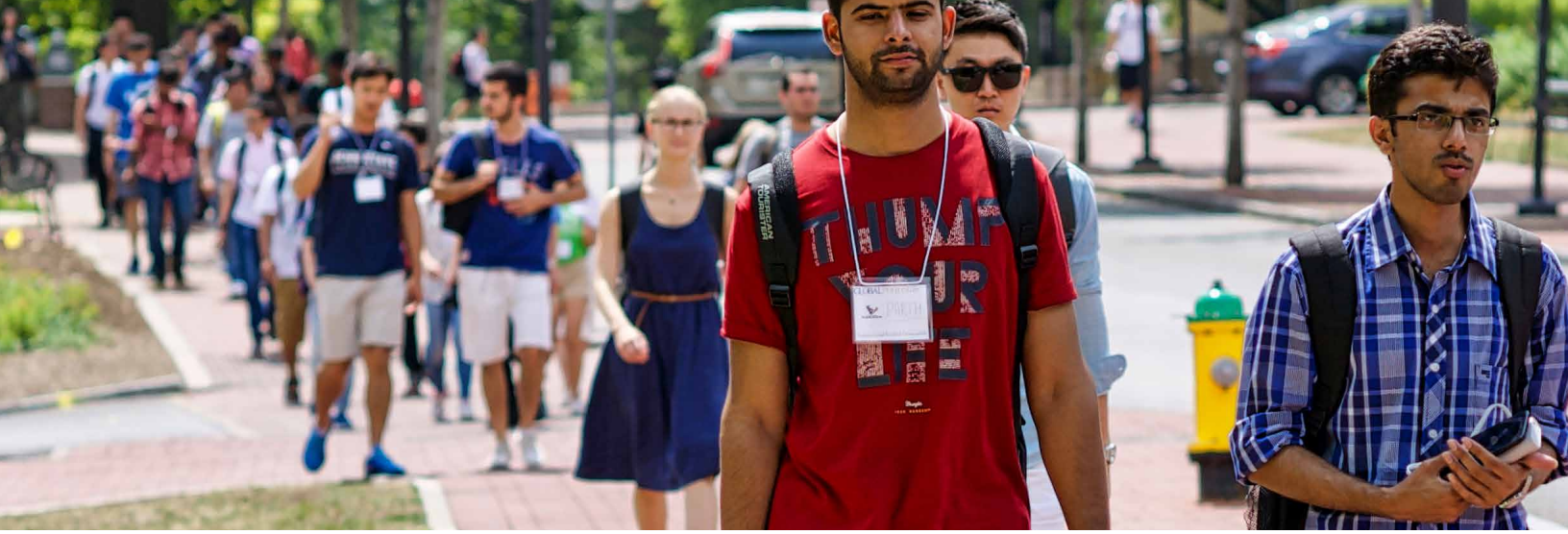
a good start on life. He's bill-free right now, and after school he won't have any debt. It doesn't really sink in until you see the bill and know that it's all paid. It's just...I got chills right now." The money they saved, thanks to the scholarship, allowed Jason and his wife, Kimberly Reimer, to buy a set of high-quality tools that will give MaCoy a head start as he begins his career. Jason is grateful for the support that Hormel Inspired Pathways has offered MaCoy and others like him. "Inspired Pathways is not just taking care of me," he says, "but my family. They're giving my son a good start on life, a really firm foothold. I'm thankful for it, and I'm proud to be a part of it."

But even as formal education becomes a bigger part of a tradesman's training, MaCoy and Jason both understand the importance of wise, honest guidance—the very thing that Jason has always sought to pass on to his son. The two spend lots of time together fishing or horseback riding and often, "anything outdoors," Jason says. In the evenings they enjoy watching "The Office." "He and I are extremely close. We have some really open conversations about everything, about life in general." This relationship has allowed MaCoy to

7%

Growth in two-year programs for technical mechanic work in 2021

internalize his father's ideas about the importance of a strong work ethic. "I've always said that no matter what you do in life, there's a couple things that you need to do really well," Jason says. "One is, you should get to work early, work extremely hard and second, at the end of the day, ask yourself, what else can I do? It's a mindset of wanting to do an excellent job, no matter what you're doing, and I think MaCoy has that."



Making the Most Out of Your College Visits

College visits are an incredibly important part of the college admissions process. In addition to helping students gain a better understanding of what the college has to offer, they can also play a role in helping a student gain admission.

Here are some tips to help you make the most of your visits:

Attend an Information Session and Campus Tour

Most colleges offer information sessions and campus tours for prospective students. These are great opportunities to learn more about the school and get a feel for the campus. Make sure to be engaged and ask questions during the presentation, which are often given by the very people who will be reading your application.

95%

Students who report that a campus tour is important in their decision to enroll according to one survey

Meet with an Admissions Officer

Try to arrange a meeting with one of the college's admissions representatives. By meeting with an admission rep, you'll be able to ask specific questions and at the same time demonstrate your interest in the college. Demonstrated interest is a factor that approximately 50% of four-year colleges consider when assessing applications. The smaller the college, the more likely they are to consider demonstrated interest.

Sit In on a Class

If possible, try to sit in on a class in your area of interest. This will give you a better sense of what the academic experience is like at the school and whether the teaching style and classroom environment are a good fit for you. Also ask about the facilities related to your intended major — you want to know what resources and hands-on learning opportunities are available.

Explore the Surrounding Area

Take some time to explore the surrounding area to get a sense of what it's like to live there. This can include checking out nearby restaurants, shops and cultural attractions, as well as looking at housing options. Remember, this is the place that you'll call home for the next few years!

Overall, the key is to be curious and attentive during your visit. Visiting is the best way to figure out if a school is the right fit for you and may even help you get accepted.

Why Get Support from an Inspired Pathways College Advisor?

College Advisors are a valuable resource for students and can provide a variety of benefits to students seeking to gain admission to both two- and four-year colleges. When students get support from a college advisor, they greatly increase their chances of being admitted to their goal college and ensure that they maximize their financial aid package.

The Inspired Pathways advisors have first-hand work experience within a wide array of college and university admissions offices. Below are some of the areas that our advisors can support you on your college journey.

Financial Aid

Our advisors support students in a variety of ways when it comes to financial aid, including:

1. Guidance on how to fill out the financial aid application forms including FAFSA and CSS Profile.
2. Identifying colleges with the best financial aid programs. For example, many families don't realize that a family of four with an income of \$80,000 can receive as much as \$75,000 in grants and scholarships PER YEAR from any one of the Full-Need Met colleges.
3. Locating additional funding opportunities. Whether its through negotiating with the financial aid office, or identifying independent scholarships the student qualifies for, an advisor can help ensure you maximize your award. The high school class of 2022 left nearly \$3.6 billion dollars of grants and scholarships unclaimed.

Presentations: May 3, May 31

Choosing Colleges

Our advisors understand the unique admissions requirements for hundreds of different colleges and have a strong understanding of the types of students those colleges are looking for. By working with an advisor, you can build a college list that will maximize both your chances of admission and gaining the full amount of financial aid that you're eligible for.

Presentations: April 26, May 24

Writing Essays

There are many misconceptions within the public about what colleges are looking for from their applicants. This results in many students choosing essay topics that do not help, and often hurt the students' chances of admission. By working with an advisor, you will be able to choose the topic that's best for you and learn how colleges want you to write and structure your essays.

Presentations: May 10, June 7



1707

Total number of people who received advising from the Inspired Pathways program.

Helping Your High School Graduate Transition to College

Making the move from high school to college can be exciting, difficult and confusing. Some students transition easily, but for many it can take months to adapt to the college lifestyle while also figuring out how to manage time and navigate the many opportunities and support systems available on campus. We want to make sure every Inspired Pathways student is successful once they arrive on their college campus.

Here are seven things you can do this summer to help you prepare for college.

1. Make a financial plan

While every student attending college through the Hormel Inspired Pathways program will have all of their tuition paid, there are other costs to consider. You'll want to prepare for transportation costs, meal plan and food costs, books and other course materials you'll need. Once you have an idea of what these extra expenses will add up to, you can start budgeting or looking for funding possibilities. One great option is to get involved in college work-study programs. Even students who don't need funding should look into these programs. Nothing beats getting paid to do your homework!

There are also millions of independent scholarships available that can be used for any college cost, not just tuition. These smaller scholarships are a great way to cover the extra costs of college and they are very easy to apply for. You can **find a list of some of these scholarships on the Hormel Inspired Pathways website in the Student Resources section.**

2. Identify on-campus support programs

From academic tutoring to mental health counseling, colleges offer a wide variety of support programs. Take some time to identify them during the summer before you enroll. Most colleges will have all of this information on their website, but you can also reach out to a student advisor to find out what's available and how to take advantage of it. In general, be on the lookout for:

Academic Supports: student and teaching assistant tutoring offices; study, writing and testing centers; and academic planning offices

Mental Health Supports: wellness centers; counseling offices; language/translation support; child care services; and disability support services

Student Involvement: student activities center and clubs; career services; library and bookstore; work-study office; fitness centers; and dining

3. Gather important documentation

You will need to bring some important documents with you to college. You might need proof of acceptance to register for classes, a photocopy of your birth certificate if you get a part-time job, and your health insurance card if you have a health emergency. Some of the documents you may want to include are:

- Driver's license and/or passport (copy and actual)
- Health and dental insurance cards
- Copy of your birth certificate
- Copy of social security card (if you don't have one, summer is a good time to request one with the Social Security Administration)
- Student ID
- Immunization record/COVID immunization card



4. Orientation and academic planning days

You should absolutely attend one of your college's freshman orientations because they are a great way to help with your transition from high school to college. This is an excellent opportunity to tour the campus, ask current students questions, meet other incoming freshmen and make some friends before your first day on campus. In addition to orientation, some colleges allow freshmen to meet with advisors ahead of time to schedule classes and provide all the login and registration information you'll need to use throughout your college experience.

5. Textbooks and materials

Textbooks and other academic materials are things you will need to buy. However, you don't always have to buy them new, especially textbooks. Before spending hundreds of dollars on new books, see if your college has any used book sales organizations. Used textbooks will cost much less than new ones, and sometimes they even have helpful notes from past students! Another place to find your books is your college's inter-library loan program. Typically almost every book that would be required is available, and they're all free! Be aware that there will be a limited quantity so make sure

to pick yours up early. They can also take a couple of weeks to deliver, so it's important to stop by your library early to ask about the book loan options.

6. Make a plan for your daily life

One of the best parts of college is the amount of time and freedom you'll have. The average college student spends just 15 hours in class per week! However, a good rule of thumb is that for every hour you spend in class, you should spend one to two hours outside of class on coursework, which means one to two hours studying, doing homework or working on assignments. So you should plan on spending 30–45 hours on schoolwork a week. That's equivalent to a full-time job. It's important to create a plan for when you'll do this work, using your syllabus to create a schedule of when assignments will be due and a time to do them.

Students should identify two hours per day that they'll be in the library or another location they work well in to do that work. By having a daily time to do your work, you'll make sure that you aren't procrastinating. And don't make the most common freshman mistake: leaving projects and assignments for finals week when all you'll want to do is study for your important upcoming exams.

You'll also want to get into a consistent sleep and eating schedule to make sure you don't end up missing morning classes or skipping meals because your schedule doesn't give you enough time to get to the dining halls. When you get to college, you will likely see many classmates struggle because they're exhausted after pulling an all-nighter or not having time to grab a bite to eat.

7. Connect with your classmates

One of the most important parts of the college experience is the people you'll meet. They may end up being life-long friends, but even if they don't, finding a group of friends on campus is incredibly beneficial. They'll be able to help you with assignments, connect you with organizations you may not have heard of, and later on may even be the connection you need to land your dream job.

A Pivotal Summer for Rising Seniors

The summer before your senior year of high school is an incredibly important time for college planning. The more you do over the summer, the more likely you are to be admitted to your top choice of colleges. We've outlined some of the most important steps rising high school seniors can take to ensure success in their college search.

Set goals

Before determining your major or what college to attend, it's important to consider what you enjoy doing and what your strengths are. Research college majors and the types of jobs you can get with each. Speak with teachers, coaches, advisors and other adults who've gone to college to learn how they got to where they are.

8-12

The number of colleges the average student applies to

Review your college options

Once you've determined your goals, you can assess ways to achieve them. Consider your academic record and available resources to learn which colleges may be available to you. Will you pursue a community college degree? Will you start at a community college, then transfer? Do you have the grades to be admitted to a four-year college? Does your family have the resources to pay for a four-year college or will you need to apply for financial aid and scholarships?

Build your college list

A good college list should include:

- At least two "safety" schools, colleges where your chance of being admitted is higher than 75%
- Four to six "target" schools, where you have a 40–60% chance of being accepted
- Two "reach" schools, colleges where you'll have less than a 25% chance of being admitted

Having this diverse college list will give you the best chance of being admitted to a top college and getting scholarships from your target and safety schools. During August, Inspired Pathways will be hosting "List Assessment" appointments, which will give you the opportunity to speak with an experienced college advisor about your choices and learn about new schools that would be good to add to your list.

Once you've created your list, confirm the application deadlines and essay requirements for each of these colleges. Make sure to do this early because colleges can easily tell when an application or essay has been rushed.

Document your achievements

Every four-year college application will ask you to list and discuss what you've done during your high school career. It is important to make sure you give them a good idea of what you've worked on. Start by making a list of all the clubs, organizations, jobs and responsibilities you have, the work you did for each and what successes you had. You'll also want to identify any awards or honors you've received.

Start writing essays

A good essay can significantly increase your chances of being accepted to your top college. You can find the Common App Essay topics here:

www.commonapp.org/apply/essay-prompts

The most widely-used application in the U.S. is the Common Application. If you apply to a four-year college or university you will likely use it in your application process.

You will probably need to write and submit only one essay, so it is essential that you thoroughly think about which prompt (if you decide to use one) to choose. Select the one that will allow you to shine.

Spring Webinars at a Glance

To learn more about what colleges look for in an essay, attend one of our College Essay Workshop presentations over the summer. You can find links in our “Upcoming Events” section under the resources tab at www.Hormelinspiredpathways.com

Make a testing plan

While community colleges do not require the SAT or ACT, many four-year colleges do. These tests can have a big impact on your chances of being admitted, so improving your score is one of the best ways to raise your likelihood of getting accepted.

The best test-prep program available online is Khan Academy, and it is 100% free. It was created in collaboration with the College Board, which owns the SAT, and it adjusts to the needs of each student. One to two hours of practice each week over the summer can lead to a massive improvement.

We also suggest that you plan on taking these tests two or three times. SAT testing occurs in May, June, August and October. Taking the test once at the end of junior year and another one or two times in August / October following a summer of studying will give you the best chance to get the score you want.

April 26 - 5:30pm CT

Types of Colleges & How to Choose

Learn how to choose the best college for you as well as ways to improve your chances of acceptance, and ways to maximize financial aid.

May 03 - 5:30pm CT

Financial Aid and Scholarship

Learn about all the college funding options available and how to access them, including FAFSA, the CSS Profile, scholarships, grants, loans and work-study.

May 10 - 5:30pm CT

How to Write College Essays

Join us as we discuss what colleges look for in essays, how to structure them, and how to choose the best topics.

May 17 - 5:30pm CT

Inspired Pathways Overview

We'll discuss the scholarship rules and how to get support from our college counseling team.

May 24 - 5:30pm CT

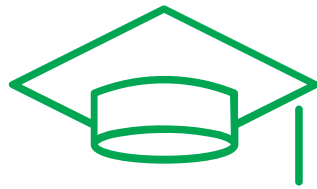
Types of Colleges & How to Choose

May 31 - 5:30pm CT

Financial Aid and Scholarship

June 07 - 5:30pm CT

How to Write College Essays



**INSPIRED
PATHWAYS**

