Scholars - it's the time of year when many of us are working on applying for grad school and/or summer research programs. This month's newsletter is focused on providing you with resources to support your application process to successfully submit!

Annalisa Ugarte, former EXITO Peer Mentor and doctoral student studying Chemistry at University of Colorado Boulder, shares her recent experience applying and interviewing at graduate programs across the country.

**Annalisa Ugarte on grad school applications...**

1. How did you decide where to apply? I am originally from Texas and moved to Oregon to complete the remainder of my undergraduate studies. I applied to schools located in Washington, Oregon, California, and Colorado. I selected these schools on the basis of cities and states I felt I would be happy living in for 5-6 years. I took into account factors such as weather and sociopolitical climate of the city.

2. What do you wish you would have known before you applied? Any advice to those who are starting the process now? Start researching the schools you want to apply to early and have an idea of which ones you’re going to apply to by the summer. Study for the GRE early and take it before the school term begins. Give yourself enough time in the summer to retake the exam then be done with it. The application process is extremely time-consuming and there are a lot of moving parts to consistently keep track of so get major tasks like the GRE out of the way. Spend a day researching each school's application steps/requirements and find an organization method that works best for you. Don’t be afraid to ask for help! The graduate recruiters at the schools are there to help you and introducing yourself via a phone call puts a name/face to your application. If an application asks if there are any additional documents you want to upload then upload that personal statement! That’s what got me a fellowship on top of my award package!

3. Did you experience any setbacks? If so, what were they and how did you press through? I was extremely uncomfortable and felt severely unwelcome during one of my visiting weekends. I experienced micro-aggressions which were extremely triggering. At one point during the visit I felt so terrible about myself that I excused myself from one of the visiting weekend activities and went to a coffee shop. I read over my personal statement, statement of purpose, and CV to regain confidence in myself and my achievements. I then journaled about how I was feeling/what I was experiencing. As I was waiting for my return flight home at the airport I threw away the paper and declined the offer of admission from that school citing the reasons why I felt unwelcome.

4. What is something you will take from your EXITO experience into the next phase of your pathway to research? I tell my students, “When you get these jobs that you have been so brilliantly trained for, just remember that your real job is that if you are free, you need to free somebody else. If you have some power, then your job is to empower somebody else. This is not just a grab-bag candy game.” - Toni Morrison

**Now for the research & internship opportunities...**

**SENIORS:** There are exciting opportunities with special NIH-funded post-bac research programs. A typical **Postbaccalaureate Research Education Program (PREP)** offers one or two year positions that provide research training at a top university and pay a stipend (about $28,000-$30,000 per
A similar opportunity is available for recent graduates who want to work with scientists at NIH research facilities.

**SOPHOMORES:** We encourage you to apply for summer research internship opportunities at universities around the country which typically provide an intensive 10-week training experience working with a research mentor, a stipend ($3,000-$6,000), and cover other expenses like housing and travel. Most applications are due between November and February.

**ALL SCHOLARS:** EXITO is holding a supplemental Enrichment session workshop on writing personal statements: Dec. 1, Cramer Hall room 350, 2:45-4pm. All cohorts are welcome. Bring something to write on. If you’ve started writing a personal or interest statement, or if you have your EXITO application, bring two printed copies. If you don’t know how to start, just bring yourself!

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**Highlights**

**EXITO Program Stuff**

**ATTN: Cohort 3 Scholars who Plan to Transfer to PSU!**

It’s that time of year already. Click here for important information on the Transfer process and upcoming deadlines.

**Submit your FAFSA**

The Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) is the first step in the process of receiving financial aid. PSU’s school code is 003216, and you may begin completing your FAFSA now, for the upcoming school year.

**Apply for Scholarships**

Applications open October 15, and if you want to be considered you must apply by February 1 (no exceptions).

**Transfer Application**

Applications for transferring to PSU are now open! Undergraduate Priority Application Deadline for Fall Term is February 1.

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**Scholars being AWESOME**

**Scholar in the News**

PSU Scholar, Valeria Vazquez-Trejo, was on KGW a few weeks ago.

See what she had to say about BUILD EXITO!

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**EXITO Program Stuff**

**Academic Advising Services in FULL SWING!**

Carlos Quatela is now taking appointments to meet with
students and assist them with class registration, academic planning, and anything else related to academic and career pathways! Carlos is available to meet in person, on the phone, or via Skype. Book an appointment with Carlos here!

Financial Aid Advising for Scholars
You can drop in with our Financial Aid Advisor, Umit Tanit Anwar, on Fridays in the Financial Aid Office, Neuberger Hall from 11a-1p. You can also email Umit to schedule an appointment outside of that time or via phone at umit@pdx.edu.

Students and Scholars Events & Resources
PSU is offering a one credit class to help students with major and career planning!

What: Explore Your Passion, UNST 195 Career Planning
This class can help students to:
• Learn the myths & realities of choosing a major
• Understand their career decision making process
• Identify their skills, interest, & values
• Learn how to research careers & majors

When: In person 5 week session:
Wednesday, Jan 24 - Feb 21, 10-11:50 (CRN 45769)
Fridays, Jan 26 - Feb 23, 10 -11:50 (CRN 16022)

We have updated our Scholar resources page to include information about summer training opportunities, funding that might be available, and more. Check it out!

Visit our newly updated Scholar Resources Page!