

Written by Lorrie Crow

OFF TO COLLEGE!

Cy-Fair Seniors Prepare to Enter College

College is an exciting time for all young adults, but also a time of change, so it's important to be prepared so that the experience can be a good one. Summer provides the perfect opportunity to get your child ready to head out. Hear about two seniors' experiences on preparing to leave the nest.

Going to School In-State

When senior Jillian Slaughter was asked recently by her parents to go to lunch with them and have a discussion, she knew she was in for "The Talk", as she terms it. "We talked about money and my being responsible," Jillian says. "I have been spending money on clothes and eating out, and my parents wanted to make me realize that with college coming up, I needed to be on a budget."

Jillian, who works at the Texas Roadhouse restaurant to save money for college, says she has her sights set on attending Texas A&M or the University of Texas this fall. This was another topic her parents discussed with her. "We told Jillian she needed to

make a decision and to look at the campuses in the next couple of weeks," says her mother, Gaylene Slaughter. "Jillian wants to live in an apartment but before we narrow it down to apartments, she needs to decide on the town."

Jillian's roommates-to-be include a childhood friend and a best friend from school. "I couldn't imagine her rooming with anyone better," Gaylene smiles, "but we did talk to Jillian about separating school from her social life. Plus, we told her that she needs to keep up her end of the rooming deal, including being tidy." Whether or not to take early classes was also an issue of concern. "Jillian likes to stay up late, so we are not sure taking early classes is such a good thing for her," her mother says.

Jillian, however, believes she is ready. She has set up a checking account with a bank card, she has applied for scholarships and is still looking for grants, she knows that she will major in advertising, and if all gets too stressful, both schools are not that far from home. "I am a little nervous about going to college,"



Jillian Slaughter works to get ready to go to college

Jillian confesses. "But the good thing about going to school so close is that if I want to come home, I can. It's not too big of a transition like going out of state, so I'm not too worried."

Gaylene, though, admits she is anxious a little. "Jillian is our first child to go off to school," she says. "We have everything on paper – the budget, the whole thing. I just hope we did the right things to prepare her."

Going to School Out-of-State

Sam McGuffie says he looks at the clock almost every minute in anticipation of leaving for the University of Michigan. The senior, famous for his football heroics at Cy-Fair High School, will be attending U-M on a full scholarship and will be a running back for the school team.

Although Freshman Orientation is on his list of things to do, Sam says his transition to college won't be gradual. He has already registered for classes there this summer. "I am taking summer classes, so when the football season starts, it won't be as hectic with taking a lot of courses," Sam says. He adds that he is undecided on his major but has considered kinesiology and sports management.

Training with new coaches will be a major transition, according to Sam. "The University of Michigan has a whole new coaching staff, and I've heard we have a good strength and conditioning coach – top of the line," Sam says. "My running back coach says

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10 Ways

to Prepare for College this Summer

1. Send "thank you" notes to friends and family for your graduation gifts and to organizations for any scholarships that you may have received.
2. Attend Freshman Orientation at your school.
3. Purchase items for your dorm room or apartment – check out collegeboard.com for a print-out list.
4. Set up a new bank account and see if you can get free checking, savings, etc. for new college students. Beware of pre-approved credit card offers.
5. Check on car insurance – your premium may be less if you are attending college in a smaller city.
6. Get a summer job to save for extra spending money for college.
7. Confirm with your college that you will be attending in the upcoming semester.
8. Make sure all scholarships, financial aid, or grants are complete to start school.
9. If possible, visit your college and familiarize yourself with the campus and cool places to hang out.
10. Get ready for the most exciting time of your life!



Photo courtesy of David Clares of Stehlan Photography

Sam McGuffie hopes to be prepared for becoming part of University of Michigan's football team

to come up conditioned and told me, "When you get here, you can see what conditioning is all about." Sam conditioned by running track this past spring and is strength training before he leaves for Michigan. "There is so much to do and learn there – the coaches have it all mapped out."

And what about preparing for the cold northern weather? "I don't know how you can prepare for the cold if you are from Texas – maybe grow thicker skin and thicker hair," he jokes. But no matter how freezing it may get in Michigan, Sam reassures that he is not nervous about attending college out of state. "It's time," he says. "I'm excited and ready to go." **CFM**

LORRIE CROW's son Zach is preparing to transition to Texas A&M this fall. Lorrie is not preparing well to transition without him at home.



Helping to get your graduate get settled before school start will enable them to concentrate on their studies when classes begin