

Columbia University: Off the Record - College Prowler (College Prowler: Columbia University Off the Record)

Julia Green



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"You're shooting too low," was the response I heard as I told my high school teacher my selection of colleges. Because I am the type of student known more for contributions outside the classroom than pure scholastic ability, gaining admittance to my first-choice college seemed like a long shot. I applied to Columbia, the school of my dreams, to appease others and just to see if I could possibly make this dream a reality. I waited for my acceptance or rejection letter, which never came. I called the school to find out what was happening, but my application had been shuttled to another department and no information was forthcoming. Maybe they were just trying to spare my feelings and possibly avoid a teary scene. Either way, I took this as a bad sign, and I immediately began making plans for attending my back-up school. I went to lunch with my mother and sadly told her the news. When we returned home, I found a note written in three different colors of ink taped to the front door. The note read, "Michelle, check the answering machine. Have a pen ready. Call me when you are through. Love, Dad." On the machine was a frantic message from my erstwhile academic counselor begging me to call Columbia. It turns out that my information had been misplaced, and they wanted to advise me of my acceptance so I could begin the necessary paperwork. I thought then that nothing could exceed the excitement of getting accepted to Columbia. I was wrong. The thrill never ended. My relationship with Columbia started slowly, but it turned out to be more than I ever hoped it would be: fascinating courses, eclectic people, and a reputation for excellence that dates back to 1754, not to mention having the whole city of New York as an extra appendage for self-discovery. Columbia University is a place unlike any other.

Columbia University, located in the heart of NYC provides students with both a prestigious Ivy League education, and all of the diversions present in a metropolis. The University attracts the best of the best from every corner of the world, and the undergraduate colleges (Columbia College, The Fu Foundation for Engineering and Applied Sciences, the School of General Studies, and Barnard College) are geared to serve the wide range of personalities present here. Columbia College is the school for recent high school graduates who intend to earn a BA or BS degree. The Fu Foundation is for students who plan on pursuing careers in engineering and applied sciences. The School of General Studies serves non-traditional students (average age 28) who have chosen to return to school after an absence. Barnard is the women's college affiliated with the University. In the following pages, you will learn from people in the know—students from three colleges under the Columbia University umbrella. I hope you find this information helpful in showing the unique experience of this great institution in this wonderful town.

Michelle L. Tompkins Columbia University

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