

The Princeton University Summer Journalism Program

220 Nassau Hall • Princeton University • Princeton, NJ 08544 • www.princeton.edu/sjp

Dear Applicant:

Thank you for your interest in the Princeton University Summer Journalism Program. We're looking forward to reading your application and, if you are selected for the program, getting to know you this summer.

What is the Princeton University Summer Journalism Program? We welcome about 20 high school students from low-income backgrounds every summer to Princeton's campus for an intensive, 10-day seminar on journalism. After the program ends, counselors stay in touch with students to help guide them through the college admissions process. Counselors assist students in preparing for standardized tests, determining an appropriate list of colleges to apply to, and filling out applications and financial aid forms. The program's goal is to diversify college and professional newsrooms by encouraging outstanding students from low-income backgrounds to pursue careers in journalism. All expenses, including students' travel costs to and from Princeton, are paid for by the program. Students who attend the program come from across the country. The program will enter its tenth summer in 2011.

What is the program like? Classes at the program are taught by reporters and editors from *The New York Times*, *The Washington Post*, *The New Republic*, *The New Yorker*, CNN and ABC News, among other media outlets. Students tour the *Times* and CNN; cover a professional sports event (in past years, a Yankees, Mets, Jets or Liberty game); cover news events in the Princeton area; film and produce a TV segment; and report, write, edit and design their own newspaper, *The Princeton Summer Journal*, which is published on the program's last day. The program is also designed to give students a taste of what life is like at one of the best colleges in the country—students live on campus and eat in one of the university's cafeterias—and to prepare them to apply to top schools. Students meet with Princeton's top professors as well as the school's president and its dean of admissions. Students attend seminars on every aspect of the college admissions process. They also take a practice SAT and attend an SAT class taught by Princeton Review. After students return home, program staff remain in contact with them, assisting them during the college application process and helping them to apply for journalism internships once they are in college.

What have our students accomplished? More than 185 students have graduated from our program during the past nine years, and many return each summer to serve as mentors to our current students. We are proud of their academic and journalistic accomplishments. Four of our alumni are currently enrolled at Princeton. Others have gone on to Harvard, Yale, Stanford, Brown, Columbia, Cornell, Duke, the University of Pennsylvania, Williams, Amherst, Middlebury, Georgetown, Bowdoin, the University of Virginia, Johns Hopkins, New York University and many other selective schools. Their work has been published in college newspapers across the country, including *The Daily Princetonian*, *The Yale Daily News*, *The Brown Daily Herald*, *The Columbia Spectator*, *The Cornell Daily Sun* and *The Bowdoin Orient*. Our alumni have also landed jobs or internships at *The New York Times*, *The New Republic*, *The*

Philadelphia Daily News, NBC and CBS, among other outlets. Alumni reflections on the program can be found [here](#).

Who is eligible? This program is intended for low-income students with excellent academic records who are committed to pursuing a career in journalism. To apply for the program, you must meet the following qualifications:

- You must currently be a junior in high school.
- You must live in the continental United States.
- You must have at least an unweighted 3.5 grade point average (out of 4.0).
- You must have an interest in journalism.
- The combined income of your custodial parent(s)/guardian(s) plus child support payments, if any, must not exceed \$45,000.

Note: This program is for students from under-resourced financial backgrounds. If the combined income of your custodial parent(s)/guardian(s) plus child support payments, if any, exceeds \$45,000 and you still wish to apply, you may attach a statement explaining why you believe your family qualifies as financially under-resourced.

How to apply. The application process consists of two rounds. For the first round, fill out the application below, and then email it to sjpapplication@gmail.com as a Microsoft Word attachment. (If you do not have Microsoft Word, please just paste the text of your application into the body of the email.) **Please do not mail a hard copy of your application to Princeton University.** Before emailing us the application, please name the document using the following format: Lastname.Firstname.doc. So, if your name is Mary Jones, the title of your document will be Jones.Mary.doc. In addition, type your name, the name of your high school (including the city and state location) and the email address where you would like to be contacted in the body of your email and put only the name of the Word document (e.g., Jones.Mary.doc) in the subject line of the email. We must receive your application by 11:59 p.m. ET on Friday, February 4, 2011. No extensions will be given for any reason.

After we receive the first round of applications, we will select a group to proceed to the second round. If you are selected for the second round, the program directors will arrange to interview you—either by phone or in person—and we will also ask you to mail us printed copies of the following documents:

- Your official high school transcript
- The first page of the income-tax return form (the 1040 or 1040EZ form) for the calendar year 2009 of your custodial parent(s)/guardian(s); or a signed statement by your parent(s)/guardian(s) saying that their income is below the level at which they would be required to file income tax returns. (If the form for calendar year 2010 is available, you may send that instead.)
- A recommendation letter from a teacher
- Clips from your high school newspaper or other publication (if you have them)

Note: From the time they are notified that they have made it to the second round, applicants will have about two weeks to mail these items to us.

Here are some tips about the application process:

1. When sending us your application or when contacting us for any reason, use an email address to which you will have regular access throughout the application process. Do not change your email address or stop checking email in the middle of the application process.
2. Send all applications to sjpapplication@gmail.com — please note that this is a GMAIL address. Send all questions about the program to sjp@princeton.edu — please note that this is a PRINCETON address.
3. Proofread and edit your application carefully before submitting.
4. Most importantly, this program is for students who are interested in journalism—who are planning to write for their college newspapers and who are at least strongly considering an eventual career in journalism. Every year, we receive applications from students who are smart and talented—but who are not really interested in journalism. Apply to this program only if you are serious about pursuing a career in journalism. It usually takes a few months for us to review all the applications and make our final decisions. All applicants will be contacted in April or early May. Please do not email us to ask about your application status.

A final word: We know that the process of applying to any selective program can be stressful, not to mention a lot of work. But, over the years, the students we have had come through our program have told us that, ultimately, the work they put into their application was worth it.

The program directors are all looking forward to reading your application. If we can answer any question along the way, don't hesitate to contact us. The best way to reach us is at sjp@princeton.edu.

Sincerely,

Program Staff

APPLICATION FOR SUMMER 2011

Please fill in the blanks below:

Name:

High School:

Home Phone Number:

Mobile Phone Number (if available):

Street Address:

Apartment Number:

City:

State:

Zip Code:

Email:

Birth Date (Month, Date, Year):

High school grade point average through end of the first semester of your junior year (on a 4.0 scale) (We want the aggregate GPA for high school and not just the GPA from the most recent semester alone.)

Unweighted:

Weighted:

List all your extracurricular activities (both at school and outside it) in order of importance to you. Please do not use acronyms when listing your activities:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.

Your favorite journalistic publication:

Your favorite book:

Your favorite movie:

Your favorite quotation:

Name one person you consider a hero:

Please briefly write about your summer activities during the past three years. Please be specific with the exact name of the camp/program/employer and the dates of attendance/employment. Write two or three sentences about what you did.

Name of Mother or Legal Guardian 1 (indicate relationship if Legal Guardian):

Occupation:

Employer:

Education (type an "X" next to one of the following):

a. high school degree

b. some college

c. associate's degree

d. bachelor's degree

e. graduate degree

Name of college attended (if any):

Degree/year:

Name of graduate school attended (if any):

Degree/year:

Is this parent living (type "Yes" or "No"):

Is this parent your legal guardian (type "Yes" or "No"):

Name of Father or Legal Guardian 2 (indicate relationship if Legal Guardian):

Occupation:

Employer:

Education (type an "X" next to one of the following):

a. high school degree

b. some college

c. associate's degree

d. bachelor's degree

e. graduate degree

Name of college attended (if any):

Degree/year:

Name of graduate school attended (if any):

Degree/year:

Is this parent living (type "Yes" or "No"):

Is this parent your legal guardian (type "Yes" or "No"):

Please list the names and ages of all your siblings, and indicate if they have attended a college:

Name	Age	College (if any)	Graduation Year
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Number of custodial parent(s)/guardian(s) (answer “one” or “two”):

If you answered “one” above, write the total income from 2009 (or 2010, if available) of your parent/guardian here (this is the number that appears in the bottom right-hand corner of the first page of his or her 1040 or 1040EZ form):

If you answered “two” above, do they file income taxes jointly or separately? (answer “jointly” or “separately”):

If you answered “two” and “jointly” above, write the total income from 2009 (or 2010, if available) of your parents/guardians here (this is the number that appears in the bottom right-hand corner of the first page of their 1040 or 1040EZ form):

If you answered “two” AND “separately” above, write the total income from 2009 (or 2010, if available) for each of your parents/guardians here (these are the numbers that appear in the bottom right-hand corners of the first pages of their 1040 or 1040EZ forms)

Parent/guardian 1:

Parent/guardian 2:

If your parent(s)/guardian(s) receives child support from a non-custodial parent/guardian, state the amount per year of those child support payments:

If your parent(s)/guardian(s) is not required to file income tax returns because his or her income is below the level at which he or she would be required to file an income tax return, please type an “X” here:

Note: This program is for students from under-resourced financial backgrounds. If the combined income of your custodial parent(s)/guardian(s) plus child support payments, if any, exceeds \$45,000, please include a brief statement here explaining why you believe your family qualifies as financially under-resourced:

Essay 1: In about 150 words, tell us about a newspaper or magazine article you’ve read recently that impacted you deeply, and why it had an effect on you.

Essay 2: In about 150 words, tell us why you are interested in pursuing journalism as a career.

Article: Take an issue, a trend, a phenomenon, a group or an important person in your local community, and write an article about it, her or him. This is a chance for you to show off your skills as a journalist. Your article may take the form of a news piece, a feature story, a profile or an opinion piece—at the top of the article, please specify which type of article you are writing. It should be about 400 words in length.