The mission of the Educational Talent Search Program is to enable targeted individuals to enhance their overall quality of life by providing comprehensive intervention of academic and career related services within available resources.

Educational Talent Search is 100% funded by the United States Department of Education and assists students who are underrepresented in post-secondary education, including first generation and low-income students. Our goal is to help these students see their potential to succeed in higher education and to help them better understand the opportunities they have.

What is Educational Talent Search?

The Talent Search program is a part of the federal TRIO programs which identifies and assists individuals from disadvantaged backgrounds who have the potential to succeed in higher education. The program provides academic, career, and financial counseling to its participants and encourages them to graduate from high school and continue on to and complete their postsecondary education. The program publicizes the availability of financial aid and assists participants with the postsecondary application process. Talent Search also encourages persons who have not completed education programs at the secondary or postsecondary level to enter or reenter and complete postsecondary education. The goal of Talent Search is to increase the number of youth from disadvantaged backgrounds to complete high school, and enroll in and complete their postsecondary education.

Eligibility

- Attend:
  Valdosta High School
  Valdosta Middle School
  Newbern Middle School
  Brooks County High School
  Brooks County Middle School
- Be Enrolled in 6-12 Grades
- Be a U.S Citizen OR Resident Alien
- Be a Potential First Generation Student
- Meet Federal Low-Income Guidelines
- Have the Desire to Pursue a College Degree
- and more!

Services

- Career Exploration
- Aptitude Tests
- College Prep Workshops
- Tutorial Services
- Financial Aid
- College Application Assistance

"The function of education is to teach one to think intensively and to think critically. Intelligence plus character - that is the goal of true education.”

Martin Luther King, Jr.
What's Next?

Undoubtedly, for a first-time student the summer before college is usually a mix of preparation and enjoying the last days of youth. There’s no denying it, the summer before you go to college for the first time is an important one you may be nervous, excited, or a mess but I am here to offer some tips to make that time frame stress-free.

1. Downsize and get organized.
2. Understand your financial situation and begin to budget your funds.
3. Get a good calendar and prepare for a whole new world of time management.
4. Embrace coupons and master the art of a good deal.
5. Lastly, enjoy your time with your family and friends!

- Chardonnay Watson, Program Coordinator
cfwatson@valdosta.edu

Greetings!

Students, you are just a few months away from the next grade level or being college bound. It is critical for you to stay focused and fight off procrastination, senioritis and summer fever! Remember your last semester grades are just as important as your first semester grades and count tremendously. Your performance can help or hinder opportunities, such as participating in summer camps, finding a summer job and getting scholarships. I know there are several distractions ahead of you, but keep focus and finish this school year out STRONG!!!

Parents and Students, thank you for taking advantage of resources the ETS program provides. Always remember, the ETS staff is dedicated to helping our students succeed, so please continue to let us know how we can help!

Sincerely,

Ms. Holly Lawrence, Program Director
hmlawrence@valdosta.edu

Get Involved!

School is very important. Keeping those grades up and having good test scores are a couple things that will help you get into college, but you need to be more marketable than that! It is good to join organizations and also do community service. Colleges and future employers want to know that you are a hard worker but also well rounded. So get involved!

- Sade Miller, Academic Advisor
smmiller@valdosta.edu
College Tour Highlights

Abraham Baldwin Agricultural College

Educational Talent Search 11th and 12th grade students had a chance to attend Abraham Baldwin Agricultural College (ABAC) Preview Day on November 15, 2014. It was a day packed full of information on entrance requirements, housing and residence life and potential scholarship opportunities. The 30 students that attended also had a chance to speak with current students and professors of the university about degree programs and organizations on campus. At Donaldson Dining Hall lunch was provided, to give students a taste of dining on campus. Overall it was a great chance to see what ABAC has to offer to them in the future.

Savannah State College

Savannah is one of the historical cities in Georgia, so of course we wanted our students to get a glimpse of what the city has to offer. On January 31, 2015 Educational Talent Search 8th and 9th graders visited the city and Savannah State University was the first stop. The 37 students were first introduced to our fellow TRiO participants who gave a presentation on what the university has to offer. Students were then broken up into 3 groups to tour the beautiful campus. Next was the Freedom Trail Tour, given by Johnnie Brown. On this tour students experienced the historical sites and contributions of African Americans in the city, such as the First African Baptist Church.
MOTIVATION AND THE POWER OF NOT GIVING UP!

Have you ever set a goal for yourself, like getting fit, making honor roll, or being picked for a team? Like lots of people, maybe you started out doing great, but then lost some of that drive and had trouble getting motivated again.

You’re Not Alone!

Everyone struggles with staying motivated and reaching their goals. Just look at how many people go on diets, lose weight, and then gain it back again! The reality is that refocusing, changing, or making a new start on something, no matter how small, is a big deal. But it’s not impossible. With the right approach, you can definitely do it.

Getting Motivated

So how do you stay motivated and on track with your goal? It all comes down to good planning, realistic expectations, and a stick-to-it attitude. Here’s what you need to do:

1. **Know Your Goal**
   Start by writing down your major goal. Your major goal is the ultimate thing you’d like to see happen. For example, “I want to make honor roll,” or “I want to get fit enough to make the cross-country team,” or even, “I want to play in the Olympics” are all major goals because they’re the final thing the goal setter wants to see happen (obviously, some goals take longer and require more work than others). It’s OK to dream big. That’s how people accomplish stuff. You just have to remember that the bigger the goal, the more work it takes to get there.

2. **Make It Specific**
   It’s easier to plan for and master a specific goal than a vague one. Let’s say your goal is to get fit. That’s pretty vague. Make it specific by defining what you want to achieve (such as muscle tone and definition or endurance), why you want to get fit, and by when. This helps you make a plan to reach your goal.

3. **Make It Realistic**
   People often abandon their goals because their expectations are unreasonable. Maybe they expect to get ripped abs in weeks rather than months, or to quit smoking easily after years of lighting up.

4. **Write It Down**
   Put your specific goal in writing. Then write it down again. And again. Research shows that writing down a goal is part of the mental process of committing to it. Write your goal down every day to keep you focused and remind you how much you want it.

5. **Break It Down**
   Making any change takes self-discipline. You need to pay constant attention so you don’t get sidetracked. One way to make this easier is to break a big goal into small steps. For example, let’s say you want to run a marathon. If it’s February and the marathon is in August, that’s a realistic timeframe to prepare. Start by planning to run 2 miles and work up gradually to the distance you need.

Source: kidshealth.org
# Educational Talent Search Saturday Academy Schedule & Tour Schedule

## February

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Time</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>HIGH SCHOOL SATURDAY ACADEMY</td>
<td>10 AM - 12 PM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>9TH THROUGH 12TH GRADERS</td>
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</table>

## March

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<tbody>
<tr>
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<td>MIDDLE SCHOOL SATURDAY ACADEMY</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>7TH THROUGH 8TH GRADERS</td>
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<tr>
<td>30 - 4/2</td>
<td>SPRING BREAK COLLEGE TOUR</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>10TH THROUGH 11TH GRADERS</td>
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## April

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<tr>
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<th>Time</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>HIGH SCHOOL SATURDAY ACADEMY</td>
<td>10 AM - 12 PM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>9TH THROUGH 12TH GRADERS</td>
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*ETS Staff will do workshops in schools throughout the semester*

## 2014-2015 TESTING DATES

### SAT

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<th>Test Dates</th>
<th>Registration Deadline</th>
<th>Late Registration Deadline</th>
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<td>Oct. 9</td>
<td>Oct. 24 - 28</td>
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<tr>
<td>Saturday, Dec. 6, 2014</td>
<td>Nov. 6</td>
<td>Nov. 21 - 24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saturday, Jan. 24, 2015</td>
<td>Dec. 29</td>
<td>Jan. 9 - 13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saturday, March 14, 2015</td>
<td>Feb. 13</td>
<td>March 3 - 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saturday, May 2, 2015</td>
<td>April 6</td>
<td>April 17 - 21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saturday, June 6, 2015</td>
<td>May 8</td>
<td>May 22 - 27</td>
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### ACT

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Test Dates</th>
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<th>Late Registration Deadline</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Saturday, Dec. 13, 2014</td>
<td>Nov. 7</td>
<td>Nov. 8-21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saturday, Feb. 7, 2015</td>
<td>Jan. 9</td>
<td>Jan. 10-16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saturday, April 18, 2015</td>
<td>March 13</td>
<td>March 14-27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saturday, June 13, 2015</td>
<td>May 8</td>
<td>May 9-22</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Star Students

**Samantha Mark**

Brooks County High
11th Grade
- Favorite Color: Lime Green
- College She Wishes to Attend: Georgia Military College
- Favorite Sport: Football
- Role Model: God Mother, Gloria Thompson
- What do you want to be when you grow up? Forensic Examiner

**Kiona Johnson**

Valdosta Early College
11th Grade
- Favorite Color: Red
- College He Wishes to Attend: Clark Atlanta University
- Favorite Subject: History
- Role Model: Poet, Nikki Giovanni
- What do you want to be when you grow up? Sports Reporter

**Kaielle Sermons**

Newbern Middle School
8th Grade
- Favorite Subject: Math
- College She Wishes to Attend: Harvard University
- Favorite Sport: Basketball
- What do you want to be when you grow up? Lawyer

**DeSaevion Hardy**

Brooks County Middle
8th Grade
- Favorite Color: Orange
- College He Wishes to Attend: Valdosta State University
- Favorite Sport: Football
- Role Model: Mother, Tisha Hardy
- What do you want to be when you grow up? IT Computer Analyst

**Morgan Lane**

Valdosta Middle School
8th Grade
- Favorite Color: Hot Pink
- College She Wishes to Attend: Florida State University
- Favorite Subject: Science
- What do you want to major in? Psychology

**Gerald Bailey**

Valdosta High School
11th Grade
- Favorite Color: Red
- College He Wishes to Attend: Winston Salem State University
- Favorite Subject: Social Studies
- What do you want to major in? Culinary Arts
ETS has assisted me in accumulating the necessary tools and information that I require to be successful in college. With great leaders and support this program has allowed me to travel, meet new people, and plan for my future. People like Ms. Watson and Ms. Miller make this program successful because they encourage students like me to get a feel for college life and have a hunger for education. Without this program I couldn’t even imagine taking college as serious as I have now. Even though I am a dual-enrolled student at VSU I never really considered college to be that important. I used to think that just graduating from high school was enough but learning from ETS has changed the way I think. I now know that college is essential to my success in the future.

I can truly say that ETS has not only taught me about college but has affected the life choices I have made. Without the proper guidance I could have been a product of my environment and another statistic in my state. The staff at ETS have been more than teachers to me they have nurtured my need to learn and this has made me cherish all the knowledge I’ve gained so far. Because I allowed myself to take advantage of the opportunities ETS has presented to me, I’ve grown into a mature young man and have become the best that I can be, yet.

For the first time, Twenty-five ETS students attended the GA TRIO Student Leadership Conference on November 8, 2014 at the University of Georgia.

VSU had eight students to participate in the academic “High-Q” competition. Event highlights included students having the opportunity to attend various breakout sessions related to leadership, and hear from an amazing speakers in gender specific forums. Entertainment included a step team performance by college students. Students also had the opportunity to meet and network with nearly 400 students in TRIO programs across Georgia. The GA TRIO Student Leadership Conference is held each fall, more information can be found at www.gaspp.us.
As you're preparing for college, you'll learn that there are many factors that help college admissions staff learn more about you. Your application, college essay, SAT or ACT scores and GPA show these counselors what your abilities, interests and skills are so they can decide if you're a good fit for the college.

Your high school transcript, which shows your high school grades, classes and GPA, will most likely be the first piece of information a college admissions officer will review. This complete record of your coursework, grades and credits provides concrete evidence of whether you're prepared to attend a particular college or not.

When planning for college, you must keep this in mind as you take classes, study and later get grades - the work you put into it will directly impact your ability to get into colleges. Your transcription will show admissions counselors how hard you work, what areas you excel in and which major or type of degree might be best for you. Obviously this is in conjunction with the other elements of your application, but now you can see how important a transcript is in the application process.

As you prepare your college admissions applications, request a copy of your high school transcript from your high school counselor or school registrar so you can review it for accuracy.

What College Admissions Counselors Examine on Your Transcript

- Your grade point average (GPA) and class rank: Be aware that some schools only consider core classes (like English, math, science and social studies) when calculating your GPA (What is a GPA?), while others look at grades for all of your classes.

- The types of classes you took in high school: The variety and difficulty of classes will help them see what type of student you are; AP/IB classes will show that you are serious about planning for college, while a course load of non-academic classes will not impress them very much.

- A consistent GPA: When school search for new students, they want to see that you are willing to work hard, you enjoy challenging yourself and learning new things and you can maintain a high grade point average. For those who had a rocky start, keep at it! Schools also like to see GPA improvement. Plus, you can speak to what changed and why you want to go to college to help them understand the discrepancy among your grades.

- The number of pass/fail classes you took: Earning a passing grade in these classes is often considered a D by colleges. Avoid pass/fail classes so they don't impact your cumulative GPA.

- Your behavior record, if included: The only time your behavior record displays on your transcript is when there were any negative reports, such as suspensions or other disciplinary actions.

Source: www.campusexplorer.com
ATTENTION SENIORS!!

The Educational Talent Search staff realizes your senior year is very busy and can be overwhelming with the planning of your life after graduation. Don’t worry, we are here to help! If you need assistance with college admissions process, financial aid and scholarship search please let us know. In addition to serving you at your target school, we will be available during Saturday Academy sessions (both middle and high school). Please make an appointment at least one week in advance with the ETS staff via phone call, email or verbal confirmation.

No Summer Plans?

Well look out for Educational Talent Search mail outs about summer educational programs. Come learn and grow with other students by taking part in scheduled activities and programs. We look forward to helping you succeed, but also having a fun experience at the same time.

Congratulations!

Kaielle Sermons
Star Student for Newbern Middle School. She is the champion of the Valdosta City School Spelling Bee. Congrats Kaielle! The ETS staff is extremely proud of you.

FINANCIAL AID WORKSHOP

On Saturday, January 10, 2015 the ETS program held its annual Financial Aid Workshop for our senior students and parents. The Federal Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) was explained in detail by Angie Wilson of Georgia Student Finance Commission. She went over common issues, important dates to remember, and how to overall complete the FAFSA accurately so that the financial aid process can be done swiftly. She also went overall changes to the HOPE Scholarship and some new scholarship opportunities for students seeking degrees in technical colleges.

Valdosta State University’s, William Jimerson, gave a great presentation on admissions at VSU. William started off by asking students what they wanted to major in and went on to explain the opportunities that would be available if they attended VSU. He went over the various scholarships the school has to offer as well as housing information and student organizations list.

Students and parents were encouraged to contact ETS if additional help is needed during the college admissions process.
TEACUP PARENTING:
College Preparation Tips For Parents

Would a professor or boss call your child a teacup?
You’ve heard of helicopter parents (always hovering, swooping in to save the day). Snowplow parents have gotten some press (push in ahead of their children, clear all possible obstacles, allow them to think they’re handling things on their own). The new parenting phenomenon? Teacup parenting.
Stories abound of students who are so cared for, so fragile, that they simply shatter at the first bit of hot water.

Are you likely to send a teacup to college?

1. **Do you handle everything?** Let go of the reins a little now, while you’re there to help. Let your kids be in charge of some projects. For example, let them do some of the college visit planning – and when you get there, let them do the talking! Instead of anticipating and preventing problems, let them chart their own course and watch how they deal with bumps along the way.

2. **Is your child’s first line of defense always to call home?** Do you jump in and fix anything wrong, whether it’s getting the college applications in by the deadline, or running gym clothes to the school when they didn’t make it into the backpack? When he calls, gently direct him to figure out what he can do.

3. **Does your child know how to fail?** When she applies to her reach school and doesn’t get in, how will she handle the rejection letter? Think back to the last time she lost. How did she handle it? Think also about the reactions she sees in you. When your child is not the first to finish, are you quick to point out the shortcomings of the winner, how your child was better, or how the event planning was flawed?

4. **Will the first F your child ever receives happen when he is away at college?** Failure is a part of life, so teens need to know how to handle it – and they need to know that it isn’t the end of the world.

5. **Observe how your child reacts to criticism, and consider how you react to criticism of your child.** Do you feel the other person is always wrong? Provide the tools to graciously accept this input (even when it’s not well-founded), and how to turn a negative into a positive. This is a skill that will help your child far beyond the school years.

What happens when you send a teacup out into the world? Below are some real-life examples.

It’s hard to find the line between raising children to know they are valued, but not in such a way that they could break apart when they discover they aren’t as cherished in general as they are at home. Take a look at these true-story examples (names changed to protect the broken), and see what you think of the suggestions for preferred reactions:

- John, freshman, got lost on campus. Called Mom, then Mom called student affairs to complain John didn’t get a map and the signs on campus were inadequate. (Preferred reaction to lost on campus? Ask for directions from one of the scores of students walking by.)
- Jason had a solid 4.0 throughout high school, then received his first-ever C on a college assignment. Jason called home, and his parent called the professor. (Preferred reaction would be Jason going to the professor’s posted office hours to discuss bringing up that C.)
- Jennifer graduated with honors after sailing through high school and college. During her first job performance review she received a below-average rating. Later that day, her father called HR to discuss. (Preferred reaction to this one? Pretty much anything other than having the parent of an adult call her boss to intervene!)

So what’s a concerned parent to do?

Obviously, not everyone’s situation will be the same. Certainly there will always be a need for positive parenting, and students with involved parents typically do better academically. More about this in Parent College Coach Tip #12: Five Positive Parenting Tips. The challenge is to avoid crossing from positive parenting into over-parenting. No one will be perfect, of course, but thoughtful parenting that gives tools to solve problems, rather than just taking care of the problems for the children, sets them up for success later — on their own, no intervention required!

Source: www.smartcollegevisit.com
ETS Students & Parents,

Thank You for your support!

Stay updated with our events by following our social media accounts below!

Facebook: Valdosta State University Educational Talent Search
Twitter: @VSU_ETS
Instagram: @ETS_AT_VSU

PHONE 229.333.5463 • FAX 229.249.2687 • WEB www.valdosta.edu/ose/EducationalTalentSearchProgram