is it like going to work every day with your best friends?
Inside, you’ll learn comedy team Broken Lizard’s answer to this question. You’ll also find many more insights from four of the group’s members, as well as those of a few other people connected to Colgate.

We set out to get some pointers for high school students like you who are going through the college search process and planning for the next four years of their lives. What we ended up with was some great advice.

A top journalist offers tips for writing the college essay. The director of Colgate’s counseling center talks about learning from mistakes and preparing calmly for standardized tests. Successful Colgate students share their secrets on getting the most out of college. And noteworthy alumni inspire us to pursue what we love.


We hope you enjoy meeting the people on the following pages as much as we did.

Jasmine and Tina

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I wish I had danced more. I see in all of these successful people a real ability to at once pursue a dream and live in the moment. I realize now that the dreams I abandoned when I was 13 really could have come true. Everyone I met had their low moments, but they never limited themselves.

— Jasmine

I wish I had danced more.
Sian-Pierre Regis ’06, junior class president, talked with Tina in Colgate’s Ryan Studio. Sian-Pierre landed his first college theatrical role during his first year at Colgate, playing Oberon (which he compares to Puck) in David Pinner’s Midsummer.

Tina Coviello So you’re from Boston. How did you adjust to the rural life here in Central New York?
Sian-Pierre Regis I grew up right in Copley Square… these huge buildings, things are always booming. Here, you have all that city stuff replaced with the people. Constant interaction with other people — you don’t need or want anything else. Every person you pass says “hey” or asks how your day is going.

TC Yeah, the “Colgate hello.”
SPR (laughing) Yes. That was the reason I came to Colgate, actually — the hello that I got. Every single person I walked past said, “Hey, man” or, “What’s up, dude?” I thought, “If this is what I am going to get every day for four years, there is no other place I want to be.”

TC You were the captain of your high school swim team, which is a big leadership role. How was that different from your leadership roles in college?
SPR It was a lot easier in high school. I knew that we had to get on the bus at 3 p.m., leave at 6 p.m., and turn off the lights at the pool when we left. That was the extent of my leadership. Here it’s more than that. You need to find a time when everyone can meet, you need to call people, you need to check in with people before and after to see how things could go better. It’s putting things together.

TC How have you changed since high school?
SPR Sian-Pierre in high school was sort of caught up in the whole high school thing. I was self-conscious about a lot of things. But Sian-Pierre here just does whatever he wants. It’s great to do that, to be accepted, and to have all the friends you want.

TC With everything that you do, how do you keep up with the rigorous academics here at Colgate?
SPR Time management is key. I have a Post-it note for every day with the times that I’m going to do things. I allot certain times for everything. If I have a break between classes for an hour, I go to the Coop and do work.

TC Your apartment must have a wall of Post-its.
SPR I have a trash can overflowing with them.

TC In making the transition to Colgate, would you have done anything differently?
SPR I knew that coming to Colgate, no one would know me and I thought, “How can I package myself?” — because I’m still in the high school zone. I thought maybe I would get dreadlocks. I already had an afro, so I figured that would be cooler. And then I came here and I thought, “What can I stand for?” I would definitely do that differently; I think that at first I missed a chance to show people who I really was.

TC You wouldn’t think of how to package yourself, but you would just be who you are?
SPR Yeah. I thought that I had to be that trendy “cool” kid from Boston.

TC A Red Sox fan.
SPR (laughing) Exactly. Had to be. Probably so I could distinguish between myself in high school and myself in college. Even though you’re pretty much the same person, you just evolve.

Sian-Pierre Regis’s Stats

# of friends he sees on a walk across the Quad between classes: at least 20
# of times each week he meets someone new on campus: 2
# of leadership positions he’s held at Colgate: 10
# of countries he’s visited while a student at Colgate: 5
# of times he’s watched Super Troopers: twice a semester
# of times he’s had dinner at a professor’s home: 6
# of times he’s at the Barge in an average week: 2
# of leadership positions he’s held at Colgate: 10

“Your roommate may be someone who you would never have talked with in high school but is the best person you have ever met in your life.”
Gloria is the national political correspondent at CBS and a columnist and contributing editor for U.S. News & World Report. She has spent more than 20 years covering politics for major television networks and news magazines. Gloria and Tina met for lunch in New York City, where they talked about the value of curiosity, the discipline of good writing, and the best preparation for a career in journalism.

Tina Coviello  Did you know that you wanted to go into journalism when you entered Colgate?

Gloria Borger  I’m one of these people who has always been nosy and curious. I loved to write, and of course loved to talk, so I always knew I wanted to go into journalism. I grew up in the Watergate era when Woodward and Bernstein were the great heroes and everyone wanted to be an investigative journalist and right the wrongs. So when I was in high school I was the editor of my high school paper, and when I went to college the first thing I did was go to the Colgate Maroon and sign up.

TC After your Watson fellowship in Britain, you started working at the Washington Star as a general assignment reporter. How did you get into solely covering politics?

GB Well, politics was also something I always loved. In fact, I loved politics but I didn’t take enough political science courses at Colgate. If I had to do it all over again I would take more political science and more history courses, because what I read now is political science and history. I just can’t get enough of it. I would recommend to all students to take everything, take science and history. I just can’t get enough of it. I would have taken more political science courses at Colgate. If I had to do it all over again I would take more political science and more history courses, because what I read now is political science and history. I just can’t get enough of it. I would recommend to all students to take everything, take everything that is available to you.

TC How did you find your voice in writing?

GB It takes time. The great thing about writing is that it makes you think about who you are and how you think, and it forces you to organize your thoughts. I don’t know what I think about something until I write about it.

TC And being a columnist is different from straight reporting.

GB I write a reported column, so I talk to people — senators, people in the White House — and then I come to a conclusion. I still use my reporting skills; I still do my due diligence. I love to talk to people and find out what they think and why they think that. The big thing I remember from my Colgate education is being pushed to think about why authors wrote a certain way, what they were really thinking. I learned to ask the tenth question, not just the first or second.

TC Have you found in working with people who went to journalism school that they benefited from that later in their careers?

GB No. I talk to many people who come to me and say, “I want to be a reporter. I want to be a writer. I want to be on television. How do I get into journalism?” The best thing that you can do is be a generalist and learn how to write. That holds true even for television, because television involves good writing, and writing means good thinking. Know how to write, and how to lead from one thought, to the next, to the next. That’s what being an English major did for me. I had to write so many papers in which critical thought was involved. What you really need is a general liberal arts education that teaches you how to write.

TC What advice would you give about writing the college essay?

GB Before you sit down at the computer, think. Make yourself notes and think about who you are, about what you want to be. It doesn’t have to be gimmicky. Nobody is interested in gimmicks. Schools just want to know what kind of person you are. Think about what it is about yourself that you want to convey to a Colgate or any college. What is it about you that they need to know to make a decision about you?

TC How do you get over writer’s block?

GB Just do a little stream of consciousness. Write stuff about yourself. Get your thoughts on paper, take a look at them, then think about what it is you’ve done in your life that’s interesting — or not so interesting — but important to you. Don’t make up stuff, because if you make up stuff they’re going to know. You have to be true in this essay.

Get inspired. Read a few passages from one of your favorite authors.

Use your own “voice.” Don’t write what you think people want to read, just be yourself.

Take your time. Writing a masterpiece can’t be rushed.

Ask questions. Talk to people.

Before you sit down at the computer, think. Make notes.

Read aloud what you have written; read it to someone else if necessary.

Don’t rely on spellcheck; have a dictionary handy.

Read often and read a variety of things. Reading makes you a better writer.

Talk to your teachers about your writing. Ask them to explain why something is good, what’s wrong with something else.

“What advice would you give about writing the college essay?”

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Jasmine Bailey  Was your goal ever to be a professional hockey player?

Dave Thomas  For just about my whole life. But when I got exposed to the sport nationally, I realized just how competitive it is.

When I first got to Colgate, I didn’t play a lot. To all of a sudden be sitting on the bench, I questioned it a lot, but found the passion for it again. A bunch of upperclassmen back then were incredibly positive influences in my life — they helped me through the hard times and reassured me that I was going to get through.

JB  Has the discipline you learned from sports helped you academically?

DT  Definitely. To commit so much time to hockey and still live up to my own expectations academically, I really had to focus myself and find ways to use every minute of my time. I’ve become a perfectionist in academics, and I think that comes from what I’ve been striving for athletically.

“Being called a nerd by the guys... I like that that’s a part of my life.”

JB  How do you prioritize and set goals?

DT  My priority has always been academics. That’s my life, because the chances of making a living playing hockey are very slim. I grew up around hockey, and for a lot of people, it’s what they do — and when they’re done they figure out what’s next. There’s much more that I am interested in, so I knew academics had to count, too.

JB  What are your goals beyond college?

DT  Maybe play for a year or two, maybe work, then law school.

JB  How would you describe the ideal teammate?

DT  Someone who takes care of everything, shows up every day to have fun, and gets the job done. When I think about the guys I really admire, they’re the ones who can manage everything. They come out because they want to, and they would do anything for anyone in the room.

JB  Did you feel peer pressure in high school?

DT  Not always. People around you are constantly thinking about what you’re doing wrong — not just what you’re doing right. And lots of parents are thinking the same thing. As long as you’re doing the right things, it’s not really an issue.

JB  Are there good kinds of peer pressure?

DT  Definitely. I have surrounded myself with people who share similar values. When you’re successful and you get some kind of reinforcement, even if it’s in a joking way, it’s good. Being called a nerd by the guys... I like that that’s a part of my life.

JB  Where do you get the courage to take risks and overcome daunting tasks?

DT  In a weird way, it’s not even daunting. My parents always wanted me to do well, and encouraged me to do stuff. But they stepped away sometimes and just tried to do a good job of guiding me without pushing me too hard.

JB  What advice do you have for someone entering college?

DT  Here’s what my sister told me: Use your professors. See them in office hours. Get extra help from them if you need it, or just explore ideas with them. Developing good relationships with professors demonstrates that you are interested, and when they see this they’re often more inclined to help you out and give you some leeway when you have a lot to do.
Broken Lizard

Broken Lizard, the quintet that created the cult classic *Super Troopers* and the comedy horror flick *Club Dread*, traces its roots back to 1989 when all five were students at Colgate. Back then they performed comedy sketches on campus and named themselves Charred Goosebeak (the improv group still exists at Colgate). Tina caught up with four of the five in L.A. while they were on a break from writing for *The Dukes of Hazzard* movie.
Patricia Price '76 is an executive on the global marketing leadership team for IBM. Jasmine met with Patricia for an afternoon at IBM’s global headquarters in Armonk, N.Y. They talked about her interesting career path, the flexibility of a liberal arts degree, and what it takes to be successful in business and in life.

**Q&A Colgate 11972**
**Religion major (medical ethics interest); pre-med; varsity tennis team at Colgate.**

**Paul** Yeah, you would be behind a desk right now.

**Kevin** I’d be preparing people’s taxes. (laughter)

**Erik** Are you saying I ignite interest in you?

**Steve** He’s saying you’re incendiary. I learned that word at Colgate. (laughter)

**Tina Coviello** Was it scary being in a more creative field with low structure?

**Paul** It helped that there were five of us. If I were doing it by myself, it would be terrifying.

**Kevin** I think the downside was more financial — not knowing what the next job was. Otherwise, we were all pretty happy about what we were doing.

**Paul** We all have friends who jumped from college to Wall Street or whatever. They had more security, but then down the road they would say, “I wish I did what you guys did.”

**Kevin** They would yell that to you from their yacht. (laughter)

Paul: "Yeah, you would be behind a desk right now.
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**Erik** Sometimes a joke will come out of nowhere with us. We’ll be eating lunch and we’ll just write it down. Other times we are forced to fill in a scene that’s part of the structure of a film and that’s a little more academic.

**Kevin** When you have a bunch of guys, your objective is to make the other guys laugh. You end up coming up with material that way.

**Paul** Collaboration really is important. You can write and write and write and if you’re not bouncing it off of anybody, who knows what direction you’re going?

**TC** What advice about choosing a college would you give to a high school student who is more creatively inclined?

**Kevin** The writing that we do is so social, so we benefited from how social Colgate was. A lot of our stuff came from that.

**Erik** It’s also about being well-rounded. One of the things that attracted me to Colgate initially was all these kids outside on the field playing one sport or another.

**Paul** I think a mistake people make, and you can say this about creative people or about someone who is into something else really specific, is going to a college that is just about that thing. You’re missing out on a lot of general life experiences. At the end of the day, those other outside experiences will probably serve you better than having just studied movement and voice for four years.

**Kevin** Or jokes.

**Paul** Yeah, jokes. Thank God we didn’t go to that joke school we were talking about. (laughter)

**TC** L.A. and Hamilton are pretty different; is there anything you miss about central New York?

**Paul** I miss the beautiful fall weather.

**Kevin** I miss the community. You have this pocket in the middle of dairy country where everyone just kind of hangs out. The beauty of Colgate is that it’s very community-oriented.
Jasmine Bailey  
Your career path has included working as a probation investigator, acting in a soap opera, and servicing international clients through your own interior design business.  
How did you make it to IBM?  

Patricia Price  
This is the beauty of a liberal arts background. You have the flexibility to move in all different arenas. To make it to the top at IBM, when I started, you had to have sales experience. So I said, well, that's what I'll do. I interviewed with a Columbia grad, a philosophy major. We talked about Immanuel Kant, Kierkegaard, and so many things I learned at Colgate. We had this wonderful chemistry. We also talked about the business, and I ended up taking the job with her.  

JB  How can a student strive for balance and avoid burning out?  
PP  I was a religion major and I spent a lot of time in the sanctuaries of Colgate. It's this quiet environment that's away from all the hustle and bustle. It offers you the opportunity to gain a clearer perspective on what you're thinking, and you can sense and respond to what your heart is saying. Never since have I had that kind of time. But it's important to try to find it.  

JB  Is it possible for a student to be too focused on one thing?  
PP  You need balance in life, but passion usually doesn't understand balance. If you have a passion for genetics, then you dream about it, eat it, sleep it. In your spare time, try reading something that has nothing to do with genetics. Some of your best ideas are extrapolations of things that have nothing to do with the subject of your passion.  

JB  What else advice do you have for a high school student who's just starting out and wants to make it in big business?  
PP  I don't see the same type of work ethic that I saw twenty years ago. There's a certain amount of entitlement going around. This is a global marketplace where that job can be had by the top student from the top Korean or Latin American business school — who, by the way, speaks four languages, and you only speak one or two. It's great to have confidence, but not to the point where it starts to erode your own work ethic. I am seeing fewer people with what I call an elegant set of soft skills — the writing, presenting, and listening skills. Often the new employee feels they have to say something in order to get on the map, when really what they might need to do is listen and gain some insight and perspective. I like people to be appropriately proactive. Try thinking, "Maybe my boss didn't think about this dimension. I'm going to give this a whirl on the side and see how it spins and maybe I can add some incremental value beyond what they requested."

JB  What is missing in the young talent that you see?  
PP  I like to see what the person has contributed. Even if it's a two-week assignment or a non-paid position, there is something you are trying to contribute, and it is your responsibility within the first day or two to get your arms around it. If you're working at a camp, and your goal is to have the least amount of conflict among your bunk kids, and have them say it was the best summer of their lives...did you accomplish it? One hundred percent? Seventy percent?  

Studies Indian culture and dance with the Indian dancer Kamala, Professor Skelton, and his wife Mary Lou.  

Watson Fellowship in the UK: resident artist with Martha Graham Company.  

Performs off-Broadway; stars in a soap opera; launches modeling career.  

Completes first year at Pratt School of Design and lands a design job servicing UN clients.  

Begin her career at IBM as a sales associate. Progresses to strategic planning > customer relationship management > market intelligence > National Board Market Research Association.  

Runs PHP Designs (her own design company).  

Future  
Giving back  

Marketing operations > global marketing executive > writing a book...IBM career continues...community service...enjoying her husband, three children, and grandchildren.  

“I love when people write to me to say something they read from my book inspired them to do something great. That’s the most rewarding part of my career.”  

“Some of your best ideas are extrapolations of things that have nothing to do with the subject of your passion.”  

PP  Create opportunities.
For many talented students, going to college and being surrounded by so many other talented people can be daunting because they feel as if they have to start from scratch. How do you put things in perspective?

Mark Thompson

It’s unhealthy to define being successful as being the best. Think instead: How do I improve? How do I develop? What’s possible for me? Where am I going and how can I get there? How can I reflect and learn from my experiences?

JB

How can students maintain a sense of identity through the process of applying to colleges?

MT

Students should take time to consider their interests and the kinds of environments they want and then pay attention to their reactions to schools and students they encounter. There are many good colleges, and part of making a good decision involves the fit that students feel when they come to visit. It’s great if some place is high on a U.S. News & World Report list, but if it’s not right for you, you’re less likely to spend your four years really engaged.

JB

How do students prepare for the freedom of college?

MT

Being successful in college, becoming more confident, more independent, and more able to stand on your own feet, doesn’t automatically take place. Typically, it means putting ourselves into positions where we assume more responsibility and independence. It’s vitally important for students to take the application process on themselves so that it’s their work and their decision.

JB

When I came to Colgate four years ago, I didn’t have a cell phone, and now I feel guilty if I leave home without it. Do you think technology ever gets in the way?

MT

I am concerned when students jump onto their cell phones and don’t allow themselves to work through difficult situations. If I have a fight with my significant other, do I deal with that on my own, or do I immediately call mom and dad to get reassurance and have them tell me what to do? Gaining independence means knowing whom you can count on, but not relying on them in order to get through.

JB

Many students, both high school and college, believe that they have to be perfect all the time. What do you think is a reasonable amount of screwing up?

MT

We can all be safe and look good, but that comes at the risk of missing opportunities to challenge ourselves. It is fine to make mistakes with some kind of regularity. People should not look to have their life go perfectly without adjustments. Not recognizing the adjustment, not processing what it was like, would be a real problem.

JB

What are some tried-and-true strategies for approaching a challenge like taking a standardized test?

MT

Know the kinds of questions they’re going to ask, and the pace at which you need to work. Realize all of the good things that you bring to the admissions process: letters of recommendation, grade point average, and activities. Keep the test in perspective.

JB

What seems to take first-year students by surprise the most?

MT

The number of choices students have: What classes am I going to take? Am I going to join this group? Am I going to do what’s healthy or not? If a student has not been able to do those things previously, he may feel overwhelmed and lost. Students should recognize that they’re going to be vulnerable in lots of situations. To engage rather than to withdraw is really important. There are lots of folks there to help: a counselor, a faculty member, an RA, a chaplain, or a group adviser.
No secrets, really. It’s working hard, challenging yourself, and loving what you do. Visit our website for some video clips and photo outtakes from the conversations that inspired us.

There’s more good advice where this came from. Simple truths, complex challenges, the beginning of a career, the realization of a dream — we’ve compiled some excerpts from these interviews to share insights and stories with you.

Tina tells us, “The people I interviewed all understood that a Colgate education is so much more than just what you learn from books. It’s taking time to reflect, to try new things. Whether it’s writing jokes about Plato and Socrates or reading Plato and Socrates, we can do this because we’ve gained this liberal arts education that has opened our minds.”

What are the secrets of success? www.colgate.edu/advice

The members of Broken Lizard talk and laugh about inspiration, hard work, and smart fun.

Gloria remembers her early days as a reporter and wonders about finding one’s passion.

Dave talks honestly about facing challenges in college, on and off the ice.

Patricia shares the value of traveling abroad, the importance of believing in what you do, and the key to effective public speaking.

Mark discusses his daughter’s college search and considers some of the challenges unique to this generation.

It’s taking time to reflect, to try new things.