

JOINING US FOR CHESS, AND MORE



Our high-school students are meeting in-person again, attending seminars and chess nights at CIS's home, and meeting outdoors for community service and casual games with friends. The program offers opportunities to the young people to express themselves and grow academically and personally while doing something they enjoy.

Some students, like **Jeremiah**, joined College Bound because they really love chess and look for like-minded peers wanting to excel at the game. Others, like **MeiQi**, were introduced by friends and did not even play chess before. Several came because of the great experiences their siblings had had in the program. Regardless of what brought them together, one thing unites all College-Bounders. In the words of **Andrew Nicholas**, a freshman, it is the "community", that the kids are here for. On a chess night, after their games were over, we interviewed several of them.

JEREMIAH, SOPHOMORE



Hi Jeremiah, why did you decide to join College Bound?

I joined the program because I came to a lot of tournaments. I was invested. So, I decided I'll join the program too.

Is it only the chess that made you join the program or what about the other component – college prep?

That component is also interesting. But I mostly do it for chess.

Did you participate in any in-person tournaments?

Yes. I played in the tournament last week at P.S. 11.

Did you go to any tournaments outside of New York City before?

I did not have a chess team before. Recently I got into Brooklyn Tech but I haven't done anything with them yet. The only time I played outside of New York was in middle school. At that time, I was coming from BSC. It was a charter school. They had a chess team but it wasn't a big chess team so I had to go on my own. I went to Nationals in Florida.

You are not afraid of tournaments, right?

No, I am not afraid. Sometimes when I am playing and if I am about to lose or I am about to win my heartbeat speeds up a little bit, which is a little bit fun. But some people might find it scary.

What do you expect from the College Bound Program?

My wish list is to meet some new people and improve in chess.

Do you want to travel with CIS?

I would like to.

VIONNIE, JUNIOR



Why did you decide to join College Bound?

I decided to join CB because my brother was in the program and he convinced me to join. Also, I wanted to get back into chess and I thought that Chess in the School's College Bound program was the best.

Are you thinking of where you want to go to college?

Right now, I want to stay in New York City and depending on how I do, I might consider applying to other states.

Do you prefer to be in-person or in the virtual reality?

I prefer to be in-person because I can see a lot of my friends who I met in this program. Also a lot of the people here are really cool so it'll be nice to see them in-person.

This year, what was your favorite activity so far?

This year, my favorite activity was just going to Central Park [for the Chess in the Park tournament]. I think that tournament was one of the best. That was the first tournament I ever played [as a child], and I have special attachment to it.

Did you go to any other tournaments after that?

I worked at the P.S. 11 tournament and I think that was a really cool tournament also, to be part of.

JOEY, JUNIOR, AND JIAWEI, SENIOR



Why did you decide to be part of College Bound?

Jiawei: I heard that it is a very good program for applying for colleges. They [College Bound staff] give different tips, and there are different community service programs that you can do. Also, I was a big fan of chess when I was in middle school. That's why I applied.

Joey: Same reasons. When I was very young I really loved chess. I heard about College Bound at a Chess in the Schools tournament. I also heard that they help us a lot with college prepping resumes and college essays.

Have you travelled with Chess in the Schools?

Jiawei: Yes. I personally went to two tournaments – one amateur tournament and one city tournament - with Chess in the Schools. After that Covid hit [and we could not travel any more].

Joey: I went to one tournament with CIS. It was the Amateurs [tournament, in New Jersey]. I usually go with my school, which has also a chess team.

What are your plans for college?

Jiawei: I am now only applying to CUNYs because they are closer and I do not want to take the ACT. I think it is too much pressure.

Joey: I am currently taking SAT but I haven't looked at any colleges yet. But I am planning to go to college. And College Bound will help me a lot with the college application.

Do you prefer to learn virtually or in-person?

Jiawei: I prefer in-person because I can't focus when I am in a virtual [class].

Joey: Same, I'd rather be in person because I get distracted easily.

ANDREW NICHOLAS, FRESHMAN



Did you just join College Bound?

Yes.

Why did you decide to enroll in the program?

My sister, who graduated, was in College Bound Program for a long time along with her friends. And I thought “Why not?”.

Do you like chess?

Yes. I’ve been playing chess since the second grade.

Did you play in our tournaments before?

Yes. Many, many times.

What attracts you to College Bound besides chess?

The community. It seems very open and free.

You have just joined the program and there is a lot ahead for you. But what have you guys done with College Bound so far this year?

We’ve done seminars and chess nights and discussed what we’ll gonna be doing looking forward.

Does it sound exciting? Are you still interested?

Yes!

Do you prefer to be in-person or in the virtual learning?

In-person. It makes it feel more personal and more like a community.

MEIQI, JUNIOR



When did you join the College Bound Program?

I joined in my freshman year. This is my third year.

Do you like it?

I actually like it. At first, I did not know chess. But because my friend is in chess, she invited me in. But I had no idea how to play chess. I did not go to tournaments, and I did not know about College Bound. But I got interested. I just came with her, and I started to learn chess. I got to know chess and I started to like playing chess.

Do you like the game now?

Yes. It gets my brain thinking.

Do you now play in tournaments?

I do! I don't know how to play well but I started to go to tournaments in my freshman year, just starting anew.

The College Bound Program is not only about chess. What else attracts you here?

College. It prepares me for college. It helps you answer questions. If you don't know anything, if you have questions about college, it helps you get prepared. It tells you what you can do and helps you do it.

Do you have plans for college?

Yes. I do! I have a college in mind. But I still have questions about double-majors and things like that. College Bound can help me through it.

If it is not a secret, where are you planning to go?

Syracuse [University].

What do you prefer, to learn virtually or being in-person?

I like to come here in-person. I get to know friends. And playing chess in-person feels like a normalcy.