Time management key in the college process

By Kelly Shelburne

From the Common Application to setting up campus visits, prospective students must learn to divide their time to be able to stay organized and meet certain deadlines.

"The best way to stay organize is to use tools like Excel to stay on task with deadlines," Emma Brown, Stonehill senior admissions assistant, said. "Every school has a different organized system and it is important to pay attention to each."

The process begins with visiting campuses and narrowing down the type of college that will be suitable. Limit yourself to visiting two schools in a day more than that can cause them to blend.

"Space things out, start broad and narrow it down to a small list," Brown said. "Start to figure things out you like and don't like about campuses."

A list of suitable colleges should be made at the end of junior year so there will be time in the summer to travel to the prospective campuses.

Once a list is made, start visiting the schools for a second time, either for an open house or an interview. The best time for an interview is in the summer, but this should never be during a first time visit.

"Teacher recommendations and the essay should be done sooner than later," Brown said. "They are one less thing to worry about when starting the Common Application."

While keeping up with deadlines, it is important to start the Common Application right away. August is an efficient time to start as early decision and early action deadlines come up fast. Most colleges use the Common Application.

Once the applications are submitted, keep in contact with the colleges throughout the fall and spring to show as much interest as possible.

Pace the process throughout junior and senior year. Don't wait until the last minute with deadlines and stay informed with upcoming events and find a way to stay organized.

(Kelly Shelburne is a journalism student at Stonehill College)