Email, Facebook, Instagram, Twitter Accounts....What?!?!?
Yes, that’s right. In today’s world of social media, many colleges and universities are now “quietly” using a new form of criteria to determine whether or not someone should be accepted to their university. This is the social media criteria. When you are applying to colleges, please be forewarned that admissions officers may look you up on Instagram, follow you on Twitter, search your posts or photos on Facebook and even scrutinize your email address. And these can be the tipping point on whether an admissions officer extends a letter of recommendation to you...or not.

What should you do?

Email: If your email is "hotmama@gmail.com", you should know that it does NOT make a good first impression with admissions officers. It raises a red flag and can create a negative perception and image of you that you do not want.
TIP: Create an email address with a "normal" name. Any and all correspondence for academic or business reasons should use a normal email that includes either the first initial of your first name and last name or vice versa.

Twitter: Talk about a trap door! Let’s get right to the point. If you can’t say it in front of your parents or teachers, don’t "tweet" it. Worse than FB, tweets can get re-tweeted by strangers or even worse, end up in the media. People tweeting their thoughts have been fired from their jobs, kicked out of school, etc. Don’t let this happen to you.
TIP: Like we stated above. If you can’t say it in front of your parents or teachers, DON’T tweet it!

Instagram: Instagram is like Twitter only it includes pictures as well. If you would not show the picture to your parents or teachers, DON’T post it! Once again, it becomes public and anyone can see it.
TIP: Keep it clean. Keep it very clean. You may think it’s just your friends that are viewing your posts. Keep in mind that anytime you put ANYTHING on social media you have made EVERYONE your friend.

Facebook: Of all the social media platforms college admissions officers may search, Facebook is public domain # 1! If you have unsavory pictures, if you "like" groups or pictures that disrespect other groups, promote violence or hatred, or make you look bad, it can be seen by those who are making a big decision regarding your future. If you’re engaging in conversations where you are using foul or disrespectful language, they can see it. Even if you don’t post the pictures but your friends do and they tag you...they can see it.
TIP "A": Go through your FB account and clean it up. NOW! Take down any and all pictures that you do not think show you in a good light. "Unlike" any group or page that does the same. Watch what you post and what others may post on your wall.
TIP "B": So you don’t want to play “defense” with your Facebook account? Great! Go on the offense! If you think the college of your choice will review your page, create it in a way that makes them WANT to accept you. Post pictures of you doing community service work. Write and post about important topics going on in the world. "Like" great nonprofit and social justice groups and pages. Post quotes from great leaders, etc. Make your page look exactly like the person you want the admissions officers to see and accept.

Do not think anything you put on social media is private or that only your "friends" are able to see it. When it comes to social media, you must take the approach that anyone and everyone can see exactly what you are posting and saying. So during this college application season, take that approach. Be smart.

Be vigilant, be safe . . . Get Accepted!