



## Summer 2014 Program Site Visit Reports The Scripps College Academy

### Overview: The Summer Residential Program

Each year the Scripps College Academy (SCA) selects a cohort of high-achieving, low-income female students from the greater Los Angeles area who aspire to become the first generation in their families to attend and graduate from college to join the multi-year SCA Scholars program. For the 2014 admission cycle SCA received **255** applications for **50** coveted spots. The selected cohort is just about evenly split between girls in their freshmen year and girls in their sophomore year of high school.

The SCA Scholar experience begins with a two-week Summer Residential Program, where these students experience what it is like to live amongst their peers and study at a private, liberal arts institution. Following the summer, students will continue to attend weekend activities for the remainder of their tenure in high school. Activities typically include: faculty-led book clubs, science research opportunities, college entrance exam preparation classes, and field trips to museums and other cultural centers. Scholars and their families also receive individualized assistance throughout the college application and financial aid processes.

### The Second Week: Research Projects

During our visit we were able to interact with members of the executive, student, and faculty teams – all of who work to provide an intensive fun-filled academic experience for the girls. The SCA summer staff team consists of a two-person executive team, 10 undergraduate student staff, and 8 Scripps College professors. SCA benefits greatly from its close relationship with Scripps College faculty. In fact, more faculty members are interested in teaching for the summer residential program than there are spots available, and nearly 40% of all faculty members at Scripps College have taught some combination of lectures and workshops for the Academy. Several of the undergraduate staff members are former SCA Scholars themselves.

The 50 Scholars are divided into 8 groups of 6-7 girls. Each of these groups has an assigned faculty staff member and an assigned student staff member that guide the girls throughout the entire two-week experience. There are also 2 student resident advisors who oversee the 8 undergraduate staff directly tasked with managing the scholars.

Our visit was during the second week of the Summer Residential Program. The first week of the program is characterized by numerous faculty led lectures by Scripps professors who expose the students to a variety of topics. During the second week of the program the girls form their own groups, each of which is in charge of developing a research project for the remainder of their tenure in the two-week residential program. On the day Focusing Philanthropy visited the program the Scholars spent the first half of their day working on their research projects. This research is presented on the last day of the program to Scholars' friends, family, and some of the students' high school teachers and administrators.

The students' research topics are almost always directly inspired by themes explored during lectures attended during first week lectures. The faculty and student staff helps guide the scholars in refining their research question, and sourcing the data necessary to support their findings. We were able to shadow three of the eight research groups the girls had formed during our day. The research topics explored included:

- How the use of Photoshop influences women's perceptions, and their ultimate satisfaction, with their self-image
- How the portrayal of male characters in animated Disney films has evolved from the release of Snow White to the release of Frozen
- Food Politics and Food Deserts: an analysis of the availability of healthy eating options in low-income neighborhoods throughout the US and how that affects healthy eating choices

During lunch our team had the opportunity to sit down with the scholars and discuss their experiences. The Scholars were very enthusiastic and candid about the past two-weeks on the Scripps campus, sharing their notebooks, their research projects - one group was conducting a survey of their peers during lunch in order to gather data necessary for their research thesis.

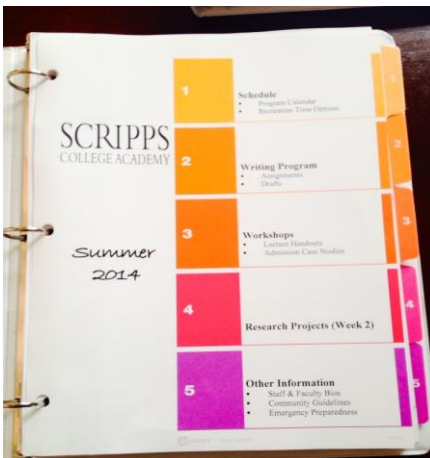
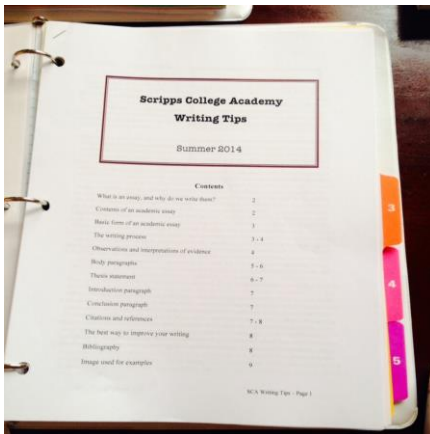
They discussed various topics covered during lectures, giving our team not only an overview of topics taught by the faculty member, but displaying genuine intrigue on theories explored by erupting into a lively debate.



*SCA scholars make their way to the dining hall in Malott Commons.*

*During the two-week residential program SCA scholars live on campus and experience for the first time what college life is all about. For most girls this is the longest time they spent away from home.*

*Pictured below, and in the column to the right, are the scholars' workbooks that are used for all their activities during their two-week stay at Scripps. On the bottom right hand side SCA Scholars learn to salsa dance during recreation time following an intensive day of working on their research project and attending workshops.*



## Afternoon Workshops

In the afternoon the Scholars attended two workshops. A current member of the SCA staff led the first workshop, the focus being how to build an effective resume, and most importantly how it can distinguish an applicant during the college admissions process. Other topics covered included email etiquette, and professional email names. A prior Executive Director of SCA led the second workshop on financial aid basics. Since the Scholars are either freshmen or sophomores, they won't be applying to college, and subsequently financial aid, for another two years or so. The workshops were both highly interactive and functioned as introductions to topics crucial to the college admissions process, but that would also be discussed throughout their time as SCA Scholars, all the way to their successful admission into college. The workshop presenters did a great job of explaining the topics and making the students feel comfortable about not knowing "all the answers" at this point in time.

*Pictured on the left hand side, is the Resume workshop, led by Shelley Bruce –SCA Assistant Director. Pictured to the right, is the Introduction to Financial Aid workshop led by the former SCA Director, and now Focusing Philanthropy Executive Vice President , Kelly Hewitt King.*



## Program Outcomes

Since the first graduating class in 2005, SCA Scholars have enrolled in more than **75** colleges and universities across the U.S. Consistently, SCA Scholars graduate from high school with top academic honors and pursue higher education. Many earn prestigious national awards including the Gates Millennium, Quest Bridge, and Posse Foundation scholarships. The class of 2014 was no exception. One hundred percent of the most recent SCA Scholars high school class has enrolled in higher education.

Class of 2014 attendance, by institution:

- **48%** attend a University of California campus
- **12%** attend a California State University
- **38%** attend a private college or university
- **2%** attend a community college

Other outcomes:

- **23%** attend college outside of California
- **8%** attend a women's college
- **73%** attend a "very selective" or "most selective" institution