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Julia Green : Columbia University: Off the Record - College Prowler (College Prowler: Columbia University Off the Record) before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised

Introduction from the Author You're shooting too low, was the response I heard as I told my high school teacher my selection of colleges. Because I am the type of student known more for contributions outside the classroom than pure scholastic ability, gaining admittance to my first-choice college seemed like a long shot. I applied to Columbia, the school of my dreams, to appease others and just to see if I could possibly make this dream a reality. I waited for my acceptance or rejection letter, which never came. I called the school to find out what was happening, but my application had been shuttled to another department and no information was forthcoming. Maybe they were just trying to spare my feelings and possibly avoid a teary scene. Either way, I took this as a bad sign, and I immediately began making plans for attending my back-up school. I went to lunch with my mother and sadly told her the news. When we returned home, I found a note written in three different colors of ink taped to the front door. The note read, Michelle, check the answering machine. Have a pen ready. Call me when you are through. Love, Dad. On the machine was a frantic message from my erstwhile academic counselor begging me to call Columbia. It turns out that my information had been misplaced, and they wanted to advise me of my acceptance so I could begin the necessary paperwork. I thought then that nothing could exceed the excitement of getting accepted to Columbia. I was wrong. The thrill never ended. My relationship with Columbia started slowly, but it turned out to be more than I ever hoped it would be: fascinating courses, eclectic people, and a reputation for excellence that dates back to 1754, not to mention having the whole city of New York as an extra appendage for self-discovery. Columbia University is a place unlike any other. Columbia University, located in the heart of NYC provides students with both a prestigious Ivy League education, and all of the diversions present in a metropolis. The University attracts the best of the best from every corner of the world, and the undergraduate colleges (Columbia College, The Fu Foundation for Engineering and Applied Sciences, the School of General Studies, and Barnard College) are geared to serve the wide range of personalities present here. Columbia College is the school for recent high school graduates who intend to earn a BA or BS degree. The Fu Foundation is for students who plan on pursuing careers in engineering and applied sciences. The School of General Studies serves non-traditional students (average age 28) who have chosen to return to school after an absence. Barnard is the womens college affiliated with the University. In the following pages, you will learn from people in the know students from three colleges under the Columbia University umbrella. I hope you find this information helpful in showing the unique experience of this great institution in this wonderful town. Michelle L. Tompkins Columbia University

"This is the kind of information kids really want to know before they pick a college." --Michelle Slatalla, The NY Times, March 9, 2006 "...get viewpoints on a variety of topics from the student body, which is where the Prowler gets its roar." --Melissa Kaplan, Boston Globe, May 23, 2004 "There is information on which schools have packed computer labs, which dorms are studious or riotous, ..." --Ben Gilbert, The Washington Post, April 27, 2004

About the Author Welcome to College Prowler During the writing of College Prowlers guidebooks, we felt it was critical that our content was unbiased and unaffiliated with any college or university. We think its important that our readers get honest information and a realistic impression of the student opinions on any campus that's why if any aspect of a particular school is terrible, we (unlike a campus brochure) intend to publish it. While we do keep an eye out for the occasional extremist the cheerleader or the cynic we take pride in letting the students tell it like it is. We strive to create a book that's as representative as possible of each particular campus. Our books cover both the good and the bad, and whether the survey responses point to recurring trends or a variation in opinion, these sentiments are directly and proportionally expressed through our guides. College Prowler guidebooks are in the hands of students throughout the entire process of their creation. Because you can't make student-written guides without the students, we have students at each campus who help write, randomly survey their peers, edit, layout, and perform accuracy checks on every book that we publish. From the very beginning, student writers gather the most up-to-date stats, facts, and inside information on their colleges. They fill each section with student quotes and summarize the findings in editorial reviews. In addition, each school receives a collection of letter grades (A through F) that reflect student opinion and help to represent contentment, prominence, or satisfaction for each of our 20 specific categories. Just as in grade school, the higher the mark the more content, more prominent, or more satisfied the students are with the particular category. Once a book is written, additional students serve as editors and check for accuracy even more extensively. Our bounce-back team a group of randomly selected students who have no involvement with the project are asked to read over the material in order to help ensure that the book accurately expresses every aspect of the university and its students. This same process is applied to the 200-plus schools College Prowler currently covers. Each book is the result of endless student contributions, hundreds of pages of research and writing, and countless hours of hard work. All of this has led to the creation of a student information network that stretches across the nation to every school that we cover. Its no easy accomplishment, but its the reason that our guides are such a great resource. When reading our books and looking at

our grades, keep in mind that every college is different and that the students who make up each school are not uniform as a result, it is important to assess schools on a case-by-case basis. Because it's impossible to summarize an entire school with a single number or description, each book provides a dialogue, not a decision, that's made up of 20 different topics and hundreds of student quotes. In the end, we hope that this guide will serve as a valuable tool in your college selection process. Enjoy!