

**COLLEGE
WISE**

Cindy's Journey to

The Wharton School of the University of Pennsylvania

Class of 2027





CINDY C.

University of Pennsylvania, Wharton
Class of 2027

AT A GLANCE

BEFORE COLLEGEWISE

- Member of FBLA
- Came from an arts background but transitioned to STEM

AFTER COLLEGEWISE

- Started working at a bubble tea shop
- Wrote her essay on what she's learned as a FBLA member and part-time worker
- Applied ED to UPenn



"Cindy enrolled with Collegewise in January 2020 after which she took full advantage of working with a college counseling service. Cindy elevated her essay and thought strategically about her activities and academics."

KATIE KONRAD MOORE
COLLEGEWISE COUNSELOR

AN OVERVIEW

Cindy's passion for business grew from her high school experience and led her to build a college application to one of the most sought after business programs in the world, The Wharton School of Business at the University of Pennsylvania.

HOW COLLEGEWISE HELPED

Working with Collegewise for 4 years gave Cindy the time to prepare and plan for her college applications. With Collegewise's project management support, Cindy was able to solely focus on building every application component without having to worry about where she was on her progress.

THE OUTCOME

Cindy and her college counselor, Katie, worked together to prepare Cindy's UPenn application for Early Decision (ED).

Although ED can be a big commitment, especially knowing that students are required to attend if they receive acceptance, applying ED to UPenn was a no-brainer for Cindy.

In addition to her stellar application, it showed admissions officers she was the right candidate for their incoming class.

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STUDENT PROFILE



HIGH SCHOOL EXPERIENCE

Despite having attended an arts and humanities middle school, Cindy's school district lottery placed her at Tesla STEM High School. She wasn't too sure about it in the beginning but ended up staying because of the amazing academic opportunities available and the smaller, tight-knit community. "I have really close relationships with my teachers," shares Cindy.

A strong sense of community was important to Cindy. Her parents immigrated to the United States from China, leaving their entire extended family behind.

"Growing up, my parents told me I was loud," laughs Cindy, "and I think that definitely factored into my personality into my teenage years. More than that, I was always someone who cared a lot about school. That's the way my parents raised me."

This led to Cindy diving head-first into her high school experience, being the student teachers could rely on to move a discussion forward and the peer that always had a cheery "hello" for anyone she passed in the hallway.

Cindy credits the STEM environment of her high school with teaching her how to think critically and creatively and introducing her to new areas of interest. For example, in her AP Psychology class Cindy spent 7 months conducting independent research on own-race bias, the unconscious behavior of one better-recognizing faces from their own race than from others. This "curiosity project" as she calls it yielded significant results confirming her own-race bias and led her to present her findings to professionals and academics in the field at a regional science fair. Cindy is now open to exploring more human behavior-related opportunities (research and academic) in college

LEADERSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

As a freshman, Cindy made it a goal to branch out and try a lot of different activities and extracurriculars. That's how she found Future Business Leaders of America (FBLA). She grew a lot in her first year, becoming a confident public speaker and gaining knowledge about the business world.

Eventually, Cindy looked for ways to take her passion for FBLA and make a broader impact. She served as State Public Relations Officer her junior year and State President her senior year – yes, that's two years of serving the now nearly 3,500 FBLA members in the state of Washington!

"The organization gave me so much and holding a leadership position was a way to give back, taking part in shaping the experience of new members who were once like myself – unsure, coming in and wanting something new."

Beyond FBLA, Cindy spent her high school years finding other ways to "amplify youth voices in [her] community" through service and civic engagement.

THE COLLEGEWISE WAY

Cindy started working with Collegewise counselor, Katie, during her freshman year. That may seem early to some, but Cindy benefitted from having an external party provide consistent and cohesive counseling throughout her high school experience and in her college application process. They were really able to get to know each other and form a strong relationship.

"[Katie] never told me exactly what to do. She recognized the work I was doing and provided support and guidance."

From the beginning, Cindy was cataloging her academics, activities, awards, and testing in a way that would make filling out her college applications more efficient and the applications themselves stronger. "It was nice to be able to talk to Katie and have her track the things I was doing and my progress," says Cindy. "It made it a lot easier, so I didn't have to do that myself!"

Cindy also had a longer runway for college research, doing many rounds with Katie, and investigating everything from Ivy League schools to small liberal arts colleges. "I didn't know how many colleges there were to choose from!" admits Cindy. "I looked at colleges I had never even heard of, and I actually liked some of them!"

UPENN, THE WHARTON SCHOOL

Cindy always felt drawn to the business world, which prompted her to take related classes at her high school, including Business & Marketing, Digital Marketing, and Engineering III/STEM Startups. She also self-studied micro- and macro-economics, eventually taking and passing the advanced placement (AP) exams.

During her college research, she looked into schools with strong economics majors. She discovered that she liked schools that offered a Bachelor of Science in economics. "It was the STEM side of me wanting a bit more of a conceptual, logical take on things," says Cindy.

Therefore, her interest in the Wharton School of the University of Pennsylvania, the top-ranked business school in the United States, was no surprise. Cindy discussed whether a summer program for high school students at UPenn would be a good choice for her with her Collegewise counselor, and they agreed that the chance to experience the campus and facilities and connect with professors and current students would be worthwhile. Worthwhile, indeed! After the 3-week program, Cindy decided to apply for Early Decision.

Cindy couldn't be more excited to attend her "dream school." What is she looking forward to most? "People say that in freshman year [of college], your whole life changes. You try so many new things. And I'm just really ready for that."

THE COUNSELOR'S PERSPECTIVE

While working with Cindy, Katie helped her navigate the many components of the application process, including standardized testing, academics, and essays.

"Cindy had a lot of great business-related activities, including being state president of FBLA and a Wharton summer program," shares Katie. "She was also interested in getting a job at one of her favorite bubble tea shops, and I encouraged her to. I think at first she saw it more as a way to make money and have fun, and not at all something that would land on her college application. Through discussing the activity section on her applications and brainstorming her essays, I think she was able to see how important it was in both her development as a person and in terms of her interest in business. She actually ended up writing her essay about both her job and her experience in business leadership."



KATIE KONRAD MOORE
Collegewise Counselor

Below is an excerpt from Cindy's personal statement:

Of the hundreds of cups of bubble tea I've tried, and the thousands of members I have met within FBLA, no two drinks have ever been the same, and no two people have been either. When I am behind the counter, scooping toppings, pouring tea, mixing sugar, and sealing drink lids, I am bringing comfort to others, putting a smile on their faces, and above all, sharing my love of bubble tea with them. When I am standing on stage in front of 2000+ FBLA members, I am guiding them with the tools and knowledge they need to step into the business world with confidence. In both roles, I craft a tasteful experience for each individual, whether in a 16-oz. cup or through a four-year journey.

WISE(R) ADVICE

As Cindy reflected on her college application process, she had two related pieces of advice:

- 1) Don't be afraid to dig into yourself
- 2) Get personal

Perhaps it's her budding interest in human behavior and cognition, but Cindy connected with the self-reflective aspects of the work it takes to prepare yourself for college, sift through amazing schools for the best match, and present yourself authentically in an application.

Take every opportunity to understand yourself better because then you can share that with colleges.

"Schools don't just want you for your statistics. They want you for who you are as a person. What better way to show that than getting a little bit personal."

As Cindy finishes up her senior year and starts preparing for college, she (and Collegewise) look forward to seeing all that she accomplishes at UPenn and the new experiences that await.



A Better Way. A Simpler Way. The Collegewise Way

**Kickstart a simpler college
application experience.**

Get Started Today

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A cluster of colorful geometric shapes, including triangles and squares in shades of teal, purple, yellow, and orange, located in the bottom right corner of the page.