



NAVIGATING COLLEGE APPLICATIONS

Kate, Mamadou, Gray, & Pao



Mamadou



Kate



Pao



Gray

**How do students navigate the
college application process?**

Today's Presentation

- **Last Week's POVs**
- **4 New Interviewees**
- **Humanizing
Resources**
- **Broadening "College"**
- **Empowering Students**

INITIAL POV

We Met

Lourdes, the Director of Equity and Inclusion in the School of Engineering Student Affairs, who had been a FLI student herself

**We were amazed
to realize**

How important it is to have a mentor that you can see yourself in in order to better conceptualize the college application process.

**It would be
game-changing to**

Connect all students with a mentor that could understand and help guide them through the college process.

INITIAL POV

We Met

Sarah, a senior at Palo Alto High School who is in the midst of the college application process.

**We were amazed
to realize**

She struggled to find a starting point for her college search because she had a narrow idea of what college was, and she didn't feel like any of the colleges she was aware of were a good fit for her.

**It would be
game-changing to**

Enable students to broaden their idea of what college can be so they're better able to find schools that are in line with their preferences

INITIAL POV

We Met

Joseph, a FLI freshman at Stanford

**We were amazed
to realize**

That he felt strongly that he did the college process all by himself.

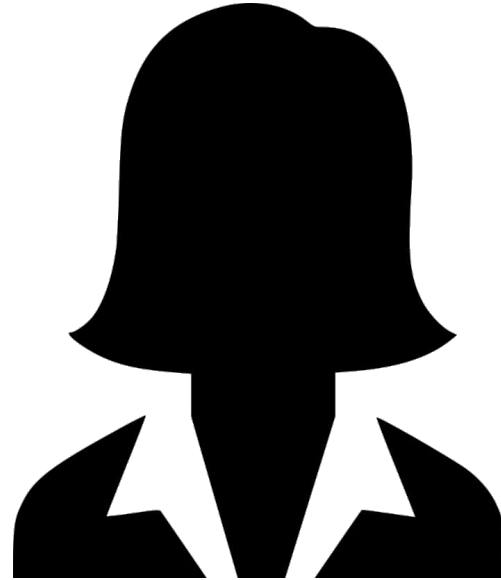
**It would be
game-changing to**

Make others feel as in control and confident in themselves as Joseph throughout the college process, like they can do it all by themselves too.

New Interviewees



Rebecca
Stanford FLI Sophomore



Jane
High School Teacher at College
Prep charter school

New Interviewees



Elizabeth
Recent UCLA Grad, Statistics



Ali
Recent FLI UM Grad, Engineering



HUMANIZING RESOURCES



Rebecca

FLI Sophomore at Stanford

“College didn’t seem real until senior year... There was never a concrete example of what college looked like”

10

“Questbridge will give you money, but the upperclassmen understood me.”

REVISED POV

We Met

Rebecca, a FLI Stanford Sophomore who felt pressured to attend college in order to move her life forward

REVISED POV

We Met

Rebecca, a FLI Stanford Sophomore who felt pressured to attend college in order to move her life forward

We were amazed
to realize

She valued and utilized her relationships with upperclassmen from similar background more than other resources for the college process, even resources that could provided her with money

REVISED POV

We Met

Rebecca, a FLI Stanford Sophomore who felt pressured to attend college in order to move her life forward

**We were amazed
to realize**

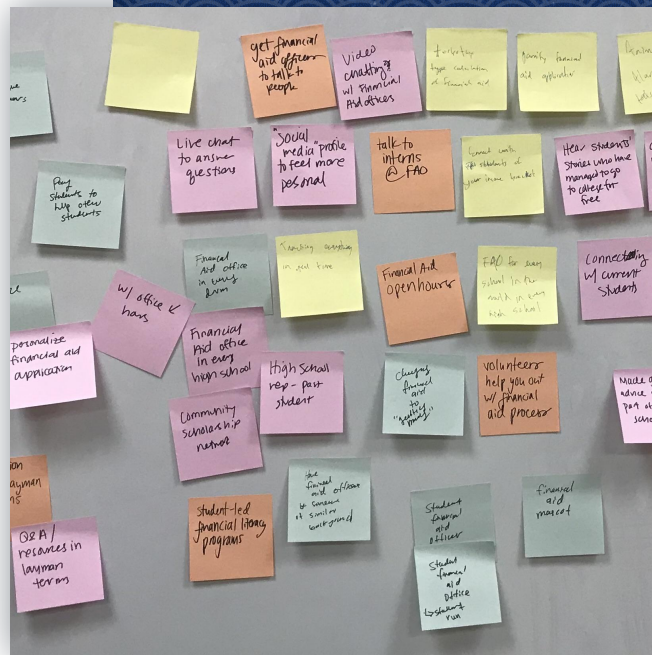
She valued and utilized her relationships with upperclassmen from similar background more than other resources for the college process, even resources that could provided her with money

**It would be
game-changing to**

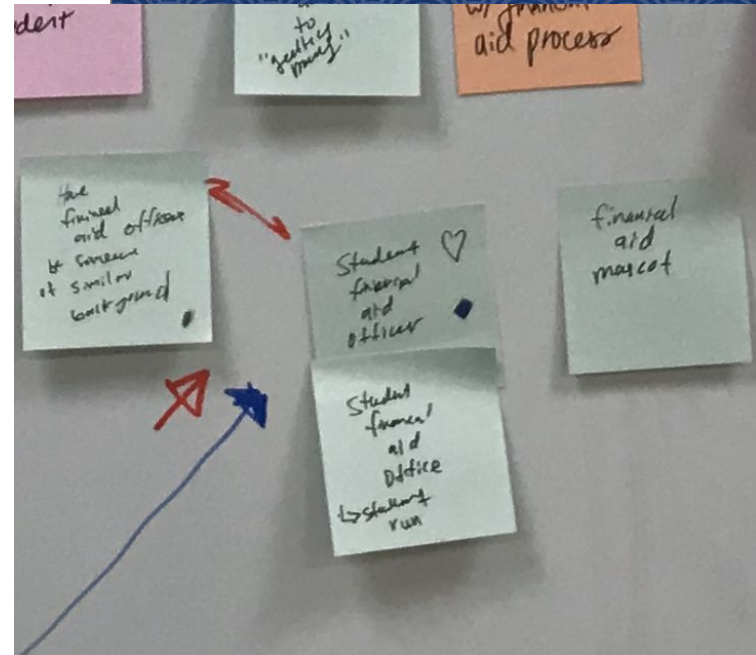
Prioritize human relationships throughout the college application process

HOW MIGHT WE

Make financial
resources
human?

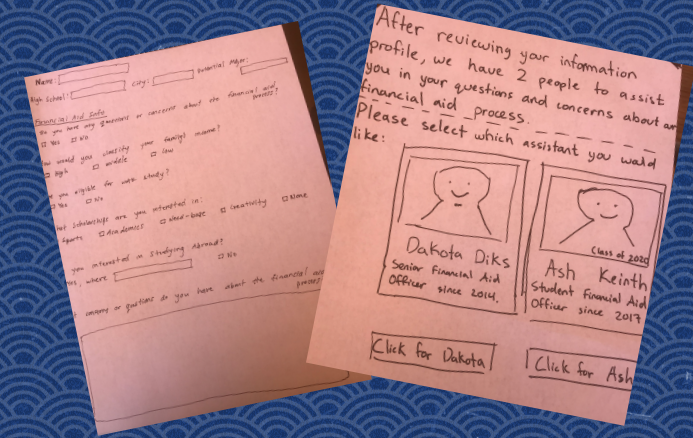


App to connect high schoolers to a college student financial “officer” from a similar background





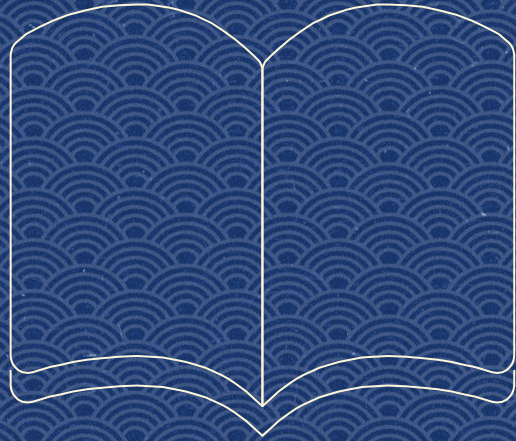
Assumption: High school students trust college students to provide financial advice & guidance



Comfortable getting guidance from student



Would prefer an experienced professional with her background



BROADENING “COLLEGE”

ELIZABETH

Recent UCLA Grad & Statistics Major

“My parents went to a pretty small liberal arts college in New Hampshire... That was what I thought college was.”

“I thought if I don’t have that, what am I going to do?”



REVISED POV

We Met

Elizabeth, a recent UCLA graduate who felt crushed when she didn't get accepted to the school her parents had attended

REVISED POV

We Met

Elizabeth, a recent UCLA graduate who felt crushed when she didn't get accepted to the school her parents had attended

We were amazed
to realize

That she loved her college experience, even though UCLA was the “opposite” of the other schools that she had applied to

REVISED POV

We Met

Elizabeth, a recent UCLA graduate who felt crushed when she didn't get accepted to the school her parents had attended

**We were amazed
to realize**

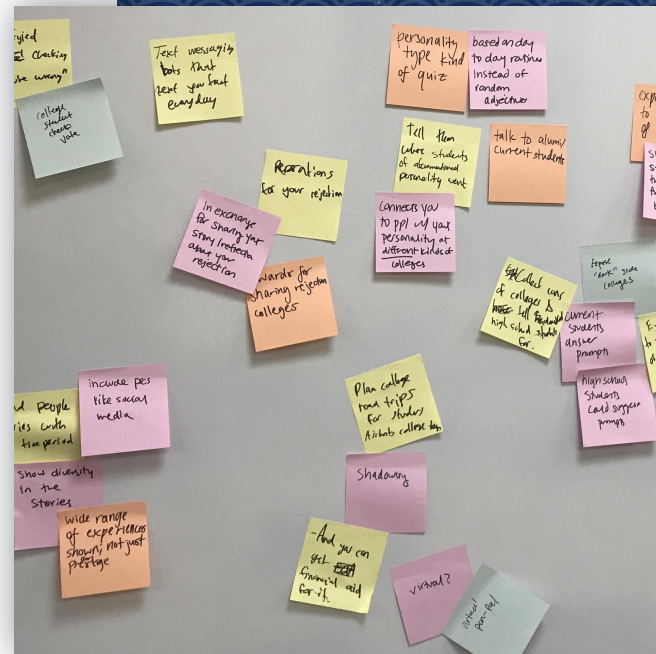
That she loved her college experience, even though UCLA was the "opposite" of the other schools that she had applied to

**It would be
game-changing to**

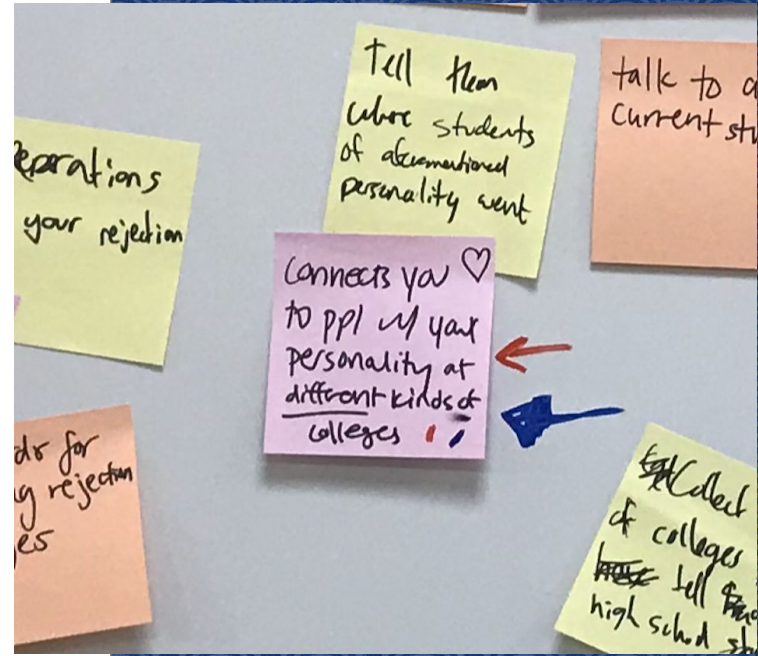
Broaden high schoolers' ideas about what college can be and encourage them to keep an open mind to eliminate emotional roadblocks that come with college rejections

HOW MIGHT WE

Encourage high schoolers to question their assumptions about colleges?



App to encourage conversation
between high schoolers &
college students with similar
personalities at various
colleges





WHAT IS A COLLEGE THAT YOU ARE INTERESTED IN?

WHICH FACTORS DO YOU LIKE MOST ABOUT THAT SCHOOL? PLEASE SELECT UP TO 3.

<input type="checkbox"/> SIZE: BIG	<input type="checkbox"/> SIZE: SMALL
<input type="checkbox"/> LOCATION SMALL	<input type="checkbox"/> COST OF ATTENDANCE
<input type="checkbox"/> SCHOOL RANKING	<input type="checkbox"/> SCHOOL SPIRIT
<input type="checkbox"/> ACADEMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> ATHLETICS
<input type="checkbox"/> DIVERSITY	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY
<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER: _____	

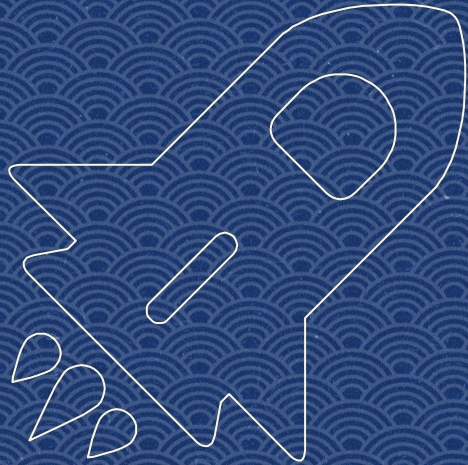
Assumption: High schoolers are already open-minded enough to engage in these conversations



Felt it was helpful to get questions answered from a college student



Certain qualities were “non-negotiables” due to family



EMPOWERING STUDENTS



ALI

UM Graduate, Engineering Major

“I was a first generation immigrant child doing everything on my own.”

“The least thing I can do is help someone from my experience.”

REVISED POV

We Met

Ali, a recent University of Michigan graduate and first generation immigrant student who felt that she did everything on her own

REVISED POV

We Met

Ali, a recent University of Michigan graduate and first generation immigrant student who felt that she did everything on her own

We were amazed
to realize

Even though she considered two relationships to be pivotal to her success in the college process, she took pride in that she had taken the initiative to form those relationships, and as a result credited herself for her accomplishments

REVISED POV

We Met

Ali, a recent University of Michigan graduate and first generation immigrant student who felt that she did everything on her own

**We were amazed
to realize**

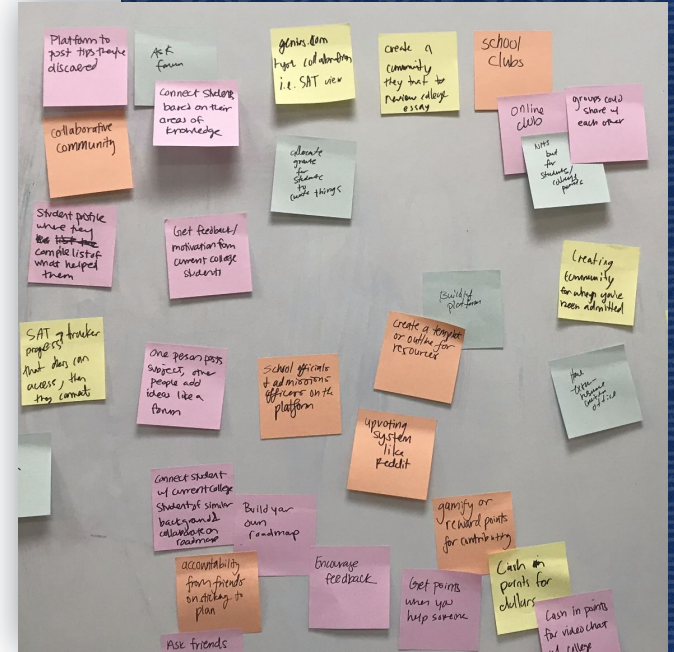
Even though she considered two relationships to be pivotal to her success in the college process, she took pride in that she had taken the initiative to form those relationships, and credited herself for her accomplishments

**It would be
game-changing to**

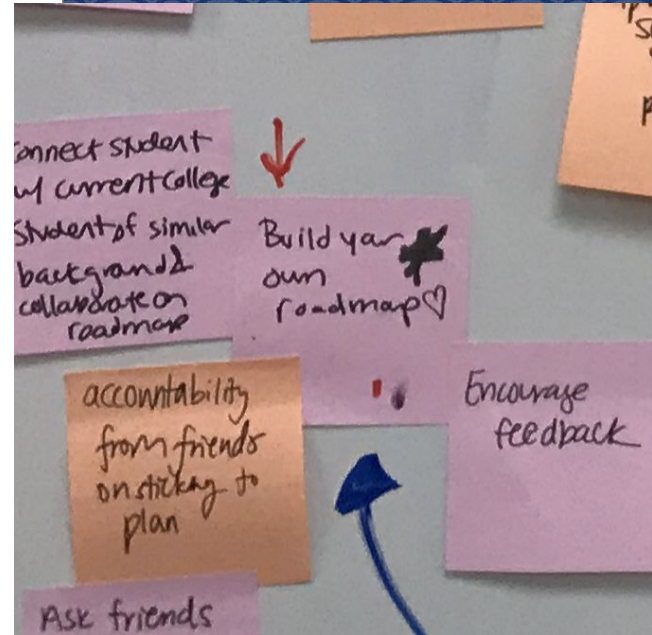
Connect students to the necessary resources in a way that empowers them to take charge of the college application process

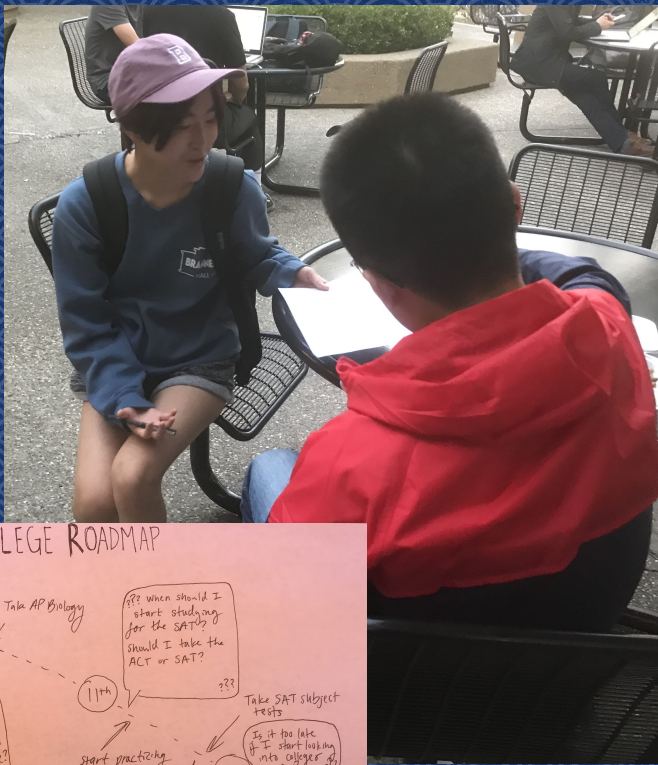
HOW MIGHT WE

Allow students to
create the resources
they need?

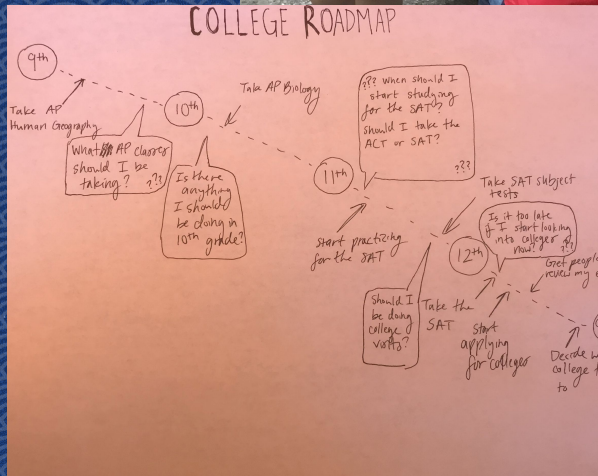


Platform for high school students to build their own college road maps, then get feedback from college students





Assumption: College students will feel qualified & compelled to give advice on college application process



Was happy to give general college advice

32

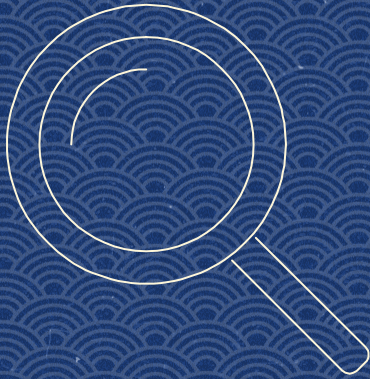


Didn't feel qualified to give advice on things like AP classes due to his background

Summary

- **Humanizing Financial Resources** -> Similar background of person giving advice key
- **Questioning College Assumptions** -> Keep in mind non-negotiables
- **Build Your Own College Roadmap** -> Background of both people involved should be well-aligned

QUESTIONS?



APPENDIX

Additional Materials

- [Interview Notes](#)
- [Empathy Maps & Insights](#)
- [HMW Brainstorm](#)
- [Solution Brainstorm](#)
- [Experience Prototypes](#)