

# POV & EXPERIENCE PROTOTYPING

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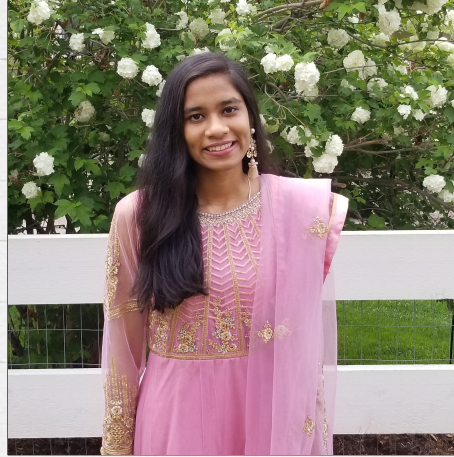


# MEET TEAM CRAAK



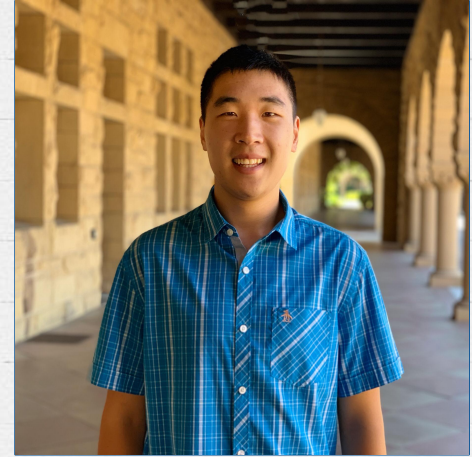
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Mechanical Engineering coterm  
(mechatronics)



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Computer Science coterm (HCI)

Making the college  
application process more  
welcoming and accessible





Our Initial  
POV

# Initial POV

WE MET...

**Mick**, a frosh at Univ. of Colorado Boulder,  
who had an great guidance counselor

WE WERE AMAZED TO REALIZE...

The college application process is so  
**convoluted** it prevents students from  
**accessing opportunities** they are qualified for

IT WOULD BE GAME-CHANGING TO...

Develop a **simpler process** to apply to college



College Frosh @ CU Boulder

Additional  
Needfinding  
Insights

# Enkhy

“There were some opportunities that I wish I’d known about before.”



FLI College Soph. @  
Stevens Institute of Tech

# Nayana

“I also felt like I had a lot of support because I had an older sibling who had been through it.”



HS Senior from CA



# Niki

“The college application process assumes that you are familiar with how to fill out complex forms.”



Project Manager, The Common App  
Former Fulbright Scholar

**3 Revised POVs**

# POV #1

## WE MET...

**Niki**, a common app project manager, focusing on underrepresented students

## WE WERE AMAZED TO REALIZE...

That many students **don't know where to start** when they first enter the Common App portal

## IT WOULD BE GAME-CHANGING TO...

**Guide** students through the application process at each step from start to end



Project Manager, The Common App  
Former Fulbright Scholar

# POV #2

## WE MET...

**Grace**, a high school senior from Colorado who applied to 10 schools.

## WE WERE AMAZED TO REALIZE...

That students want to be able to talk to their peers about college **without feeling competitive tension**.

## IT WOULD BE GAME-CHANGING TO...

Connect high schoolers in a way where they **feel comfortable** talking about the college application process.



HS senior from Colorado

# POV #3

## WE MET...

**Enkhy**, an Asian-American, FLI college sophomore attending Stevens Institute of Technology, applied to 10 colleges

## WE WERE AMAZED TO REALIZE...

That she spent **more time researching information** than writing her application.

## IT WOULD BE GAME-CHANGING TO...

**Reduce the time** needed to research logistical info and connect students to consolidated, organized resources



FLI College Soph. @ Stevens  
Institute of Tech

How might we...  
prototype  
solutions?

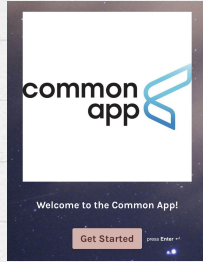
How might we develop a simpler application that guides students through the process?

## Solution

Make the application process more proactive by guiding applicants through questions




# Prototype: Typeform



8 → Which best describes you? I am:

- Key A Applying as a first year student, starting in 2020 or 2021
- B Planning to start college in 2022
- C Planning on starting college in 2023 or further

2 → Thanks Kevin! Can you also give me your last name?



Type your answer here...

A Typeform that prompts students with questions

Assumption  
Students prefer  
prompted questions  
rather than a normal  
form.

# Results: Typeform

## Worked

Prompted questions  
More user-friendly buttons

## Didn't Work

Some of the simplified questions

## Surprises

Click buttons > keyboard strokes

## Learnings

Editability is important

Think about international applicants

### **Assumption**

Students prefer prompted questions rather than a normal form.

### **New Assumption**

Students want to edit and review all questions.

How might we establish a sense of community and camaraderie within high schoolers applying to the same colleges?

### **Solution**

College support groups of 3-4 people where students rely on each other for support and information

# Prototype: CollegeFam



Find a CollegeFam



Google Forms survey where students rank college interests and are paired with others with similar interests but different top colleges.

## Assumption

Students want to talk about college with their peers without feeling competitive.

# Results: CollegeFam

## Worked

Students were able to meet new friends

## Didn't Work

Competitive tension increased

## Surprises

Regardless of top school, students still feel competitive with one another

## Learnings

By talking about competition, we made students feel more competitive with one another

### **Assumption**

Students want to talk about college with their peers without feeling competitive.

### **New Assumption**

Students want a safe community of peers where college does not dominate the atmosphere.

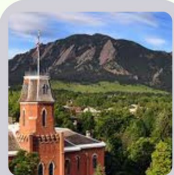


How might we reduce the individual burden of finding and organizing college application information?

### Solution

Have a centralized “shopping cart” app that allows students to see the logistical info of each school’s application

# Prototype: CollegeCart



CU BOULDER

Apply on Common App

APP FEE

\$50

Required Essays: 2

1 Personal (250-650 words)  
1 Supplement (250-650 words)

Test Scores: Optional

Optional self-report scores for SAT and/or ACT

Letters of Rec: 1

One academic letter of rec

Avg. Time Spent  
on App by Users

2-3 weeks

Tuition

\$31,034

App Deadline

JAN 15th

[See School's Net Price Calculator >](#)

[See scholarships for this school >](#)

[See user reviews for this application >](#)

Assumption:

Students want a single tool that unifies info about applying to college.

## YOUR SUBTOTALS:

ESSAYS

13

APPROX. PREP TIME

3 MONTHS

APP FEES

\$350

"Shopping cart" of colleges

# Results: CollegeCart

## Worked

Standardized organization of info  
App fees total  
See everything at once

## Didn't Work

Expected time commitment  
# of essays could be misleading  
Didn't know what a "Net Price Calculator" was

## Surprises

Wanted location specific info  
Wanted to compare essay questions side-by-side

## Learnings

User averages may be misleading  
Think of students brand new to process


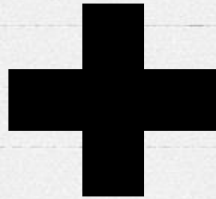
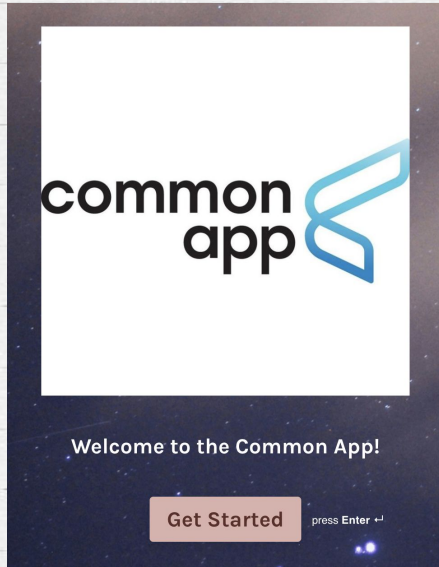
### **Assumption**

Students want a single tool that unifies info about applying to college.

### **New Assumption**

Students don't want to be compared to others, even implicitly.

# Solution



**CU BOULDER**   
**Apply on Common App**



**Tuition**  
\$31,034

**App Deadline**  
JAN 15th

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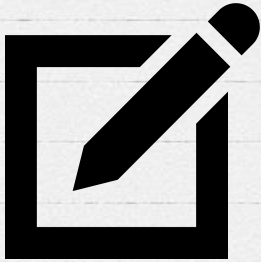
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\$50

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2–3 weeks

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# Key Learnings



Focus on simplicity, but  
keep editability



Avoid college topics within  
high school social circles



Accommodate students  
new to the process who  
won't understand the  
jargon

## Next Steps

- X Create a user interface design to mimic the Common App TypeForm prototype
- X Integrate CollegeCart with the application form
- X Explore what information students want to see right away on CollegeCart
- X Create cohesive solution prototype and test!



QUESTIONS?



# APPENDIX



# Typeform (from Niki's POV)

How might we...

- Make the existing college application process smoother
- **Develop a simpler application process**
- Have colleges apply for students
- Convert the application to a conversation with a friend
- Improve computer access for students
- Make the college application the best part about senior year
- Put more of the burden on high schools
- Allow students with auditory or visual impairments apply to college
- Share applications among students
- Remove the requirement of a computer for the process
- Make the form/process less intimidating

# Typeform

## Solutions:

- Answering verbal questions
- **Using something simpler like a typeform**
- Word detection off a hand-written page
- Removing questions off the existing form
- A phone app
- Having the high school fill out school-related information
- Pre-filling information from a government database
- Asking colleges to recycle questions
- Redesigning the interface (something like amazon shopping)
- group/recommend schools based on input criteria
- Using camera scanning of pages
- Speech to text
- Bring wifi to everyone's houses

# Typeform Common App

<https://luqi0fvzh9u.typeform.com/to/MJuc4w3p>

# CollegeCart (from Enkhy's POV)

How might we...

- Help her prepare for the college process ahead of senior year?
- Connect her with tools to help her research schools to apply to?
- Create a simple way to manage her time, balancing between school work and college applications?
- Help students plan out their approach to completing essays?
- How to make resources on the college app process easier to find?
- Help students keep track of and meet deadlines?
- Reduce the stress and amount of time the college app process takes up in a student's life?
- Create a centralized place for colleges to input their college app requirements?
- How might we reduce the individual burden of finding and organizing app information?
- **Reframe preparation/research for the college app process so it is not just an individual responsibility?**

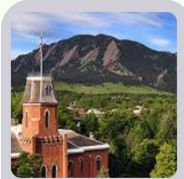
# CollegeCart (from Enkhy' POV)

## Solutions:

- Have people share links to guides/resources they used (during + after the process) in one app
- A calendar preloaded with deadlines from the colleges the students has selected/shown interest in, deadlines for standardized tests
- Notes shared from previous students from their high school/region who have applied to the school before
- Recommend schools based on your current selections (like Netflix)
- **A “shopping cart” of schools showing cost of attendance, logistical info (how many teachers' recs needed, how many essays, people's reviews, etc.)**
  - **Excel spreadsheet**
- At beginning of process: Tinder but for colleges? Swipe left/right, shows size, location, cost, etc.
- Each college has contact info for regional representatives, people nearby who have applied to the college + offer to help clarify questions (e.g. chat functionality)
- Piazza/Ed but for high schoolers and their counselors, post-grad centers, other teachers that would allow students to post questions (both anonymously or not) and allow counselors, teachers, or other students contribute their answers + tips
- Motivational texts + reminders about deadlines

# CollegeCart

# YOUR COLLEGE CART



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**Apply on Common App**

APP FEE  
**\$50**

**Tuition**  
\$31,034  
**App Deadline**  
**JAN 15th**

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**Avg. Time Spent on App by Users**  
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[See scholarships for this school >](#)

[See user reviews for this application >](#)



**STANFORD**

**Apply on Common App**

APP FEE  
**\$90**

## YOUR SUBTOTALS:

ESSAYS  
13

APPROX. PREP TIME  
3 MONTHS

APP FEES  
\$350



# CollegeFam (from Grace's POV)

How might we...

- How might we provide a non-threatening, college community?
- How might we better organize college application resources to be more organized?
- How might we make college information easier to find on the Internet?
- How might we help students feel more confident in themselves during college application season?
- How might we better prepare students to think about and prepare for college apps earlier?
- How might we create a way for students to better keep track of deadlines?
- How might we mitigate the unhealthy, competitive atmosphere within many high schools?
- **How might we establish a sense of community and camaraderie within high schoolers applying to the same colleges?**
- How might we make college counselors more of a welcome and inviting resource that students seek out?
- How might we help students be more thorough and confident in choosing the list of colleges they apply to?

# CollegeFam

## Solutions

- Anonymous online forum that focuses on college apps (like Reddit)
- Addressing this within high school classes (by the teacher)
- High schoolers openly share vulnerabilities and fears (whether online or through in person exercises)
- College counseling application workshops in groups
- College application group work sessions/clubs in high school
- Online forum that focuses on student mental health with professional mental health advice
- App for chatting with random high school students with different interests (like Tinder but for colleges? lol)
- Assigning “college support groups” in high schools with students of varying backgrounds
  - Groups can rely on each other for support and information, not competitive if backgrounds are different enough
- Humanize classmates more... exercises such as Crossing the Line”
- Shared calendar of small “wins” (i.e. turning in an app, etc.) where each person has a “win” that’s celebrated with classmates

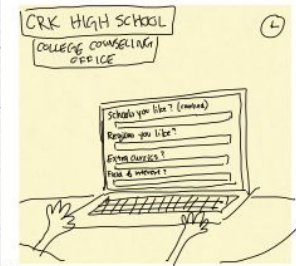
CollegeFam

<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1e9TG8OSsC5A1OW26Y5zq-bsJ9QANhAhDYaJUGebUi1Q/edit>

# CollegeFam

CS147-Prototype #1

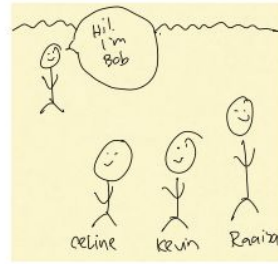
Question: How might we establish a sense of community + camaraderie within highschoolers applying to the same colleges?



① Students fill out survey determining interests with college (juniors/seniors).



② Based on results, matched based on interests (primarily output interests + region interests).



③ Students find a time to meet.



④ Students share + chat about college interests.



⑤ Students determine common interest between them.



⑥ Students discuss what topics been discussing about. Community based on college application.