We're back with Lauren Sefton, Associate Director of Admissions, from Rhodes College in Memphis, Tennessee, and now we're going to here a little bit about Rhodes application process. Can you discuss the process, beginning with the basics and let's start with just your requirements. So what are the application requirements to Rhodes?

Sure. Rhodes is a member of the Common Application. Which is a general application accepted at over 500 colleges and universities in the United States. Basically the Common Application is a time saver for students. Every single college or university that a student is applying to wants to know your name and where you're from and your address and your extracurricular activities. And so you're able to put that into one document and hit submit and send it to all of the schools that accept the Common Application, that you're interested in applying to. So we accept the Common Application. We have a supplement, that's Rhodes specific where we get to ask questions that are specific to our institution. We have the school report form secondary school report form, or a report form filled out by your counselor recommendation. One teacher recommendation, your high school transcript. Standardized test scores, either the SAT or the ACT and then if English is not a students primary language, we ask for TOEFL and/or IELTS scores. And then we also require the Certificate of Finances for every international student.

Next, could you outline the basic process and the deadlines for us?

Sure. Rhodes actually has four deadlines for admissions. There are two Early Decision deadlines. An Early Decision at Rhodes is a binding contract, which means if a student is accepted under Early Decision, we expect them to enroll. We offer the first Early Decision deadline of the November one deadline, and students hear back from us with an admission decision within a month, by December first. So potentially, before the New Year. They could know where they're headed to school the following fall. And then our second Early Decision option is a January one deadline. And for students that maybe didn't know that Rhodes was their top choice earlier in the fall. That gives them a little bit more time to pull that paperwork together. And again, they'll hear back from us within a month, by February first. Our most popular application deadline is Early Action and that's a November 15th deadline. Early Action at Rhodes is not binding, so students apply early, they hear back early in mid-January with an admission decision. But they still have several months to weigh their other options and really do some self-reflection and figure out if Rhodes is where they want to be. The national response deadline for all colleges and universities is typically May first, and so they have, again, several months to, to weigh those options. The final deadline is Regular Decision, which is a January 15th deadline. And Regular Decision can be a good fit for a lot of our international students. Is simply because I have a little bit more time to pull that paperwork together. Or some additional time to take another SAT or ACT, or take it in that first place if that hasn't been something that's been on their to-do list earlier than that. So that's a January 15th deadline. So, you touched on this a little bit, but as a school with four different deadlines that can confuse international students at times. So, what advice do you have for an international student who's trying to decide between Early Decision One, Early Action, Early Decision Two, or Regular Decision?

We are providing a lot of options. And so my best advice is to talk to your admission counselor. There are two of us in the office that work specifically with international students. And we'll be happy to run through the options and try to figure out which one is the best choice. Simply if, if Rhodes is your number one choice, or if any school is your number one, hands down, choice. You're
willing to commit, you're excited to go there, you know that if you got into every school that you were applying to, Rhodes is where you'd be. Then, Early Decision is a student's best option. But, for many of our international applicants, they don't have that certainty of heart, because they haven't been able to visit a campus, any campus, really. >> Mm-hm. >> And so, for many of them, they're going to wait and do a non-binding commitment, and then, it just comes down to a timeline, usually. >> Mm-hm. >> Early Action versus Regular Decision is more about providing students with, with a decision earlier on for Early Action. >> Mm-hm. >> Or giving them a little bit more time to pull everything together for Regular Decision. >> Mm-hm. >> Depending on a school's home country's school calendar. >> Mm-hm. >> They may prefer to wait with Regular Decision if perhaps they haven't been able to show exactly the kind of grades they'd like to demonstrate to a college or a university in the admission process. Maybe they're a little bit of a late bloomer. >> Mm-hm. >> And they're just now recognizing that they really do love to learn. If they want to be able to show that senior year progress. >> Mm-hm. >> Regular Decision, a January deadline gives us a chance to see senior year progress. At least in the beginning of that senior year. Now for some countries the school calendar doesn’t mesh up with that and it wouldn't, it wouldn't make a difference. But for a few that can be helpful to see that senior year progress during Regular Decision. Otherwise, my advice is to go Early Action. >> Mm-hm. >> At least at Rhodes. It's nice to have that decision in your hands by mid-January. And at least you know what your opportunities may look like head, moving forward. So, quicker to get the paperwork off your desk and on to mine that much sooner. >> Lauren, are there certain requirements or pieces of the application that tend to confuse international applicants and, and if so, can you explain those a little bit more? >> Mm-hm. One document we that we require our international students to submit that we don't require from our U.S. citizens to submit is a Certificate of Finances. >> Mm-hm. >> And this is a document that provides verification of their financial circumstances and what can they afford to put towards their college education, and where are those funds coming from. It could be from parents’ savings. It could be from a students' job, it could be from parents' paychecks. Usually it's a combination of all three. >> Mm-hm. >> And it lets us know that they can afford to be in this country. A Certificate of Finances is something that's required by every single college or university in order to issue a visa document to study in the United States. What can be very confusing is, different colleges and universities ask for that Certificate of Finances at different points in time. >> Mm-hm. >> And so at Rhodes, we ask for the Certificate of Finances at the point of application. It's part of our application materials. >> Mm-hm. >> And so it's important that that comes in as deadline in the same way that test scores or your Common Application has to come in by the deadline in order to be evaluated. And so, it's important I think for international students to recognize that that document is going to be required but may be required at different points in the process depending on the schools that they're applying to. Another point of confusion oftentimes happens with international students about the score reports. And it's very important for students to understand that those score reports, whether it's for the SAT, the ACT, the TOEFL, the IELTS, if they're taking SAT subject tests. Those score reports need to come directly from the testing agency. >> Mm-hm. >> Whether it's ACT, or College Board, it, or IELTS, it comes directly from the testing agency and that way we can verify that they are indeed official scores. As opposed to being submitted by the student indirectly. >> And we'll be right back with more from Lauren Sefton about the evaluation process. [BLANK_AUDIO]