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**Featuring:** Mandy Marchesini, College Advisor at Bishop Lynch High School

**What inspired you to pursue a career in your field and what do you enjoy most about your career choice?**

I got started in admissions just like many of us do - as a campus tour guide! (S/O K-State Office of Admissions ☺) After a few years on the recruitment side, I realized that my true calling was helping students find their perfect college fit, whatever school that may be. I switched over to the counseling side in 2022 and I absolutely love it. I know it's cliché, but the best part of my job is forming relationships with students and their families. It is so rewarding to support them through this stressful yet exciting process and see them thrive at their chosen schools!

**What do you think are the most important qualities for success to you and your career?**

In this role, I believe adaptability is crucial for success. It's all about being able to meet the unique needs of each class as they evolve. You have to be flexible in how you share information, organize events, and connect with students. What worked for one class might not work for the next group, so you need to be open to trying new things and creating new resources. I believe in "find a need, fill a need" - ask your students what they need and how they need it. They're your best source of insight!

**What are some of the biggest trends or developments that you are seeing in your field?**

Something that I've been focusing on this year is understanding how students' executive functioning has been impacted by the disruptions of the pandemic. A lot of high school students are struggling with managing timelines and deadlines, especially in the intense college application process. To support them, I've been collaborating with our campus Learning Specialist to create resources that promote organization and independence. This initiative is gaining traction within high schools, and I believe college admissions offices should really consider these challenges when communicating with prospective students. It's so important to make the admissions and scholarship processes straightforward and easy for 17 and 18-year-olds to understand!

**How do you balance work life and personal life?**

I started my career postgrad working remotely as a regional recruiter, with my "home office" in my living room, so I learned the hard way about burnout when work spilled into my personal time (...which happened a lot.) Because of this, I'm VERY strict when it comes to work/life balance. I turned off email notifications on my phone in 2018 and never looked back. Highly recommend. I genuinely love my job, so I see having firm boundaries as the key to keeping it that way.