



THE COLLEGE CONNECTION NEWSLETTER

FOR HIGH SCHOOL SENIORS

A Publication of Future Focus Educational Services

September 2011

VOLUME 19, ISSUE 1

CONNECTING THE DOTS TO YOUR FUTURE

Steve Jobs spoke these words to the 2005 graduating class at Stanford University: “You can’t connect the dots looking forward, only when looking backwards. So you have to trust that somehow the dots will connect in your future. You have to trust in something: your gut, destiny, life, karma, whatever. This will give you the confidence to follow your heart. You’ve got to find what you love. Keep looking and don’t settle.” As high school seniors you may find yourselves struggling to balance your intangible dreams and goals with the realities of your past and present. After high school it all seems like such a risk, yet some action is suddenly required of you to move your life onward into your unknown future. Of course, you may choose to stay in your cozy bedroom and pull the covers over your head. But when you look back someday, will the connected dots make sense or will there even be dots to connect? This newsletter is meant to connect you to the next dot. This is the first of nine monthly eight-page newsletters you will receive throughout the 2011-2012 school year to help you with timelines and to provide guidelines for making that first step into the unknown. Share this newsletter with a parent or friend and try to find a few minutes for yourself during the opening days of school to read through these pages.

4 Things You Need to Know About College Net Cost Calculators

(from “The College Solution”, 8/9/11)

By Oct. 29, a federal mandate will require all colleges to post a net price calculator on their websites that factor in everything from living expenses and books to estimated grants for particular institutions. Under the new law, colleges have three options. 1) to use the standard free template from the federal government; 2) to hire a vendor such as College Board; 3) to create a calculator in-house. Previous to this requirement families did often not know this critical information until the spring, which gave them little time to digest the information and select a school by the deposit deadline of May 1. The new “net price calculators” (NPC) will be incredibly valuable because they will allow students and their parents to learn in advance what the price of individual colleges will be for them. These NPC will determine the price for a family after any financial awards are subtracted from the sticker price. These calculators aren’t going to be perfect. Plugging in numbers months ahead of time may not account for a family’s changing financial circumstances. You will increase your chances of using them effectively, however, if you understand some of the issues facing users and the colleges that are creating the calculators. Here are four things you need to know about net price calculators:

Continued on page 2

Legislative Update

A key piece of the debt ceiling/deficit reduction deal passed by Congress was \$17 billion toward the funding of the Pell Grant program in FY 2012 and FY 2013. Even with the additional funding, Pell Grants will need an additional \$1.3 billion in this fall’s appropriations process to maintain the \$5,550 maximum grant. Funding for the other student aid programs – SEOG, Federal Work-Study, Perkins, TRIO, GEAR UP, and graduate programs needs to be approved this fall. Undergraduate subsidized student loans which pay interest during school will be a target for elimination in the Joint Congressional Special Committee deliberations this fall. The Committee is empowered to consider \$1.5 trillion in additional cuts to be presented by Thanksgiving, and voted up or down before Christmas this year.

Quote of the Month *(from mother on college tour)*

“The presentation is mouthwatering and dispiriting. The school is very selective. The admissions officer quotes some figures: the astronomical number of applicants, the microscopic number of acceptances. ‘But have fun with the process!’ she says.” Full article: http://articles.boston.com/2011-07-22/lifestyle/29803778_1_college-tour-admissions-famous-people

Continued from page 1

4 Things You Need to Know About College Net Cost Calculators

• Side-by-side comparisons of colleges could be difficult: There will be so many different calculators on school websites — from very basic ones to sophisticated ones — that families won't be comparing apples to apples. (*Editor's note*): Research the calculators of these two colleges to see the difference in the kinds of information requested. Both use the same template/format.

University of Portland: <http://www.up.edu/finaid/default.aspx?cid=10659&pid=1657>

Carleton College: <https://apps.carleton.edu/admissions/afford/estimator/>

• Calculators can be too simple because the most accurate ones will require the most inputs from parents. However, more complicated calculators may discourage families, especially low-income parents, from using the tool. That's a big reason why the calculator template offered to colleges by the federal government asks fewer questions than many calculators created by outside firms or within the schools themselves. The federal template available on certain college websites doesn't include merit aid calculations. More affluent families, who use calculators reliant on the federal model, might assume that they have to pay full price even though their children might qualify for merit (non-need-based scholarships) aid that's given to wealthier applicants. Be sure to check whether school calculators include merit aid by asking for GPA and test scores.

• If schools ask for test scores to help determine possibility for merit aid, a family may mistakenly include a student's writing SAT score even if a school only wants the critical reading and math scores. This would inflate the overall SAT score, which could produce an overly generous — and misleading — award. Be careful when inputting your information. If the outcome seems wrong, try again.

• One college administrator says, "I worry that the calculators may mistakenly take the place of talking to financial aid folks and getting real information." Don't use the cost calculators exclusively. You'll also want to talk with staffers in the college financial aid offices.

Editor's note: It appears from initial online individual college NPC research that some or many schools are depending on the NPC developed through the vendor option by the College Board. List of "Participating Schools": <http://www.collegeboard.com/html/netpricecalculator>

WHAT TO DO BEFORE ACTUALLY APPLYING

1. Look at your senior year courses, the classes you have taken over the last three years, and the grades you have received. If you have taken the minimum in order to graduate and your GPA is below 3.0, you are not yet ready to apply to a four year college. Plan on attending a local community college where you can mature without pressure and develop your academic skills and decide on a possible career direction. Best of all, at a community college if you are above age 18, you are guaranteed acceptance and **YOU DON'T NEED AN SAT SCORE**. After two successful full-time years, you can transfer into the third year of a four year college or university. Your eventual four/five year diploma will carry the title of your graduating university or college, just the same as those students who attended it for all four years.
2. If you have prepared yourself to apply to four year colleges or universities, the first question you must answer is: "How will we pay for this increasingly expensive education?" This will depend on your family's income and assets and your financial need. See the page one article on the new Net Price Calculators.
3. Remember: Students from low income families, with unweighted 3.8+ GPA's, who have taken the most rigorous classes have a chance of attending very competitive private colleges for less than in-state larger public universities.
4. Research possible colleges and universities which realistically fit your financial possibilities when combined with your academic qualifications, career aspirations and personal requirements.
5. Have a discussion with your family about these three areas: Look at your academic record. Checkout your financial need. Begin your college research. This newsletter will help take you on a monthly journey toward your college goals.

University of California Admission Policy Change for 2012

Beginning with students applying for the fall 2012 term, SAT Subject Tests no longer will be required and students who do not submit subject test scores will not be penalized during the review process. Some majors at some campuses, however, recommend particular tests, and applicants may submit subject test scores for consideration during the comprehensive review process much the way they do now with Advanced Placement and International Baccalaureate scores.

SENIOR CHECKLIST FOR SEPT/OCT.

_____ Make a list of test names, dates and fees, registration dead lines,\ college application deadlines, and financial aid applications (including scholarships) and deadlines. (Most Schools accept scores from the December SAT, for regular deadline applicants.)

_____ Prepare resume and listing of interests, strengths and goals to give to teachers, counselors and employers for letters of recommendation.

_____ College bound athletes applying to Division I or Division II schools need to register with the NCAA Eligibility Center for Certification in order to play college athletics. WEBSITE: <http://www.eligibilitycenter.org>.

_____ When registering for SAT or ACT, if you mark the code 9999 as one of your college or scholarship codes, your scores will be sent automatically to the NCAA Eligibility Center.

_____ Narrow your list of colleges to five or six. Consider fall campus visits. Browse through campus catalogs and brochures located in your school's Career Center and check out college websites.

_____ Attend college visitation meetings at your school

_____ Work hard to keep your grades up. Admissions committees will closely review the first semester of your senior year.

_____ Register @ <http://www.collegeboard.com/splash> for October 1 SAT - Deadline: **September 9, 2011**; November 5 SAT - Deadline: **October 7, 2011**

_____ Register @ <http://www.actstudent.org> for October 22, ACT. Deadline: **September 16, 2011**

_____ Start working on the first draft of your admissions essay(s)

_____ Listen to morning bulletins for local, state and national scholarships for which you might apply. "Deadlines usually range from November 1, 2011 to May, 2012"

_____ If applicable, prepare applications for early decision. These deadlines begin November 1. Know the difference between "early decision" and "early action".

_____ Checkout commonapp.org to see a list of the 456 schools which now accept the common application (*see article on page 4*)

WEBSITES WORTH A LOOK

<http://collegecost.ed.gov/catc/Default.aspx>

This is a new U.S. Dept. of Education website listing the cheapest and most expensive colleges in the country (2009-2010 data) where you can select a type of institution to see which schools have the highest increases in tuition and fees and net prices (price of attendance after grant and scholarship aid). Data are for full-time beginning undergraduate students. The "Search for Colleges" link takes you to the "College Navigator" which allows you to refine your college search. (*See *College News* item on Bates College)

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sZ_FCtRRgBk

More than 400 colleges and universities have set up channels on YouTube as part of the YouTube EDU section. The 10 most popular videos of the 2010-11 academic year include star-studded commencement speeches and robotics videos, but the biggest hit focused on a graduating senior who was paralyzed from the waist down before entering college, walking to receive his diploma, aided by a mechanized exoskeleton that UC Berkeley engineers designed for him. Since 2009, over 125,000 videos have been posted to YouTube EDU, totaling more than 63,500 hours of video or about seven years of screen time.l.

<http://inlikeme.com/admission-statistics-acceptance-rates-early-vs-regular.html>

Lists colleges which indicated a significant difference between early vs. regular admission acceptance rates, based on 09-10 data. Updated numbers should be available by October 1.

Ivy League Solicits Students Only to Reject Them

(Janet Lorin in New York at jlurin@bloomberg.net)

Nicole Ederer, a high school senior from Thornwood, New York, was surprised over her rejection by Duke and Columbia Universities after being wooed with e-mails and letters. She began receiving correspondence after scoring 214 on her PSAT. She had spent about \$780 on 12 applications after mailings from top schools. She was rejected from Duke, Columbia and Cornell University in Ithaca, New York, and now plans to attend the University of Maryland. This year many accomplished seniors were duped by elite colleges which sent e-mails, a few pamphlets and big envelopes filled with a ton of information which made them feel they were wanted. The deluge of correspondence from even the most hard-to-get-into colleges is raising false expectations among thousands of students, swelling school coffers with application fees as high as \$90 apiece and making colleges seem more selective by soliciting and then rejecting applicants. Jon Reider, director of college counseling at San Francisco University High School, advises students to view e-mails and mailings skeptically, especially from elite Ivy League schools and their equivalents.

COLLEGE NEWS

University of California regents voted in mid-July to raise tuition by 9.6% - on top of an 8% increase already approved for this fall, amounting to a rise to \$12,192, more than 18% higher than last year's \$10,302. With a mandatory campus fee that averages \$1,026, a year at a UC campus will now cost \$13,218 before room and board. That's more than twice what it cost in 2005. That will make out-of-state tuition at least 3 times the in-state tuition.

Many of the nation's 105 historically black colleges are increasingly wooing non-black students. The goals: to boost lagging enrollment and offset funding shortfalls. Some black colleges are stepping up recruiting at mostly white or Hispanic high schools and community colleges. Even top-ranked black schools such as **Howard University** and **Spelman College** are recruiting more aggressively in the face of intensifying competition for top African-American students.

According to elearner.com, 216 online colleges and universities will extend their passwords to students this fall. Online enrollment at virtual, online-only and traditional universities and colleges offering online classes increased 21 percent in 2009, according to the Sloan Consortium's 2010 survey of online learning.

Rising by \$100 billion a year, outstanding student loan debt is expected to reach \$1 trillion by year's end. "Student loan debt has become a macroeconomic factor; it affects the economy," said Mark Kantrowitz, publisher of the financial aid website www.finaid.org. "Students who graduate with excessive debt are more likely to delay buying a car, buying a house, getting married, having children, saving for their retirement.

THE 2011-2012 COMMON APPLICATION

Many of the nation's top, mostly private and competitive colleges and universities accept *The Common Application* in place of their own. The Common Application is the recommended form of 456 selective colleges and universities for admission to their undergraduate programs. For all participating schools, all members of each admission office staff sign an annual Participation Agreement reaffirming their commitment to the Common Application. Some of these institutions use the form exclusively. All give equal consideration to the Common Application and the college's own form. Experience with the Common Application over a period of 30+ years has demonstrated its advantages to students, counselors, and teachers. The concept is simple: Students complete one Common Application form (including the SAME ESSAY!) with accompanying Supplements from most schools, then submit it online. The online application now allows students to request Teacher Evaluations and the School Report online. All documents can also be saved and edited. Checkout the website at: <http://commonapp.org>.

SAT and ACT Sell Student Names to Colleges

(Janet Lorin in New York at jlurin@bloomberg.net)

The College Board, which owns the SAT college admission test, and its nonprofit rival, ACT Inc., are making money by selling personal details about teenagers. The companies collect information on millions of test takers and both sell names and information to colleges at 33 cents a name. The College Board took in \$60 million in revenue from such enrollment services, according to its most recent tax filing for the year ended June 2009. That amounted to almost 10 percent of total revenue of \$623 million. Harvard College, which accepted a record low 6.2 percent of applicants this year, markets to high school students because it wants to find the most talented class, said William Fitzsimmons, dean of admissions and financial aid. The school informs students "it's a highly competitive process," he said. Stanford charges \$90, the highest fee for U.S. students among more than 400 colleges that use the Common Application. This year it received about \$2.6 million in fees. Duke contacts about 50,000 prospective applicants annually through electronic and paper mailings based on their PSAT scores. All members of the Ivy League, eight colleges in the northeast U.S. including Harvard, Yale and Columbia, received record applications this year.

WEBSITES WORTH A LOOK

<http://essaysolutions.wordpress.com/>

Here is a very useful website which contains well-written, insightful articles on writing college application essays. It also includes video tips on writing the college application essay. You can also enter your email address to subscribe to their blog and receive notifications of new posts by email

SCHOLARSHIPS & CONTEST LISTINGS

WELLS FARGO BANK \$1,000 COLLEGE SWEEPSTAKES Sweepstakes run on www.wellsfargo.com/collegesteps from **8/6/11 to 8/5/12**. Open to students who are in an accredited secondary educational institution. Click on "Official Rules" at bottom of page to find a listing of quarterly dates of drawings, beginning with 11/4/11. Each drawing includes five \$1,000 awards ("prizes") for high school students, gr. 9-12. The sweepstakes enrollment form is very simple. This is basically a marketing outreach tool for student loans, but it offers a legitimate random chance at twenty \$1,000 awards during the year.

2011 WENDY'S HIGH SCHOOL HEISMAN SCHOLARSHIP AWARDS Must be a high school senior, participating in at least one of 27 eligible school-sponsored sports, with a 3.0+ GPA and be a leader in school and in the community. **Application deadline: October 2, 2011**. Twelve National Finalists, one female and one male, from each of the six geographic regions will receive a \$2,000 award donated to the winners' high schools in the students' names. Two National Award Winners will receive \$10,000 award donated to the winners' high schools in the students' names. <http://www.wendyshighschoolheisman.com/about/whos-eligible/>

FREE RIDE FULL TUITION SCHOLARSHIPS + Many more Here are 37 Colleges, Universities and Organizations which offer up to full tuition, room and board, to outstanding high school graduates. You will find details for such organizations as Microsoft, and such schools as **Juniata (PA), Boston College, Boston University, DePauw University (IN), Cooper Union (NY), Wake Forest (NC) and St. John's University (NY)**. Requires free registration. <http://www.studentscholarshipsearch.com/Scholarships/> Click on "Free Ride Full Tuition Scholarships"

RON BROWN SCHOLAR PROGRAM A minimum of 10 four year renewable awards for \$10,000 per year are available to African American high school seniors who plan to attend college full-time. Scholarship is based on Financial Need, Academic Achievement, Essay, Extracurricular Activities, Potential for Success, Leadership Experience or Potential, Community Service, and Recommendations. **Deadline** (to be considered for the Ron Brown Scholar Program and also forwarded to a select and limited number of additional scholarship providers): Post-marked by **November 1, 2011**. <http://www.ronbrown.org>

GOOD TIDINGS FOUNDATION COMMUNITY SERVICE SCHOLARSHIP Twenty \$5,000 awards are available to seniors who have served their community by volunteering. Scholarships are based on greatest service and financial need. **Application deadline: November 7, 2011**. <http://www.goodtidings.org>. Click on "Education" under "Programs".

MISS TEENAGE CALIFORNIA SCHOLARSHIP PAGEANT The 33rd annual Miss Teenage California Scholarship Program will be held April 20-22, 2012 at the Hilton at Los Angeles Airport. Female students 13-19 are eligible to apply. There is no swimsuit or talent competition. Judging is based on achievements and activities, personality, poise and appearance in formal attire. The winner wins a \$10,000 Scholarships and the right to represent Calif. in America's Miss Teen Pageant. Email for an application today at: <http://www.missteenageca.com/> Call (916) 714-4222 for application deadline.

VOICE OF DEMOCRACY COMPETITION A National Audio Essay Scholarship designed to give high school students, **grades 10 through 12**, the opportunity to voice their opinions and address their responsibilities to our country. It consists of a 3 to 5 minute tape-recorded essay on the **2011-2012 theme is "Is There Pride in Serving in Our Military?"** Each state winner is provided with a five-day all-expense paid trip to Washington, D.C., plus the opportunity to compete for National scholarships totaling over \$130,000. The First Place Winner receives a \$30,000 scholarship. Other scholarships range from \$1,000 to \$16,000. Entry must be given to the local participating VFW Post listed on website: <http://www.vfw.org/index.cfm?fa=cmtylevelddid=150> **Deadline for entries is November 1, 2011**

JOE FOSS INSTITUTE ESSAY CONTEST A \$5,000 college scholarship, plus two runners up \$500 scholarships, and a 4th place \$250 scholarship. Find a military veteran that you do not already know. Get involved in that person's life. This is NOT simply an interview. Make a friend, discover his (or her) history, his feelings — then and now — and how he would like to spend the rest of his life. Write a 1500 word essay about the experience. All essays must be received electronically by 11:59 MST, Sunday October 9, 2011. Guidelines & Rules, go to: <http://www.joefoss.com/programs/scholarship-program>

SCHOLARSHIPS & CONTEST LISTINGS

THE EMERSON PRIZE This is one of the most prestigious awards for high school history students. Although worth no monetary award, winning one of the annual five laureate prizes for best essay opens college doors at the most highly regarded schools. First you must have your essay, ranging from 4,000-6,000 (or more) words published in the *Concord Review*. Essays, accompanied by a \$40 check, are accepted on a “rolling admissions” basis. Emerson Prize winners are chosen from the published essays. All details at: <http://www.tcr.org/tcr/submissions.htm>

SCHOLARSHIP AMERICA: DOLLARS FOR SCHOLARS Are you a student or family looking for scholarship aid? Go to website: <http://scholarshipamerica.org/> You can follow Scholarship America on *Facebook* to be notified when programs open for the 2011-2012 school year. Also check out the Dollars for Scholars “Chapter Search” to see if there is a chapter in your area. These grassroots organizations give thousands of dollars in scholarships to local students each year. You can also sign-up for email updates. Be sure to check out the “Collegiate Partners Program” which involves nearly 500 colleges, universities and technical schools to help maximize the impact of financial aid from Scholarship America. Click on “Open Scholarships”

DAVIDSON COLLEGE BRYAN SCHOLARS PROGRAM Offers \$30,000 per year for four years to one male and one female scholar athlete in each freshman class in the eligible sports listed on their website. Requires a Nomination Form, signed by a school administrator. **Deadline: September 23, 2011**. To be considered for the Bryan Scholars Program, **the entire Davidson College admission application is due by October 15, 2011**. Because of early deadlines, call the Davidson Admission Office at (800) 768-0380 to express your interest. http://www2.davidson.edu/admission/admis_bryan/

COLLEGE NEWS

Students are being duped by some test-optional schools into thinking that test scores don't matter, when they matter a great deal for marketing outreach and prestige, says Leon Botstein, president of **Bard College** (NY), which neither requires the tests nor buys names. Test-optional colleges, such as **Bowdoin** (MA) that buy names of high-scoring students, are hypocritical, he said. “They take a stance that looks principled but is strategic. They say ‘I’m going to show myself to be open,’ but in reality they’re completely buying into the definition of a good student that is guided by the test.”

NATIONAL FOUNDATION FOR ADVANCEMENT IN THE ARTS (ARTS) ARTS is a national program to recognize the achievements of high school seniors and other young artists 17 or 18 years old in areas of Dance, Classical Music, Jazz, Theater, Visual Arts, Photography, Film & Video, Voice and Writing. Award amounts vary but can be as high as \$10,000. **Final registration deadline is October 14, 2011**. Fill out an ARTS application at the ARTS website: <http://www.youngarts.org/> Pay the \$35 per discipline fee (fee waivers for low-income students) and receive an ARTS ID#. **Deadline for submitting materials to be judged: Post-marked October 29, 2011**. Materials submitted without an ARTS ID# will NOT be judged.

COCA COLA SCHOLARS FOUNDATION 2,200 applicants are selected as Semifinalists in mid-November and notified by email around December 1. Semifinalists must then complete a secondary application due in mid-January, including essays, official transcripts, and two letters of recommendation. In April, 250 Finalists are invited to Atlanta for personal interviews. 50 students are then designated as National Scholars and receive awards of \$20,000 for college; 200 students are designated as Regional Scholars and receive awards of \$10,000 for college. All details available at: <https://www.coca-colascholars.org/> **Deadline: October 31, 2011**.

WEBSITES WORTH A LOOK

<http://www.finaid.org/questions/noloansforlowincome.phtml> (scroll down to full list)

Here you can find an extensive list of 70+ private and public colleges and universities which offer low income students different types of “no-loan” policies: a mix of no-loans, loan caps, no parental contributions or Pell Grant matches, depending on the school.

Example:

College/Program: Amherst College

Accommodation Replaces loans with grants and work study in the financial aid package.

Eligibility Students with parental contributions of up to \$3,800 (family income roughly \$40,000).

Year Initiated 2007-2008

Accommodation Replaces loans with grants and work study in the financial aid package.

Eligibility All students

Year Initiated 2008-2009

LOOKING FOR PRIVATE SCHOOLS THAT DON'T REQUIRE TEST SCORES?

Furman University (SC) is among the highly selective private liberal arts colleges now giving applicants the option of submitting standardized test scores or choosing not to include SAT I or ACT test results as part of their application credentials for the 2011-2012 academic year. Several top independent colleges, including **Denison University** (OH), **Middlebury** (VT), **Bowdoin** and **Bates** (MI), and **Mount Holyoke**, **Hampshire** and **Holy Cross** (MA) have strengthened the movement. Furman has also joined **Hamilton**, **Bard**, and **Union Colleges** (NY) and **Franklin & Marshall**, **Gettysburg** and **Dickinson** (PA) in offering some form of test-optional admissions alternative. The only 3 western schools are **Lewis & Clark** (OR), **Pitzer** (CA) and **Whitworth** (WA). Two very good schools in Illinois are **Knox** and **Lake Forest**. For the full list of schools go to: <http://www.fairtest.org/univ/optional.htm>

HS Counselors Beg to Differ With U.S. News Rankings

Your high school counselor may not be a fan of the U.S. News and World Report rankings of "Best Colleges," at least based on the findings of a survey released in May. In the survey by the National Association for College Admission Counseling, a majority of college counselors responded that they had "negative opinions" of the U.S. News rankings and suggested that they "offer misleading conclusions about institutional quality." Specifically, most of the 1,157 high school counselors and 1,176 college admissions officers surveyed took issue with a number of factors that U.S. News uses in calculating its rankings, including data on admissions selectivity and alumni giving, as well as the assessments of college leaders. Most respondents said they considered those factors to be a "poor" predictor of college quality, or of no predictive value at all.

Answering the "What other colleges are you applying to?" question

You should feel no particular obligation to provide colleges with any information regarding the other places to which you are applying. The question, whether it comes up in an interview or on an application, serves no constructive purpose. Admissions officers are often looking for ways to calibrate a student's interest in attending, and they're prone to all kinds of conclusions according to how a student responds. My advice is to leave it blank. This is not information an admissions committee is likely to track down if you don't answer the question. (*US News College Application Advice*)

HEALTH CAREER RESOURCE

<http://www.healthcareercenter.org/>

Figuring out which healthcare career or health occupation to pursue, or simply finding a good job, can be a difficult and time consuming endeavor. [Healthcareercenter.org](http://www.healthcareercenter.org) was created to help aspiring healthcare and medical students and job seekers make better, more informed career choices by providing them with highly relevant, reliable and up-to-date job search, career development, and employment information.

COLLEGE NEWS

*After news outlets dubbed **Bates College** (ME) the most expensive private, non-profit school in America, at \$51,300 for the 2009-2010 school year, the school had to point out that its ranking has to do with the fact that its cost includes room and board.

After spending years buttressing its academic and social image and rising in prestige among colleges and universities, **Northeastern University** (MA) found itself ranked stunningly near the bottom of Forbes magazine's annual list of the top 650 US colleges. Forbes apparently placed the university so far down for a seemingly odd reason: that relatively few Northeastern students graduate in four years. That should have come as no surprise. Northeastern is well-known for building job placements, or co-ops, into its academic program, and 80% of its students graduate in five years.

Duquesne University (PA) is intensifying its efforts to recruit students for its school of education. The university will offer a 50% discount on tuition and fees for all freshmen who enroll in the school of education in 2012. The discount is good for all four years. For 2012, education majors will pay about \$14,000 less than students in other fields.

Visa applications from students in India seeking degrees in the United States are up sharply, and international-education experts say a confluence of factors, from a booming economy to stricter immigration restrictions in other top destination countries, are fueling the growth.

College Admission Acceptances — a Year of Wow!

(“www.collegeisyours.com” by Patrick OConnor)

Last April students, parents and school counselors were sent spinning from a month of college news that has surprised even the most cautious college watchers. Thin envelopes, noisy e-mails, and overworked websites had left a cloud of data and decisions that asked two questions — what happened, and what’s next? First, a look at what happened:

- As expected, all highly selective colleges reported an increase in the number of applications — but the increase was larger than expected. This means more students were applying to college than ever before, AND these students were applying to more colleges than ever before, meaning many selective colleges offered admission to less than 10% of their applicants.
- Why were students applying to more colleges? First, the economy. High unemployment and the tight housing market are still making parents cautious college consumers. As a result, students applied to economic safety schools (this is why public colleges saw big application jumps) and to more colleges that were out of reach, hoping to find one that would offer a better financial aid bargain.
- Second, Harvard and Yale. Word continued to spread about the bargain these schools are for families that make less than \$160,000 a year; as a result, more families who thought they couldn’t afford an Ivy are applying to Harvard and Yale. While this is good for these colleges, it makes admission that much harder, meaning the “traditional” Harvard and Yale families had to apply to more colleges. This explains part of the reason why colleges as small as **Swarthmore** saw big application jumps.

What does all of this mean? Three things:

- More students with more choices. Students who used to have one or two acceptances from safety schools now have three or four.
- More uncertainty. These students can still only attend one college, meaning more colleges will get “no thanks” notes from many admitted students.
- Bigger waitlists. Many colleges expect an increase in the number of admitted students who attend somewhere else, so they’re padding their waitlists, just in case.

THE COLLEGE CONNECTION NEWSLETTER

FUTURE FOCUS EDUCATIONAL SERVICES

145 Brooks Lane
Ashland, OR 97520

FOR SUBSCRIPTION INFORMATION, CONTACT:
futurefocus@jeffnet.org