



THE COLLEGE CONNECTION NEWSLETTER

FOR HIGH SCHOOL SENIORS

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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 2016-2017 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.

Massive Breach Exposes Hundreds of Questions for Upcoming SAT Exams

(Reuters.com, 8/08/16)

Just months after the College Board unveiled the new SAT in March, a person with access to material for upcoming versions of the redesigned exam provided Reuters with hundreds of confidential test items which the SAT verified as authentic. Experts say the failure to protect the SAT test items may be among the worst security lapses in college-admissions testing history. It’s not clear how widely the material has spread, but the College Board is taking steps to minimize the impact. At risk are thousands of items that were being prepared for the redesigned SAT. College Board spokeswoman Sandra Riley said in a statement that they are “taking the test forms with stolen content off of the SAT administration schedule while we continue to monitor and analyze the situation”. Riley declined to say whether those steps would involve cancelling or delaying upcoming tests. The next sitting of the SAT is October 1.

Reuters reported earlier how an East Asian industry is exploiting the College Board’s routine practice of recycling items from past tests. “Cram schools” drill their students on questions harvested from previous tests, conferring an enormous advantage over students who see the items for the first time when the exam is given. The traditional use of lock boxes to help prevent the theft of SAT booklets sent to international testing locations is now helpless against leaks that originate earlier in the content development and distribution cycle. Developing a single version of the SAT typically takes about 18 to 30 months and costs about \$1 million. To quote one official, “A test like the SAT ... is so important and so consequential and is taken by people all over the world.”

REMINDER: New Earlier Date to Submit 2017 FAFSA

October 1 is now the date that students and families can file the FAFSA. The infamous form is used to calculate how much students and their families must contribute to the cost of college, and how much help they will get in the form of grants, scholarships and loans. In the past, students had to wait until Jan. 1 to file the form. But in an effort to align the financial aid process with the typical college admissions cycle, the federal Education Department moved the initial filing date three months earlier. The department also changed the rules to allow students to complete the form using older financial information. The new rules have FAFSA filers use tax information from a year earlier — known, awkwardly, as “prior prior” year returns. Students filing for the 2017-18 academic year, then, will use 2015 tax data. The main benefit of this change is that many more students can now use the Internal Revenue Service’s Data Retrieval Tool, which automatically fills in the online FAFSA form with the necessary tax information from 2015.

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Don't Let the Higher Costs of College Scare You Away

(*"Inside Higher Education"*, 5/16/16, by Rick Seltzer)

If you are a top academic student with financial need, here is some positive news: Tuition discount rates keep climbing to previously unseen levels at private colleges and universities. This means that tuition & fees at a private college or university which costs \$32,600 (2015-16 national average) might cost roughly 50% less with grant-based aid, much closer to the 2015-16 \$9,410 average for state residents at public colleges and universities. The average institutional tuition discount rate has risen to an estimated 48.6% for first-time, full-time freshmen in 2015-16, according to a report released by the National Association of College and University Business Officers. That means private institutions piped nearly half of every dollar charged in tuition and fees back into scholarships and grants for freshmen. The average discount number also means private colleges and universities relied on steep discounts to attract students or make themselves more affordable.

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

More and more highly selective private liberal arts colleges are 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 2017-2018 freshman academic year. Several top independent colleges, including **Lawrence** and **Beloit** (WI), **American** and **George Washington** (DC), **St. John's** (NM/MD), **Goucher** (MD), **Stetson** (FL), **Wesleyan** and **Trinity** (CT), **Denison** (OH), **Middlebury** (VT), **Bowdoin** and **Bates** (MI), and **Smith**, **Hampshire**, **Clark** and **Brandeis** (MA) have strengthened the movement. **Furman** (SC) has also joined **Hamilton**, **Bard**, **Marist** and **Skidmore** (NY) and **Franklin & Marshall**, **Gettysburg** and **Dickinson** (PA) in offering some form of test-optional admissions alternative. Six western private schools are now included: **Lewis & Clark** and **Willamette** (OR), **Mills**, **Whittier**, and **Pitzer** (CA) and **Whitworth** (WA). For the full list of over 850 schools go to: <http://www.fairtest.org>

Finding a College that Feels Right

(*"bestcollegefit.com"*, 8/10/16)

Most college applicants would agree that the best school for them would be a place that includes people with their shared values and interests, a place where people would encourage them on bad days and celebrate with them good days. It would be a community into which they could settle comfortably, a place where they wouldn't be distracted by worries about how to fit in, wondering about what people thought of them, of how they thought or dressed, and not having to prove themselves to anyone. The question is how to find such a place. It's hard to search the Internet for such a fit. Chat room conversations can be deceptive as they tend to reflect only the opinions of those who participate. And the images you see on videos and in printed materials are rarely unattractive. You really need to experience college campuses and, in the process, be sensitive to your "gut" reactions, which basically would tell you when it feels right — like you would be at home. As you think about living apart from the comforts of home, finding your niche is vitally important, so let your gut go to work for you. Look for students who come from similar backgrounds — who share your interests and your loyalties. While they shouldn't be exact clones of your friends from home, it's a good sign if they are people from whom you can learn and around whom you can grow personally. Based on your experience on college campuses, where do you see evidence that interaction with others will help broaden your perspective — get you to take moderate risks and think outside the box on occasion? What does your gut tell you about how an environment will respond if you struggle? Will anyone know? Will anyone care?

U. of California Increases In-State Admissions

(*"Chronicle of Higher Education"*, 7/12/16)

The University of California system has increased offers of admission to California applicants by more than 15% for the coming fall semester. The rise in in-state admissions comes a few months after a state audit found the system enrolled too many out-of-state students. Critics said the system's admissions policy favored out-of-state and international students because they paid higher tuition rates than did their in-state counterparts. The audit found that the enrollment of nonresidents had soared by 432% over the last 10 years, while California residents' enrollment increased only 10 percent.

I Thought the 'Best' College for Me Was the Most Selective. I Was Wrong

(*The Washington Post*, by Sophia Zupanc)

From a young age it was understood that if I wanted a "good" life, I needed a "good" job," and if I wanted a "good" job, I needed to go to a "good" school. However, I never took the opportunity to define "good" for myself. Unfortunately, many students like myself have done what we could to improve our chances of being admitted to a "good" school. We have gotten involved in extracurricular activities that made us appear "well-rounded" even while we stressed over grades and spent hours writing the "perfect" essay. We allowed "good" to become synonymous with "most selective." I am one of the lucky students who won the admissions lottery. I attend one of the most selective colleges in the country (*Ed: Wellesley College, MA*). My classes are small, my professors are engaging, and my classmates are impressive. I should be happy, but I'm not. Since my August arrival, I have not been able to shake the feeling that I'm not where I belong. Deeply passionate about the problems facing my Rust Belt home (*Cleveland*), my current situation absolves me from truly fighting for all the issues I feel most strongly. What I have realized is that my current institution is missing the thing most important to me: abundant opportunities in my chosen field. The stress of it all had taken 10 pounds and much of my already fine hair. I was unhealthy. But I continued to wonder if it was possible for me to have "good life" if I walked away from my "good" school. I have now realized that the logic I'd once followed was so twisted. Countless studies have shown that career success is much more contingent on the person and their work experience, yet we continue to let the admission craze dominate reality. I understand now that a "good" school is not the most selective, nor the most prestigious. Rather, it is the school where I am offered the opportunity to grow in the areas that matter most to me. I have learned a lot about myself over the past year; I have grown both intellectually and emotionally. Most importantly, however, I have finally defined what is "good" for me. (*Note: Sophia is now enrolled for her sophomore year at the John Glenn School of Public Affairs, Ohio State University.*)

Bard Gets \$1M to Create Small Hydropower Projects

When **Bard College** (NY) took ownership of the Montgomery Place estate in January, it got more than just a historic home, trails and gorgeous scenery. It also got a couple of old dams — and all the compliance responsibilities that come with them. But they also saw an opportunity to generate power on a small scale. It is now one of three college projects to receive a \$1 million grant through Gov. Andrew Cuomo's (NY) "Energy to Lead Competition."

COLLEGE RELATED NEWS

++**Lehigh University** (PA) has announced a new financial aid initiative that seeks to meet 100% of every student's demonstrated financial need, offering scholarships, grants, work study and loans to fill the gap between the cost of attendance and the calculated expected family contribution, with loans capped at \$5,000 per year.

++**Stanford University** (CA) students and alumni dominated certain sports in the Olympic Games. Katie Ledecky will be a freshman this fall. Joining her in Rio were 30 other current and former Stanford athletes — among them, swimmers Lia Neal, Simone Manuel and Maya DiRado.

++**Ursinus College** (PA) has announced a new freshman scholarship for fall 2017 that will cut nearly in half the cost of college for high-achieving students. The new *Gateway Scholarship* offers a renewable \$30,000 per year. To qualify: 1260 SAT combined reading and math score or an ACT composite score of 28.

++The Education Department has sent a letter imploring all colleges and universities not to make any changes to their financial aid deadlines, despite the earlier availability on October 1 of the FAFSA, the federal government's application for grants and loans.

++**Berea College** (KY) has acquired the intellectual property of the Arts Incubator of the Rockies, AIR. The program, now known as the **AIR Institute of Berea College** has relocated from Colorado. AIR Institute programs teach design thinking, business planning, and entrepreneurial initiative with the latest business development strategies and tactics.

++In the fall of 2015, a student group called "The Movement" sent **Hamilton College's** (NY) president a list of demands, including one that called for the curriculum to reflect "Hamilton's mission statement to develop 'students as human beings'". In fall of 2017, all students will now be required to pass a "Diversity Requirement" course.

++Death of the Dorm Key! **Northwestern University** (IL) plans to change to smart cards at four residential buildings. Many other institutions have already made the switch.

++Traditional colleges including **Northeastern University** (MA) are entering the coding boot camp market by partnering with boot camp providers or by creating their own programs. Ask about them at your targeted schools.

++**Pepperdine University** (CA) has told the U.S. Department of Education that it no longer wishes to be exempt from Title IX and will abide by the antibias policy. Many Christian colleges, as Pepperdine is, received exemptions in the last two years, saying that the Education Department's view that Title IX bars discrimination against transgender and gay students violates the colleges' Christian faith.

Campus Protests over Cultural and Racial Sensitivities Sour Alumni Feelings

(“New York Times”, August 4, 2016)

In June, Scott MacConnell cut **Amherst College** (MA) out of his will. Mr. MacConnell, who graduated in 1960, is expressing his discontent through his wallet. He wrote to the alumni fund in December and warned that he was reducing his support to the college to a token \$5. “As an alumnus of the college, I feel that I have been lied to, patronized and basically dismissed as an old, white bigot who is insensitive to the needs and feelings of the current college community,” A backlash from alumni from particularly small, elite liberal arts institutions is an unexpected aftershock of the campus disruptions of the last academic year. Although fund-raisers are still gauging the extent of the effect on philanthropy, some colleges have reported a decline in donations, accompanied by a laundry list of complaints. Alumni from a range of generations say they are baffled by today’s college culture. Among their laments: Students are too wrapped up in racial and identity politics. They are allowed to take too many frivolous courses. They have repudiated the heroes and traditions of the past by judging them by today’s standards rather than in the context of their times. Fraternities are being unfairly maligned, and men are being demonized by sexual assault investigations. And university administrations have been too meek in addressing protesters whose messages have seemed to fly in the face of free speech. Robert Longworth, class of ’99, the seventh in his family to have attended **Amherst**, has been the president of the New York City alumni association and a class agent. But he has withdrawn, he said, because of his sense that the college has become “so wrapped up in this politically charged mission rather than staying in its lane and being an institution of higher education.” Mr. Longworth has heard from “friends who went to **Hamilton, Trinity, Williams, Bates, Middlebury, Hobart**, who are not pleased at what’s happened on campus, and they’ve kind of stepped away.” For these alumni, he said, refusing to write a check “seems to be the only lever that can make a difference.”

Theatre Resources

There are many rewarding careers in theatre — ranging from actors and directors, to musical theatre artists and stage managers, to designers, playwrights, and theatre teachers. The Educational Theatre Association offers several helpful online resources for aspiring theatre professionals. The Dramatics College Theatre Directory (<http://collegedirectory.schooltheatre.org>) is a searchable online database of hundreds of undergraduate theatre programs. Users can search by school name, state, annual cost, campus setting, degree type, major, and other criteria. The Association also offers a comprehensive *College Resource Center* that will help students learn more about college life and applying to theatre programs. Useful resources include *Why Study Theatre*, *Inside the Conservatory*, *Surviving the Hurricane*, and *Laying the Foundation*. Click on “Resources” at: www.schooltheatre.org/resources/collegeresourcecenter

COLLEGE RELATED NEWS

++The Education Department is revising the federal financial aid application to make it easier for homeless college students to access loans and grants. Changes will take effect beginning with the 2018-2019 award year.

++In the last few years, small liberal arts colleges have been under financial siege, forced to re-examine their missions and justify their existence. Even several established and respected ones — **Bard College** (NY), **Yeshiva University** (NY), **Mills College** (CA) and **Morehouse College** (GA), among others — have received negative financial ratings.

++Warren Buffett has criticized **Grinnell College** (IA) for not cutting tuition or boosting enrollment after its endowment expanded to \$1.8 billion. Grinnell said Buffett’s facts about enrollment aren’t correct.

++Princeton, New Jersey homeowners have joined a lawsuit challenging non-profit **Princeton University’s** property-tax exemption, whose \$22.7 billion endowment makes it the fourth-richest U.S. university. The outcome could cut homeowners’ annual property taxes, averaging \$17,699, by a third. Similar gripes threaten to upend such communities as New Haven, Connecticut, where Princeton’s Ivy League cousin **Yale University** is the subject of proposed legislation to tax its property.

++The all-male final clubs at **Harvard University** (MA) have long been bastions of money, power and privilege. 225 years after the oldest club was founded, the university has announced restrictions on the organizations that could significantly change their character by forcing them to become coed. Female students took to Harvard Yard to voice their discontent with the new policy.

++The *Cornell Daily Sun*, one of the country’s leading student newspapers, has announced that it would decrease its print production to three days a week from five, joining a growing list of college and professional newspapers forced to adapt to financial challenges and the changing habits of readers.

SCHOLARSHIPS & CONTEST PROGRAMS

BURGER KING SCHOLARS PROGRAM - Application opens on October 15. When first 50,000 applications are received, the application will no longer be available. Application data must be submitted electronically by 11:59 p.m. (Pacific), December 15, 2016. Application and guidelines now available at: <http://www.bkmclamorefoundation.org>. Grants more than \$7 million in scholarships each year.

DR. PEPPER TUITION GIVEAWAY - For students between the ages of 18 (by 12/2/16) to 24. Find more information at www.drpeppertuition.com. Must submit your "Goal" to "Tell us how you'll change the world in 350 characters or less" by October 17, 2016. You'll be eligible to submit a video once you reach 50 votes on FB. Dr. Pepper will select finalists for a chance to compete for up to \$100,000 in college tuition.

MENSA EDUCATION & RESEARCH FOUNDATION SCHOLARSHIPS - Applicants need not be Mensa members. Various scholarships totaling \$70,000 are awarded, based solely on a 550-word essay explaining career, academic and/or vocational goals and how you plan to achieve your goals. **Postmark Application Deadline: January 15, 2017**. <http://www.mensafoundation.org>. Click on U.S. scholarships at bottom of page.

SCHOLARSHIP FOR YOUNG HISPANIC LEADERS - Open to Hispanic students attending or accepted to an accredited undergraduate four-year institution for fall 2017 are eligible for non-renewable, need-based \$1000 scholarships. <http://www.uskli.org> - phone: (312) 427-8683 **Application Deadline: December 31, 2016**.

EDISON SCHOLARS PROGRAM - Offers scholarships for high school students with financial need pursuing studies in STEM fields. Thirty \$40,000 scholarships at \$10,000/year will be awarded. Must live in or attend a public or private high school in areas serviced by Southern California Edison. Applications are accepted from October to February. Info at: <http://www.edison.com/home/community/how-to-apply.html>

YOUNG ENTREPRENEUR AWARDS - NFIB's Young Entrepreneur Foundation awards 100 Young Entrepreneur Award Scholarships to students across the country! Each award is between \$2,000 and \$25,000. Applicants **MUST** be HS seniors and own and/or operate their own small business. NFIB's Young Entrepreneur Foundation awarded \$260,000 to deserving young entrepreneurs in 2016. **Application deadline: December 18, 2016**. <http://www.nfib.com/yea>

ELKS MOST VALUABLE STUDENT SCHOLARSHIP - Open to any high school senior who is a US Citizen. Applicants will be judged on scholarship, leadership, and financial need. 500 renewable scholarships ranging from \$1,000 per year to \$12,500 per year will be awarded. This year, the application is due to be submitted online (not to a local Lodge) by **November 30, 2016**. <http://www.elks.org/enf/scholars/mvs.cfm>

STOKES EDUCATIONAL SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM - Open to 2017 seniors who *plan to major in Computer or Electrical Engineering, Computer Science*. Pays tuition & fees up to \$30K per yr. at the college of your choice. If selected as a program participant, you are required to work in your area of study for NSA after your college graduation. **Application deadline online or postmarked November 15, 2016**. Phone: 410-854-4725. Guidelines at: <https://www.intelligencecareers.gov/icstudents.html?Agency=NSA>

AXA ACHIEVEMENT SCHOLARSHIP - Applicants must be high school seniors graduating in spring 2017. One winner from each state is selected by Scholarship America, to receive one-time scholarship awards of \$10,000 each. Ten national winners are selected to earn an additional one-time scholarship of \$15,000. **Applications will be received until December 15, 2016 or until 10,000 applications are submitted, whichever occurs first**. For details on how to apply: <https://us.axa.com/axa-foundation/about.html>

SCHOLARSHIPS & CONTEST PROGRAMS

AMERICAN LEGION NATIONAL HS ORATORICAL CONTEST - 53 awards offered annually. Amounts vary from \$1,500 to \$18,000, non-renewable. Must compose a prepared oration on some aspect of the Constitution of the United States. Details at: <http://www.legion.org/scholarships/oratorical>. Under "Rules & Resources" click on "Learn more about the Oratorical Contest", then "Request Oratorical Contest Information" and "State Contests". Local deadlines vary, so ACT NOW!

COMCAST LEADERS AND ACHIEVERS SCHOLARSHIPS - Offers one-time \$1,000 awards not based on financial need. Must be high school senior, demonstrate a strong commitment to community service and display leadership abilities in school activities or through work experience. All nominations must be made by the Principal or Guidance Counselor. They can email Comcast@applyists.com or call (855) 670-4787 for eligibility and nomination information and materials. **Application deadline: December 2, 2016** Visit their Facebook page at: <https://www.facebook.com/ComcastLeadersandAchievers>

DAUGHTERS OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION SCHOLARSHIPS - Each year the DAR awards more than \$150,000 through more than 25 different type scholarships. The renewable Richard and Elizabeth Dean Scholarship award for graduating HS seniors is \$5,000 for each year of college. Some scholarships require separate applications. Although financial need is not stated as a requirement, a Financial Need Form is part of the application procedure. **Postmark Application Deadline: February 10, 2017**. To access the application and a list of scholarships: <http://www.dar.org/national-society/scholarships>

THE PRUDENTIAL SPIRIT OF COMMUNITY AWARDS - Recognizes high school students who have demonstrated exemplary, self-initiated community service. Schools and designated organizations such as *Girl Scout councils, county 4-H organizations, American Red Cross Chapters, YMCAs* may select one honoree for every 1,000 students. State finalists receive \$1,000 and an expense-paid trip to Washington, D.C. From the State Honorees, ten National Honorees are chosen and receive an additional \$5,000. **Applications must be submitted to "certifiers" no later than November 3, 2016.** <http://spirit.prudential.com/view/page/soc>

SOCIETY OF AUTOMOTIVE ENGINEERS - A variety of corporate-sponsored scholarships for graduating high school seniors are offered, ranging in value from \$1,000 to \$10,000. All scholarships are contingent upon the applicant's enrollment in an engineering program accredited by the Accreditation Board for Engineering and Technology (ABET). Website: <http://students.sae.org/scholarships/freshman/> **Applications must be postmarked by January 15, 2017.**

GATES MILLENNIUM SCHOLARS PROGRAM - Students are eligible to be considered for a GMS scholarship if they: Are *African American, Asian Pacific Islander American or Hispanic American*; Must be a citizen/legal permanent resident or national of the United States and have attained a cumulative 3.3 GPA. Must meet the Federal Pell Grant eligibility criteria. All forms and information are available at website: <http://www.gmsp.org>. **Deadline for Submission of Nomination Materials is January 12, 2017.**

Independent Ranking Websites Worth Checking Out

<https://www.alumnifactor.com> - This site claims to have surveyed and interviewed 42,000 alumni of 450 colleges over the last five years. It is now considered secured and legit. 33 page reports are available for 227 top schools for \$5.95 ea.

<http://www.parchment.com/c/college/college-rankings.php> - College rankings based on actual student enrollment decisions. Tens of thousands of students have contributed to a database of over 989,337 acceptances at hundreds of colleges in the US. Using a formula similar to the one used to rank chess masters, Parchment helps decipher the meaning of those student choices.

<https://collegescorecard.ed.gov> - Details annual costs, graduation rates, salaries after graduation and other information for more than 7,000 institutions of higher education. Great for comparing and sorting schools. Includes such info as: 23 four-year schools with low costs that lead to high incomes and 30 four-year schools with high graduation rates and low costs;

<https://www.youniversitytv.com> - Based on career data that LinkedIn has collected from some 240 million members around the world, you have access to University Rankings based on career outcomes. The website claims: "Tell us what you want to do, and we'll show you which universities send the most alumni into that career." If you have a linked-in account you can sign in OR instantly sign-up.

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COLLEGE NEWS

++For high school graduates, the unemployment rate is disturbingly high: 17.8 percent. Add in those who are underemployed, either because they would like a full-time job but can only find part-time work, or they are so discouraged that they've given up actively searching, and the share jumps to more than 33 percent.

++Oracle founder and chairman Larry Ellison is donating \$200 million to the **University of Southern California** to create an interdisciplinary cancer treatment center. The center, which will be called the Lawrence J. Ellison Institute for Transformative Medicine of USC, will focus on using technology to transform cancer treatment.

++**College of the Ozarks** (MO), a Christian liberal-arts college, has a \$427 million endowment. But unlike other private liberal arts colleges with large endowments, C of O has accumulated its endowment all while offering four-year degrees to all students tuition-free.

++A study by faculty members at West Point (NY) has found that students perform better academically when laptops and tablets are banned from the classroom.

NATIONAL FALL COLLEGE FAIRS

<http://www.nacacnet.org> - National College Fairs allow students to interact with admission representatives from a wide range of postsecondary institutions. Click on "Student Registration for National College Fairs" on the right. Fairs in western cities in mid to late October. When you register, your information will be provided exclusively to those colleges and/or universities that you choose at the College Fair. By allowing a college or university to record the electronic bar code on your Barcode, you agree and give permission that all personal information will be shared only with those colleges or universities.

<http://www.nacacnet.org/college-fairs/PVA-College-Fairs/Pages/default.aspx> – Dates for Performing and Visual Arts College Fairs – Western cities in late October. Click on "Student Registration for Performing and Visual Arts".

LOOKING FOR BEST SCHOLARSHIP SEARCH SITES?

<http://www.collegescholarships.org/search/helpful-reviews.htm>

Here you will find comprehensive reviews of the leading scholarship search services. As free subscriber sites they offer their services to users who take the time to fill in the brief online profiles. But how timely, accurate and relevant are these services? And do they deliver results any different from those you'd find using Google search? In order to really get a clear idea of how each of these services works, the following fictional profile was filled out and submitted on each site: "My name is Toni, and I'm a senior in high school. I am a white female, non-minority. I am an Honor Roll Student with a 3.4 GPA, and SAT score of 1430. My college of choice is the University of Colorado-Boulder, intended major is biology, and career interest is medical research. I have a part-time job at McDonald's, at least one of my parents is a police officer, our household income is \$60,000, and I'm a resident of Colorado. I also have Multiple Sclerosis." The resulting list of scholarships which are then suggested as good fits on each site, are accessed in detail in many different areas.

<https://www.higheradmission.com> - Spend 5 minutes entering your grades, test scores, accomplishments and characteristics to learn your unique merit aid award amounts from Higher Admission colleges and universities. Your identity remains hidden until you decide to release it to a school.

The College that "Fits" You Best Is One that Will:

- Offer a program of study to match your interests and needs.
- Offer a community that feels like home to you.
- Provide a style of instruction to match the way you like to learn.
- Value you for what you have to offer.
- Provide a level of academic rigor to match your aptitude and preparation.

Be particularly attentive to the last point, especially if you need financial assistance or hope to receive merit scholarship recognition. The places that have seen what you can do—and are prepared to invest in your further success—are the ones that will admit you and give you the support you need to achieve your goals. As you consider colleges, then, start with an understanding of fit from a perspective that is centered on your sense of self:

- How academically curious are you?
- How important is an active social life to you?
- Do you have well established study habits?
- Do you like to speak freely in discussions and workshops?

Do you look at college as first a stepping stone to a career OR as first a way of making you stronger and richer as a student and as a person.

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Using Your “Mission Trip” as Essay Subject?

(Excerpted from “N.Y.Times”, 08/14/16 by Frank Bruni)

There is a persistent vogue among high school students for so-called service that’s sometimes about little more than a faraway adventure and a few lines or paragraphs on their applications to selective colleges. It turns developing-world hardship into a prose-ready opportunity for growth, empathy into an extracurricular activity. And it reflects a broader gaming of the admissions process that concerns me just as much, because of its potential to create strange habits and values in the students who go through it, telling them that success is a matter of superficial packaging and checking off the right boxes at the right time. That’s true only in some cases, and hardly the recipe for a life well lived. In the case of drive-by charity work, the checked box can actually be counterproductive, because application readers see right through it. Ángel Pérez, who is in charge of admissions at **Trinity College** (CT) in Hartford, told me, “The running joke in admissions is the mission trip to Costa Rica to save the rain forest.” And he added, “Aren’t the children there sad, getting abandoned by a fresh crop of affluent American teens every few days?” Jennifer Delahunty, a longtime admissions official at **Kenyon College** (OH), said that mission-trip application essays are their own bloated genre. “Often these students come to the same conclusion: People in other parts of the world who have no money are happier than we are! That is eye-opening to some students. But it can be a dangerous thing to write about, because it’s hard to rescue the truth from that cliché.” There are, of course, excellent mission trips, which some students do through churches that they already belong to. There are also plenty of other summer projects and jobs that can help students develop a deeper, humbler understanding of the world, like the student who spent the summer working at a coffee shop. He wrote about not realizing until he did this how invisible people in the service industry are. He wrote about how people looked right through him at the counter. Helicopter parents, stand down! That doesn’t mean that you should hustle your teenagers to the nearest Starbucks. It means that whatever they do, they should be able to engage in it fully and reflect on it meaningfully. And if that’s service work, why not address all the need in your own backyard?

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FUTURE FOCUS EDUCATIONAL SERVICES

145 Brooks Lane
Ashland, OR 97520

FOR SUBSCRIPTION INFORMATION, CONTACT:
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