

# College Bound

ISSUES & TRENDS FOR THE COLLEGE ADMISSIONS ADVISOR

Vol. 25, No. 5

January 2011

**SPECIAL  
ISSUE**

## CB's 25th Annual National Admissions Trends Survey Results Facebook and Financial Needs Trump Trends

FOR THE LAST 25 YEARS, *COLLEGE BOUND* has surveyed representative colleges and universities small and large, public and private, from coast to coast to spot check the latest trends in college admissions. *CB* asks admissions officers at a wide variety of schools to describe how they see the issues of the day—the number and kind of applications they received, their use of a wait list (or not), the number of early decisions, their yield and, of late, the state of the economy and its impact on financial aid and college going rates.

Last year, for example, *CB*'s survey confirmed that, indeed, there were increases in the number of students selecting public colleges. Admissions officers then said that students who once sought education at a private school were deciding on “best buys” at public institutions. *CB* also found that 48 percent of colleges were enrolling more out-of-state students to increase their tuition dollars. At the same time, more students were choosing to stay in-state to save money.

In many respects, this year is not radically different. And perhaps reflecting the often confusing cross currents at work during the last admissions cycle, *CB* editors felt that some colleges are literally holding their breath, waiting to report their enrollment results until the dust settles, and their numbers become “official.” Here, though, are the preliminary results from nearly 80 colleges who by press time were providing a glimpse inside the admissions offices of American higher education. And there is more to come next month.

### THE FACEBOOK CHALLENGE

*Time* Magazine made Facebook founder Mark Zuckerberg its “Person of the Year” for 2010. The movie “Social Network” was a huge hit last fall. So it is no wonder that admissions officers at U.S. colleges and universities report increased usage of the new social media to attract students, while students use it to make their college selections.

That's what Lesley Al-Hajeri of Embry Riddle Aeronautical U. confirmed, saying, “More schools are using Facebook to recruit students.” Gina McLaughlin, senior admissions advisor at SUNY Institute of Technology, also noted “more social media involvement.” Reflecting the use of technology overall, Melinda Wood, assistant dean of admissions, Elon U., cited the “growth in online applications” as one of the top trends for 2010.

Other interesting trends also emerged. Last year, admissions officers reported that they hosted fewer visitors to campuses, speculating that it was a reflection of the impact the recession was having on the traditional college admissions process. But this year, perhaps as a bellwether of an improving economy, Richard C. Vos, vice president, Claremont McKenna C., was one of several admissions officers stating that they saw “more campus visitors.”

Phyllis J. Schultz, Lawrence U., noted, “The class of 2010—at least as far as Lawrence was concerned—arrived faster and larger than expected. Parents played an even more active role in the decision-making process this year than in previous years.”

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NEWS FLASH NEWS FLASH NEWS FLASH

### Early Returns for 2011

Even as *CB* reports its survey results for last year's admissions cycle, new trends are emerging for 2011.

**Selective Schools Compare Early Decision Numbers.** At the most selective universities in the country, early decision data is in, and the schools are comparing the number of applicants, according to *The Dartmouth Review* in December. Amherst C., Brown U., Cornell U. and Yale U. saw their number of early decision applications decrease this year, while Dartmouth C., Columbia U., Stanford U., Williams C., U. of Chicago, U. of Pennsylvania, Massachusetts Institute of Technology and Duke U. all registered significant application increases over last year.

Dartmouth received 1,759 early applications this fall, an increase of 11.98 percent over last year. Yale received 5,257 applications, with a 0.08 percent decline. Stanford had 5,929 applicants and 6.54 percent growth. And U. of Chicago attracted 6,960 applications, an increase of 18.5 percent.

In another report from *Bloomberg*, Northwestern U. saw early applications increase 26 percent from last year to 2,127. Dartmouth accepted 25 percent of early applicants and Duke admitted 30 percent of its early students. Early applications to MIT surged by 13 percent, to 6,405. College counselors also speculated that this year, in a down economy, students are looking for an education that will likely lead to a career.

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## FACEBOOK AND FINANCIALS

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And, perhaps reflecting the stiff competition to get into public universities in California, Kelli Payne, California State U. Stanislaus, said, "Students were better prepared, submitted any required documents timely and adhered to campus deadlines." In general, Kelly S. Gosnell, vice president for admissions, Trinity Washington U., observed that, "Students are more focused."

## FINANCING HIGHER EDUCATION

The increased need for financial aid though dominated the list of trends for 2010, according to admissions officers. As Christopher Lydon, Providence C., said, "net cost" was "more frequently trumping academic reputation compared to the period before the economic downturn."

Ms. Wood at Elon U. was one of many reporting "increased financial aid inquiries." Kevin Dyerly, director of admission, Whitman C., likewise reported seeing "more financial need."

**Did Financial Need Impact Admissions?** "Yes," according to 54 percent of colleges. How so?

*Greater need for aid.* Serena McCollum at Ohio U. noted that "with the instability of the economy, even more students are requesting information on financial aid and scholarships." Susan Winstel, director of admissions, Carlow U. in Pennsylvania, said there were "more Pell-eligible students." Anita H. Garland, Hampden-Sydney C., observed, "We had to offer greater need-based scholarships."

Angela Colon, assistant director of admission, Moravian C., added that with a "decrease in family income, there was an increase in 'need-based' aid." Jay Eckles at Rhodes C. in Tennessee found that "the average need of our accepted applicants went up, and we had many more appeals for additional assistance. Net price was a more important factor." Likewise, Kristina Brooks, admission counselor at Scripps C., found that "the proportion of applicants requesting financial aid increased." And Ms. Gosnell at Trinity Washington U., added that "more qualified" for aid.

*More influence on selection.* "Financial aid was a strong factor in decision making," according to Lori Heying, Mount Mercy U. She said that, "More students were even more reliant on aid.... We can only offer so much." And K.C. Deane, Reed C., said that there was an increased awareness of financial aid awards. "By being need-aware, financial need by definition impacted our decisions," she added. Sandra Hayes, dean of admissions, Santa Clara U., said that more families factored aid into their decision. And Jim Amidon, Wabash C.,

## EARLY RETURNS

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**SLU Has Higher Acceptance Rate for ED.** St. Lawrence U. accepts 80 percent of applicants who apply by the early decision January 15 deadline, but only 40 percent of regular decision applicants, according to the *Watertown Daily Times* in December. It cited *U.S. News and World Report* data that suggests SLU is one of five schools with the highest acceptance rates for early decision applications. The others are Tougaloo C. in Jackson, Mississippi, U. of Arkansas, SUNY C. of Environmental Science and Forestry at Syracuse U. and Wittenberg U. in Ohio.

Some counselors and admissions officials question whether early decision benefits students who cannot wait to compare financial aid offers before making a final decision. And, they say, some great students are left behind. But, according to Teresa E. Cowdrey, vice president and dean of admissions and financial aid, SLU, "In regular decision, on a good year, when we have a lot of applications, we will have some strong students who we thought would be successful at St. Lawrence and would have admitted them under early-decision, but we don't offer them admission." She added, "If those students typically had applied early decision, we would have admitted them." ■

said that with more financial need, there was "more comparison shopping." He also noted that "more need=more loans."

*Issues regarding loans.* But while students needed more loans, the loans may have been harder to get. Carlena Bean, director of admissions, Husson U. in Maine, said, "There was an increase in the numbers of unemployed parents, so obtaining loans was more difficult." Rob Pfaff at Saint Joseph's C. in Indiana said, "Families seemed less willing to borrow beyond Stafford/Perkins. There seemed to be more unemployed parents."

Overall, among those colleges and universities that felt financial need impacted admissions: Aquinas C., Baldwin-Wallace C., Bucknell U., Carlow U., Colgate U., Dickinson C., Franciscan U., Hampden-Sydney C., Hope C., Husson U., Moravian C., Mount Mercy U., Oklahoma City U., Philadelphia Biblical U., Providence C., Reed C., Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute, Rhodes C., Santa Clara U., Scripps C., Southern Illinois U.—Carbondale, Temple U., Thomas More C., Trinity Washington U., Wabash C. and Wartburg C.

Patrick Roberts, Georgia Southern U., did not feel financial need impacted its admissions, but noted that "due to the economy, we saw students waiting as late as possible to pay for housing deposits."

**Are More Students Requesting Financial Aid?** At the same time, even though some

admissions officers may not think that financial needs impacted their admissions, 95 percent of colleges in the survey said they had more students requesting financial aid this year, including:

Adelphi U., Baldwin-Wallace C., Binghamton U.-SUNY; Bucknell U. (only a few), California State U.—Stanislaus, Campbellsville U., Carlow U., Carnegie Mellon U., Centre C., Colgate U., Dickinson C., Elon U., Embry Riddle Aeronautical U.—Daytona Beach, Embry Riddle Aeronautical U.—Prescott, AZ, Emory U., Franciscan U., Georgia Southern U., Hampden-Sydney C., Harvey Mudd C., Hendrix C., Hope C., Husson U., Illinois Wesleyan U., James Madison U., John Hopkins U., Kalamazoo C., Lawrence U., Longwood U., Louisiana State U., Marquette U., Moravian C., Mount Mercy U., New C. of Florida, Oberlin C., Ohio U., Oklahoma City U., Philadelphia Biblical U., Providence C., Purdue U., Rhodes C., Saint Joseph's C., Saint Louis U., Saint Michael's C., Santa Clara U., Scripps C., Southern Illinois U.—Carbondale, SUNY Institute of Technology, Temple U., Thomas More C., Trinity Washington U., U. of Bridgeport, U. of Dayton, U. of Florida, U. of Idaho, U. of Iowa, U. of Michigan—Ann Arbor, U. of North Carolina—Chapel Hill, U. of North Florida, U. of Oklahoma, Valparaiso U., Wabash C., Wagner C., Wartburg C., Wells C. and Whitman C.

Only Duquesne U., Portland State U. and U. of Colorado—Boulder said they noted fewer requests for financial aid.

## Did Colleges Take Emergency Steps?

Some colleges, such as Hampden-Sydney C., said they had planned for the increased need in financial aid. Carlow U. "increased scholarships and instituted an appeal process." Embry Riddle Aeronautical U.—Daytona Beach said the "university reallocated institutional funds to assist students." The Evergreen State C. "set aside part of the tuition increase to redistribute as aid." Ohio U. "used institutional grant funding for state grant reduction." Reed C. had already increased its financial aid budget dramatically for "'08-'09 year."

But Rhodes C. said it created an emergency fund. Saint Joseph's C. reported, "We did more proactive 1-on-1 work with families to help them find ways to pay. We probably gave additional aid because of it." Saint Louis U. said, "Emergency steps were taken in 2009-2010 and approved for continuing in 2010-2011: Emergency Scholarship Fund, Institutional Loan Fund, Magis Awards (no longer required to have it, but it was continued)."

The U. of Florida said that a student now "works one-on-one with a financial aid advisor." The U. of Iowa said, "We made additional allocations to the University's undergraduate Tuition Set Aside scholarship and grant programs to help meet the demands of the

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# NEW Programs or Majors in 2010

WHILE ADMISSIONS OFFICERS cited financial concerns as a major trend in 2010, some noted new academic issues afoot. Ohio U. was one of several schools noting the “marked increase in the number of first-year college work (earned via Advanced Placement, postsecondary options or dual enrollment).” And Worcester Polytechnic Institute said there was a consistent interest in STEM fields in 2010.

CB asked admissions officers what new majors or programs were launched in 2010. Here’s what they said about new options for undergraduates.

- Aquinas C.:* Sustainable business.
- Adelphi U.:* Music ed, peace studies.
- Baldwin-Wallace C.:* Digital media & design.
- California State U.–Stanislaus:* Ethnic studies.
- Campbellsville U.:* Christian missions, Spanish, interdisciplinary early childhood education and minor in photojournalism.
- Chapman U.:* Computational science, law, justice & social change.
- Dickinson C.:* Latin American, Latino & Caribbean studies.
- Duquesne U.:* Education and computer & IT.
- Elon U.:* Biochemistry, anthropology and music technology.
- Emory U.:* Two new minors: sustainability and media studies.
- The Evergreen State C.:* Consciousness studies, sustainability & social justice.
- Franciscan U.:* International business.
- Georgia Southern U.:* Bachelor of fine arts with a major in graphic design.
- Harvey Mudd C.:* Computational biology.
- Hendrix C.:* Literary studies, film studies and creative writing.
- John Hopkins U.:* Global environmental change & sustainability and archeology.
- Kalamazoo C.:* Jewish studies concentration.
- Longwood U.:* Nursing.
- Marquette U.:* Construction engineering management, computations mathematics.
- Moravian C.:* Living & learning communities.
- New C. of Florida:* Applied mathematics and Chinese language & culture.
- Ohio U.:* Bachelors of arts in global studies--war & peace, and bachelor of arts in classical languages.
- Oklahoma City U.:* The Oxford Plan and sports business.
- Providence C.:* Minor in film, certificate in neuroscience for biology or

- psychology majors.
- Purdue U.:* College of Health & Human Sciences.
- Reed C.:* Environmental studies.
- Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute:* Cognitive science, web science and sustainability studies.
- Sacred Heart U.:* Fashion marketing and merchandising, fashion design, computer science, game design and development.
- Saint Louis U.:* Certificates: anatomical & physiological science, criminal justice/security management and sales leadership (PBC); majors: B.S. community health, B.A. criminal justice/security management, B.S. civil engineering, B.A. environmental studies, B.A. Latin American studies.
- Saint Michael's C.:* Pre-pharmacy, gender studies and environmental studies.
- Santa Clara U.:* Bioengineering, web design.
- Scripps C.:* Art conservation and environmental analysis.
- Southern Illinois U.–Carbondale:* Sport administration.
- SUNY Institute of Technology:* Network & computer security and electrical & computer engineering.
- Temple U.:* Tyler School of Art: B.F.A. fibers and materials studies, B.S. architectural preservation, B.S. facilities management; C. of Education: B.S. in education (middle grades education –concentration in mathematics and language arts, concentration in mathematics and science and concentration in science and language arts); Esther Boyer C. of Music and Dance: B.F.A. dance–focus in dance education; C. of Science and Technology: B.S. in mathematics and computer science with teaching).
- U. of Bridgeport:* Criminal justice & human security, health sciences and medical technology.
- U. of Colorado–Boulder:* Concurrent bachelor-master degree in chemical and biological engineering.
- U. of Oklahoma:* Arabic, environmental sustainability and risk management.
- Virginia Tech:* New major in the College of Natural Resources & Environment–environmental resource management.
- Wabash C.:* New dual degree in engineering with Purdue U.
- Wagner C.:* Five-year microbiology and film/media studies programs.
- Wells C.:* Center for Business & Entrepreneurship.
- Worcester Polytechnic Institute:* Interactive media and game development; bioinformatics. ■

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increased numbers of students.” Valparaiso U. “replaced lost state aid” and Wagner C. in New York made “need grants.”

But 63 percent of colleges said they did not take emergency steps. Purdue U. said “funds are set aside for extenuating circumstances and awarded on a case by case basis.”

## THE STATE OF EARLY APPS

“Most likely as a result of the recent economic downturn, students were concerned about making early decision commitments that

they might not be able to honor due to financial constraints,” said Dickinson C. But, “both early decision and early application numbers were up in comparison to the year before.”

Jason Reinoehl at the U. of Dayton, added, “Our students are applying earlier and they are applying to more institutions.” Rosemary Anastasio at Wagner C., cited, “More early action, less early decision applicants; students being pressured to deposit before May 1” as a major trend. Edith Waldstein, vice president, Wartburg C. in Iowa noted that the “timeline for application and deposit has shifted to later in academic year.”

In fact, 56 percent of those surveyed said they used early decision or early action. And of those, 34 percent said they received more early applications compared to the previous year. Below are some of the schools that received early applications with the percent of their 2010 first-year class accepted ED/EA:

Bucknell U. (42 percent); Carnegie Mellon U. (20 percent); Centre C. (45 percent); Chapman U. (69 percent); Claremont McKenna C. (27 percent); Colgate U. (43 percent); Dickinson C. (77 percent); Duquesne U. (19 percent); Elon U. (63 percent); Emory U. (38 percent);

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Hampden-Sydney C. (10 percent); Harvey Mudd C. (31 percent); Illinois Wesleyan U. (51 percent); James Madison U. (38 percent); John Hopkins U. (38 percent); Kalamazoo C. (68 percent); Lawrence U. (47 percent); Longwood U. (29 percent);

Middlebury C. (29 percent); Moravian C. (61 percent); Oberlin C. (32 percent); Providence C. (42 percent); Reed C. (27 percent); Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute (24 percent enrolled); Rhodes C. (49 percent); Saint Michael's C. (65 percent); Santa Clara U. (73 percent); Scripps C. (57 percent); U. of Colorado-Boulder (62 percent); U. of Dayton (80 percent); U. of Michigan-Ann Arbor (66.8 percent); U. of North Carolina-Chapel Hill (74 percent); U.S. Coast Guard Academy (22 percent); Virginia Tech (22 percent); Wabash C. (5 percent); Wagner C. (3 percent); Wells C. (56 percent) and Whitman C. (28.2 percent).

## TOTAL APPLICATIONS

*How many applications did colleges receive in 2010?* The Evergreen State C. had more applications by its priority date which "increased competition for admission." Louisiana State U. saw an "increase in number of minority students." Mount Mercy U. in Iowa noted there is "still a good number of stealth applicants; students are applying to a number of institutions." Purdue U. posted an "increase due to international applications." At Campbellsville U. in Kentucky there were "more applications and greater number of females." Oklahoma City U. was one public receiving "more applicants." Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute had a "softer applicant pool, especially early decision."

Rhodes C. noted, "We experienced an increase in visitors and an increase in applications. We also saw an increase in applicants who were not seriously interested in Rhodes, and an increase in accepted applicants who expressed a desire for additional aid. We ended up with a larger class than we expected, so the trends we experienced at the beginning of the admission cycle followed through to the end." Saint Michael's C. in Vermont also said it had "increased application numbers" while Southern Illinois U.—Carbondale found "students applying to multiple institutions."

*Seventy-seven percent of colleges said they received more applications compared to 2009 (and the number of applications) including:* Aquinas C. (2,266); Baldwin-Wallace C. (3,553); California State U.—Stanislaus (4,896); Campbellsville U. (2,146); Carnegie Mellon U. (26,718); Centre C. (2,257); Colgate U. (7,872); Dickinson C. (5,033); Elon U. (9,771); Embry

Riddle Aeronautical U.—Daytona Beach (3,975) and Embry Riddle Aeronautical U.—Prescott (1,439); The Evergreen State C. (1,965); and Georgia Southern U. (9,817).

Also, Harvey Mudd C. (2,718); Hope C. (3,252); Illinois Wesleyan U. (3,554); James Madison U. (22,583); John Hopkins U. (18,486); Lawrence U. (2,625); Longwood U. (5,316); Louisiana State U. (18,214); Marquette (19,588); Middlebury C. (7,984); Mount Mercy U. (376); New C. of Florida (1,672); Oberlin C. (6,014); Oklahoma City U. (1,253); Philadelphia Biblical U. (629); Portland State U. (5,431); Providence C. (8,398) and Purdue U. (30,707).

Plus, Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute (13,464); Rhodes C. (5,598); Sacred Heart U. (7,569); Saint Joseph's C. (1,784); Saint Louis U. (10,962); Saint Michael's C. (3,363); Santa Clara (11,787); Scripps C. (2,097); Southern Illinois U.—Carbondale (12,664); SUNY Institute of Technology (1,873); Thomas More C. (1,459); Trinity Washington U. (1,388); U. of Colorado-Boulder (21,003); U. of Florida (27,987); U. of Idaho (6,790); U. of Illinois-Chicago (14,889); U. of Iowa (17,220); U. of Michigan-Ann Arbor (31,613); U. of North Carolina-Chapel Hill (23,271); U. of North Florida (8,763); U.S. Coast Guard Academy (4,580); Valparaiso U. (4,070); Wabash C. (1,535); Wells C. (1,964) and Worcester Polytechnic Institute (6,660).

*Twenty-four percent of colleges reported fewer applications in 2010 compared to 2009 (and the number of applications) including:* Binghamton U.—SUNY (27,248); Bucknell U. (7,178); Carlow U. (1,063); Duquesne U. (6,502); Husson U. (1,894); Kalamazoo C. (1,932); Moravian C. (2,004); Ohio U. (13,366); Reed C. (3,075); Temple U. (17,051); U. of Bridgeport (6,369); U. of Dayton (11,567); Virginia Tech (20,083); Wagner C. (2,410); Wartburg C. (2,195) and Whitman C. (3,322).

Claremont McKenna C. (4,264); Emory U. (15,550); Franciscan U. and U. of Oklahoma (10,700) reported the same number of applications as in 2009.

## ACCEPTANCES

*Did colleges accept more students in 2010?* Fifty-seven percent of the schools in CB's survey reported that they accepted more students in 2010 than 2009. Those that accepted more students: Aquinas C. (1,792); Binghamton U.—SUNY (10,918); California State U.—Stanislaus (1,643); Campbellsville U. (1,389); Carnegie Mellon U. (6,392); Centre C. (1,664); Colgate U. (2,597); Elon U. (4,740); Embry Riddle Aeronautical U.—Daytona Beach (3,177); Embry Riddle Aeronautical U.—Prescott (1,179); The Evergreen State C. (1,854); Georgia Southern U. (5,493);

Hope C. (2,601); Illinois Wesleyan U. (2,165); Longwood U. (3,509); Louisiana State U. (13,148); Marquette U. (12,058); Moravian C. (1,584) and New C. of Florida (827).

Also, Oklahoma City U. (952); Philadelphia Biblical U. (444); Providence C. (5,640); Purdue U. (19,993); Reed C. (1,311); Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute (5,381); Rhodes C. (2,543); Saint Joseph's C. (1,092); Saint Louis U. (7,663); Saint Michael's C. (2,773); Scripps C. (820); Thomas More C. (1,082); Trinity Washington U. (694); U. of Colorado-Boulder (17,447); U. of Florida (11,206); U. of Idaho (5,238); U. of Illinois-Chicago (3,204); U. of Iowa (14,434); U. of Michigan-Ann Arbor (16,006); U. of North Carolina-Chapel Hill (7,559); U. of North Florida (3,729); U. of Oklahoma (8,498); Valparaiso U. (2,970); Virginia Tech (13,412); Wabash C. (865); Wells C. (1,385) and Whitman C. (1,550).

*Thirty-three percent of colleges accepted fewer students (and the number they accepted) including:* Baldwin-Wallace C. (2,303); (Bucknell U. (2,253); Carlow U. (698); Dickinson C. (2,405); Duquesne U. (4,989); Emory U. (4,490); Harvey Mudd C. (638); Husson U. (1,337); John Hopkins U. (3,823); Kalamazoo C. (1,438); Middlebury C. (1,375); Mount Mercy U. (264); Oberlin C. (1,996); Ohio U. (11,372); Portland State U. (3,965); Southern Illinois U.—Carbondale (7,509); SUNY Institute of Technology (645); Temple U. (11,022); U. of Bridgeport (3,659); U. of Dayton (8,931); U.S. Coast Guard Academy (385) and Wartburg C. (1,577).

*Five percent reported they accepted the same number of students as in 2009 (and the number they accepted) including:* Claremont McKenna C. (729); Franciscan U. (NA); James Madison U. (13,037); Lawrence U. (1,739) and Wagner C. (1,843).

Finally, one concern in the past has been whether or not there was a "summer melt" of accepted students who did not enroll in the fall. This year, only a few colleges reported a greater than usual summer melt: Carlow U., Hope C. and New C. of Florida. The majority of colleges said, "No," their "melt" was not larger than usual.

But multiple deposits by students still bother many admissions officers. Georgia Southern U., for example, noted, "More students seemed to be 'depositing' at several schools—making a commitment to several schools instead of just one school, and then making a 'final decision' in May." ■

**Coming Up:** The wait lists, the yields, the class size. And the rest.

**HAVE A GREAT NEW YEAR!**

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Production: Design|Americom; Salsedo Press, Inc. COLLEGE BOUND is published monthly, ten times a year. Inquiries should be directed to P.O. Box 6536, Evanston, IL 60204; 773-262-5810. Annual subscription: \$59 in North America, \$69 for international orders, including airmail postage. [www.collegeboundnews.com](http://www.collegeboundnews.com)

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