

College Bound

ISSUES & TRENDS FOR THE COLLEGE ADMISSIONS ADVISOR

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Admissions Watch

Apps Surge Amidst Some Planned Declines

California State Sets New Record. A record 790,000 students submitted applications to California State U. for fall 2015. That's an increase of 30,000 applicants seeking a spot at one of the 23 campuses in the CSU system, the largest in the nation. First-time freshman applications surged to 552,642, while transfer applications increased to 238,258.

Currently, 96 percent of CSU students come from California. Nearly 38 percent of the applicants are Hispanics/Latinos, 6 percent are African-American, nearly 18 percent are Asian American and 28 percent are Caucasian.

Colby Soars. Colby C. in Maine attracted the most applications in the school's 202-year history, a total of 7,591, or 47 percent more than last year. "Even more gratifying than the number of applications is the diversity and depth of this applicant pool," said Steve Saunders, interim vice president. "On nearly every measure—ethnic diversity, academic quality, geographic distribution and the number of first-generation applicants—this is a remarkable group of students."

Why the dramatic increase? Colby reports that it strategically invested resources to seek out and engage the most academically-prepared students in the country. It also hired additional staff to increase the number and efficiency of high school visits. They emphasized Colby's intellectual culture and rigor, and its individualized academic experience. News of an additional \$1.2 million in financial aid for the Class of 2019 also helped. Colby still meets 100 percent of calculated need for all the students, and offers grants, not loans, in all financial aid packages.

Drexel's Planned Decline. Drexel U. in Philadelphia saw a 50 percent drop in applications for this fall. But that left the school with 27,424 applications, and a much more manageable pool than in past years. In fact, it is something that admissions officers hoped would happen after the school instituted a \$50 application fee and "jettisoned its VIP fast application" which required neither essays nor recommendations and made applying as easy as a click of a mouse.

Since 2005-06 when the fast route was opened, applications exploded by 300 percent and enrollment grew by 43 percent to 26,359. But Drexel's yield plummeted to only 8 percent. To enroll a class of 2,925, it had to accept 80 percent of applicants.

Drexel, a university known for its co-op program that sends students into the workforce for a fifth year of study, decided that it wanted to attract applicants who were truly interested.

"It wasn't a good way of doing business," Randall C. Deike, senior vice president, told *The Philadelphia Inquirer*. "We were at some level doing a disservice to students.... We want to identify the right-fit student, because we believe they are best prepared to succeed and graduate, and that's our ultimate goal."

Harvard Still Rising. Applications to Harvard C. increased by 9 percent over last year. A record 37,305 students applied for a spot in the Class of 2019. William R. Fitzsimmons, dean of admissions and financial aid, told *The Boston Globe* that the increase was linked to two factors: publicity surrounding a \$150 million gift for financial aid from a hedge-

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Financial Aid Flash

Feds Forgive Billions in Student Loans.

"The government is on pace to forgive billions of dollars more in student loans than previously thought as droves of borrowers enroll in federal repayment programs," according to *The Wall Street Journal*.

The recent annual budget submitted by President Obama to Congress revealed that the amount forgiven had increased by \$22 billion. More students have enrolled in repayment plans, such as Pay as You Earn, that peg monthly student loan repayments to the income of borrowers and permit balances due to be forgiven in as little as 10 years.

The *Journal* added that "Federal direct loans covered by the government's three main income-based repayment plans swelled 71 percent to \$135 billion in the past fiscal year."

For-Profit Debt Relief. The U.S. government recently forced for-profit Everest U. to sell its campuses after allegations that it inflated job-placement numbers. As part of the settlement, former students at Everest will receive partial loan forgiveness of 40 percent on the balance of their private "Genesis" loans, but only on those loans. The total value of the loan forgiveness is estimated at \$480 million. Everest's parent company, Corinthian Colleges, sold its assets of 50 campuses to the ECMC Group.

Record Year for College Gifts. Last year was a good year for giving to U.S. colleges and universities which received \$37.5 billion,

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fund manager, and new electronic outreach, including a new website, video and social media. About 60 percent of Harvard students receive need-based aid. Families on average pay \$12,000 annually in tuition and fees.

NYU's All-Time High. New York U. has broken application records for eight years in a row, this cycle attracting 60,322 prospective students, a 15 percent increase over last year, and the largest increase since 1999. Some 7,749 apps were Early Decision, more than any other university in the U.S., according to *Washington Square News: NYU's Independent Daily Student Newspaper*.

Northwestern Nears 30,000. Even though applications to Northwestern U., outside Chicago, declined by 4.7 percent this year, the Big Ten's only private university attracted more than 29,297 hopeful students. Applications from African-American, Hispanic and international students increased, while they fell among Asian-Americans and white students.

Mike Mills, associate provost for university enrollment, told *The Daily Northwestern* that there was also a drop in applications from students with lower test scores. Last year, Northwestern's overall acceptance rate was 13 percent, but the rate for regular admissions was between 8 and 9 percent.

Meanwhile, NU's Office of Undergraduate Admissions has begun implementing an outreach program to Native American students for next year's pool.

Notre Dame's Total Up, EA Dips. The total number of applicants to the U. of Notre Dame rose for fall 2015. Early applicants fell, but the total quality increased, Don Bishop, associate vice president, told *The Observer*. Bishop attributed the ED decline to the fact that ND switched from Early Action to Restrictive Early Action.

"There's one restriction: you cannot apply early here if you're applying to a binding early decision program." He added, "We believe as many as 200 to 300 students that were admitted last year in Early Action were obligated to turn down their offer of admission at Notre Dame to honor an Early Decision commitment elsewhere."

Bishop estimates that 800-1,000 early applications dropped out and then were replaced with around 1,200 applications in the regular cycle. "So our net gain was favorable," he told the paper. "We noticed that the very top of the pool did not decline. Seven percent increase in that top half of one percent in the nation, which means usually around 1550 or higher on the SAT and 35 or 36 on the ACT, so the very top of the pool's gotten bigger and better."

Rutgers Up Over 12 Percent. Rutgers U. New Brunswick in New Jersey has already received 36,000 applications for the Class of 2019, up over 12 percent, and on pace to reach a total of 48,000. International applications soared by 40 percent.

"I've been involved in admissions for more than 30 years," said Courtney McAnuff, president of enrollment management, "and I've never seen an annual increase this high."

McAnuff attributed the increase to several factors, including demand for admittance to Rutgers' new honors college and the school's new visibility as part of the Big 10 Conference. He told *The Daily Targum* that Rutgers U. was recently rated as the 33rd best university in the world, and 8th among public universities in the U.S.

The average SAT score for students admitted to the honors college is 2210, 600 points above the national average. However, this program only has space for 500 students. "The new honors college at Rutgers is a venue for

the very top students not only in New Jersey, but in the nation," McAnuff added.

Tufts' Record ED. Tufts U. in Massachusetts admitted 530 students from its record number of first round of Early Decision applications, which grew by 6 percent over last year. Tufts received a total of 1,839 first and second round ED apps, director of admissions Lee Coffin told *The Tufts Daily*. Students chosen from these first two rounds will make up about 44 percent of the Class of 2019. About 25 percent of the accepted applicants are students of color. International students account for 55 spots.

Williams' ED Up 7 Percent. Williams C. in Massachusetts admitted 112 women and 132 men Early Decision, or about 44 percent of the Class of 2019. A total of 593 students applied ED, up 7 percent over last year. "We have tried to diversify our Early Decision pool," director of admissions Dick Nesbitt told *The Williams Record*. ■

Enrollment Trends

St. Lawrence's First-Year Profile. Last year, St. Lawrence U. in New York fielded 4,327 applications and accepted 2,062, or 48 percent. Of those, 610 or 30 percent, enrolled. Over 14 percent were U.S. students of color, 10 percent were international students and 38 percent came from New York State. About 97 percent of all new students received some financial aid.

IUPUI's Attraction. Indiana University-Purdue University Indianapolis (IUPUI) enrolled 3,927 freshmen last fall, an increase of 6.5 percent. The number of freshmen with SAT scores of 1300 or above increased by 18 percent. The average credit-hour load for freshman is 13.8, a 2.7 percent increase.

"Our dynamic environment, distinctive programs and commitment to student success are increasingly attracting talented new students to IUPUI," said Nasser Paydar, executive vice chancellor.

Hispanic Serving Institutions. A report from Excelencia in Education and the Hispanic Association of College and Universities provides an overview of the status of Hispanic Serving Institutions in higher education. Here are some highlights indicating changes from 1994 to 2014.

There are 409 Hispanic Serving Institutions (HSIs), up from 189 a decade ago. Latino undergraduate enrollment at HSIs has grown 230 percent to 1.6 million students. The number of states with HSIs has increased from 13 to 21. The largest increase of HSIs was among four-year institutions, 86 to 206. The number of HSIs offering graduate programs has tripled from 53 to 156; 38 percent of Latino graduate students were enrolled at an HSIs.

College Completion Rates Between Rich And Poor Students Widens. The percentage of students from the lowest-income families—those making \$34,160 a year or less—who complete college has grown by only 3 percent since 1970, from 6 percent to 9 percent in 2013.

However, college completion rates for students from the wealthiest families, those earning \$108,650 a year, rose dramatically during the same period from 44 percent to 77 percent, according to the Alliance for Higher Education and Democracy.

Admissions Responses. Velocify, a "cloud-based intelligent enrollment management software," and Enrollment Resources compared the response rates to student admission inquiries between for-profit and non-profit colleges. Here are some of their findings:

"Non-profits far outperformed their for-profit counterparts on speed-to-first-email, taking an average of three hours to respond versus 41 hours by for-profits.

"Many non-profit and for-profit schools overcalled their prospects," the report said. Some 30 percent of non-profit and 42 percent of for-profit schools were "excessively persistent, with more than 12 calls to a prospect over 22 days. Velocify research found that six is the optimal number of call attempts to maximize contact rates without overinvesting time and resources into unresponsive prospects.

"Despite the clear benefits of calling all prospective students back, 20 percent of non-profits school prospects and 10 percent of for-profit school prospects did not receive a single call from their inquiries."

For a complete copy of the study, see www.velocify.com/highered. ■

Roundup of New Curriculum Programs

American and Columbia U. Partner for Dual Degree in Engineering. American U. in Washington D.C. has entered into a partnership with Columbia U. in New York City that will enable its undergraduates to get an engineering degree from Columbia's Fu Foundation School of Engineering and Applied Science. First, they will complete their AU degree, and then earn a bachelor's from Columbia in a specific engineering major.

"The dual-degree program offers AU students a wonderful opportunity to combine a liberal arts education with professional training in the field of engineering," said Peter Starr, dean, American's College of Arts and Sciences.

Dixie State Adds Chemistry. Dixie State U. in St. George, Utah, will offer a new bachelor's degree in chemistry beginning this fall. "We have a strong local manufacturing sector that utilizes cutting-edge chemical processes," said Kelly Bringham, chair. "Working with these businesses will develop a strong local workforce, and prepare graduates to reach their goals.... Our Snow Science Center has truly been a catalyst for the rapid development of our new chemistry degree program."

LIU's Honors College. Long Island U. Post (NY) has established a new honors college to prepare "the next generation of scholars, entrepreneurs, artists and professional leaders," said Kimberly R. Cline, president. The college will feature small, seminar-style classes and mentorships. Honors students will have opportunities to co-author published papers and present original research at national academic conferences. Students will also have access to global business leaders and internships in New York City.

The program hopes to attract "students who challenge the status quo, seek deeper knowledge and travel the world." More than \$100 million in scholarships and grants are awarded each year to highly-motivated LIU Post students. Applications are being accepted for fall 2015.

Oregon State-Cascades' Hospitality. Oregon State U.-Cascades has launched a new hospitality management program "to fill the need for highly-skilled employees in one of Oregon's most important industries." The multi-disciplinary degree will prepare graduates for hospitality careers in hotel management, cruise operations, conference services, restaurant ownership and food and beverage services. It is the only degree of its kind in Oregon.

Central Piedmont and Broadcasting. Central Piedmont C. C. in North Carolina will offer a new degree in Broadcasting and Production Technology beginning in August. "An expert in the Charlotte media environment once told me, virtually all companies are now media companies," said Anasa Sinegal, director of CPCC's Digital Media,

Journalism and Communications Division. "An associate of applied science degree in broadcasting and production technology will provide CPCC graduates with a multi-platform media education." The U.S. Department of Labor forecasts a 9 percent increase in jobs in this field over the next few years.

Renton Technical C.'s First BAS Renton Technical C., near Seattle, one of 34 colleges in the State of Washington operated by the State Board for Community and Technical Colleges, is offering a Bachelor of Applied Science in Application Development. The degree is "designed for students who have earned an information technology related associate's degree and are looking to take the next step toward earning a bachelor's degree."

California's New Four-Year Degrees. The California Community Colleges Board of Governors has approved bachelor's degree programs at 15 of its colleges. The degrees and colleges: Airframe Manufacturing Technology, Antelope Valley C.; Industrial Automation, Bakersfield C.; Emergency Services and Allied Health Systems, Crafton Hills C.; Mortuary Science, Cypress C.; Equine Industry, Feather River C.; Dental Hygiene, Foothill C. and West Los Angeles C.; Bio-Manufacturing, MiraCosta C.; Respiratory Care, Modesta Junior C. and Skyline C.; Automotive Technology, Rio Hondo C.; Health Information Management, San Diego Mesa C.; Occupational Studies, Santa Ana C.; Interaction Design, Santa Monica C.; Health Information Management, Shasta C.

HBCU's Cybersecurity Education. Thirteen Historically Black Colleges and Universities will receive \$25 million in federal funds for cybersecurity education over the next five years. The money is aimed at producing more cybersecurity professionals demanded by the U.S. economy.

Korean Thrives, Other Language Study Dives. A new Modern Language Association survey found that despite advanced language study growth for several languages, overall language enrollments in U.S. colleges and universities declined. Total language enrollment in undergraduate and graduate programs declined by 6.7 percent between 2009 and 2013. But study of Korean, American Sign Language, Portuguese and Chinese increased.

Since 2009, the study of the following languages declined: Spanish, 8 percent; French, 8 percent; German, 9 percent; Italian, 11 percent; Japanese, nearly 8 percent; Arabic, 8 percent; Latin, 16 percent; Russian, 18 percent; Ancient Greek, 36 percent; Biblical Hebrew, 9 percent; Modern Hebrew, 19 percent. Language where study increased: ASL, 19 percent; Chinese, 2 percent; Portuguese, 10 percent; and Korean, 45 percent. ■

SCHOLARSHIP SCOOPS

Agricultural-Related Degrees. The CHS Foundation, representing the nation's leading farmer-owned cooperative and a global-energy, grains and food company, will award 300 scholarships, 100 to high school students who plan to pursue agricultural degrees or STEM degrees related to agriculture. *Deadline:* April 1. For more info, see: www.chsinc.com/stewardship.

Catholic Scholarships. Niagara U. is establishing a \$1 million scholarship fund for students from Catholic high schools across the U.S. The money is a gift from Vincentian fathers and brothers. It will be available to students in good academic standing, who participate in local community service and uphold Niagara's Catholic traditions.

Arkansas Aid Website. The Arkansas Department of Higher Education (ADHE) and the Information Network of Arkansas have launched a new website, "College for You" at <http://scholarships.adhe.edu>.

The site will make it easier for students and their parents, teachers and counselors to find information about college scholarships, grants and loans. It can be accessed from any mobile device. ■

Work Study Model Grows

To confront increased college costs for its students, Paul Quinn C., a religiously affiliated, historically black school in Dallas with an enrollment of 285, is embracing the Work College Model. Beginning this fall, students at Paul Quinn will be assigned on-campus jobs in offices and academic departments, or with local businesses. They will work during their entire enrollment, and in return, will pay less tuition, no more than \$2,300 a year. Nor will they have to pay for textbooks.

A few years ago, Paul Quinn C. made headlines when it transformed its football field into a working farm. "We think there is a place in higher education for an institution that commits itself to the needs of the population and the communities they serve," said Michael Sorrell, president. He added, "We try very hard not to load our students up with loans." See, www.pqc.edu.

"Work Colleges can afford to keep tuition low because the students do a lot of the work that keeps the campus running," said Robin Taffler, executive director of the Work Colleges Consortium. Currently, seven colleges across the nation make up the Work College Consortium. They offer an alternative to high tuition and student debt for the right type of student. See, www.workcolleges.org.

Alice Lloyd C. in Kentucky charges no-out-of-pocket tuition to students in its defined geographic area. About 95 percent of its graduates are accepted to graduate or go on to professional schools. And they graduate with the lowest debt in the nation. See, www.alc.edu.

Berea C. in Kentucky "awards four-year

tuition scholarships to all its students, who because of financial circumstances cannot otherwise afford a high-quality, residential, liberal arts education." See, www.berea.edu.

At Blackburn C., a liberal arts school in Illinois, students perform all sorts of jobs from laying bricks for new buildings to working in the library. *U.S. News and World Report* ranked Blackburn as the #2 Best Value College in the Midwest. See, www.blackburn.edu.

Students at C. of the Ozarks, a Christian college in Missouri, work in one of 80 diverse jobs often related to their career path. And they are graded on their job performances, as well as their academic work, giving future employers insight into who they are hiring. Tuition costs are covered through the student work, grants and scholarships. See, www.cofo.edu.

Ecclesia C. in Arkansas assigns students to various fields of work to "build character and build resumes." For the past three years, Ecclesia has had a spot on the President's Higher Education Community Service Honor Roll. Ecclesia students graduate with an average debt of \$5,938. See, www.ecollege.edu.

Sterling C. in Vermont is a small, progressive liberal arts college that offers BA's in Ecology, Environmental Humanities, Outdoor Education, Sustainable Agriculture, Sustainable Food Systems and student designed majors. See, www.sterlingcollege.edu.

Warren Wilson C. in North Carolina promotes international and environmental programs. It is also well known for its academics, social life and affordability. See, www.warren-wilson.edu. ■

AID FLASH

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a 10.8 percent increase over the previous year. Leading the way was Harvard U., with \$1.16 billion in donations. Stanford U. brought in \$927.5 million.

Giving to the top 10 schools increased by nearly 18 percent. Other top beneficiaries, according to the Council for Aid to Education, The U. of Southern California, Northwestern U., Johns Hopkins U., Cornell U. and the U. of Texas at Austin.

Hawaii Aid Goes Unused. Hawaii high school students failed to claim \$11.2 million in college grant money last year, according to a study by NerdScholar. That's because as many as 3,000 eligible Hawaii students did not fill out the Free Application for Federal Student Aid. The study added that nationally, nearly half of Pell Grant-eligible students failed to fill out the FAFSA. Find out more at www.NerdWallet.

Wash U. To Increase Economic Diversity. Washington U. in St. Louis is raising funds to double the number of students on campus who receive Pell grants. Currently, only 6 percent of Wash U. students are eligible for the federal grant, but the school plans to increase that to 13 percent by 2020. The new program will cost the school \$25 million a year on top of its current \$100 million financial aid budget.

Web-Based Toolkit. Find the "Dollars for College Financial Planning Toolkit," sponsored by America's Promise Alliance and uAspire, with support from Citi Foundation, at <http://gradnation.org/resources/dollars-college-student-financial-planning-toolkit>. ■

NEWS YOU CAN USE

Georgia Consolidation. Georgia State U. and Georgia Perimeter C. will consolidate to form a new Georgia State U., the second largest university in the University System of Georgia. GSU celebrated its hundredth anniversary in 2013. It is located in downtown Atlanta and will have a combined enrollment of over 54,000 students.

Millennials' Weak Skills. "Despite having the highest levels of educational attainment of any previous generation, America's millennials, on average, demonstrate weak skills in literacy, numeracy and problem solving in technology-rich environments compared to their international peers," says a new study from Educational Testing Services (ETS).

And this raises the question of "whether we can thrive as a nation when a large segment of society lacks the skills required for higher-level employment and meaningful engagement

in democracy."

Find the report, "America's Skills Challenge: Millennials and the Future" at www.ets.org/millennials.

Seventh-Grade Readers. A study of 341 colleges by Renaissance Learning, an education software company based in Wisconsin, found that the average book assigned to college students for summer reading has a seventh-grade reading level.

"We are spending billions of dollars trying to send students to college and maintain them there when, on average, they read at about the grade 6 or 7th level..." said Sandra Stotsky, professor emerita at the U. of Arkansas. She charged that colleges "seem to be suggesting that a middle school level of reading is satisfactory, even though most college textbooks and adult literary works written before 1970, require mature reading skills."

Chicago Improves. In 2006, researchers of the To & Through Project found that just eight of 100 Chicago Public School freshmen earned a four-year college degree by the time they turned 25. However, its latest research indicates that the Chicago Public Schools has seen dramatic, system-wide improvement in high school completion, moving from 58 percent in 2006 to 73 percent in 2014, a 15 increase. Chicago also has seen a modest improvement in four-year college enrollment, from 33 percent in 2006 to 40 percent in 2014. Now, 14 out of 100 CPS freshmen earn a four-year college degree by age 25.

Meanwhile, the graduation rate at the City Colleges of Chicago has increased from 7 percent in 2010 to 13 percent last year. And the annual number of degrees conferred reached 4,000, up from 2,000. ■

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