

College Bound

ISSUES & TRENDS FOR THE COLLEGE ADMISSIONS ADVISOR

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Inside Admissions Offices

The Talk About the Class of 2022

NOT EVERY STUDENT admitted to a college this spring found out via e-mail or other traditional means. Some got a real surprise. For example, *The Wall Street Journal* reported that several students were notified by men with a video camera and a bulldog, the Butler U. mascot.

Some of the students admitted to the U. of Maryland received the good news when a massive bus decorated with the school name pulled up in front of their homes and a marching band, cheerleaders and 6-foot tall mascot unloaded. Other schools sent their admissions officers or students with balloons and gift bags filled with the hopeful school's T-shirts and coffee mugs. The students' reactions were often posted on social media and they received quick feedback from their friends.

American Admits 29 Percent. American U. in Washington DC received 18,950 applications for the Class of 2022, up slightly from last year. AU admitted 29 percent, its second lowest admit rate. The new class is 59 percent white, 60 percent female. Black students make up 7 percent of the admit pool. Hispanic students account for about 14 percent, while Asian students account for 8 percent. And 42 percent come from the Mid-Atlantic region, although the school acknowledged an increase in applications from the South and West. Andrea Felder, assistant vice provost for undergraduate admissions, said she expects about a 4 percent summer melt of students who commit to AU.

Amherst Admits 12.8 Percent. Amherst C. in Massachusetts received a record 9,722 applications for the Class of 2022 and admitted 1,244 students for an acceptance rate of 12.8

percent. Around 37 percent of the total number of students admitted came through Early Decision. Katie Fretwell, dean of admissions, told *The Amherst Student* that she expects a yield rate of 37-39 percent, which would bring the new class to about 460 to 485 students.

"In addition to a number of targeted recruitment efforts to diverse populations," Fretwell told the paper, "we have made a number of modifications to the application process including reduced standardized testing requirements, expansion of application fee qualifiers and waiver of the additional fee for submission of supplemental arts material."

As a result, 56 percent of those admitted are domestic students of color. Amherst also admitted students from 58 countries and 49 states. Women make up 53 percent of admits. The average ACT composite is 33, while the average SAT score was 1492, 20 points higher than last year.

Bowdoin Admits 10.3 Percent. Bowdoin C. in Maine fielded 9,081 applications for the Class of 2022, 25 percent more than last year. It admitted only 10.3 percent, its lowest admit rate ever and 3 percent lower than last year. Whitney Soule, dean of admissions and financial aid, said the admission team works hard to recruit students, but a 25 percent increase was "unexpected." Bowdoin admitted students from all 50 states and 40 nations.

Bowdoin's elimination of the application fee for students who apply for financial aid is one reason, Soule cited. Bowdoin saw an increase of applications from low-income and first-generation college students. About half of those expected to matriculate were admitted through Early Decision I & II. And

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Financial Matters

\$50,000 Borrowers Grow. The number of borrowers who left school with more than \$50,000 in federal student debt has grown from 2 percent in 1992 to 17 percent in 2014, according to a report from Brookings. However, its research shows that these borrowers have low rates of default compared with borrowers who have relatively small debt.

And many of the large-balance borrowers are graduate students at selective institutions who are seen as low-risk, according to "Borrowers with Large Balances: Rising Student Debt and Falling Repayment Rates" by Adam Looney and Constantine Yannelis. They also found that more students who take out large loans are attending institutions with poorer loan repayment outcomes and worse labor market outcomes.

Arizona "Dreamers" Ineligible for In-State Rate. Last month, the Arizona Supreme Court ruled that state colleges cannot give in-state tuition to young immigrants covered under the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals program. Currently, 2,000 DACA recipients who attend community college or state universities in Arizona pay in-state rates.

(Meanwhile, Gov. Dannel Malloy has just signed a bill to provide financial aid to undocumented students going to state schools in Connecticut.)

Earlham Retains Students With Small Grants. Earlham, a small Indiana liberal arts college of 1,000 students started by the Quakers in 1847, has been awarding small

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CLASS OF 2022

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12 students came in through the Questbridge Match program. Bowdoin also received more candidates through the Common Application and the Coalition Application.

Claremont Colleges. The five Claremont Colleges in California fared well this admissions season.

- **Scripps C.** admitted 90 of 281 Early Decision applicants and 671 of 2,917 Regular Decision applicants, for an acceptance rate of 24.1 percent. Scripps' target size for the Class of 2022 is around 250 students.

- **Pomona C.** attracted a record 10,245 applications this year, and admitted a record-low 7 percent of them. Pomona's target class size is 410-415 students from its regular pool and 20-25 students from its transfer pool.

- **Claremont McKenna C.** received fewer applications this year, but nonetheless saw its admit rate drop from 10.4 percent to 8.9 percent.

- **Pitzer C.** attracted 4,358 applications, 16 percent more than last year. It admitted 13.2 percent or 577 students, hoping for a class size of 266-271.

- And, **Harvey Mudd C.** fielded 4,101 applications, slightly more than last year. It admitted 14.5 percent of them, aiming for a class size of 225 students. Almost 40 percent of its class was admitted ED.

Connecticut C. Reshapes Liberal Arts. More than 6,400 students from around the world applied to Connecticut C., up from 5,400 last year. Connecticut C. officials attribute part of the increase to the new Connections curriculum, the college's reinvention of the liberal arts.

"Connections has raised the profile of Connecticut College among students who understand the need to be adaptive in today's world," said Andrew Strickler, dean of admission and financial aid. "Specifically, they are drawn to our Integrated Pathways, which allows students to explore issues they are passionate about by intentionally combining their academic major with interdisciplinary study, and a relevant world language, all organized around a central theme."

Another factor that has proven to be important to prospective students is team advising. Each student is supported all four years by a team that includes a faculty advisor, staff advisor, student advisor and career advisor.

Davidson Admits 18 Percent. Davidson C. in North Carolina fielded more than 5,700 applications. It admitted 18.7 percent. International admitted students hail from 30 nations. Students of color make up 30 percent of the admitted pool. These students "impressively articulate who they are and what they

want to become, and why Davidson is the right place for them.... Now we will watch the group grow, strengthen our community and make an impact on this campus and beyond over the next four years." said Chris Gruber, vice president and dean of admission and financial aid.

Denison Hits Record. Denison C. in Ohio received over 8,000 applications, a new record, and accepted 2,700 students for an admit rate of 34 percent. Over the past four years, applications to Denison have jumped by 64 percent. Over two-thirds of the admits ranked in the top 10 percent of their high school class. Of accepted students, 36 percent are "multicultural," 20 percent are first-generation college students and 20 percent qualify for Pell Grants.

Denison attributes the spike in applications to its strategic plan, which puts a new emphasis on academic innovation on campus, support of career exploration and meaningful mentorships of students by faculty, staff members and coaches. Denison says that five years after graduation, 95 percent of alumni are employed in their desired field.

Georgetown Admits 14.5 Percent. Georgetown U. received 22,897 applications for the Class of 2022, and admitted 3,327 of them, for a record low admit rate of 14.5 percent. "It's the most competitive group ever admitted," Charles Deacon, dean of undergraduate admissions, told *The Hoya*.

Deacon also told the paper that he believes a surge in youth political engagement since the 2016 presidential election has attracted more students to the university's location in Washington, DC. Students want to be "in the

presence of things that matter."

All four of Georgetown's undergraduate schools saw an increase in applications.

Hamilton Admits 21 Percent. Hamilton C. in Upstate New York received a record-high 6,240 applications. Hamilton admitted 1,300 students or 21 percent, the fewest in its history. About 19 percent of the new students were admitted ED1 or ED2. Monica Inzer, dean of admissions, said that admitted students came from 46 states and 25 countries, with Canada, China and Vietnam sending the most.

Haverford Admits 18 Percent. Haverford C. in Pennsylvania received 4,682 applications and admitted 877 students, for an admit rate of 18.7 percent. "Now more than ever, we feel inspired by their intellectualism, energy, compassion and commitment to social engagement, and we look forward to seeing how the members of the Class of 2022 embrace their Haverford experience and make our community even stronger," said Jess Lord, dean of admission and financial aid.

Over 50 percent of those admitted to Haverford are students of color. And 16 percent are international students from 41 nations. China, India and the UK led the admitted international pool. About 96 percent of the admitted students are in the top 10 percent of their high school class. Their median SAT is 730 for critical reading, 760 for math. Their median ACT score is 34.

Lehigh Admits 22 Percent. Lehigh U. in Pennsylvania received 15,623 applications, *continued on page 4*

Among the Publics

Florida Tops 40,000. The U. of Florida attracted 40,849 applications to the Class of 2022, and accepted nearly 15,000 students, or 36 percent, hoping for a first-year enrollment of 6,400. The Middle 50 percent GPA was 4.2-4.6. The Middle 50 percent SAT score is 1300-1440. Women continue to make up about 60 percent of students, while more out-of-state students were accepted than in past years. International students number 1,060, up 426 in 2017. Some 2,799 of those admitted are first-generation college students, up 249 students in 2017.

Students from low-income families rose 305 students in 2017 to 2,091. Students in the top 5 percent of their class reached 4,543, down 60 students from 2017. Some 3,011 legacy students were admitted. And 4,129 of those admitted are underrepresented minority students, up 515 students from 2017.

Georgia's Quality Increases. The U. of Georgia attracted 26,500 total applications and admitted 12,600 potential enrollees. Admitted

students posted mid-range SAT scores of 1320-1490 and mid-range ACT scores of 29-33. The average GPA is 4.08, up from last year's 4.0. Georgia awarded 4,000 academic scholarships.

William & Mary Admits 36 Percent. The C. of William & Mary in Virginia received about 14,640 applications this year and admitted more than 5,000, for an admit rate of 36 percent. The Class of 2022 is expected to include about 1,530 students. Students of color make up 35 percent of admitted students. International students account for 7 percent of admitted students. About 30 students are expected to participate in the St. Andrews/William & Mary Joint Degree Programme.

The median SAT score of admitted students is 1460, while the median ACT score is 33. Some 87 percent of students rank in the top 10 percent of their high school class. Acceptance letters included a green and gold metallic banner with the university's logo and Class of 2022 printed on it. ■

Preparing for the College Transition...Now

Editor's Note: Katherine Firestone had a hard time in school. She suffered from undiagnosed ADHD until her junior year of high school. But she believes that what made her successful during this time was the support system around her. After college, she worked as a teacher, and saw that other parents wanted to help their students at home, but didn't know what to do. So she started the *Fireborn Institute* in East Providence, Rhode Island, to give parents ideas on how to help their children, recognizing that success at school is enhanced at home. She is also the host of "The Happy Student," a podcast for parents on promoting happy academic and social lives. Here, she writes about preparing students for the college transition.



Katherine Firestone

STUDENTS AND FAMILIES feel a lot of excitement leading up to the first year of college. They also feel anxiety and fear about what college life will be like. For most students, college will offer the most independence they have ever had, which is a great milestone. But that freedom can be dangerous if they aren't ready for it. To help students maintain that positive excitement, while also helping them manage some of their fears, families could be encouraged to try some of these tips:

1. Give students more independence this summer. Perhaps that means a later curfew, checking in on them a little less throughout the day, and letting them choose what to do with their summer. It can be hard for parents to give up some of that control that is inherent with each of those things, but it's a really great opportunity for students to practice being more independent while still having a parent there to look after them in case they mess up.

Yes, a student may get into more trouble with a later curfew. To begin with, they may engage in underage drinking. Even though we don't want to condone underage drinking, if a child is going to do it, isn't it better if they do it when parents can go pick them up or take care of them when they get home? That is much safer than if it happens for the first time when they are at college and are with other teens who do not know what to do.

Giving students more independence now allows them to practice being more responsible so that they can continue to be that responsible, independent person in college. And if something goes wrong, families are still there to support them and keep them safe. Plus, parents can talk with them about why breaking the drinking laws was dangerous before they go off to school.

2. Start talking about what students might want to do after college. That helps them think about what major they might want to pursue. It's not something that has to be decided before starting college. Many students change their majors several times. It's certainly not supposed to feel like a serious, time-sensitive conversation. It's simply a good idea to get students to start thinking about the future. That way, they can begin thinking about internships and test out different paths. They can still change their mind while at school, of course, before they've graduated. But it is good to think about hopes and possible plans, even if they don't know what they want to do.

3. Go shopping! It seems like a mundane tip, but parents may need to encourage college-bound students to buy a new outfit and supplies so that they feel confident making those first impressions at school. When they feel like they look good, it helps them feel more comfortable and get ready to meet new people.

4. Talk to the college bound student about what they are looking forward to as well as what they are scared about. If they seem unwilling to talk about these things, parents can share an experience they had either at college or in a new environment. For instance, I was a day late moving in to my dorm, which really scared me because I didn't know if people would still be moving

in or not. I worried about how embarrassing and difficult that would be to move into a dorm at a different time from others. It turned out to be fine. But to be sure students don't worry about that problem, encourage them to review all of the move-in plans well ahead of time so that there aren't any surprises on day one. And talk through other fears.

Parents should talk about the fun things, too, such as the independence they felt when they first left home. I remember being excited during freshman year when I realized I could just go to town with my friends and get frozen yogurt on a school night. Talk about the excitement of exploring new subjects, taking courses on topics they enjoy, and taking advantage of the artistic, cultural and athletic opportunities that college offers.

Sharing these and other experiences helps students feel more comfortable sharing their worries with parents. And then brainstorming what to do ahead of time can ease those fears. Also, focus on the positives to help mitigate that pre-college anxiety.

5. Review the college's resources in case a student needs help with tutoring, health issues, dietary restrictions, learning differences or just wants to be ready to rush a fraternity or sorority or join a club at the beginning of the year. Talking to an advisor ahead of time and figuring out where to go to get help if or when the situation arises is a good idea, so students can concentrate on classes and making friends. When they arrive at college they should be less fearful and more able to focus on meeting new people. And encourage students to get involved.

Spending the summer reducing any pre-college jitters and giving students more independence will help them be ready to be happy, more responsible freshman. They will be prepared to hit the books, take advantage of college resources and make lifelong friends.

For more information about the Fireborn Institute, see, <http://www.fireborninstitute.org>. ■

BOOKSHELF

The Path to Purpose: How Young People Find Their Calling in Life by William Damon, Free Press; ISBN-10: 1416537244; \$11.67. Damon argues that developing a sense of purpose is one of the most important but overlooked aspects of adolescent development. ■

ENROLLMENT TRENDS

Early Admissions Investigation. According to various sources, the U.S. Department of Justice is investigating whether competing colleges that communicate with each other about Early Decision applicants violate antitrust laws. Justice wants to know whether this kind of exchange of information affects students' admissions chances.

Historically Black Colleges & Universities. A new study, "Degree Attainment for Black Students at HBCUs and PWIs: A Propensity Score Matching Approach," concluded that black students who attend Historically Black Colleges & Universities are between 6-16 percent more likely to graduate within six years than those who attend predominately white institutions (PWI).

That contrasts with previous studies, such as a recent report from the Education Trust

that found the six-year degree-completion rate for black students at HBCU is 32 percent in contrast with 45 percent at all other kinds of institutions.

But researchers Ray Franke, from the U. of Massachusetts at Boston, and Linda T. DeAngelo, from the U. of Pittsburgh, contend that their study takes into account systematic differences between students, such as economic status, academic preparation and institutional disparities in revenue and wealth, and factored in age, gender, average income, location and high school success to get a different picture.

"If we want to increase overall degree-completion numbers, then we ought to allocate resources to those institutions that educate students that have difficulty persisting and graduating," Franke told *The Chronicle for Higher Education*. "We've seen cuts to HBCUs over the years, so we need better policy." ■

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12.6 percent more than last year. Lehigh admitted 3,418 students from ED I, ED II and Regular Decision, or 22 percent. One reason for the increase in applications was greater outreach to California and overseas. "We're trying to diversify the campus and globalize the campus," Bruce Bunnick, interim vice provost of admission and financial aid, told the *Brown and White*. Lehigh plans to expand its undergraduate population by 1,000 students over the next 10 years.

Notre Dame Attracts More Than 20,000 Apps. A record-breaking 20,370 students applied to become members of the U. of Notre Dame's Class of 2022. And 3,586 were admitted. "About one third of the students considered to be at the very top of the class or with a national test score of 33 to 36 ACT or 1500 to 1600 SAT gained admission to Notre Dame this year," Don Bishop, associate vice president of undergraduate enrollment, told *The Observer*. "We're up 4 percent in applications, but we're up 18 percent in what we would call 'highest-ability applicants.'"

Students were also evaluated on how well they will fit into Notre Dame's mission of being a "force for good." Bishop told the paper, "Kind of the science and art of admissions is to blend the productivity of the student with looking at their motivation and personal attributes to project: is this a student that will use the resources of Notre Dame best or is there another student that convinces us they will have a better appreciation for the priorities that we have at Notre Dame?"

NYU Admits 19 Percent. New York U. received a record-smashing 75,937 applications for the Class of 2022, and admitted 15,722 for a record low admit rate of 19 percent, down from 27 percent last year. NYU's new pool of admitted students is the most diverse in university history with 33 percent more accepted African American students and 14 percent more "Latinx" students, according to *Washington Square News*.

"NYU's ongoing efforts to attract the best and brightest students in the world are continuing to pay off," Shonna Keogan, director of executive communications, told the paper.

Rice Evaluates By Committee. Rice U. in Texas drew nearly 20,900 applications for this fall or about 16 percent more than last year. "It's thrilling to see a strong interest in Rice University," said Yvonne Romero da Silva, vice president for enrollment.

"But more applications means more work for our team. We were grateful to have adopted a new evaluation process, committee-based evaluation (CBE), which makes the evaluation of applications a conversation and analysis of qualifications between two admissions officers. That it also proves to be more efficient is a plus or else we'd still be reading applications right now!"

Rice uses two-person teams of 20 admissions staff members who can evaluate six to 10 applications in an hour. Romero da Silva noted that CBE also reduces professional burnout among admissions officers. In 2014, the National Association for College Admission Counseling (NACAC) found that 55 percent of admission officer respondents planned to seek a new career within two or three years. ■

FINANCIAL MATTERS

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grants to students who are in danger of withdrawing because of financial issues. About 90 percent of Earlham students receive some form of financial aid and 71 percent complete their degree in four years. But more than 60 students have received grants of \$2,200 to help them stay in school.

"We're convinced that if they are achieving academically, if they are contributing to the community, these are students we want to see complete their degrees," said Bonita Washington-Lacey, senior associate vice president of academic affairs. "And if we can remove some of the financial stressors toward doing that, they are able to focus more on their academic lives and not worry about paying that debt of difference in what they owe the college." Alumni donors have funded the financial assistance grants for the next three years.

First Year Cal C. C. Tuition-Free. Last October, California Governor Jerry Brown signed Assembly Bill 19 that waives tuition for first-year community college students. But as Pedro Noguera, a UCLA education professor told the *Daily Bruin*, "One of the ironies that people don't realize is that community college used to be free (in California). So this is a return to what we once had."

Wesleyan Adds Financial Aid. This year, a record 12,788 students applied to Wesleyan U. And 2,233 were admitted, or about 17.5 percent. Nancy Meislahn, dean of admission and financial aid, told *The Wesleyan Argus* that she hopes to recruit 780 new students to the Class of 2022. Admitted students come from 70 nations. Some 45 percent of those admitted are students of color, while 13 percent are the first in their family to attend college.

The median ACT for the Class of 2022 is 34, one point higher than last year. The median SAT for English/writing is 740, for math it is 770, putting the average new student in the 99th percentile of all students who took standardized tests this year. Some 82 percent of admitted students took four years of a foreign language, while 83 percent took biology/chemistry and 87 percent took physics/math through calculus.

"The most important thing we're doing is adding to financial aid, so as to ensure that students who do decide to come to Wesleyan are able to make the most out of their experience while they're here," Michael Roth, president, told the paper. ■

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