

College Bound

ISSUES & TRENDS FOR THE COLLEGE ADMISSIONS ADVISOR

Vol. 39, No. 8

April 2025

Admissions Watch

Wishes and Dreams

Amherst Admits 7 Percent. Amherst C. in Western Massachusetts received 15,818 applications for its Class of 2029 and admitted about 7 percent of them. Amherst also admitted 35 students through the QuestBridge National College Match. Ninety-six students were admitted through the Small Town and Rural Students College Network. About 53 percent of admitted students are eligible for financial aid.

"We're always looking for ways to expand the areas where students are aware of and considering Amherst," said Will Cummins, director of admissions recruitment.

BC Accepts 12 Percent. Boston C. attracted 39,681 applicants for its Class of 2029, and extended an offer of admission to approximately 5,000 students or about 12.6 percent. They hail from all 50 states and 77 countries. About 12 percent will be the first in their family to attend college. About 9 percent are international citizens. About 52 percent are female. Approximately 95 percent of admitted students rank in the top 10 percent of their graduating class, with average SAT scores of 1503 and average ACT scores of 34. BC is test optional, but 74 percent of applicants submitted standardized test scores.

BC hopes to matriculate about 2,400 students in the fall, according to Grant Gosselin, dean of undergraduate admission and financial aid. "The forecasts made by the enrollment analytics team gives us confidence in the number of offers we have extended," he said.

UC Riverside Apps Surge by 23 Percent. Applicants to the U. of California Riverside surged to a record 70,578. That's 23.2 percent more than last year. Of those, 12,326 were transfer applications, primarily from California

community college students. Some 5,110 of those applications indicated interest in the new major of business analytics. The School of Education's major in "Education, Society, and Human Development" grew by 43 percent. UCR tied with UC Merced for the highest percentage of in-state applications among UC's nine campuses, both at 87 percent.

"The UCR model of combining academic excellence with broad student support is extremely attractive to those seeking education with long-standing impact," said Chancellor Kim A. Wilcox.

Duke Admits 4 Percent. Duke U. in Durham, North Carolina, received a record 58,698 applications for its Class of 2029, 4,500 more than last year. Duke admitted 2,818 students, including 113 QuestBridge scholars selected from the 2,998 students who expressed an interest in matching with the elite school. Overall, Duke's admit rate fell to 4.8 percent.

Fairfield Total Apps Up. Fairfield U. in Connecticut attracted 21,290 applicants from 49 states and 92 countries for its Class of 2029. That is a 15 percent increase from last year. With the target first-year class size of 1,450 students, Fairfield admitted 25 percent of its applicants. The average weighted GPA of admitted students was 3.9, the middle 50 percent SAT ranged from 1310 to 1420.

Florida State Admitted 25 Percent Early. FSU received around 32,700 Early Action applications for its Class of 2029, a 49 percent increase. It admitted 25 percent of them. The middle 50 percent of accepted applicants posted GPAs ranging from 4.3 to 4.6. The

continued on page 2

Ivy Dreams

Brown Admits 5.65 Percent. Brown U. in Rhode Island fielded 42,765 applications for its Class of 2029, fewer than last year when the number hovered around 50,000. Some 5,055 were Early Decision applicants. Brown admitted 2,418 students, for an acceptance rate of 5.65 percent, according to *The Brown Daily Herald*. About 73 percent of all admitted students are expected to apply for financial aid, up from last year's 65 percent.

Last year, the Class of 2028 enrolled 40 percent fewer Black domestic students and 29 percent fewer Hispanic students compared to previous classes before the Supreme Court's affirmative action ruling. Statistics for this year's class will be released later this year. The number of rural students who applied increased by 10 percent this year.

Cornell Changemakers. Cornell U. in upstate New York admitted 5,824 students to its new class. "This class of admitted students brings to life Cornell's commitment to changing lives through public engagement," said Lisa Nishii, vice provost for undergraduate education and enrollment. The new students represent 115 different countries.

Dartmouth's Holistic Approach. Dartmouth C. in New Hampshire received 28,230 applications for its Class of 2029 and admitted 1,702 students. Ultimately, it hopes to enroll 1,185 first-year students. "Dartmouth has had a durable increase in application volume since 2020," said Lee Coffin, vice president and dean of admissions and financial aid. It's grown 32 percent over the past five years. Nearly 92

continued on page 2

INSIDE

- Financial Matters
- Common App Apps
- News You Can Use

COLLEGE BOUND: Publisher/Editor: **R. Craig Sautter**, DePaul University; Chief Operating Officer: **Sally Reed**. Production: Design|Americom WVA.

COLLEGE BOUND is published monthly, ten times a year. Inquiries should be directed to P.O. Box 6536, Evanston, IL 60204; **773-262-5810**.

Facebook @collegeboundnews; <http://www.collegeboundnews.com>; collegeboundnews@gmail.com

Twitter/X @cbnewsletter

WISHES AND DREAMS

continued from page 1

average SAT score ranged from 1352 to 1450. The ACT scores ranged from 30 to 33, about the same as last year.

The admissions office said that it admits students based on strength, skills and character (vires, artes and mores, for you Latin scholars.)

Georgia Recruits a Class of “A” Students.

The U. of Georgia received 47,816 applications for its Class of 2029 and admitted more than 15,800, 12 percent more than last year, according to *The Red & Black*. About 24 percent of admits are from Georgia. The middle 50 percent of GPA of admitted students ranged from 4.08 to 4.35, for an average of 4.22. SAT scores range from 1314 to 1470, while ACT scores ranged from 30 to 34.

In high school, about 23,110 worked in leadership roles, 10,140 played on athletic teams, 9,380 had jobs in addition to school and 6,180 participated in the creative arts. The top five intended majors of the new Georgia Bulldogs are biology, finance, business, psychology and mechanical engineering.

Georgetown Admitted 11 Percent Early.

Georgetown U. in Washington D.C. received 8,254 Early Action applications for its Class of 2029, and admitted 917 students, up from 881 last year, for an admit rate of 11 percent, according to *The Hoya*.

Grinnell’s ED Apps Were Up 5 Percent.

Grinnell C. in Iowa received 479 Early Decision I and 386 ED II applications for its Class of 2029, 5 percent more than last year. About 48 percent of the ED applicants were admitted. Interest in Grinnell’s Early Decision cycle may have increased because of the new Grinnell Choice Scholarship of \$20,000 a year awarded to ED admits.

However, the total number of applications this year was down by about 4 percent, according to Sarah Fischer, assistant vice president of admission. She added “There’s no advantage to applying one way over the other.” As far as racial composition, Fischer explained, “I and the rest of the admissions staff don’t see the composition of the applicant pool until we’ve released decisions.” That’s in accordance with the Supreme Court’s affirmative action decision two years ago.

Johns Hopkins Selects 150th Class. Johns Hopkins U. in Baltimore admitted 1,732 students from 39 countries and 42 states through its Regular Decision cycle to join 793 previously admitted through Early Decision. They are all part of Hopkins’ 150th entering class,

Ellen Chow, dean of undergraduate admissions, said that among those admitted students is the inventor of an affordable biosensor for

cancer detection, the developer of an app using AI to translate between American Sign Language and English in real time, the host of a podcast on youth voting and Gen Z activism, the author of a children’s book on the importance of bees for the environment, the founder of a zero-waste club that redistributed more than \$400,000 worth of food from local restaurants to shelters and a writer whose creative flash-fiction, poetry and essays have earned national awards, among other achievements.

Marquette Apps Up 30 Percent in Two Years.

Marquette U. in Milwaukee received more than 20,000 applications for its Class of 2029, an increase of more than 30 percent over two years. Marquette applicants came from all 50 states and 79 countries. Applications are still being accepted and will be reviewed on a rolling basis.

“The growth in our applicant pool along with continued increases in both quality and diversity, is a testament to the tireless efforts of our admissions team and our campus partners,” said Andy Schneider, dean of admissions.

Northeastern Tops 100,000 Apps.

Northeastern U. in Boston received more than 100,000 applications for Fall 2025. Since 2015, the number of Early Decision applicants has grown by 660 percent.

Northwestern Admits 7 Percent.

Northwestern U. on the shores of Lake Michigan just north of Chicago received more than 53,000 applications this year, up from about 50,000 last year. It admitted 7 percent of those students to its Class of 2029, down from 7.6 percent last year. About 55 percent of the incoming class was admitted last December during Early Decision, when about 20 percent of applicants were accepted. NU received applications from 12,000 high schools, Liz Kinsley, dean of undergraduate admissions, told *The Daily Northwestern*. NU will remain test optional.

Notre Dame Early Apps Up 16 Percent.

The U. of Notre Dame in South Bend, Indiana, received a record 12,917 Restrictive Early Action applications for its Class of 2029, 16 percent more than last year. Of those applicants, 1,669 were admitted. ND is “need-blind” to both domestic and international students, and has eliminated loans from its aid packages.

Overall, ND received 35,401 Early and Regular Decision applications, and admitted 9 percent of them. “We continue to be inspired by the incredible students who apply to Notre Dame,” said Micki Kidder, vice president for undergraduate enrollment. “This year’s admitted students exemplified the faith, intellectual curiosity, compassion and dedication to the greater good that defines a Notre Dame education.”

IVY DREAMS

continued from page 1

percent of admitted students have standardized test scores that rank among the top 25 percent of test takers at their high schools.

“We evaluate all testing in the context of the school environment in which a student is enrolled and the community in which they live, and this new data point captures that important truth in a way that the previous focus—on the testing mean—cannot illuminate,” Coffin said. “Dartmouth is committed to broad socioeconomic representation.” About 27 percent of admitted students will qualify for free tuition and about 22 percent will qualify for a Pell Grant.

Princeton Admits Five Percent? The headline of *The Daily Princetonian* read, “Excited about experiencing the ‘American Dream.’” Princeton releases regular decision for the Class of 2029.” As with many other Ivy League schools, Princeton will not release data until later this year.

But the papers said, “Princeton has historically maintained an acceptance rate of about five percent, admitting 4.5 percent of applicants to the Class of 2027 and 5.7 percent the year before. Princeton has opted to extend its test-optional policy to the next admission cycle.

Yale’s First Expanded Class. Yale C. in Connecticut received 50,228 applications for its Class of 2029, which has been enlarged by 100 students. It admitted 2,380 students. They will be joined by 38 students who deferred their admission last year, 728 admitted EA in December and 66 QuestBridge Scholars. International students come from 65 countries. Currently, 55 percent of Yale students receive need-based Yale scholarships, with the average award of \$68,000. ■

Pomona’s Largest Pool Ever. Pomona C. in California, part of the Claremont Colleges, admitted 861 students from the largest applicant pool in school history. First-generation college students make up 27 percent of the admitted Class of 2029, another new record for the school, while 58 percent are from public schools. International students comprise 16 percent of the new class and come from 45 countries, including China, India, United Kingdom, Canada and Japan.

About 22 percent plan to major in the Humanities, 23 percent in Interdisciplinary fields, 26 percent in the Natural Sciences, 23 percent in the Social Sciences and 6 percent are undecided.

“It is a privilege to be able to offer admission to such an exceptionally talented group of students,” said Jonathan B. Williams, vice president.

continued on page 4

The Downs and Ups

Some Changes in FAFSA Eligibility Resulted in State Aid Cutbacks. Changes last year to the Free Application for Federal Student Aid, which expanded the number of eligible students, resulted in the Indiana Commission for Higher Education reducing the amount of aid in its Frank O'Bannon Grants.

The cuts range from 14 percent to 86 percent, depending on where a student goes to college and the specific financial aid needs, according to insideindianabusiness.com. Instead of increasing allocations proportionate to the FAFSA expansion, the Commission had to stretch grants in different directions to help more students. It means thousands of grants at public and private Indiana schools are being decreased.

In 2024, Indiana appropriated \$171 million for 32,000 students, with the average amount of \$4,700 for students at public universities, and about \$8,200 for students attending a private one. The largest share went to students at Ivy Tech, the state's community college, where nearly 6,800 students received an average of \$2,800.

College Inflation Rate at 8 Percent. According to Fidelity Investments, the average cost of tuition and fees and room and board for the 2024-25 academic year at public four-year colleges is \$24,920 for in-state students, \$44,090 for out-of-state students. The average cost of tuition and fees and room and board at private nonprofit four-year colleges is \$58,600.

The average annual rate of college tuition inflation is 8 percent.

Return on Investment. Georgetown's Center for Education and the Workforce used data from the College Scorecard to compute the ROI of graduates. To view the "Return on Investment" (ROI) at 4,600 colleges and universities, go to: <http://cew.georgetown.edu/cew-reports/roi2025/>.

LOCAL FUNDING NEWS

Bucknell Sends Low-Income Students Abroad. Bucknell U. in Pennsylvania launched a new program to encourage low-income and first-generation college students to study abroad, helping them with finances and mentoring to see how the experience can profit them personally and professionally.

Cleveland State Cuts Three Athletic Programs. To help balance its budget, Cleveland State U., a Division I school, announced that it is cutting and will no longer recruit students in wrestling, women's golf and softball. Its 15 other athletic programs will remain active.

Harvard Expands Financial Aid. Starting with the 2025-26 academic year, Harvard C. will be "affordable to more students than ever, especially from middle-income families," *The Harvard Gazette* announced

in March. Harvard will be free for students from families with annual incomes of \$100,000 or less and tuition-free for students from families with annual incomes of \$200,000 or less. Students with family incomes above \$200,000 will also receive aid, depending on their circumstances.

SCHOLARSHIP SCOOPS

Grace C. Supports 100 Percent of its Students. Grace C. in Winona Lake, near Warsaw, Indiana, a Christian college, where the famous evangelist Billy Sunday moved his headquarters in 1911, awards \$2 million in annual scholarships. Grace "provides institutional financial aid to 100 percent of its students, with 20 percent attending tuition-free."

Smith Students to Benefit from \$51 Million Gift. The largest gift in Smith C. history, an anonymously donated \$51 million from a 1979 alum, will be used to bolster student financial aid for "young women from all economic backgrounds," and add two faculty positions in engineering and statistical and data sciences.

"Scholarships light the path to Smith for so many remarkable, high-achieving students," said Sarah Willie-LeBreton, president. "Access matters and a bequest of this magnitude is an affirmation of Smith's commitment to access, affordability and equity."

Smith, located in Northampton, Massachusetts, meets the full need of every enrolled student and awards over \$100 million annually in scholarships and grants, without loans. About 67 percent of Smith students receive institutional financial aid, while 18 percent receive Pell Grants.

TRANSFER

Transfer Story Complicated. The percentage of students who transferred from one institution to another rose by 4.4 percent last year. According to the National Student Clearinghouse Research Center, transfers are up 8 percent since 2020. About 1.2 million students transferred in 2024.

Transferring was strongest at community colleges, which saw transfers increase by 5.8 percent year-over-year. The transfer growth was particularly strong at online schools, where it rose by 6.6 percent last year, and is up 39 percent since 2020. But the transfer rate was only 1.4 percent at public and private four-year colleges.

Perhaps because of the FSAFA and financial aid problems last year, the number of students who transferred from a four-year institution to community colleges grew by 6.3 percent. Transfers from one two-year institution to another rose by 5.6 percent. About 72 percent of students who moved from one institution to another stayed in the same state. The transfer rate of black students increased by 8.3 percent. Hispanic student transfers increased by 4.4 percent since 2023. ■

COUNSELOR'S BOOKSHELF

The First-Year Experience: How to support student success, The Chronicle of Higher Education, \$179; And, *Improving Support for Nontraditional Students*, The Chronicle of Higher Education, and *The Future of Regional Publics*, The Chronicle of Higher Education. Find all three at the Chronicle's online source store at www.chronicle.com.

Acuity Insights' Admissions Trends Report.

Acuity Insights, a "provider of admissions assessment, program management, and analytic solutions for higher education," released its "2025 University and College Admissions Trends Report," based on the survey of 160 admissions leaders. Its top trends were:

- "AI is Expanding Role in Admissions;"

over half of the respondents said that AI will transform applicant evaluation, improving efficiency while maintaining holistic review standards;

- "Enrollment Challenges and Retention Strategies: with declining enrollment rates, 41 percent of admissions leaders cited competition from other institutions as the top challenge, followed by declining interest in traditional college education (36 percent)." See, <https://acuityinsights.com>. ■

WISHES AND DREAMS

continued from page 2

Santa Clara's Regular Decision. Santa Clara U. in California received a record 20,000-plus applications for its new class from 49 states and 72 countries. Their average GPA is 3.86. About 12 percent of admitted students are first in their family to attend college. More than 800 come from Christo Rey and Jesuit High Schools.

South Carolina's Apps Top 60,000. The U. of South Carolina attracted more than 60,000 applications from transfer students and hopefuls for its Class of 2029 at its flagship Columbia campus. This is 13 percent more than last year. Some 7,000 of those were for the school's highly-rated Honors College. USC expects to matriculate slightly more freshmen than last year's 7,290 students.

Elizabeth Orehovec, executive director of undergraduate admission, said the rise in applications shows applicants are drawn "to our strong academics, vibrant sense of community and unmatched student experience."

Swarthmore Admits from 82 Nations. Swarthmore C. outside of Philadelphia received 12,995 applications for its Class of 2029 and admitted 965 students. First-generation students account for 27 percent of admitted students. About 63 percent of admitted students attended public or charter schools, 27 percent private independent schools, 9 percent religious schools and 1 percent were home-schooled. About 92 percent of admitted students rank in the top 10 percent of their high school class.

States sending the most admitted students were, in order, California, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Maryland, Massachusetts, Texas, Florida and Connecticut. Engineering is the most popular intended major, followed by political science, economics, English literature, biology, mathematics and statistics, philosophy and environmental studies, Jim Block, vice president and dean of admissions, noted.

More on Tufts Admits. Tufts U. in Massachusetts received 33,400 applications for its new first-year class, a slight decrease from last year. It admitted 10.5 percent of those applicants to its Class of 2029. Just over half, 55 percent, attended public schools, many are from Boston. Over 50 of admitted students engaged through Tufts' Small Town Outreach. About 30 students were admitted early through QuestBridge National College Match. About 15 percent qualify for federal Pell Grants.

International students make up 11 percent of the Tufts' admitted class, representing 74 countries. Students intend to major in biology,

NEWS YOU CAN USE

Direct Admissions. According to a recent *Washington Post* article, the number of state-run, direct admissions programs has jumped from one in 2015 to programs today in Idaho, Minnesota, South Dakota, Washington, Indiana, Hawaii, Connecticut, Wisconsin, Utah, Illinois, Texas, California, New York and Oregon.

Direct admissions lets high school students with good grades know that they have an automatic place at certain colleges. In Utah, all 16 of its public colleges and universities participate. In California, the focus is on 10 campuses within the California State system.

pre-health pathways and community health; mechanical and biomedical engineering; computer science; psychology and cognitive and brain sciences; economics; political science and interdisciplinary arts studies.

Virginia Apps Top 64,000. During its three rounds of admissions this year, the U. of Virginia attracted more than 64,000 applications for its Class of 2029, up from last year's 60,000. "Each student brings with them a unique personal journey in life experience and their performance in the classroom speaks for itself," said Greg Roberts, dean.

Wellesley Admits 13 Percent. Wellesley C. in Massachusetts attracted slightly more than 8,700 applications for its Class of 2029, the most in school history. About 13.7 percent were offered admission to the all-women's college. They hailed from 47 states and 31 countries. First-generation students account for 20 percent of the new class, while 8 percent are international students. Just over half speak a language other than English at home. The QuestBridge National College Match program contributed 15 students.

"I am extremely proud of the work that the Admissions and Student Financial Services teams have done," said T. Peaches Valdes, dean.

Williams Admitted 26 Percent ED. Williams C. in Massachusetts received 964 Early Decision applications. It deferred 129 applicants and denied admission to 572. It admitted 257 students, 26.6 percent. Williams also welcomed 18 QuestBridge Scholars. The racial composition of last year's class did not significantly change compared to classes before the Supreme Court's affirmative action ruling.

Williams also received 14,261 Regular Decision applications, 161 more than last year. About 8.5 percent of all applicants were admitted through both Early and Regular Decision. The target class size is 560 students. ■

Minnesota, Idaho and Wisconsin share data with high schools to pull student transcripts for information. Then participating schools notify students. Connecticut and Illinois use the Common App and rely on self-reported student data that is later verified.

"This behavioral nudge is going to be most effective for people who didn't know that college is an option for them," Taylor Odle, professor at the U. of Wisconsin-Madison, told the *Post*. "And those are most often students who fall further down the academic gradient." ■

Common App Apps Up 4 Percent

Each year, the Common App issues reports on the status of applications year-over-year. This year's "Deadline Update," reports on the status of applications this year as of March 1 at colleges and universities that have been Common App members for at least the past five years.

Here are some findings from its most recent report:

- "Applicant and application counts are up" to 1,390,256 distinct first-year applicants, an increase of 4 percent over the 2023-24 application cycle.
- "Latinx and Black or African American applicants are among the fastest-growing." Latinx have increased 13 percent, while African American applications jumped by 10 percent.
- "First-generation applicants are substantially up." First-generation applications grew by 13 percent, while "continuing-gen" applicants did not increase at all year-over-year.
- "Low-income applicants are up." Students who were eligible for the Common App fee waiver increased by 9 percent. Growth of applicants from below-median income ZIP Codes outpaced those of applicants from above-median ZIP Codes by 8 percent.
- "Domestic growth in applicants was faster in the Southwest and among metropolitan and metropolitan urbanities." The Southwestern region applicants grew by 34 percent. Growth of urban applicants ranged from 4 percent to 6 percent.
- "The rate of domestic applicant growth exceeds growth in international applicants for the first time since 2019."

See, <https://www.commonapp.org>. ■

To renew your subscription, go online to www.collegeboundnews.com

Annual subscription: \$59 in North America, \$69 for international orders, including airmail postage.

See, www.collegeboundnews.com

©2025 COLLEGE BOUND PUBLICATIONS, INC. All rights reserved. ISSN 1068-7912 For photocopy rights, please write the Editors.