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IECA⁺
TM

INSIGHTS

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE INDEPENDENT EDUCATIONAL CONSULTANTS ASSOCIATION

June/July 2019

Calendar

June 10–11
IECA Philadelphia College
Symposium

June 11
Webinar: Advancing Gifted yet
Struggling Students (and
Parents!): What Is Twice-
Exceptionality and How Does It
Impact Educational Consulting?

July 9–11
IECA at International ACAC
Conference, London, Ontario,
Canada

July 9–13
STI West, Claremont McKenna,
CA

July 12
Webinar: Hate Speech in the
Milieu: Defending Safe Space

July 30–August 3
STI East, Swarthmore, PA

August 13
Webinar: Finding Work/Life
Balance: Fact or Fiction?

September 8–13
IECA WOW College Tour (WA
and OR)

When Scandal Hits Page One, IECA's High Standards and Ethics Shine Brightest

By Mark Sklarow, IECA CEO



In March,
the college
admission
scandal led
TV news
broadcasts
and
headlines

screamed from the front pages
of newspapers from New York
City to Missoula, Montana.
In the past, other scandals
dominated: whether it was
improper teacher behaviors
at independent schools, test
cheating rings in Asia, or
abusive staff in therapeutic
programs, all aspects of
the field of independent
educational consulting have
been scrutinized over the years.



But whether a story involved
colleges, secondary schools, or therapeutic
environments, the press has largely turned to IECA
when such stories have broken—both the national
office and IECA members were the experts that the
press sought out. Most recently with the college
scandal, media stories that cited IECA outpaced
other sources by a factor of 10. Certainly, one reason

is how quickly the office mobilized, developed
its messaging, created an alternative story line
(why and how to find a great IEC), and responded
to interview requests. But there was more: our
members' reputation for knowledge, experience,
and ethical work and the Association's commitment
to ensuring those standards are entrenched—we are
a reliable and respected resource.

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Barbara Pasalis

Moving Our Association Forward—Strategic Goals and Initiatives

Last fall, the IECA Board of Directors held a retreat in conjunction with the LA conference. A facilitator helped the board clarify its role as a board of governance as compared to the operational roles of the staff. In addition, we identified three main strategic areas to move the Association forward, and we incorporated the goals resulting from the Bernuth & Williamson Survey.

The first area is Growth & Development. Our Association has experienced

tremendous growth over the last few years, and this necessitates change. Goals in this area include:

- Lead a strategic planning process to position IECA as a thought leader
- Be recognized as the gold standard in the field of independent educational consulting
- Implement a decision-making process that promotes timeliness and transparency
- Institute systems that will increase efficiency and decrease the time commitment of volunteers
- Manage fiduciary risks

- Reorganize the management team to improve efficiency and free the CEO for strategy
- Increase the number of qualified members, domestic and international, across all specialties
- Build strategic partnerships that align with our mission.

The second key strategic area is Influence, increasing our reputation and brand awareness. This is even more crucial in light of the Varsity Blues scandal. Goals include:

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IECA⁺ INSIGHTS

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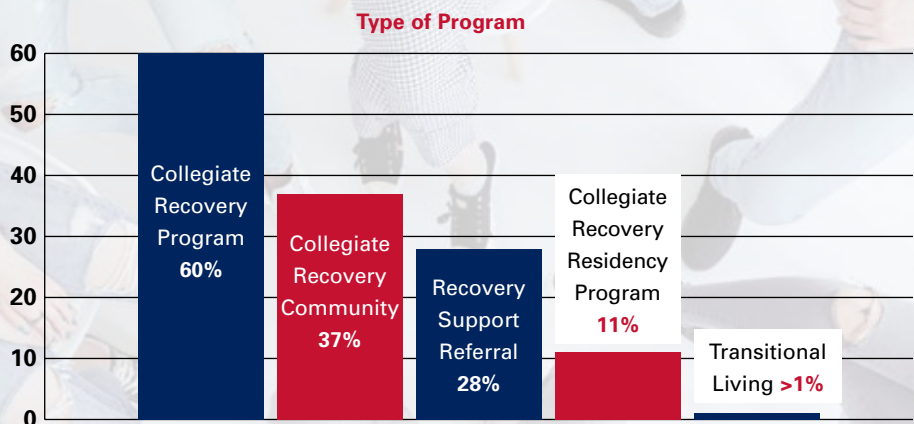
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In Focus

Recovery Programs on Campus

A survey by Transforming Youth with 127 colleges and universities responding found the following about campus recovery programs:



Area of Focus

- Peer support **87%**
- Counseling or clinical support **35%**
- Social activities and sober fun **74%**
- Other as an area of focus **22%**

Source: Transforming Youth Recovery (<http://www.transformingyouthrecovery.org>).


IECA's 2019 Steven R. Antonoff Award

Marilyn Emerson (NY) received the Steven R. Antonoff award at the IECA Spring Conference in Chicago. Although she was not able to receive her award in person, she was there in spirit as participants recognized her professionalism, generosity, and dedication to the profession. Over her 23 years as an IEC specializing in college, graduate, and international consulting, she has become a recognized expert in the field of educational consulting, presenting workshops on the college application process all over the world, teaching university classes about college and graduate school consulting, and sharing her expertise in the media, including the *New York Times*, *Newsweek*, *USA Today*, and *Fox News*.



A past president of IECA, she has been on the board for eight years and was chair of the Graduate School committee. In addition, she chaired the Outreach Committee and was vice president for Education & Training, where she helped develop webinars and the

ethics course. As a member of the Mentoring Sub-Committee, she helped write the original *Mentoring Handbook* and she continues to serve as a mentor. She holds a BA from Queens College as well as an MSW in family counseling from Fordham University School of Social Work.

With a strong belief in giving back to one's community, she is IECA's project director for the Possibility Project, a nonprofit in New York City that brings teenagers together through the performing arts to engage in social/emotional learning (SEL) with a focus on social justice. Emerson has coordinated pro bono college planning and coordinated college visits and encouraged other IECs to participate. In her spare time, Marilyn enjoys traveling, reading mystery novels, playing Scrabble, and playing with her granddaughters. Marilyn plans to accept her award at the 2020 spring conference in Connecticut. 

Save the Date! IECA College WOW Tour

September 8–13, 2019

The IECA College Committee is organizing a tour of Washington and Oregon colleges. The itinerary will be announced in June, with registration opening in July.

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IECA Chicago Conference in Photos

More photos can be found on our Facebook page



ACE Talks are now a conference staple.



Former Secretary of Education Arne Duncan spoke to participants.



Fun times at the Member Dinner Tuesday night.

(See Chicago-area Campus Tour photos on page 39.)



The conference allowed for some impromptu networking.



Above: There are always big smiles at the networking reception.



Past and present board members celebrate CEO Mark Sklarow's 25 years with IECA.



Making new friends at IECA!




Members delve into current topics at roundtable discussions.

Scandal, from page 1

In those early hectic weeks after the Varsity Blues scandal hit, I spoke to dozens of reporters, authors, and journalists. Everyone asked out our ethics guidelines. Many had read our *Principles of Good Practice*. They asked if we ever refused membership to applicants because of their practices or website messages (YES!) or whether we had removed from membership those who have violated our standards (YES, again!). They expressed a bit of satisfaction that a membership group would put ethical conduct front and center.

The media also expressed near universal surprise about our requirements for membership. After I recited the campus visits, education, experience, reference checks, and more that IECA demanded of applicants, they began to understand. And they shared that essential difference with their readers. As *U.S. News and World Report* informed its readers, **“In the absence of state licensure for independent educational consultants, IECA has adopted that role of arbiter, setting standards and practices.”**

When things are quiet and stories about schools, programs, and colleges are buried well off the front page, it is easy to lose sight of what makes IECA membership unique in the world of professional societies. But when scandal breaks, we are reminded that our reputation—and our members’ reputations—are not made in the moment, they are made over years and years in each and every IEC office. The rewards of that commitment are what counts in those unique, scary, and highly hyped moments. 

President’s Letter, from page 2

- Ensure that IECA plays a central role in any discussion of governmental licensing or credentialing
- Develop a strategic communications plan to reach external constituencies
- Articulate and grow brand awareness
- Better articulate our brand to parents and the public at large
- Help members at all levels grow their businesses
- Ensure maintenance of our standards to safeguard our brand as we continue to grow
- Provide greater support for international consultants.

The board has developed action items and will be working to achieve the stated goals over the next year so that we continue to move our Association forward and serve our members.

The third strategic area is the Engagement of our members in the Association. Goals in this area include:

- Reorganize the Executive Committee to vest more responsibility with the committees
- Increase the number of and engagement of volunteers
- Expand the work of Regional Groups
- Improve member communication.

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The board has developed action items and will be working to achieve the stated goals over the next year so that we continue to move our Association forward and serve our members.

I want to take this opportunity to thank all the members who have served on committees over the past year. Without their participation, IECA would not be able to provide the rich educational programs we have. Special thanks to the chairs of the committees of the membership:

- Marilyn O’Toole, College Committee
- Vita Cohen, Community Committee
- Patricia O’Keefe, Global Committee
- Marilyn Emerson, Graduate School Committee
- Betsy Donnelly, LD Committee
- Pamela Pik, Outreach Committee
- Elizabeth Hall, Schools Committee
- Michelle Grappo, Therapeutic Committee

I encourage all members to join committees and get involved in our Association to ensure that our programs meet everyone’s needs.



Barbara Pasalis, IECA President

A list of the 2019–20 IECA leadership can be found on page M12 in the Member-to-Member section.



Evaluating College Support Services for Students With LD

By Lauren Gaylord MA, IECA (WA)

Finding an environment that can support the academic and social-emotional needs of a student with learning differences (LD) should be considered along with other fit factors as you create a college list. Depending on the student, LD support might be higher or lower on the list of fit factors. Accommodations and services at colleges and universities vary in terms of depth, variety, and accessibility. There are a few ways, however, that independent educational consultants (IECs) can discern what is available on a college campus and how easily students can access those services.

Clarify What Is Needed

Understanding the specific learning needs of your student is the first step in evaluating whether a college's learning support services (simplified here as DS for disability support) are a good fit. What are the barriers your student faces in the classroom? What are your student's strengths (academic, social-emotional, and physical)? What accommodations and services are currently in use? Which are working? Which aren't? What is his or her diagnosis? That information can be gathered from the student,

family, teachers, neuro-educational testing, IEP/504 documentation, and others who work closely with the student. A discussion with the student and family about the accommodations and services the student is using that may (and may not) be available in college is a critical element of this process.

For students with LD, one of the most important changes from high school to college is that they are responsible for getting the accommodations and services, not the institution. Strong advocacy skills are linked to college success. Therefore, given the range of programming, a key element in evaluating whether a program will meet a student's needs is understanding his or her ability to self-advocate. High school (and the college search and application process) is a good time to help students who lack strong self-advocacy build those skills.

Consider School Size Knowledgeably

In the broadest sense, DS program differences are based on the resources—both formal and informal—at the institution, not the type of institution. Before

continued on page 8



Lauren Gaylord, G2 COLLEGE, can be reached at lauren@g2college.com.

discussing program evaluation, however, let's dispel the myth that smaller (e.g., liberal arts) colleges are always better for students with LD. Of course, a strong case can certainly be made that at smaller schools, students with LD have an easier time getting the help they need. The smaller size allows students to connect with professors and other support people so that it is harder to get lost, there is less (of everything) to navigate on campus, and there is often more flexibility and more-personalized academic advising and support. Smaller schools often have solid reporting or alert systems in place to prevent students from falling behind without notice. All those things can help students with LD be successful. But small schools can also present challenges that may affect success: a curriculum that is heavy on reading and writing; the intensity of discussion style classes; fewer housing options; and less robust LD support (e.g., fewer trained staff, less programming and resources, less assistive technology, and so on).

Larger universities may have more DS staff (often with more-specialized training) and the critical mass can also result in wider campus awareness and acceptance regarding LD issues. Larger institutions may have more robust programming and resources, for example, skills workshops; assistive technology; and dedicated tech staff, supplemental education, executive function support, and the like. In addition, larger universities have a wider diversity of majors, which may present more opportunities for students with LD to explore and find courses of study that work better with how their brain functions, such as more majors that are less test intensive and more project based. Although it is crucial that all students with

LD are strong self-advocates, it can be even more important for students at larger universities because there is more to navigate. If a student lacks the skills to find and use resources, it will be hard for him or her to be successful, no matter how strong the support is. Armed with an awareness of your students' learning support needs in the context of prioritized fit factors, you can start evaluating which colleges can best provide the needed support.

Although it is crucial that all students with LD are strong self-advocates, it can be even more important for students at larger universities because there is more to navigate.

Models of LD Support on College Campuses

There are generally three models of LD support on college campuses (this does not include colleges that specialize in providing LD support, not discussed here): compliance, comprehensive, and moderate.

Compliance provides only what is required by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), and includes basic accommodations, such as extended time on tests, use of note takers, and use of some basic assistive technology. It can work for students who don't need accommodations beyond the most basic and who are comfortable self-advocating.

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Comprehensive provides a wide range of accommodations and services, usually for a fee, and students are typically provided with a dedicated learning specialist, which includes required meetings. Staff typically has specialized LD training and is larger than a compliance-model staff; services may include things like academic advising and support, supplemental education, executive function support, mentoring/coaching, additional technology, subject-specific tutoring, social skills training, and organized activities. Such a program typically requires an application and may have limited spots. In these programs, students are often supported in building self-advocacy skills.

Moderate accommodations and services fall between the bare bones of compliance and the full-meal-deal of comprehensive: in addition to the basics, there might be more LD trained staff; more specialized peer training and mentoring; a wider scope of services and programs that could include such things as study skills, coaching, and social supports; and some coordination with other support services. Most colleges and universities are in this category, and students needing more accommodations and services than the basics and who are strong self-advocates can be successful at schools with moderate programs.

How can IECs find out what is available?

Start with the website. Although colleges and universities with comprehensive (fee-based) programs are usually pretty clear on their website, it might take more digging into both the formal and informal supports to determine what model it is and if it will meet the needs of a particular student. Look for the following things on a DS website:

Green Flag or Red Flag?

As you go through this evaluation process, keep your eye out for green flags and red flags.

Green Flags	Red Flags
A welcoming "meet students where they are" philosophy	A gate-keeper philosophy
Flexibility on required documentation	Limited staff or one primary person doing bulk of work
Well trained and adequate number of staff members	Staff lacking expertise in LD
Wide range of programming and services	Overuse of peers vs. professionals in critical support areas
Training and ongoing support for assistive technology for students	

- Does the page feel student-centered?
- How easy is it to find what documentation is required to receive accommodations?
- What is the background and training of staff?
- Are there dedicated learning specialists?

continued on page 10



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- Do the offerings feel bare bones or robust?
- How much support (e.g., tutoring, coaching, mentoring, tech) is provided by professionals and students?

Look into mental health support. Exploring what is available in terms of mental health services, staff, and resources is also important as you dig into websites because many students with LD will need mental health support during college. In addition to the basics of staffing and resources, your student might need to know what support groups are available. Is there a limit on the number of visits? Are there drop-in hours?

Follow up with phone calls or emails and visits. After exploring a website, you may have enough information to know whether the school provides sufficient support for your student. Or you might have concerns and you, or the family, may need to dig deeper by calling, emailing, or visiting. A phone call or visit might reveal dedicated staff, comprehensive programming, and wonderful support that were not evident from the website—keep in mind, the folks who design and update websites are not those providing the accommodations and services. A less-than-wonderful website does not automatically mean programs are lacking. A phone call or visit can also provide a “gut feel” for the program’s philosophy and health. Calls and visits are also a great way to stay up-to-date for future students; staff and program changes can have a big impact on the student experience.

Ask Questions

- Ask about the availability of and process for accessing any accommodations or services that the student needs that are not clear on the website. This could include questions about programs for students with ASD, social supports, assistive technology training and support, coaching, skills training, priority registration, flexibility in core classes, waivers and substitutions, supplemental education, options for reduced course loads, specific housing or dietary needs, and mental health support.
- Ask about the process for securing academic accommodations and working with professors. This process can vary widely and depending on the student can add challenges they need to be prepared for. On some campuses, students must meet directly with professors at the start of each class to work out their accommodations with little support from DS. Some DS offices require students to meet and check-in each term with DS staff; other DS offices do not require periodic check-ins after the initial meeting to set things up.
- Find out how DS coordinates with other services on campus. Students with LD often require resources in multiple offices (e.g., DS, academic support, mental health, residential life, and so on). Does DS facilitate that engagement? If those supports are not close to each other, will the student walk across campus to get them? Knowing whether and how well the offices work together can give you insight into how well your student will be able to navigate the services.



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- Ask whether the DS staff provides coordination of and support for off-campus referrals, for example, therapists, tutors, coaches, and psychiatrists. Some DS offices are happy to provide—and some DS webpages will list—extensive resources in the community. Others do not.
- It's important to understand the academic feel of the campus. Many students are more comfortable in a less competitive and more collaborative environment. Is it known for academic intensity? Do students and faculty call it a supportive place? Is there an honor code that allows flexibility in test taking for all students?
- Find out how academic probation works and if there is an alert or notification system. The first term of college can be a particularly hard adjustment for some students with LD; it might be important to know how strict the school is about maintaining a certain GPA. Is there a system in place by which folks on a students' team, such as professor, advisor, RA, and so on) regularly connect to ensure that students are not getting lost?

As IECs, we know that each student we advise is different and we may need to ask additional questions according to the unique needs of our students. Understanding their individual needs and wants is central to assisting them in their postsecondary educational path. When working with students with LD, understanding what to look for and ask about regarding LD support will enable you to do your job better. 🇺🇸

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Thoughts on the College Admission Scandal

By Laurie Kopp Weingarten, CEP, New Jersey

It's been several weeks since the college admission scandal broke as I write this. It was one of those moments that most IECs will remember for a long time: I was in the midst of working on a high school junior's college list, making sure it was balanced with a good mix of likely, target, and reach schools, when my phone started buzzing. My first message came from a college friend. The Facebook messenger post read, "Holy cr*p. Are you hearing about this huge admissions fraud case? Turn on CNN." As I ran to turn on my television, two more texts arrived with similar messages.

I stood silently as the charges were announced. In the meantime, my phone was blowing up with emails, texts, and other messages from, it seemed, everyone I've ever known.

Since that day, the story has been pervasive and covered from every angle in print, TV, and radio. The amount of chatter on our community message groups and on social media has continued. It seems that everyone has an opinion, something to say about the scandal.

He Was a Criminal, not an IEC

When people ask me about it, I keep reminding them that Rick Singer, the man at the center of the

scandal, acted criminally. He was not associated with IECA or NACAC or any other recognized professional organization. Rather, he was a crooked businessman who simply claimed to be a "college counselor." We IECs all work hard to help students find the best fit colleges. We help with everything, including creating college lists, preparing for interviews, brainstorming essays, and discussing summer opportunities—basically we explain the process to students who really don't know how to begin approaching it, and we teach students how to go through the "front door."

Was I surprised to hear this scam being exposed on television? Well although it was certainly appalling to turn on the news and watch the outrageous scandal unravel, I have to admit that I wasn't really that shocked. Each year reports surface about students cheating on the ACT or the SAT, and counselors exchange frustrated stories about students and parents suspected of fabricating parts of their applications. But I think the astonishing fact here is how many people were complicit—the scope was unprecedented. There were numerous coaches, parents, and others who went along with this scheme. How in the world did Singer convince so many different parties to participate? How could this not have been detected earlier?

continued on page 14



Laurie Kopp-Weingarten, One-Stop College Counseling, can be reached at laurie@one-stopcc.com.

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Scandal, from page 13

College admissions has become an intense, stressful process. Parents sometimes lose sight of the fact that their children can be successful, if they perform well, at *any* college. They get caught up in the competitive frenzy of highly selective college admissions, and they look for ways to “beat the system.” The parents involved in the scandal were unusually brazen; they didn’t think the rules applied to them. But those parents weren’t thinking ahead—how was their child going to perform and how would their morale suffer when they struggled to keep up with the students who were admitted on their merits?

The parents involved did their kids a huge disservice, and this story won’t go away for a long, long time. I doubt there are many scams going on as extensive as this one, but there are always going to be people looking for a “back door” and a way to “push” their child into a highly selective college.


What’s Ethical and What Isn’t?

We all know life isn’t fair, and nobody has ever claimed the college admission process is just. I tell my families that if they have an honest advantage, then it’s fine to use it. For example, if the student is part of one of the underrepresented minority groups, let the college know. If a student is first-generation or coming from a rural area, he or she may have an advantage. If a student is a legacy applicant, and the college gives legacies a second look, then let the family know. A student whose mom is an esteemed professor at the university may have a leg up in the process. If a student plays the harp and the school needs that skill, he or she might get admitted with a slightly lower academic profile.

On the other hand, cheating is always wrong. Having someone take your standardized tests for you is unethical—there is no gray area. Claiming you are an athlete when you aren’t is a bold-faced lie. Families should be able to use their internal radars to determine what’s acceptable and what’s not. And if they can’t figure out that hiring someone to take the SAT for their student is wrong or that pretending their nonathlete teen is a recruited athlete, then they have a real problem.

What Now?

Colleges should take a firm stand. The coaches should be fired (and it looks like all were either dismissed or suspended), the parents should face appropriate charges, and Singer should be held accountable in the legal system. As for the students, it seems that some really had no idea what was happening while others were in on the scheme. The colleges must decide how they want to handle the students. But it is going to be tough remaining on campus when their peers know that they were admitted under false pretenses.

Let’s hope this large-scale publicity will stop others from doing something like this in the future. And the good news is that this scandal doesn’t seem to have negatively affected our businesses. 



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Therapeutic Placements vs. Traditional Boarding Schools

By Christie Woodfin, MEd, LPC, CEP, IECA (GA)

When I began my work as an independent educational consultant more than two decades ago, traditional boarding schools were almost the only type of residential program available, even for youngsters with emotional and behavioral needs that required specific attention. There were a few emotional growth boarding schools, most of which were in-your-face confrontational places. Their therapeutic approach was almost universally behavioral and often felt punitive. A handful of wilderness programs were available, with some minimal therapy. Therefore, most folks sent their adolescents who were acting up at home to boarding or military schools and hoped that they would shape up. Now there are two separate genres of residential programs for junior and senior high students: traditional and therapeutic.

Traditional Boarding Schools

Traditional boarding schools include highly competitive institutions, those whose students

are more intellectually limited, and those who are dispirited and uninspired learners. Many institutions now understand learning issues, so in addition to schools exclusively for students with LD, there are many traditional schools with good learning support departments.

Traditional boarding schools provide structured days that are filled with classes, all-school meetings, required after-school sports or programs, evening study hours, and weekend activities. Faculty at those schools are generally energetic sorts who teach classes, coach sports or advise clubs, and live in a dorm where they supervise students in the evenings—they are referred to as triple threats. Students are assigned to an advisory group of several kids who meet regularly with their faculty advisor, and most campuses have an on-staff counselor who can handle crisis events or refer a student to off-campus therapists for regular out-patient therapy.



Christie Woodfin, Woodfin & Associates LLC, can be reached at cwoodfin@bestschoolforyou.com.

Therapeutic Programs

Over the last couple of decades there has also been a proliferation of therapeutic programs for students with emotional and behavioral problems, substance abuse issues, or more than the usual adolescent angst. Those programs, which combine therapeutic and academic components, have evolved to combine medical expertise on anxiety, depression, and a plethora of other disorders; a developmental understanding of the stages of growth on the way to adulthood; and an appreciation of the curative benefits of being outdoors and enjoying exercise. And unlike some earlier models, the new therapeutic programs emphasize relationships between staff and student and exude warmth and respect for their young clients.

Residential therapeutic programs, most commonly referred to as long-term residential treatment centers (RTCs), are quite different from a traditional boarding school in that therapy is embedded within the daily activities on the campus. An RTC should include the following five elements, which were first articulated by Jared Balmer, PhD, founder of Waypoint Academy, Island View, and Oakley Schools in "The Five Food Groups of a Therapeutic Program."

1. Psychiatry provided by a staff MD who monitors the medications of the students and titrates those medications as needed (with the parents' approval).
2. Therapy provided by master's and doctoral level counselors, psychologists, and social workers. Therapy includes


individual therapy at least weekly, family therapy by Skype weekly and in person quarterly, and group therapy multiple times a week. Group therapy will deal with the issues involved in living together as a community; the challenges of how one grows to be a well-functioning young adult; and individual issues such as adoption, divorce, trauma, self-harm, and anxiety or depression. Therapeutic approaches may include cognitive behavioral therapy, dialectical behavioral therapy, EMDR, exposure therapy, equine assisted therapy, sand-tray therapy, expressive art therapies, or other modalities.

3. Education continuing as in other schools. Because students attend therapeutic programs year-round, there is an opportunity to make up work that a student may have missed because of emotional issues.
4. Activities that include on-campus programs, such as farming, athletics, arts, and music. Most programs also now recognize the importance of sleep hygiene, exercise, and nutrition in contributing to mental health and incorporate those components into the programming.
5. A milieu that is conducive to a therapeutic program. Unlike a traditional boarding school which has one faculty covering many functions, a therapeutic program has three staffs, each with discrete functions, and the boundaries between the teaching staff, the therapists, and the residential staff are lowered, so there is active communication between all entities of the program. The staff commonly outnumbers the number of students on campus. In addition, all staff members are using the same language (like DBT responses, for example), presenting consistent expectations, and providing a microcosm in which to learn new skills.

Therapeutic programs are far smaller than even the smallest boarding school, and rather than staying at an institution until graduation, students can expect to leave in 9–18 months, as they gain the skills and mental health needed to function well in the world.

Complimentary Goals

The growth of therapeutic programs has helped traditional boarding schools because they no longer find themselves with students in each class whose emotional needs outstrip the ability of the school to serve them well. Now, young people with emotional problems, whom typical schools are not equipped to handle, can get the help they need from the experts at therapeutic schools.

The long-term goal at both types of institution is the same: to equip a young person to be a capable, well adjusted, productive, happy, and—I would hope—moral, young adult. And at both types of schools, visiting IECs continue to be touched and awed by the caring, dedicated faculties and staffs that serve the students. Their warmth as well as expertise is an inspiration and a key ingredient in teaching today's complex adolescents the lessons—both academic and interpersonal—that they will need going forward. 

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Concurrent Enrollment: A Rehearsal for College

By Maria Nissi, MA, IECA Associate (NY)

As concurrent enrollment (CE) programs—also referred to as dual enrollment or dual credit—grow in public school districts across the country, more students than ever are graduating from high school with a college transcript. Many earn 30 or more credits, and some complete associate’s degrees before they walk across the stage at high school graduation. With federal support written into the Every Student Succeeds Act and state legislatures following suit, concurrent enrollment is positioned for continued growth.

A Good Investment

The investment is well-warranted: data demonstrate that concurrent enrollment (CE) students persist in and complete college at higher rates than students matriculating with no CE credit. They are also more likely to attend graduate school, according to research by Joni Swanson (2008). Swanson also argues that CE students benefit from anticipatory socialization: through experiencing aspects of college before they arrive and modeling college student behaviors, they reinforce their self-perception as “college material.”

Melinda Karp, founder of Phase Two Advisory and former assistant director of the Community College Research Center at Columbia University, said, “CE courses are authentic college in a way that AP and IB often are not.” A concurrent enrollment course is designed to mirror the corresponding course at

the partner institution: the same syllabus, texts, assessments, and grading scale are used. As in college, CE students take fewer exams, write longer papers, and are expected to complete homework that may not be collected. “CE students learn how to be successful in the culture of college. They practice the study skills that they’ll need once they arrive on a college campus, which are surprisingly different from study skills in high school,” explained Karp. With campus visits also a regular occurrence, students get the physical experience too, increasing comfort levels and college-going attitudes.

With the partner college’s entire course catalog to work with, many CE programs boast varied and extensive offerings, including general education and career and technical courses. According to Victoria Zeppelin, director of CollegeNow at Tompkins Cortland Community College in Central New York, “This flexibility allows colleges and schools to work together to identify the best courses to meet the needs, skills, and interests of the school’s teachers and students.” Noting that AP and IB curricula “heavily favor” the liberal arts and sciences, Karp pointed out that CE makes college-level exploration possible in preprofessional fields, such as business and health sciences. In addition, many CE courses are open to students who may not be eligible for AP or IB. A video production or graphic design course may spark a professional interest in one student while a robotics or CAD course introduces another to careers in STEM.

continued on page 20



Maria Nissi, Maria Nissi Admissions Consulting LLC, can be reached at marianissi@outlook.com.

Concurrent Enrollment, from page 19

Students' experience with assessment and grading in CE courses provides another dress rehearsal for college. In contrast to high-stakes AP exams, CE course grades are based on multiple assessments, which can include experiential learning. As Zeppelin explained, "Not all students test well and the AP exam rewards good test takers. It may also encourage instructors to teach to the test." In CE courses, all students who demonstrate content mastery earn a passing and often transferable grade. "To us, this is about equity and access to educational opportunities," said Zeppelin.

Advisement Essentials

With a solid understanding of concurrent enrollment and its benefits, independent educational consultants (IECs) can join school counselors and college advising staff in helping students maximize their credits, accelerate degree completion, and save significant tuition dollars. Here are a few guidelines for providing such support:

- Not all concurrent enrollment is created equal. The National Alliance of Concurrent Enrollment Partnerships (NACEP) sets the standards, requires strict program oversight, and provides professional development. Colleges may want to know if an incoming student's CE credits were earned through a NACEP-accredited program.
- Students starting a college transcript should be aware that a low GPA and too many course withdrawals can affect their future financial aid eligibility.

- Generally, students need at least a grade of C to transfer a course.
- About 90% of colleges accept concurrent enrollment credit. Often, the highly selective colleges that do not accept CE credit also limit AP and IB credits or don't accept them at all.

- Nearly all public universities and many highly selective colleges are concurrent enrollment friendly. Northeast private colleges that accept concurrent enrollment credit include RIT, Carnegie Mellon, RPI, Lehigh, Ithaca, Siena, Clarkson, and Skidmore, to name a few.


- Transfer policies vary by institution. The UCONN Early College Experience Transfer Database (<https://ece.uconn.edu/home/research/credit-transfer-database>) is a useful resource for researching college transfer policies regarding college credit earned in high school.

- Generally, a student should apply to college as a freshman, even if they have earned more than 35 credits, which is the typical credit-cap for incoming first-years.

Benefits in Action

Perhaps the most noticeable benefit to students is the flexibility that their concurrent enrollment credits afford them while in college. Their credits can make double-majoring, study abroad, athletics, and internships more feasible. Because they already have a college transcript, students also may benefit from perks such as early registration and residence hall preference. Scholarship benefits are

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a possibility, too; for example, students in the SUNY and CUNY colleges can use concurrent enrollment credits as a safety net to remain on track for degree completion, a requirement of the Excelsior Scholarship. Below are a few examples of CE working for students when they arrive to college:

- Matthew attends a private liberal arts college that accepts concurrent enrollment credits not used toward high school graduation requirements. His college accepts 16 of the 30 credits he earned in high school, including Calculus I and II, Public Speaking, and Spanish Literature and Culture. Instead of graduating a semester early, Matthew, a neuroscience major, decides to take one less course for each of his first four semesters to allow himself ample study time as he transitions to college life and his rigorous curriculum.
- Alex attends a public four-year college that accepts all degree-applicable concurrent enrollment credits. She is able to transfer 32 of the 45 credits she earned in high school. Alex, a student-athlete, is enrolled in a 4+1 accelerated master's degree program. She will finish her bachelor's degree in three years and use her fourth year of NCAA eligibility to continue playing soccer in her master's program.
- Anaya attends a highly selective private university that does not accept concurrent enrollment credit. Taking the most rigorous curriculum available to her, she earned 44 college credits while in high school. Although none of her CE credits transferred, she was able to use some as proof-of-prerequisite for upper-level courses, which allowed her to double-major. She was also well-prepared for her demanding Honors Program.

Beyond flexibility and perks, concurrent enrollment makes a life-changing difference for first-generation students.

Beyond flexibility and perks, concurrent enrollment makes a life-changing difference for first-generation students. Victoria Zeppelin, whose program partners with more than 70 high schools across rural Central New York, says, "We often hear stories of students who if not for concurrent enrollment, would not have seen themselves as potential college students or whose aspirations are raised to not only go to college but also to earn a graduate degree." Leaders in the field understand the importance of sharing student success stories with state representatives, an effort supported by the newly formed College in High School Alliance. With more formal support in place, concurrent enrollment will continue to give high school students the dress rehearsal they need to make college their comfort zone. 

Reference

Swanson, Joni L. 2008. "An Analysis of the Impact of High School Dual Enrollment Course Participation on Post-Secondary Academic Success, Persistence, and Degree Completion." Paper presented at the meeting of the National Association for Gifted Children, Tampa, FL and the National Alliance of Concurrent Enrollment Partnerships, Kansas City, MO.



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Think Like an Enrollment Manager

By Rachel Coates, MA, IECA Affordability Subcommittee (NY) and Betsy Wiltshire, MA, IECA (IL)

Some admission decisions by colleges are particularly crushing for high school seniors. A surprise offer for second-semester or even second-year admission that gives with one hand while taking away with the other; an unexpected rejection of a highly qualified candidate at a likely school; or relegation to several increasingly long waiting lists. Each year brings a new flavor of frustration.

As independent educational consultants (IECs), we would like to be better prepared to anticipate these outcomes for our families. In that spirit, at the IECA conference in Los Angeles we set out to ask a panel of enrollment managers from UCLA, Occidental College, USC, and the University of Richmond to help us understand their business models for enrollment. And since then we've been on the lookout for other startling new twists among decisions for the high school class of 2019.

Waiting List Strategies

Charlie Leizear from Occidental explained that the key goal of enrollment management is to meet the budget numbers. Specifically, the goals are to deliver an entering class of exactly the target number of students—not too many or some will be sleeping in Portacabins and not too few or the college's revenue and future viability could be jeopardized—and to spend the exact amount of dollars on need-based aid and merit awards that was budgeted for the year.

Gary Clark from UCLA explained why a large waiting list is a necessity at his institution. The room's immediate feedback was that he gave the "best explanation of the waiting list ever." UCLA has the most applicants of any school in the country—more than 110,000—and with seven divisions, some of which admit by major, they must maintain dozens of sub-waiting lists to

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cover all the combinations of in state/out of state/international across arts and sciences, nursing, art, architecture, music, engineering, public affairs, theater, film, and all the rest. Clark needs to be ready to plug any specific hole in the entering class: a shortage of out-of-state females for engineering, for example. That explanation undoubtedly holds true at many institutions, although at schools with fewer parameters to juggle and excessively long waiting lists, it may also indicate a fuzzier reluctance to just say no, thus continuing to fuel the hopes of potential applicants in future years.

Some years ago, the phenomenon of highly qualified students being rejected or wait-listed at a likely school became known as Tufts Syndrome, named for the school first noted for using this bold tactic to keep its acceptance rate lower and more accurately predict its yield (the percentage of accepted students who decide to attend). In 2019, that kind of yield-protection strategy is widespread and can sometimes lead to a catastrophic string of results for an individual student. A new flavor appeared this year at Case Western Reserve University, where highly qualified students got the good news/bad news that they were being wait-listed while also learning that if they were admitted off the waiting list, they would receive a significant merit aid award. Clearly, colleges are developing ever-more creative strategies to protect their own interests. So how should an IEC respond? Three suggestions stand out.

Manage expectations. IECs are used to doing this to make sure the student and family are aware of “lottery” level admission rates at some top schools. But we should prepare our clients for other realities as well, particularly the possibility of a third round. We all know about first round (EA, ED1, and ED2) and second round (RD), but colleges are increasingly leaning hard on the third round (waiting list and nonstandard admissions offers) to craft their classes. We can help our clients prepare for some disconcerting possibilities: having to wait until June or July to get the answer they want; being required to spend their first year abroad or take freshman courses at community college; or starting at another less-favored school.

Develop a suitable list upfront. IECs are also used to doing this to make sure the student ends up with at least a couple of good-fit academic, social, and financial choices when decision time rolls around. But it becomes even more crucial when a likely school starts wait-listing aggressively and a target school employs preferential financial-aid packaging (that is, considers merit within the need-based pool). Knowing what your client has to offer is key: Does the applicant offer high grades or scores or a special sport or talent? Is the family legacy or full-pay? Even if a college is need-blind in admissions generally, only rarely will it be need-blind in taking from the waiting list. We should also consider how those factors might move a school from target to likely, or vice versa, when researching college lists.



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Knowing that a student may enter a third round, we might include some likely colleges where great merit aid could make starting there and then transferring attractive. For example, one in eight first-year students at the University of Southern California (USC) start in the spring. If USC is on your student's list, you might be wise to think in advance about where he or she could happily spend first semester if offered spring admission. A recent post on the IECA Member Network developed a crowdsourced list of colleges that offered alternative admissions this year.

We are being paid by our clients to understand what colleges are doing.

Our goal is to advise on admission factors and financial arrangements in a way that best serves our students; a college's goal is to maximize revenue while enrolling the students it wants.

Continue to educate yourself. We are being paid by our clients to understand what colleges are doing. Our goal is to advise on admission factors and financial arrangements in a way that best serves our students; a college's goal is to maximize revenue while enrolling the students it wants. We can keep our ears open, attend local talks by admissions representatives, go on tours, and pay attention to our colleagues on the Member Network. We can also read *Inside Higher Ed* and the *Chronicle of Higher Education* and bookmark key blogs and articles, such as Ron Lieber's definitive 2019 *New York Times* piece on need-aware schools, "Another Admissions Advantage for the Affluent: Just Pay Full-Price" (www.nytimes.com/2019/03/15/your-money/college-admissions-wealth.html). We should also ask questions about whether a college overenrolled last year, whether and how much it typically gaps, and when and to what extent it expects to go to the waiting list. Being aware that colleges are businesses—and increasingly act like it—can put us ahead of the game.

The key to success will be to figure out how the steps that colleges are taking could benefit your client. In the past, the Tufts Syndrome might have seemed to be a college's reaction because applicants didn't take it seriously. We now know that it's a yield-management strategy with solid business principles behind it—and an approach that is not going away. In fact, demonstrated interest (proving that a high-statistics student really wants to attend) is becoming important at a wider range of schools. Case Western, which surprised so many strong applicants with waiting list offers this spring, may be just the most recent example. Wise IECs will keep enrollment management considerations in mind as they work with their students and families. 



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Campus Visits



▲ Chapel Haven West was delighted to host **Christie Woodfin** (GA) (center) for a visit in April.



▲ IECA members (top photo) **Lee McClendon** (VT) and (bottom photo) **Margie Schaffel** (MA) attended the Gender Education Demystification Symposium (GEMS) Conference Reception at Skyland Trail—a nonprofit residential psychiatric treatment organization for people struggling with mental illness regardless of where they may identify on a spectrum of gender or sexual orientation—in Atlanta on February 18.

Letter of Appreciation for Tour

Dear Mark, Laurence, and Valerie,

I just want you to know that the Red, White & Blues Tour did not disappoint! We were splendidly guided by **Marilyn O'Toole** and **Joanne LaSpina**. It can't be easy keeping 27 IECs focused, on-time, and on our best behavior, but these ladies did it!

Many thanks to the planners in the home office. These tours and events are invaluable for our very necessary ongoing education.

I'm so happy to be a member of IECA.

Warm regards,
Victoria Hirsch, IECA Associate (CT)



Author's Corner



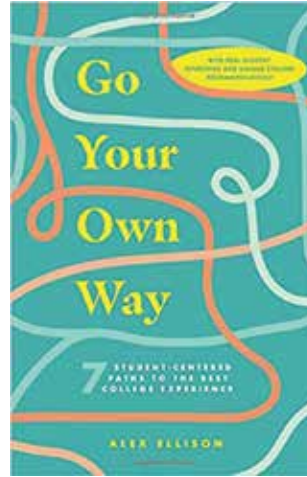
Interview: American College Campuses

(Social Sciences Academic Press 2018)

By *Qing (Shirley) Xian*

On March 17, China's Academic Sciences Academic Press organized a book sharing session in Beijing for Shirley Xian and broadcast the session online in real

time, receiving more than 145,000 views. At the event, she used a dialogue approach (with a host) to share her perspective on value of college education in the United States, some recent perceived trends, how to plan, how to find the right fit college, and the value of campus visit. She answered many questions on site. The book is in Chinese.



Go Your Own Way: 7 Student-Centered Paths to the Best College Experience

(Dunce LLC 2019)

By *Alex Ellison*

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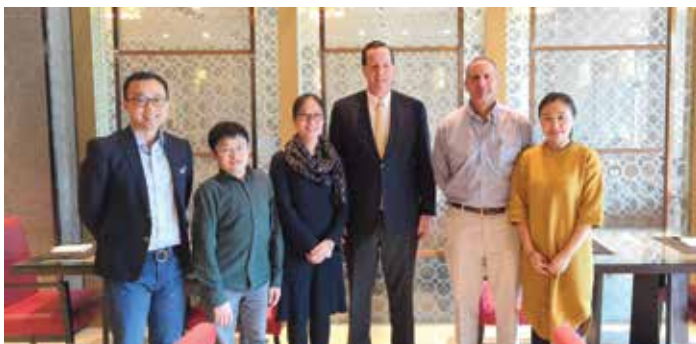
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Regional Groups

Beijing

On April 2, the group met with head of school Joseph Hanrahan at Marianapolis Preparatory School for breakfast (top). On April 5, we had our group meeting and discussed ethical conduct for consultants to share admissions results of their clients. Please contact Wanning Ding (wanningding.beijing@gmail.com) for more information about this group.



Philadelphia

The Philadelphia group met with Jacksonville University in King of Prussia on March 21 for a Lunch and Learn. On March 19, Anna Seltz organized a visit and tour of the Villanova nursing program, and in April we met with Guilford College. Please contact Joanne LaSpina (joanne@mycollegehelper.com) or Laura Blanche (blanchecollegeconsulting@gmail.com) for additional information about our group.



New Jersey

Jacksonville University hosted a lovely lunch for the New Jersey group in March, complete with appetizers, a short video on the school, and packed bags. President Tim Cost generously flew in just for the lunch. We were also joined by Tim Taggart, VP of the student experience, and Julia Wiesner, the NJ rep. Pictured are Jen Principe, senior admissions counselor, James Madison University, Jill Siegel, Susana MacLean, Nikki Bruno, Amy Hallock, Janet Loren, Carolyn Mulligan, Sally Campbell, Stephanie Ackerman, Eileen Nolan, Lynne Rosenfeld, and Linda Kern. Please contact Carolyn Mulligan (insidersnetwork@comcast.net) for more information about this group



North Carolina

IECs in the North Carolina Triangle area visited Queens University of Charlotte on April 22 and were hosted by admissions representative Lizzy Menzer. We learned about their "Yes/And Promise," which combines diverse experiences with learning inside and outside the classroom. Pictured (l to r) are Belinda Wilkerson, Manjiri Sethna, Lizzy Menzer, Queens University of Charlotte, Liz Agather, and Wendy Briley. Please contact Manjiri Sethna (bewisec@gmail.com) for more information about this group.



San Diego and Orange County

San Diego and Orange County groups met on May 2 to discuss the trends we saw in admissions this year, and how it will affect the way we counsel students and families in the coming admission cycle. Attending were San Diego members Jackie Woolley, Holly Hauser, Jeanette Wright, Susen Herold, Carey Cimino, Margot Hutchison, and Lani Asato and Orange County members Barbara Klein, Lena Kobayashi, Holly Giudice, Gail Nichols, Mona Inamdar, and Chrissy Mossbarger. Please contact Jackie Woolley (summitcollegecounseling@gmail.com) for more information about this group.





In the News

Bari Norman appeared on NBC's *Today* in "Admissions Scandal: Colleges Need to 'Step Up,' Analyst Says" on March 13.

Nancy Federspiel (MA) was quoted in "What Kids Learn From Aiming High and Failing" in the *Herald Tribune* on March 19.

Terry Mady-Grove was quoted in "3 Tips for Using Extracurriculars to Make UP for Low Test Scores" in *College Covered*.

Lora Block (VT) was quoted in "The College Admission Scandal: Voices of Reason Part One" in *Forbes* on Mar 30.

Janet Rosier (CT) was interviewed on *Good Morning Connecticut*, WTNH Channel 8 New Haven, on March 14 and quoted in the *New York Times*' article "How to Find Trustworthy College Admissions Advice" on March 18

Barbara Connelly (MI) was interviewed by Detroit Local 4 News for "Counselors Offer Advice to Families After Charges Filed in College Admissions Cheating Scandal" on March 13.

Laurie Weingarten was on KABC Talk Radio in Los Angeles. She appeared as a guest discussing the recent College Admission bribery scandal.

Steve Mercer (CA) was quoted in "Amid Controversy College Consultants Expensive Yet Legal" on *Consulting.US*.

Cynthia Flowers, Associate member (GA), was recognized as the IEC who worked with student Jordan Nixon in "I got into 39 colleges without cheating: What applying to schools looks like in 2019" in *USA Today* on March 14.

Jane Shropshire's (KY) op-ed "College Admissions Scandal Exposes a Badly-Broken System. To Fix It, Focus on Students" was published in the *Lexington Herald Leader* on March 22.

Steven Mercer and **Mark Sklarow** were quoted in *The San Jose Mercury News* article "Your Kid's an Average Student: What's It Cost to Boost His College Application?"

Gail Grand (CA) and Mark Sklarow were quoted in "How to Find a College Adviser Who Won't Get You Arrested" on *Policygenius* on March 22.

Jill Tipograph (NY) was quoted in "Some wealthy parents even offer bribes to get their kids into the best summer camps" on *MarketWatch.com* on March 30.

Stephanie Meade (CA) was interviewed for "Deep Dive: Discussion on College Admission Scandal" on *Fox Nation*. She was also quoted in the *Hollywood Reporter* article "Hollywood's Go-To College Counselors Respond to Cheating Scandal: This Is Not the Standard" on March 12 and in the *Wall Street Journal* article "Remember, It's Their College Years, Not Yours" on March 16.

Cigus Vanni, Associate member (PA), was quoted in "Is It Moral and Ethical to Pay for an Advantage in the College Admission Process?" in *Forbes* on March 19.

Eric Endlich, Associate member (MA), was quoted in "The College Admissions Scandal Highlights Just How Much Successful People Believe an Elite Education Matters in *Business Insider* on April 19 and in "Is It Moral and Ethical to Pay for an Advantage in the College Admission Process?" in *Forbes* on March 19.

Evelyn Alexander (CA) appeared on *Good Morning America* in "Prep School Lands in Center of College Cheating Scandal" on March 18 and was quoted in "Counselors Offer Advice to Families After Charges Filed in College Admissions Cheating Scandal" on *ClickDetroit.com* on March 13.

David Thomas (MI) appeared on WPIX *News Closeup* in NYC in "Inside the College Admissions Scandal" on March 15.

Whitney Laughlin (British Columbia, Canada) and Christine Chapman (MA) were quoted in "Ringleader of Admissions Scam Also Ran a College Counseling Firm for Families in China" in *Higher Education* on March 15. The article included a link to IECA's *Principles of Good Practice*.

Nina Heckler, Associate member (TN) appeared on WBBJ *Good Morning America* in Jackson, TN.

Janet Rosier's (CT) blog entry "The College Admission Scandal" was published in the Hearst Connecticut newspapers online editions.

Herbie Walker (NV) appeared in the Inside Education segment "Exploring Post-High School Options: Careers and College" on *VegasPBS.org* (Season 19, episode 1921).

"My Take on the College Admission Scandal" by **Heather Ricker-Gilbert** (PA) was published in the *Centre County Gazette* in State College and is posted on her blog at *collegegateways.com*.

IECA's member survey was quoted in "7 Tips to Help You Ace Your College Applications" on *credible.com* April 25.

Mark Sklarow, IECA CEO, was quoted in the following articles, among others, placing **IECA** and its professional and ethical practice in the public eye after the Varsity Blues scandal was revealed.

- ASAE's *Associations Now* in "In Wake of Admissions Scandal, College Consultants Group Steps Up" on March 20.
- "Colleges Weigh Fate of Students With Tainted Applications" in *Education Week* on March 19.
- "Getting Your Kid Into College: Where to Draw the Line When Offering Help" on CNBC on March 27.
- "Stanford Kicks Out Student as Fallout From College Admissions Scandal Grows" on April 8 in the *Los Angeles Times*.
- "College Admission Scam: Actress Felicity Huffman to Admit Charges" in *U.S. News and World Report* on April 4.
- "The Legal Way the Rich Get Their Kids Into Elite Colleges: Huge Donations For Years" in the *Los Angeles Times* on March 22.
- "As College Consulting Expands, Are High School Counselors Advocates or Adversaries?" in the *Star Advertiser* on March 20.
- "USC Places Hold on Student Accounts of Those Linked to College Admissions Scandal" in the *Los Angeles Times* on March 22.
- An appearance on CNBC on "The business of college advisors is booming. Here's how to navigate the consulting process" on March 15.
- "What to Look for When Hiring a College Consultant," in *U.S. News and World Report* on April 4.
- "How to Navigate the Murky World of College Admissions Counseling" in *The Week* on April 29.
- "Poll: Americans Split on College Admissions Fairness" in the *Star Tribune* on April 4.



Initiatives

Kiersten Murphy (WA) hosted Allie Jacobious of High Point University at her new office in the Seattle area. Many IECs were in attendance, including IECA Associate members **Eileen Restrepo** and **Donna Mezey**.

Alan Haas (CT) and **Nicole Busby**, Associate member (CT), spoke on the topic "Scandals, Standardized and Sports" at Woodway Country Club in Darien, CT on April 30.



THE ARCH LEARNING COMMUNITY

The Arch Learning Community is a comprehensive program designed to support students with diagnosed learning disabilities and/or learning challenges. Through cohort classroom learning, customized academic coaching, weekly seminars, specialized advising and a pre-orientation program, students acquire the necessary skills to be successful in their degree program.

For more information contact:

Katie Fernandes

Associate Director

Arch Learning Community

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dean.edu/arch



KATZ AWARD: NOW ACCEPTING NOMINATIONS

Irvin W. Katz, one of the founding members of IECA, lived his life in service to others, as a mentor to many consultants and as a steward of community volunteerism.

In 2006, The Irvin Katz Memorial Award was established to honor those members of IECA who make extraordinary voluntary contributions of their time and talents to community organizations that benefit the educational needs, health and well-being of all our children.

THE IRVIN W. KATZ SERVICE AWARD IS PRESENTED ANNUALLY AT THE IECA FALL CONFERENCE IN RECOGNITION OF A MEMBER'S SIGNIFICANT CHARITABLE WORK FOR THOSE A PARTICULAR ORGANIZATION SERVES. THE KATZ AWARD IS CONSIDERED TO BE ONE OF THE HIGHEST HONORS A CONSULTANT CAN RECEIVE!

The IECAF Board invites all members of IECA to nominate a Professional or Associate Member consultant for consideration, based on personal knowledge of his or her contributions to the community. We also welcome self-nominations for consideration of the award. The award committee will gather names until Friday, August 2, 2019. Please send to lgrattan@iecafoundation.org.



Therapeutic Program Spotlight: Gold Coast Down Syndrome Organization

In 2018, the IECA Foundation awarded \$3,000 to the Gold Coast Down Syndrome Organization. This organization strives to be a proactive, dynamic support group to all individuals with Down Syndrome and their families. They promote the inclusion of those with Down Syndrome through education and advocacy. The Learning Program works with 70 families to educate both par-ents and children. 95% of parents feel the Learning Program had a large impact on their children's education and 97% noted an appreciable growth in knowledge.





Introductions

Please Welcome IECA's New Professional Members



Joan DeSalvatore (PA) has been an IEC for 7 years and was an Associate member. Currently, she works at AcceptU, a company comprised solely of former admissions

officials, in addition to her own practice. Previously, she was the associate dean and director of undergraduate programs at Lehigh University, College of Business and Economics; assistant dean and director of student affairs and activities at Columbia Business School, Columbia University; and assistant dean of student and academic affairs at the School of International & Public Affairs, Columbia University. She also offers free or low-fee college advising services to local and remote first-generation and low-income students.

DeSalvatore holds an MA in psychological counseling from Teachers College, Columbia University, and a BA in psychology and minor in education from Barnard College, Columbia University. She attended IECA's 2011 Summer Training Institute and is a member of PACAC.

A proud mother to three adult children and two grandchildren (who unfortunately live a seven-hour drive away), DeSalvatore is happily married and living with a number of cats. She enjoys quilting because she loves to play with color and shapes (and sadly cannot seem to be able to learn to draw or paint).

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Whitney Enwemeka (CA) has been an IEC for 2 years and was an Associate member. Before becoming an IEC, she served as an assistant director for the University of Southern

California (USC) Office of Undergraduate Admission and the Marshall School of Business for more than 5 years and oversaw a student ambassador program at the Marshall School of Business.

Enwemeka earned her BA in African American-ethnic studies at California State University-Fullerton and completed an MS/MBA in social entrepreneurship at the USC Marshall School of Business. She is a member of NACAC and WACAC.

This summer, Enwemeka will return to USC as an admissions coach and college essay instructor for their Bovard Scholars Program, a free, 3-week residential program for high-achieving students with financial need. She recently helped Ethan "College Essay Guy" Sawyer with his Matchlighters Scholarship program.

Enwemeka enjoys listening to her favorite podcasts, watching random documentaries, working out, actually cooking the hundreds of recipes she's pinned on Pinterest, and traveling the world. So far, she has visited 24 countries, but who's counting?

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Martha Garfield (CA) has been an IEC for 4 years. Previously, she was director of college counseling at George Stevens Academy in Blue Hill, ME; a college advisor for Maine

Educational Talent Search (A TRIO program for high-achieving, first-generation, low-income high school students); and an academic advisor for the Explorations Program at the University of Maine.

Garfield holds a BA in international affairs and Spanish from the University of Maine and an MA in English/TESOL from San Francisco State University. She attended IECA's Transitioning to Private Practice in 2015 and is a member of NACAC and WACAC and a certified educational planner.

An East Coaster by birth, Garfield is a West Coaster by choice—who needs winter? Before getting into education and becoming an IEC, she was a sea kayak guide in Maine, Mexico, and Washington for 15 years. She loves to be outdoors: hiking, walking, paddling, and camping. When she can't be outside, she often has her nose in an enthralling historical novel.

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Lindsay Greco (GA), an IEC for 6 years, was an Associate member. Previously, she was an admissions counselor at Savannah College of Art & Design.

Greco has a BA in international affairs and political science from the University of Georgia and an MA in international affairs, the Middle East, from American University. She is a member of SACAC and NACAC.

Greco was a member of Leadership Savannah, class of 2018. She is a volunteer counselor for Matchlighters Scholarship and a wish volunteer for Make-a-Wish Georgia, as well as a member of the Junior League of Savannah and a board member for Long Point HOA.

As the mother of three young children, Greco stays very busy and is an avid tennis player. When time allows, she also enjoys traveling to new places and loves to read and watch true crime documentaries.

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Denise Haile (MA) has been an IEC for 3 years and was an associate member. She was director of admission for Cambridge College and Simmons School

of Management and held progressively responsible admissions leadership jobs throughout the Boston area.

Haile holds a doctorate in higher education administration from Northeastern University, an MBA from Bentley University, and a bachelor's degree from Harvard University.

Haile and her husband are parents of three children, two of whom have gone through the college admissions process. She has traveled widely and enjoys working with US domestic and international students.

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Lynne Hawkes (NC) has been an IEC for 6 years. Previously, she was an education advisor and the director of college counseling at Grace Christian School;

assistant director, Center for Teaching and Learning Excellence, Florida Institute of Technology; environmental specialist, Florida Department of Environmental Regulation, and several earlier environmental science-related positions.

Hawkes earned a master's of environmental management from Duke University, a BS in environmental science with a minor in biology from Allegheny College, and a certificate in College Admissions Counseling from UC-Riverside. She is a member of NACAC and SACAC.

Hawkes is a board member of Concentric Development Inc, an organization that works alongside nonprofit foundations that sponsor work in developing nations. At Duke University Nicholas School of the Environment, she is an alumni council member and was previously an alumni admissions advisory committee volunteer for Duke's Office of Alumni Affairs. She currently volunteers as a career coach for Dress for Success.

Hawkes loves exploring the great outdoors and traveling with her husband and their four kids and their families, hiking, sailing, biking, kayaking—anywhere they can get off the beaten path. They also enjoy sharing meals with friends, taking any opportunity to fill their house with fellowship and music.

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Martha Jones (CA) has been an IEC for 7 years. Previously, she was a high school counselor at Roseland University Prep in Santa Rosa.

Jones holds a BA from Sonoma State University, attended National Chanda University in Taipei as a foreign exchange student, and earned a certificate in college and career counseling from UC–Berkeley. She is a member of NACAC and WACAC, where she served on the SLC planning committee.

Jones is an avid gardener and reader and enjoys walkabouts.

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Kris Kim (CA) has been an IEC for 15 years. She has more than 15 years of professional experience in higher education, including various research projects and

fellowships. She also writes about college admissions for various newspapers and magazines.

Kim earned a PhD in education from UCLA, an MA in education from Stanford University, and a BA in economics from UCLA.

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Lisa Kraft (CA) has been an IEC for 4 years and was an Associate member. Her professional background includes a long tenure as a school counselor, a liaison

to schools, and work in public relations. After 15 years in the public school system, she joined a practice whose philosophy about working with students and families matches her own.

Kraft has a BA in mass communications from UC Berkeley and an MS in counseling, school specialization, from San Francisco State University. In addition, she has a pupil personnel credential for the State of California and is a CEP. Kraft attended IECA's 2016 Summer Training Institute and is a member of AICEP, NACAC, ASCA, and ACA. She is a volunteer scholarship reader for the University of California at Berkeley Alumni Association.

When Kraft is away from the office, she is usually hiking with her husband and dog, cycling, baking, traveling, and exploring all aspects of the San Francisco Bay Area.

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Suzanne Lewis (AZ) has been an IEC for 3 years and was an Associate member. As an educator in the Tempe Union High School District for 20 years, she taught

English and AP English, was coordinator of Gifted and AP Services, and was an instructional technology trainer. In addition, she taught at the Center for Academic Precocity at Arizona State University and was an adjunct faculty member for Rio Salado College.

Lewis holds a BA in theatre arts from Pepperdine University, a teacher certification from Ottawa University (AZ), and an ME in education, curriculum and instruction from Arizona State University–Tempe. She attended IECA's 2016 Summer Training Institute and earned a certificate in college counseling from UCLA Extension.

Lewis is a member of the Consortium of Higher Education LGBT Resource Professionals (CHELRP), NACAC, and RMACAC. She is a notetaker and communication liaison for IECA's Associate/Student Virtual Roundtable and the founder of IECA's affinity group Supporting LGBTQ+ Students. Lewis is active in her children's schools and Boy Scouts. In addition, she is a trained GLSEN Phoenix volunteer serving on the Education Cadre, and a passionate ally, advocate, and activist for LGBTQ+ youth and adults alike.

Lewis lives in Chandler, AZ, with her husband of 26 years, John, and her sons Jack, who will attend MIT, and Nick, who is a rising high school sophomore. She and her husband are avid baseball fans and Arizona Diamondbacks season ticket holders.

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Anjanita Mahadoo (MA) has been an IEC for 6 years and was an Associate member. Previously, she taught high school in Philadelphia's suburbs, taught at Rutgers

University, and worked in behavioral treatment centers for children and teenagers in California.

Mahadoo, whose first language is French, earned a BA in psychology and French studies, an MA in postcolonial studies from Rutgers, and an MS in education from St Joseph's. She earned a certificate in college counseling from UCLA Extension and attended IECA's 2018 Summer Training Institute. She is a member of NACAC, NEACAC, MLA, and NAFSA.

Born in Mauritius, an island off the east coast of South Africa, Mahadoo gives back to the community by helping Mauritian students, most of whom are low income/high-need, with their US college applications and financial aid applications as well as scholarship searches. The number of Mauritians applying to US colleges has increased considerably since she began her efforts. Mahadoo also serves underprivileged families in the larger Boston community and takes on a couple of pro bono clients every year. She volunteers as a coach with SHE-CAN, which empowers low-income young women from developing countries, and at MIT as a parent-connector.

A single mother, Mahadoo has two children in college at MIT; her son is in the MEng program in artificial intelligence and her daughter is currently a junior applying for MD/PhD. She loves traveling to foreign countries—more than 50 so far—and speaks seven languages. She also loves nature and street photography and has collection of over 25,000 photos.

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Shaun Ramsay (MA) has been an IEC for 3 years. He most recently served as assistant director for admissions and student affairs in the School of Music at Boston University.

Previously, he was the assistant director for recruitment at the Eastman School of Music at the University of Rochester, and admissions and student services coordinator at the Longy School of Music in Cambridge, MA.

Ramsay received degrees in music performance and economics from the Eastman School of Music and the University of Massachusetts respectively, and is an alumnus of the New England Conservatory Prep division. Ramsay has presented widely on admissions and enrollment at conferences, including NACAC, the Performing Arts Admissions Roundtable Conference, and the New York State School Music Association, as well as at numerous high schools and universities nationally and internationally.

Ramsay lives in Natick, MA, with Jared, his chef and husband (in no particular order). When not eating, Shaun enjoys CrossFit and spending time with friends and family at their cottage on Square Pond in Maine.

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Sarah Rickelman (CT) has been an IEC for 10 years. Previously, she worked in finance on a deal team in private equity in Washington, DC, and subsequently in Hartford, CT. After seven years in finance, she shifted gears to educational consulting, applying many of the analytical skills used in her former profession to advise clients about the college process.

Rickelman earned a BA in economics from Dickinson College and an MBA from the University of Maryland's Robert H. Smith School of Business. In addition, she completed a certificate in college consulting from UCLA Extension.

With a passion for the arts, Rickelman has continued to support artists and programming in her local community through her involvement with the Shoreline Arts Alliance, a nonprofit organization where she served as a board member and treasurer from 2014–16. Her support of the arts was also exemplified in her role as cultural arts chairperson of the Island Avenue Elementary School, where she served as treasurer of the Parent Teacher Organization from 2016–2018. Currently, she volunteers her time helping A Better Chance scholars with their college process.

Rickelman has three children ages 12, 11, and 6. In her free time, she loves to ski with her family.

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Valori Stitt (CA) has been an IEC for 5 years and was an Associate member. She previously was a mobile software technology consultant for Zindigo Inc. and at Hewlett-Packard she held positions as strategic alliance manager, business development manager, and marketing team manager.

With a BS in marketing from San Jose State University, Stitt went on to earn an MBA from Santa Clara University, and a certificate in college counseling from UCLA Extension. She also completed courses from Stanford's Writer's Studio and is a member of NACAC and WACAC.

Stitt has been a featured speaker on college admissions issues for a local school district's Countdown to College annual events and is a published travel article writer. She has been an MVLA Scholars college coach and scholarship administrator since 2014, an AVID College Mentor since 2014, a grantee manager for Silicon Valley Social Ventures, and a retired Junior Achievement economics instructor.

Stitt is married and is a parent to two children, one postcollege in a financial services career and the other a junior in college.

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Jackie Woolley (CA) has been an IEC for 6 years and was an Associate member. She began her career as a clinical psychologist specializing in cognitive therapy with adults; children; and adolescents with depression, anxiety, and stress-related disorders.

Woolley holds a BA in experimental psychology from the University of California at Santa Barbara, an MA and a PhD from the California School of Professional Psychology at Los Angeles, and a certificate in college counseling from the University of California–San Diego Extension. She attended IECA's 2014 Summer Training Institute and is a member of WACAC. Since 2015, Woolley has been a cocoordinator for IECA's San Diego Regional Group.

Woolley volunteered as a college coach for YALLA San Diego, a nonprofit that supports refugee and immigrant students in East San Diego, and was a founding board member and mentor for Partners in College Success (PiCS), a nonprofit that supports first-generation students. She continues to mentor two students through their college years.

Woolley and her husband have three children who have graduated from college—a daughter who is a television producer, a son traveling the world, and a daughter who works in the film industry. They recently began splitting their time between Southern California and Wyoming, where she has started a second practice.

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On the Road

TACAC

IECA was represented at the TACAC conference in Dallas, TX, March 24–25. **Amanda Fogler**, IECA manager of member outreach and engagement, met with college admissions professionals, school counselors, IECA members, and nonmember consultants in the exhibit hall. IECA Associate member **Sue Pignetti** (TX) also volunteered her time at the IECA table, speaking to potential members about the benefits of IECA membership.

SACAC

At the SACAC conference in Atlanta, GA, in April, **Caitlin Myers**, IECA membership associate, along with volunteers **Lindsay Fried**, Associate member (GA), and **Helese Sandler** (GA) conducted outreach efforts in the exhibit hall.



▲ Leading a workshop for new IECs who are transitioning from school counseling at the SACAC Conference in Atlanta are (l to r) **Mark Cruver** (GA), **Belinda Wilkerson** (NC), IECA's CEO **Mark Sklarow**, and **Helese Sandler** (GA).

◀ CEO **Mark Sklarow** at the IECA table with the new CEO of ZeeMee, Vanessa Didyk.



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Woodhall School, The	28	https://woodhallschool.org

Year in Review

The IECA membership year runs from July 1 to June 30. As this year draws to a close, we want to share a few 2018–19 highlights:

Membership in the Association passed the **2,000** mark.

The IECA website lists more **school** and **therapeutic tour opportunities** than ever before and we track those opportunities better. Plus, IECA coordinated tours to **65** different college campuses in 9 states and England. Watch for upcoming tours to the Pacific Northwest, the Southeast, California, and a repeat of the Big 10+ tour.

The **IECA Member Network** launched and participation in the peer-to-peer discussions already exceeds the old TalkList and includes the ability to search for past discussions.

Participation in IECA events—conference, tours and more—by **schools, programs, and colleges** are at historic levels.

Our **37 regional groups** are active and along with our many affinity groups, expanding and playing an ever-increasing role in IECA.

Varsity Blues brought tremendous attention and interest to IECA and our members as the leading voice in ethical, knowledgeable consulting in nearly all the 400 news stories that appeared following the scandal. As a result, **inquiries from potential clients are up, web searches for IECs, membership inquiries, and public awareness have all increased significantly.**

IECA now holds **20 educational programs** annually—not including tours and regional events—that include the largest-ever College Symposium in Philadelphia, a successful business-focused retreat in Florida, STI on both coasts, new webinars, successful conferences, and coordinated events with NATSAP and School Connections. And we plan to expand our offering in the coming year.





Managing
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Clients
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IECA⁺
TM

Member-to-Member

THE **NEWSLETTER** OF THE INDEPENDENT EDUCATIONAL CONSULTANTS ASSOCIATION

June/July 2019

Hot Topics on the IECA Member Network

See page M3 for instructions on how to search for a discussion.

College

- Engineering with liberal arts
- Resources for homeschooling parents
- Substance free dorms
- Postdecision interaction with students (gifts, events, info)

School

- Placement for teenage student with autism
- Military school feedback
- SSAT Flex

Grad School

- Online MCAT prep recommendations
- GMAT or GRE for MBA applicants?
- Is an MBA worth it?

Therapeutic

- ISO "wilderness-light" summer program
- Therapeutic boarding school with flight training?
- NATSAP connect app



New Initiatives Roll Out at Annual & Board Meetings


Many new and expanded programs were announced at the Annual Meeting and Board of Directors meeting during the Chicago conference this spring. These include:

- Establish educational "learning intensives" to train members in key, critical areas of knowledge
- Create an international training (akin to STI) for newer IECs working globally
- Explore lobbying efforts in the face of the Varsity Blues scandal and subsequent efforts in California and elsewhere to register or license IECs
- Establish a China consulting subcommittee of the Global Committee
- Build on the national PR success in March and April and create training for members to develop their own media relations strategy
- Maximize the successful launch of the Member Network by making full use of the platform's technological offerings to include Affinity and Regional groups
- Repeat the popular (and sold out) Big 10+ College tour, plus offer more tours, both general, such as the upcoming WOW tour, and specific, such as arts, LD, and more

- Continue the evolution of *Insights* toward longer, more in-depth, professional journal-style articles and emphasize *5 Minute News* for topical content.



We also shared that IECA's annual budget has passed the \$3 million mark. At the same time, IECA's reserves had been depleted as a result of growth, new programming, and board development during the last several years that drew down reserves. At the recommendation of our auditor, IECA's board adopted a new policy that will require the Association to maintain reserves to ensure the operation of the organization for one year, even in the face of a catastrophic national emergency that could necessitate cancellation of in-person events. Over the next several years, the Association will seek to build this "rainy day fund" to more than \$600,000.

See the Back Page in this issue of *Insights* for recognition of our recent successes. 

Virtual Roundtable Is Priceless

By Margot Hutchison, IECA Associate (CA), and Manjiri Sethna, PhD, IECA Associate (NC)

We were excited to hear that **Jeff Levy** (CA) and **Jennie Kent** (Columbia) were cohosting a monthly Virtual Roundtable for IECA Associate and Student members—an hour-long meeting usually held on the last Friday of each month. Led by those two experienced moderators, the group discusses current topics, resources, and processes. We've covered everything: how to get teenage boys to respond and check their emails, college visits, financial aid questions, over-involved parents, IEC processes meeting-by-meeting, and the most current news and changes in the industry—it's a mini training institute each month. The resources shared encompass everything from standard "go-tos" used by experienced IECs to new sites, tools, and lists. It's a wealth of information and a monthly sanity check. As a bonus, if a session is missed, notes are shared through Google Docs and are available to go back and revisit. It is a tremendous value, almost priceless.

We highly recommend the roundtable to any level of IEC and wanted to share our perspectives from two different levels of experience, Margot is a newer IEC and Manjiri is an IEC who has been in practice for seven years.

Margot's perspective. After two years of helping students pro bono, receiving a college counseling certificate through UCSD, going to conferences and visiting colleges, and attending the Summer Training Institute (STI) last summer, I had my first full-blown admission season last fall. It was a trial by fire. I stared down the barrel of an email written by a grandfather who accused me of guiding his granddaughter straight on the path to homelessness by letting her choose film as a major. I helped a student apply to the wrong university—it had a very similar, almost identical, name as the university where he and his father had connected with the coach. I also had several students get into their dream schools and one student who sent me a picture of every acceptance, with a "seven for seven, baby!" caption on the last one.

Through the roundtable, I had a monthly reality check to keep things in perspective. I learned from other members that my experiences were not too out of the ordinary. I realized that I know a lot as well—I've had the mental Horshack moments of "Ooh, ooh I know this one." One of the professional members on the Zoom meeting last month commented on how great it was to check-in on what everyone was doing process-wise and to be able to discuss current trends and practices. The process discussions have

really helped me refine the way I work with my students. During January and February, when I was assessing how the first season went and adjusting my business model, the roundtable helped fuel ideas for all aspects of my business. I'm feeling more like a grizzled IEC each month, and after each roundtable, I feel less as if I'm alone on an island and more as if I have a generous, ethical, intelligent, and savvy group of colleagues.

Manjiri's perspective. I've been an IEC for seven years; my journey started with IECA's 2012 STI, where I met incredibly passionate classmates who continued to support one another as we grew our practices. So, what value could this monthly virtual roundtable offer me? The answer is a no brainer: a place to reconnect with fresh perspectives from newer IECs, learn from them, and refresh what might be my "rusty" knowledge. For example, in a discussion about next steps in the process after initial consultation, a newer Associate member shared that he likes to give an overview of the next 6–12 months and then dive into individual modules. I noted that in my interactions with students in 9th or 10th grade, they are not ready to take in the big picture overview and can feel overwhelmed; giving them small steps, a month or two at a time, is helpful. I loved the idea of the modules, however.

Such interactions can only increase our ability to see "outside the box," which for me was this member's approach to providing services by thinking of them as modules, allowing for flexibility to adjust and customize for the variety of students we serve. It is a refreshing thought for me to rethink and infuse the modules approach into my work.

What I did not realize, however, was how important it is to have the opportunity to contribute from my experience and have a safe space to talk about challenges, mistakes, and successes. In a recent session, I shared my feelings about the challenges from the Varsity Blues Scandal and helping students focus on the right thing, not giving up on honesty and integrity. The group was supportive and energizing with comments that recognized the value of my perspective. One comment from an Associate member gave a boost to my self-confidence: "I was really struck by your comment. How do we keep them from giving up on honesty and integrity?" I was in a newer IEC's shoes not too long ago and such an opportunity to interact would have been invaluable.



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Tips for Connecting on Member Network

Since our new IECA Member Network Community has replaced the IECA TalkList, participation in discussions among members has increased significantly.

Here are two tips:

Cross-Post a Discussion to Another Specialty

If your topic applies to more than one specialty, you may want to cross-post it to another group to maximize the responses. Note: you have to join a group before you can post a message; members can join any of the specialty groups.

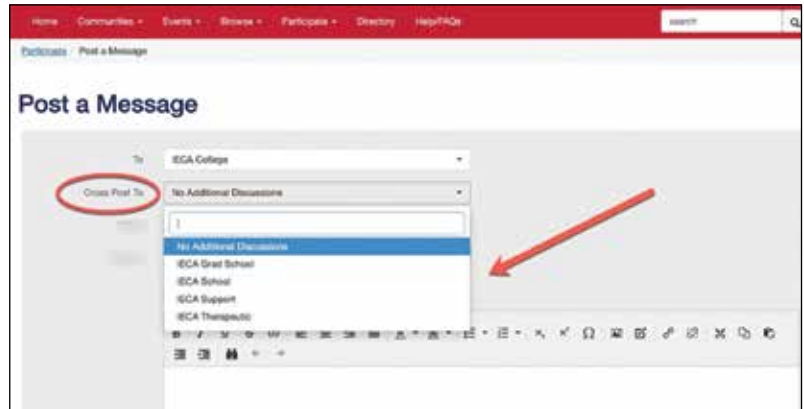
Search for a Discussion

You can search for a topic to see past discussions on a particular subject so that you don't have to repeat questions that have already been answered. The search box can be found on every page.

And remember, **Responses should almost always be sent using the 'Reply to Sender Privately' button** (see screenshot below), especially when responding to a member's request for help and suggestions. It is that member's responsibility to post a summary of the responses they received. Responses of 'thank you' and 'that's great' should always be sent privately to reduce the number of extra emails your colleagues receive.

If you want to reply to the entire community, just click on the reply button in your email or the **'Reply to Group'** link at the bottom of each email. Please be very thoughtful of your colleagues' time when selecting this option and use it only when you are contributing to a discussion in a substantive way.

For more tips, download the Member Network User's Guide: link.iecaonline.com/member-network



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Lifelong Learners

We both see the discussions as a crucial part of being lifelong learners, a fundamental tenet of our profession. The secret sauce that truly enhances the roundtable experience is Jeff and Jennie, the enchanting duo that skillfully navigates the space without really making it feel so. The witty, easy going, nonintimidating aspects of their personalities (we won't say which one is which) is a welcoming presence and the key to the interactions in an online environment. They have mastered the art of stepping in and out when necessary while giving honest and realistic perspectives from

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their diverse and highly experienced backgrounds. Each brings their own signature expertise, Jeff as a financial aid wiz and Jennie as an international specialist. They keep things moving along and ensure that we don't beat any topic to death.

The professionalism and overwhelming group knowledge are always evident, but there is also a family feel to the roundtable. The value of staying abreast of processes, current trends, and changes in our industry, especially in the current college admissions environment, cannot be overstated. The roundtable makes all of us better and smarter IECs. We look forward to it each month. 🙌

IECA Member-to-Member INSIGHTS M3



Committee Reports

Education and Training Committee

Chair: Allison Matlack (MA)

The Education and Training Committee has been busy this year. After a year in development, the mentoring webinar for new mentors and mentees has finally been completed and is available on the IECA website (<https://link.iecaonline.com/mentoring-webinar>). Susan Sykes, Gina Gerrato Greenhouse, and Belinda Wilkerson narrate and share thoughts and observations about what goes into a successful mentor-mentee relationship. Brimming from the success of that production, Gina and Susan Dabbar worked on putting together a guide for new Regional Group leaders with tips and suggestions for running meetings and hosting events. We're excited about the work that is happening at the regional group level and are eager to support those efforts.

Belinda has also been working on making the process of gathering session notes from conference breakout sessions more efficient and productive, and we're grateful to all of you who have offered to take notes. Members can now find the session notes on the IECA website (<https://link.iecaonline.com/conference-highlights>).

One of our bigger initiatives has been spearheaded by Joan Wittan and Aubrey Groves, who have been doing a lot of research, thinking, and planning to put together what we're calling Education and Training Intensives (ETIs). The goal of the ETIs is to help members focus on one particular topic in depth over a concentrated period of time. Each ETI will involve 15 hours of engagement through some combination of pre-conference sessions, breakouts, webinars, podcasts, readings, campus tours, and other programming options. The first intensive is in the process of development and we hope to announce it soon. Stay tuned for more details!

College Committee

Chair: Marilyn O'Toole (CA)
Vice Chair: Ibrahim Firat (TX)

What a fabulous year for the College Committee! The Tours Subcommittee, led by Joanne LaSpina and supported by Louise Franklin and Carolyn Gelderman, created two ambitious and successful tours. In fall 2018, we planned the Big Ten+ college tour, which required 1,000 miles of bus travel, and were welcomed by world-class institutions. In spring 2019, we held the Red, White, and Blues tour and traversed Tennessee, Mississippi, Alabama, and Missouri, covering an equal number of miles to visit 10 unique institutions, each providing invaluable information sessions.

Larry Blumenstyk and Ibrahim Firat took the lead in creating new breakout sessions that are responsive to current issues, which included adding many experts and admissions officers to panels, which will hopefully continue at future conferences. Pamela Kwartler accepted the responsibility of overseeing the committee's contributions to *Insights*, writing and curating dynamic articles that were valuable to all IECA members.

Our committee guided dynamic and overflowing roundtables at the conference, including Pamela and Tali Neshers' discussions that addressed student's anxiety. And Lora Block continued to work diligently with the Affordability Subcommittee to support affordable college opportunities.

Some of my closest friends are members of IECA because someone invited me to join them at a table or on the bus, so I asked each member of this year's College Committee to reach out to fellow members whenever possible. In summation, the committee members shared what they felt we had accomplished this year: "I've learned both how IECA serves us and how we can serve IECA. We are part of a vital, engaged, and professional community and the hard work of my colleagues has made me proud to be an IEC."

Global

Chair: Patricia O'Keefe (CA)
Vice Chair: Marina Lee (MA)

The global market is one of the fastest growing populations of the independent educational consulting industry, so it stands to reason that the Global Committee is bustling with activity. From 2018–2019, we produced 12 new webinars, provided 8 *Insights* articles, and hosted more than 4 breakout sessions and 2 roundtables.

In Los Angeles, we produced a half-day workshop "Advising Students from Asia, Guiding them Beyond the USWNR Top 50," with panelists from UCLA, USC, NYU, Initialview, Applerouth and ArborBridge.

Global Committee members were not just active in the United States but also attended and presented at conferences and events from as far away as Singapore, Shanghai, and London. We are passionate about global education and make great efforts to promote the professional caliber of IECA members as well as highlight the difference between IECs and agents.

For anyone interested in global education advising, we host an open committee session for all members just before the IECA conferences. You can also contact incoming chair Marina Lee at marinalee@cogitaeducation.com. We also offer a Facebook International Discussion Forum at www.facebook.com/groups/IECAInternationalDiscussion.

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Understanding Student Loans

By C. Claire Law, MS, CEP, IECA (SC)

What form comes to mind when you think of college financial aid? Drum roll: FAFSA. And what does federal financial aid consist of mostly? Drum roll: loans. Independent educational consultants (IECs) know that FAFSA stands for Free Application for Federal Student Aid, and loans are a form of federal financial aid that must be paid back with interest.

If students file a FAFSA, colleges automatically award federal loans, grants, and work-study if they qualify under Title IV funding. It's worth noting that although the government lends limited amounts, they are in fact quite generous considering that undergraduate students are still in their teens, have no cosigner, no collateral, and no established credit.

Through the federal Direct Loan program, dependent students can borrow up to \$5,500 in the first year, \$6,500 in the second year, and \$7,500 in the third and fourth years, of which \$2,000 is always unsubsidized. *Unsubsidized* means the student is responsible for paying the interest during all periods. *Subsidized* means the federal government pays the interest when students are enrolled.

Most IECA member consultants work with dependent students. The dependency status determines whose financial information goes on FAFSA. Undergraduate students typically enter their own and their parents' financial information. Graduate students are considered independent. To see whether your student meets qualifications for dependent or independent status, visit <https://studentaid.ed.gov/sa/fafsa/filling-out/dependency>.

Understanding Capitalization and Origination Fees

In my practice, I talk with families about financial aid early in the advising process and set up a meeting with the students to talk about loans. I explain facts about origination fees, interest rates, and repayment terms. I tell them that one way to avoid capitalization (unpaid interest that is added to the principal of the loan, increasing the loan amount) is to pay the interest every year. For example, in the first year, the interest on a federal Direct Loan of \$5,500 at 5.05% interest would be approximately

\$275. If that isn't paid, it will be added to the amount of the loan and subsequent interest will accrue on the increased amount of \$5,775 for the next year. Some clients don't believe me or don't understand, so I recommend two websites: one shows them how interest is calculated and explains capitalization (<https://studentaid.ed.gov/sa/types/loans/interest-rates#how-calculated>) and the other explains how to compare loans (<http://www.finaid.org/calculators>).



For my student Jessica, pictured, this concept was totally foreign, and she started looking at me as not her favorite person anymore.

As if interest accrual wasn't enough, there's also a cost for originating and disbursing loans. This fee is 1.062% or \$58.41 for originating an unsubsidized Direct Loan of \$5,500 in first year. (See chart on page M8.)

This means the student borrows \$5,550, the college receives \$5,441.59, the government gets the \$58 fee,

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What's Your Solution?



Other than books or gifts, what do you do to wrap things up with your students, once they've made their college choice and are ready to make the transition to college? —Laura Poullos

Following is a summary of responses from the IECA Member Network College Community.

- Hold a transition to college brunch for the graduates so they can hang out in their college shirts and you can discuss things incoming freshmen should know.
- Ask students to come by my office in May to pick up their graduation present and to get a picture for my social media.
- Send a list of college tips compiled by the class before them. Tips from the class of 2018 to the class of 2019.
- Hold a transition meeting to review a checklist of things parents and students need to know, including having a medical power of attorney in place, drugs/alcohol/sexual consents, how to prepare for being uncomfortable and homesick, budgeting/handling money, and so on. Have students go on their school's website and ask them where they would go for help if they fall behind

in a class, if they feel anxious or depressed, if they are looking for something to do, and so on so that they can navigate the site and can see the vast array of resources their school offers. Alternatively, do this in a group setting.

- Send an email (and snail mail too) that covers the basics of things like dorm insurance, health insurance, move-in tips, summer storage, and so on—the things families need to know but aren't obvious from the correspondence they get from the school.
- Send information to parents about legal issues that may arise with their student in college (see link). I refer them to a local attorney who handles all the documents for a small fee. <https://collegeboundmentor.com/getting-legal-house-order-adult-child-leaves-college/>
- Check in with them a few times during first semester to remind them that you are available for questions or support if they need it and to see how they're adjusting to life on campus.

Committee Reports, from page M4

College Affordability Subcommittee

Chair: Lora Block (VT)

The Subcommittee has been consistently advocating for IECA members who advise college-applicant families and students to include financial fit in their practices and to provide education and support to help them do so effectively. We are always looking for volunteers to help and join the subcommittee in the future. Please contact one of us if you're interested.

This past year we have carried out our professional educational activities in numerous ways:

- Created a two-year cycle of training on college affordability through a sequence of pre-conference workshops that follow our curricular outline document, *Helping Families Determine College Affordability in Five Steps* and our Roadmap for Training. IECs who attend all four pre-

conference workshops will get an outstanding foundation for how to work with families on issues of financial fit.

- Revised our "Five Steps" document to bring it up to date on important changes in the financial aid processes. It will be posted on the IECA website by the time of the conference in Chicago.
- Created *Step-by-Step Process of How to Pay for College*, an infographic flyer with a useful glossary, which is available for IECs to share with families. It's available on the IECA website.
- Offered break out sessions at all conferences, wrote articles for *Insights*, and facilitated conference roundtables.
- Created and used a Roadmap Tracking document to keep track of our numerous and varied training activities so that we make sure to cover our objectives.

- Worked with IECA to clarify the policy for earning CEs pursuant to NBCC rules. IECs are able to earn CEs for such sessions for AICEP, as noted on IECA conference materials.

- Advised CEO Mark Sklarow, at his request, about the suitability of creating relationships with certain vendors.

- Held informal quarterly roundtables on ZOOM for Subcommittee members to share knowledge, ask questions, and discuss concerns outside of our more formal monthly meetings.

- Organized our members to be responsible for specific areas of oversight in order to equitably share the work.

- Set goals for the upcoming year to institute webinars and better organize a library of useful documents for members on the IECA website.

but the student is responsible to pay the entire amount of \$5,500 plus the interest of \$275 over the coming year. I asked my student Jessica whether she could come up with \$275 over the next year, and she said she'd be able to pay it from her summer earnings.

Interest Rates for Direct Loans First Disbursed on or after July 1, 2018, and before July 1, 2019		
Loan Type	Borrower Type	Fixed Interest Rate & Loan Fees
Direct Subsidized Loans up to \$3,500 in the first year and Direct Unsubsidized Loans	Undergraduate	5.05% 5.05% (loan fee: 1.062% for loans disbursed on or after 10/1/18 and before 10/1/19)
Direct Unsubsidized Loans	Graduate or Professional	6.6% (loan fee: 4.248% for loans disbursed on or after 10/1/18 and before 10/1/19)
Direct PLUS Loans	Parents and Graduate or Professional Students	7.6% (loan fee: 4.248% for loans disbursed on or after 10/1/18 and before 10/1/19)

PLUS Loan For Parents

Parents of undergraduate students can borrow from the Federal Direct PLUS Loan at 7.6% interest and a fee of 4.248%. A little history provides the rationale behind this loan. The Reagan administration provided this loan in 1980 to offer liquidity for higher-income parents and opened the federal-guaranteed loan program to private lenders and servicers. It was done under the benign misnomer of Family Federal Education Loan Program or FFELP. Colleges increased their cost of attendance because it only meant that parents would take on a slightly larger PLUS loan each year. The mantra of financial aid administrators was that parents can afford college but must be willing to borrow. And borrow they did, especially those who could not afford to send their kids to college and thought a college education would take their kid out of the cycle of poverty.

Although much is made about the 1.5 trillion dollars of student loan debt carried by a combined 44.7 million borrowers (Friedman 2019), a congressional budget analysis found that "reducing federal lending would cause a shortfall of federal revenues" (Kreighbaum 2019). Because the government became the only lender, it earns money from loan fees and interest. Consider that approximately 26 million borrowers are in repayment (Friedman 2019), which means a constant stream of passive income for the government. Servicers get some of that money because they get paid by the government to collect payments. Unfortunately, they get paid more for receiving regular payments than for rehabilitating defaulted loans. Nevertheless, of the 44.7 million borrowers, only

5 million are in default. How many are struggling to pay and are placed in deferment or forbearance? 2.6 million (Friedman 2019).

When loans are in deferment or forbearance, a borrower can temporarily stop making or reduce payments, but interest continues to accrue. Servicers know this is a stop-gap measure to prevent default. For many borrowers, however, the better choice would be to enter an income-based repayment plan. Servicers are responsible for explaining them so that borrowers can enter a plan that best fits their financial situation.

The Department of Education has created many income-based repayment plans and continues to add more because when payments don't cover even the interest, loans go into negative amortization. It takes some time to explain the pros and cons of each plan, so it's much easier for servicers to place borrowers into the old-standing "deferment" plan, even though doing so adds costs to the loan. Students should be aware of this problem, study the income-based plans, and figure out which one they can live with. For more about income driven repayment plans, visit <https://studentaid.ed.gov/sa/repay-loans/understand/plans/income-driven>.

Public Service Loan Forgiveness (PSLF)

Many borrowers believe that if they work for a nonprofit organization, such as a school or hospital; recertify each year; and make the regular 120 payments over 10 years, any remaining balance will be forgiven. At the last Federal Student Aid conference in November of 2018, the Department of Education indicated that they received 28,021 applications for loan forgiveness and have approved only 96 applications (\$5.2 million). "I would not hold my breath" said Gary Carpenter, founder of the National College Advocacy Group, a nonprofit organization dedicated to teaching financial aid strategies to college advisors.



Although the picture of federal student loans seems dim, alternative loans from private lenders such as Navient, formerly SallieMae, are no better. When students or parents are ineligible for federal loans, colleges refer them to their preferred private lenders. Typically, they are more attractive because the interest rates are lower. But young borrowers and their parents may be unaware that variable rates could change as often as monthly, whereas federal rates are


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Student Loans, from page M7

fixed and offer steady repayments. As expensive as the Federal Direct PLUS loan for parents is, the fee is essentially a life insurance policy, whereby if the borrower dies the loan is forgiven. No such provision exists for private loans. In addition, the maligned income-driven repayment plans (e.g., ICR, IBR, Pay-As-You-Earn, REPAYE) were created to make repayments lower when students start working and increase them as their salary increase. Banks offer no such safety nets.

Keep Track

Studies show that if students graduate in four years and borrow only up to the aggregate federal limits, they typically can pay back their loans. To keep track of one's federal loans, the best site is the US Department of Education's central database for borrowers. It's called National Student Loan Data System (<https://nslds.ed.gov>) and it tracks the life of a loan, all payments, interest, penalties, and outstanding balances. Private lenders and servicers do not offer such a database, so borrowers must keep a close tally on the whereabouts of their loans.

Government-guaranteed loans for undergraduate students serve an important purpose: they help students pay for college, students have skin in the game, and parents end up borrowing less (Conkling 2018). In summary, Federal Direct Loans are available for undergraduate, first-year students, dependent on their parents. Loan interest and fees are a source of revenue for many parties. Transparency of loan information is essential. 

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Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP)

One condition for receiving federal loans is that the student must make progress toward a degree. Passing classes is important. For example, I came across "Nelly" at Old Navy and she revealed to me that she had failed some classes at the local community college while she was taking care of her mother who had cancer and was dying. She had to give back \$700 of her Pell Grant. I told her to appeal but she already had!

If you are working with a financially disadvantaged student who has extenuating circumstances, you need to tell them about SAP (Satisfactory Academic Progress). Those students are better off taking fewer classes, even though to qualify for any Pell they must be enrolled at least half-time. I'm happy to report that Nelly's uncle helped her pay the \$700 and she regained eligibility for aid. She's now at a four-year college doing well.

Meet the Newest Nominating Committee Members

Congratulations to IECA's newest nominating committee members, who were elected at the spring Annual Meeting in Chicago, IL. **Charlotte Klaar** (SC), **Jane Klemmer** (NY), and **Jesse Quam** (NC) will serve two-year terms. The Nominating Committee is responsible for proposing an annual slate of candidates for IECA's Board of Directors and Executive Committee that will best serve IECA's needs for the future. Chaired by **Ann Rossbach** (NJ), the other committee members include **Vita Cohen** (IL), **Alan Haas** (CT), and **Joan Koven** (PA).



Charlotte Klaar



Jane Klemmer



Jesse Quam

Managing Clients With Starry-Eyed Dreams

A conversation with Alan Haas, IECA (CT), Jane Klemmer, IECA (NY), Whitney Longworth, Summit Educational Group, and Betsy Morgan, IECA (CT)

Whitney Longworth: *It is such a delicate balance managing expectations with people when you're first meeting them. You want to be honest, but you also don't want to be discouragingly direct. How do you each navigate that?*

Betsy Morgan: I start by emphasizing our philosophy and process. Families are often operating under out-of-date assumptions because they don't understand how things have changed, so I explain things like grade inflation and recentered test scores, but I don't think intake is the place to be the crusher of dreams.

Jane Klemmer: I think we've all been guilty of dream crushing at some point, and that's what I am trying to do less of. I may share data about declining admissions trends, but I try to make it less personal and more "here are the facts." If I have access to the school profile online, I will give them a copy and explain its purpose and how to interpret it.

Morgan: Agreed. If you can establish yourself as an expert—which is why pulling the rug out from under them initially doesn't make sense—hopefully, those messages are going to be received with more respect and understanding. It's hard to get there, but whenever you can lead a family to draw their own conclusions, you'll be less likely to be viewed as the dark cloud raining on their parade.

Alan Haas: Our goal at the outset is to help families feel a sense of confidence in the process. We will not take a client on until after the first meeting when expectations are clear and we all agree that we are ready to work together. The student has the veto!

Longworth: *Alright, so let's say the family has agreed to work with you and you have presented them with a lot of this information, but they still clearly have lofty ambitions. What is your next move?*

Klemmer: When someone comes in after receiving first-quarter grades junior year, I cautiously give hope and encouragement where a positive trend in grades might make a difference. If official test scores are not yet available, I look at practice tests based



on tutoring, etc., recognizing there is still time to improve their results. By the end of junior year if scores have not moved and grades are unchanged, that's when we have the "come-to-Jesus" moment.

Haas: We start with a unique process of assessment to establish a base of knowledge and competence. That establishes our credibility and trust and enables us to guide expectations better. Of course, it doesn't always work!

Morgan: Definitely right. Another place that this comes up is with subject tests. When students take a practice or an official subject test and score in the 600s, we have something concrete. Maybe we shouldn't be looking at schools that require or recommend them? Definitely a good time to have a follow-up conversation about the list.

Klemmer: This brings up the importance of documenting certain things we say. I was advising a student who was solid but not a top student at his high school. Sensing the best approach was directness, I indicated in the first meeting that we would probably not be targeting Yale (the parents' alma mater) or other colleges in the top level of selectivity. Dad wholeheartedly agreed. A week later, before I provided a college list, he sent me their college visit plan. The list included Amherst, Williams, Cornell, and Duke! When his focus didn't change, I sent a periodic reminder: "We need to broaden this list to include schools that are more secure." I didn't want him to later tell me I had not been clear that their son was applying to all reaches.

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Whitney Longworth can be reached at wlongworth@mytutor.com.



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Animal-Friendly College Campuses

By Jordan Burstein, IECA Associate (IL)

Many colleges allow animals on campus, letting students bring small lizards, fish, and amphibians. There are also a few colleges that allow students to bring dogs and cats to campus. Beyond those that grant such sanctions, the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and the Fair Housing Act (FHA) require colleges to allow service and emotional support animals to attend with students. But there are very strict guidelines regarding the ADA and FHA, and the laws apply to both public and private colleges and universities.

- The ADA stipulates that colleges allow service animals on campus and in the dormitories.
- The FHA specifies that colleges allow service animals and emotional support animals in campus housing.

ADA Requirements

Under the ADA, emotional support animals are not covered. The dog or even miniature horse (yes, miniature horse) must be a service animal, which is a more difficult designation to obtain because the animal must perform a specific service that helps the student navigate their daily activities. Under the ADA, students can use service animals in housing as



well as around campus. If a student has an animal for depression or anxiety, however, they must request permission to have the animal under the FHA, which does allow service animals as well as emotional support animals in campus housing. But the FHA specifically limits the animals' availability to attend classes with the student.

When requesting to bring a service animal under ADA, there are some important points to know. Colleges are permitted to inquire as to what service the animal provides for the student but are not

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Pet-Friendly Campuses

A few colleges allow dogs or cats on campus without disability or emotionally specific needs. Some of these colleges bring puppies to campus while others allow students to bring their own animals.

Alfred State University
 Austin Peay State University
 Berry College
 California Institute of Technology
 Case Western Reserve University
 Chapman University
 Eckerd College
 Harvard University
 Iowa State University

Kansas State University
 Lees- McRae College
 Lehigh University
 Lyon College
 Maryland Institute College of Art
 Massachusetts Institute of Technology
 Reed College
 Rice University
 South Dakota State University

Stanford University
 State University of New York at Potsdam
 Stephens College
 Stetson University
 University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign
 University of Washington
 Washington and Jefferson College

Starry-Eyed Clients, from page M9



Haas: It is fair to say that if we are to work consistently with a student over time, the college list would be stronger, so that helps gain support for our recommendations. If the parents continue to up the ante, we will suggest that the family meet with the school counselor who will often be more conservative. Ultimately, we are trying to bridge the gap between expectations and reality.

Morgan: What about our role with the fragile kid? Do you ever have offline conversations not in front of the student if you think they might not be able to handle it? I don't like doing it, but I am having to do it more with some of my very anxious students.

Klemmer: Yes, I do. It is infrequent, but sometimes it helps to have an offline conversation to hear where the parent is coming from and to stress the whole notion that success extends beyond getting in.

Haas: Our process is one of empowerment. From scheduling the first session through all ongoing communication, everything is directly owned by the student so that they are actively engaged and driving the process. For shy or nervous students, that can put them at ease and give them a sense of control.

Longworth: I see more students with testing anxiety every season, and it becomes even more important that we manage expectations from the beginning. We want to take pressure off the student by having them feel prepared and confident in time for test day.



Longworth: *A common situation I run into is an average student who is pursuing athletic recruitment and homing in on top-level schools. How do you manage expectations in that instance?*

Klemmer: An athlete I advised this season was an average student who worked extremely hard and was often stressed out by school work. I repeatedly emphasized the benefits of finding an environment that would reduce, not enhance, her anxiety, but my recommendations for more academically appropriate colleges were shot down. She had hopes of being recruited by a Division I, household name university, but the process at many selective

schools did not progress after they received her grades and test scores. Although the student was ultimately recruited by a highly selective university and everyone was thrilled, I still have mixed feelings about the outcome, knowing the academic and athletic pressures in store for her.

Longworth: Sometimes the student does not have a chance for admission with more selective schools and is ignoring realistic recruiting opportunities. One of my students was being recruited by several schools, but she was laser-focused on the one reach and ended up not making the cut. Both she and her parents were so focused on trying to push to the next level that they completely lost sight of all her accomplishments.




Haas: We worked with a family where the father was trying to position his son for a top school using a sport as his "hook." He did nothing else inside or outside of school and was a good student, but not stellar. In this case, the parent expectations became a constant stumbling block. Seldom were the needs or interests of the student considered.

Morgan: We always need to remind families that "student" is first in student-athlete; this is not a game to be won.

Longworth: *Do you have any final advice to share?*

Klemmer: I've learned that there is no one best approach to managing expectations. Every family and situation are different and words that resonate with some, fall flat with others. I'm always assessing and reevaluating to consider what I might do differently next time.

Morgan: I've learned never to say never. I will say "extremely unlikely" or "dream" or "shoot for the moon," but ultimately the decision about where to apply is theirs. And when a no comes, if they say that I prepared them for it, I've done my job.

Haas: We advise our parents to keep perspective and love your kids for who they are, not for what you want them to be. 


Animal-Friendly, from page M10

allowed to ask about specific disabilities or documentation of disabilities. If the service animal is not housebroken or properly trained, colleges can request its removal from campus. Those conditions make having service animals on campus somewhat difficult for some students.

FHA Requirements

The Fair Housing Act is less strict about the types of animals used by students. In addition to dogs and miniature horses, cats can also be emotional support animals. Unlike the ADA, the FHA doesn't require an explanation of the service the animal provides, but colleges do have the right to ask about the type of support that the animal provides the student. They can also request a letter from a doctor or therapist validating the student's need for a support animal or even disability documentation.

Make an Informed Decision

Bringing an animal to campus is an enormous responsibility. Whether the students have special circumstances or not, they must be able to adjust to college and also tend to their animal's needs. Please have a conversation with families about these conditions, specificities, and potential obstacles as they decide whether to utilize a service or support animal. Most college and university websites have their explicit policies regarding ADA and FHA posted. 

For More Information

www.ada.gov/regs2010/service_animal_qa.pdf
<https://esadoctors.com/fair-housing-act-emotional-support-animals>
www.hud.gov/sites/documents/Pet_Ownership_Final_Rule.pdf

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