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# COLLEGE INSIGHTS GROUP

## NEWSLETTER

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April/May 2010

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### CHECK YOUR ENGINES

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Mark Your Calendar for  
our Free Presentation:

*Check Your Engines-  
A 12-Point Inspection  
to get ready for the  
College Application Process  
Saturday, April 24, 2010  
2:00 - 3:00 pm  
Ponte Vedra Beach Branch  
Public Library*

**Standardized Testing**  
Make sure you have registered  
for the ACT, SAT, and  
SAT II Subject tests  
that are offered  
in May and June.

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### ***Hello Students and Parents:***

*We hope April showers will bring you a bounty of opportunities, including college acceptances and summer activities.*

*For College Insights Group, spring has resulted in growth of our client roster. Fortunately, with three of us providing consultation services, we continue to deliver tailored and individualized guidance to each of our students. Satisfied parents tell us that our Tune-Up Session has “ignited a spark” in their children and that we have “opened their eyes” and given them a plan for high school courses, testing, and college admissions.*

*For high school seniors, April’s bounty is college acceptances. Now is the time to select your college. Whittling down your “Choices in April” may seem daunting. In this newsletter, we suggest criteria that will make this process manageable. In addition to acceptances and rejections, some may have received notices of being placed on a college’s waitlist. You may be unsure of what action, if any, to take. This month’s College Insight’s article is written by a college freshman who was accepted off a waitlist and is now attending the college of his dreams. Along with general pointers, we can provide waitlist guidance regarding your specific situation for a flat fee of \$300. If you are waitlisted, don’t delay. Call us now.*

*Please feel free to forward this newsletter to friends, especially high school seniors. Those desiring to subscribe may send an email to [info@collegeinsightsgroup.com](mailto:info@collegeinsightsgroup.com) with the subject line “newsletter” and we will add your email address to our subscribers list.*

***Keep driving toward the Finish Line,  
Diane, Mary and Aletha***

### **View College As An Investment**

College should be viewed as an investment of time, money and most importantly, an investment in your future. You will be spending the next four years at the college that you select, so choose wisely. Even at a state school, this investment can cost nearly \$60,000; some private colleges may exceed \$250,000 for four years. Most of us would not make such an expensive investment without extensive research, investigation and guidance. Is it worth it? Absolutely. The median yearly income of an individual with a high school diploma is \$33,176, while the median yearly income of an individual with a four-year bachelor’s degree is \$53,040. As far as unemployment, the latest numbers from the Bureau of Labor Statistics show that the unemployment rate for those holding only a high school diploma is 11.9%; the unemployment rate for those holding a bachelor’s degree or higher is 4.7% (March 2010).

## How to Make Your Choice in April-

Factors to consider in selecting the college to attend

May 1<sup>st</sup> is decision day – your decision day. After months of waiting to hear from the colleges to which you applied, now it is your turn to accept or reject the offers of admission. With acceptances in hand, it may feel a bit overwhelming to choose. Here are factors to consider when making your choice. The list is ordered based on importance.

1. **Financial package:** Compare each school's offer of scholarships, grants, loans, work-study programs, and student employment opportunities (including research assistantships).
2. **Academic environment:** Review the academic factors that inspired you to apply to the college. Look at majors offered, student-faculty ratio, faculty reputation, undergraduate focus, class sizes, facilities, libraries, study-abroad opportunities, co-ops or internship opportunities, and research focus.
3. **Size, location, affiliation and community:** These are criteria that you examined prior to applying. However the importance you placed on each may have changed over the past six months. For example, now you may be more comfortable living a plane-trip away from home. Include a second look at the composition of the student body.
4. **Availability of support services:** Determine the extent and breadth of academic counseling, career placement services, pre-professional advising, peer advising, personal counseling, mental health services, and student health facilities.
5. **Housing:** Delve into the campus culture regarding housing. Do most students live on campus for all four years? Is on-campus housing guaranteed for four years? If not, check into off-campus housing availability and pricing.
6. **Activities/Clubs/Social:** Explore the non-academic life on campus. Find out what clubs and organizations exist. Are fraternities and sororities pervasive? Are there athletic opportunities outside of varsity sports?
7. **Athletics:** Whether you are an athlete or a sports fan, it may be important to you to determine the level of athletics at the college. Look into whether the school offers athletic scholarships and what sports are offered. Determine the college's division of NCAA athletics.

## College Insights- from a University of Virginia Freshman

Once again, it is the time of year for decisions. This is especially true for students who have applied for colleges and face the daunting selection of a university. However, when colleges release their enrollment offers, there is one response that befuddles the situation even more, the waitlist. As a senior, I was given offers to several choice schools and rejected from others. Then I became waitlisted at the University of Virginia, my preferred university. Many questions ensued. "What can I do?" and "Can I influence the process in any way?" raced through my mind.

While the waitlist is formidable, a little determination will go a long way towards improving your chances of getting off the waitlist. The best place to start after you are notified that you have been placed on the waitlist is a phone call. Just one call to the admissions office will let them know that you are truly interested in their institution. Simply ask if you could send any supplementary information to help their decision, offer to interview with the university, and tell them how much you really want to attend. Make sure you get the name of whomever speaks with you. It never hurts to be able to refer to staff members by name or to send a "thank you" or follow up note. Usually, they will make a note in your file and they may move you up the waitlist over students who didn't show as much interest. Also make use of any connections you have with the university. If you met a professor while visiting or someone from work knows an alumnus who maintains strong ties to the university, any feedback that these people can give to the admissions office might be enough to influence them to admit you.

Then comes the hard part, you have to wait. During this time, there isn't a whole lot more you can do. Just be patient and enjoy your senior year. Make sure that you're prepared to attend another institution in case you don't get off the waitlist. Also, it is worth realizing that if you are on the waitlist, it means that you are worthy of attending their institution. You are on the waitlist solely as a result of limited space. So with this in mind, if you find yourself on the waitlist, have courage, express your interest, and may your future bode well.

~Ross, UVA 2013

**SparkPlug:** *William R. Fitzsimmons, the dean of admissions and financial aid at Harvard College, on parental involvement: A recent study by the College Board and the Art and Science Group has found that 60 percent of the students surveyed were satisfied with their parents' role in their college search. Only 6 percent wanted their parents to be less involved — perhaps including the 1 percent who reported that parents wrote their essays or the 3 percent whose parents filled out their application forms — who may be the truest "helicopter parents." The most provocative finding was that nearly 30 percent wanted their parents to be more involved in the college admissions process. There are many students who would be happy to have more help of all sorts from their parents.*

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