



IECA Consultants
can win \$1,000 at the
Boston Conference

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Featured
presentations at
IECA's Boston
Conference

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Fit Not Rank,
and Test
Optional
Colleges

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The Newsletter of the Independent Educational Consultants Association

INSIGHTS

April/May 2007

CALENDAR OF UPCOMING EVENTS

April 23 - 25 Pre-Conference
College Tours: RI, Boston

April 25 Pre-Conference
Asperger's Workshop

April 25 - 28 IECA Spring
Conference, Boston, MA

April 29 - May 1 IECA members'
Post-Conference BEANS Tour,
Boston Area Colleges; Local
Boarding School Tours

June 3 - 6 IECA Toronto Area
Universities Tour

June 27 - July 1 West Coast
Summer Training Institute,
Claremont, CA

July 4 Independence Day—office
closed

August 1 - 5 East Coast Summer
Training Institute, Towson, MD

September 3 Labor Day—office
closed

September 26 IECA/NACAC
Transitioning to Private Practice
Seminar, Austin, TX

September 27 Annual IECA
College Admission Luncheon,
Austin, TX

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STRATEGIC PLAN NEAR MID-POINT: A PROGRESS REPORT

In 2005, IECA adopted a plan to guide the Association's priorities and efforts through 2010. As we near the mid-point in the plan, here is a report on the progress we've made:

GOAL I: PROMOTE PROFESSIONAL ETHICS

- The Principles of Good Practice were reviewed and revised, establishing stricter guidelines to govern school/consultant relations.
- A new procedure for dealing with complaints is nearing completion.
- An ethics column now appears regularly in *Insights*.
- IECA and NATSAP meet regularly to review ethics guidelines.
- The new Principles of Good Practice were posted on IECA's website and a conference-themed summary sent to all members and schools this winter.

GOAL II: INCREASE GROWTH OF MEMBERSHIP BY 15% ANNUALLY

- Professional Membership has increased from 280 to 329—an 18% increase in two years.
- Changed "provisional" to "associate" membership.
- Associate and Student Membership increased from 100 to 228—a 128% increase in two years.
- Membership standards were maintained or strengthened in all areas.

- All marketing materials for Professional member applicants are reviewed.
- Member retention rate continues at 95%.

GOAL III: IDENTIFY IECA IN PUBLIC AS PREMIERE ASSOCIATION FOR EDUCATIONAL CONSULTING

- Redesigned nearly all IECA brochures and flyers.
- Developed new collateral that draw the distinction between IECA and non-IECA consultants: one for the general public, one for college admission directors.
- Reached out to NAIS, NACAC, NATSAP and other organizations to strengthen relationships.
- Advertised in NACAC conference program with ads directed at admission officers.
- Revised two 'Top Ten' lists for public, resulting in increased press coverage, including appearances on FOX New Channel, Bloomberg TV and in national publications.

GOAL IV: ASSIST MEMBERS IN RUNNING PROFITABLE, PROFESSIONAL, STATE-OF-THE-ART OFFICES

- Include small-business skills workshops at conferences.
- Increased frequency of campus tours and improved the awareness of tour information via monthly electronic updates.

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PRESIDENT'S LETTER

THE YEAR IN REVIEW

As I look back upon this past year I am particularly pleased and proud of the work that has been done by many members of our organization. I believe IECA has made great strides towards accomplishing several goals of our five-year Strategic Plan. This could only be done through the hard work of the committee chairs, standing committee members, task forces, the volunteer efforts of the membership, as well as through the dedicated work of Mark Sklarow and his staff in the national office. I would like to highlight a few of these.

As reported in the last issue of *Insights* the board of directors has approved the updated Principles of Good Practice. This was an essential component towards completing Goal I, which was to have IECA maintain its role as the standard-bearer in the field of educational consulting, enabling its member consultants to be knowledgeable and ethical professionals.

Much has been accomplished on Goals IV and V which are focused on helping members run successful practices and providing professional development opportunities. In conjunction with this, we are working on Goal VIII by continuing to look at our conference schedules to be sure that they provide the most comprehensive and efficient format to benefit all attendees. Our conferences are rich with workshops, expert speakers, and networking opportunities that benefit us all.

The Schools Committee is working closely with NAIS to explore how we can work together to help families who are seeking information and advice about independent school options. The Ethics Committee and the Special Needs Committee are both continuing to work closely with NATSAP on issues of ethics as well as developing good working relationships.

The College Committee continues its efforts towards building closer relationships with colleges. Our Transitioning to Private Practice workshop at the NACAC annual conference is growing each year, and helps us improve our working relationship with NACAC, which formally named IECA its training partner in this program.

The IECA Summer Training Institutes: Practices and Principles of Educational Consulting was held on the East and West coasts again in 2006, giving us improved geographic coverage. These highly successful programs have provided superb training for new consultants, and helped us



grow our membership beyond the strategic plan so that we are close to our five-year objective already.

At our annual conference in Chicago in May 2006, we undertook a leadership initiative towards accomplishing the goals of our strategic plan and to manage our growth. We brought in an outside consultant to provide training for the board and committee chairs. We will continue to offer this training annually to support the leadership and provide board continuity from year to year. As our membership has grown in excess of 550 and our annual budget over \$1 million, we need open lines of communication, structure and consistency, as well as a reporting format that keeps the organization moving in a positive direction.

Several task forces are hard at work examining ways IECA can improve how it serves its membership. We have a task force looking at the addition of a graduate school designation. With increased interest in this area we wanted to look at how that designation might improve matching families with practitioners who can best help that population. We also have a

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IECA⁺ INSIGHTS

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QUESTIONS & ANSWERS ABOUT THE REVISED PRINCIPLES OF GOOD PRACTICE

by Diane Geller, IECA, VP for Ethics and Professional Practices

Over the past year, we have featured several articles in *Insights* relating to our newly revised Principles of Good Practice. Since approval “in principle” by our membership at last May’s annual meeting, our lawyers have approved the final wording, the final version has been officially adopted by the board of directors, questions and answers have appeared in previous issues of *Insights*, and procedures and instructions for filing complaints about violations of our Principles of Good Practice have been written.

In the coming months, we will be using *Insights* to pose scenarios and answer questions that come up about the Principles of Good Practice. While we are aware that we cannot dictate the behavior of schools, colleges or programs, we do hope that our Principles are clear and our processes are transparent. Please let me know if you have questions about ethics issues, and feel free to submit items for consideration in this column. Here are some answers to questions we’ve been asked recently.

When do these rules go into effect, and how do people know about them?

The new rules do not go into effect until July 1, 2007. When IECA member consultants get this coming year’s membership information and renewal, they will be asked, as they are every year, to read the principles and sign an agreement to abide by them.

Copies of the Principles are available on our

website at www.iecaonline.com/about.html. Information explaining how to file a complaint will also appear on our website. Schools, programs, and colleges have been advised in writing about our Principles of Good Practice and encouraged to note our guidelines on reimbursement, off-site event planning, and limits on gifts, etc.

Can you just tell me some of the major additions that the new guidelines cover?

The principles were revised to address such issues as compensation for placement, perceived or actual conflicts of interest, and lavish gift-giving. For example, specific sections of the Principles of Good Practice address consulting within the boundaries of one’s own competence, dealing with multiple relationships and potential conflicts of interest, consultant relationships with Students/Families/Schools/Programs and each other, and advertising and public representations. We hope that clear guidelines will remove even the suggestion of compensation for placement; ethical behavior is clearly detailed and procedures are in place for resolving complaints in a fair and timely manner.

I encourage you to read the Principles for yourself, but here are a few areas that may be of interest to you:

Off-site or after-hours events at conferences should be designed to enhance a consultant’s knowledge of a school or

program; events that permit discussion and sharing are encouraged, while events that do not allow such opportunities for learning are discouraged. Small value items such as pens, pennant, mugs, and t-shirts, are acceptable give-aways, but IECA member consultants may not accept gifts beyond a value of \$50 per year. Off-site or after-hours events should cost an institution \$50 or less for a consultant’s participation and events that cost more can be set up as a shared cost to ensure the consultant is not accepting any item or service valued above \$50.

Members neither solicit nor accept compensation from Schools/Programs/Colleges for placing or attempting to place students with them and avoid behavior that might be construed as soliciting or accepting compensation. Consultants may not ask for or demand special favors, trips, etc. Customary, ordinary, and reasonable expenses are okay (e.g. a working lunch with a representative). It is inappropriate to request or accept reimbursement for anyone other than oneself.

In what way is advertising subject to the Principles of Good Practice?

Member advertising is reviewed in two ways. First to ensure that IECA member consultants not make promises or guarantees to prospective clients beyond what they can reasonably deliver. Second, IECA believes the role of a consultant is to reduce family anxiety. Advertising should reflect this goal and not seek to exploit an already difficult time for a student and family.

continued on page 6

THE IECA SUMMER TRAINING INSTITUTE: A PROFESSIONAL TESTIMONIAL

by IECA associate members Jill Smilow (MA) & Rosa Hallowell (MA)

With any major life transition, there are always questions, concerns and self-doubt. Making the transition from one area of professional work to another is no different. Between us, we had worked as an educational trainer, corporate lawyer, conflict resolution facilitator and community activists. When we made the decision to combine our collective professional experiences and focus them on working

with stressed, pressured and scared college-bound students and their parents, we believed we were channeling our past into a productive, purpose-filled future career as Independent college counselors.

When we began our journey, our very first realization was (and continues to be) how much there is to learn. Constantly. With every book and article, college tour

and Internet search, we found ourselves with more and more questions about this remarkable field. Dedicated to spending our first official year on research and knowledge-building before seeing a single client, we came to an understanding part way through our preparations: we were missing a professional community. Where could we find colleagues to help us put our research into context? When reading statistics, dry data and myriad details about multiple schools, how could we be sure that we were reaching appropriate conclusions about each institution? How could we evaluate and separate reliable sources of information from those just tapping into a trend? How could we learn what we needed to know about testing, financial aid, special needs, marketing, or common pitfalls? Lucky for us, we discovered the Independent Educational Consulting Association and the IECA Summer Training Institute early on in our research.

The IECA Summer Training Institute proved the perfect program to help us develop as independent college consultants in an exponential way. The comprehensive materials presented have become the foundation of our professional library. The teaching staff of professionals were generous and open with their time, and most importantly, their knowledge. We were especially thankful for the opportunity to create a network of colleagues who, like us, are in transition, searching for a valuable, trustworthy and worthwhile training before hanging out a shingle.

continued on p. 5

Tim Lee, from page 2

website task force looking into ways in which our website can better serve not only our members but also our various constituencies. We have a regional groups task force. While members have gathered together regionally either formally or informally over the years, we wanted to look into how the association could support these existing groups, and encourage others to form groups in other geographical areas. For example, Tri-state provides support and professional development for its members, but has existed for many years as a regional group without formal support from the national office. Another task force is looking at an Internet initiative where consulting services could be delivered via Web technology. I anticipate that these task forces will be making their recommendations to the board when we meet in Boston in April.

None of these goals could be accomplished without the hard work of our membership. I believe I speak for all of us when I express my thanks and

appreciation for their generosity and dedication to the goal of improving IECA.

I welcome your thoughts, comments, and feedback on how we are doing. In addition, I also encourage you to get involved. IECA members can join standing committees, assist with task force development, and share their expertise at our conferences. Colleges, schools and programs can submit proposals for workshops at our conferences so that we all may benefit from your knowledge.

Although I only have enough space to highlight a few of the activities of this past year, I am very pleased with the progress we have made towards the goals and objectives of our strategic plan. IECA is constantly striving to improve itself as an organization, not only in serving its members, but in how it serves students as they consider their educational options.



Timothy B. Lee
President, IECA

Strategic Plan Update from p. 1

- Added several new discounts on books and other services.
- Exploring computer-based products for adaptation by consultants.
- Expanded click-through advertising to draw potential clients to IECA site and consultant search

GOAL V: PROVIDE MEMBERS WITH OPPORTUNITIES FOR PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

- Added a second location for the Summer Training Institute.
- Introduced a Transitioning Workshop which is co-sponsored with NACAC.
- Task Force currently exploring regional possibilities.
- Expanded the diversity of breakouts at National Conferences.
- Established Education and Training as a permanent committee to recommend new topics and delivery models for training.
- Expanded member-centered content on IECA website.

GOAL VI: AFFIRM AND FORMALIZE COMMITTEES AND PATHS TO LEADERSHIP

- Established a new Executive Board position: Vice President for Committees.
- Established a formal organization of committees, chair selection, standing committee appointments, reporting procedures, and mission statements.
- Provided committees with free conference calling capabilities, which has resulted in increased productivity since committees meet more frequently by phone.
- Provide ongoing professional training for Board and Committee Chairs.
- Established a "leadership series" of conference breakouts.

GOAL VII: MAINTAIN COMPETENCY AND EFFICIENCY OF NATIONAL OFFICE

- Increased manager of communications position from part-time to full-time.
- Increased manager of member services position from part-time to full-time.
- Hired new staff member for IECA Foundation.
- Exploring new association software to manage member files, fees, etc.
- Enhanced staff benefits toward goal of employee retention.
- Provide staff membership in professional societies and opportunities for education and training.

GOAL VIII: ESTABLISH A COMPREHENSIVE CONFERENCE CALENDAR

- Implement new conference schedule/pattern effective November 2007, designed to reduce peak numbers of attendees at conference on any one day, and separate school/college representatives from therapeutic.
- Ad hoc committee is exploring conference frequency and schedule. 


INITIATIVES

Cammie Bertram (CT) was appointed to the SSAT board for a four-year term, beginning July 1, 2007. Her father served on the same board, and also served as its president.

The American Institute of Certified Educational Planners has announced that **Bill Dingleline** (SC) will become its new chair, replacing **Steve Antonoff** (CO) whose term just expired.

Mark Sklarow will present a breakout session at the NACAC conference in September, entitled, "College Consulting: A Transformed Profession."

Summer Institute from p. 4

During the intensive program we covered topics that supported our specific knowledge of the field and our general development as new small business owners. We learned about recent trends, the consulting process, liability issues, campus evaluations, resources, complicated clients, financial aid, and developing a business plan, just to name a few! We had many opportunities to ask questions pertinent to our particular practice. Eating, studying and living together with the 70 plus participants and staff provided additional opportunities for networking and the kind of learning that lasts far beyond the schedule of the program. We left the Institute exhausted, exhilarated, and sure that we had made the right choice in choosing independent college consulting as our new professional arena. And in case we had any questions about the value of our experience, our mentor, Turbi Smilow, with 22 years of experience under her belt, confirmed that the materials we received in the five days with IECA had taken her years to gather! If you are planning a professional transition to the field of independent educational consulting, be sure to include the 2007 IECA Summer Training Institute in your business development plans. 

Summer Institute Schedule:

West Coast:

Wednesday, June 27 - Sunday, July 1, Claremont McKenna College, outside Los Angeles, CA

East Coast:

Wednesday, August 1 - Sunday, August 5, Towson University, suburban Baltimore, MD

To download the Summer Institute brochure, go to the IECA website at: www.iecaonline.com/consult_conference3.html.

Principles of Good Practice from p. 3

Why is it only okay for me to accept a small token from someone, but okay for conference sponsors to spend more on sponsoring an event at a conference?

Sponsorship is designed to support the broad efforts of our organization and does not materially benefit any individual consultant. In addition, all sponsorships are designed to ensure that the per consultant cost falls well below the maximum permissible.

What do I do if I think someone has violated our Principles of Good Practice? Do I have to put something in writing?

Sometimes behavior is unethical and violates our Principles, sometimes it is just lack of common courtesy or the result of ignorance. If you think a principle has been violated, you should either contact Mark Sklarow or Diane Geller to discuss the issue or submit a complaint form (available from info@IECAonline.com).


Then what happens?

An attempt will be made by the executive director and/or Diane as chairperson of the Ethics Committee to mediate complaints regarding violations of the PGP. If initial (typically oral) mediation is not satisfactory, and you have not already done so, you may be asked to file a complaint in writing. Then the Ethics Committee will address the issue and attempt to resolve the matter with the parties involved. All sides will be heard and treated with respect. Matters will be resolved according to due process and in a timely fashion.

Do all IECA members have to abide by the Principles of Good Practice?

Yes.

I don't understand something in the Principles. What if I have a question about the Principles of Good Practice?

Ask us! Get in touch with Mark Sklarow, or anyone on the Ethics Committee (Diane Geller, Georgia Irvin, or Bill Dingledine). 

THIS MONTH'S QUERY:

"A school/college/program has offered to pay my registration fee for a conference. I thought this was very nice! Is there anything inappropriate in my accepting this?"

Generally speaking, this appears to violate the prohibition of gifts valued at more than \$50. In some cases a consultant may have done work for a school, engaged to do consulting in curriculum or advising. In that case it may be that such payment would be considered part of a compensation package. However, in most cases it would not be considered appropriate.

A special session on IECA's Principles of Good Practice will be featured on Member Day at the Boston Conference.

IN FOCUS

SUBSTANCE ABUSE BY COLLEGE STUDENTS

Based on a new study of full time college students, 49% of full time college students binge drink and/or abuse prescription and illegal drugs; and 22.9% of students meet the medical criteria for substance abuse and dependence.

Over the last 10 years the percentage of students who drink has remained nearly steady at 68% as has the percentage of students who binge drink (40%), however the study also showed an increase in the frequency of binge drinking, with 16% doing so 10 or more times a month.

Abuse of prescription drugs has increased significantly between 1993 and 2005:

- Up 343% for opioids like Percocet, Vicodin and OxyContin
- Up 93% for stimulants like Ritalin and Adderal
- Up 450% for tranquilizers like Xanax and Valium
- Up 225% for sedatives like Nembutal and Seconal

In addition, over the same time period, daily marijuana use has doubled while cocaine and heroin use are each up by more than 50%.

Source: National Center on Addiction and Substance Abuse at Columbia University, March 2007

SSATB: SUPPORTING ADMISSION SINCE 1957

by Aimee B. Gruber, SSAT Field Representative

You probably know that the SSAT is available at nearly 700 test centers in 76 countries. Did you know that the nonprofit organization—the Secondary School Admission Test Board (SSAT+B)—is much more than a test? While the test is certainly an integral part of the organization, the actual mission is closely connected to the work of educational consultants—to advance and add value to the private school admission process for schools, students, and families.

SSATB serves 800+ members including day and boarding schools and more than 100 educational consultants and organizations such as KIPP and The Boys Club of New York. Last year, educational consultants and organizations administered the SSAT to more than 4,000 students.

SSATB has a long and proud history of working closely with educational consultants. IECA member Alice Jackson (CA) served on SSATB's Board of Directors for many years and is followed by Cammie Bertram (CT), who joined the Board in February of this year. Faith Howland (MA) and former IECA member Frank Stephenson are recipients of SSATB's William B. Bretnall Award, recognizing their significant contributions to the field of admission. Clearly there are many reasons for IECA and SSATB to work together on behalf of the families that we serve.

Like IECA members, SSATB members follow Standards of Professional Conduct focusing on ethical and transparent practices in admission. The organization endeavors to provide state-of-the-art admission and assessment services to schools, students,

and families to help ensure the best "fit" between student and school.

SSATB supports—through numerous services—Data-Driven Admission.

Data-Driven Admission encourages schools to utilize data to:

1. Develop refined pictures of their "market."
2. Quantify the potential success of applicants.
3. Maximize student fit by placing test scores in school-specific contexts.
4. Ensure that enrolled students are well-supported.
5. Maintain a transparent process with families.

In addition to the powerful networking opportunity provided by SSATB's one-of-a-kind Annual Meeting, many of SSATB's services enrich the educational consultant's connection to schools. For example, a Validity Study quantifies for individual schools the relationship between SSAT scores and student performance. This school-specific information enables admission officers to communicate with educational consultants about strengths and/or areas of concern for potential applicants. Data like this drives a fully informed admission process and helps educational consultants and schools ensure student "fit."

More information about the SSAT and about Data-Driven Admission will be available at the IECA conference in Boston, with two sessions being presented: "Understanding the SSAT" and "Data-Driven Admission."

CONFERENCE INSIGHTS

LANDMARK CHOIR TO PERFORM AT CONFERENCE



The Landmark Chorus will offer a brief performance during the IECA Boston conference during lunch on Friday, April 27. Landmark School's Performing Arts program offers training in the areas of dance, music and theater for high school-age students. With more than 50 members, Landmark has won both local and national acclaim for its strong performing arts program. Emphasis is placed upon the acquisition of skills for the young performer—from performing onstage to technical theater backstage—all culminating in a full-scale, annual spring musical. Performances have been released on four professionally produced CDs, and are available upon request.

Founded in 1971, Landmark School is located in Prides Crossing, Massachusetts and specializes in language-based learning disabilities.

INTRODUCTIONS



Beth Dennard was commissioned in the United States Air Force where she served eight years on active duty. She also served as a faculty member at the United

States Air Force Academy in Colorado Springs. As a reservist she assisted Houston-area private high school students as an U.S. Air Force Academy admissions liaison officer. Her first official role as a guidance counselor was at Second Baptist School in Houston, where she served as the director of college guidance.

Beth earned a doctorate in education from University of Houston, a master's of arts in psychological counseling from Ball State, and a bachelor's of arts in psychology from Troy State University. She is a licensed professional counselor in Texas. Beth is a member of NACAC and TACAC.

Beth is training for the Chevron Houston marathon. Her husband, Mike, is the regional representative for the University of Tulsa and her daughter is a freshman at Pepperdine University.

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Russell Hyken is a nationally certified counselor. He launched his private practice in 2005. He previously served as dean of faculty

and students at John F. Kennedy Catholic High School in Missouri, and as a school counselor.

Russell holds a psychological examiner certification, an Ed.S. from Webster University; a licensed professional counselor certification and an M.A. in counseling from Saint Louis University; and a post-AB certificate in teaching English from Washington University.

Russell is a member of the American Counseling Association, American School Counseling Association, American School Psychologists Association, American Psychological Association, and the National Association of School Psychologists.

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Catherine Marris has been an associate member since 2004. She is the director of Your College Advocate. She is also an academic counselor at The

North Hills School in Irving, Texas. Catherine attended IECA's Summer Institute in 2004.

Catherine holds a bachelor's of arts degree from the University of Arizona; a master's in occupational therapy from Texas Woman's University; a certificate in college counseling from UCLA Extension; and a certificate from the Harvard Summer Institute on College Admissions.

Catherine is a member of NACAC and the National Association of Women Business Owners.

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Bari Norman is the director of My College Counselor, and has been an associate member since 2005. She previously worked

as a director of pre-college programs, and as an admissions counselor at Barnard College/Columbia University; and as curriculum consultant at NYU Graduate School of Education. She also writes the "Ask the College Advisor" column in *The Miami Herald*.

Bari holds a Ph.D. and M.A. in sociology from the University of Pennsylvania; an A.B. from Barnard College/Columbia University; and a certificate in college counseling from UCLA Extension.

Her hobbies include running marathons and knitting.

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Tom O'Dell has worked in the education field for over thirty years. He began his private educational consulting practice in January 2006.

Prior to forming his consulting business, Tom held numerous positions at independent boarding schools, most recently as director of admissions at the Hillside School in Massachusetts, and headmaster of the Greenwood School in Vermont. Tom currently consults to the admissions office at the Forman School in Connecticut.

He received his B.A. and teacher certification from Adelphi University and has taken graduate level courses in special education at Central Connecticut State University. He is an active board member of SBSA, and has presented workshops at TABS, SSATB and SBSA.

Tom and his wife Robin have lived most of their 30 years together in Litchfield County, Connecticut. They have two grown children. Tom and his wife are avid travelers, and have visited Costa Rica, Ireland, and Peru.

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Paula Porter is owner of Porter Education Consulting and has been an IECA associate member since 2003. She also serves as director of college guidance at York

Country Day School. Previously she served as director of enrollment services at The Janus School, and director of The Lancaster Jewish Day School. Paula holds a B.A. from Barat College in Lake Forest, IL, and will earn her certificate in college counseling from UCLA Extension in June, 2007.

Paula is a member of NACAC and PACAC. She has presented on several topics, including college admission for students with Asperger's Syndrome and ASD, and college admission outlooks and trends.

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Specialty: C*

BOSTON CONFERENCE VENDORS

(as of 3/20/07)

IECA consultants: Remember to visit all of our conference vendors. IECA members will receive a "Passport" (found in your registration packet) to win \$100 for each vendor stamp you collect, up to a maximum of \$1,000!

Table

#102	ACT, Inc.
#108	Ben Kaplan Institute for Educational Opportunity
#207	CBI Insurance Agency, Inc.
#109	College Consultant Assistant
#105	Collegia, Inc.
#206	Go Home at Five, LLC
#103	Hedberg Maps
#208	inResonance, Inc.
#110	Johnson O'Connor Research Foundation
#209	NAPPI, Inc.
#205	National Association of Private Special Education Centers
#203	National Independent Private Schools Association
#201	prepGATE K-12 Education Loan
#106	Reel Wisdom
#204	Saving Teens in Crisis Collaborative
#107	Simply College
#101	Summit Educational Group
#202	WhippleHill Communications
#104	Wintergreen Orchard House/ Alloy Education

IN THE NEWS

Steve Antonoff (CO), was quoted in the March issue of *Consumer Reports Money Advisor*, in the article, *College Costs Before College*.

Luisa Rabe (PA), **Shirley Darling** (CO), IECA associate member **Ginger Fay** (DC), and **Mark Sklarow**, IECA executive director, were featured in the February issue of *CASE Currents* (Council for the Advancement and Support of Education) article, *Are Admissions Consultants Marketers or Matchmakers?*

In March, **Mark Sklarow** was interviewed by Bloomberg.com for a TV-on-demand story as part of a new series on personal finance, featuring educational consultants.

In fact, independent educational counselors can serve as valuable partners to admissions offers by helping publicize the institution to prospective students and helping the institution get the full picture of an applicant.

— *CASE Currents*
February 2007

IECA associate members **Steve Migden** (NY) and **Doretta Goldberg** (NY), and **Mark Sklarow** were quoted in the *Anton Community Newspapers* February 5 in the Camp & School section, which appears in 19 different community newspapers on Long Island. The article featured IECA's 2007 Top Ten Strengths Colleges Look For.

We have no interest in consultants who are not IECA members... We respect the integrity of their program, membership process and probationary period, and focus on fit.

— **Chuck Bachman**
senior associate director of admissions
Lafayette College
in CASE Currents, February 2007

Carol Gene Cohen (TX) appeared on Fox 4 News on February 7, along with one of her students.

Barry Sysler (PA) was quoted in an *Inland Valley Daily Bulletin* article, *At the Claremont Colleges, Majors Can Be Created* on February 19.

Imy Wax (IL), IECA associate member **Bonnie Bell** (IL), and **Mark Sklarow** were featured in a *Pioneer Press* article on February 15, entitled *Choosing Schools Can Take Consultation* which featured IECA's 2007 Top Ten Strengths Colleges Look For.

M. Ann Goode, IECA associate member (MD), has an article featured in the January 2007 edition of *Washington Parent* magazine. The article, *The Path to College: Putting It Into Perspective* can also be read at www.washingtonparent.com.

Consumer Reports identifies three websites that offer parents and college-bound students a wealth of knowledge. Among the three recommended sites was IECA's site.
— www.wral.com, March 20, 2007

FEATURED PRESENTATIONS AT THE BOSTON CONFERENCE

In addition to the four keynote speakers scheduled for IECA's spring conference, these seven featured presentations are set for Friday April 27.

COMPUTER ADDICTION SOLUTIONS IN ADOLESCENTS AND YOUNG ADULTS: MODERATING AND MOTIVATING FOR SUCCESS

Kenneth Woog, Psy.D., associate director, Pepperdine University Youth Services

This workshop provides an overview of excessive and problematic computer use by adolescents and young adults and its impact on their health, academic, occupational and social functioning. It will review methods of treatment, early intervention and prevention, and the role educators and educational consultants play in dealing with this growing health problem.

THE CHANGING LANDSCAPE OF HIGH STAKES TEST ACCOMMODATIONS

*Deborah Lazarus, Psy.D., The College Board
Manju Banerjee, Education Testing Service
Gretchen Holt, ACT
Loring Brinckerhoff, Education Testing Service
Kendra Johnson, IECA associate member (VA), moderator*

With a consistent increase in the requests for non-standard test administration, the implementation of new special education regulations, and recent court rulings regarding high stakes test accommodations, what are the implications for students seeking high stakes test accommodations in today's world? A panel of experts from

several testing agencies will share insights and updates on many of these issues.

ISSUES FACING THE NATION'S MOST COMPETITIVE BOARDING SCHOOLS

*Ray Diffley, Choate Rosemary Hall
Patricia L. Gimbel, Deerfield Academy
Ian Gracey, Groton School
Christine Chapman, IECA (MA), moderator*

A panel of admission representatives explores trends and changes taking place in the nation's most competitive and leading boarding schools.

THE QUICK FIX? WISC? PROZAC? STRESS, LEARNING STYLES, TROUBLES, EVALUATION, AND MATURATION IN BOARDING SCHOOLS.

*David L. Gleason, Psy.D.
Ross K. Peterson, M.D.
Harriet Jacobson, Ph.D.
Faith Howland, IECA (MA), moderator*

Anyone working in a boarding school has had experience with academic and disciplinary crises, anxious students, poor decision-making, and counter-productive behaviors. This panel will discuss professional responses when help is needed. The second session of the panel will be an informal question and answer opportunity.

DATA-DRIVEN ADMISSION: A NEW LOOK AT THE ADMISSION FUNNEL

Aimee B. Gruber, SSAT

A new and data-driven approach to admission is needed. This session will discuss "the data funnel" and will demonstrate how admission offices can use the SSAT to define and act on their schools'

unique admission and market contexts.

SEVEN THINGS EVERY COUNSELOR & EDUCATIONAL CONSULTANT MUST KNOW ABOUT COLLEGE SCHOLARSHIPS

Ben Kaplan, author of How to Go to College Almost for Free

Even though winning college scholarships is a hot-button topic among students and parents, most educational consultants know very little about the subject. Learn the nuts and bolts of how families can find, apply for, and position themselves to win lucrative college scholarships from corporations, foundations, associations, state governments, and individual schools.

COLLEGE FUNDING SOLUTIONS—A NEW PERSPECTIVE

*Carl Buck, Peterson's
Rick Darvis, College Funding Solutions*

Learn how the IRS can provide "Tax Scholarships" for college; how an "Employer Education Assistance Plan" can allow a family to deduct the cost of college; how a family can save \$100,000 per child for college and not cost the family a dime; why you may want to disqualify a student from receiving need-based financial aid; preparing for the college campus visit for financial aid purposes; award letter analysis; appeals to the financial aid office—how, when, and why.

For a complete list of breakout sessions, presenters, and the conference schedule, visit www.IECAonline.com.

COLLEGE CHOICE—IT'S THE FIT, NOT THE RANK, THAT MATTERS

by Martha "Marty" O'Connell, executive director, *Colleges That Change Lives*

If you had to choose a spouse or partner for life, would you like to use a publication ranking them by income, IQ scores, and reputation as reported by others who have never met the person? I often ask this question as I speak to college bound students and their families and after the laughter, we discuss the factors that are important in searching for the "right" college, for each student. As a culture, we love consulting consumer guidebooks and lists for a shortcut method to choosing electronics and cars; the college search requires a more thoughtful, personal and time consuming approach. It can't be reduced to rankings with numerical values when it requires starting with who the individual student is and why they are going to college, their needs and desires, and learning styles and interests. This self inventory is the start for finding colleges that "fit" for the individual, instead of starting with the assumption that only the "Top Twenty" on the USNWR list have any value.

Another flaw in the rankings is that they tout the entering class statistics, rather than focusing on what happens during the four years those students are enrolled. Loren Pope, often known as the "Ralph Nader" of college admissions, has said that choosing colleges based on the entering statistics of the freshmen class is like choosing a hospital based on the health of those in the ER—it's the treatment that really matters; in the case of college, what happens between the first year and graduation.

How do you choose a college without using rankings? Visit the National Survey

of Student Engagement (NSSE) website and read the section, *Choosing a College: Are You Asking the Right Questions?* "How often do faculty meet students outside of class? How much writing and how many presentations are required? How much time do students devote to co-curricular activities?" Other questions like these get at the heart of what is important for each individual student. They also focus on questions pertinent to student outcomes, rather than assuming that the rankings number got that right.

The president of Sarah Lawrence College and others are correct in pointing out the flaws at best and sham at worst of USNWR: *America's Best Colleges*, but this ranking guide is not going away any more than the swimsuit edition of *Sports Illustrated* is leaving us—they sell big. But their value—or lack of it—in the college search process can certainly be diminished if students, parents, and counselors go after fit, rather than name recognition. Students are very good at naming the people in their own lives, as well as "famous" people, who are successful and happy, but usually can't name the college these people attended or even know if they went to college. I challenge them to find out, and they most often report that they were surprised to learn how many had gone to lesser known or "lower ranked" colleges. For those attending college, the choice of college has less to do with success in life than does the experience and the opportunities a student has while in any college, coupled with their personal qualities and traits.

If I could wave my magic wand this spring, I

would make the rankings go away, but without those magical powers, I'll ask for the next best thing: a thoughtful, student-centered college search process that ends with a good "fit" for each student and allows them, their families and their school counselors to celebrate the choice, regardless of where it ranks on any list.

[see page 13 for a partial list of test-optional colleges]

Colleges That Change Lives is a non-profit organization dedicated to the advancement and support of a student-centered college search process.

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Shortridge Academy
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Valley View School

TEST OPTIONAL COLLEGES

Here is a partial list of test-optional colleges, courtesy of IECA's Dodge Johnson (PA). Test-optional does not always mean students don't have to take the SAT. Some colleges limit it to students in the top tenth of their class or with cumulative averages of, say, 3.5 or better. Some require a portfolio or a graded sample of writing submitted for school. Others will let you substitute a battery of subject tests for the SAT. Still others don't require it of most students but do in certain majors.

Among the growing number of colleges offering options to standardized tests—or that simply no longer require them:

- Antioch College
- Arizona State University
- Arizona, University of
- Art Center College of Design
- Art Institute of Boston
- Art Institute of Chicago, School of the
- Atlantic, College of the
- Bard College
- Bates College
- Beacon College
- Bennington College
- Bowdoin College
- California College of Arts and Crafts
- California Institute of the Arts
- Cazenovia College
- Chatham College
- Columbia College (Chicago)
- Connecticut College
- Cornish College of the Arts
- Culinary Institute Of America
- Curry College
- Denison University
- Dickinson College
- Drew University
- Eckerd College
- Fashion Institute of Technology
- Five Towns College
- Franklin & Marshall College
- George Mason University
- Guilford College
- Gustavus Adolphus College
- Hamilton College
- Hampshire College
- Hartwick College
- Hobart College
- Holy Cross, College of the
- Humboldt State University
- Iowa State University
- Iowa, University of
- Johnson & Wales University
- Juniata College
- Knox College
- Lake Forest College
- Lawrence University
- Lebanon Valley College
- Lewis and Clark College
- Lyndon State College
- Marymount Palos Verdes College
- McDaniel College
- Middlebury College
- Minnesota, University of
- Mitchell College
- Montana, University of
- Morris, University of Minnesota at
- Mt. Holyoke College
- Mt. Ida College
- Muhlenberg College
- Nebraska, University of
- New England College
- New England Culinary Institute
- Newbury College
- Northern Arizona University
- Oklahoma, University of
- Oregon State University
- Oregon, University of
- Paul Smith's College
- Pennsylvania College of Technology
- Pitzer College
- Prescott College
- Ringling School of Art and Design
- Ryerson Polytechnic University
- Salisbury University
- Sarah Lawrence College
- Shimer College
- St. Cloud State University
- St. John's College
- St. Lawrence University
- Sterling College
- Stonehill College
- Susquehanna University
- Texas, University of
- Union College
- Unity College
- Ursinus College
- Utica College
- Vincennes University
- Wheaton College
- William Smith College
- Wyoming, University of



INSIGHTS April/May 2007

The Newsletter of the Independent Educational Consultants Association

Inside This Issue:

- Outstanding breakouts featured at IECA's Spring Conference in Boston
- College choice: Fit not rank
- Questions about IECA's Revised Principles of Good Practice? Here are some answers
- Summer Training Institute attendees share their experiences

- Strategic Plan progress

- A list of test optional colleges

Inside the Member-to-Member Section:

- 13 Fatal Errors college applicants make
- Committee reports
- How to Test Drive a College flyer insert
- Expanded advertising section featuring more than 20 schools, colleges and programs

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