



Calendar

August 9
Monthly Webinar
Resilience and Healthy Coping

September 5
Labor Day
Office Closed

September 13
Monthly Webinar
Financial Aid: Prior-Prior Year

September 14-17
SSATB Conference: IECA Presents
Baltimore, MD
September 21

Transitioning to Private Practice
Workshop
Columbus, Ohio

September 22
Annual IECA/Admission Officer Luncheon
Columbus, Ohio

September 22-24
NACAC Conference/IECA Exhibits
Columbus, OH

October 11
Monthly Webinar
"Test Optional" With Strings Attached

October 25-28
AACAP Conference: IECA Exhibits
New York, NY

October 31-November 2
Campus Tours: Colleges and
Program Tour
New Orleans, LA

November 2-5
IECA Fall Conference
New Orleans, Louisiana

November 5-6
IECA Board of Directors meets
New Orleans, LA

November 8
Election Day

November 8
Monthly Webinar
Public University Honors Colleges &
Programs

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August/September 2016

A Gumbo of Education, Networking, and Speakers Awaits in New Orleans

Those who have lived in New Orleans understand the city's unique take on life. Although it is often summed up by tourists with the popular phrase *laissez les bons temps rouler* (let the good times roll), those who call New Orleans home would say the city's psyche is closer to "do your own thing without judging others." New Orleans is a place where neighbors gather on a moment's notice for dinner. Where inviting friends over doesn't require invitations and planning; it can be done on the fly because there's always enough to share. It's that sense of coming together as community that has guided IECA's preparation for our Fall 2016 National Conference.



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3 Pre-Conference Sessions Maximize Take-Aways

Grow Your Consulting Practice by Getting the Right Message to the Right Consumer

In addition to providing great consulting and advisory services, IECs must also attract potential clients. Faculty members from the Arthur M. Blank Center for Entrepreneurship at Babson College—one of whom is also an IECA member—will lead this hands-on, practical session.

School Consulting: Best Practices

Thinking about expanding your practice to school consulting? Need a refresher on best practices and the changing nature of school admissions? Experts from both sides of the desk will examine testing, ethics, the changing

landscape, and much more. This session is appropriate for school admission reps who want to explore the consulting side as well.

The Ins and Outs of College Financial Aid

In the olden days (five years ago) only a handful of IECA members dealt with financial matters, now most client families expect to talk about college affordability, merit and need-based aid, and more. Issues like prior-prior year, undocumented students, and loans have become more complex. You'll gain knowledge you can immediately put to use.

For more information about these sessions, visit www.iecaonline.com/conferences.html.

President's Letter

We Are All Brand Ambassadors

July and August are the months when we renew (or initiate if you are a recent STI grad) our memberships in IECA.

As we each commit to *The Principles of Good Practice* and renew our memberships, it's an appropriate time to discuss the Board of Director's recent discussions about IECA's strategies and the impact they will have on our organization and your business.

As a result of expansion in our profession and serious outreach from our Association, membership has grown dramatically in the last decade. That growth has enabled us to enrich the content at our conferences, offer regional events, and diversify our educational offerings—affirming our commitment to educating our members. The foundational strategies of meeting

the diverse needs of members, promoting IECA's sustainability, enhancing education and training, diversifying membership, and partnering with organizations that serve members and clients continue to be key components of the Strategic Plan and all have an effect on membership.

This year, the board also explicitly added a new overarching strategy: strengthen the IECA brand. As articulated in our plan, "Increasing the quality and awareness of the IECA brand is critical to the overall value that IECA can deliver to its members. A strong brand reinforces the value to families seeking help from an IECA member. It increases the impact and effectiveness that our organization can have on our ability to influence policy and expand community outreach."



Ann Rossbach

That aspirational goal will demand the best from each of us. To build a sustainable, differentiated brand takes hard work and dedication. Like the *Good Housekeeping* Seal or the Mercedes Benz slogan "The Best or Nothing," we want to position IECA members as the very best in their fields. We want to create a brand promise that assures our clients and the organizations and policymakers who work with IECA members, that they are dealing with the very highest caliber of independent educational consultants.

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IECA⁺ INSIGHTS

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In Focus

US Students Who Study Abroad

There are about 1/3 as many US students who study abroad as there are international students who study in the US. Of the top countries US students choose, only China is among the top exporting countries to study in the US (see back page).

Top Destinations for US Students

13% United Kingdom

10% Italy

9% Spain

6% France

5% China

3% Ireland

3% Costa Rica

3% Germany

3% Australia

2% Japan

Duration of Study

62% short-term (summer or up to 8 weeks)

35% mid-length (a trimester or 1–2 quarters)

3% long-term (academic or calendar year)

What Students Study

23% STEM fields

20% business

19% social sciences

8% foreign language and international studies

7% fine or applied arts

Source: Institute of International Education, Open Doors Data

IECA West Coast Symposium

By Jackie Woolley, PhD, IECA Associate Member (CA)

The first IECA West Coast Symposium on the Future Trends in College Admissions was held on June 9 in Los Angeles. Chair **Jenny Umhofer**, Associate member (CA), Sean Hawes, and their committee organized a successful event that brought together IECs and college admissions representatives.

The admissions panel session, featuring representatives from Pomona College, Lewis and Clark College, Chapman University, Pepperdine University, and Scripps College, focused on timely topics, including the new Coalition Application and its emphasis on preparing students to think about college earlier (see Coalition Application, page 5) and the value of a liberal arts education as an opportunity for students to be exposed to new ways of looking at the world.

Exploration of the characteristics of the new generation of students highlighted the anxiety that some students feel with so many choices and ways to engage parents in more-productive ways to alleviate some of that stress. One suggestion was that students should take only the APs they are interested in and feel they can be successful in. It was also recommended that students do what is most meaningful to them and focus on depth rather than breadth in extracurricular activities. For example, it turns out the perfect

Pepperdine students are those who care about something other than themselves.

While discussing test optional schools and diversity, it was found that at Lewis and Clark, the test optional students achieve and graduate at the same rate as the students who submit test scores. Admitting diverse students is only the first step; schools need to have resources and programs on campus to help them be successful.

During roundtable discussions following the panel presentation, panelists and attendees were able to continue discussions with the college admissions representatives.

A panel of IEC's from California, including **Mel Preimesberger**, **Steven Mercer**, **Stephanie Meade**, **Evelyn Alexander**, **Jeana Kawamura**, and **Gail Grand** shared their knowledge and experience on several topics, including the trend toward optional standardized testing, skyrocketing college costs, and what it means to be college ready. Observations included that students do not need to know at 17 what major and career they want, that IEC's should learn about gap year programs, and that students have choices and don't have to choose the most expensive school.

IECA Members Central to Boarding School Admissions

It is no secret that the number of US students attending boarding schools has been in decline over the past decade. In response to the crisis, boarding schools have increased the number of international applicants, but that is not a long-term solution to the problem. Drawing from the recent comprehensive member survey that IECA conducted, CEO **Mark Sklarow** has written *Independent Educational Consultants and Their Impact on Boarding School Applications*, a white paper detailing the role that IECA members play in supporting boarding school enrollment.

The survey data reveal that 42% of IECA members advise on school placements—that equals more than 620 independent educational consultants who work with 14,800 secondary school-bound students each year. Of those students, 7,550 go to boarding schools, 6,300 go to day schools, and 1,260 go to parochial schools. Matthew S. Hoeniger, assistant headmaster and director of admission at Rumsey Hall School, said, "Over 50% of our boarding school students come from consultants...[who] are invaluable resources to both schools and families, as they are the key to finding the appropriate fit for individual students."



At this point, the families that work with IECs are primarily tuition-capable families, those identified by the National American Boarding School Initiative (NABI) as able to pay 80% of annual tuition. Given that 98% of IECA members work with pro bono clients, however, they also represent the diverse students that boarding schools hope to

continued on page 6

With more than 50 educational sessions, you will find just what you need. Among the offerings are sessions that emphasize practical take-aways for immediate use and those that are designed to be thought-provoking, innovative, and theoretical. Some will be foundational, offering help for those seeking introductory understanding of a specialty, a topic, or the profession. Others will be more strategic, intended for those further along in their consulting or admission knowledge. All are designed to allow you to personalize your conference experience and do your own thing.



New Orleans' reputation as a strong and resilient community is represented in many ways. Keynote speaker, **Scott Cowen**, former president of Tulane University, is often credited with bringing education in New Orleans back after Hurricane Katrina. He worked to resurrect public education and infused the citywide rebuilding effort with energy through university volunteerism and public-private partnerships.

That sense of sharing and community will also play out through interactive discussions, community forums, case study reviews, and of course in the conference's social opportunities. Conference Central with the vendor hall is always exciting and adding the special tastes of New Orleans, such as café au lait and beignets, will make it more so. And the Thursday evening reception will really allow the good times to roll as we bring in the city's street performers, fortune tellers, and artists—plus foods from three types of the region's culinary roots: low country, creole, and Cajun.

New Orleanians don't shy away from big issues either, and we begin the conference on Wednesday examining one of the hottest topics on campuses today: whether a rape culture has been allowed to develop and how schools, colleges, and women's groups are seeking to reverse the trend. That opening session will feature **Sally Kenney**, one of the nation's leading experts on women, campus life, and justice.

And because no proper New Orleans gathering would be complete without a little lagniappe—a little something extra—Friday afternoon will feature a college showcase held in cooperation with SACAC and Saturday morning will offer a special Master Class to examine complexities in mental health care in young adulthood. Among the topics being explored are co-occurrence, trauma, and addiction's impact on neurobiology and the social development of young adults. The 2.5-hour session will be led by **Maureen MacConnell** of Red Oak Recovery and **Ray Estefania**, psychotherapist and certified intervention professional. 🍷

Check out the IECA website for more details on events and presentations that will highlight educational institutions throughout the South and other special events at www.IECAonline.com/conferences.html.

The Big Easy: Get Ready for IECA Fall Gathering

Big Plans: Yes

Easy to Fit It All In: No

IECA returns to the Crescent City after a 12-year absence with big plans—both in the formal, educational parts of the program (see page 1) and in the networking events, member activities, and the city itself.

NOLA has become one of the nation's premiere culinary destination cities with scores of upscale restaurants led by celebrity chefs. Yet some of the city's most iconic foods were originally based in the city's multiethnic, working class roots. Watch for some of those treats to find their way to conference meals; others can be found in scores of establishments within a short walk: gumbo, jambalaya, étouffée, po'boys, red beans and rice, muffuletta sandwiches, oysters, and Cajun cooking have come to define the diversity of N'awlins. And of course every day should start with beignets and café au lait.



IECA's member dinner will also feature the varied tastes of the city, and getting to the restaurant, just a few block from the hotel, will itself be a unique NOLA experience as we form a "second line" behind a local band, with beads aplenty to keep, bring home, or toss to the tourists.

A number of musical styles credit New Orleans as their birthplace, and clubs featuring live Dixieland, jazz, and zydeco are just a short walk from the hotel throughout the famed French Quarter. Easy streetcar rides can take attendees to the Garden District, the WWII museum, and more. Museums in the French Quarter celebrate Mardi Gras (did you know we have members who are active in the city's Crews?) and remember Katrina.

IECA has arranged for the hotel's discounted rate to include the weekends before and after the conference to accommodate those who wish to experience the city longer; bring a spouse; or immerse themselves in the diversity of cultures, histories, and traditions that are so unique to the city.

Coalition Application Is Now Available

The Coalition for Access and Affordability Application is now available and offers another option for independent educational consultants and their clients—a unique college exploration and application process that encourages reflection and self-discovery through early engagement and technology. At www.coalitionforcollegeaccess.org, IECs will find specific resources—including videos and Power Point presentations—to help them learn more about the platform of tools and to help introduce the application to client families.

Starting immediately, students who are ready to apply this fall can access the Coalition Application tools to find essay prompts; a private, secure virtual locker with unlimited storage to save documents, videos, and other artifacts; a collaboration space where they can safely share information with and get feedback from trusted mentors and others; and finally, the application portal where they can apply to 56 colleges and universities that are accepting the 2016–17 application—all of which have committed to fully meeting applicants demonstrated need. By mid-July about 10,000 students had established accounts, a relatively small but growing number.

IECs can also use these tools to help younger high school students who are just beginning the planning and exploration process. Those students can create a profile; collect evidence of their academic and creative work over the course of high school; share with and get feedback from IECs, mentors, and others; and when the time is right, pull it all together in an application.

Although IECA applauds and supports the goals of the Coalition to promote college access and affordability to “instill a college-centered mindset in low-income students as a means of helping them in the admissions process,” the Association also expressed reservations in a letter from then president **Gail Meyer** (CA), CEO **Mark Sklarow**, and Deputy Executive Director **Sue Depra**. The letter stated: “IECA agrees that establishing a college culture in high schools through educational activities with the intention of informing students about postsecondary educational options can decrease stress associated with the college application process, while giving students a profound sense of what is possible...”

Like any new admissions platform, school-based counselors and independent educational consultants will require sustained support and education to implement it as intended by the Coalition. School-based counselors are already overextended; recent data (ASCA) show that the average counselor to student ratio is 491:1...and the college search and application process is just a small part of their overall responsibilities.”

Because IECA members not only work with students and families privately but also perform substantive pro bono work in their communities (97% of members do so according to a 2015 survey), they consistently assist, encourage, and guide students who might not otherwise be engaged in the college admissions process. We can help promote the goals of the Coalition for Access and Affordability while being cognizant of the educational, emotional, and developmental needs of the students we serve.



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Similarly, IECA has a commitment to raise our brand awareness. Over the next year, the board will make decisions regarding how we address this overarching goal. A revised website is in the near future, but other important aspects of our brand will also be under review. In the end, it is not necessarily about the *number* of members in our Association; rather, it is the quality, depth, and range of our expertise that establishes the IECA brand as the gold standard of independent educational consultants.



Ann Rossbach, MAT
IECA President

Boarding School from page 3

attract in the future. Boarding schools recognize that families who work with IECs understand the importance of fit and what life at boarding school entails. Peter Gilbert, director of admission at the Salisbury School, says "the admissions office has strong evidence that a candidate working with an IECA educational consultant is a very strong predictor for a student's success in the admissions process...and as a student in our school."

IECA members introduce thousands of families each year to the possibility of boarding school being the best fit for their child. Many of those families have no experience with boarding schools and were not specifically seeking that option. The survey indicated that 22.8% of domestic clients and 17.6% of overall clients who were not initially seeking a boarding school were sold on the experience by the IEC, a fact that is appreciated by the schools. Bradford Bates, head of school at Dublin School, said "Engaging with educational consultants to help match mission appropriate students to our school has been critical to our success in building an intellectually, geographically, and socially diverse student body. IECA consultants have sent Dublin School some of our most successful students, young people who might never have found their way to our intentionally small boarding school."

Going forward in support of NABI, the goal is for IECA to explore the advising techniques that result in some IECs bringing nearly 75% of their clients to boarding schools and to identify those practices that would help ensure that more students who would be best served in a residential setting have that opportunity. In addition, IECA encourages members to conduct more boarding school visits, host more admission representatives, and continue learning more about boarding school opportunities. 🧑🏫



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International Boarding School Admissions: The Right Fit and the Bottom Line

By Jason M. Kirschner, Head of Admissions USA, EF Academy International Boarding Schools



Virtually every IECA member and every independent secondary school leader in the United States is familiar with the controversy surrounding admissions standards and student body diversity with regard to international students, particularly those from China. When independent schools are struggling to meet their bottom line and

encounter waves of eager full-pay applicants from China and other parts of the world, there is a temptation to accept a limited vetting process and admit those students without fully understanding their goals and needs. It is justified by suggesting that full-pay Chinese students help keep good schools open so that those schools can educate their core of US students, often at a lower cost. Or it is justified by suggesting that Chinese students will benefit from any American education as a superior option to what they have in their home country. Some schools take the opposite line to an extreme, refusing to admit qualified, mission-appropriate Asian students (and even Asian-American students) because of the perception that they might negatively affect diversity and significantly alter school culture or potentially cause a level of discomfort among their heretofore reliable base of traditional—mostly White and Christian—boarding school families.

Best Fit

From an ethical standpoint, an old proverb comes to mind: The road to hell is paved with good intentions. It is not difficult to empathize with the position that independent schools find themselves in, regardless of what you believe about the value and role of private education in the United States. As long as independent school leaders take stock to ensure that consulting and admissions practices are executed in such a way that we prioritize best fit for individual students irrespective of their national or ethnic background, we can all feel good about the work we're doing and the lives we're improving. It is our responsibility to educate our American parents as to why we see so many Asian applicants and how diverse they are as individual contributors to school life. And we owe it to our Asian and other international applicants to really learn who they are and set appropriate expectations for them.

It starts by putting yourselves in your international applicants' shoes. Imagine you are 15 years old, born and raised in Shanghai, or Hanoi, or Lagos, or Sao Paulo. What do you want from life? What are your goals? Why is it your dream to go high school and university in the United States, and how do you think it is going to be different from the education you've experienced growing up?

What are you excited to do and what are you really nervous about? How are you unique compared with all of those other students in your country who want to go to school abroad? I'm sure you can also imagine that each applicant would have different answers to those questions.



With the choices and opportunities available to high school students today, the biggest challenge to find what's right for them as an individual. Because that's what international students are—individual sentient young people who need our help and guidance to help them make appropriate decisions. We Americans might not always feel that deeply enough. Asking international applicants to take an admissions test, such as the Cognitive Abilities Test (CAT4) or the Secondary School Admissions Test (SSAT), can be useful to learn more about a student's strengths; weaknesses; learning style; and if the student is a non-native English speaker, language proficiency. But the student's goals and admissions test results should be considered together with the coursework and levels they've accomplished in school overseas to more capably guide the student.

English Proficiency

In international admissions, it is particularly important to ensure that a prospective student's English level meets the requirements of the academic programs. Accepting an international student whose English level is not high enough is unethical by any standard. A student whose English level is too low will not only struggle and most likely fail to succeed in school, but will also find it incredibly difficult to acclimate to or feel comfortable in their English-speaking environment. That alone would be enough to ruin their study abroad experience and set their education back.

continued on page 11



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International boarding School, from page 9

In a truly ethical and honest admissions process, a student's English proficiency is taken very seriously and in cases where they do not meet the language requirements, independent education consultants and schools must work with the student and his parents to find a suitable alternative, which could be a summer of English lessons, or a whole year of English and preparatory classes. The solution should never be to throw the child into an environment they are not prepared for and hope that they do not drown, even when their parents mistakenly insist upon it. That happens, and it happens a lot.

Tuition Fees

Progressing through an ethical admissions process, we arrive at the topic of tuition fees. Many private schools have exorbitant tuition prices for students who come from out of the country, which takes advantage of families who might not understand that their child is making it possible for domestic students to get a private school education at a lower cost. Other schools have more transparent and equitable practices. For example, EF Academy has a global tuition rate regardless of national origin, and we are transparent about what tuition covers and what additional fees a family will need to pay—but what is important is that those mandatory fees are the same for everyone who attends our school.

The Bottom Line

We can embrace our best natures, genuinely help young people get the best possible education available, and be financially responsible as we run institutions we can be proud of. Independent school admissions offices have to consider financial goals, but it's imperative to keep every student's well-being in mind at all times and to never think of young people with personalities and dreams as numbers and dollar signs. At the same time, we must not get caught up in a xenophobic hysteria that bars international students from participating in our schools as global citizens. Remaining fair and honest and following an ethical admissions process is the best way to help a student maximize his or her potential and thrive in a first-rate academic setting. If a school is the right fit for an individual student, from China or another country, just wait and see how amazing he or she can be and the positive effect on the entire school community. It is a privilege to work in a field where we guide today's youth to success and achievement in an interconnected world, and we all have the ability to take advantage of that without taking advantage of international students. 🙏

Jason M. Kirschner can be reached at jason.kirschner@ef.edu.

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By Marina Lee, EdM, IECA (MA)



the values are defined as follows:

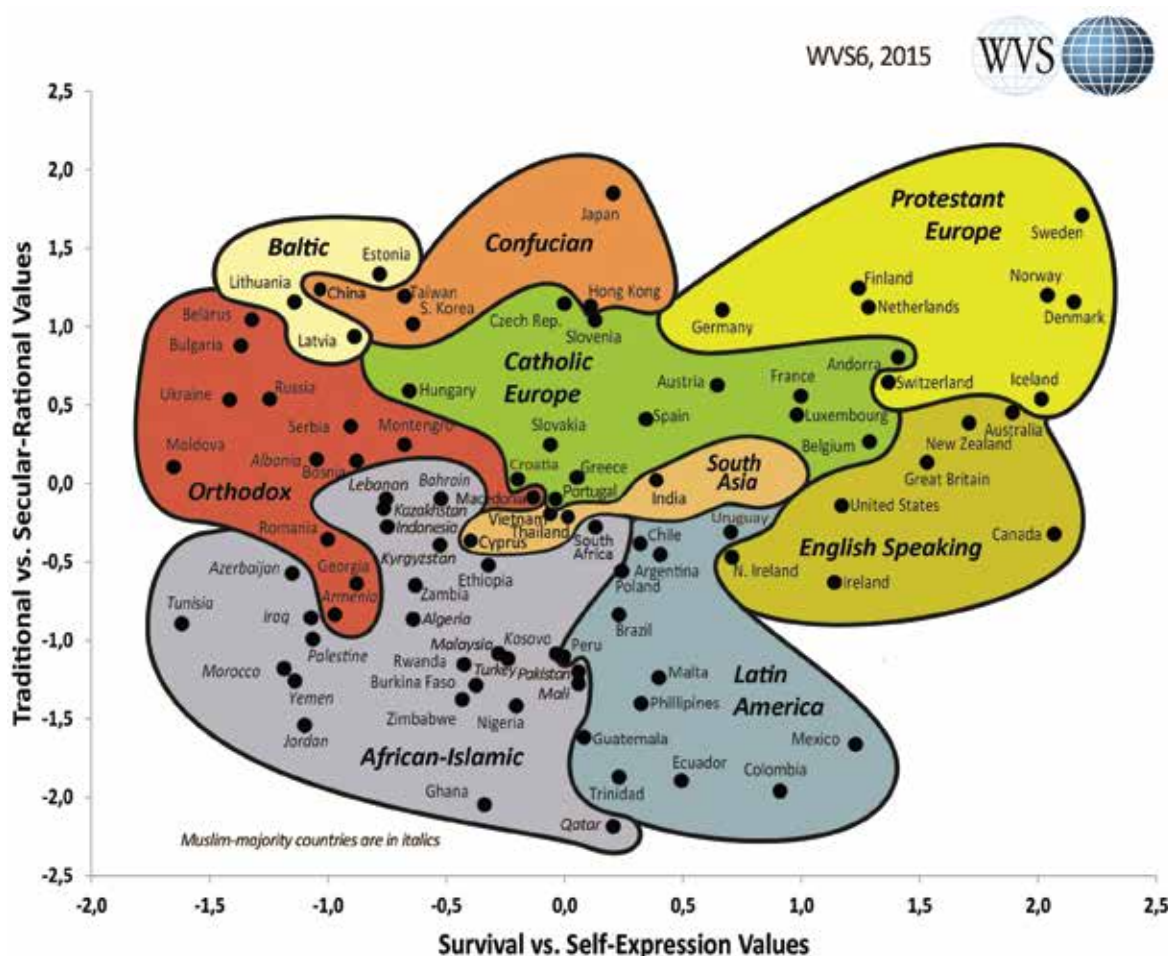
Secular-rational values have the opposite preferences to the traditional values. These societies place less emphasis on religion, traditional family values and authority. Divorce, abortion,

Self-expression values give high priority to environmental protection, growing tolerance of foreigners, [LGBTQ] and gender equality, and rising demands for participation in decision-making in economic and political life. (Inglehart and Welzel 2015)

The map also connects societies by shared characteristics, such as Confucian, Protestant, Islamic, or Catholic.

continued on page 15

Figure 1: 2015 Inglehart–Welzel cultural map of the world, from the World Values Survey.



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Culture and Ethics from page 13

Why It Matters

Although the map's representation greatly simplifies the complexity within each society, the WVS assessment does provide an important lens for independent educational consultants (IECs) working with international students. Most international students coming to the United States are coming from nations whose governing ideologies tend to lean towards Secular-Rational and Survival value systems (upper left quadrant). It is important to understand how these ideologies drive the calculations behind decision making as each student plays out a socio-cultural narrative shaped not only by their background but also by their own (often subconscious) synthesis of their societal histories. As IECs, we also have our own stories and implicit value systems that play a role in influencing our students.

Within this context, we can see how the common guiding principle of behavior heard throughout the United States, "Do unto others as you would have them do unto you," can engender increasing levels of complexity for international students. Following this principle creates a very real trap, because a well-intentioned student may easily assume that others hold the same values and thus the same preferences. It is exceedingly difficult to understand the ramifications of our actions without understanding the value systems in which we find ourselves.

In particular, the issue of plagiarism can take on new nuances when considered through this societal-value lens. The values placed on individual merit, critical thinking, and innovation within societies falling high in self-expression and secular-rational domains (upper right quadrant) drive the "scarlet letter" placed on plagiarism within American academic culture.

In many non-American societies, however, avoiding offending or embarrassing immediate superiors takes precedence over giving credit to ambiguous others. In several East Asian academic contexts, providing detailed citations can carry the insulting implication that the professors are in fact unfamiliar with the very works that they have assigned. In this value system, the overriding focus on citations from the original source becomes overly pedantic. The duty of the student is to demonstrate knowledge, not to provide credit to others. For those students, who have often found success operating under a different definition of excellence, adapting to a new definition within the American academic context is a difficult endeavor.

How We Can Help

Despite the variations, all value systems have one common attribute: each society believes in the truth—or ethical competency—of their own values; thus, individuals lead their lives believing in their own sense of the "good" and the "bad." Each society shown in the chart above, therefore, develops citizen identities that embody a value spectrum specific to their own socio-cultural history.

IECs can be effective in guiding students through the following steps:

Share expectations with students. Avoid focusing on a single action as "bad," and instead develop a broader context of what is valued in an American classroom and school (e.g., taking initiative, participation, individualism).

Encourage identity formation. International students, more than other groups, are in a unique position to analyze and actively construct their identity. IECs can help students develop a stronger sense of self—and thus a stronger sense of ethics—by framing the application process as an identity developing exercise and the time in American schools as an opportunity for students to reevaluate their value systems.

Involve families. Families propagate and reinforce societal values for students and provide the most pertinent advice on what is good and bad. Teaching families about the value systems and rationales behind school policies and academic rules is a key step toward fostering empathy and bringing about awareness for families, students, and ourselves.

Build competence. All IECs are constantly working to develop and extend their field of expertise. For those working with international families, developing competence means recognizing the different value systems at play and coordinating necessary support structures.

continued on page 17

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Culture and Ethics from page 15

Educate others. Provide your own experiences, knowledge, and opinions to influence the *Principles of Good Practice* of IECA and the standards of other organizations, especially with regard to:

- Multiple interests and potential conflicts of interest
- Relationships with colleges, programs, and schools
- Relationship with students and families
- Relationship with other IECA members
- Advertising and other public statements.

Taking an active approach to our work helps to codify the values we uphold in the United States and will help students better understand models of professional and social behavior.

Moving Forward

We must not only be aware of and empathize with international students coming from different value systems but also analyze our own values and the effect we may have on our students. In doing so, we can better guide our students and help them develop a stronger sense of self. This requires much patience and even taking on roles and responsibilities that are traditionally outside the typical realms of an IEC. As each student develops a sense of

self, he or she will decide for themselves what philosophy of life is best. With strong support, that philosophy can create a new trajectory of global competency that transcends the WVS map, demonstrating the unifying humanity that is the basis of all values, regardless of society. 🙏

About the World Values Survey

The World Values Survey (www.worldvaluessurvey.org) is a global network of social scientists studying changing values and their impact on social and political life led by an international team of scholars. The survey started in 1981 and uses a common questionnaire in almost 100 countries, which contain almost 90% of the world's population. The WVS is the largest noncommercial, cross-national, time series investigation of human beliefs and values ever executed, currently including interviews with almost 400,000 respondents.

Reference

Inglehart, Ronald, and Christian Welzel. 2015. *Findings and Insights*. www.worldvaluessurvey.org/WVSContents.jsp.

Marina Lee, Cogita Educational Services, can be reached at marinalee@cogitaeducation.com.

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Financial Aid for International Students

By Jennie Kent, IECA (Bogota, Columbia)



An important aspect of our work as IECs is helping students find colleges or universities that are not only strong academic and social matches but also good financial choices as well. Although many counselors and independent educational consultants feel secure assisting domestic students with regard to financing, many still have questions when advising international students on financial matters. The answers to the following questions are a good place to start learning more.

Q: Are international students eligible for financial aid?

A: Most international students are not eligible for federal financial aid, such as Pell Grants, Direct Loans for students, and PLUS Loans for parents, but they are eligible for institutional aid at many public and private colleges and universities.

Q: Who is considered an international student?

A: In the United States, each educational institution determines the criteria for an international student and how their applications are read. There is no easy definition that pertains to all institutions, but many draw the line according to whether a student will require a visa to study in the United States. Many dual nationals will fall within the domestic applicant pool.

Q: What is the largest source of financial aid for international students?

A: The largest source of financial aid for international students is institutional aid, in the form of need-based aid, merit-based aid, or both.

Q: When helping an international client, what are the key pieces of information that IECs need to help families build an appropriate financial list of colleges?

A: The two most important things to know beforehand are the financial aid policy of each institution and whether the client will qualify for need-based aid or only be eligible for merit-based aid.

Q: How can we learn which colleges give need-based aid, merit-based aid, or both?

A: The best way to learn about institutional financial aid policies is to look in each university's Common Data Set or to use the recently updated chart that **Jeff Levy** (CA) and I produced (go to resources/FA international students at www.personalcollegeadmissions.com).

Q: My client qualifies for need-based aid. Which institutions should he consider?

If your client can demonstrate financial need, any institution that offers need-based aid for international students will be an option. Although data on the percentage of need met for international students are difficult to find, most institutions that offer need-based aid should be considered, particularly if the data indicate that the average per-student financial aid award is substantial.

Q: My client will only be eligible for merit-based aid. Which institutions should she consider?



A: Merit-based aid is awarded to any student who fits a profile that the institution is eager to attract. That may mean a talented artist or athlete, a strong academic student, or even a student who is from a desired location. Because of that, it is important to consider the strengths of each individual student and look at what he or she will bring to the institution. In addition, if an institution offers generous aid packages to a large percentage of students, there is a greater chance of your client getting a good offer.

Q: Are some colleges more generous with financial aid than others?

A: There are many institutions that are generous with aid, but some stand out for the amount of aid they offer or the overall percentage of international students who are receiving it. The list of schools generous with aid to international students is long. Here is a sample of 15 such institutions:

- **Only need-based aid.** Amherst College, Harvard University, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Princeton University, and Yale University are all need-blind for international students and meet 100% of demonstrated need.
- **Only merit-based aid.** Furman University, Muhlenberg College, Quinnipiac University, Stetson University, and The College of Wooster are all generous with merit aid.
- **Both need-based and merit-based aid:** Colby College, Macalester College, Providence College, Trinity College, and Washington and Lee University all offer generous packages of combined need and merit.

Q: Other than institutional aid, what other sources of financial aid are available for international students?

A: International students have many sources of aid available to them. Some students' home countries may offer scholarships or loans. And there are international organizations and private sponsors who do the same, as well as scholarships specifically earmarked for international students. A good resource for scholarships is www.edupass.org/finaid/databases.phtml.

Although the majority of international students are not eligible for federal aid in the United States, there are some exceptions, such as US nationals, permanent residents, or students in the US with the intention of becoming a US citizen or permanent resident. For a list



of which noncitizen students are eligible for federal aid, go to <https://studentaid.ed.gov/sa/eligibility/non-us-citizens>.

Finally, international students are allowed to work on campus, although institutions limit those hours. If any of your clients will have campus jobs, remind them to check with the international student coordinator to see if any US taxes will be due on earned income at the end of the year and when to file returns.

Q: *Is grant aid subject to US tax?*

A: Scholarships not exceeding tuition and fees are not subject to US tax. But if any amount of a student's grant aid is used for room or board, it will be taxable at the federal rate of 14%. If a student's home country has a tax treaty with the US, however, they may receive a refund for taxes paid on aid used for room and board during the previous calendar year.

Q: *What about loans? Are international students able to take them out?*

A: International students may not take out federal loans, but some institutions and private lenders offer loans for international students. As is the case with anyone entering into a legal agreement, loans should be carefully analyzed and the terms clearly understood before borrowing money.

Q: *Which forms do international students need to submit when applying for financial aid?*

A: The forms that need to be submitted will depend on the methodology used by each institution, so be sure to have your students check on each college's website. Some students will need to submit the FAFSA, some will need to submit the CSS PROFILE, and some students may need to submit what is known as Proof of Financial Support or Financial Certification.

Q: *When do these forms need to be submitted?*

A: Submission deadlines can be similar to those for domestic students who are applying for financial aid but will need to be individually verified with each school. Verification is crucial in the case of financial certification or proof of financial support. Some institutions require forms to be submitted at the same time as the admission application, but others will request them at the time of enrollment to help secure a student visa from the US government. If a client is applying for need-based aid, keep in mind that many institutions will not let an international student apply for aid if they did not apply as a freshman, regardless of a change in situation, such as loss of a job or death of a parent.

Q: *Will applying for financial aid impact an admission decision?*

A: It is important to note that an institution may be need blind for domestic students but need aware for international students. The majority of institutions that offer financial aid to international students are need aware and thus may consider the student's demonstrated need in the application review.

Jenny Kent, Educate Abroad, can be reached at jk@educateabroad.co.

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How International Drama Students Audition for US Schools

By Chris Andersson, MA, IECA Associate (NY)



The world needs its stories to be told. Artists are storytellers. Educating artists to be the keepers of our collective memory—to take what they learn, what they observe, what they breathe in, and shape it and share it with the rest of us—so that we, together, can evolve as a human race is vital to our life on this planet. So, we need the planet's voices. All of them.

Arts schools around the world welcome students from every part of the globe, knowing that the mixing of cultures and perspectives—both life and artistic—will create a vibrant incubator of ideas.

Just as with any other college or university, the arts student is looking for a good match with an arts school. Encourage your students to research widely and deeply. Just as you would for any student, suggest that they look beyond the big names. What kind of program might be appropriate for them? Do they want the intense, immersive nature of a conservatory program or do they want a strong academic school with the opportunity to major in their desired art form? Maybe something in-between? Propose that

your students attend a summer high school program at one of their top schools of interest. They will discover whether the program, the school, and the location are right for them. The philosophy, approaches, schools of thought, and disciplines offered will all factor into their decisions of where to apply.

The challenge for arts students is their two-pronged application process. They must not only submit an academic application, as does every other aspiring college student, but must also go through an artistic review as well. Many arts programs require applicants to submit a portfolio of work (e.g., photographs, drawings, writing samples, and short films), which they present either in person or online. Acting programs, however, require an audition, which, in most cases, is done in person. How, then, does an aspiring actor apply to a college drama program on the other side of the earth?

The good news is that international applicants to drama programs in the United States have options. If a student is fortunate enough to be able to make the trip to their desired school, they can audition alongside other international and US candidates and at the same time, see the campus, meet current students, and get a good feel

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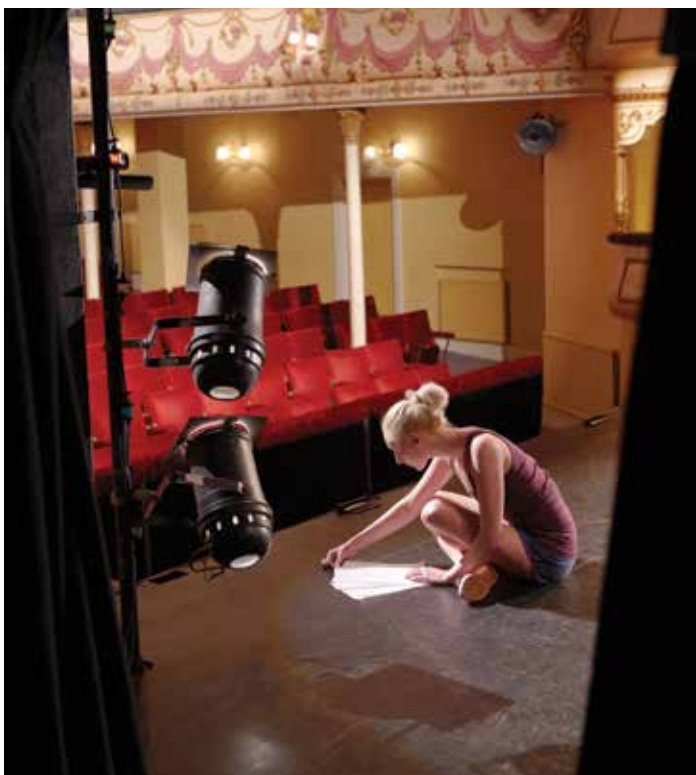
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The guide will also include information on gap years, American universities abroad, branch campuses, and using US federal financial aid to fund undergraduate degree study outside the US.

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for the place. They might even participate in the Unified Auditions, where a number of drama schools gather at the same location for a couple of days in New York, Chicago, and Los Angeles, which enables families to get a lot of bang for their travel buck. Many students, however, cannot travel to the United States for auditions because of class schedules or finances, which often includes other family members flying as well. The digital submission option has been created just for those students.



Not all schools offer the video option, so finding the answer to that question is a key part of students' research. Some of the schools that do not offer the option for a digital submission for drama candidates are The Juilliard School, Carnegie Mellon University, the University of North Carolina School of the Arts, UCLA, DePaul University, CalArts, and Pace University.

On the flip side, NYU Tisch School of the Arts, Emerson College, The New School for Drama, Boston University, the University of Michigan, the University of South Carolina, and the University of Texas–Austin are among those that allow candidates to utilize the digital submission option to fulfill the requirements for an artistic review. Some schools encourage students to appear at an in-person audition, suggesting it is the best course of action, but still offer the video option; others view the digital submission as an equivalent alternative to the live audition. The different reasoning behind each school's decision whether to offer a digital option may be affected by the size of the incoming class, the structure of the artistic review itself, and the philosophy behind the training offered.

At NYU Tisch School of the Arts, we receive applications from many different countries and the majority of those applicants submit digital artistic reviews in lieu of attending in-person auditions. We take digital submissions just as seriously as in-person reviews and digital applicants are accepted into the program every year. In fact, the same group of evaluators—teachers in the department—conduct both the live and digital reviews. Diversity is of great value to our department, especially because of our size. The digital submission option allows us to meet students from all over the world. Just this year, the top five countries from which we had applicants were the United Kingdom, Mexico, India, Singapore, and Australia, followed by Hong Kong, Brazil, UAE, Turkey, Israel, France, South Korea, and many others.

Here's how we do it. An in-person acting artistic review consists of two monologues and a conversation with the evaluator. The whole thing takes about 15 minutes and occurs in New York or at one of our many regional audition locations around the country, as well as in London. A digital submission comprises two monologue videos and a Skype call. The evaluator first watches the two monologues and takes notes. Then, she contacts the applicant on Skype for the conversation portion of the artistic review.

While the candidates for the digital session are waiting to be contacted by their evaluator, they are all in a Skype chatroom with the NYU host for the session, so they can chat with each other and ask questions about the admissions process, the Drama Department, student life at NYU, or living in New York City—just like they could at a live session. We try to create a group atmosphere so the candidates who are sitting alone in their bedrooms or dorm rooms realize that they are part of a bigger process and that there are students from all over the world who are also auditioning from their bedrooms or dorm rooms.

Creating community is the important thing in this process: unifying the digital applicants in their adventure of auditioning; demonstrating that the candidates are being invited into a community of artists and scholars; and bringing them together once they arrive to connect and share their experiences in their new school, new city, and new country.

If you have international arts clients—drama or otherwise—let them know that their voices are valuable. Their stories need to be told. Their perspectives are welcome. Bringing together a diverse, multicultural student body of artists can only result in challenging, enlightening, invigorating, painful, deep, thoughtful, fascinating work. Please encourage them to apply. We are waiting for them with open arms.

Chris Andersson, Theater Education Specialist, Director of Admissions, NYU Tisch School of the Arts, can be reached at chris@chrisandersson.nyc.

The International IECs Toolbox

By Laura O'Brien Gatzionis, MEd, IECA (Athens, Greece)



In international advising, there are three distinct constituencies with whom independent educational consultants (IECs) work. The first group consists of international students who have completed part or all of their secondary education in the United States. This requires some specialized knowledge as well as cultural sensitivity, but is less of a stretch for an IEC

who deals primarily with US students and US programs.

Students who are attending school or completing their secondary education or first degree outside of the US are a second category of students. This is much more challenging than the first cluster, requiring familiarity with the applicant's educational system. Students may be in international, but not necessarily American, schools and knowledge of the local culture is essential to successfully advising this population.

The third group of students, which may include US citizens, is exploring studying at an international university or attending a program outside of the US. Those global institutions can have very different admissions requirements and expectations from US

options. As in the case for advising students for US establishments, guiding this contingent requires a similar level of expertise from IECs, including site visits.

Working with an international student population and overseas programs opens up many areas of exploration, as well as pitfalls for the unwary. You may guide students living in the US who wish to apply to institutions abroad or you might counsel non-US passport holders or US citizens who reside abroad through the US application process (undergraduate and graduate). Perhaps you are working with international students who are attending boarding schools located in the US or another country or students who need guidance on therapeutic or other programs. Taking advantage of the many opportunities offered for professional development by professional associations such as IECA and others in the international arena of educational consulting will allow you to continue to hone your knowledge and skills.

Resources

Every IECA conference includes globally focused educational sessions as well as a roundtable, which is an opportunity to discuss current

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concerns in the international field. IECA offers additional resources for IECs, including an international-focused issue of *Insights* as well as webinars on subjects of particular interest to IECs working with this population. The Global Committee has prepared the I Designation roadmap, to provide guidance to members who wish to develop their skills. Regional IEC groups are open to all IECA members and are yet another valuable resource. There are currently groups in Europe, Turkey, Southeast Asia, Shanghai, and the ASEAN Nations.

IECA members who work with international students can add to their toolbox by being aware of continuing education opportunities through organizations such as TABS, NAIS, NACAC, NAFSA, and International ACAC.



The Association of Boarding Schools (TABS) and the National Association of Independent Schools (NAIS) collaborate to conduct a yearly Global Symposium. The International Association for College Admission Counseling (International ACAC), which is affiliated with NACAC, offers professional development at its annual summer conference with all educational sessions devoted to international issues. Regional institutes are held in a different location each year, and past locations have included Shanghai and London. The Association of International Educators (NAFSA), the National Association of Therapeutic Schools and Programs (NATSAP), and the Council of International Schools (CIS) offer annual conferences and regional institutes and with internationally focused presentations, such as the recent "Working with International Families in the Therapeutic Milieu" by IECA's **Becky Grappo** (CO) at the NATSAP conference.

Internet-based resources include webinars offered by professional organizations, such as IECA, TABS, NACAC, International ACAC, and NAFSA. Experts also gather to discuss and share hot topics, articles, and blogs through most of these organizations' Facebook and LinkedIn communities as well as Education USA and College Board.

Additional online educational resources for college consultants can be found through UC Irvine Extension's IEC program, which offers an elective course on American College Consulting for the International Student. (Full disclosure: I am one of the instructors for that course.) To better comprehend the international student's perspective, a consultant could follow the University of Pennsylvania's Coursera MOOC, "Applying to U.S. Universities," which is offered specifically for high school students who have been educated in the national curriculum of their countries.

Welcome to the exciting and fast changing world of international consulting!

Laura O'Brien Gatzionis, Educational Advisory Services, can be reached at laura@eduadvise.gr.

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Getting the Most Out of Campus Visits

By Elizabeth Stone, PhD, IECA (CA)



Customizing a campus visit takes special planning, but the benefits are enormous. The time taken to sit in on classes and meet with faculty and advisors provides enormous advantages for students who have to write the "Why this college" essay or participate in an admissions interview. The prospective student who has carefully planned his visit can write

about his or her unique experiences on campus and make a better case for "fit" than a student who has merely walked around the quad. Customized visits are especially important for international students who usually cannot return to revisit campuses and often are less familiar with the resources that universities in the United States offer.

A Tale of Two Students

This year I counseled two students who were interested in film studies. Ryan was admitted to many excellent film programs, including the University of Southern California, Columbia University, and UC Santa Barbara. Sharon was admitted to several colleges as well. Both students took a very active approach to choosing a

college, but Ryan customized all his college visits while Sharon, like many students, attended prospective-student open house events and visited many colleges without making prior arrangements to see facilities or to meet with faculty members.

Ryan's unique experiences on campus included attending a three-hour film screening and lecture and a meeting with the professor and students during the screening intermission. A prearranged appointment with another faculty member lasted more than an hour, and the professor answered many of Ryan's questions about the academic options available to him. At another campus, it was prearranged for Ryan to sit in on a course titled Hollywood Counterculture Cinema, and because the professor knew Ryan would be attending, she asked him to watch *Shampoo* and *Annie Hall* in preparation for the class discussion.

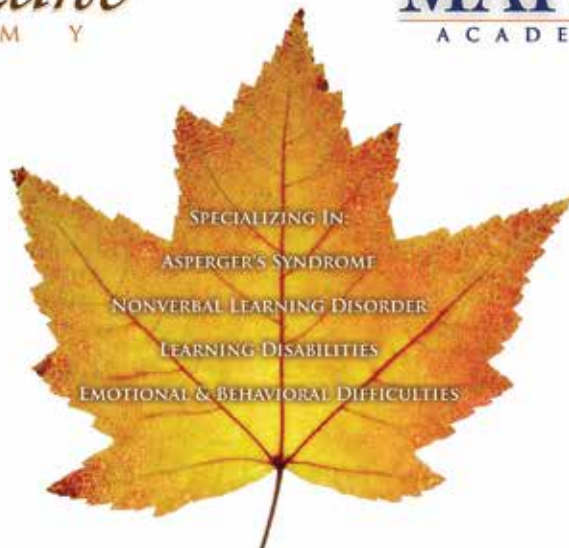
When it came time for Ryan to make an enrollment decision, his meetings with faculty and like-minded students played an enormous role in evaluating each offer. He had gained perception of the courses' academic rigor and of the faculty's expectations. In the end,

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Campus Visits from page 25

he felt confident deciding which program would best meet his career and academic goals.

Sharon's experiences were astoundingly different. She also visited schools with film programs in the South, Midwest, and East Coast, but did not arrange meetings in advance, figuring she'd drop in on faculty and just take the general campus tours. As a result, she missed seeing essential film facilities. I knew that one college she visited had an excellent film program with a state-of-the-art facility that isn't in the main section of campus, but after her disappointing visit, I was unable to persuade her to consider the admission offer. Although Sharon did connect with a couple of faculty members, she was not prepared to ask them personalized questions because she didn't research the background of anyone she met, i.e. read their biographies, learn about their specialties, or understand their academic rank or teaching track at the university. And because she never sat in on a class, she did not have an opportunity to meet a variety of students or gauge the classroom dynamic.

When Sharon informed me of her enrollment decision, I was shocked, because compared to other colleges that offered her admission, it did not have the strongest film program when considering the number of full-time faculty, quality facilities, and



special opportunities available for undergraduates. When I asked Sharon what led her to the decision, she cited how much she loved the campus tour guide who "seemed really cool and nice," and that the campus was "pretty with really big dorm rooms."

Guidance for International Students

Colleges provide impersonal group tours and information sessions to provide an overview of their campuses. For prospective students, however, those encounters alone rarely provide the insight

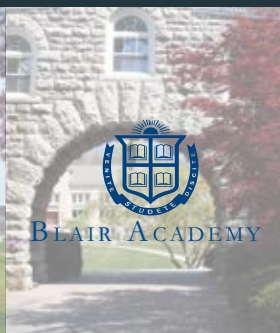
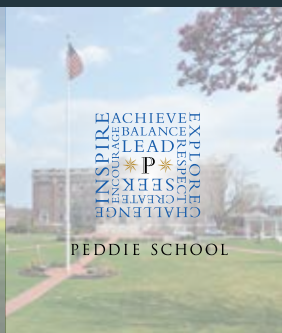
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necessary to choose the “best fit” college. For example, a college classroom experience often reveals much about student and faculty expectations, and it can differ greatly from school experiences in other countries. What does it feel like for an international student to observe a small seminar where each student is expected to participate? Will an international student feel confident in a large lecture hall full of hundreds of students? An immersive campus visit is extremely beneficial to prepare a prospective student for the variety of US college experiences. Plus, customizing the first visit will put the student in the best position to write a compelling application and to make an informed enrollment decision. What should a student do to prepare for a visit?

Review course catalogs and schedules and find classes of interest.

Walking into a class without prior knowledge of the course content, topic of the day, or information about the professor can be a lost opportunity to engage with the material.

Write to professors in advance to ask permission to observe class.

Showing up without permission or “sneaking” into a class is disrespectful to the professor. Obtaining permission may also lead to an invitation from the professor for a short follow-up conversation after class or through email. In addition, the professor can provide the student with an assignment so that the student can sense of the rigor of the course material and better understand the lecture or discussion.

Schedule meetings in advance with advisors or resource staff to learn about departmental offerings, multicultural resources, or support services. When appointments are prearranged, students have the uninterrupted attention of the individual with whom they are meeting. The faculty member will have prepared to meet the student, just as the student has prepared for the meeting. Traveling a great distance hoping someone will have the time to speak with you unannounced is risky and you may end up meeting with a front office staff member who doesn’t usually meet with prospective students.

Search websites for information on specialized facilities and request access. Special facilities tours are usually led by a campus professor or faculty member who can explain the resources available. To get the most out of those visits, students want a knowledgeable person to lead the tour. Many facilities are not accessible to students without key cards so students likely won’t have access on their own.

Buy advance tickets to campus performances and events. Students may want to arrange their college visit around special events where they can meet with other students with similar interests. Often tickets need to be purchased or reserved well in advance.

Extend a visit beyond a “Preview” or “Discovery Day.” Popular special campus events introduce large groups of prospective students to campus and provide access to a wide variety of faculty members and programs, but it will be in the company of hundreds, or even thousands, of other prospective students trying to gain the same information. Often, arranged meetings with faculty or admissions

officers are not even available during these special admissions events. If students are intrigued by these open house days, they should arrive a day early or stay an extra day to see the campus on a typical day.

Find lodging that gives the student a flavor of the college

environment. Staying near campus makes it possible to participate in evening activities, hang out in the college’s coffee house or on-campus hang-outs, or even study in the library instead of watching TV in a hotel many miles away. In addition, try to steer clear of invitations from the college for students to sleep on a stranger’s floor in a dorm. Although it might sound like a great plan, too often the prospective student is left to fend for him- or herself while the host student is off studying. Better to enjoy the campus nightlife and then get a great night’s sleep in a comfortable bed.

A good rule of thumb for planning customized college visits is 6–8 weeks in advance for domestic students and 10–12 weeks in advance for international students. The lead time makes it possible to obtain good value in air and lodging and ample time to connect with campus resources, explore and book upcoming campus events, and plan a coordinated itinerary to maximize time on each campus. ✈️

Elizabeth Stone is the executive director of Campanile College Counseling, Campanile College Tours (an affiliate of Alpine Travel of Saratoga), and Marble Arch Test Prep and Tutoring. She can be reached at estone@campanile.us.

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Meeting Students Where They Are—Even at the Extremes

By Jessie Peck Martin, IECA Associate (NJ)



At the IECA Spring Conference in Boston, Dr. Ellen Braaten opened her keynote speech, *The Curse of the Average Child*, with a slide like this:



Wal-Mart or Harvard. That slide stuck in my mind. All other high schoolers should just go home, settle in with their iPads, hide under the custom-made T-shirt quilt from Aunt Donna, and binge watch *Game of Thrones*. If those are the only options, then it's winner take all—because stocking shelves doesn't play well on Instagram.

My yoga instructor noted something similar a decade ago, telling me: "We are a nation of extremes; moderation is no longer respected. Sodas are bigger. SUVs are bigger. And some family named Kardashian is on TV. How long will people want to watch that?" Well, extremism lives: Kim Kardashian has more than 50 million followers on Instagram; of more than 42,000 applicants to Stanford for the class of 2020, 4.69% were accepted (just over 2,000 students); and dare I mention the presidential campaign?

As parents, citizens, educators, and independent educational consultants (IECs), we are seeing firsthand the impact of extremism. Consider the following scenarios, both of which I witnessed in my practice in the last year.

1. No Way Out

Nelson was diagnosed with acute school phobia (didaskaleinophobia) at the age of 13. He missed 45 days of school during his freshman year and was lucky that his transcript had four passing grades, all Ds. In elementary school, Nelson performed just fine, earning honor roll each year up through fifth grade. By the time he turned 13, his sister had been admitted to Wesleyan, his brother was a star wrestler, and Nelson decided that if he could not get straight As, school was futile. His thinking (variations on I can't get straight As, there is no place for me) led to suicidal ideation and a hospitalization. After extensive therapy and an art class that sparked an interest in graphic design, Nelson finished his junior year with a 3.0.

2. The Highest of Bars

Leesa was a straight A student with eight AP classes and a 33 on her ACT. She was a residential leader at her prep school, a regionally recognized piano player, a six-time varsity athlete, and a nationally ranked water-skier. Her SAT subject test scores were in the mid-600s and she received no 4s or 5s on her AP exams. As much as I tried to caution this only child and her parents that admittance to an Ivy League was a reach, she really wanted to apply—and with an ED application no less. After she was deferred ED1 at Cornell and clearly shaken by the news, I tried to help her gain some perspective and asked her to name three people

in her life whom she admired and tell me where they did their undergraduate work. She began with Alan Turing (Cambridge, then Princeton). Bill Gates (Harvard, to start). With a deep sigh, I started again and named a few teachers and mentors who I knew had made a direct impact on her. They went to Rutgers, Middlebury, and Lafayette.

The fact is that the majority of us—as a statistical reality—fall in the thickest section of the bell curve. (Why else would it be shaped like that?) And that is completely okay. I repeat this often to my students, and over and over again. But let's face it: being average or below average or even above average in any department guarantees nothing:

It's precisely your uniqueness that makes you awesome—deciding that someone else's uniqueness is better than your own isn't exactly being your own best buddy about things... Can you imagine what our world would be like if our biggest heroes succumbed to the perils of comparison?...If the guys in Led Zeppelin compared themselves to Mozart? *Dude. That guy's huge. Way huger than we'll ever be and he doesn't even have a drummer. I think we should get rid of ours...* You are more than enough. Avoid comparison like the plague. (Sincero 2013)



Help Them Be Their Best Selves

What can we do as IECs? Every day we must meet our students and their families precisely where they are. Growing up, I spent a lot of weekends with my grandparents. As my grandmother toasted English muffins and sipped black coffee, she would always, at some point, mutter the "Serenity Prayer." You know the one: "God, grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change, the courage to change the things I can, and the wisdom to know the difference."

And here's the thing, that prayer, if we reorder it a little, provides a roadmap to working with students who have worked themselves way out to the edge of the most precarious limb.

Step 1: Acceptance

When struggling students show up (you know the signs), we must

help each of them recognize that they are exactly where they need to be at this point in time. Now, that may not mean that they are exactly where they need to be to gain an acceptance to Stanford, but the first step is always acceptance. Only from a place of acceptance can we help students shimmy their way back toward that sturdy trunk, their unique center.

Step 2: Illumination

Give students assignments that provide them with ways to be proactive and help them articulate and define moments in their life when they are moved by purpose. Here are some I have found effective and meaningful:

Post. Seek, read, and post links of two articles that interest you weekly. Over the next few months, a pattern of topics will emerge and often reflect a latent interest.

Write. Set the timer on that smartphone, and write without interruption for a set period of time.

Meditate. This is a tough sell, yet is nonetheless becoming increasingly important in our culture. Try the Calm app (calm.com). At first, challenge students to just one minute daily.

Value creativity. Create a creative style profile at hackingcreativity.com, a site that is part of Red Bull's (yes you heard right), research on creativity. You just may pique the interest of that skateboarding enthusiast on your roster and all those students who don't think that they are creative.

Step 3: Encouragement

Encouragement is very different from praise. It focuses on intrinsic motivations and is nonevaluative, whereas praise communicates external judgments. And did you notice that word? The one gift the Lion was given in Oz. It's smack dab in the middle: *courage*. It takes great courage for young people to push through their fears and limiting beliefs about themselves. Yet for a shift to occur, courage must be employed, and we can foster that courage through encouragement. The beauty of consulting is that we are not there to grade or parent or discipline; we are there for our students, to provide a path, and to guide them on each step on it until they realize they can guide themselves just fine.

As independent educational consultants, as mentors, and as sounding boards, we are called to meet each student exactly where he or she is at that moment. We are to awaken in them their unique value, regardless of circumstance, test performance, athletic accomplishments, community service, extracurricular activities, or GPA—and help them take that next step.

References

Sincero, Jen. 2013. "Chapter 6: Love The One You Is." *You Are a Bad Ass: How to Stop Doubting Your Greatness and Start Living an Awesome Life*. Philadelphia, PA: Running.

Jessie Peck Martin, *CompassU Educational Consulting*, can be reached at jessie@compass-u.com.

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Campus Visits



Curry College in Milton, MA, hosted IECA members for a tour during the Spring conference.

In the News

Victoria Tillson Evans, associate member (DC), was quoted in the June 13 article "Out-of-State Enrollment Rises at State Flagship Universities" in *U.S. News and World Report*.

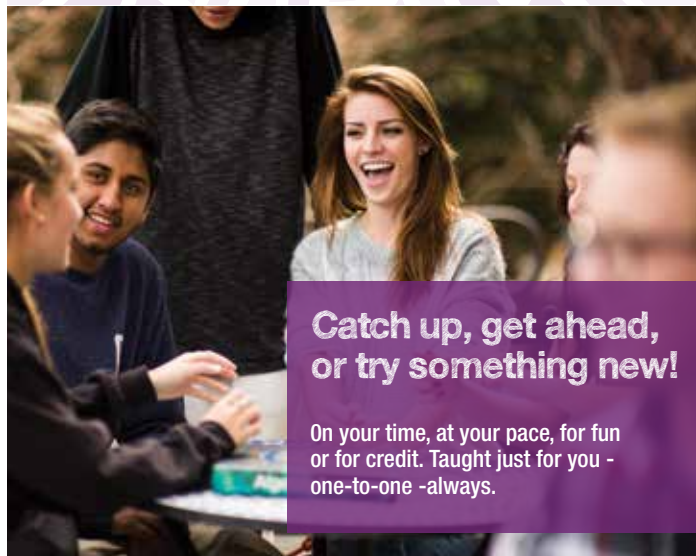
Jamie Dickenson (WV) was interviewed by 13 News WOWK in Charleston, WV, for a story about the new SAT.

Mark Sklarow was quoted in *The Pie News* article "Why educators fear the Trump effect on US education exports" on July 1.

In Memoriam

Pauline B. Reiter, who became an Emeritus member of IECA in January 2016, died on May 27, 2016. Born in New York, she built her career in independent educational consulting in Bellevue, WA, and was a professional member of IECA from 2004 until her retirement in 2015.

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Why I Belong

I vividly remember the moment I knew I wanted to become an IEC. Standing behind my table during the “swap” at the 2006 Fall Conference in Miami, I was exhausted by the sheer number of questions being asked of myself and the head of the small boarding school where I was serving as the director of admission. Even with two of us, we could hardly handle the conversation stream.

Arriving home after that conference, I told my husband about the engaging and thoughtful conversations I had with dozens of independent educational consultants (IECs) who seemed passionate about their profession and cared deeply for the families with whom they were working. I told him that I wanted to be an independent educational consultant when I grew up, and two years later, that’s just what I did.

Through membership in IECA, I have developed a significant professional network of colleagues and mentors. I have yet to encounter a situation in which I couldn’t reach out to my IECA peers for guidance and a possible solution. In our



I have yet to encounter a situation in which I couldn’t reach out to my IECA peers for guidance and a possible solution.

profession, continued education and professional development are paramount, and IECA does an excellent job of providing opportunities for newly minted IECS as well as seasoned members. IECA has always been ahead of the curve by staying on top of trends in education, the changing global landscape, and business practices. Working in a field that can sometimes feel isolating, I have always appreciated the opportunities IECA has provided for members to interact both professionally and socially, whether at a conference or during an organized tour. I love that I can now count so many of those same IECs who stopped by my table in 200—and showed me just where my career could go—as my colleagues and friends.

—Kristina L. Dooley, IECA (OH)

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Regional Groups

Florida

A new **Central Florida Area** regional group has recently formed. Please contact Dianne Keilholtz at Dianne.Keilholtz@launchingcollegesuccess.com for more information.

Vancouver

The newly formed **Vancouver** regional group met for lunch on May 24. Pictured from l to r: Whitney Laughlin, Kate Hauser, Zahra Rasul, and Bibi Malek. Not pictured: Hilary Lehn and Janette Lim.



San Diego

On June 23rd, the **San Diego** group met for breakfast with Teri Ann Matsuda, associate director of freshman admission at Drexel University, who shared information about Drexel, their co-op programs, specific majors, and overall admissions process.

European Regional

The **European Regional** group will start meeting monthly by video conferencing. They are creating a directory for the group which consists of email and Skype addresses as well as a brief description of the types of students each IEC works with in their practice. Recent agenda topics have included the ACT versus SAT for international students.

Beijing

The **Beijing** group met in June to discuss the issues of boarding school admissions for Chinese students, the new counseling business models in China, and the promotion of IECA standards and ethical counseling in China. Pictured l to r: Hamilton Gregg, Jack Cao, and Sue Zhong.



Twin Cities

On May 18, the **Twin Cities** group hosted Jeron Schmidt, admissions counselor from Northland College, and enjoyed presentations from Vita Cohen on Common App updates and from Garth Robertson and Kate Malczewski on NACACs *Statement of Principles of Good Practice* case studies. In June the group met to celebrate the class of 2016 and Ryan Luse's new status as a Professional Member. Pictured l to r: Jay Benanav, Jenny Buyens, Garth Robertson, Laurie MacGregor, Sue Luse, Ryan Luse, Vita Cohen, Susan Hoff. Not pictured: Qing Xian.



New Jersey

The New Jersey group met with a rep from **Occidental College** this spring. Pictured first row, l to r: Charlie Leizear, associate dean of admission for strategic initiatives, Occidental College; Linda Kay, Marcia Kramer, Carolyn Mulligan. Second row, l to r: Lisa Schechter, Abbie Rabin, Laurie Weingarten, Jessie Martin, Melanie Talesnick. Third row, l to r: Anna Ren, Larry Blumenstyk, Tony Carnahan.



Send your group news to *Insights* at insights@iecaonline.com as you hold events; host speakers; and visit colleges, schools, and programs. Don't forget to take photos!

Initiatives

During Smart Money Week, April 23–30, **Thomas J. Jaworski**, associate member (IL), was the featured speaker at four Chicago-area programs. Following one program, he was interviewed by and quoted in the Chinese-language Epoch News regarding college financial aid.

Heidi Molbak (LA) and Jacqui Byrne have cofounded FlexSchool, a day micro school for gifted and twice-exceptional (2e) students in grades 6–12/PG. Molbak will serve as opening head of school for the New Haven campus in September.

Nancy Masland's (IECA Emeritus member) published *House of Heart and Heartbreak: A Family's Struggle With a Daughter's Mental Illness and Substance Abuse*.

On May 11, **Holly Blumenstyk** (NJ) spoke at the New Jersey Association of Independent Schools Admissions Conference. Her address introduced IECA to approximately 80 school admissions representatives and educational professionals.

On June 3, the *Fay Observer* announced **Belinda J. Wilkerson's** (NC) appointment to the IECA Board of Directors.



Pictured above, **Marilyn Emerson** (NY) and students from the Possibility Project met with reps from Purdue University and from Hobart and William Smith colleges in June.

Associate member, **Chris Andersson** (NY), pictured below, joined Marilyn Emerson at The Possibility Project in June to discuss applying to programs in the arts.



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On the Road

IECA's CEO **Mark Sklarow** and **Amanda Fogler**, manager of member outreach and engagement, participated in the **2016 WACAC Conference** at Loyola Marymount University in June. Sklarow taught the pre-conference training for new and aspiring IECs with Arun Ponnusamy from Collegewise and also moderated a session on the relationships between schools and IECs. In addition to being a conference sponsor and vendor, IECA hosted a breakfast for 75 attendees, who were primarily unaffiliated IECs.



The IECA luncheon at WACAC was once again well-attended.

Sklarow also attended the **Symposium on the Future Trends of College Admission**, sponsored by IECA in Los Angeles, before heading to Colorado to begin the planning process for the 2017 Spring Conference in Denver. He was joined by **Rachel King**, IECA's conference manager, and **Valerie Vasquez-Guzman**, manager of educational programs. Associate member **Jenny Umhofer** (CA) and Sean Hawes chaired the symposium.



Amanda Fogler staffed the IECA booth at the WACAC conference.

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Introductions

Please Welcome IECA's New Professional Members

Sue Cook Christakos (MD) has been an independent educational consultant for seven years and was an Associate member. In addition to her consulting work, she has a small advocacy practice to help families



obtain the necessary supports and services for their children to become successful students and advance to the postsecondary level. Each year Christakos works with some families pro bono, often supporting students who are the first in their families to go to college. Her previous work as an attorney on the Americans With Disabilities Act is particularly relevant to her advocacy.

Christakos graduated from Bucknell University with a BA in psychology and received her JD from Georgetown University Law Center. She attended the 2009 IECA Summer Training Institute. Her professional associations are primarily in the field of learning disabilities and advocacy and include NACAC, the Council of Parent Advocates and Attorneys, the Association on Higher Education and Disabilities, the Collaborative Resource Network, WISER, and the Learning Disabilities Association. In addition, she is currently on the board of the DC chapter of the International Dyslexia Association, holding the office of secretary.

Christakos has been married to her husband, Nick, for more than 28 years and has three wonderful children, who have all supported her "encore" career. In her spare time, she enjoys traveling with family and friends, exploring this vast world we live in, and tasting some delicious wines along the way!

*Susan Cook Christakos, JD
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Amy Herzog (IL), an IEC for five years and an associate member for three years, worked as an estate planning attorney at a large law firm in Chicago before becoming an IEC. Herzog earned her BBA from the Stephen M.



Ross School of Business at the University of Michigan and her JD from Loyola University of Chicago School of Law. She attended the 2013 IECA Summer Training Institute and is a member of NACAC.

Herzog is a volunteer and mentor for College Bound Opportunities, an organization that helps guide and support first-generation students through the college preparation, search, and application process. She is also very active in an organization called CURED, Campaign Urging Research for Eosinophilic Disease, because her 14-year-old son was diagnosed with Eosinophilic Esophagitis, a rare white blood cell disease, at age 4. To date, CURED has raised close to \$5 million to support cutting edge research of eosinophilic diseases,

She and her husband, Brian, have four children—three boys and one girl between the ages of 11 and 20. When she isn't working, you will find her hanging out with family, walking, reading, and spending time with friends.

*Amy Herzog, JD
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amy@nscollegeconsulting.net
www.nscollegeconsulting.net
Specialty: C*

Linda Katz (MA), an IEC for 5 years and Associate member for four years, spent 18 years as an occupational therapist, during which time she developed her passion for working with students with learning differences. Also trained



as a mediator, she spent 10 years training high school students to be peer mediators.

Katz earned a BHS in occupational therapy from the University of Florida and has completed the UC Irvine certificate program in independent educational consulting.

After founding her town's MLK Day of Giving Back, Katz chaired it for four years, involving up to 700 community members in a day of volunteering. Since 2014, she has volunteered as an application reviewer for the Asian & Pacific Islander American Scholarship Fund, and she has served on the local high school council since 2010.

Katz and her husband are the parents of three children—one still in high school and two who have attended Colleges That Change Lives schools. She enjoys biking, walks in the woods, yoga, two book clubs, and traveling with her husband.

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linda@rightfitcollegecoaching.com
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Ryan Luse (MN) has been an IEC for five years and an associate member for three. Before he started his career as an IEC, he worked for Thomson Reuters as a training and quality consultant. Luse holds a BA in communications and writing from Emerson College and a certificate in college counseling from UCLA Extension. He attended the 2009 IECA Summer Training Institute, has attended several IECA conferences, and is a member of MACAC.



An active volunteer, Luse takes on pro bono clients each year; has partnered with College Possible, a nonprofit organization, as well as local high schools; and raised \$5,000 for charity by winning a local talent show.

Luse is an avid music lover and Beatles fanatic whose passions also include creative writing, performing and writing music, politics, concerts, film, traveling, and finding adventure and meaning in life. He is married to Anna Luse, an interior designer, and they reside in St. Paul with their little dog Lennon.

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31% from China
14% from India
7% from South Korea
6% from Saudi Arabia
3% from Canada
2% each from:
Mexico
Brazil
Japan
Taiwan
Vietnam

58%

of those 1 million students come from
China, India, South Korea & Saudi Arabia

What These International Students Study

44% STEM fields

20% Business

Broken Down:

20% Engineering
20% Business & Management
12% Math & Computer Science
8% Social Sciences
8% Physical & Life Sciences
6% Fine & Applied Arts
3% Health Professions
5% Intensive English
2% Each
Communications & Journalism
Education
Humanities
1% Each
Agriculture
Law Enforcement & Legal

10% Undeclared/other

Source: Institute of International Education, Open Doors Data 2015