

Future careers for students page 7



On campus with health and physical disabilities page 13



**Advising Chinese** page 17



THE NEWSLETTER OF THE INDEPENDENT EDUCATIONAL CONSULTANTS ASSOCIATION



#### October 8

Webinar: The SAO Common **Application & Gateway Portal** 

#### October 16

Professional Member Retreat Registration Opens

#### November 4-6

Pre-conference tours in Atlanta area

#### November 6-8

IECA Fall Conference in Atlanta, GA

#### November 8

Post-conference tours in Atlanta area

#### November 12

Webinar: Helping Students With LD Optimize Outcomes on Admissions and Testing

#### November 28-29

IECA office closed for Thanksgiving holiday

#### December 10

Webinar: Understanding Neuropsychological Testing

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# National Research: How Test-**Optional Admission Policies** Affect Students and Colleges

By Steve Syverson, Assistant Vice Chancellor for Enrollment Management. University of Washington-Bothell



Over a twoyear period, Bill Hiss (retired from Bates College); Valerie W. Franks. researcher: and I analyzed data involving

more than 950,000 individual applicant records at 28 testoptional institutions trying to better understand the impact of the policy on institutions and the outcomes for students. Recently, we published this largest study of

its kind on the impact of test-optional admission policies in Defining Access: How Test-Optional Works in 2018. (See page 5 for more detail about how the study was conducted).

The institutions represented the breadth of US higher education, including public and private, small and large, well-endowed and heavily tuition-dependent, highly selective and only modestly selective, and highly diverse and more homogeneous. The proportion of applicants who chose not to submit test scores (nonsubmitters) varied from a low of less than 5% to a high of about 50%, but the majority were in the 20-30% range.



#### What Did We Learn?

Perhaps the strongest message is that although there are several shared themes and outcomes, there is no single conclusion to be drawn about the results of adopting a test-optional policy (TOP). It varies by institution. Some institutions seem to be executing it to great institutional advantage and others less so. All shared the stated goal of using their TOP to increase their diversity and service to students from traditionally underrepresented groups, and most appeared to have made progress in that direction.

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October/November 2019



### President's Letter

# IECA Responds to Proposed Legislation

Ever since the Varsity Blues scandal hit, there has been continued discussion and debate about legislation that states could introduce requiring IECs to register to conduct business in their state. The State of California quickly introduced AB1312.

The IECA Board of Directors, together with CEO Mark Sklarow, has been closely watching the developments in California (see article on page M1). From the very first day after news of the scandal broke, IECA has been tirelessly making contacts, gathering information, and communicating our view through the media to lay the groundwork for advocacy.

The board hired a national lobbying firm in DC with contacts throughout the US to monitor the progress of any related bills and protect our interests. This required a significant, previously unbudgeted, dedication of funds. Mark Sklarow quickly reviewed and revised the association budget to free up the necessary funding. This would not have been possible for a smaller association with fewer financial resources.

From the first, our lobbyists felt that it would be unlikely that AB1312 would come to a vote of the floor in its present form. This belief was validated on August 30 when the California legislature declined



Barbara Pasalis

to move the bill out of suspension (where it had been placed due to the high cost of implementation) for consideration in the current session. Despite this, Assembly Member Low in California is committed to advancing some legislation in the future, and it could resurface in the second year of the legislative session. Although IECA was the only IEC member organization not to act on the assumption that the bill was certain to pass, we have developed a Plan B and are in the process of cultivating relationships to ensure that IECA has an influential voice if the bill is

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# In Focus

#### Student to School Counselor Ratios

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States with the highest student to counselor ratios:

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Source: ASCA & NACAC

# Check Out These New Features at Our Upcoming Conference in Atlanta!

We're excited to announce several new features at our conference this fall—we look forward to seeing you there!

#### Conference Mobile App

Now you'll be able to see the conference schedule on your phone: create your own customized schedule; view

sessions, speakers, events, and speaker handouts; and contact other attendees. We'll announce more information and how to download the app soon.

#### **Education Intensives**

As reported in last month's *Insights*, we will debut our first Education Intensive (EI) at the conference in Atlanta. Els will allow IECA members of all experience levels and specialty designations to acquire new skills and knowledge and gain recognition through specifically targeted educational offerings.



### Extra Time Slot for Breakouts

As requested by many attendees, we've added another time slot for additional breakouts: six breakout opportunities from Wednesday to Friday will allow for more topics to be offered.

#### Tailgate Party

Our indoor tailgate/networking

reception is sure to be a fun event, with games and tailgating food—we encourage everyone to wear their logo gear from their favorite school, college, or alma mater!

#### **Timely Discussion**

Things keep changing in our arena and to ensure our discussions are timely, conference participants will select final topics for Roundtables Discussions by electronic vote during the opening general session.

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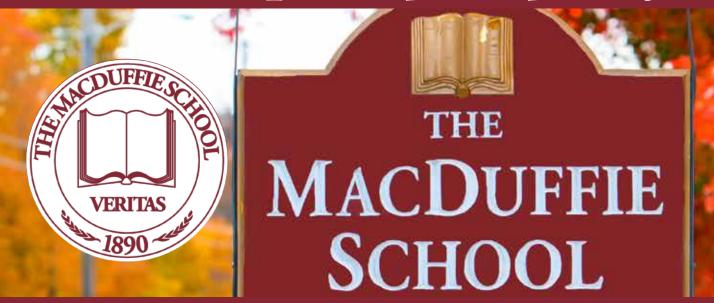
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#### Test-Optional, from page 1

Following are some themes or outcomes that are shared widely within our sample of colleges and their applicants:

A TOP disproportionately appeals to underrepresented minority students, first-generation-to-college students, Pell-eligible students, women, and LD students. As has been found in earlier research, students from those populations often feel that standardized tests don't represent their abilities well and are more likely to be nonsubmitters when offered that opportunity. However, the larger proportion of all those groups still submit test scores.

Nonsubmitters tend to have substantially lower test scores (140–160 points lower on the 1600-point SAT scale). In the aggregate, our colleges were able to provide test scores for only about a third of their nonsubmitter applicants, so this is an incomplete comparison, but we have no reason to believe it is not representative. The numbers closely parallel earlier studies, particularly at Bates where they collected scores from the majority of the nonsubmitters who enrolled.

#### Variations on Test-Optional Admission

#### **Optional for All Policy**

39%

Allows most or all students to choose whether or not to submit standardized testing scores as part of their admissions application.

#### **Optional Plus Policy**

9%

Nonsubmitters are required to supplement their application with an interview or extra writing samples.

#### **Optional for Some Policy**

5%

Testing options are offered to some student groups, but not others. For example, out of state residents, students wishing to enroll in a particular school (nursing, engineering, etc.) and so on.

#### **Academic Threshold Policy**

46%

Students who meet certain academic criteria (e.g., rank, GPA) are admitted without standardized testing scores as part of the admissions decision.

Source: Approximate Proportions on FairTest List

Institutions in our study tended to offer admission to nonsubmitters at a lower rate than those who included their test scores (submitters). But interestingly, the nonsubmitters tended to accept those offers (enroll) at a *higher* rate. We speculate that the lower admit rate results from admission committees and readers still having the use of test scores so firmly ingrained in their thinking that there is still some subtle bias against applications that lack them. And we speculate that the higher yield rate is

because those nonsubmitters (with lower test scores) were not offered admission to some of the test-requiring policy (TRP) colleges to which they applied, so they had fewer options about where to enroll. Although those two trends were widespread across our sample of institutions, we can't show any causality from the data, so they are merely thoughtful speculations.

The nonsubmitters achieved modestly lower GPAs in college but graduated at the same (or higher) rates than the submitters.

Thirteen of our TOP colleges were able to provide four- and fiveyear graduation rates (for the cohorts entering in 2012 and 2011 respectively). In aggregate, that particular group of nonsubmitters presented HSGPAs that were the same as their submitter classmates and SAT scores that were about 125 points lower.

Institutions in our study tended to offer admission to nonsubmitters at a lower rate than those who included their test scores (submitters). But interestingly, the nonsubmitters tended to accept those offers (enroll) at a higher rate.

#### Effect on Financial Aid

A less conclusive, but potentially concerning trend we noticed was that nonsubmitters tended to receive less gift aid (merit and need-based) than submitters, but please note that it is difficult to compare financial aid and scholarship data across institutions for multiple reasons. First, in the awarding of institutional funds, not all institutions define need in the same way (some use solely the federal EFC from the FAFSA, some the Profile, and some an institution-specific definition). And second, the definition of "merit" money is very squishy. In many discussions, merit money is assumed to be only the money going to non-needy students (or given in excess of need), but at most institutions, although merit scholarships are awarded without regard to need, in the case of needy students, they are incorporated into the need-based aid award and substitute for need-based grant aid. And some aid-leveraging strategies award substantial gift aid to students who are very low-need (or no-need) to persuade them to enroll.

In our analysis, we created five aid categories:

Those who had no demonstrated need (or didn't apply for aid) and

- 1. Received no gift aid
- 2. Received gift aid (of more than \$1,000)

Those who the institution identified as "needy" and

- 3. Received gift aid that exceeded their level of need (by at least \$1,000)
- 4. Received gift aid that just covered their level of need (plus or minus \$1,000)
- Received gift aid that fell short (by \$1,000 or more) of covering their full need.

continued on page 6

#### Test-Optional, from page 5

The analysis is confounded further by the fact that nonsubmitters, in the aggregate, include more high-need students (e.g., more Pell-eligible students). Within our sample population, 36% of our nonsubmitters were "high-need," but only 28% of our submitters were in that category. And the very high-need population of both submitters and nonsubmitters is more likely to fall into the category of not having had their full need met with gift aid (#5 above), because only the most well-endowed institutions are able to meet full need without the use of loans or work-study.

#### The Study's Design

The bulk of the 950 schools were able to provide data on four cohorts of applicants—two years prior to adopting a test-optional policy (TOP) and two years after adopting it, which allowed us to assess whether there were notable changes to their applicant pools (and cohorts of enrolled students) after adopting a TOP. But even if we observed differences, we would be unable to conclude a causal relationship because so many other factors might also have affected their pools, so we also identified a matched sample of institutions that still required the SAT or ACT (test-requiring policy or TRP) and compared the IPEDS data for both our participating TOP institution and their matched TRP institution to try to reduce the impact of other variables.

We completed hundreds of different comparisons. Because not all institutions were able to provide clean datapoints for every comparison, not all of them were used in every comparison, so the report reads more like an anthology of a number of smaller studies. To provide context, the complete report carefully identifies the number of institutions and number of student records involved in each comparison.

But focusing solely on the students whom the institutions determined had no demonstrated financial need, we found that 60% of the nonsubmitters received gift aid, whereas a larger proportion (70%) of the submitters received gift aid. Here we hypothesize that this results from two strategies focused on enhancing institutional profiles (for rankings or other reasons) by increasing the average test scores. First, some of our institutions require submission of test scores by any student wishing to be considered for their largest scholarships (eliminating nonsubmitters). And second, some of the aid-leveraging strategies mentioned above use test scores as one component of the "desirability" algorithm that determines how much gift aid each student will receive, which would systematically work to the disadvantage of nonsubmitters.

#### In Summary

Although the larger proportion of students applying to testoptional colleges still choose to submit test scores, the pool of nonsubmitters has a substantially higher representation of students from populations that are traditionally underrepresented in higher education. In comparison with their matched-sample TRP peers, two-thirds of the institutions in our study achieved greater increases in their applicant pools and greater diversity in their enrollments after adopting a TOP and they suffered no decline in the graduation rates of their students. So, it appears that a well-executed TOP can be a useful tool both in increasing applications and in increasing diversity.

Although the larger proportion of students applying to test optional colleges still choose to submit test scores, the pool of nonsubmitters has a substantially higher representation of students from populations that are traditionally underrepresented in higher education.

Studies cited by the testing agencies recognize the presence of what they refer to as "discrepant testers"—students whose standardized test scores appear to be inconsistent (either too high or too low) with their academic performance in high school. We believe our research supports the argument that providing some of those lower-testing discrepant testers the opportunity to apply without submitting test scores can benefit the institution as well as the student and will help to avoid artificially truncating access to educational opportunities for some traditionally underserved populations.

Steve Syverson can be reached at steves47@uw.edu. Defining Access: How Test-Optional Works is available at www.nacacnet. org/globalassets/documents/publications/research/defining-access-report-2018.pdf

#### President's Letter, from page 2

reintroduced. The goal would be to establish membership in IECA as the threshold for registering as an IEC in California should the legislation move forward.

Concurrent with the decision to hire the lobbying firm, the board appointed an ad hoc Government Relations Committee. Under the leadership of Steven Mercer, former IECA Board vice president, this committee will monitor developments, serve as liaison between the lobbyists and the board, and report its recommendations to the board. The committee is planning an informational webinar, which will take place the first week of October, to dispel rumors and inform our members of the status of legislation in Illinois and California as well as IECA's actions.

The IECA Board and CEO Mark Sklarow are committed to proactively following these developments, not only in California but also throughout the United States. Our priority is to protect the interests of our members wherever they live and work.

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Barbara Pasali IECA President



# How to Prepare for the 4th Industrial Revolution

By Pamela Kwartler, MA, IECA (NJ)

What skills will be the most marketable during the 4th industrial revolution? In the August/September issue of Insights, I discussed how independent educational consultants (IECs) can better understand the world our students will graduate into and what we can do to help them make choices that will propel them forward. The many students and families who go on autopilot and reach for a straightforward major and career with a seemingly high ROI in 2019 may be surprised by 2023 outcomes. They need to open their minds-in fact, call it mind over major. In addition to highly sought-after majors like computer science/business, colleges are offering yet more interdisciplinary majors that combine computer science/philosophy/psychology/linguistics, art design/ engineering, and politics/philosophy/economics. The fact is that none of the fields we know will exist in the future as they are today.

#### Forecasting the Future

What will be the most valuable skills for future jobs? It's daunting to think about keeping up with the demands of technology. It will benefit students to learn to code—or at least understand enough about different tech languages to be independent—or they'll be working for someone else who does. Technology specialists, no longer confined to the back office, are front and center. New jobs will emphasize such skills as designing, programming, maintaining, selecting, monitoring, and controlling technology. Businesses will continue to hire more STEM workers

and the full range of those skills will continue to be invaluable; however, the new job market is a race that everyone—business, STEM, and humanities majors—can team up to win.

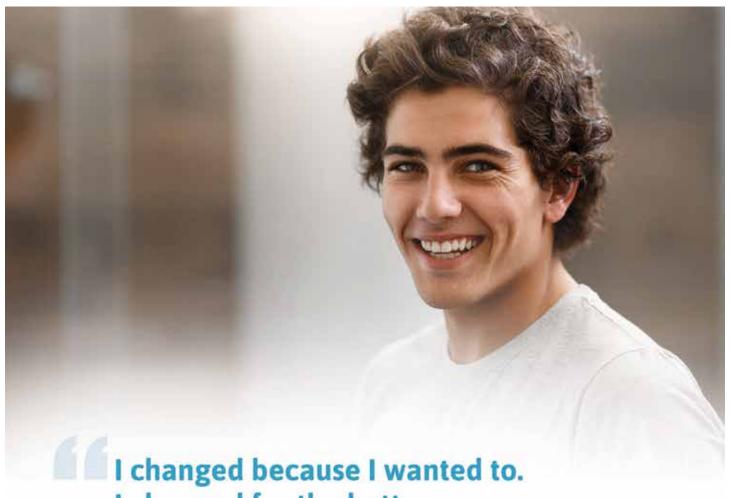
Author David Epstein's book Range: Why Generalists Triumph in a Specialized World stresses that focusing on big problems—in other words being a generalist—serves the individual, society, and the economy better. Students would be wise to avoid focusing on one narrow area, because that specialty may disappear. Articles in Business Insider indicated that certain jobs, including computer programming, data collecting and processing, and accounting and auditing, are most susceptible to automation and outsourcing (Lubin 2016a), but those that require "unpredictable physical work, stakeholder interactions, and applying expertise are less susceptible....Managing others is least susceptible" (Lubin 2016b).

"Stable" or "new" employment roles, as defined by the World Economic Forum, include data analysts and scientists, big data specialists, and information security analysts. None of this is surprising. A few of the "hard skills" in demand are those developed in data science, cloud computing, analytical reasoning, UX design, mobile app development, video and audio production, translating and natural language processing, and research to develop competitive strategies.

continued on page 9



Pamela Kwartler, College Process Counseling LLC, can be reached at lesscollegestress@ gmail.com.



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#### Industrial Revolution, from page 7

However, the prevalence of artificial intelligence (AI) has made "soft skills" at least as valuable as hard ones because they can never be automated. Some skills central to marketing, such as creativity, storytelling, customer service, emotional intelligence, and understanding consumer behavior, are crucial. Other new jobs on the horizon include innovation professionals, people and culture specialists, and service and solutions designers. These titles are intentionally broad and underscore how the innovation pipeline will draw from all kinds of creative thinkers. Large-scale problem solving will require not only workers with math and technology skills but also effective communicators who can lead from the heart and extract the information that will help get to the root of complicated issues. Those strong in the humanities help influence cultures and change behavior by encouraging people to adopt solutions. Employees with STEM skills play an important role, but the top skill sets needed in any field are collaboration, creativity, and being open to change. Human skills that cannot be replicated by machines still matter, so negotiation, critical thinking, and active learning will never decline in value. 👗

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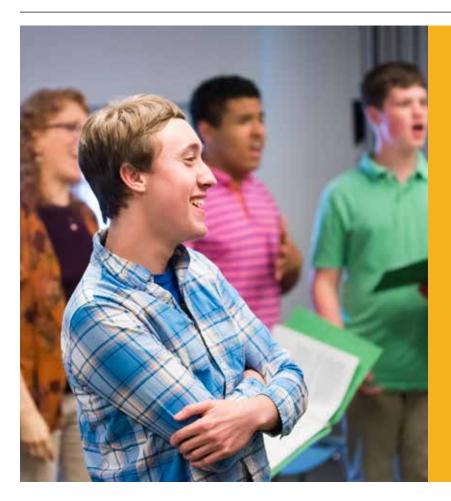
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Lubin, Gus. 2016b "This Helpful Chart Reveals if a Robot Is Coming for Your Job" *Business Insider*, August 8. https://www.businessinsider.com/jobs-that-robots-will-take-2016-8.

#### How Can IECs Help?

Help students make smart choices by suggesting that they:

- Start a club or organization emphasizing tech, communications, or social justice skills.
- Get involved in clubs such as Girls Who Code or jobs like camp counseling for science programs like Camp Invention.
- Create a website focusing on problem solving in any area of interest (see UN Sustainable Development Goals for Ideas).
- Choose high school courses in computer science; engineering; health sciences; digital arts; and social justice, such as law and human rights or peace and conflict studies.
- Research college courses that are both broad and specialized (not in a redundant field).
- Refrain from specializing in a shrinking field or one where machines are expected to be deployed.
- Develop problem-solving skills by getting involved in or learning about town projects.
- Read up on, understand, and build opinions about political issues, such as healthcare.
- Always emphasize the most valuable skills: collaboration, creativity, and being open to change.





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### Save the Date! Professional Member Retreat

January 13-15, 2020 • Pointe Hilton Squaw Peak Resort in Phoenix

Make your plans now to attend the 2020 Professional Member Retreat, IECA's first 2020 event. Specifically designed for Professional members the retreat focuses on business practices and is appropriate for all specialties. The group is purposefully kept small to encourage interaction and deep discussion, so it fills up quickly.

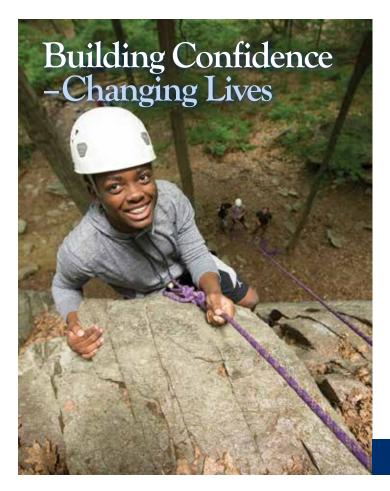
This will be our 8th Winter Retreat which has grown in popularity each year-and our FIRST in the western part of the country. We will announce more details soon and also post them on the IECA website. The signature features of the Retreat are discussion sessions and member-to-member learning labs that are business related topics. If you are planning to attend the Retreat and are interested in either leading a group discussion or teaching a short lab, please send your suggested topic to Valerie@iecaonline.com. Also, be thinking about your "One Great Idea" to share—it's always a favorite time at the Retreat.

Registration opens on October 16.









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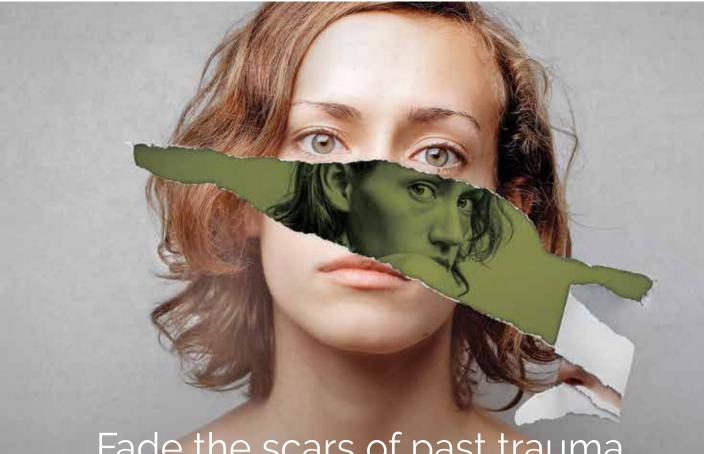
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# Addressing Health Conditions and Physical Disabilities

By Annie Tulkin, Founder and Director of Accessible College

Transitioning to college can present challenges for all students: living away from home for the first time and with roommates, finding their way around a largely unfamiliar campus, and navigating new social and academic interactions. But for students with health conditions and physical disabilities, additional calculations come into play when preparing to transition to college. Plus, information about obtaining accommodations for all aspects of college life (academic, housing, and dining) is less readily available for those with such conditions, meaning families and students simply may not know their options nor what to explicitly ask about or advocate for. Understanding the specifics of the college accommodations process can help independent educational consultants (IECs) best support students with health conditions and physical disabilities in their college search.

#### Laws

First, all knowledge must be grounded in the laws that apply to college. Colleges are required to provide "reasonable accommodations" under the

Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act also applies to colleges, and it protects students with disabilities from discrimination on the basis of their disability. In addition, the Fair Housing Act applies to students with disabilities seeking housing-related accommodations.

It's important to understand that students may not receive the same support services that they received in high school, and the role of parents in advocating for their child is significantly diminished, meaning that the parents no longer have access to the student's education records because of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). Parents can, however, be supportive by encouraging the student to contact the Disability Support Office (DSO) to request accommodations.

#### **Accommodations**

In the college setting, students must be able to request their own accommodations, provide

continued on page 14



Annie Tulkin can be reached at www. accessiblecollege.com, @AccessibleCollege on Facebook, and @AcssCollege on Twitter.

#### Health Conditions, from page 13

documentation, and self-advocate. For many students, the language of self-advocacy is new and can create a hurdle to receiving the support that may be essential for success in college. In addition, moving to campus may be the first time the student has lived away from their parents. When you consider the additional challenges of medication and health care management and accessibility that adds a lot of extra pieces to the student's transition.

Students with health conditions and physical disabilities may have a 504 plan or an Individualized Education Program (IEP) that outlines the accommodations the student received in high school. Some students with health conditions, which are sometimes "invisible disabilities," may not have disclosed their disability in high school. They may have been able to manage their condition in that environment (i.e., living at home, eating a regulated diet, managing time with parental oversight) or they were given "informal" accommodations by teachers and administrators (e.g., breaks during class, ability to use the bathroom as needed, and passes to school's wellness center or nurse's office).

Students with physical disabilities have a different set of considerations in the transition to college. They must apply extra scrutiny to schools to find a place that is accessible to them. In addition to any academic accommodations the student may need, such as a notetaker, extra time, preferential seating, and the like, they may also need to consider the overall accessibility

of the campus and pay close attention to campus housing and programmatic accessibility. Regardless of the student's disability, if they are seeking accommodations in the college setting, they will need to follow the university process to request accommodations. Following are some examples of health conditions and physical disabilities that may require further transition support beyond typical accommodations:

For many students, the language of self-advocacy is new and can create a hurdle to receiving the support that may be essential for success in college. In addition, moving to campus may be the first time the student has lived away from their parents.

**Crohn's Disease:** A student with Crohn's Disease may have been able to get informal permission to use the bathroom during class and exams in high school, but in college they would need to follow the university process for requesting those accommodations or comparable



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reasonable accommodations. In addition, they may want to consider the accommodations for housing, such as a private bathroom, and connect with dining services to discuss food options on campus.

Migraine disorder: A student with migraine disorder may have been able to miss classes, get extensions on assignments, and be allowed to have food or drink in classes and exams in high school. Those accommodations may not directly transfer to college because there may be certain technical requirements and attendance requirements that the student must adhere to. Even if the student is granted the accommodation for extensions on assignments and flexibility in attendance, they will have to self-advocate and communicate directly with professors.

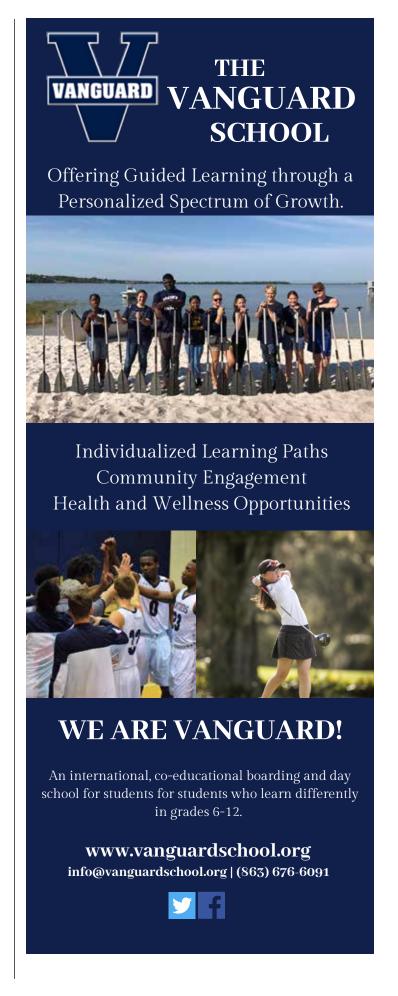
Wheelchair user: A student who uses a wheelchair should connect with the admissions department and the Disability Support Office before touring the school. They should ask about accessible campus routes and ensure that the school can provide an accessible tour. Students will need to be specific in their accommodation needs beyond academic requests. Considerations should include classroom furniture, such as an accessible desk; ADA compliant housing; and accessible transportation. If the student needs a personal care attendant to assist with bathing, toileting, and daily needs, they must arrange for that independently.

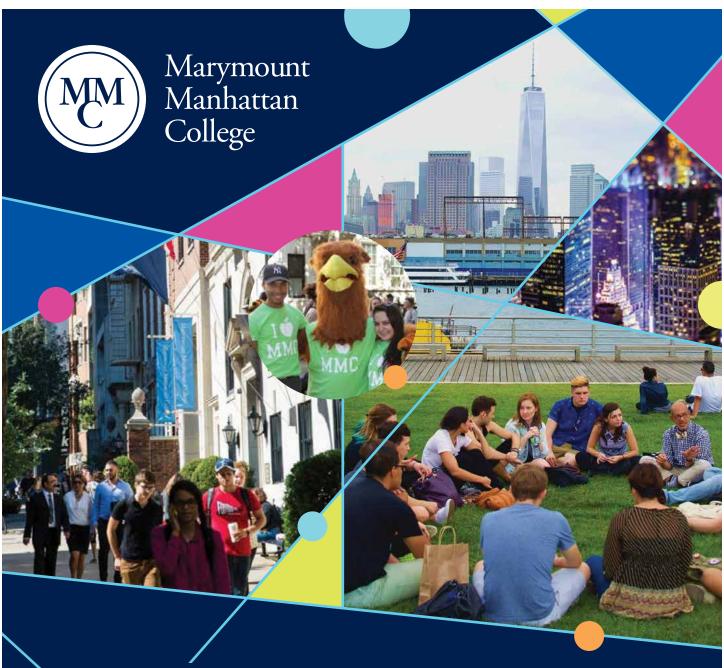
#### Tips for IECs

Preparation is key for these students. IECs can provide support in the following ways:

- Ensure that the student researches the Disability Support Office at the school. Help them connect with the DSO to ask about the process for receiving accommodations.
- Empower the student to ask whether the school will connect him or her with current students who have similar conditions (the school would do this by contacting current students and getting their permission to connect with a prospective student).
- Talk with the student about their needs. Ask how they are currently managing their medical condition (e.g., appointments, medication, and so on). Explore how their needs may change in the college setting.
- Check that the student is thinking about the whole college experience and not just academics. Help the students think about all their needs. For example, if the student is living on campus, they may need housing and programmatic accommodations for such things as clubs, sporting events, concerts, and so on).

With comprehensive transition planning, students with physical disabilities and health conditions can transition to, thrive in, and complete college successfully.





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### **Chasing Education Dreams**

By Julia Gooding, EdM, IECA (Shanghai, China)

When I moved to China for the second time last October, my Uber driver to JFK was from China's Hebei province. During afternoon traffic, he recounted to me in Chinese why he had upped and moved his family to Queens four years ago: "Zhao women de meiguo meng, to find our American dream" and "get better education for my children." Once I explained that I was on my way to move to Shanghai, he started laughing and asked why I would do that. I thought about it and told him: "yao zhao wo de zhonguo meng, to find my Chinese dream."

A year later, the chase is ongoing. As an independent educational consultant (IEC) working in China, there is a lot that isn't easy. I wish there was less hyperanxiety, especially around testing; more openness to consider fit; and more spaces for exceptional Chinese students in great US boarding schools and universities—not to mention a more ethical landscape free of dubious practices like guaranteed admission and false advertising and a higher visibility and reputation of IECA members.

There is, however, even more to appreciate. In broad strokes, very few in the world appreciate

education more than East Asian families. Weekend education seminars can attract hundreds of parents, many with toddlers, who will invest countless hours and hard-earned income on their child's future.

The United States and China are the two largest economies in the world and the most significant relationship of the 21st century. The months and years that the children of elite Chinese families spend in American classrooms, dorms, and campuses hopefully contribute to mutual appreciation and understanding. I myself am a product of this soft diplomacy. Living in Beijing in 2008 on a Fulbright grant, the world was opening and hopes high. In 2019, in the midst of ongoing trade disputes and shifting geopolitical dynamics, how might we assess the vitality and direction of student circulation and education trends between China and the United States, especially as it impacts IECs and US institutions? Although it is an incomplete snapshot at best, we can look to changing national policies, individual study abroad decision-making processes, existing admissions processes, and changing educational options within China.

continued on page 18



Julia Gooding, BE Education, can be reached at Julia.gooding@be.com.

#### Erosion of Trust, Students as Proxy

Visiting admissions officers to China often ask: how do people here feel about the trade war? Are families changing their plans to study abroad as a result? Besides the fact that it's tougher to find my favorite peanut butter, not many Chinese citizens seem to feel connected to national-level politics and tariff disputes. But the latest events in the news cycle may be symptoms of deeper currents of change that could have long-term impacts.

In 2018, more than 350,000 Chinese students came to study in the United States (IIE 2018b). As a whole, international students contributed \$42 billion to the US economy and created over 455,000 jobs in 2017 (IIE 2018a, NAFSA 2018). Last year, it was publicized that the Trump administration had considered banning all Chinese students from entering the US. In just the past few months, we have seen changes to educational policies that affect international students and, in particular, Chinese students. Increased scrutiny of visa applications has exacerbated wait times and caused panic for some students. Students will face extra screening and the length of visas in aviation, robotics, and advanced manufacturing will be shortened from a maximum of five years to one year.

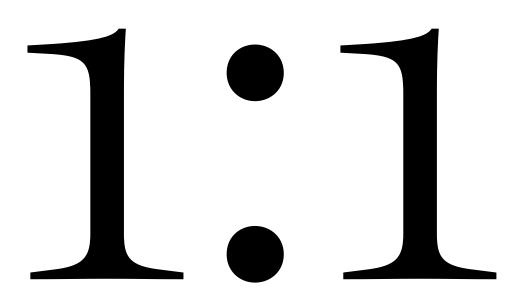
In May 2019, P.R. China's Ministry of Education put out a statement to warn students that it may not be safe to study in the United States. In June, China announced that beginning in 2020, four AP exams would no longer be offered in "open test sites" in mainland

China, including US History, World History, European History, and Human Geography. This sudden and unexplained shift is another steep step in the uphill battle many Chinese students face when considering US colleges.

In the US, new policies have closed Confucius Institutes on college campuses. Various incidents have made the news, including expulsion of Chinese professors at Emory University and discriminatory remarks made toward Chinese students on various campuses. In return, China has also shortened or denied visas to American academics with long histories of coming to China. It is unclear how these policies and events will affect students and institutions in the long run and whether these are temporary blips or harbingers of the future. I hope for the former.

#### Attractions and Fears of Studying Abroad

As I bicycled past the local high school on my street in Jing'an district on a bright Sunday morning in early June, crowds swarmed the sidewalks and police monitored pedestrians. It was the final day of the gaokao, the ultimate high-stakes college entrance exam in China. The pressure of the gaokao plays no small part in why Chinese students flock overseas for schooling every year. The impetus to study abroad earlier is in part a repulsion of the memorization-focused, high-pressure system and a pull toward alternative education systems that engage different kinds of learners, and encourage students to develop critical thinking, analytical, and problem-solving skills.



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There is often a conflicting internal dynamic in decision-making processes about when and where to study abroad. The attractiveness is usually big picture, abstract, and long-term: brand names, high rankings, and a concentration on the long-term return on investment. The fears, however, are usually much more specific and personal, but no less a priority. The most pernicious concerns involve gun violence and safety. One of my students happened to be on a US campus this summer during a nearby armed robbery. Once her "dream school," it's now a place she no longer plans to apply. Many Chinese students grow up in well-maintained, extremely safe megacities with extensive modern public transportation systems and daily conveniences, so the lifestyle and social-emotional adjustments they will face cannot be underestimated.

The most pernicious concerns involve gun violence and safety. One of my students happened to be on a US campus this summer during a nearby armed robbery.

Once her "dream school," it's now a place she no longer plans to apply.

#### Hoops to Jump Through

All students must work diligently to prepare successful school or college applications, but international students, especially Chinese students applying to the US, must jump through multiple hoops. Students who apply to US boarding schools must prep for TOEFL, SSAT, and Vericant and take time out of school to fly across the world for in-person interviews. For Chinese students applying to US colleges and universities, TOEFL, ILETS, or Duolingo; SAT or ACT; Vericant or InitialView; extracurriculars and leadership experience, which isn't necessarily easily available in their schools; and many essays are needed. Some international divisions of public high schools heighten testing anxiety further by expecting target TOEFL or SAT scores by certain dates, such as requiring SAT Subject testing in October of 11th grade.

With very few exceptions, students in China must fly to neighboring countries to take the SAT or ACT and pray for no testing cancellations. Before traveling to Hong Kong for the June SAT this year, one of my student's friends was told by her test prep company to wear a diaper to avoid long bathroom lines and missing testing time. With macro-level discouragements and micro-level nuisances it's an incredible testament to the dedication and perseverance of families, as well as the quality of US educational institutions, that they come at all.

By comparison, I often meet students in British curriculum schools in China (IGCSE and A-levels are the fastest-growing school international curricula in China) whose parents would like them to study in the US for college. But those students are often less interested in the US when surrounded by peers who are planning to study in the UK, Australia, or Canada, where a successful applicant does not necessarily need to load up on additional testing or extracurriculars.

#### **Educational Options Within China**

In 2017, two in five international students in US high schools were Chinese, but that current will ebb for most schools. Within China, the international K–12 school market is exploding. According to ISC Research's *China Market Intelligence Report 2018–19*, 228 new international-style schools opened in China in the past five years. There are now 245,000 Chinese students enrolled in international style K–12 schooling, representing a 64% increase in five years. In addition, the Chinese government has invested incredible sums into its higher education, provides generous subsidies to encourage international students to study in China, and is recalibrating opportunities regionally through the Belt and Road Initiative. US institutions cannot rest on their laurels. Educational opportunities are truly global, including the slowly increasing quality of options in the backyards of China's cities.

As IECs who advise international students and families, it behooves us to stay on top of policy changes and develop comprehensive knowledge about the global education landscape, school curriculum strengths and limitations, and possible best fit types of education systems and schools for our students. China's appetite for international educational options will not abate anytime soon; however, families are more discerning, local options are flourishing, and the current US environment will nudge more families to consider alternatives. Education dreams are alive and well, but dreams need guidance, encouragement, and nourishing to become a reality. Where will they take us and our students? Down the street or to the other side of the world?





### College Consultants Care

By Wendy Briley, IECA Associate (NC)

It had been three weeks since Amanda's initial diagnosis with breast cancer. Amanda is a member of a professional women's networking group that I belong to and she had just revealed her cancer diagnosis to us. Like many women, Amanda was completely shocked and feeling very overwhelmed. With the beginning of her chemotherapy, she was already not feeling well and has twin daughters who are rising seniors in high school. She didn't want their college applications "falling through the cracks" just because she didn't feel well.

Most of us want to help someone when we hear that they have had a cancer diagnosis but feel helpless and don't know how. I was thrilled that I knew exactly how I could help Amanda. I am the founder of College Consultants Care, a nonprofit organization that provides free college application assistance to students who are undergoing treatment for cancer or have a parent who is undergoing treatment for cancer. Amanda's daughters will be the first recipients of our organization's efforts!

One year ago, I was speaking to a friend of mine who had been diagnosed with multiple myeloma. She told me that many of her friends with similar diagnoses were concerned about not being able to support their children through the college application process because of their illness. I had an idea. I am an independent educational consultant (IEC) and a member of IECA, an organization that has more than 2,000 members in the United States and overseas. Wouldn't it be great, I thought, if we could match IECs with students affected by cancer in their local area and provide free college application assistance? I know that most, if not all, of my fellow IECA colleagues provide pro bono work, so I knew I could recruit IECs.

The mission of College Consultants Care is to provide free college application assistance to students who are affected by cancer, whether it is the student or a parent undergoing treatment for cancer. At the spring IECA conference in Chicago I met with my affinity group, Consultants Who Give Back, and let them know about College Consultants Care. Their support was astounding. Immediately,



Wendy Briley, Briley
College Consulting
LLC, can be reached
at Wendy@
collegeconsultantscare.
org and will happily
provide more
information about
College Consultants
Care.

5 IECs agreed to participate. I also put the information on the IECA member TalkList (now Member Network) and so far, more than 20 IECs in over 10 states committed to our organization.

How does the process work? Our plan is to partner with adolescent and young adult cancer centers as well as adult cancer centers around the country and let them know about the services we provide. We will match an IEC, hopefully in their local area, with the family in need of our services. If we can't match locally, we will offer a virtual IEC if that meets the family's needs.

Our plan is to partner with adolescent and young adult cancer centers as well as adult cancer centers around the country and let them know about the services we provide. We will match an IEC, hopefully in their local area, with the family in need of our services. If we can't match locally, we will offer a virtual IEC if that meets the family's needs.

We will also provide workshops in those cancer centers for families regarding the college application process. Along with providing our services for those families affected by cancer, College Consultants Care will offer training and webinars to IECs about the special needs of families dealing with a cancer diagnosis and best practices for working with those families.

#### Compensation for the IEC

Although most of us wish we could do more pro bono work, the reality is that to keep our business running, we must bring in income. If an IEC participates with College Consultants Care they will receive a stipend depending on the type of services they provide. Our hope is that by offsetting some of the costs, it will allow IECs to take on more students affected by cancer. For those IECs who are fortunate enough to be able to take on students purely pro bono, they will have the option to waive the stipend and have it go back to College Consultants Care.

How do you become involved? You can contact College Consultants Care at www.collegeconsultantscare.org. On the contact page, use the drop-down menu to select Independent Educational Consultant. A representative from College Consultants Care will contact you and direct you through the remainder of the process. We will also have a booth at the Fall IECA Conference in Atlanta in the vendor area and hope you will stop by and sign up!



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# Students Call for Change to Aid Assimilation of Asian Students in US

By Marina Lee, EdM, IECA (MA) with Daniel Ko, Cornell University; Caroline Min, Bryn Mawr; and Elaine Yan, Smith College

In 2018, the number of international students in the United States surpassed one million, according to the Institute of International Education. As those numbers grow, it is increasingly important to address some common challenges. Adjusting to college generally consists of two main aspects: academics and social assimilation. In many cases, cultural expectations make it hard for Asian students to ask for the help they need because of stigma regarding mental health.

#### Academic Pressure

A central part of adjusting to academic life is dealing with the "herd mentality" that plagues the Asian international community and causes students to think and act in a collective manner rather than as individuals, pressuring them to keep up with their peers academically to avoid falling behind the expected timeline. In fact, the inherent pressure to

follow the mainstream four-year graduation path creates stigma about taking alternative paths to explore genuine interests and passions in college. Caroline Min, a rising sophomore at Bryn Mawr, recently dealt with that pressure:

As I sat in my chair on graduation day awaiting my high school diploma, I was plotting out the next four years of my life. I knew that I was going to graduate on time in 2022 with the rest of the class of 2018, have prestigious internships along the way, get a job as soon as I graduated, and hopefully live the rest of my life coloring within the lines. Things took a turn when I got to college and realized that the mental health issues that I had swept under the rug were not exclusive to my high school experience and did not magically disappear upon my arrival to college like I had hoped.

continued on page 24



Marina Lee, Cogita Education Initiatives, can be reached at marinalee@ cogitaeducation.com.

#### Aid Assimilation, from page 23

By the time second semester approached, I knew I could no longer stay in school for the sake of keeping up. When I consulted my parents, they wanted me to stay another semester and take a gap year for an internship. But at that point, I was over "keeping up with everyone else." It was a brutal awakening that my health and sanity are more important than this predetermined route to a successful life, and that, quite frankly, each person is too unique and qualified in their own ways to be dictated by one standard of success.

#### A Sense of Belonging

The other aspect of adjusting to college is social assimilation, which promotes an individual's sense of belonging to a community. Bridging the cultural barriers between international students and mainstream US students can be tough, however, especially for international students who are unfamiliar with the English language and US pop culture. They may be stereotyped as the "typical Asian student" and deemed aloof and nerdy, making it harder for them to initiate friendships with US students. Although that is not always the case, many ultimately choose to make friends with other fellow international students to avoid such conflict. Elaine Yan, a rising sophomore at Smith College, experienced such a situation and wrote:

Coming from mainland China, this seems especially true for me because of the government regulation on

people's online access. We are used to a completely different set of online tools, including search engines, social networking, video sharing, etc., leading to an inevitable gap between our online experiences and those of US students. There were multiple times that I felt left out of the conversation with my US friends because I had little knowledge about US pop culture. They might find an inside joke very interesting, while I wasn't able to get it at all. It then becomes even harder for me to step out of my comfort zone and initiate conversations with mainstream US students.

#### The Mental Health Factor

Many Asian international students have trouble taking care of their mental health. On one hand, mental health is often disregarded in conservative Asian culture, where students' academic performances are prioritized. Because parents pay expensive fees to support the students' education abroad, there is an unspoken expectation for students to achieve academic excellence and they may have difficulty seeking help partly because of that pressure and need for parental approval. To combat this, schools could normalize mental health by training professors to openly discuss mental health and regularly check in with students.

On the other hand, international students sometimes find the mental health services on campus unhelpful because counselors may be inexperienced regarding the conservative, taboo nature of mental health in their cultures. Colleges must work to create



an inclusive environment by hiring faculty who are sensitive to international students. For example, Melissa, a friend attending a liberal arts college in New York, was going through a depressive episode one night when she called the emergency hotline. The call left her questioning the service's professionalism because it felt more like a light-hearted banter between friends than an emergency service. That experience sheds light on how cultural differences manifest when cultural expectations are not met.

On the other hand, international students sometimes find the mental health services on campus unhelpful because counselors may be inexperienced regarding the conservative, taboo nature of mental health in their cultures. Colleges must work to create an inclusive environment by hiring faculty who are sensitive to international students.

#### What Can IFCs Do?

Prepare parents. It is natural for international students to feel foreign and out of place, given that they are living in a country far from home. They may feel like their parents are not unconditionally supportive, do not want to add burden, or do not have anyone to confide in and consequently resort to handling problems on their own. IECs can help prepare parents to create a safe, caring space for students reminding them to:

- Take note of the time difference where the school is located and staying updated on current events through the school's website.
- Communicate in a supportive manner. That involves validation; making sure the student is seen and heard; and empathy, listening with the intent to understand, not fix.
- Empower students by promoting self-esteem and healthy coping methods.

Ensure that parents and student are familiar with and willing to use resources on campus for additional support, such as academic resources, include advising, tutoring, study groups, and office hours, and that it is normal to reach out to teachers' assistants or professors for help. For personal issues, including roommate trouble, lost items, or struggles with mental health, they should immediately reach out to the hall or residential advisor, Campus Safety, or Counseling Services. Health issues should be resolved at the health center on campus.

Help students engage. Students will most likely engage with a more diverse population of people than they have in the past when they are on campus. Prepare them so they will understand that respect and genuine interest go a long way and help them learn to:

- · Deal with difference.
- Expand their comfort zone.
- · Question and engage instead of making assumptions.

Daniel Ko, a rising sophomore at Cornell University, shared his experience:

This past school year at Cornell University, I was attending a gym class as a freshman. Coming from a Korean American background, I didn't feel anxious about any cultural barrier between myself and other students. I carried on as usual in the class, and I was partnered with a Chinese international student named Kuan. He was very friendly, and I could tell that English was not very comfortable for him. Surprisingly, at the end of class he had asked me to get lunch with him. After that, Kuan and I became the closest of friends! Instead of viewing the language difference as a barrier, we always teach each other new words, in English for him and Mandarin for me!

The assimilation of Asian international students to US schools is a multifaceted, complex discussion. Their struggles must be seen and heard through personal experiences so that IECs and families can learn how to best support them. Where there is struggle, there is always potential for change. Hopefully in the near future, the challenges of Asian international students in the United States will become history—less of a daunting experience, and more of an exciting opportunity!

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▲ IECA members Missy Evans-Moreland (MD), Victoria Turner Turco (MD), Terry Mady-Grove (NY), and Jennifer Ericson (VA) attended the National Society for High School Scholars conference near Washington, DC, in August. They served as mentors, staffed the IECA booth in the exhibit hall, and presented a session on college essays to an overflow crowd of more than 300 students and parents. It was a rewarding experience for the IECs: the students and parents were attentive and the audience asked thoughtful questions. Many parents and students stayed after the presentation to speak with them individually, and the feedback was very positive. IECA's CEO, Mark Sklarow, also attended the event and was asked to serve as a judge of STEM passion projects on display and served as a mentor for afternoon roundtables.

Attending the event were 600 students—most were rising juniors, with a few rising seniors and sophomores—along with approximately 900 parents. At least two-thirds of the families were

minority, most noticeably African American, Latino, and Indian. Some students indicated that they attend schools that do not have honor societies or they did not qualify because they had family obligations that precluded volunteerism.

The representatives from IECA were humbled by the quality of the STEM projects on display. For example, the winner of the STEM projects was a student who discovered an early test for Parkinson's that can identify likely patients up to two years before the first symptom is seen. So promising is his work that the Michael J. Fox Foundation has offered to fund his research and Harvard Medical School has invited him to attend undergraduate school and work in the medical school lab.

Note: NSHSS will be exhibiting in the vendor hall at the IECA Fall Conference in Atlanta.



#### Summer Training Institute 2019 East

"The professionalism and generosity of the faculty, the quality of the information, and the level of inspiration were outstanding. Now I'm ready and able to start my independent consulting business."

- Ilene Rosen, 2019 Attendee
- Participants in IECA's 2019 STI East wrapped up a busy and fulfilling week.

# In the News

Sarah Loring de Garcia (Mexico) was quoted in "To Be Test Optional or Not to Be, for International Students" in Inside Higher Ed on July 22.

Jill Madenberg (NY), Judi Robinovitz (FL), and Steven Mercer (CA) were quoted in "How Attending an Alternative School Impacts College Admissions" in U.S. News & World Report on August 9.

IECA CEO Mark Sklarow appeared on WGN-TV Morning News in Chicago on August 27 to discuss further developments in the Varsity Blues scandal and other topics. He was also guoted in

- "Some Parents Give Up Their Children in Order to Pay for College" in VOA's Learning English on August 3.
- "Illinois Colleges Urge Lawmakers to Close Financial-Aid Loophole" in the Wall Street Journal on August 8.
- "How Much Does It Cost to Get Your Kid Into College? It Could Be a Whole Lot" in USA Today on August 15.

**IECA** was referenced in *Boston* magazine's Education Section on August 27 with Sharon Olofsson (MA), Don McMillan (MA), and Melissa McViney (MA) contributing to "20 Expert Ways to Get Your Kid into College Legally" and "20 Tips to Get Your Student Into College...Legally."

Laurie Weingarten (NJ) was quoted in "College Recruiters Aggressively Go After Out-of-State Students" in USA Today on August 30.

Katelyn Gleason Klapper (MA) was quoted and IECA was referenced in "How to Get Your Kid Into the Right College Even if You're not Rich or Famous" on NBR on August 12.

The Wake Weekly featured IEC Wendy Briley (NC) and her nonprofit, College Consultants Care, in "Nonprofit Offers Help for Students, Families Affected by Cancer" on September 6. (See her article on page 24.)

Elizabeth Stone (CA) was interviewed for "Is Early Decision/ Early Action the Right Choice for Your College Dance Career?" in DanceSpirit magazine on August 20.

"The Common Application Opens Today" by Janet Rosier (CT) was posted in her Next Stop: College blog, published on Hearst CT News Blogs on August 1.



The Long Island Business News named Terry Mady-Grove's (NY) company, Charted University Consultants LLC, the Best Women Owned Business on Long Island in August.



The Greenwich Education Group, with Victoria C. Newman (CT), founder and executive director, and Associate member Peggy Hersam (CT), held its 10th annual Private Day and Boarding School Fair in Old Greenwich, CT in May. Representatives from approximately 100 day and boarding schools met with 200

parents and students. They presented a check for \$2,000 to Joseph Siciliano, director of parks and recreation, for the Youth Scholarship Fund of the town of Greenwich (pictured) and \$2,000 to REACH Prep to support underserved students.

Antoinette Battiste (CA) received a Distinguished Volunteer Fundraiser Award at Silicon Valley Philanthropy Day during the Association of Fundraising Professionals Silicon Valley chapter's annual awards luncheon on November 8.



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### Regional Groups

#### Regional Groups on the Member Network

Regional groups have now been added to the IECA Member Network so it will be even easier to stay in touch and keep up with what's going on! To join a Regional Group online community, go to the Member Network at *network.iecaonline.com* and choose Communities.

#### California

The California group had coffee in Los Angeles with Abby Klinkhardt of Washington University of St. Louis on September 5.



#### New Jersey

The New Jersey group met for lunch and a meeting with Joel Ontiveros from the University of California–Santa Cruz in July. Not only did he share his considerable knowledge of the UC system, but he followed up with links to many helpful resources and information.

In September, the NJ group held a lunch with a Patrick Mazur, assistant director for admissions, College of Charleston on September 6.



Pictured are Alice Fuscaldo, Blakely Slater, Carolyn Mulligan, Stephanie Welder, Patrick Mazur, Nikki Bruno, Susana MacLean, Shari Powell, Karime Jankauskus, Abbie Rabin, Natasha De Sherbinin, Jessie Martin, Carole Kraemer, Pamela Kwartler, and Laurie Weingarten.



# The IECA Foundation Presents Hot'lanta: Rock 'n' Roll Dance Party

Wednesday, November 6th from 7–9 p.m. in Imperial Ballroom A on the Marquis Level

(Please note that this is a ticketed event.)

The IECA Foundation is hosting a music-filled evening packed with entertainment, scrumptious food, and plentiful drinks. Dress as your favorite rock group and get down on the dance floor! All proceeds will help the Foundation reach their goal of awarding more grants than ever before to organizations impacting underserved students across the country. We can't wait to see you there as we join together to support this important cause.

For ticket and sponsorship information, please visit www.iecafoundation.org.



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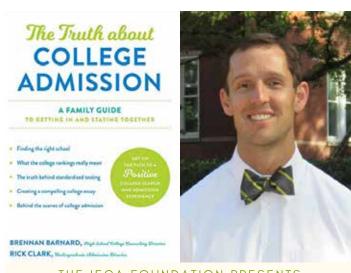
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# Introductions

#### Please Welcome IECA's New Professional Members



Christina Barton (AR) has been an IEC for 14 years. Previously, she was director of college and academic advising at Haas Hall Academy in Arkansas for 7 years and worked part-time

administering standardized testing and providing curriculum advice to home school families.

Barton has a master's degree in education in curriculum and instruction, a bachelor's degree in psychology, and a teaching certificate for K–6 and ESL. She is currently the only Professional IECA member in the state of Arkansas.

Barton's husband, James, is a veterinarian who specializes in poultry. They have been married for 26 years and have two children, a daughter 24 who works in recruiting for a major retailer and a son 22 who is a software engineer. She enjoys trying new restaurants, traveling, snorkeling, gardening, and doing genealogy research. In her spare time, she works on a university sensory analysis panel, putting her skills at evaluating, tasting, and describing food products to work.

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Specialty: C



Ann Cadwallader (MN)
has been an IEC for
13 years and was an
Associate member.
Before becoming an
IEC, she was a high
school math teacher,
an alpine ski coach, the

executive director of a nonprofit, and an ACT tutor.

Cadwallader earned a BS in biology from Stanford University and an MBA from the Carlson School of Management. She attended IECA's 2006 STI.

A competitive tennis player who has qualified for nationals four times, Cadwallader leads an active life with most of her vacations involving downhill skiing or scuba diving. She is also slowly learning how to play golf. She has two sons and three Labrador retrievers.

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Specialty: C



Julie Ekkers (MN) has been an IEC for 3 years and was an Associate member. Previously, she worked in law school admissions for 10 years, serving most recently as the assistant dean

of admissions at William Mitchell College of Law (now Mitchell Hamline School of Law). While there, she was a member of the cross-functional team that launched the country's first hybrid enrollment option at an American Bar Association-accredited law school. She also worked as an application reader and applicant interviewer at Macalester College.

Ekkers earned a BA in American studies from Northwestern University, a JD from DePaul University College of Law, and a certificate in independent educational consulting from UC-Irvine Extension. She is a member of NACAC and MACAC.

Ekkers has volunteered as an iMentor for College Possible, and before becoming an IEC, she volunteered with the Northwestern Alumni Admission Council for 11 years, serving as the Twin Cities regional cochair for 4 years.

Ekkers and her husband have a son in middle school and a daughter in elementary school and recently welcomed home a dog. When not working, she enjoys reading and walking to the library or around one of Minnesota's 10,000 lakes with a friend.

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Specialty: C



Nadine Green (NJ)
has been an IEC for
8 years and was an
Associate member.
Before launching her
business, she worked
in the healthcare sector
as a speech pathologist

with patients who had sustained a head injury. Later, she worked as the chief operating officer for various entrepreneurial healthcare businesses.

Green holds an MA in speech language pathology from Hofstra University and a BA in speech pathology and audiology from the State University of New York College at Cortland. She also earned a master's certificate in business management from Tulane University's Freeman School of Business and a certificate in college advising from UC–San Diego Extension. She is a member of NACAC and Vistage International and Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM). In 2019, she was recognized by NJBIZ as one of the Best Fifty Women in Business.

Green is married and has two children ages 26 and 21.

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Grayson Lemmond
(GA) has been an
IEC for 3 years and
was an Associate
member. After working
with Lida Griest for
six years, she took
on the day school

placements three years ago. She received her bachelor's degree in psychology from the University of Georgia and is currently working towards a MS in special education through Purdue University.

Lemmond works as a tutor and was trained in the Orton Gillingham method at The Schenck School in Atlanta and uses that teaching method to work with students with dyslexia in the local area.

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Specialty: S



Kate Lindseth (NJ) has been an IEC for 7 years and was an Associate member. Before starting her business, she served on the board of trustees and

development committees at several schools. She has been actively involved on the board of the Trenton Children's Chorus for 8 years, helping them establish a pathway to college program. Before that, she was a vice president at Rothschild Inc. and head of the Syndicate Department in New York City.

Lindseth has a BA from Connecticut
College with a double major in
government and economics. She spent
a year at Bowdoin College on the Twelve
College Exchange Program. She completed
her certificate in college counseling from
UCLA Extension, is a member of NJACAC,
and attended IECA's 2013 STI. She
attended the NJACAC Basics Workshop
(2014), The Harvard Summer Institute
(2015), and IECA's Philadelphia College
Symposium (2019).

Originally from Miami, FL, Lindseth and her husband have three adult children, two of whom are married and live in Boston and one in NYC. She loves to play tennis, ski, hike, and travel.

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#### Introductions, from page 31



Xing (Lexy) Liu (China) has been an IEC for 10 years. Liu has an MA from Michigan State University and a BA from Jinan University (Chian).

She is a member of NACAC.

To help Chinese parents get to know American education, Liu keeps a blog about her school visits, which has over 35,000 views and an average of 800 views for each article.

Since the beginning, her company has worked to change people's perspective about education equality, and has been partnering with the Gay and Lesbian Campus Association in China (GLCAC) to promote sex education and gender equality in Chinese schools. She is also working on collaborating with Seda, one of the most impoverished Tibetan areas in China, to help Tibetan girls receive educational opportunities.

Liu lives in Shenzhen with her husband Nick. They met in the United States and moved to China, which changed both of their life paths. In their free time, they like going back to the United States to spend time with family and also hosting them in China. Liu likes traveling, and after visiting Peru two years ago, she has a deep affection for South America; her next travel plan is to hike the Inca Trail and appreciate the lost beauty.

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Specialty: S+I



Monica Meng (GA) has been an IEC for 2 years and was an Associate member. Previously, she was a college and career center coordinator at Milton (GA) High

School. Meng holds a BS in biology and a biochemistry certificate from the University of Missouri–St. Louis and a certificate in college admission counseling from UC–Riverside Extension. She is a member of SACAC.

Meng is a member of the leadership team for the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society's Student of the Year in Atlanta and is providing support and guidance to the Milton High School PTO during the 2019–2020 school year as the college and career center transitions to a volunteer-run space. Since 2016, she has coordinated and executed a college fair to serve the North Fulton, GA, community.

Meng lives in Atlanta with her husband, Steve, three dogs, two cats, and a parrot. Her daughter, Eliza, attends the University of Georgia and her son, Kyle, attends Western Carolina University. She is an avid Chelsea FC and Atlanta United supporter who grew up in St. Louis and will always be loyal to the St. Louis Cardinals and the St. Louis Blues. She loves to travel and dreams of one day living in London again.

Monica Meng Educated Pathways 925 Wilde Run Court Roswell, GA 30075 217-412-9599 monica@lhrcc.com www.lhrcc.com Specialty: C



Ellen Miller (NY) has been an IEC for 5 years and was an Associate member. Previously she was associate dean for the Center for University Advising and director of the

premedical studies certificate program at Hofstra University.

Miller holds an EdD in educational leadership and in policy studies, an advanced graduate certificate in educational administration, an MS in counseling, and a BA in psychology from Hofstra University. She attended IECA's 2013 STI and earned a global career development facilitator certificate from the National Career Development Association.

She is a member of the Association for Nontraditional Students in Higher Education, where she is a member of the faculty advisory board; the Association for the Study of Higher Education; the Council on Adult and Experiential Learning; the National Academic Advising Association; the National Career Development Association; and the National and Northeast Association of Advisors for the Health Professions.

Among Miller's publications are a Prescription for Success: A Guide for Prehealth Students (2018); A Study in Persistence: The Weekend College Experience (2013); and "The Effects of On-Line Dating and Mating in Romantic Relationships," an essay in The Effects of the Internet on Social Relationships.

Miller is involved in community service and a member of PEO, philanthropic educational organization. The proud mother of two sons, she is a grandmother to four beautiful grandchildren.

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Donna Sakabu (CA)
has been an IEC for
7 years and was an
Associate member.
For 17 years, she was
a deeply committed
volunteer at her sons'
schools, serving in the

classroom and on a variety of committees. Most recently she chaired the scholarship committee of a local high school parent boosters group.

Her work as a founding member of the college and career planning committee for a local charter high school was the catalyst for her to join the field of college planning.

Sakabu received a BS in business administration (finance) from California State Polytechnic University–Pomona and earned a certificate in college counseling from UCLA Extension. She attended IECA's 2015 STI and is a member of WACAC, where she frequently volunteers.

Each year, Sakabu presents breakout sessions for College Sunday, an annual conference organized by a local high school's IB Parent Organization and presented at the 2018 "Share, Learn, & Connect" held at the University of the Pacific. She and her husband are members of Centerpoint Community Church, through which they volunteer extensively.

Sakabu has been married to Roy, an electrical engineer, for 31 years. They have two sons who graduated from college in May 2019. Andrew graduated from William Jessup University and Tim graduated from Oklahoma State University. In her free time, she loves traveling, reading, watching college football, and discovering new wineries to visit in Northern California.

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Specialty: C



Tazim Salehani (TX) has been an IEC for just over 1 year. Previously, she was a clinical liaison at The Meadows of Wickenburg, vice president

of business development at Phoenix House, vice president of business development at InnerChange: Trusted Residential Therapy, director of sales operations at CRC Health Group/Aspen Education Group, and clinical director of Wilderness Western Admissions.

An advanced trainer for neuroptimal neurofeedback, Salehani has assisted mental health professionals as they incorporated that service into their practices. Her work as an executive at various residential programs allows her to have a different perspective on types of therapeutic placements that are best for families.

Salehani has worked with the South Asian community in various ways, including an appointment to the national council's social welfare board for three years. She created content to help adolescents, families, and children with intergenerational issues, substance abuse, and preventative programs and created a list of resources for the community allowing them to seek help. Currently, she is on the board for Mental Health America Dallas as well as Simply Grace, an affordable sober home for young woman in recovery.

Salehani has a three-year-old son and a girl on the way. She and her husband are first-generation and have been fortunate to be able to balance their culture with being an American. They love to spend time together, exploring restaurants and their city and traveling.

Tazim Salehani, MS 360 to 180 2919 Commerce Street #711 Dallas, TX 75226 214-438-0014 tazim@360to180.com www.360to180.com Specialty: T



Julia Sensenbrenner (WA) has been an IEC for 6 years and was an Associate member. Previously, she was a tutor in humanities and writing for international students

who were studying in Seattle high schools, a freelance writer and editor, and an associate editor for the US-China Business Council's *China Business Review*.

Sensenbrenner has a BA in East Asian studies from Princeton University, a PhD in sociology, from Johns Hopkins University, and a certificate in independent educational consulting from UC-Irvine Extension. She is a member of SACC and PNACAC.

As a volunteer with AVID (Advancement Via Individual Determination) at Highline High School, Sensenbrenner supported first-gen students by helping with personal statements and scholarship essays for three years. She also volunteered for three years with College Access Now (CAN) in Seattle, working with seniors on the college application process. She is actively involved in church activities and teaching Godly Play.

Sensenbrenner has three adult sons and enjoys hiking, swimming, and reading.

She speaks Mandarin Chinese and lived in China for four years.

Julia Sensenbrenner, PhD Sensible College Solutions LLC 4319 43rd Avenue NE Seattle, WA 98105 206-841-5906 julia.sensible@gmail.com Specialty: C+I

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#### Introductions, from page 33



Erika Smith (KY)
has been an IEC for
4 years. Previously,
she was a school
counselor and
college planner at
Lexington Catholic
High School, a

college admissions professional at Transylvania University, an associate director of admission at Lexington Theological Seminary, and a director of admission at Midway University.

Smith earned a BA in political science from the University of Kentucky and an MA in theology from Lexington Theological Seminar. She is a member of NACAC and AICEP, where she held the position of commissioner.

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Annie Vinik (MD)
has been an IEC for
5 years and was an
Associate member.
Before becoming an
IEC, she spent 10
years in the Office of
Academic Advising

and Student Services at George Washington University's Elliott School of International Affairs, where she also created and directed a thesis-like independent research program.

Vinik has an AB from Duke in English and French and volunteered in the Duke undergraduate admissions office while in college. She also has an EdM in higher education from the Harvard Graduate School of Education and is a member of PCACAC.

Vinik served as an alumni admissions interviewer for Duke for many years and spent 10 years on the alumni board of Georgetown Day School in Washington, DC, including two as president.

Vinik lives in Washington, DC, and loves the city's energy. A huge Francophile, she spent a year in Paris during college and a year teaching English in southern France after graduation. She and her husband have two elementary school–age kids. She loves that becoming an IEC has allowed her to work with her dad, Bruce Vinik, a longtime IECA member.

Annie Vinik, MEd Vinik Educational Placement Services 4701 Sangamore Road, Suite S105 Bethesda, MD 20816 301-320-3133 annie@vinikeps.com www.vinikeps.com Specialty: C



Susan Wertheimer
(VT) has been an IEC
for 2 years and was
an Associate member.
Although she has been
an IEC for a short time,
she was an admissions
professional at the

University of Vermont for 32 years, serving as a senior associate director and the interim dean of admissions for nearly three years at a time of major transition as well as an admissions counselor. Currently, she and her business partner are contracted as college counselors at a local independent school in addition to serving private clients and offering pro bono services.

Wertheimer earned a BA and an MEd from the University of Vermont. She completed a certificate in college counseling from UCLA Extension and attended IECA's 2017 STI. She is a member of NACAC. She is a board member of the Burlington Boys & Girls Club and volunteers to train their college coaches as part of Early Promise, a program to increase college attendance or other postsecondary training for a largely first-generation, low SES population. She is a coach with ScholarMatch and has three virtual students.

If Wertheimer had her "druthers," she would spend every waking moment on her bicycle (in the summer), another way of saying she's an active Vermonter who doesn't especially love to ski. Her two adult children and stepdaughter live in Portland, ME, where she has three grandchildren, and in Brooklyn. It saddens her that her partner of 40 years passed away four years ago and isn't around to watch them grow up, but her life is full of work, friends, and family.

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#### October 8

A Brief Overview of the SAO Common Application and the Gateway Portal

#### November 12

Helping Students with LDs Optimize Outcomes on Admissions and Testing

#### December 10

Understanding Neuropsychological Testing

All IECA webinars are free to members (live or on demand) and cost just \$24 for nonmembers. For more information and to register, go to <a href="http://webinars.IECAOnline.com">http://webinars.IECAOnline.com</a>. Our webinars remain available in the archives for years.

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member

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**Over 6 Months** 

(March-September 2019)

IECA
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Activity

IECA

Of the 27,000+ visitors who looked for additional information:

- 59% were IECs
- 23% were parents/students
- 18<sup>8</sup> were admission representatives