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My Favorite College Resources

- *Fiske Guide to Colleges*
- *The Insider's Guide to Colleges*.
Compiled by the *Yale Daily News*

There are many more out there, but I think these two give a good picture of the personality of the school.

www.princetonreview.com

Will give you a quick snapshot of the majority of colleges.

NEW RESOURCE

www.collegedata.com

Great new resource for college financial data and acceptance history. Check it out.

IECA Conference Key Take-Aways

I spent last week in Baltimore visiting schools in the DC/Baltimore area and attending a conference with other Independent Consultants and College Admissions professionals. Among the highlights of the conference were two sessions: one on reading the transcript and the other on reviewing the applications.

Transcripts

As you can imagine, different schools assess the transcript differently. At a school that is heavy in Math, Science and Engineering, such as RPI, their primary concern is a student's challenge and grades in math and science, with little to no emphasis on foreign language. At a school like Dickinson, who has a heavy focus on creating global citizens, their focus is heavy on foreign language and humanities and well-rounded students. This underscores the need to target your schools based on your interests and strengths.

Application Case Studies

I participated in a session with Admissions Directors from 11 plus schools. We were given three case studies in advance to review along with a mock profile of the school to which we were admitting. The three students profiles were as follows:

Student 1: "180" had a 3.14/4 GPA and 1830 on her SATs at an all girls private school in Greenwich, CT. She received disciplinary action for drinking at a school function during her sophomore year. After that incident, she turned herself around and founded a SADD (Students Against Destructive Decisions) chapter at her school and became a leader in the community. She was also half black and half Jewish. During her sophomore year, she had mostly C's, a couple of B's and 1 D. After she turned around, she had mostly A's and B+'s.

Student 2: "Shoe Guy" had a 3.45/4 GPA with SATs of 2080 and 700 plus on several SAT subject tests. He was editor-in-chief of his paper and had extensive community service working with the homeless. He is openly Gay and his parents are Israeli, so he

speaks Hebrew, English and is studying Latin. He also works in his parents' falafel restaurant. He is interested in studying politics and languages. He wrote about how he is "show guy" but meant to say, "shoe guy". Big typo!

Student 3 "Swimmer" has a 3.37/4 GPA and 1920 SATs. She is a swimming recruit with a letter of Immediate impact from the swim coach at the perspective college. She lost her father during her junior year and wrote about that in her essay. She is quiet in class, but will participate if asked. She is interested in studying accounting.

RED BRICK UNIVERSITY accepts 40% of its applicants. The average GPA is 3.4-3.9 and the average SATS are CR 620-710; M 600-710; W 610-700. It is a small liberal arts college with small, seminar-based classes. They recently completed a new athletic facility and are aggressively going after athletes

Now that you have the facts, whom would you choose? You can only select one?

I will share with you who was most selected in the next newsletter!

College Visits

I had the opportunity to visit seven schools while I was away. Below is a summary of my impressions of the schools. For those of you who are just starting the visitation process, see if one stands out. For those of you who have already visited some of these schools, I am curious to share our impressions and see if they are the same.

George Washington

School of doers. Right in the downtown D.C; the campus covers a span of 4 blocks by 4 blocks, but they have done a good job of buying up all the property to make it all feel like it is part of GW. There are two very small "squares", but no real green area. Extremely strong in pre-professional programs. Students do a lot of internships and also participate in politics given its DC location. Students wear jeans, sweatshirts, Abercrombie and Ugg Boots. Seem engaged in the learning and students that excel by doing rather than strictly intellectual. Many people smoke, perhaps due to large international contingency. There is a great urban feel to the school, but If you want a strong sense of a campus, look elsewhere. Also the third most expensive school in the US.

UMD College Park

Sweat pants, jeans, sneakers and Uggs are standard wardrobe at this large, state university; but overall kids seem down-to-earth. Maryland has impressive programs in many disciplines. There are numerous scholars and honors programs. Also have language

immersion houses where students must speak a foreign language 80% of the time. School is designed as three large concentric U's with a large mall like area in the center with grass and paths. There is a lot of activity on campus, good school spirit and ability to get involved. It takes about 40 minutes to walk from one side of the campus to the other. A great large school option for students who want that type of college experience. The honors programs allow students to get the experience of a smaller community within a larger community.

Georgetown

Strong intellectual community. Focus on developing global leaders that will use their education for the greater community. The largest employer is Teach for America and a many students also go to the Peace Corps. Students are preppy, clean-cut and have a genuine love of learning. Campus is very pretty with red brick buildings all around. 55% of the student body is Catholic, however as the oldest Jesuit College, there are crosses throughout the building and Brothers live in the residence halls. There is a plurality of religions with 10-15% self reported Jews, 8-9% Muslim, and 20% Protestant students. Students are required to take two religion and two philosophy classes to graduate. Political environment is robust with equal weight and ability to debate between Democrats and Republicans. Students have the ability to become CEO of student run store on campus. Strong in business, pre-med, and IR. School of Foreign Service focuses on languages and economics. Need to have an interest in both. The only negative is that the planes fly over campus and are rather loud. Georgetown itself has tons of restaurants, shops, bars, etc.

Loyola College of Maryland

Follows the Jesuit tradition of mind, body spirit. Looks to educate the whole student. Very pretty campus with lots of trees and long corridors of grassy area. Shares library with all girls College of Notre Dame. Students are clean cut, mostly white and interested in learning, but do not seem to work extremely hard. Ministry is very active and run numerous off-campus retreats to build community. Strong sense of community and interaction with faculty. Clergy live in the resident halls. There is no Greek life, but close to Baltimore and part of College Town bus system that will take students to other local colleges and into town. Very welcoming community.

Johns Hopkins

"We are the best school; we have the best study abroad program, the best International Relations program and the best robotics lab in the country." touted our tour guide. All may be true, but there is a very strong competitive sense of the students albeit said in jest. Students are actively engaged in academics and extracurricular activities. Pretty campus, with state-of-the art

facilities. Large Asian population, which is not surprising given the excellent science and engineering programs. Bio-medical engineering is the toughest program to get into and the only program that students must declare and be admitted to depending on space. World-class in robotics, bio-medical engineering, creative writing, and International Relations programs. Students are unadorned, preppy, type A, and active. Our tour guide wore a preppy, driving shoe, jeans and a blazer.

MICA

Excellent art and design school right in the heart of Baltimore. Students are engaged, creative and focused on producing art. Many students have an artistic look to them, but not overly pierced or tattooed. Blue hair, bright green scarf, rainbow-colored sneakers with double holed earrings and interesting spectacles illustrate the student body. State-of-the art facilities abound for creating art in fibers, drawing, painting, liberal arts, and sculpture. Great school for a creative student who wants to be in a city and have access to the art culture. Has produced some impressive students and artists.

Goucher

Type B school set along 200 plus acres of property with beautiful trees and mid-century architecture. Students are a bit quirky, artsy, but not overly so. Very strong in the theater, dance, languages, and other humanities. Also growing science program and have a dual degree engineering program. World-class dance and equestrian programs. Buildings are clean, but not state-of-the art. Goucher is building a new Athenaeum which will house a new library and student center. Just built a new work-out room, but still a small school. 67% female: motto for boys is "the odds are good, but the goods are odd." For girls; "the Goucher goggles" meaning that girls are not very select. Mandatory study abroad program for at least 3 weeks. Will give students \$1,200 towards fulfilling this requirement.

Seniors

Congratulations to those of you who have completed your Early applications and to those who have heard some positive results already. I know these last couple of months have been hectic, but I appreciate all of your hard work. I am available to meet with you to complete essays for any outstanding applications. It would be great to get all of the applications in within the next month.

Juniors

The first marking should be over. I've met with many of you, but if we have not met for your needs assessment, please schedule a meeting in the next couple of months so that I can begin your preliminary list. We can also discuss some summer options that will fit into your interests.

Sophomores

Hopefully the year has gotten off to a good start. It would be good to meet after January to discuss summer plans and develop a strategy for next year.

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