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DEAR COUNSELORS



Happy New Year! Here at Next Step Education Group, we are always trying

to be innovative. And with every new year, we try to introduce something new that pushes the envelope.

In 2012, we launched NextStepAcademy.com, our online life and career skills school that's chock full of courses that students typically don't get. [Contact me](#) to find out how we can offer your students a free membership so they can learn about financial literacy, leadership, communication skills, career skills and much more.

In 2013, we launched *LINK*, this great magazine you're holding now! It's free to counselors in more than 25,000 high schools. [Do you want to get involved?](#) We're always looking for good articles and contributors. And please let us know of any counselors who would also like to receive *LINK Magazine*.

In 2014, we launched the NextStepU College Planning Center, a retail education center, in Rochester, N.Y. Our center provides college planning services that are supplemental to what counselors do. Of course, we would never want to compete with you. We just want to send more prepared students to their counselors.

And now, we've launched our idea for 2015! At the NextStepU College Planning Center, we've created a bona fide [college planning curriculum](#) for high schools to use. It's a complete workbook that also contains a training model for counselors. The curriculum was created by a more than 40-year school counselor veteran Dr. James Malone who, along with being a school counselor, taught school counseling in the master's program at C.W. Post for 20 years. In this program, he realized that most masters' level counselor programs don't have a course in college planning. In fact, only about 10 percent of schools do! So, most new counselors end up getting trained on the job.

To help you with this, our NextStepU College Planning curriculum not only provides your school with a thorough, standard method to deliver college readiness, it can also be a training tool for your new counselors!

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Thanks for all the great work you're doing and we looking forward to helping you become even better!

All my best,

David Mammano
CEO/Founder Next StepU
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NSU: Share This!

Look for this symbol throughout the issue for content you can share directly with your students. Scan it, copy it, email it — any way that will get it to your students!





Dear counselors,

It's an exciting time to be in the world of education! New technology like Naviance and social media outlets like Facebook and Twitter have made your jobs easier than ever — at least on the surface.

I'm thrilled to have gotten the chance to interview Marsha Lenzi, our cover counselor, this month. As a 28-year veteran in the field, Lenzi has seen her fair share of changes and admits that while the new forms of communication are great for showing what you really do as counselors, it comes at a cost. Your access to information may be higher than ever before, but that also means

you have more pressure to know everything.

That's why this issue is focused on topics that are up-and-coming; maybe you've never even heard about them yet. We're tackling everything from the Instant Decision process to Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs are one of the most buzzed-about topics in the last few years) and everything in between.

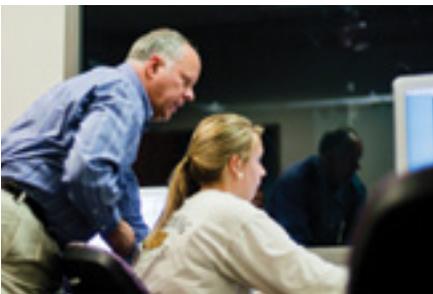
We also know that no matter how long you take to discover these new trends, nothing ever gets done unless you find time to focus on yourself as well. Check out our "Counseling the counselor" article on page 42 to find out ways to relax, unwind — and just how to say no.

Plus, since we appreciate so much what you do, we want to give you the chance to be rewarded, just for interacting with us! Check out the reply card in the middle of this issue and send it in for your chance to win one of five \$50 MasterCard gift cards. Or, register as a counselor at NextStepU.com and you'll automatically be entered.

As always, feedback is welcomed — we want to hear from you! For any comments or inquiries about writing, email me at Editor@NextStepU.com. I can't wait to hear from you!

All my best,

Laura Sestito
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The future of digital learning

MOOCs are facing challenges but seek to be an effective learning outlet for students

By Ali Sewalt



Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs) were once considered the solution to many educational issues plaguing students today, such as cost and accessibility. However, despite all of the positive movements forward, MOOC programs are still encountering many issues. For one, employers admit that they are more likely to hire applicants with a traditional degree. Also, MOOCs tend to see a higher dropout rate and lower overall grades in comparison to a conventional education. Education scholars speculate as to whether or not this online movement is just a passing fad or if eventually these programs will mark a change in education.

What is the future of MOOCs?

In order to combat some of the issues that have arisen with MOOCs, online learning platforms and traditional schools have started to come together to combine both old and new learning efforts. Programs like NovoEd, a student-centered online learning platform, has partnered with Princeton University, Wharton University of Pennsylvania, University of Maryland, and the Carnegie Foundation, among others, to create some of their courses. This learning center

describes itself as a three-step working process that has students network with peers, alumni and mentors, encourages students to learn to lead and work in a team setting, and to join the “world’s classroom” at a global level.

This new wave of online learning is different from traditional MOOC programs in that it offers online and in-person study groups and requires students to work on real-life projects. Students also seek out mentors and, with their help, are able to start their own projects to enhance individual learning.

“Traditional online courses focus on the most boring parts of education through tedious practices such as multiple choice questions,” says NovoEd’s founder, Amin Saberi. “[This can] create an isolating, lonely environment for students.” Contrary to that idea, programs like NovoEd and the schools they partner with seek to motivate students and create an environment in which they want to expand.

Can the MOOC model be successful?

Skepticism of MOOCs has often stemmed from the low success rate of early online learning plat-

forms which saw an average of about a five percent success rate. So far, the NovoEd educational model has seen a large increase in success with a 45 to 65 percent success rate of students finishing a certain course. Professors and students who have witnessed the success cite the positive feedback as a result of the collaborative learning experience. Students are more engaged and likely to complete their studies in a group setting versus independent study. While the results can’t predict the future of MOOCs as a whole, it may indicate the chance for the model to succeed in the future.

The ultimate goal of the MOOC is to make college degrees more accessible with a more affordable price and to increase online course retention rates. While the future of online learning and MOOCs is often changing, there is no doubt that strides are continually being made in order to improve the educational future for students, both online and traditionally.

Ali Sewalt is currently a senior at Nazareth College in Rochester, N.Y.

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A photograph of David Mammano, CEO and Founder of Next Step Education Group, speaking at a TEDx event. He is wearing a light blue button-down shirt and is smiling while looking to his left. The background is a blue screen with the text "TEDx Flouro" and "x = independently organized TED event" visible.

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Unlocking your students' creative genius

7 ways to prep students for college assignments

By Rachel Montpelier

High school is very different from college. That might sound obvious, but the distinction goes beyond what students are learning. It also has to do with *how* students are learning. Ashley Whitlatch, Global Education Relations Manager at Prezi, a company that produces an online tool that allows users to create visual presentations, suggests that high school is defined by finding the “right” answers, while college is more defined by ideas and seeking different answers. Here are some ways you can prep your students for college life by tapping into their creative sides:

1 Stress that there is no “right” answer

“University professors are much more likely to encourage the idea that there are a plethora of answers,” says Whitlatch. College classes are focused on diverse ideas and class participation rather than on the correct answer. So when your students are concerned about finding the same answer as everyone else, make it clear that their personal opinions and their learning styles are just as valid as finding the right answer like every other student.

2 Encourage students to consider the bigger picture

“Creativity isn’t a linear process,” Whitlatch explains. Instead of getting stuck and overwhelmed on one question or on one class, students need to understand how everything fits into their overall goals. Help prepare your students for college by encouraging them see the big picture. For example, if a student is worried about one grade, show him his entire transcript and GPA. One average grade won’t make a game-changing difference among countless A’s and B’s, extracurriculars and high test scores.

3 Use various media

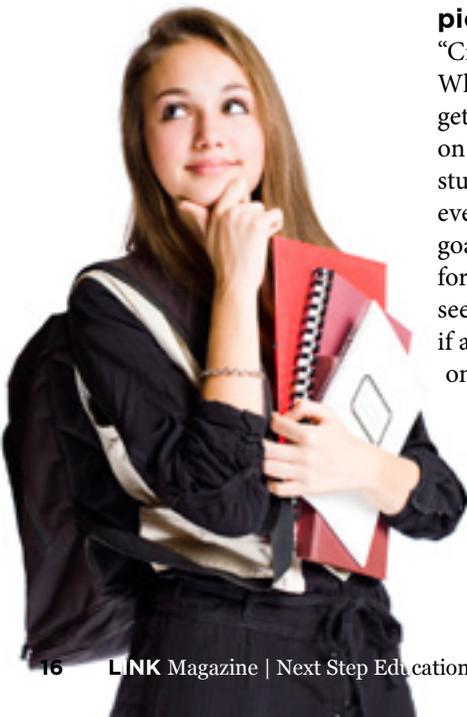
“[Media] stimulates creativity, memorization, brainstorming and ideas,” Whitlatch says. “[It] is incredibly important in a classroom lecture.” Use presentations, video clips, articles and images when you talk to students and their parents. Not only will you be subtly supporting their creativity, you will be using your own to help them with their college plans. After all, seeing a video about a college is much more memorable than a mere description of it.

4 Recommend study breaks

“I think it’s imperative for students to find new and different ways of learning,” Whitlatch says. Taking a break from regular study habits — i.e. outlines and note cards — means students can create a study guide presentation or can think of a whole new way of learning. Telling them to take a break might be the best way to facilitate a student’s education.

5 Help them push the envelope

High school seniors need to start thinking like college students. “It will allow them to push past their cognitive boundaries. It will also help to broaden their perspective and critical thinking skills,” Whit-



latch says. If you support your students when they break the high school studying mold and learning norms, you will be doing them a huge service. Thinking differently is what college is all about.

6 Rethink memorization

“It’s not about memorizing the history of the world from 4000 B.C.E.,” Whitlatch says. Stress to students that succeeding in college means using their own perspectives and opinions to understand their classes. A student’s education is contingent on his or her ability to comprehend why a class should matter to him or her. And that does not always involve memorizing vocabulary on note cards. “Using new methods of learning will help students arrive at college with critical thinking skills,” Whitlatch explains.

7 Link creativity to technical education

Even if you have students planning to go into technical careers, stress the importance of creativity. “Just look at Steve Jobs, who was an incredibly creative man — this allowed him to transform an entire industry,” describes Whitlatch. Creativity and business are not mutually exclusive, so make sure creativity is part of every one of your students’ educations.

College will be a new experience for students, but it doesn’t have to be a difficult one. By encouraging students’ creativity, they will be better prepared for the assignments they will receive once they get to college.

Rachel Montpelier is a recent graduate of Nazareth College in Rochester, N.Y.

ACADEMICS

Forming good study habits in college



Break the cycle of procrastination by following these three study tips:

► Break projects up

Often when faced with large projects, or a test that covers a lot of material, it can be easy to get overwhelmed and push off studying. “Break projects into tiny pieces to keep yourself motivated,” suggests Olivia Lindquist Bowen, Founder & Director of Education of the Royston Writing Institute. “Not only is it satisfying to cross something off your list, but by splitting an assignment into many small tasks, it will be easier to motivate yourself to take action. Go as small as you need to in order to wipe out excuses.” For example, start studying for a test a week ahead by dividing the material into sections and reviewing some each day, leaving time for a comprehensive review of all the material before the test.

► Use a calendar

But how do you keep track of these small tasks? Use a calendar or scheduling software that gives you enough room for more than just final deadlines and/or make a list of tasks that have to be completed each day. Schedule

your days so that you have enough time for studying, your job, extracurriculars and hanging out with your friends. If you are particularly busy with several tests and papers one week, it might not be a good time for a *Harry Potter* movie marathon with your hall. You have to make sure you have time to fit in everything that you’re obligated to get done.

► Get the worst done first

Bowen also suggests two other techniques for getting dreaded tasks out of the way. One is known as the Pomodoro Technique, in which you have to choose a task and work on it for 25 minutes without stopping. Then, take a quick five minute break to give your brain a breather before starting on the next 25 minutes. And what should you start with? The task you want to do the least, which will not only get it out of the way, but also give you a sense of accomplishment that will keep you motivated.

— Sarah Rowe

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A collage-style advertisement for Marshall University. It features a green background with a large white 'M' logo containing the word 'MARSHALL'. On the left is a portrait of Victoria Perri, Senior Marketing Major. In the center is a testimonial: "Coming to Marshall, I knew no one here, so I was nervous but excited to see what college had in store for me. After getting involved and meeting new people, I realized I made the right decision. Marshall offers so much to its students, and the university goes out of its way to make your time here memorable and beneficial. Marshall turned into my new home and the people here became my family." Below the testimonial is her name and title. To the right are three photo cutouts: a student studying, a student climbing a rock wall, and a student playing baseball. At the bottom, the text 'Best. Decision. Ever!' is written in large white letters over a background of green pom-poms. The website 'marshall.edu' is written in a curved font at the bottom right.

Maintaining a proper social media profile

Your students shouldn't let a social media profile come between them and a college acceptance

By Joe Villmow

Social media is a great way to stay connected to friends and family, find new friends, share interests and post pics of a recent adventure. However, if your students use these tools carelessly, social media can also leave a negative footprint on their future academic and professional careers.

As part of the Millennial generation, your students grew up with social media. They're used to posting the online diary of their lives for all to see. And that's the problem: it's there for everyone to see, including colleges your students are applying to as well as future employers. More people are realizing that what they do online impacts their personal brand and, because of this, are more diligent in checking what gets posted on their profiles. Sometimes though, your students may need an extra reminder.



Colleges, universities and employers are more likely to check out potential students' social media profiles and get an idea of who each student really is outside of his or her application. One 2006 survey suggested that up to 77 percent of employers would Google or research applicants. That research eliminated about 35 percent of candidates from consideration based on the information they uncovered online, including inappropriate pics, foul language, poor communication skills and negative or discriminatory comments.

That survey was conducted in 2006. It can almost certainly be said that researching employees — or college candidates — is even more prevalent today.

Tell your students to imagine themselves being college or job candidates sitting in front of the decision maker. He or she looks at them and says, "Well, I looked you up online and found..." Students should ask themselves: Is what they found out something I think will make a good impression? If not, what can be done to fix that before I start interviewing? This guide to keeping profiles clean (*right*) should be their go-to source on making that first impression a good one.



Keeping profiles clean

What you do today shouldn't

haunt you in the future! Use these tips to keep your social media profiles as squeaky-clean as possible.

- ▶ **Check your friend list.** Who you friend and associate with, including groups, is a reflection on you. Connect with friends with common interests, including school, college and personal interests. Do your Facebook friends reflect your personality? Are there any friends you need to un-friend or groups to drop?
- ▶ **Check privacy and security settings to control what others can see.** Check them periodically, because social media policies often change.
- ▶ **Clean up your "digital dirt."** Remove, or request to have removed, anything that may tarnish your current or future reputation. What pics should you remove from your wall — yours and those others posted of you?

(“Keeping profiles clean,”
continued)

▶ **Google yourself once a month.** Take the time to see what’s out there in cyberspace with your name attached. Everyone else can find the same thing. You can also use Google Alerts and you’ll receive an email when your name shows up. Similar services include SocialMention.com and Social Sweepster which searches social media for posts by or about you.

▶ **Before posting something, do the “Grandma Test.”** Ask yourself: is this post something that I would want my grandma, or someone else that I know and respect, to see?

▶ **Keep it positive.** Use social media to demonstrate your positive personality. Do you want to be seen as someone who is positive or only complains or acts negatively?

▶ **Cool down.** Before you post something you may regret, take a breath or two. Maybe wait an entire day. It’s too easy to get caught up in the moment and post something nasty. (See “keep it positive” above.) Be mindful of what you say about schools, friends, teachers, enemies, etc.

▶ **What’s your name?** No, not your legal name, but your online name? It’s probably best to use your real name instead of something cute or something that could be seen as inappropriate. If your name is already taken as a username (there is probably more than one John Smith out there), consider adding your middle initial or add a special character (for example: @john_smith) to

differentiate.

▶ **Get a real headshot.** You had fun at that party, but is that really the impression you want to make in your profile picture? A picture really is worth a thousand words. Have a friend take a good photo of your head and shoulders only, against a plain background. Smile. It doesn’t need to look like a mug shot.

▶ **Be yourself.** It may seem like the opposite of what I’ve been saying, but it’s important to be yourself. Your social media personality may be the first impression you make. Your posts should reflect your unique personality. Make a good impression by posting about your career interests, hobbies, community activities, achievements, and other things that tell someone who you are as a person.

Remember, everything you post and upload to the Internet is something someone can download for future use, is archived forever, and potentially displays what you least expect. It’s something you should keep that in mind before you post something.

Joe Villmow is the founder of EmpowerMe, an organization dedicated to finding students the motivation they need to become successful.



APP REVIEW



RescueTime

This app is ideal for the procrastinator. It helps students track every minute of their time by detailing which documents, websites and apps they most use so they can get a better sense of how long different tasks take. Students give their schedules structure by more effectively managing their time spent on work and play.



Wordcounter

This online tool will glance through students’ papers and count the most frequently used words and phrases. All writers are guilty of sticking to their go-to phrases and writing styles. However it’s counter-productive to students’ growth as writers. This web app allows students to cut back on repetitive or redundant words and add some variety to their papers.

— Ali Sewalt



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What is Instant Decision?

Learn about the new admissions method — and if it's right for your students

By Ali Sewalt

It's late in the school year and one of your students who thought he wasn't cut out for college decides he wants to apply after all. What do you do? Is it too late for him to apply?

While some schools implement deadlines, schools like Rutgers and Seton Hall are holding Instant Decision or Immediate Decision Days. Schools that participate hold multiple days for students to come to campus after submitting the online portion of their application. They bring their SAT scores, essay, recommendations, transcript and a portfolio if it is applicable. Once they arrive on campus with their paperwork, they meet with admissions personnel and are able to leave at the end of that day knowing whether or not they have been accepted into the college. All applicants who apply for Instant Decision are pre-screened to ensure that they are in fact qualified for admission before they begin the procedure.

What are the benefits?

This process eliminates the agonizing wait for a letter in the mail and allows college admissions boards to put a face to the applications they are reviewing and really get to know the student. Instead of scheduling multiple visits, which can involve

travel costs, students can combine processes and meet with the dean of the school, sit in on a class, discuss financial aid and get a first-hand look at residential and campus life.

It can be quite scary and intimidating to depart for college without knowing a single person on campus. Schools who use Instant Decision Days report successful meetings between prospective students who end up meeting and sometimes even rooming with each other. While students may not find their future roommates that day, it's still helpful for them to have familiar faces to dine and spend time with those first days of school.

Parents can also become an important part of the process, as they are present for everything but the interview. An advantage of Instant Decision Days is that working parents are able to attend all of the important meetings in a single day. They can also witness first-hand what their child might experience over the next four years.

What does it do for students' chances of getting in?

Many schools that offer Instant Decision Days report that half of the students who apply during

that time are accepted. The benefit of this procedure is it allows students to present themselves in person instead of conveying their personalities in an essay, which is sometimes difficult to do. Getting to talk with current students may also help ease applicants into a decision. It is much more effective to engage in a dialogue and discover if a school is a good fit than it is to find answers on a website.

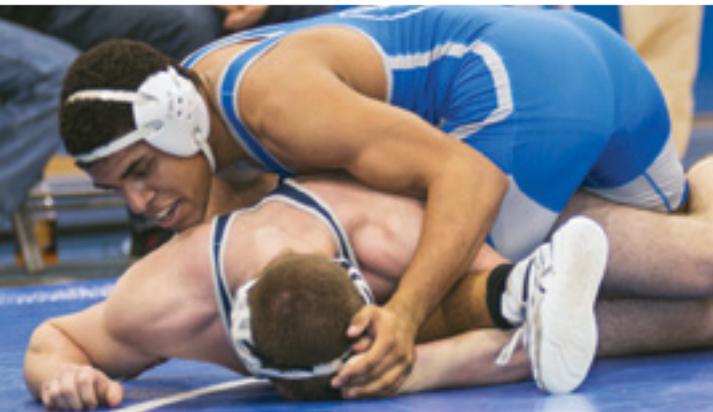
Admissions counselors advise prospective students who might utilize this option in the future to know that the more information, they provide during their interviews, the better. It allows the admissions committee to create a vision of a student's future at their school and allows them to get to know the student as a whole. It further aids the complicated process of scholarships, financial aid and housing. Students are encouraged to make appointments with professors for prospective majors and really look into what they might be experiencing in the next year.

Before you say "no" to a late bloomer who decides to go to college, be sure to advise Instant Decision as an option. It may not be the proper choice for every student, but it's something new and beneficial in the college application process.

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The power of smart goal setting

What students can do now to help them achieve their dreams later

By Dawn Marie Barhyte



The process of setting smart goals allows you to choose where you want to go and what you want to achieve. By having a vision in mind, you know what to concentrate on, giving you long-term sight and short-term motivation. Researchers believe setting goals is one of the most important life skills you can develop. The problem is getting students to see those benefits.

What is goal setting?

Goal setting is determining what you want, designing a plan to get there and having the discipline to follow through. For your students, it is a way to get them to think about their futures and motivating themselves to turning this vision of the future into reality.

Advantages of setting goals

Highly successful people have always had clear, focused goals that guide them to greatness. Maria Furtado, executive director of Colleges That Change Lives, says “students who are motivated and persevere are typically more successful than their peers. Those young people are more likely to set tangible goals and work

towards those goals steadily.” It is especially beneficial for students who are applying for college. “Goals that lead a student to explore intellectually and achieve academically to the best of his or her ability will lead to the best preparation for college,” Furtado adds.

The benefits of goal setting typically go beyond just academic. Ellen Smith, a licensed clinical social worker (LCSW) and certified health coach insists that “teens that set goals feel more in control of their lives and are less likely to be influenced by peers who are not as focused.” In that way, she sees that many of the students she comes across who set goals for themselves are less likely to be distracted by drugs, alcohol or other self-harming behaviors.

Raising self-confidence

By setting clearly defined goals, your students can measure and take pride in the achievement of those goals. As they start to see forward progress, they can also benefit from a boost of self-confidence from knowing that they accomplished something important to them. Additionally, researchers have found that the

students who were most successful in life weren’t the ones with the highest grades or best SAT scores, but instead were those who set specific goals and set out at accomplishing them.

“The more specific and realistic goals are, the more likely they will be achieved,” explains Smith. “Successful achievement of goals not only builds self-confidence but creates a forward momentum towards personal and scholastic growth.” Peter Van Buskirk, author of “Winning The Admission Game” agrees, adding, “Confidence and achievement go hand in hand. Just as the achievement of success breeds confidence, it’s impossible to achieve at high levels without confidence.”

Recognizing and applying talent

“Talent without confidence goes nowhere,” stresses Van Buskirk, “As students think about college and their futures, they need to believe in themselves and seek out opportunities that will allow them to test their skills and grow with the knowledge that they can do — and be — more than they ever imagined.”

How to set out smart goals

Goal setting is an important component of success whether students are aspiring to get into an Ivy League college or just get a scholarship. Have students begin their goal setting process by encouraging them to start with small goals and then move on to the big stuff. Setting smart goals that are meaningful to your students gives them motivation because they will want to achieve them — and they know it's something that is possible.

It's important to remind students to avoid reaching for goals that aren't their own. Many students face pressure when it comes to choosing the right college or getting a good score on their SATs, but those goals aren't something a student is going to want to try to achieve or to bother working for if it's not something that is truly important. Their motivation will come from within — not because a parent or teacher told them to.

Having goals will not only allow your students to dream, but give them motivation needed to reach for those dreams. Goal setting will enable your students to go further than they thought possible as they experience success along the way. By using the right strategies, your students can achieve their goals and reach for their dreams.

Dawn Marie Barhyte is a widely published freelance writer and former educator who continues to touch the lives of young people through her writing.

A goal setting guide: Secrets of smart goal setting

Ready to start making your goals become a reality? Start with this process and get ready to see your dreams become a reality!



Step 1: Define your goal

Be specific! You are far more likely to achieve if you make your goal a concrete idea rather than something vague. The more specific you are, the easier it will be to know when your goal has been met.

Step 2: Map it out

Brainstorm steps needed to achieve your goals. Breaking your goal into sub-goals is key to staying motivated and recognizing and celebrating the progress you've made. Ask yourself if an activity will get you closer to achieving your goal or detract from it. What do you need to do every day to move closer to goal?

Step 3: Make a list

Define your assets and resources. What are your strengths? How can they help you achieve your goal? Who are some people you could go to for additional support?

Step 4: Go over possible roadblocks

Generate a list of challenges you might face and how you will overcome them. Once your obstacles are identified, when you actually face them, you will be better able to solve them and move onto the next stage of your goal.

Step 5: Target practice

Make deadlines and, if you're tackling a big goal, set smaller goals to lead up to your ultimate vision. If one plan doesn't achieve results, revise your plan and try again. Before starting up again, be sure to ask yourself what went wrong the first time and seek support when tackling it again.

Step 5: Picture it

Visualize what completing a goal will feel like. Every time you remind yourself of how you will feel once you achieve your goal, you're training your brain to make that good feeling happen.

Step 6: Track progress

Do a review while you are working on your goal and focus on what you are doing right, what is going wrong if your process is going slow, and what you can do to improve. But remember — don't give up even if you're not where you wanted to be!

Step 7: Pat yourself on the back

You did it! Time to reward your successes by basking in your goal setting glory and treating yourself to something well-deserved.

— Dawn Marie Barhyte

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Getting a first-hand look

Why you should take advantage of seeing schools in-person

By Lisa Sohmer

As a counselor, your knowledge of individual campuses and programs is an important resource when working with students. Information is available from any number of sources — college websites, guidebooks, conferences, reports from recent alumni — but visiting the campus yourself will provide a special and valuable kind of insight: your own.

Colleges are eager to educate you about their campuses, programs and students, so counselor visits to campus will always involve touring the campus, hearing presentations and meeting current students. Take notes, take pictures and gather all the information that you can but don't make the mistake of thinking that this is a one-way street.

Your time on the tour is also a chance to speak with the admissions team and explain your school, your students and what makes them special. Talking — in addition to listening — will bring your high school profile to life.

Your time spent visiting campuses is a natural complement to the time you spend within the school building.

Starting locally

Start with local colleges and attend workshops and meetings that include a campus tour. If there's a college nearby, call the admissions office and request a tour of the campus and a meeting with your high school's contact there. Your students flock to the college, but why? Ask them, and then go see for yourself.

Consider a group tour

When colleges seek you out about hosting tours and

inviting you to participate, take them up on their offers. Group tours have the added benefit of being outstanding opportunities to network with colleagues in the counseling community while learning about colleges.

Do your own homework

If the invitations aren't coming, go get them. Attend the NACAC College Fair in your area, speak with the representatives you meet there and give them your business card. Introduce yourself to your colleagues at the NYSACAC conference and let them know that you would be interested in visiting their campus. Also, ask them to keep you in mind as they plan future counselor tours.

Don't miss out on the opportunity to learn about colleges by seeing the campuses yourself. Make contacts, make friends and make the most of the counselor tour experience.

Lisa Sohmer is the Director of College Counseling and Upper Division Admission at The Garden School in Jackson Heights, N.Y.

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Making the most of your visit

Do your homework before taking a trip out to see the schools on your list

By Office of Admission at [Lynn University](#)



The college visit is an important rite of passage for high school students as they begin to check out the schools they're interested in attending. The process can be daunting and tedious as they are herded from one campus to the other — different campus, same drill.

But some schools have started to make the college tour process a little more unique. Lynn University, for example, revamped its college visit program in 2012 to offer a richer, more productive experience for the prospective student. Since then, their program has been well received, both by national organizations and by students themselves.

How to make a tour unique

Wherever you or your students decide to tour, see how customized you can get your experience to be. At Lynn University, their tour starts out with a current student guiding prospective students around campus and discussing majors and extracurricular activities. Then, faculty members in students' potential majors dine with them to talk about courses.

"We try to give students an insider's sense of what being a Lynn student might be like," says

Gareth Fowles, Vice President for Enrollment Management. "It is not just a tour, but an entire experience — and it is also available to high school counselors."

Counselors are encouraged to visit colleges as often as time and distance allow. Those that live nearby should visit schools in the area periodically and take time to visit more distant colleges at least once a year, if possible.

"Colleges and universities recognize and appreciate the role that counselors play in assisting students to find the right institution," says Fowles. "While counselors receive numerous updates from colleges and universities, we find that counselors who spend time visiting campuses are better prepared to advise students through the college search process. So, we have designed the campus visit experience in a manner that will enable counselors to walk away with a true understanding of the university's academic, social, cultural and athletic environment."

Whether via a 30-minute or full day visit, keeping these 4 guidelines in mind (*right*) before you visit can help make every campus tour experience more meaningful.

1 Do your homework
Yes, this also applies to you! Become familiar with the university's programs, philosophy and campus, including recent changes and future plans. Visit the school's website to discover nontraditional programs offered for specific student groups or needs, such as learning differences and honor programs.

2 Get social
Check out the school's social media channels. Sites like Instagram and YouTube provide a first-hand experience of the university's culture.

3 Ask the tough questions
Universities want to help counselors gain knowledge about their academic offerings, programming and features of the campus to impart to students. Ask about them — there are no inappropriate questions!

4 Go with an open mind
Encourage students to keep an open mind and to make informed decisions. For example, many students do not understand the difference between choosing a large school versus a small school until they witness it for themselves.



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How to personalize your college visits

If you're taking a college tour for the first time, it can be difficult to figure out what exactly you're supposed to be getting out of the experience. If you prepare properly, taking a college tour can give you a better indication of the school's resources, environment and if it could be a good potential fit for you.



If you are unsure what major or field you want to study, answers to questions like these can help admission counselors personalize a student visit:

- ▶ What do you do when you're not in school?
- ▶ What activities do you enjoy in school?
- ▶ What would you be doing if you could do anything?
- ▶ What is your dream job?

While on campus, try these ideas to get the full experience:



- ▶ Shadow a student and see the campus through his or her eyes.
- ▶ Sit in on a class and be part

of the discussion.

- ▶ Meet one-on-one with a professor from a college or study of interest.
- ▶ Take advantage of an event or activity occurring on or around campus.
- ▶ Take in your surroundings, tour the area and check out transportation options.
- ▶ Ask about deadlines, costs and financial information.

— Stefano Papaleo, Director of Undergraduate Admission at Lynn University



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The value-added planning process

How college and career planning can pay off with improved grades and a healthier outlook

By Jim Paterson



Counselors assume that developing a plan for one's life is simply an important step in development — the way learning the alphabet is or developing study skills. But it can be said that devoting time to career and college planning has therapeutic value much beyond simply setting a future course for a young person.

The exploration seems to help students in three ways. First, it makes sense of education for students who could not clearly see its purpose. Second, it provides direction to those who begin to feel that their life needs more focus or meaning. Lastly, it allows for a way out for those who feel their life and environment is not helping them progress — or is detrimental to their development.

The American School Counselors Association (ASCA) sees career planning as one of the key tasks of school counselors in a strong school counseling program. The national model for school counselors asks that they “coordinate ongoing systemic activities designed to assist students in establishing personal goals and developing future plans.” It is clear that counselors devot-

ing time to the process of life planning will discover ways that it will be therapeutic for the student involved.

Building brains...

“In general, I do think when a student focuses on their future it helps them perform academically, helps them set goals,” says Maureen McLaughlin, the head of counseling at Gonzaga High School in Washington, D.C. “This year I saw a number of seniors who have struggled ‘to get it together’ academically — and all of a sudden, they blossomed in the classroom; part maturity, part determination, part a decision that their future is important and they have some control over it.”

Counselors often report that, in general, students who plan their futures or investigate specific options helps them see why education has significance and often encourages them to devote more energy to academics. They may begin to see what it will take to, for instance, get to law school or they may just generally see how education will be a factor in any future employment.

Students may even begin to see

how education pays off in their development as a more interesting, intellectually sophisticated person. As they learn a bit about careers and post-secondary work, they often begin to quiz teachers or other adults they admire about how the adult learned certain things and where they went to college. Then they think about what they might have to do — as one student put it — “to improve my brain.”

All those realizations can result in a heightened interest in academic achievement, especially in certain areas that are relevant to them. Counselors can play a role by beginning this process early. Some school districts are requiring even more emphasis on career and educational planning in the middle school years and helping students develop a new energy.

Esmeralda Armendariz, counselor at Captain Walter E. Clarke Middle School in El Paso, Texas, says her school district is requiring career exploration courses in middle school and that so far it has paid off. “It really is an eye opener for them in connection with their academic performance,” she says.

...and easing minds.

Such efforts may also help students with socio-emotional problems by giving them a different view of their lives and a way to see their lives in a better light. Students reporting emotional issues often describe social or family lives that are difficult, and time spent working on their future can help them look past those issues or see them in a new light.

“The element of hope is never to be underestimated,” says Brenda Friedler, an educational consultant who works with adolescents on college admissions in Stamford, Conn. “Looking forward to the future and having dreams are critical to the healthy development of adolescents, in my opinion.”

New thinking in school counsel-

ing recommends more emphasis on future plans rather than past problems and, as ASCA puts it “a focus on student change to promote a better future and success.” Developing a future plan — or at least examining the options — can provide students with a new way of looking at their lives.

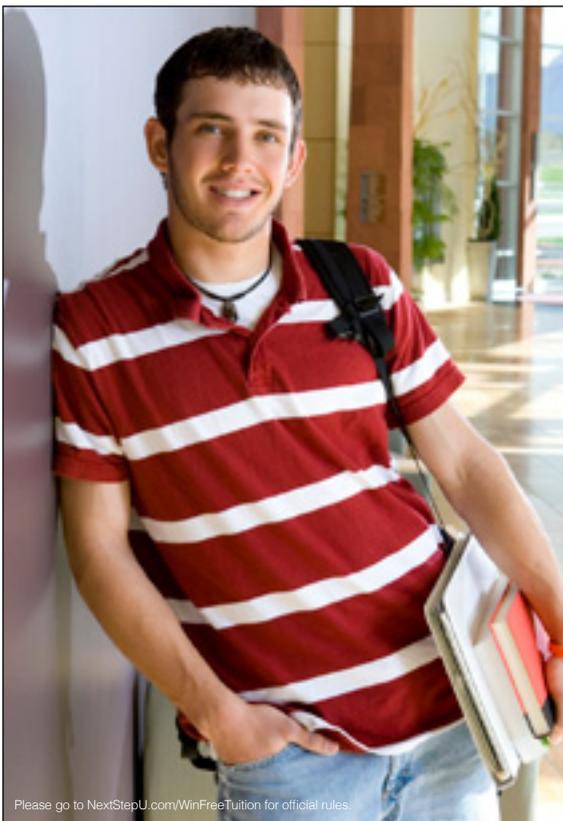
Counselors know that many of their students with the most troublesome socio-emotional issues are trapped in difficult, unhealthy environments. Their job is to assist them with those concerns and help them cope with them. It is often also helpful to have them look past their current situation toward a potentially brighter future.

McLaughlin says she can also simply see that discussions about future goals heighten confidence.

“It definitely improves their self esteem, and I have noticed how much more confident and independent they have become as they take control and attempt to act as an adult. Their parents no longer have to treat them like a child, which of course makes them feel more confident in themselves.”

Career and college planning is an important step in development, but it may also pay off by re-directing a student’s thinking, boosting academic achievement and helping them handle the socio-emotional issues that are so difficult at this age.

Jim Paterson is a writer, editor and a school counselor at Argyle Middle School in Silver Spring, Md.



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Counseling the counselor

10 ways to stay sane and be a more effective counselor

By Steve Polk

In order to rescue a drowning person, a lifeguard must first ensure his own safety. Once secure, he can then help others. Counselors are the same way — they themselves need to be healthy before they can be effective in helping others. However, counseling can be stressful and there may be a time in your career when you find yourself overloaded and don't know what to do. You may have your own “stuff” that mirrors the “stuff” kids bring to you (depression, grief, abuse, anxiety, relationship problems). In the school setting, parents, administrators and colleagues can frequently increase your stress levels as well. While there are no quick fixes, here are 10 ways to reduce stress and help you be a more effective and happier counselor:

Mantras get fulfilled

Self-talk, whether positive or negative, is powerful. Try to focus on the positive and decrease the negative. Remember that for every negative event in an average day you probably engaged in 100 positive ones.

Tip: Remind yourself of at least one positive thing you've done each day.

Counseling is a team sport

Foster a supportive and positive

environment with your teammates.

Tip: Get together once a week to check-in, socialize, decompress and vent with other counselors.

*Remember the
Counselors
Mantra: Be as
kind to yourself
as you are to
every person
that walks
through your
door.*

Breathe, eat, exercise, laugh, sleep and repeat

It is sometimes easy to forget the basics. Biofeedback studies suggest that moods can alter dramatically if a person is tired, underfed, dehydrated, out of shape or lacks sleep. Doing deep-breathing exercises, stretching, making sure you eat balanced meals, and all the other good habits we tell students to follow apply to us as well.

Tip: Get out of your office at least once per school period to chat with colleagues, check on the weather, or to stretch and take a deep breath.

The doctor is currently unavailable

Staying late, arriving early, not taking lunches and being too accessible to students are all behaviors that can, over time, exhaust a counselor and cause burnout. You do not get more efficient or effective the longer you work. Become more mindful and proficient in organizing your work day.

Tip: Log your arrival and departure times at work for a week and then, the following week, try to cut that amount down.

Ask for backup when you need it

Be aware of the various issues that your students can bring to you, whether it be a parent's divorce, cutting, eating disorders, grief, loneliness or any of the myriad of other problems that students may come to you for help with. Be honest enough to admit a need for backup if your lack of knowledge about the issue will interfere with your ability to help.

Tip: Make a list of issues you have the most difficulty with. Share your issues with a trusted colleague and ask him or her to be available to help you with students who come to you with those sorts of problems.

Don't overshare

The amount of information available about people is enormous thanks to social media. Be very cautious about how much personal information you share on social media — and be aware of what others might be posting about you. Students (and school districts) are very media-savvy and may just stumble upon something you don't want them to know about.

Tip: Review your information and delete anything your gut tells you might not be appropriate.

No trespassing!

Setting and maintaining boundaries is essential for self-care. Being too available through phone calls, text messages and email can interfere with your life. Do not give your cell phone number out to parents or students — if a true emergency occurs, you will be contacted if you need to get involved.

Tip: Hand out your business card to those who need to contact you and don't check your email outside of office hours.

Time off for good behavior

Taking vacations and enjoying holidays not only connects you to those you love, it also gives you something to look forward to. Plus, taking time off can make you a better counselor because it gives you time to refresh and be better equipped to help your students when you come back.

Tip: Plan one activity to partake in within the next 10 days, then follow-through and do not think about work while enjoying it.



Be prepared

Using some sort of organizer for your daily, weekly and monthly work will decrease your anxiety. That way, you don't just have to rely on your memory.

Tip: Prepare for your next significant event at least 24 hours beforehand so that on the day of the activity you are prepared and relaxed.

Colleagues are not clients

Because of your training, your affect and your perceived role in the school, other staff will likely come to see you as a person they can talk to. Frequently they will reveal a lot about their lives that they don't reveal to others. If you're stressed about trying to deal with these kinds of situations, keep in mind that the same guidelines that rule your interactions with students can help you deal with adults.

Tip: As a department, create a list of counselors available to staff to give out in cases you deem appropriate.

Eustress (good stress) propels you into activity and allows you to finish projects and promotes job — and life — satisfaction. Distress (bad stress) can cause physical ailments such as muscle tension, headaches, ulcers, high blood pressure, and heart disease. It is estimated that distress is related to up to 75 percent of all medical problems. Self-care, like any other behavior, can be learned through intent and practice.

Remember the Counselors Mantra: Be as kind to yourself as you are to every person that walks through your door.

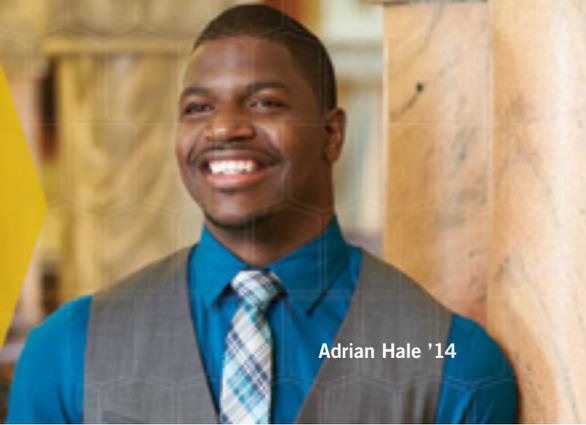
Steve Polk, MEd., has been an active secondary guidance counselor for 14 years and specializes in career planning and options for students after high school. You can reach him at writeinkpolk@yahoo.com and he is also on LinkedIn.



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Finding solutions

How a solution-focused therapeutic approach can help students wrestling with the search for a perfect direction forward

By Jim Paterson

If you were to sit in on a school counselor's session with a student these days, there is a good chance he or she would be using a specific approach to help with some of the most difficult problems confronting young people, including the confusion — and often stress — surrounding a college or career choice.

A new such approach that's gaining momentum is called solution-focused brief therapy (SFBT), and its name pretty much describes the direction it takes; establishing goals for your student rather than focusing on his or her problems.

SFBT is one technique that counselors can use that involves a careful analysis of a student's innermost personal thoughts and emotional history as well as plain-spoken mentoring. But the reason SFBT seems to work so well is because it quickly gets students to move past problematic history and instead focus on potential solutions. Using some very practical approaches, SFBT allows counselors to talk to students about their future educational plans.

Where it comes from

SFBT was developed in Milwaukee in the early 1970's by Steve de Shazer and Insoo Kim Berg who

studied thousands of counseling sessions at their family therapy center. They came to the conclusion that the therapists who focused on solutions and what was working with their clients had better success than those who simply reviewed the problems they faced. This focus gained favor in busy counseling offices, where the caseload and variety of student problems grew, and in clinical settings where insurance drove the demand for faster results. It has since been refined and expanded over the last 34 years to include new strategies.

But how do you use this simple, effective approach that is so well suited to young people as a way of helping them sort out one of their biggest challenges? How do you best help them find the direction they are going to take in the future?

Putting SFBT to work

Both practitioners and researchers say that while SFBT helps students solve socio-emotional difficulties, it can also help with the career and college choice process in the same way — because it is future-oriented and looks for solutions.

Linda Metcalf, author of "How to

Say it to Get Into the College of Your Choice" and who has been studying applications for SFBT and written and spoken about the topic broadly, says it works well for both socio-economic and college planning issues. "[SFBT] can be used effectively in choosing the right college, designing a résumé, etc," she explains, "Parents can also use SFBT to talk to their kids about [college planning] and other topics using key strategies in SFBT."

Research by psychologists
Rebecca Burwell and Charles



Chen at the University of Toronto also support the capabilities of the SFBT approach. Their research examines “the technical applicability of solution-focused interventions to the career counseling practice” and suggests that it is a worthy practice because it focuses on the “fundamental belief that people have what it takes to get what they want, and that this potential simply needs to be brought into their consciousness and set in motion.” In that way, their research suggests that SFBT can be a tool to bring to light the abilities your students — whether it is something they knew they were capable of or not.

While there is a lot of information about SFBT that can tend to get overwhelming, Metcalf says it is relatively easy to apply the technique into your own office. Here are some of the approaches used in SFBT and how they might be applied to counseling adolescents about their future post-secondary plans:

1 Focus on positive change
SFBT directs attention to how students will change to solve a problem. They need to explore what resources are available to them, what decisions have to be made, what their potential timetable is and what different options they have. Career and college counseling seems to be a natural fit for this type of thinking. Instead of focusing your time reviewing grades, going over problematic study habits or developing transcripts with your student, consider future interests and goals and discuss those topics with your student. Encourage him or her to find ways to accomplish those goals using available resources and strategies that have worked.

2 Focus on resources
Again, rather than thinking about problems and limitations, give more attention to the resources and strengths a student has. A counselor can examine past successes, strengths and skills that a student has shown and use that to tackle a current issue. In addition to the strengths of a particular student, look at other examples of students that have been successful. How can the actions of those students help in your current situation?

3 Note exceptions
Ask a student, “when this problem wasn’t happening, what was going on?” Once he or she answers this question, the student can learn from what he or she has done correctly in the past to create success.

4 Make the student the expert
The student should guide the process, not the counselor. While you can provide information and guidance, avoid giving definitive answers and direction. Especially with young people in the midst of this difficult choice process, they may want — but not necessarily benefit from — someone else’s solutions. Counselors should take on what has been described as a “travel agent” role; helping the student find his or her own answers.

5 Promote change and identify roadblocks
If they know change is possible, young people are more motivated to work on that goal. Conversely, if achievement isn’t necessarily in sight, a counselor can promote change by helping students examine and resolve potential roadblocks. Help the student seek out some of those challenges and be a guide to help him or her brainstorm solutions.

6 Be constructivist
No past problems or tendencies should define the future. There is no “hidden truth” that guides the process, but instead the student and counselor should work together to build a new reality and a plan that can change and grow.

7 Compliment and normalize
Noting progress of students who are exploring educational and employment plans helps them see how things are working. A scaling question and answer session helps show areas that need attention and growth. Try this by asking, for example, “on a 1-10 scale, how comfortable are you with this particular major, and how does that compare to how you felt previously?”

At the end of the day, make sure your process is goal-oriented, pragmatic and flexible. The college and career choice process is about your student’s future, based on practical, well-informed choices. A student may discover that a long-held belief about a career or college or educational plan is not what they thought. Through this process, you’ll help them discover what their true ideals are and the solutions they can go about to accomplish them.

Jim Paterson is a nationally-published writer and editor and most recently a counselor at Argyle Middle School in Silver Spring, Md.



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How to use the labor market to counsel students

A quick guide to understanding employment trends and salaries for any occupation

By Lee Koslow

What kind of job can a communications degree get me? Is healthcare really a hot field? What do STEM careers pay? These are some of the questions you might get from career-confused students. As a counselor, you can learn to use labor market information to answer questions like these, but where do you find the information?

Where to find labor market information

As a workforce development professional, I have found that the best all-around website for labor market information is [ONetOnline.org](https://www.onetonline.org). First, enter some key words for the job title in the Occupation Quick Search box in the upper right-hand corner of the page to get a list of results. Then, by clicking on the best match, you can view a summary report with a lot of useful information.

The Wages & Employment section gives national job openings and average salary numbers. You can select your state for information specific to where you live. If you want employment numbers for your local area, try entering your state and occupational projections into a search engine.

How to read the information

Here is a typical table with labor

|  Decoding labor market information | | | |
|---|-----------------------------------|----------------|-------------------------|
| SOC code | Title | Percent Change | Annual average openings |
| 15-1121 | Computer systems analysts | 14.3 | 90 |
| 15-1131 | Computer programmers | 11.1 | 60 |
| 15-1132 | Software developers, applications | 21.1 | 60 |

occupations (*above*).

When looking at employment data, you are really only looking at two numbers: percent change and average annual openings.

Percent Change. Ideally, you want this number to be positive. Double-digits indicate really strong growth.

Average Annual Openings. Many articles on hot careers hype high-growth occupations but ignore the actual number of jobs. In the healthcare field, let's look at the example of orthodontists, an occupation that boasts 16.3 percent national growth from 2012–2022. However, the projections call for only 300 annual job

openings during that time period. Contrast that with registered nurses, which are projected to have over 105,000 job openings each year. You may conclude that pursuing a career as an orthodontist gives you far fewer options than nursing.

So what is an acceptable number of annual job openings? That depends on several factors, including the size of the area that you are considering. As in the table above, 60–90 openings is pretty good for the average metropolitan area but not very good for a large state.

A few more tips

Salary information is often included with (or near) employ-

DEVELOPMENT

The “Miracle question”

ment numbers. When reviewing salaries with your students, there are two important things that they need to know. First, median wages are a lot higher than entry-level wages. For example, the median salary for electrical engineers is \$87,900 per year. But a new graduate from an electrical engineering program can expect to start well below the 25th percentile, which is \$69,700.

Second, salaries differ from one city to another. The average electrical engineer in Silicon Valley, Calif. earns \$113,700 per year. However, the median salary for the same job in Durham, N.C. is less; about \$70,700.

Finally, if you want to advise a student on the types of jobs that he or she can get by pursuing a certain major, visit ONetOnline.org/Help/Online/Crosswalk for a tutorial on a college major to job title.

Need more help sorting through the information? Try connecting with a counselor at your local One-Stop Career or American Job Center (ServiceLocator.org).

Are your students struggling to find their ideal colleges?

Their parents may encourage them to attend their alma maters, which is great if it's fitting. Friends from high school may initiate a pact where they want to stay together by attending the same college.

But remember, this is one of the biggest decisions that your students will make in life. Have them consider the good decisions that they have made in the past and encourage them to use that technique when it comes to their college decision. While working with your students, ask them these questions and follow this script to help them sort out their priorities.

tell you that you were in a good place for the next four years? Would you be on a small campus with 3,000 students, a state university with 50,000 or something in between with 10,000?

► **What's offered?**

What would you be doing while you were there learning? Would you be engaged in fraternities or sororities, extracurricular activities, study abroad trips?

► **Who's there?**

Would there be certain professors with certain specialties? Would your relatives be close by? Would your high school friends be in the same school? Would you be with a diverse population or a specific, religious group.

► **What is the scene?**

What else would be going on that would tell you that this was the best college for you? Would it be a friendly campus where the professors knew your name or a larger campus in a big city where there is culture to experience?

► **What's the cost?**

Would the college you attend be offering you a scholarship and or an opportunity to do work study to help pay the bills?



The Miracle Question:

Suppose tonight while you sleep, a miracle happens. You wake up tomorrow and you are attending the college of your dreams. It is exactly what you had hoped for and you feel successful at what you are doing.

► **What is the locale?**

Thinking about that day, where would you be? What part of the country, city or kind of a community would

— Jim Paterson



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Top resources for counselors

Reviewing the latest and greatest apps and resources you can use in your office

By Michelle Rabinowitz

New technology has made connecting with your students easier than ever. But, with so many choices, it can be difficult to figure out which opportunities to take advantage of — and which ones you should pass on. Use this guide to start building your resource collection!

SOCIAL MEDIA APPS



Facebook

A lot of parents are on Facebook, so try to get them, along with students, to like a page you set up.

Ways to use Facebook best for sharing counseling advice:

- ▶ Take pictures around school or of students with their college acceptances or special summer program acceptance letters. Parents and grandparents will share your status of their student to brag about them, which is positive publicity for your department.
- ▶ Friend your local college admission counselors or like their admissions pages, and easily share photos and info from their college sites.



Twitter

This is better than Facebook as far as our students are concerned. Before you set up your profile, consider that

most counselor pages will post a policy in their page descriptions that they will not follow students back. Be sure to check with your district about policies regarding social media.

Ways to use Twitter best:

- ▶ Retweet financial aid tips from FAFSA.ed.gov and college sites as well as various scholarship announcements.
- ▶ Consider a weekly game like Trivia Tuesdays and give out a prize to the first person to come by the office with the right answer.



Hootsuite

This platform allows you to post to your Facebook and Twitter at the same time and in advance, making it easy to plan a whole week at a time. This will save you time posting if you use both.

The one drawback is it's difficult to post pictures and you can't tag people in Twitter like Facebook.



Remind

This is a great app to send out info to your students in

groups. You can either text to a device or use the email function. It comes from a Remind 101 number and not from your cell phone so it protects your privacy.

Bonus: You can create multiple groups through your user name; for example, create one for seniors, one for parents, and one for each of the clubs you advise.

Ways to use Remind 101:

At orientation nights, such as Senior Night, have Remind 101 printouts as part of your packet and do a drawing 10 minutes after your intro as an incentive to get the group to activate it right then. Keep extra copies on hand in the office for students who couldn't make the event.

PERSONAL/SOCIAL APPS



Calm Counter

Good to remember for students who need a visual to focus on when they need a moment to cool down.



IZen Garden

Students can drag their fingers through the “sand” like a rake, which could be calming to some of your more agitated students.



Conversation Starter

A great way to come up with group ice breakers.

ACADEMIC APPS



ACT Photo

This app makes it easy for your students to take their required picture for their ACT admission ticket.



Scholarships.com app

Utilize this app from the biggest scholarship site, but be aware — it will flood your inbox with updates. I tell students to create a separate email just for scholarship searches.



Official SAT Question of the Day

This app was developed by the College Admissions Examination Board (the makers of the SAT) and allows students to answer a new practice SAT question every day.



Scholly

Costs a dollar, but it help students to narrow down the stream of scholarships they get when they register for other free services. Plus, it was designed by a counselor!

Michelle Rabinowitz is in her seventh year as a high school guidance counselor in Missouri.



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Parental advisory

10 ways to get parents to encourage student success

By Tim Lybarger

Counselors are often contacted by parents looking for advice on what they can do to help their students be more academically successful. While parenting styles certainly differ among the many families we serve, here are 10 ideas for you to give parents to consider that could relieve stress from their student's school experience and help to encourage overall success.



A PARENT'S GUIDE

Set expectations early

As each new term gets underway, spend time with your student setting realistic goals and expectations for the coming weeks. Once these expectations are clearly established, stick to them and do not back down. Celebrate when goals are reached and be supportive while holding your student accountable when they are not. There is nothing wrong with a reward and consequence system for motivating a teenager.

Talk to him or her

Open communication with your student is vital to nurturing success. While the teenager in your house may not be as open with you as you would like, the reality is that your student depends on your support in both good times and bad. Be sure that you are available when you are needed.

Get to know people in your student's life

Inside of school and out, be aware of who your student is around on a daily basis — teachers, counselors, principals, coaches, friends, parents of friends. Do not hesitate to communicate with these people when you have questions or concerns. To be a supportive parent, it is always better to know too much than to not know enough.

Don't let your student get overwhelmed

High school can be a stressful experience for teenagers who want to be involved in extracurricular activities or work a part-time job. While working to earn money is respectable and extracurricular involvement is a key component to an enjoyable school experience, please help your student set logical and reasonable priorities. Unless it is an absolute necessity, do not let your student's job or extracurricular participation take priority over academic success. When a student works 30 hours each week at a part-time job, finding the time to focus on school work is nearly impossible.

Prioritize

At times, scheduling conflicts can be unavoidable — but as much as possible, schedule appointments for your student outside of the school day. If an appointment is necessary during the day, try to schedule it during a time when your student will miss the least amount of class time. What is most convenient for your schedule could have a significantly negative impact on the continuity of what is taking place in the classroom.

Deal with problems before they get out of hand

Hopefully your student's school experience is a smooth one; however, concerns and problems are not uncommon. Rather than wait until it is too late, contact your student's teachers as soon as you have any sort of question or concern. Waiting until the final days of a term and asking what can be done to save your student's grades is undoubtedly too little too late. If your student's school offers an online grade book, check it often. With this technology at your fingertips, there is no excuse for being in the dark when it comes to your student's academic progress.

Homework is important — really

Homework completion can have a significant impact on an overall course grade while daily assignments help build the skills needed to do well on quizzes, exams, and other assessments. A student's poor performance in a class can frequently be traced back to missing and incomplete homework. Again, make use of online access to teacher grade books and calendars to hold your student accountable for academic responsibilities.

Set a good example

In your own daily life, model the kind of behavior that you expect from your student. The fruit does not fall far from the tree, right? Are you holding yourself to the same standards you expect from your student? If you complain about your job and look for ways to avoid responsibility, the student you are raising is more likely to follow your lead.

Remember your own school days

Ralph Waldo Emerson once said, "The years teach much which the days never knew." If you knew then what you know now, would you have done things

differently? Problem is, you didn't know it then, and neither does your student. You were young once too. Don't forget what that was like.

Compliment and praise

Who doesn't like to receive a heartfelt compliment once in a while? If your student does something positive — no matter how big or small — be proud and openly express your pride to your student. Recognizing good behavior can be a very powerful motivator for the behavior to continue.

Tim Lybarger has been a school counselor since 2001 serving the students of Mahomet-Seymour High School (Mahomet, IL) since 2003. Lybarger can be contacted at TL@mshscounselors.com



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Advocating health promotion programs

Healthy living is more than just “an apple a day keeps the doctor away”

By Alyvia Burkey



The World Health Organization (WHO) defines health promotion as “the process of enabling people to increase control over, and to improve, their health. It moves beyond a focus on individual behavior toward a wide range of social and environmental interventions.”

The field of health promotion and wellness is growing in terms of careers and media attention. Health care providers and insurance companies are placing more emphasis on disease prevention. Organic and locally grown foods are marketed and sold at an increasing number of grocery stores. The United States government supports the First Lady in her cause to end childhood obesity with its successful Let’s Move! campaign.

For high school students who are passionate about health and wellness, health promotion degree programs offer a holistic course of study alternatives to traditional pre-med and health science programs.

Q&A WITH A HEALTH PROMOTION PIONEER

As a prospective health promotion student, I fervently wanted to change things that negatively impacted health. I liked how eating healthy foods and exercising made me feel; I also had an intrinsic desire to help others be their best selves. When I stumbled upon the health promotion program at American University, I realized that I could make a career out of my passion.

The School of Education, Teaching and Health (SETH) at American University in Washington, D.C., was on the cutting edge in creating an academic program which prepares students for careers promoting health in a variety of settings. The program began with a graduate degree offered in health fitness management in 1980; an undergraduate degree in health promotion followed in 1997. Dr. Stacey Snelling, Associate Dean of the SETH; as well as my former mentor, professor and boss, was kind enough to share her thoughts on this healthy course of study.

Q: What motivates students to pursue a degree in health promotion?

- ▶ Passion for health
- ▶ Commitment to work with people
- ▶ Desire to improve health disparities
- ▶ Interest in community work

Q: What could a high school student do to learn more about the field?

Participate in community events that promote health, such as “fun runs/walks,” food drives, health fairs; volunteer at food banks, health clinics, and non-profit associations.

Q: Which advanced placement courses might be beneficial for students who are interested in pursuing a degree in health promotion?

Biology, anatomy and physiology, sociology, home economics; good writing and speaking skills would also be helpful.

Q: What are some examples of job placements upon graduation?

- ▶ Worksite Health
- ▶ Community Health
- ▶ Departments of Health
- ▶ Nonprofit associations that promote health issues

Q: What percentage of undergraduates go on to pursue graduate degrees? What types of graduate degrees do they pursue?

In our sample, 54 percent go on to pursue graduate degrees in allied health (nursing, physical therapy, physician assistant) or Masters of Public Health (MPH) or Health Promotion.

Q: To your knowledge, is the number of degree programs in the field increasing or decreasing?

Currently there are about 300 health promotion programs nationwide. Also, many other degree programs such as public health, sociology and biology are incorporating health promotion related coursework.

Q: In your opinion, is there an increased focus on preventative health care by both our government and healthcare system?

Currently, we have a restorative health care system. However, the Affordable Care Act is attempting to increase access to healthcare and make health promotion and disease prevention a priority. The latter issue speaks volumes for our industry; as health promotion leaders, we know physicians and allied health professionals are criti-

cal pieces to improving public health, especially for those who have chronic conditions. The government is investing in preventative healthcare services, both in specific communities and healthcare system-wide.

Q: What are the hot topics in the field of health promotion and wellness currently?

- ▶ Nutrition
- ▶ Childhood obesity
- ▶ Global health
- ▶ Access to healthy options, both food and physical activity
- ▶ Social determinants of health (access to healthcare, good education, social and community support, financial stability and its connection to achieving a healthy lifestyle)

Q: As a Registered Dietician, your career could've taken many different paths; what influenced your decision to become a university professor?

The desire to inspire young people to become knowledgeable health promotion professionals so that they can change the health of our society. The health of a nation is the foundation for a prosperous nation.

Alyvia Burkey is a Certified Health Education Specialist (CHES) who holds a MS in Health Promotion Management from American University.



NextStepAcademy.com offers students a look at the field of healthcare before they commit to their major.

Healthy living resources



AU's Health Promotion Program

Contact Dr. Anastasia Snelling at (202) 885-6278.

Info for your hungry students

▶ Forks over Knives (forksoverknives.com)
An independent and inspirational film promoting the benefits of a plant-based diet.

▶ "Sugar Salt Fat: How the Food Giants Hooked Us" by Michael Moss
Pulitzer prize-winning NY Times reporter details the history of the processed food industry and its success in creating a public addiction to unhealthy food.

▶ Michael Pollan.com (michaelpollan.com)
Author, journalist, activist, professor and one of the greatest authorities on the food industry.

▶ Well, by Tara Parker-Pope on Health (well.blogs.nytimes.com)
Tara Parker-Pope reports on medical science, nutrition, fitness and family health.



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Building teen confidence

How to help teens understand themselves and others

By Karyn Gordon

Stephanie is a beautiful 14-year-old girl who does well in school and has dozens of friends, yet she is secretly struggling with an eating disorder and has thought about committing suicide.

Luke is in his first year of college. He's popular and well-liked, but he can frequently be heard criticizing his girlfriend's appearance and using negative comments to control her.

Fifteen-year-old Stephen's parents often complain that he is rude and insensitive and always seems angry, but underneath his corrosive communication style are feelings of abandonment and frustration with life.

These three teens are real people, and they are struggling with the same issues that almost all teens face in their everyday lives. And

just like most teens, the source of their problems can be linked to unhealthy self-esteem.

Over the last five years, I have counseled hundreds of teens and their families and I have presented to numerous parent and teacher groups. Through all of this, I have become increasingly convinced that one of the single most empowering tools we can provide to the youth of today is a greater knowledge of themselves and an understanding of how to develop a healthy self-image.

Internal confidence

When I talk about self-esteem in high schools, I encounter a lot of confusion because it is a concept that many youths associate with their external confidence. Rather, I like to describe it as an inner attitude; something in oneself that every individual controls for himself or herself that will in turn determine how we feel about ourselves and how we act toward others.

Avoiding "false" self-esteem

I differentiate healthy self-esteem from not only low self-esteem but also the equally unhealthy false self-esteem. Common issues include the inability to choose stable relationship partners, struggling as a perfectionist or with feelings of intense jealousy,

the inability to make decisions or having difficulty saying 'no,' difficulty controlling anger and the inability to set and achieve realistic goals. All of our decisions in life are affected by the manner in which we view ourselves, but the good news is that change is always possible.

Conquering poor self-esteem

The most important first step to conquering any self-esteem problem is to take responsibility for our actions and stop blaming others for what we may perceive as unfair treatment. As humans, we have the unique ability to choose how we respond to different stimuli, and this is the one factor that we can control in any situation, regardless of the circumstances. The sooner we recognize how we are contributing to any problem, the sooner we can take steps to correct our mistakes and begin the healing process.

There are many ways to build our self-esteem, and it may take some time, but it is always worth it!

Karyn Gordon has spoken to more than 150,000 youth in high schools across North America and is author of "Dr. Karyn's Guide to the Teen Years." Visit dkleadership.org.





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Embracing change

How Marsha Lenzi, a counselor at Webster Schroeder High School in Webster, N.Y., focuses on what's important in her job despite new challenges

By Laura Sestito



It's clear when walking into Marsha Lenzi's office at Webster Schroeder High School in Webster, N.Y. that she has made an impact on her students. All over her office are pictures, quotes and notes from current and former students, all of whom believe Lenzi made a difference in their lives.

"I had a young man who came out to me for the first time [back in high school]," Lenzi reminisces, "and he just wrote me the other day saying, 'remember when you printed out that [inspirational quote] for me, that you've had the power within all along?' He goes, 'I keep that in my phone with me all the time.' And that just meant the world to me."

Naturally, as she's telling me this story, one of her current students sends her a text message on her personal cell phone, though she insists, "I'm pretty selective about who I give my cell phone number to. But the half a dozen or so I have in there write me all the time."



Photo provided by Sarah Reale

Above: Lenzi and student Sarah Reale who, along with counselor Martha Henry, nominated Lenzi to be featured.

As a 28-year veteran in the school counseling field, Lenzi has seen her fair share of challenges and changes, both with her students and in the profession in general.

Some of the biggest changes she's had to accommodate for involve the changing technology, but she insists that those changes have mostly been for the better.

Going digital

"There's lots of digital organization and each time it introduced itself I thought, 'I am never going to learn this!'" Lenzi remarks, "But I did." In fact, instead of resisting new technology like she might have done in the past, Lenzi feels excitement about all the new opportunities it can bring. "You don't even need a file cabinet anymore," she says, "all the data on kids...it's all right there [in Naviance]."

However, even with the benefits that new technology can bring, Lenzi admits that there is a downside to having a world of information at your fingertips. "In some ways it looks like it's gotten to be an easier, smoother job but [at the same time] the demands have increased. It gets very complicated." While counselors used

to be mainly just responsible for scheduling, that aspect is “just the tip of the iceberg.”

Challenges in and out of the office

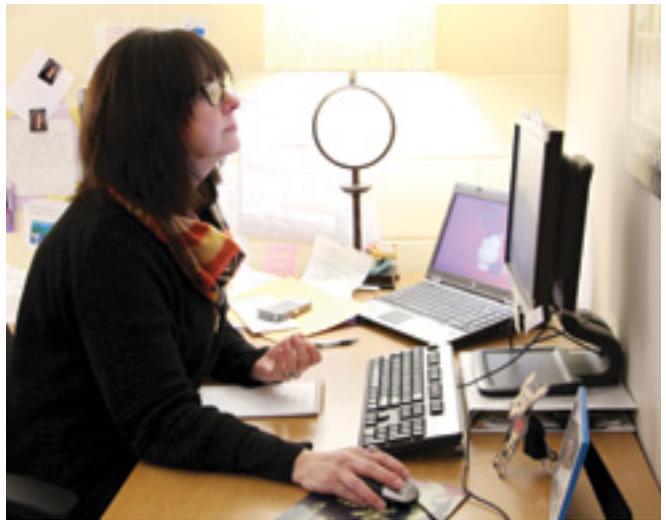
While learning everything from college planning to dealing with emotional issues is challenge enough, Lenzi also describes how counselors are often faced with other confrontations. “A high percentage of parents who walk in or call are angry at someone or something,” she insists, “So it can be a challenge to constantly diffuse that anger and not take it personally.”

Her solution to dealing with confrontations such as these is simple: “I always believe them, no matter what they tell me.” She relates their outbursts to a checklist; these parents just have to tell someone that they are feeling and know that someone understood them. That way, they can feel better about the situation they are dealing with and then go about their day. “No one means to be mean or say what they did,” Lenzi stresses, “they just had to tell someone.”

Knowing what needs to be done

Despite those challenges, Lenzi is hesitant to complain. “Historically, it feels like the rest of the education community sees counselors as complainers, but my perception is just that no one gets it,” she explains, “And I’m not on a mission anymore to get people to understand what this job is... no one understands the depth of this job and the diversity of the amount of stuff we need to know.”

Lenzi remarks that she feels for new people in the profession;
Continued on pg 64...



Lenzi’s tips to running a successful social media page

If you haven’t started your own social media page, whether it be on Facebook, Twitter or any other of the number of outlets available today, Lenzi would ask: “what are you waiting for?”

Whether you’re just starting out with a brand new social media profile or you’ve been running it for a while but are feeling stuck, here are some of Lenzi’s tips to running successful social media campaigns — without taking up too much of your time.

Send emails to their phones

Gotta get the message out? Stay connected on their phones through email or texting.

Show off what you do

Let parents and students see that “oh gosh, [we] do know what we’re doing!” Lenzi explains.

Include as many students as you can

“One of the Facebook posts that had the most views was when the seniors got in a big circle and they did ‘Sweet Caroline,’” says Lenzi, “I went around through the whole circle of everyone so every single kid got to be in that.”

Highlight helpful events

Lenzi explains that she does several counselor-sponsored nights where kids can hang out and have fun doing things like karaoke or volleyball in the cafeteria.

there's so much to learn, but at the same time, "you don't have to ask for permission on everything." She describes, "When I first started, I used to go in and ask the principal everything. And then I think of myself now and how autonomous I am...[I just work] for the best interest in the student, knowing my principal supports me."

"You don't have to ask permission on everything."

Getting the word out

As the administrator on Webster Schroeder's School Counselors Facebook page, Lenzi has used this social media tool as an outlet to open up communication among students, parents and other teachers. "The ultimate goal [of running the Facebook page] is communication, just keeping the lines open," she insists, "It puts the counselors in a really positive light [because] it shows people what we do."

However, getting students to visit a Facebook page can be difficult in a time where engagement is low. But, according to Lenzi, "Students love to see their pictures on Facebook — that's the only way they'll go to the page!"

In addition to tagging students online, Lenzi also uses their Facebook page to get the word out about events that are coming up and encouraging students — and their parents — to attend. "The excuse years ago used to be 'I didn't know [about that event], nobody is communicating with me' but the communication is all over the place [now]," says Lenzi, "So for parents to say 'oh well I

didn't know about that' it's like, really? How did you not know?"

Remembering what's important

At the end of the day, Lenzi always remembers that her job is first and foremost to be there for her kids. "We've been fighting this [negative] image for so many years...are we guidance counselors, are we school counselors, do we do counseling or what do we really do?" she laments.

But, with the rise of social media and the ability to communicate more with students and parents, Lenzi has found that it's easier to show people how seriously she takes her job and all the positive things she and her fellow counselors do for their students. "[Social media] lets you say, we do lots of stuff, and here's what we do and here's how we're there for your kids."

Lenzi also finds strength from her co-workers when times get tough. "I would never ever have been on this job as long I have without my colleagues," she stresses, "They keep me sane because, like I said, I don't think people understand this job and they just get it."

But for Lenzi, what it really all comes down to are the experiences that she's had with her students and knowing that she's made an impact on their lives. "Experiences I am going to take with me when I retire honestly are the kids that came back and whose lives I've touched," she explains, "[those experiences] are very special to me, it...brings me to tears."

Laura Sestito is the editor of LINK Magazine.

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Do you know a counselor or who goes above and beyond in his or her school or community? Nominate that person to be a part of *LINK Magazine's* Featured Counselor section!

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Featured counselors

These super counselors from across the country take pride in their jobs and make a difference in their schools and in the lives of their students

By Laura Sestito

JUDY GROOD



Position: School counselor

School: Leuzinger High School

City: Lawndale, Calif.



Nominator:

Claudia Gonzalez, colleague

Figuring out how to help your students prepare for college is no easy task. Not only do you have to help them find their best college fit, you then have to walk them through the essay, show them how to search for scholarships and help prepare them to become successful, college-ready students.

Judy Grood, a counselor at Leuzinger High School in Lawndale, Calif., knows the importance of the college planning process.

That's why she gives her students one-on-one attention throughout the school year to ensure that they are on track with every stage of the process.

"She goes above and beyond to ensure that her students get all of the information they need pertaining to scholarships, resources within their community and college planning," explains fellow counselor Claudia Gonzalez.

"Students are constantly lining up outside her door to ask for help with scholarships, the college application process and financial aid."

Utilizing resources is something that Grood has become known for, and she insists on meeting with both juniors and seniors to discuss their scholarship opportunities through the variety of resources she has accumulated over the years. "She is very in tune with her students and works with each student on a four-year plan to help him or her stay on track," comments Gonzalez. "She is intelligent, detail-oriented and experienced in working with a diverse group of students in a variety of academic settings."

Grood also realizes that college planning exists outside of her of-

fice and she plays a key role in organizing college and career nights for students and parents. "Grood is a counselor who does not hesitate to go above and beyond for her students and for the school community," Gonzalez insists. "[These college nights] provide parents with college requirement information and resources to help their students."

Grood has also found a role as a leader in her school and community and has transitioned smoothly from her role as the School-to-Career Coordinator/Facilitator to becoming a school counselor — a role she's had for the last 20 years. "Grood's leadership abilities are evident in the many roles she takes on as a counselor," Gonzalez explains, "They are an asset to how she deals with students, parents, teachers and administration.

At the end of the day, it is Grood's attitude that really sets her apart. "She is an empathetic, enthusiastic and respectful counselor," insists Gonzalez, "She... provides a safe space for students to get help for personal matters or educational planning." Grood is an asset to her school and her community and we commend her efforts to help her students

on their journey to college — and beyond.

PATRICK O'CONNOR



Position: Dean of College Counseling
School: Cranbrook Kingswood Upper School
City: Bloomfield Hills, Mich.
Nominator: Bob Bardwell, colleague

Many counselors gain experience through their years in the profession, but not every counselor shares that knowledge with the world. Patrick O'Connor, Associate Dean of College Counseling at Cranbrook Kingswood Upper School in Bloomfield Hills, Mich., is one of the few counselors who puts his experiences into words.

“College is Yours 2.0: Preparing, Applying and Paying for Colleges Perfect For You” is the go-to guide that he penned to help others learn from the know-how he’s accumulated over the years. “This book has helped countless students navigate the often confusing college admissions process,” explains O’Connor’s colleague, Bob Bardwell.

In addition to his book, O’Connor is also a contributor to the Huffington Post, writing about anything from college planning advice to opinion pieces about educational legislation and ideas he has about making the landscape better for school counselors across the nation.

O’Connor is also an advocate for the field of education and specifically the role that school counselors play in it. He recently has become a vocal supporter of a legislative bill that would mandate more school counselors and require adequate training in college admissions counselors. “While this bill would take effect in Michigan, it would serve as a model for other states to adopt as well,” insists Bardwell.

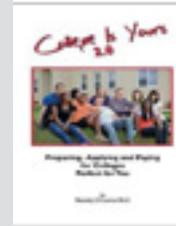
Supporting counselors is not just something that O’Connor does on a large scale; he also pays attention to the counselors in his own school and the needs that they require. “He donated funding to support a colleague who wanted to attend the 2015 NACAC conference in San Diego,” describes Bardwell. “This speaks to the endless dedication [he has] for counselors and students.”

In addition to supporting his fellow counselors, O’Connor also has a strong dedication to the students that he serves. “He cares deeply about the students with whom he works,” explains Bardwell. “He builds deep connections with his students who are well served by him.”

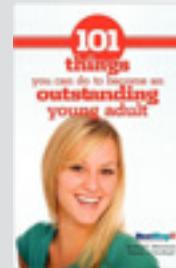
O’Connor knows that even when the job gets difficult that it’s important to keep a positive spin

COOL RESOURCES

An effective counselor is one who uses his or her resources. Check out these books to help you and your students with college planning — and beyond.



College Is Yours 2.0
 By Patrick O’Connor
 Available at Amazon



101 things you can do to become an outstanding young adult
 By David Mammano
 Available at bn.com and Amazon.

on things. Bardwell explains that he most often does so through laughter. “He is able to infuse humor in his work like no one else I know,” he describes.

Describing O’Connor’s dedication to his job comes easily for Bardwell who explains that he is “articulate, intelligent and sharp.” But, the word that sums him up most completely, according to Bardwell? “He’s a gem.”



Visit NextStepU.com/FeaturedCounselor to nominate a deserving counselor you think should be featured in the next issue.

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Website: www.richmond.ac.uk

Year Founded: 1972

Type of Institution: 4-year private comprehensive

Student-Faculty Ratio: 10:1

Institutional Designation: Private, Not-For-Profit

Tuition Costs: \$32,000

Room & Board: \$13,740

Average Scholarship/Grant Aid Awarded: \$12,480

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THE OCEAN CORPORATION

Location: Houston, Texas

Website: www.oceancorp.com

Year Founded: 1969

Type of Institution: Vocational/Technical Trade School

Student-Faculty Ratio: 30:1

Institutional Designation: Single Campus/Full Academic Year/Proprietary

Tuition Costs: \$20,000

Room & Board: No on-campus housing and no meal plans available

Average Student Aid Package: \$15,541

Average Percentage of Financial Need Met: 77.71%

Average Scholarship/Grant Aid Awarded: \$4,682

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See ad on page 44

THE ART INSTITUTES

Location: The Art Institutes is a system of over 50 schools throughout North America. There may be one near you.

Website: www.artinstitutes.edu

Year Founded: 1970

Type of institution: Master's, bachelor's, associate's degrees, as well as certificate and diploma programs.

Student-Faculty Ratio: Varies per location.

Institutional Designation: Private/For-Profit

Tuition Costs/Room and Board: Actual tuition and housing costs will vary depending on program, number of credits enrolled, and living arrangements. Contact school of interest for details.

Financial aid: Financial aid is available for those who qualify. Students who require financial assistance must complete the FAFSA and meet with a financial aid officer. Students may also apply for a number of scholarships focusing on their specific areas of career interest.

Average Scholarship/Grant Aid Awarded: Please visit <http://new.artinstitutes.edu/scholarships> for scholarship/grant opportunity information.

Average Work-Study Aid Awarded: Varies per location.

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See ad on back cover

Profiles — Northeast

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Website: www.alfredstate.edu

Type of Institution: Two and Four-year Institution

Institutional Designation: Public, Co-educational

Tuition Costs: \$6,170 In-state; \$9,740 Non-

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See ad on page 36

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Location: Buffalo, N.Y.

Website: www.dyc.edu

Year Founded: 1908

Type of institution: D'Youville is an independent, urban, coeducational institution. It provides health-care, business education, liberal arts and professional programs

Student-Faculty Ratio: 12:1

Tuition Costs: \$23,092 annual

Room and Board: \$10,800

Average Student Aid Package: \$20,124

Average Percentage of Financial Need Met: 82%

Average Scholarship/Grant Aid Awarded: \$8,801

Average Work Study Aid Awarded: \$1,500

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Telephone: 800-777-3921

Email: admissions@dyc.edu

See ad on page 32

FINGER LAKES COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Location: Canandaigua, N.Y.

Website: www.flcc.edu

Year Founded: Established in 1965, opened in 1967

Type of Institution: Community College

Student-Faculty Ratio: 20:1

Institutional Designation: State University of New York

Tuition Costs: \$4,022 per year for New York State residents

Room & Board: Suites at Laker Landing (near campus housing) range from \$7,106 to \$8,450

Financial Aid Info: More than 75 percent of Finger Lakes students received financial aid last year, totaling more than \$16 million.

Average Scholarship/Grant Aid Awarded: \$4,481

The campus includes science and computer laboratories, a simulated hospital nursing station, recording studios, music rehearsal halls, a greenhouse, television studio, gymnasium, and fitness center. FLCC's Student Center includes an auditorium, cafeteria, bookstore, space for student activities and the College's Student Life offices. The One Stop Center centralizes Admissions, Financial Aid, Student Records, Student Accounts and Educational Planning and Career Services into a centralized location to address all of their enrollment needs.

Telephone: 585-394-3500

Email: admissions@flcc.edu

See ad on page 31

DEAN COLLEGE

Location: Franklin, Mass.

Website: www.dean.edu

Year Founded: 1865

Type of Institution: Private, not-for-profit

Student-Faculty Ratio: 16:1

Institutional Designation: Associate and Bachelor's Degrees

Tuition Costs: \$34,390

Room & Board: \$14,760

Average Student Aid Packages: \$26,500

Average Scholarship/Grant Aid Awarded: \$17,000

Average Percentage of Financial Need Met: 73%

Average Work-Study Aid Awarded: \$1,500

Dean College, a small residential college in Franklin, MA offers a community that cares. We will help you develop a personalized pathway to success with our faculty and staff who are dedicated to keeping you on track to meet your goals. At Dean College you are not a number, you are an individual who will receive unmatched personal and academic support. That is the Dean Difference!

Telephone: 508-541-1508

Email: admissions@dean.edu

See ad on page 53

FIVE TOWNS COLLEGE

Location: Dix Hills, N.Y.

Website: www.ftc.edu

Year Founded: 1972

Type of institution: 4-year college with graduate studies

Student-Faculty Ratio: 14:1

Tuition Costs: \$21,000/year

Room and Board: \$13,000/year

Average Student Aid Package: \$26,712

Average Percentage of Financial Need Met: 88%

Average Work-Study Aid Awarded: \$936

Located in Long Island only 35 miles from New York City, Five Towns College has been preparing students for work in all phases of the entertainment industry since 1972. The college provides state-of-the-art equipment and studios along with industry internships in order to prepare students for the real world. Our most popular degree programs include Music, Music Business, Audio Recording Technology, Theatre Arts, Filmmaking, Mass Communication, Music Teacher and Childhood Education and more! Learn more at www.ftc.edu.

Telephone: 631-656-2110

Email: admissions@ftc.edu

See ad on page 36

GANNON UNIVERSITY

Location: Erie, Pa.

Website: www.gannon.edu

Type of Institution: University

Institutional Designation: Private — Religious

Tuition Costs: \$24,980

Room & Board: \$10,230

Average Student Aid Package: \$20,989

Average Scholarship/Grant Aid Awarded: \$17,030

Average Work-Study Aid Awarded: 81%

Average Work-Study Aid Awarded: \$2,300

Gannon University in downtown Erie, Pennsylvania, is a caring community of dynamic faculty and staff who educate motivated students in an environment inspired by Catholic values. Enrollment at Gannon exceeds 4,000 students, and personal attention for each student is provided with a student-to-faculty ratio of 14:1. U.S. News & World Report's "America's Best Colleges" continues to cite Gannon as a top-tier university in the northern region of the United States. Additionally, Gannon has been ranked in the annual guide's Great Schools, Great Prices category, which affirms Gannon's mission of providing a quality education at an affordable price.

See ad on page 13

HOFSTRA UNIVERSITY

Location: Hempstead, N.Y.

Website: www.hofstra.edu

Year Founded: 1935

Type of Institution: University

Student-Faculty Ratio: 14:1

Institutional Designation: Private, Non-profit

Tuition Costs: \$38,900

Room & Board: \$15,310

Average Student Aid Package: \$23,210

Average Percentage of Financial Need Met: 60%

Average Scholarship/Grant Aid Awarded: \$14,557

Average Work-Study Aid Awarded: \$3,500

Hofstra University offers students the complete college experience — a vibrant, active campus with hundreds of cultural and social events annually, small classes with experienced faculty, access to state-of-the-art technology and facilities — all less than an hour away from downtown New York.

Telephone: 800-463-7872

See ad on page 28

HAMPTON UNIVERSITY

Location: Hampton, Va.

Website: www.hamptonu.edu

Year Founded: 1868

Type of Institution: Private

Student-Faculty Ratio: 10:1

Institutional Designation: Hampton University, coeducational

Tuition Costs: \$21,760 (2014-15)

Room & Board: \$9,692 (2014-15)

Average Student Aid Package: \$5,632

Average Percentage of Financial Need Met: 34.7%

Average Scholarship/Grant Aid Awarded: \$5,050

At Hampton University "Inspiration to Impact" are more than words. We offer a rich academic environment that cultivates leaders. Through global scientific collaborations and modern research projects, our professors and students are asking questions and finding answers. We offer our students innovative courses that lead to 48 bachelor's; 24 master's programs; and doctoral or professional degrees in nursing, physics, atmospheric/planetary sciences, business leadership and administration, educational leadership and management, physical therapy, and pharmacy.

Telephone: 757-727-5000

Email: admissioncounselor@hamptonu.edu

See ad on page 27

MERCYHURST UNIVERSITY

Location: Erie, Pa.

Website: www.mercyhurst.edu

Year Founded: 1926

Type of Institution: Four-year, Catholic, liberal arts

Student-Faculty Ratio: 14:1

Tuition Costs: \$28,400 per year

Room and Board: \$10,400 - \$11,936 (depending on residence hall)

Average Student Aid Package: \$17,000

Average Percentage of Financial Need Met: More than 90% of students receive financial aid

Mercyhurst University, founded in 1926 by the Sisters of Mercy, is a fully accredited, four-year, Catholic comprehensive institution, in Erie, Pa. The university offers more than 100 majors, minors and concentrations as well as unique post-baccalaureate, advanced certificate and master's degree programs. In addition, Mercyhurst provides certificate and associate degree offerings at branch campuses in North East, Corry and the Booker T. Washington Center. Inspired by our motto, "Carpe Diem" (seize the day), our faculty and students are busy making a difference on and off campus — from "the Hill" to the far corners of the world.

Telephone: 1-800-825-1926

See ad on page 34

MOHAWK VALLEY COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Location: Utica, N.Y.

Website: www.mvcc.edu

Year Founded: 1946

Type of institution: Two-year college

Student-Faculty Ratio: 20:1

Institutional Designation: Public — state and local

Tuition Costs: \$3,810 (in-state, full time) \$7,620 (non-resident, full time)

Room and Board: \$9,800

Percentage of students receiving financial aid: 80%

Mohawk Valley Community College (MVCC) was founded in 1946 as New York State's first community college. A unit of the 64-campus State University of New York, we offer two-year degree programs on campuses in Utica, Rome, online, and at sites throughout the community. Shorter-length certificate programs are also offered. Our mission is to promote student success and community involvement through a commitment to excellence and a spirit of service, providing opportunities for affordable education with support services for all students.

Telephone: 315-792-5354

See ad on page 27

NAZARETH COLLEGE

Location: Pittsford, N.Y. (Suburb of Rochester)

Website: www.naz.edu

Year Founded: 1924

Type of institution: 4-year private

Student-Faculty Ratio: 9:1

Tuition Costs: \$29,244

Room and Board: \$12,466

Average Student Aid Package: \$23,000

Average Percentage of Financial Need Met: 90%

Average Scholarship/Grant Aid Awarded: \$16,500

Average Work-Study Aid Awarded: \$3,000

Nazareth College is for students that want more than a classroom experience. It is for students that seek to apply their learning in real-world experiences that help them identify and validate their life's work. Challenging academics, plus experiential work and applied learning, translates to satisfaction and success. Nazareth students are changing the world, engaging in next-generation careers and setting themselves up for success and satisfaction. This is Nazareth.

Telephone: 585-389-2860

Email: admissions@naz.edu

See ad on page 3

MONROE COMMUNITY COLLEGE — ROCHESTER

Location: Rochester, N.Y.

Website: www.monroecc.edu

Year Founded: 1961

Type of institution: Two-year college

Institutional Designation: Public — state & local

Student-Faculty Ratio: 19.5:1

Tuition Costs: \$143/credit hour (\$1,708/semester) for NYS residents; \$286/credit hour (\$3,416/semester) for non-residents

Room and Board: \$6,994/year for single; \$6,170/year for double room

Average Student Aid Package: \$7,145

Average Percentage of Financial Need Met: 60%

Average Scholarship/Grant Aid Awarded: \$5,255

Average Work-Study Aid Awarded: \$1,880

Located in Rochester, N.Y., Monroe Community College has four campus locations and offers over 90 academic programs. At MCC, students can prepare for transfer to four-year colleges and universities across the country, or start highly skilled careers upon graduation. MCC is among the top 10 U.S. community colleges recognized for innovative use of technology to achieve first-rate student learning environments. It is also home to award-winning athletic teams, an Honors Institute, residence halls, and over 50 student clubs and organizations. In the fall 2014 semester, 15,335 students attended MCC.

Telephone: 585-292-2200

Email: admissions@monroecc.edu

See ad on page 44

PENNSYLVANIA COLLEGE OF TECHNOLOGY

Location: Williamsport, Pa.

Website: www.pct.edu/link

Year Established: 1989

Type of Institution: Four-year college

Student-Faculty Ratio: 17:1

Institutional Designation: Public

Tuition Costs: \$15,450 (Pa.); \$21,930 (out-of-state)

Room & Board: \$10,036

Pennsylvania College of Technology is ranked among the top 10 public, four-year colleges in the north and is one of the nation's top 100 associate degree producers. As a special mission affiliate of Penn State committed to applied technology education, Penn College offers bachelor, associate, and certificate majors to nearly 5,700 students in more than 100 career fields ranging from manufacturing, design, transportation, and construction to hospitality, health, business, and natural resources. Business/industry connections, national corporate sponsors, small classes, industry-standard equipment, and faculty with work experience contribute to strong graduate placement rates.

Telephone: 800-367-9222

E-mail: pctinfo@pct.edu

See ad on page 24

QUINNIPIAC UNIVERSITY

Location: Hamden, Ct.

Website: www.quinnipiac.edu

Type of institution: Comprehensive higher education system

Year Founded: 1929

Institutional Designation: Private — Nonprofit

Tuition Costs: \$40,670 (incl. fees)

Room & Board: \$14,490

Average Student Aid Package: \$26,791

Average Scholarship/Grant Aid Awarded: \$21,508

Average Work-Study Aid Awarded: \$1,936

Quinnipiac, founded in 1929, is a private, co-educational, non-sectarian university in a uniquely attractive New England setting, enrolling 6500 undergraduate and 2500 graduate students. Quinnipiac's location provides the best of the suburbs and the city — only 8 miles from New Haven and less than 2 hours from New York City and Boston. The University offers 58 undergraduate majors and 25 graduate programs in business, communications, engineering, health sciences, nursing, liberal arts and sciences, education, law and medicine. An education at Quinnipiac embodies the university's commitment to three important values: excellence in education, a student-centered campus, and a spirit of community.

Telephone: 1-800-462-1942 or 203-582-8600

See ad on page 18

THE STATE UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK

Location: 64 campuses across New York State

Website: www.suny.edu/attend

Year Founded: 1948

Type of institution: Comprehensive higher education system

Student-Faculty Ratio: Varies by Campus

Institutional Designation: Public — State

Tuition Costs: State-Operated Baccalaureate Campus, excluding University Centers: \$6,170 (New York Resident); \$15,820 (Out-of-State) / Community College Average: \$4,076 (New York Resident); \$8,484 (Out-of-State Resident)

Room and Board: State-Operated Baccalaureate Campus Average: \$12,020; Community College Average: \$9,730

Average Student Aid: varies by campus

The State University of New York is the largest comprehensive university system in the United States, educating nearly 460,000 students in more than 7,500 degree and certificate programs on 64 college and university campuses and online through Open SUNY. There are nearly 3 million SUNY alumni worldwide. To learn more about how SUNY creates opportunity, visit www.suny.edu.

Telephone: 800-342-3811

Email: askSUNY@suny.edu

See ad on page 22

SALISBURY UNIVERSITY

Location: Maryland

Website: www.salisbury.edu

Year Founded: 1925

Type of Institution: 4-year public comprehensive

Student-Faculty Ratio: 16:1

Institutional Designation: A Maryland University of National Distinction

Tuition Costs: \$8,128 in-state; \$16,474 out of state

Room & Board: \$10,240 (based on "all day, every day" meals and double occupancy renovated dorm)

Average Student Aid Package: \$7,143 (need-based)

Average Percentage of Financial Need Met: 52.4% (need-based)

Average Scholarship/Grant Aid Awarded: \$2,514 (non-need-based), \$5,644 (need-based)

Average (Federal) Work-Study Aid Awarded: \$1,888

Nationally recognized for academic excellence, Salisbury University is a proud member of the University System of Maryland offering 43 undergraduate majors, 16 graduate programs and a doctorate in nursing practice. SU is ranked among the nation's "Best Values" by *Kiplinger's Personal Finance*, *Money*, *Forbes* and *The Princeton Review/USA Today*. Washington Monthly also named SU among America's "Best Bang For The Buck" Colleges. Sea Gull athletes have earned 18 NCAA Division III national team championships. Founded in 1925, SU is just 2.5 hours from Baltimore and Washington, D.C.

Telephone: 410-543-6161

Email: admissions@salisbury.edu

See ad on page 19

SUNY FREDONIA

Location: Fredonia, N.Y.

Website: www.fredonia.edu

Year Founded: 1826

Type of Institution: Fredonia is a comprehensive, public, liberal arts university in western New York that offers bachelor's and master's degree and advanced certificate programs.

Student-Faculty Ratio: 16:1

Tuition Costs: In-state Tuition/year: \$6,170; Out-of-state Tuition/year: \$15,320; Fees: \$1,570.00

Room and Board: \$7,200 (room) \$4,900 (food)

Fredonia has just what you're looking for in an education. With 5,300 students on a beautiful residential campus, it's the perfect mix of campus size and program variety that provides a classic, complete college experience in a creative and vibrant environment. With affordable tuition and housing, Fredonia gives you the academic challenges of a selective liberal arts college committed to developing your character as you prepare for a successful career and a rewarding life.

Telephone: 716-672-3251 or 800-252-1212

Email: admissions@fredonia.edu

See ad on page 59

SUNY OSWEGO

Location: Oswego, N.Y.

Website: www.oswego.edu

Type of institution: Comprehensive higher education system

Institutional Designation: Public—State

Tuition Costs: In-state: \$6,170; Non-resident: \$15,820

Room and Board: \$12,958

Average Student Aid Package: \$7,779

Average Percentage of Financial Need Met: 80%

Average Scholarship/Grant Aid Awarded: \$5,980

Average Work-Study Aid Awarded: \$1,107

Founded in 1861, SUNY Oswego enrolls over 6,800 full-time undergraduate students at our picturesque and residential campus along the southeastern shore of Lake Ontario in upstate New York.

SUNY Oswego, offering a broad range of liberal arts and career directed academic programs, has a reputation for excellence and has been consistently recognized as among the nation's "Best Northeastern Colleges" by The Princeton Review and U.S. News and World Report. SUNY Oswego has also been named to the President's Higher Education Community Service Honor Roll with Distinction.

See ad on page 30

TOURO COLLEGE

Location: New York, N.Y. (Manhattan, Brooklyn, Queens)

Website: www.touro.edu/nyscas

Type of institution: Comprehensive higher education system

Tuition Costs: \$14,600

Average Student Aid Package: \$9,000

Average Percentage of Financial Need Met: 90%

NYSCAS is ideally suited to reflect, and respond to, the challenges of this new era. Our tradition of academic excellence has given us the foundation and confidence to reach for new and unimaginable knowledge, while the diversity of our University system community makes it possible for students, faculty, alumni, and neighbors to interact with — and thus be transformed by — the multiplicity of human perspectives. At the same time, our numerous locations in the world's most global city offers us a unique laboratory in which to study the evolution of modern society, attract and learn from the remarkable people who make New York home and, in doing so, fulfill our responsibilities as active, engaged citizens.

See ad on page 10

SUNY POTSDAM

Location: Potsdam, N.Y.

Website: www.potsdam.edu

Year Founded: 1816

Institutional Designation: Public

Student-Faculty Ratio: 15:1

Institutional Designation: SUNY Arts Campus

Tuition Costs: \$5,870 in-state, \$15,320 out-of-state

Room and Board: \$10,580

Average Student Aid Package: \$12,000

Average scholarship awarded: \$2,600

Average work-study awarded: \$1,200

SUNY Potsdam is one of 64 units of the State University of New York and one of 13 SUNY Arts and Science Colleges. The College is one of only three SUNY campuses designated as an arts school. SUNY Potsdam enrolls 4,330 graduate and undergraduate students, with approximately 2,100 living on campus. The College offers more than 40 majors, with an additional 45 minors available.

Telephone: 315-267-2180

Email: admissions@potsdam.edu

See ad on page 40

TRINITY WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY

Location: Washington D.C.

Website: www.trinitydc.edu

Year Founded: 1897

Type of Institution: 4 Year, semester based, institution of higher education offering undergraduate and master's level degrees

Student-Faculty Ratio: 16:1

Institutional Designation: Private — Religious

Tuition Costs: \$21,930

Room & Board: \$9840

Average Student Aid Package: \$16,534

Average Percentage of Financial Need Met: 65%

Average Scholarship/Grant Aid: \$13,922

Average Work-Study Aid Awarded: \$1,300

Trinity Washington University is committed to the academic success of our students — nearly 50% of Trinity students are D.C. residents. Trinity is very affordable and was named "Best Value" among Washington, D.C., universities by Fox News. Trinity prepares its students to become leaders of character — passionate intellectuals excited about their future. Trinity's prestigious graduates have been leaders in federal, state, and local governments; Fortune 500 corporations, education, community organizations, and so much more. Trinity is located in the nation's capital on a 26-acre campus, just minutes from the U.S. Capitol and downtown Washington, D.C.

Telephone: 202-884-9000

Email: admissions@trinitydc.edu

See ad on page 45

UNIVERSITY OF PITTSBURGH AT BRADFORD

Location: Bradford, Pa.

Website: www.upb.pitt.edu

Year Founded: 1963

Type of Institution: 4-year public

Student-Faculty Ratio: 18:1

Tuition Costs: Pa. residents: \$12,452 (non-nursing); \$15,952 (nursing); Out-of-state: \$23,268 (non-nursing); \$29,672 (nursing)

Room & Board (double standard/260 block 10 guest meals): \$8,470

Average Student Aid Package: \$17,489 Pa. resident; \$19,500 out-of-state

Average Work-Study Aid Awarded: \$1,740

The University of Pittsburgh at Bradford is for students who want to earn a world-renowned degree in a personalized, supportive and friendly environment. You can choose from more than 40 majors and 50 minors, concentrations and pre-professional programs. Most of our classes are small, so your professors will work closely with you. And when you graduate, you'll have the prestigious University of Pittsburgh degree, which is recognized all over the world.

Telephone: 800-872-1787 or 814-362-7555

Email: admissions@upb.pitt.edu

See ad on page 37

VAUGHN COLLEGE OF AERONAUTICS

Location: Flushing, N.Y.

Website: www.vaughn.edu

Type of institution: Comprehensive higher education system

Student-Faculty Ratio: 15:1

Institutional Designation: Private — Nonprofit

Tuition Costs: \$20,840

Room and Board: \$12,000

Average Student Aid Package: \$18,895

Average Percentage of Financial Need Met: 82-90%

Average Scholarship/Grant Aid Awarded: \$9,485

Average Work-Study Aid Awarded: \$3,000

Adjacent to LaGuardia Airport, Vaughn College is an independent, four-year college specializing in engineering, technology, management and aviation. Faculty and staff know students as individuals and work with them to enhance their college experience. A fully staffed career development office provides year-round opportunities for on-campus recruitment, employment and internships. Many of our alumni hold exciting positions at well-known organizations such as Lockheed Martin, The Port Authority of New York/New Jersey, United Technologies, Consolidated Edison and JetBlue Airways.

See ad on page 56

UTICA COLLEGE

Location: Utica, N.Y.

Website: www.utica.edu

Year Founded: 1946

Type of institution: 4-year private, comprehensive, residential college.

Student-Faculty Ratio: 11:1

Tuition Costs: \$33,216

Room & Board: \$12,418 avg.

Average Student Aid Package: \$28,209

Utica College is a uniquely personal, private institution that specializes in professional education with a strong foundation in the liberal arts. UC offers innovative, career driven programs in 16 of the 20 most desired majors and an 11:1 student to faculty ratio. One hundred percent of faculty-recommended pre-med students are admitted to medical school and hundreds of internship opportunities available nationwide to all students. Utica College awards merit scholarships or need based aid to 95 percent of students.

Telephone: 800-782-8884

See ad on page 18

Profiles — Southeast

BARRY UNIVERSITY

Location: Miami, Fla.

Website: www.barry.edu

Year: founded 1940

Type of Institution: University

Student-Faculty Ratio: 13:1

Institutional Designation: Private-Religious

Tuition Costs: \$28,160

Room & Board: \$10,200

Average Student Aid Package: \$26,808

Average Percentage of Financial Need Met: 44%

Average Scholarship/Grant Aid Awarded: \$19,316

Average Work-Study Aid Awarded: \$3,000

Barry University in Miami, Fla., offers exciting learning opportunities, with more than 75 majors and specializations. You learn in small classes with professors who not only know your name, but they know your goals and will help you succeed. You live on a 122-acre campus just minutes from the beach and downtown Miami. You gain hands-on experience and apply what you've learned in the classroom to a rapidly changing world.

Telephone: 800-695-2279

Email: admissions@barry.edu

See ad on page 4

ERSKINE COLLEGE

Location: Due West, S.C.

Website: visit.erskine.edu

Year Founded: 1839

Type of Institution: Private, Christian 4-year liberal arts

Student-Faculty Ratio: 11:1

Institutional Designation: ARP affiliated

Tuition Costs: \$33,315

Room & Board: \$10,500

Average Student Aid Package (incl. loans): \$32,335 (S.C. Resident, \$20,385 (Non-S.C. Resident))

Average Percentage of Financial Need Met: >95%

Average Scholarship/Grant Aid Awarded: \$27,113

Average Work-Study Aid Awarded: \$1,500

Erskine College is small. Our close-knit academic community helps students focus on what's really important. More than a great college experience, it's a place to craft a lifelong vision. A smaller residential campus means students can't fake it. Quality is revealed. Weaknesses strengthened. Character is refined through intentional, individual relationships. Faculty become friends and mentors. Our alumni go on to top medical and graduate schools. They lead businesses and organizations both large and small throughout the world. But we produce more than simply competent professionals. We equip the whole person—intellectually, physically and spiritually—to flourish in life and leadership.

Telephone: 864-379-8838

Email: admissions@erskine.edu

See ad on page 5

MARSHALL UNIVERSITY

Location: Huntington, W.V.

Website: www.marshall.edu

Year Founded: 1837

Type of institution: public

Student-Faculty Ratio: 19:1

Institutional Designation: Master's Large

Tuition Costs: \$6,526 resident, \$15,026 non-resident

Room and Board: \$9,546

Average Percentage of Financial Need Met: 50.8%

Average Scholarship/Grant Aid Awarded: \$5,635

Marshall University is a state-supported, public institution with multiple campuses and educational centers in West Virginia. Founded in 1837, the university is headquartered on a 100-acre campus in the heart of Huntington, W.V., the second-largest city in the state. Students find that Marshall combines the best of the opportunities of a large institution with the personal care and attention expected with a school of a much smaller size.

Telephone: 1-877-GOHERD-1

Email: recruitment@marshall.edu

See ad on page 19

LYNN UNIVERSITY

Location: Boca Raton, Fla.

Website: lynn.edu

Average Student Aid Package: \$17,544 for full time freshmen. The average financial aid package excludes PLUS loans, unsubsidized Stafford loan, and private alternative loans.

Average Percentage of Financial Need Met: 50% of first-time, full-time freshmen.

Average Scholarship/Grant Aid Awarded: \$10,108 of first-time, full-time freshmen.

Average Work-Study Aid Awarded: \$2,000 first-time, full-time freshmen.

Lynn University is an independent, innovative college based in Boca Raton, Florida. With more than 2,500 students from 90 countries and nearly all 50 states, the school is consistently ranked among the top five most international schools by U.S. News and World Report's Best Colleges. The school's Dialogues of Learning curriculum, award-winning iPad program and international student base help Lynn graduates gain the intellectual flexibility and global experience to fulfill their potential in an ever-changing world.

Telephone: 1-800-994-LYNN

See ad on page 48

NOVA SOUTHEASTERN UNIVERSITY

Location: Fort-Lauderdale-Davie, Fla.

Website: www.nova.edu

Year Founded: 1964

Type of Institution: University

Institutional Designation: Private — Nonprofit

Tuition Costs: \$25,950

Room and Board: \$9,880

Average Student Aid Package: \$19,568

Average Percentage of Financial Need Met: 91%

Average Scholarship/Grant Aid Awarded: \$11,173

Average Work-Study Aid Awarded: \$3,007

Nova Southeastern University (NSU) is a fully accredited, private, not-for-profit, independent university classified as a research university with 'high research activity' by the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching. One of only 37 universities nationwide to also be awarded Carnegie's Community Engagement Classification, NSU offers a vast number of undergraduate, graduate and professional degrees through 18 colleges and schools. Schools include medical, dental, optometry, nursing, pharmacy, psychology, liberal arts and sciences, education, humanities, social sciences, law, business, computer and information sciences, and oceanography. The main campus in Davie, Fla. covers 314 acres in a tropical setting. NSU's presence extends throughout Florida, the U.S. and 13 countries around the world with a network of over 164,000 alumni.

See ad on page 83

REGENT UNIVERSITY

Location: Virginia Beach, Va.

Website: regent.edu

Year Founded: 1977

Type of institution: Private, Liberal Arts, Christian

Student-Faculty Ratio: 17:1

Tuition Costs: On Campus: \$15,900/year (24-36 credits/yr.); Evening/Online: \$395 per credit hour

Room and Board: Room: \$2,150 - \$5,785 per semester; Board: \$2,520 avg.

Average Student Financial Aid: \$11,889

Average Percentage of Financial Need Met: 60%

Average Scholarship/Grant Awarded: \$5,499

Average Work-Study Awarded: Not applicable

Regent University prepares students with the knowledge to excel and the faith to live with purpose. Our 19,000 alumni, from more than 110 countries, are changing the world as accomplished professionals. Named a top-25 school nationally for online bachelor's programs (U.S. News & World Report, 2014), Regent is among the most affordable undergraduate Christian colleges (CCCU 2014). Fully accredited, challenging programs are available online and on campus. New classes begin every eight weeks.

Telephone: 800-373-5504

Email: admissions@regent.edu

See ad on page 11

WILLIAM PEACE UNIVERSITY

Location: Raleigh, NC

Website: www.peace.edu

Year Founded: 1857

Type of institution: 4-year

Student-Faculty Ratio: 15:1

Institutional Designation: Private — religious

Tuition Costs: \$24,450

Room and Board: \$9,450

William Peace University (Raleigh, NC) offers innovative academic programs rooted in the liberal arts tradition to prepare students for careers in the organizations of tomorrow. We challenge students to think big and then give them the skills they need to accomplish their goals. Nowhere is this more evident than in our graduates: more than 90% of graduates are placed in a job or graduate school within a year of graduation.

Telephone: 919-508-2214

Email: admissions@peace.edu

See ad on page 9

College Profiles — Southwest/Central

MIDWESTERN STATE UNIVERSITY

Location: Wichita Falls, Texas

Website: www.mwsu.edu

Year Founded: 1922

Type of institution: Comprehensive higher education system

Student-Faculty Ratio: 17:1

Institutional Designation: Public, State

Tuition Costs (based on 15 SCH): \$2,422,50 (in-state); \$3,397.50 (non-resident)

Room and Board: \$6,450

Average Student Aid Package: \$10,933

Average Percentage of Financial Aid Need Met: 67%

Average Scholarship/Grant Awarded: \$5,805

Average Work-Study Aid Awarded: \$2,681

Midwestern State is recognized as a public liberal arts university with strong programs in the arts, humanities, sciences, and social sciences as well as accredited professional programs in mechanical engineering, social work, nursing, radiologic science, respiratory care, athletic training, and business, among others. MSU offers the individual attention of a private education but the affordability of a public university. Classes average fewer than 30 students, and most are taught by full-time faculty, not graduate assistants. Students are active in more than 100 organizations and bring a spirit of competition to 13 NCAA Division II athletic programs.

Telephone: 800-842-1922

Email: admissions@mwsu.edu

See ad on page 7
Magazine | Next Step Education Group

TEXAS A&M — GALVESTON

Location: Galveston, Texas

Website: www.tamug.edu or aggiesbythesea.com

Year Founded: 1962 as Texas Maritime Academy

Type of Institution: University

Student-Faculty Ratio: 13:1

Institutional Designation: Public — state

Tuition Costs: \$7,748/year (Texas resident); \$16,530/year (out-of-state) for 24 credit hours/year

Room & Board: \$9,600/year with 19 meals/week

Average Student Aid Package: \$11,645

Average Percentage of Financial Need Met: 66.6%

Average Scholarship/Grant Aid Awarded: \$5,554

Average Work-Study Aid Awarded: \$2,165

A great education and an adventure. Science majors use the latest technology to map oceans, count whales and studying aquatic life in underwater caves. Business majors prepare for career where international trade and world travel is the norm. Engineers learn to build undersea pipelines, design bridges, construct ports and build maritime onboard naval and civilian ships that sail the world's waterways.

Telephone: 409-740-4414

Email: seaaggie@tamug.edu

See ad on page 14

TEXAS A&M — KINGSVILLE

Location: Kingsville, Texas

Website: www.tamuk.edu

Year Founded: 1925

Type of institution: Public

Student-Faculty Ratio: 20:1

Institutional Designation: four-year

Tuition Costs: \$6,940 per year (in-state for 15 semester credit hours)

Room and Board: \$7,831 per semester

Average Student Aid Package: \$10,308

Average Percentage of Financial Aid Met: 60%

Average Scholarship/Grant Aid Awarded: \$6,335

Average Work-Study Aid Awarded: \$2,536

Texas A&M-Kingsville offers an extensive array of bachelor's and master's degrees along with selected doctoral degrees providing opportunities for research at the undergraduate and graduate level. Well-known programs include agriculture and wildlife science, music, engineering, kinesiology and communication sciences and disorders. Modern campus housing coupled with a variety of dining options and intercollegiate and intramural athletics provide an enhanced residential experience for students from more than 40 countries and 30 states. Our student recreation center houses two gyms, a weight and cardio room and an elevated jogging track to keep students fit, and we also offer a robust variety of student activities and organizations for students.

Telephone: 361-593-2111

See ad on page 32

UNIVERSITY OF HOUSTON — VICTORIA

Location: Main campus located in Victoria, Texas. Upper-level and graduate programs also taught at locations in Greater Houston.

Website: UHV.edu

Year Founded: 1973

Type of Institution: Four-year, public university

Student-Faculty Ratio: 19:1

Institutional Designation: Bachelor's and master's

Tuition Costs: \$6,397 (full-time, in-state undergrad)

Room & Board: \$7,386

Average Student Aid Package: \$9,634

Average Percentage of Financial Need Met: 71%

Average Scholarship/Grant Aid Awarded: \$3,694

Average Work-Study Aid Awarded: \$2,075

The University of Houston-Victoria offers courses leading to more than 65 bachelor's and master's degree programs and concentrations in the schools of Arts & Sciences, Business Administration, Education & Human Development, and Nursing. UHV provides face-to-face classes at its Victoria, Texas, campus as well as teaching sites in Greater Houston, and online classes that students can take from anywhere. Since its founding in 1973, UHV has provided students with a quality university education from excellent faculty at an affordable price.

Telephone: 877-970-4848

Email: recruitment@uhv.edu

See ad on page 51




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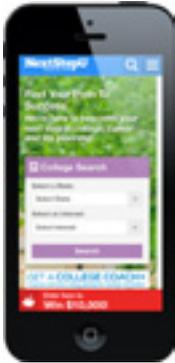
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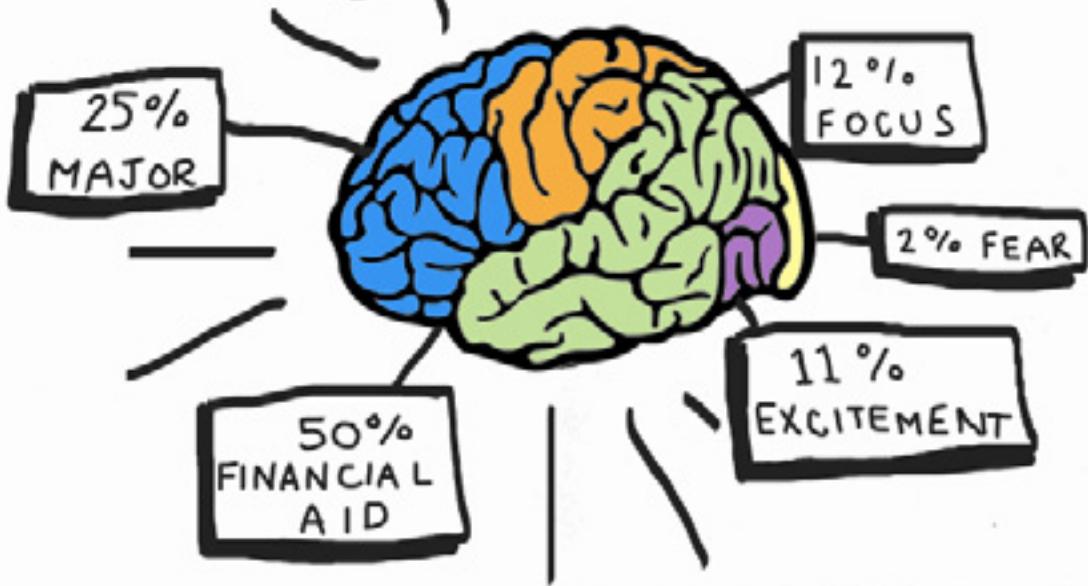
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Anatomy of a senior's brain



FEBRUARY 2015

| Sunday | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday |
|--|-----------------------|---|---|---|--------|-----------------------|
| 1 Download the complete 2015 calendar at NextStepU.com/Calendar | 2 Groundhog Day | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 Lincoln's B-Day | 13 | 14 Valentine's Day |
| 15 | 16 President's Day | 17 | 18 | 19 Chinese New Year | 20 | 21 |
| 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | Tip of the Month Check on your applications <i>Acceptances start to get sent out in February. Keep checking on the status of your application — but don't hound colleges too much!</i> | | | |
| B Daylight Saving | 9 | <small>January 2015</small> <small>S M T W T F S</small> <small>1 2 3</small> <small>4 5 6 7 8 9 10</small> <small>11 12 13 14 15 16 17</small> <small>18 19 20 21 22 23 24</small> <small>25 26 27 28 29 30 31</small> | | <small>March 2015</small> <small>S M T W T F S</small> <small>1 2 3 4 5 6 7</small> <small>8 9 10 11 12 13 14</small> <small>15 16 17 18 19 20 21</small> <small>22 23 24 25 26 27 28</small> <small>29 30 31</small> | | |

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Always be yourself.

UNLESS

you can be a unicorn.

THEN **Always**

BE A UNICORN.



MARCH 2015

| Sunday | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday |
|--|--------|---|---|--|----------------------|----------|
| 1 Download the complete 2015 calendar at NextStepU.com/Calendar | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 8 Daylight Saving | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 |
| 15 | 16 | 17 St. Patrick's Day | 18 | 19 | 20 Vernal equinox | 21 |
| 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 |
| 29 | 30 | 31 | Tip of the Month Time to decide on a school <i>How do you make the right choice? Talk it out! Weigh your financial and academic options and remember, always trust your gut.</i> | | | |
| 5 Easter | 6 | <small>February 2015</small> <small>S M T W T F S</small> <small>1 2 3 4 5 6 7</small> <small>8 9 10 11 12 13 14</small> <small>15 16 17 18 19 20 21</small> <small>22 23 24 25 26 27 28</small> | | <small>April 2015</small> <small>S M T W T F S</small> <small>1 2 3 4</small> <small>5 6 7 8 9 10 11</small> <small>12 13 14 15 16 17 18</small> <small>19 20 21 22 23 24 25</small> <small>26 27 28 29 30</small> | | |

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Coffee Cup vs Sleep

≡ **A HANDY GUIDE** ≡



APRIL 2015

| Sunday | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday |
|----------|--------|--|---|----------|--|------------|
| 29 | 30 | 31 | 1 April Fool's Day | 2 | 3 Good Friday | 4 Passover |
| 5 Easter | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 |
| 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 Taxes Due | 16 | 17 | 18 |
| 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 Earth Day Admin Assist Day | 23 | 24 | 25 |
| 26 | 27 | 28 | 29 | 30 | Tip of the Month Celebrate Earth Month Take some time to give back to the earth and build up your resumé at the same time. Join an environmental club, raise money with a bottle drive or recycle your old electronics at an earth-friendly facility. | |
| 3 | 4 | March 2015 S M T W T F S 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31 | May 2015 S M T W T F S 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31 | | | |

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MAY 2015

| Sunday | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday |
|--|--|---|--|----------|--------|----------|
| Tip of the month Keep your grades up <i>Colleges are still looking at your grades — make sure you don't slack off, even in the final stretch.</i> | | | | 30 | 1 | 2 |
| 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 |
| 10 Mother's Day | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 |
| 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 |
| 24 | 25 Memorial Day | 26 | 27 | 28 | 29 | 30 |
| 31 | 1 Download the complete 2015 calendar at NextStepU.com/Calendar | April 2015 S M T W T F S 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 | June 2015 S M T W T F S 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 | | | |

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JUNE 2015

| Sunday | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday |
|----------------------------------|--|---|--|---|--------|----------|
| 31 | 1 Download the complete 2015 calendar at NextStepU.com/Calendar | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 |
| 14 Flag Day | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 Ramadan begins | 19 | 20 |
| 21 Father's Day June Solstice | 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 | 26 | 27 |
| 28 | 29 | 30 Win Free Tuition Deadline! Enter at NextStepU.com/WinFreeTuition | Tip of the Month Get a summer job <i>Don't waste these months of freedom — use this time to get a job. Then, save some of what you earn to pay for those college bills.</i> | | | |
| 5 | 6 | May 2015 S M T W T F S 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31 | | July 2015 S M T W T F S 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31 | | |

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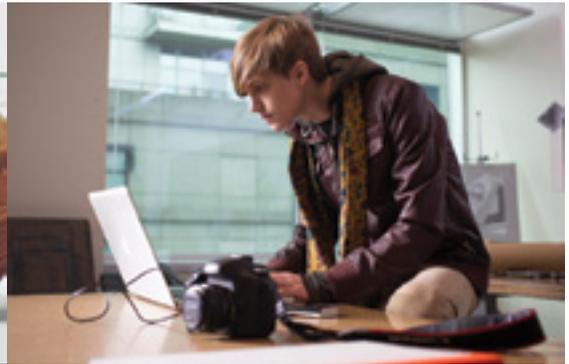
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