

# College Bound

ISSUES & TRENDS FOR THE COLLEGE ADMISSIONS ADVISOR

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## Special Issue

### Welcome To CB's 35th Year!

IT IS AN UNDERSTATEMENT to say that this year's college application and decision cycle takes place under the extraordinary conditions. With the COVID-19 worldwide pandemic, many colleges, universities and K-12 schools are trying to open face-to-face, under new restrictions, with hopes of getting in a full academic year. Others decided to continue the virtual learning route necessitated last spring, until the nation gets a cleaner bill of health. Still others are changing their minds as their opening date gets closer. And then others have opened only to shut down again as COVID-19 cases multiplied on their campuses.

As *CB* goes to press, the situation is fluid and will be determined by the virus itself. At the same time, counselors, teachers, students, parents and administrators are under severe pressures. More so for high school seniors who want to further their higher education and find the right college to help them achieve their goals.

*CB* pledges to continue our award-winning, in-depth reporting on this year's admissions cycle to help you keep up with the ever-changing scenario. *However, please note that at the beginning of this school year we will continue to bring you our news as an online, print-CB-yourself publication (Print/Staple).* During the first week of each month, you can find your Current Issues at [www.collegeboundnews.com](http://www.collegeboundnews.com). (And don't forget to visit our website regularly to find our front-page, "Admissions Story-of-the-Day.") Have a great and safe school year!—*The Editors.* ■

## How COVID-19 is Impacting Higher Ed

**The Bottom Line: Fewer Than 25 Percent Expect to Open Face-to-Face.** "Are colleges safe in general to open up right now? I would say not," James Phillips, a physician and assistant professor at George Washington U. Hospital told CNN recently. He noted though that high schools are much more controlled environments. "There are so many other variables that go in [to opening colleges] that are going to make it incredibly difficult to keep the virus out of the classrooms and out of those living spaces."

During the summer, about two-thirds of all colleges and universities worked out plans to reopen this fall for face-to-face (mask-to-mask) instruction. But during those months, *The New York Times* counted more than 6,300 cases of

COVID-19 on 270 college campuses. Some came through off-campus parties, others at summer football workouts.

In late August, *The New York Times* published an interactive map tracking the number of cases coast-to-coast on campuses. And by late August, as a result of escalating infection numbers across the nation, and the fact that students were arriving from geographically diverse locations, less than one quarter of colleges and universities decided to conduct most of their classes in-person.

Of the 3,000 institutions surveyed by *The Chronicle of Higher Education* and Davidson C.'s College Crisis Initiative in late August, only 2.5 percent were operating fully in-

*continued on page 2*

## COVID-19 FINANCIAL MEASURES

**Rebates for Virtual Learning.** As colleges open remotely, some students and families are complaining that they have to pay the same for online classes as for face-to-face. Chapman U. in Southern California reversed its plans to open face-to-face and shifted to remote instruction. But some students wanted a refund. "We are paying a lot of money for tuition, and our students are not getting what we paid for," argued one parent.

About 30,000 students at Rutgers U. signed a petition in July calling for an elimination of fees and for a 20 percent tuition cut. More than 40,000 signed a plea to the U. of North Carolina system to house students in case of another outbreak instead of sending them home.

Some colleges are responding with cuts. Franciscan U. of Steubenville in Ohio said that it will cover 100 percent of tuition costs after financial aid and scholarships for incoming undergraduates. St. Norbert C. in Wisconsin is offering a free semester. Most colleges remain cost steady.

**Schools Sued.** Indeed, the \$600 billion higher education industry has been rocked by the pandemic. Public universities rely on tuition for 20 percent of their revenue; private colleges 30 percent. By early May, more than 60 colleges and universities had been sued by students seeking rebates for unused room and board and partial tuition for diminished quality

*continued on page 4*

## INSIDE

- The Shape of Openings
- Admissions Watch
- Extra Supplement
- News You Can Use

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## IMPACT OF COVID-19

*continued from page 1*

person, 20 percent were primarily in-person, 15 percent were hybrid, 27 percent were primarily online, 6 percent were fully online and 24 percent were yet to be determined.

Here's a snapshot of how things developed.

**Students Stressed.** In a survey of 2,490 college students in 11 states, Court Spaces, a student housing developer, found that 90 percent of respondents said they wanted to come back to campus in the fall; 72 percent of them wanted to go back even if their schools continue online instruction. The survey, conducted in June, also found that 58 percent reported that their online learning classes in the spring had been a negative experience. And 75 percent said that they felt more anxious or stressed while 55 percent were more depressed or worried. And 12 percent had seen a professional for physical or mental health.

Some 90 percent of the respondents were either "very confident" (46 percent) or "somewhat confident" (43 percent) that their universities would take appropriate action to help protect them from the spreading virus. And 85 percent felt the same way about their student housing provider.

Summer jobs were canceled for 57 percent of students in this survey, while 32 percent of those who had jobs saw their salaries reduced. Some 21 percent reported a parent had lost his or her job, while 55 percent reported their parents' working hours had been reduced. Only about 40 percent felt that their own job prospects after graduation were the same as before the pandemic.

**Campuses Prepare.** Meanwhile, a survey of college presidents conducted by the Association of American Colleges and Universities and ABC Insights found 84 percent intended to convene in-person sometime this fall, while 85 percent planned to maintain current tuition.

The survey, taken in July, then found only 20 percent of college presidents expected no change in fall enrollment, while 31 percent actually anticipated enrollment increases, in part, coming from those who have lost their jobs and need new skills. Presidents of small private institutions were most likely to bring back students for face-to-face instruction.

Some observers were not so sure they would be able to do that. Scott Galloway, a New York U. professor of marketing and author of *Digital IQ Index*, speaking at "Remote: The Faculty Connected Summit" sponsored by Arizona State U. in mid-July, predicted that by fall the virus would force almost all colleges and universities to go online with their instruction.

**The Natural Density of Colleges a Concern.** As campuses reopen across the country,

## National Governors Association Warns of "Considerable Health Risks"

In a memorandum to members, the National Governors Association wrote, "The residential and communal aspects of higher education pose considerable health risks that will require a nuanced approach to reopening."

The dangers are real. For example, during the summer, 105 students living in U. of Washington fraternity houses tested positive for COVID-19. In mid-July, the U. of California, Berkeley, reported a spike in virus cases linked to a series of fraternity and sorority parties. And during the last week of July, 12 students at Bradley U. in Illinois became sick.

"I just hope that students are aware of the direness, the extent of this virus and know that if they walk on campus, we are accepting that we are walking out into the world as adults and we need to act as such," said Bradley's student body president, Emma Hoyhtya.

The NGA found that of the 750 institutions

it surveyed in late spring that had announced they were re-opening in fall, 65 percent were planning on face-to-face instruction.

NGA recommended all states follow Connecticut's lead in creating their re-opening framework. Connecticut said its institutions need to have "the capacity to administer diagnostic tests, conduct contact tracing and provide sufficient personal protective equipment to students and staff." It also recommended that institutions "consider repopulating in stages...." And make plans of action in case of a "campus-wide outbreak." It also called for "academic flexibility..."

In addition to the NGA recommendation for "gating conditions" that schools and businesses need to follow for safe reopening, Connecticut warned colleges that strict policies must be in place to avoid "the high risk of legal liability from individuals who contact COVID-19 on campus..." ■

almost all have instituted some form of social distancing, constant public health education and systems for monitoring and tracking the health of students, faculty and staff, including tracing. According to the *Washington Post*, some colleges also are requiring students to forgo keg parties, road trips and bringing outside guest on to campus.

But Sheldon H. Jacobson, the founding professor of Computer Science at the U. of Illinois, noted that because of the natural density of college campus activities, strict social distancing at all times is unlikely.

He recommends that students, faculty, staff and administrators take a "smart approach" that takes "a closer look at situations where there is higher density for longer periods of time and focus extra attention on mitigation there." Much of this could include more education [about how the virus spreads and how to keep safe.]

"Everyone would love to snap back to Fall 2019, right? And that isn't possible," Katherine A. Rowe, president of the C. of William & Mary told the *Washington Post*. "What is possible is using the best evidence we have to understand what Fall 2020 could be."

**Social Distancing Problems.** But upon arrival on campus, hundreds of students were tailgating or attending parties and events without masks at campus and off-campus sites. At Oklahoma State U., 23 confirmed cases were linked to a single sorority house. At the U. of Tennessee, Knoxville, 28 active cases were reported and more than 150 people were in self-isolation. At the U. of Oklahoma, nine football players tested positive as they prepared for the Big 12 football season.

These scenes have shocked school officials, as well as varsity football players who have spent the last month trying to keep clear of the virus. The U. of Alabama's athletic director, Greg Byrne, tweeted "We've got to do better than this for each other and our campus community. Please wear your masks!"

The president of Villanova U. in Pennsylvania sent a warning to students that those who don't follow health guidelines and wear a mask at all times will "Be Sent Home."

**Faculty Resistance.** Faculty at some universities express concerns about returning to teach face-to-face classes.

The American Association of University Professors issued a statement that said, in part, "... absent much essential information such as the exact level of risk, including predicted numbers of infection and deaths that is being factored into the universities' planning models, we see no reason to believe that any kind of instructional reopening in the fall will be safe."

The *Chicago Tribune* reported that some faculty at the U. of Notre Dame (where more than 150 COVID-19 cases in late August led classes to shift to online for at least two weeks), the U. of Chicago, Northwestern U. and the U. of Illinois Urbana-Champaign had requested that they be allowed to teach their classes online.

Jon Yates, a spokesman for Northwestern, told the paper, "a significant portion of instruction will be conducted remotely." Yet the university hoped that there would also be significant face-to-face learning. But on August 28, Northwestern announced it was asking all freshmen and sophomores to stay home. ■

# The Shape of Openings

DESPITE ALL THE UNCERTAINTY, and a surge of infections during the summer, hundreds of colleges have re-opened in August or early September, hoping to get a full semester of face-to-face (mask-to-mask) learning in before Thanksgiving (when they expect a second wave of the virus). Many are also under economic pressure to fully reopen, fearing permanent enrollment declines if they don't.

But early reports indicate enrollment problems. This summer, the U. of Colorado reported a 2 percent decrease in freshman enrollment and an 11 percent decrease in overall enrollment.

A mid-summer survey by Williams C. indicated that only 73 percent of its 2,254 students surveyed planned to return to campus during the 2020-21 academic year. More than 15 percent of first-year students planned to take a gap year, while only 11 percent of the entire student body submitted such plans. Juniors had the highest proportion of students indicating that they would be enrolling remotely at 23 percent and the lowest in-person enrollment at 66 percent.

## FACE-TO-FACE, MASK-TO-MASK

Colby-Sawyer C. President Susan D. Stuebner said, "I am extremely grateful for the hard work of those who helped to create a plan for a safe return to campus that allows our students to experience the many opportunities that come with being together," she said. "We have the unique advantage as a small institution to operate in a means that is both safe and effective...."

The U. of Washington is celebrating its 159th year. President Ana Mari Cauce said that it expects the Class of 2024 to be "our largest freshman class ever." UW is conducting a hybrid approach of small-scale, in-person and online learning. "We want them in the dorms. We know that a very important part of the learning experience happens in the classroom from other students, but also outside the classroom and the interaction with faculty, in labs, with each other. We're looking forward to bringing that richness back," she said.

Purdue U. in Indiana is open for face-to-face instruction. But it is requiring and paying for COVID-19 testing of all students before they return to campus to attend classes or live in dorms, as part of its "Protect Purdue" program. Results were sent to and managed by its virtual health center, which will provide ongoing case management throughout the semester.

The University of California, Berkeley, moved 2,200 students into dorms. But it expected total enrollment this fall of 42,000. The majority of learning will be remote.

The U. of North Carolina at Chapel Hill opened in-person, but within a week had to switch to online classes after confirming a virus outbreak among 130 students. Michigan State U. and Drake U. in Iowa abruptly switched to online near the end of August.

Several schools that announced they were conducting in-person learning by press time include: Beloit C. in Wisconsin, Indiana U. Bloomington, North Carolina State U., Oklahoma State U., Rice U. in Texas, which is conducting classes outdoors and in tents with students bringing their own portable chairs, and Yale U.

**Illinois Tests Students Twice a Week.** The U. of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign is requiring all students and faculty members to be tested for the COVID-19 twice a week with a saliva-based test developed by U. of I. researchers. In-person classes resumed late-August. Only about one-third are fully face-to-face. Large lecture courses are offered remotely. Illinois anticipated that between 5,000 and 15,000 fewer

students on campus this fall.

"If everyone does their part to maximize the safety of our entire community, we have the ability to provide modified in-person delivery of our missions," said Chancellor Robert Jones.

## ONLINE EXAMPLES VARY

**Harvard Decided By July.** Harvard U. decided in July that its fall classes will be taught online. However, it has opened its dorms to members of the Class of 2024. It asked upperclassmen who want to return to seek individual permission. Harvard declared that providing housing for more than 40 percent of undergraduates could leave it "again facing the prospect of asking our students to leave, on short notice, prior to the end of the semester." In the end, 340 Harvard first-year students, roughly a fifth of the first-year class, deferred admission rather than possibly spend part of the year online.

**Johns Hopkins Went Online (And Announced Reductions in Tuition.)** Johns Hopkins U. in Baltimore announced in August that all undergraduate instruction, labs and co-curricular activities will be conducted online for the duration of the fall. JHU is giving a one-time 10 percent reduction in fall undergraduate tuition. It also provided an extra \$14.8 million in need-based aid for students whose families' circumstances have changed as a result of the pandemic, along with emergency aid for hardships related to the switch to distance learning.

During the summer, JHU invested extensively in enhancements to the online academic experience, including new state-of-the-art equipment and the creation of more than 60 new virtual teaching studios that greatly improve upon typical Zoom course experience, rather than relying on home studios.

**Loyola U. Chicago Closed Dorms.** Freshmen and sophomores are normally required to stay in dorms at Loyola University Chicago, but not this fall, a decision that will have "significant revenue implications," the university noted. Students living off-campus will still be able to use some school facilities and attend some of the few in-person courses offered.

Almost all classes will be taught virtually. "Let us remember that Loyola is not merely a campus, but a collective of hearts sharing common values," the university wrote students in an e-mail. "We are Loyola, bound together by our Jesuit values of compassion, adaptability, excellence, imagination and social justice."

**Smith C. Reevaluated "Troubling Trends."** In early summer, Smith C., said that students at the all-female college in Massachusetts would have an opportunity to study on campus for at least part of 2020-21 academic year. But in early August, Smith President Kathleen McCartney wrote the Smith community that, "given new scientific evidence, as well as recent and troubling trends nationally and in Massachusetts, I have come to the difficult conclusion that we should not bring students back to campus for the fall semester." Instead, all Smith fall classes are remote.

**Other colleges announcing an online fall semester include:** Brandeis U., California Institute of the Arts, DePaul U. in Chicago, Full Sail U. in Winter Park Florida, Georgetown U. in Washington D.C., Rutgers U. in New Jersey, Spelman C. in Atlanta, Syracuse U. in Upstate New York, the U. of Maryland, U. of Pennsylvania, U. of Virginia, Princeton U. and Illinois State U. ■

## COVID-19 FINANCIAL

*continued from page 1*  
of learning (online).

Among those charged with breach of contract are the U. of California, California State U. System, Arizona State U., Columbia, Cornell, Drexel and NYU. Arizona State issued \$1,500 credits to those who moved out of student housing. Harvard, Columbia, Middlebury and Swarthmore issued rebates for unused room and board. Other schools have followed with refunds.

"We're in the middle of a catastrophe," Peter McDonough, general counsel of the American Council on Education (ACE) told *Bloomberg News*. "Schools are doing their best to work their way through it.... Faculty and staff are literally working around the clock."

**Liability Issues.** Many colleges such as Northwestern U. and Illinois State U. sent "assumption of risk" notices, requiring students to sign various forms that waive liability of their college in case they get infected. Students at Penn State forced the university to change the language that said students "assume any and all risk of exposure to COVID-19." Education lobbyists are pressing Congress to extend immunity to colleges so they don't fold in the worse-case scenario. In fact, immunity for colleges and businesses was one of the issues that prevented the House of Representatives and the U.S. Senate from agreeing on extending unemployment benefits in August.

**College Towns Hurt.** The sudden evacuation of students from college towns in the spring left businesses in college towns reeling. For example, according to a June report from Bloomberg, revenues were down 20 percent in Orange County, home to the U. of North Carolina, Chapel Hill.

"Our whole economy downtown has been gutted," one proprietor said. Even when schools reopen, those with formerly huge weekend athletic events will continue to be hurt. Lincoln, home to the U. of Nebraska, for example, brings in \$5.2 million each home football season.

**USC Offered Students a Scholarship to Stay Home.** The U. of Southern California is offering a \$4,000 scholarship per semester to students who stay home. The offer is only good for students who normally receive financial aid for housing. Students who are not living at home, but off-campus, will receive the maximum amount of financial aid credit from the university. Most USC classes will be online fall semester.

"With COVID cases on the rise in Los Angeles, there continues to be uncertainty in our fall plans, and we realize that is a particular challenge to students receiving financial aid," said USC's Dean of Financial Aid, Thomas McWhorter.

**Long-Term Impact.** This whole process has been expensive. The American Council on Education estimates that reopening this fall will add 10 percent to colleges' regular operating expenses, costing the country's 5,000 colleges and universities a total of \$70 billion. According to Moody's investor's service, roughly 30 percent of universities are running operating deficits.

New York U.'s President Scott Galloway is forecasting dramatic shifts. He thinks colleges everywhere will be forced to embrace hybrid learning and reinvent themselves to survive. "There will be a lot of zombie universities," Galloway told *New York* magazine. "Alumni will step in to help. They'll [some colleges will] cut costs to figure out how to stay alive, but they'll effectively be the walking dead. I don't think you're going to see massive shutdowns, but there's going to be a strain on tier-two colleges."

Galloway also predicted that universities will work with technology giants to offer students a mix of online and off-line degrees. "I just can't imagine what their enrollments would be if Apple partnered with a school to offer programs in design and creativity."

The U. of Washington's President Ana Mari Cauce told a virtual town hall meeting that no matter what happens next, "This crisis has created, in essence, thousands of laboratories across the nation experimenting with different

approaches to teaching, to learning, to evaluation, to assessment and we will be looking to see which experiments have been more successful and which haven't."

Former Washington Governor Gary Locke told *geekwire.com*, "I've always been a major proponent of personal interaction between the faculty and the students. Clearly, using technology can make it easier for both faculty and students. But there's still no substitute for that human interaction."

**Fewer Federal Financial Aid Applications.** The number of applications for the Free Application for Federal Student Aid by high school seniors fell by 45 percent in the first weeks of the pandemic, according to an analysis by the Associated Press. The FAFSA is required for Pell Grants and many state aid programs.

Applications from students at Title I schools plunged by 52 percent. They rebounded since then, but remain behind last year. As of mid-June total applications are nearly 4 percent behind last year, down by 70,000 students. The numbers could signal that students are delaying a start or return to college this fall.

This year, just 71 percent of families completed the FAFSA, according to Sallie Mae, down from 77 percent in 2018/19 and 83 percent the year before that.

**Education Job Loses.** Over the summer, the National Education Association warned that without additional funding help from states and localities, 1.9 million jobs could be lost in the education sector.

And a July survey of college presidents conducted by the Association of American Colleges and Universities and ABC Insights found that that 88 percent plan to lay off staff, 82 percent will impose a hiring freeze and 64 percent plan to implement across-the-board budget cuts, along with decreased pay for senior staff, all in an effort to protect academic programs as much as possible. And 43 percent of the presidents anticipate cutting some academic programs and faculty positions. ■

## ENROLLMENT TRENDS

**Top California Enrollment Trends.** Latino students are now the largest ethnic subgroup of freshmen in the U. of California's Class of 2024. According to statistics released by the university, Latinos moved past Asian Americans for the first time, making up 36 percent of the system's 79,953 California admitted students. Asian Americans make up 35 percent, whites account for 21 percent and black students only 5 percent. First-generation students account for 45 percent of those admit-

ted, while 44 percent are low-income students.

UC admitted 28,074 transfer students, including the largest-ever class from the California Community Colleges system. The overall admission rate for all nine undergraduate campuses rose to 69 percent. The average unweighted GPA for this year's admitted freshman class remains the same as last year at 3.91. The average ACT score was unchanged at 29 and average SAT score was 1415, compared to last year's 1419, both scores in the

95th percentile. But standardized tests are being phased out next year.

UC Berkeley admitted its most diverse class, accepting the largest number of black and Latino students in three decades, 40 percent more than last year. It also admitted more low-income students, those lacking immigration status and those who are first in their family to go to college.

Offers of admissions are not the same as those who show up. Most UC campuses will offer only limited in-person classes and have significantly reduced on-campus student housing. ■

## ADMISSION WATCH

With all the national turmoil, this year's cohort of college-bound students is confused, watching and waiting for developments, hoping that the virus will run its course or that a vaccine will be approved and that colleges gradually will become more healthy environments for the Class of 2025.

Usually optimistic, high school students will proceed with their plans, probably with a more balanced set of college applications. Counselors will still do as much in-person and virtual advising as possible.

But this fall, college fairs and college visits are going to be virtual. However, college admissions committees will continue to do their work, and the admissions cycle, including early admissions, will proceed as near to normal as possible. All hope that the 2021-2022 academic year will see the full return of students. To start the school year, here are current admissions reports.

### **Coast Guard Restricts Initial Movement.**

This summer, 271 men and women reported to the U.S. Coast Guard Academy in New London, Connecticut, for training. Some 39 percent of the new class are women, and 34 percent comes from underrepresented minority groups. Six are international students from Guyana, the Dominican Republic, Honduras, the Federated States of Micronesia, Jordan and the Philippines. But this year's routine is different. Instead of traditional haircuts, uniform issues and drill practice, they were sworn in and started a 14-day restriction on movement (ROM).

**Fayetteville State Hands Out Laptops.** In North Carolina, Fayetteville State U. distrib-

## Plans Changing

A Junior Achievement survey of 1,000 graduating high school seniors this year showed that some teens were more circumspect. Roughly half of the Class of 2020 seniors in this survey said their plans after high school had changed as a result of the pandemic.

About 32 percent expected to delay their start date for college and 16 percent changed the career path they wish to pursue. Some 36 percent said they will now work. Also, more than 35 percent of those who planned to attend college said they are less excited to attend. Some 58 percent had concerns that the virus will affect academic quality, 53 percent that it will affect dorm life and 44 percent that it will impact athletics and school-sponsored events. (The Big-10 and the Pac-12 conferences have moved football to Spring 2021. Others may follow.) ■

uted more than 800 laptops to members of its new Class of 2024, a gift of an anonymous donor. Classes began in early August with half of the student body on campus with virus restrictions, and the other half taking virtual classes. The groups will rotate at semester.

**North Carolina Greensboro.** In June, the U. of North Carolina Greensboro welcomed 2,489 first-year students and 893 transfer and adult students, virtually. The students participated in nine one-day sessions that included a live stream Q&A via YouTube and small group discussions with the orientation leaders via Zoom. New students also had advisors help registering for classes. Every new student was also mailed a welcome kit.

"After students are finished with virtual orientation, I hope they feel like they have met someone in a virtual setting that they can have a personal connection with when they get on campus," said Austin McKim, associate director of New Student Transitions & First Year Experience.

**Trinity Admits 35 Percent.** Trinity C. in Connecticut, founded in 1823, admitted 610 students to its Class of 2024, 35 percent of applicants, more than normal due to the virus. Its yield was 29 percent, compared to 31 percent last year. Some 68 percent chose not to submit standardized test scores. New students hail from 71 nations and 35 states, 51 percent of whom are women, 21 percent U.S. students of color and 14 percent first generation, according to Angel B. Perez, vice president.

In addition to academic performance, Trinity looks at a student's "grit, optimism, persistence, willingness to take risks and ability to overcome adversity," traits that research has shown predict success in college. Half of new students will receive financial aid.

**Washington State Projections.** A report by the *Seattle Times* recently found that projections for the state's two research universities, the U. of Washington and Washington State U., "are holding up well." However, Central Washington and Eastern Washington universities expected enrollment to fall by 10 percent or more (Eastern by more than 1,200 students). Before the pandemic, Central Washington had seen applications soar by 25 percent.

"In uncertain economic times, students will think twice about spending thousands to go to college," Jens Larson, associate vice president for enrollment management at Eastern, told the paper. Because high school seniors lost their support network, including counselors, "it is so incredibly hard to work them through the process." ■

## Community College Options

Great uncertainty reigns among high school seniors about where to go to college, or whether they should go to college at all this year. Since many students want to stay closer to home, community colleges across the country are gearing up for a possible influx of students.

"Under the circumstances, families may turn to us as the gateway of opportunity, and we've been ready," Michael Baston, president of Rockland C.C. in New York, told CNBC.

Indeed, the pandemic has caused severe economic damage. A survey by the College Savings Foundation, based in Washington D.C., found that 40 percent of students say they will attend public college and 26 percent say they will choose a community college. The average tuition at a C.C. was \$3,730 for the 2019-2020 school year. "From a college savings standpoint, I think it's the best investment you can make," Julio Martinez, executive director of California's ScholarShare Investment Board, told CNBC.

Currently, about half of all bachelors degree earners start their higher education at a C.C., according to the National Student Clearinghouse Research Center. And at least 30 states guarantee students with an associate degree can transfer to a four-year college. However, the completion rates at C.Cs is still relatively low at 40 percent after six years, compared to 67 percent who start at a four-year public university, and 77 percent who start at a four-year private school. ■

**Staying Closer-To-Home.** If May and June commitments were an accurate early indicator of fall enrollment, it appears many new students are opting to stay closer to home. Commitments from state residents at the U. of Texas at Arlington were up 26 percent. At The Ohio State U. and Western Kentucky U., they were up 20 percent, at Michigan State U., up 15 percent, while out-of-state deposits were down 15 percent, according to the Associated Press.

Half of 20 colleges contacted by AP registered increases in freshman confirmations, some as high as 30 percent. The other half reported decreases of up to 15 percent. Confirmations from new international students were down by 50 percent at the U. of Florida, down 28 percent at the U. of Minnesota and down 21 percent at The Ohio State.

"We are going to be a more regional and local university," Bob McMaster, vice provost of the U. of Minnesota, told its board of regents.

Reasons for the geographic shift range from wanting to be closer to home in case classes shut down again to fear of flying long distances during the pandemic to the benefits of lower tuition. ■

## COUNSELOR'S BOOKSHELF

*College Admissions During COVID: How to Navigate the New Challenges in Admissions, Testing, Financial Aid and More*; Princeton Review and Robert Franek, 224 pages, ISBN: 978-0-525-57181-0, \$17.99, (Available October 27).

*The Best Value Colleges: 375 Schools That Give You The Most For Your Money* by Robert Franek and the staff of The Princeton Review, ISBN: 978-0-525-56926-8, \$12.99.

College Consensus posted rankings for 2020 of the "100 Best Value Colleges & Universities," "Top 50 Community Colleges," "Best Value Online Colleges" and "Top 50 Online Community Colleges." See, [www.collegeconsensus.com](http://www.collegeconsensus.com).

*Good Work If You Can Get It: How to Succeed in Academia* by Jason Brennan; Johns Hopkins University Press; ISBN-10: 1421437961. Nearly 80,000 students began work on a PhD this year, but "most graduates will never find

a full-time academic job." See, <https://www.press.jhu.edu/>.

*Unacceptable Privilege: Deceit & the Making of the College Admissions Scandal* by Wall Street Journal reporters Melissa Korn and Jennifer Levitz, Portfolio, ISBN: 10: 978-0593087725, \$28.

### WEB SOURCES

**Renovated Finaid/Fastweb.** FinAid.com and sister site Fastweb.com, have renovated their websites to better support students, educators and parents seeking financial aid information. Over 50 million users have consulted these sites for scholarship and financial aid information. See, <https://www.finaid.org/>.

*Advice for Seniors.* A blog by Meagan O'Connor, Entrepreneur-in-Residence at Kaplan offers advice on various issues such as "Planning for When You Don't Know the Plan," and "Should I Take a Gap Year?" See, <https://boostbykaplan.com/blog>.

### Reports

"Segregation Forever?" The Continued Underrepresentation of Black and Latino Undergraduates at the Nation's 101 Most Selective Public Colleges and Universities," a report from The Education Trust.

Among its findings, "Since 2000, the percentage of black students has decreased at 6 out of 10 of these colleges; and that just 14 percent of these colleges enroll representative numbers of Latino students. See, <https://edtrust.org>.

"International Survey of Best Practices in Online Education for Research Universities;" a survey from 48 research universities in the USA, Canada, Australia and UK from the Primary Research Group Inc., 150 pages, ISBN: 978-1-57440-637-5, \$109. See, <https://www.primaryresearch.com/AddCart.aspx?ReportID=611>.

**Subsidized/Unsubsidized Loans.** To read "Forbes Guide to Subsidized and Unsubsidized Federal Loans," go to [www.forbes.com/advisor/loans/subsidized-vs-unsubsidized-student-loans/](http://www.forbes.com/advisor/loans/subsidized-vs-unsubsidized-student-loans/). ■

## NEWS YOU CAN USE

**Is Online Learning More Personal?** "While teaching is physically remote, we are learning that it can be much more personal than on-campus teaching," Caroline Levander, vice president for digital and global strategy at Rice U., and Peter Decherney, U. of Pennsylvania, wrote in their blog series, "Education in the Time of Corona."

"Remote teaching requires us to become more aware of the human condition of our students. When students come to campus, they leave their homes and families largely behind, stepping into a new world where classrooms and dorms obscure the lives they led prior to matriculation. Now we are teaching into the worlds our students have had to return to—the homes they share with others, or the homelessness of earlier years or the hostile home environments they escaped when they came to campus.

"And like our students, faculty, too, are revealing what makes us most human. As we fumble with the mute button on Zoom or ask our students for help with video sharing, we expose our incompetency rather than our mastery of the material."

**PTA Parent Poll Shows Teacher Support.** An impressive 88 percent of parents approve of the job their children's teachers are doing dur-

ing the coronavirus crisis, according to a PTA poll. At the same time, 52 percent expressed very serious concerns about keeping their children's education on track. About 55 percent are concerned that their children are missing out on socialization with other students. And, 38 percent of parents and 37 percent of educators say they need more distance-learning training for themselves.

**School Finances Count.** *Education Week's* Quality Counts project concluded that, adjusted for regional cost differences, national per-pupil spending in primary and secondary schools averages \$13,301, but varies widely by state. Vermont spends the most at \$22,506; Utah spends the least at \$7,932. See, [www.edweek.org](http://www.edweek.org).

**50 Colleges that Pay Off the Most.** CNBC has released its list of which colleges lead to the highest average salaries. The top five private universities? Stanford U., Harvard U., U. of Chicago, Princeton U. and Dartmouth C.

The top five public universities? U. of Washington-Bothell, CUNY-Baruch C., U. of Washington-Seattle, Purdue U. and the U. of Michigan. See, [www.cnb.com/2020/07/28/the-top-50-us-colleges-that-pay-off-the-most-in-2020.html](http://www.cnb.com/2020/07/28/the-top-50-us-colleges-that-pay-off-the-most-in-2020.html).

**Test Optional.** All eight Ivy League colleges have announced that this year they are test optional. "All high school seniors now have a straightforward option: Submit SAT or ACT scores if you wish," said Jeremiah Quinlan, Yale's dean of undergraduate admissions and financial aid. "As with other parts of the application, standardized tests are considered as one component among many in the whole-person review process...."

One critic of standardized testing, Joseph Soares, professor of sociology at Wake Forest U., charges that one of the reasons that tuition-dependent colleges use the test is to disguise keeping their applicant and admit pools disproportionately weighted towards youth from families from high incomes. But Quinlan said that recent Yale analysis indicates that both the SAT and the ACT are the "most predictive elements" of what a college student will do academically at Yale after controlling for a student's background.

However, Shaan Patel, founder of Prep Expert, worries that failure to submit such scores can cheat students out of millions of dollars in scholarships.

Dickinson C. is now "test blind." Manhattan C., Texas Tech U., Southern Methodist U., Virginia Tech U. and Minnesota State U. Moorhead also will be test-optional for those applying for 2021. See, <http://www.fairtest.org>. ■

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