

# College Bound

ISSUES & TRENDS FOR THE COLLEGE ADMISSIONS ADVISOR

Vol. 38, No. 1

September 2023

## Admissions Watch

### Early Reports for Fall 2023

*Welcome Back! This is CB's 38th year of publication! Through thick and thin, we've been with you. We will continue to provide the latest news on issues and trends, this cycle related to the college Class of 2028. We wish you a great new school year.*

**Catholic U. Welcomes Largest Class.** About 5,890 students applied to The Catholic U. of America's Class of 2027. By early August, 888 students had sent in their deposits, the most in five years. About 23 percent of the incoming class is made up of first-generation students. About 27 percent identify as Hispanic. The new class is evenly divided between male and female students.

Catholic U. recorded more student applications from New York, Maryland, Washington D.C. and Virginia, as well as Texas and the South Atlantic states. Over 55 percent of the class posted a 3.5 GPA or higher. About 53 percent said they were interested in architecture, 16 percent in business, and 79 percent in philosophy.

**Elon Greets 1,688 New Students.** The Class of 2027 at Elon in North Carolina moved into their dorms in mid-August. The 1,688 new students, who posted high school GPAs of 4.08, were joined by 87 transfer students. International students from 15 nations joined first-generation students who make up 10 percent of the new class. Some 20 percent of the Class of 2027 are African Americans, Latino/Hispanics, Asian Pacific Islanders, Native Americans, Alaskan Natives, and multiracial students (ALANAM). Students who identify as LGBTQIA account for 12 percent of the new class.

New students signed the Elon Honor Code,

pledging themselves to honesty, integrity, responsibility and respect.

**Georgia's New Students Post 4.0-plus for Seventh Straight Year.** The U. of Georgia welcomed 6,200 new first-year students to its Class of 2027 from a pool of 43,500 applicants. Additionally, 1,700 transfer students began their studies in Athens. New students took, on average, 10 Advanced Placement, International Baccalaureate or dual-enrollment courses and posted an average high school GPA of 4.13, the seventh consecutive year that the average weighted high school GPA of entering students exceeded 4.0.

Members of the Class of 2027 also scored 30 on the ACT and 1339 on the SAT. The new class includes 215 Georgia valedictorians and salutatorians. New students hail from 45 states and 14 nations. However, Georgia residents make up 84.5 percent of UGA's undergraduate student body. Every UGA undergraduate participates in experiential learning through internships, faculty mentored research, travel-study, service learning, student leadership or other activities.

Some 94 percent of first-year students returned for their second year, and 75 percent complete their degrees within four years, 88 percent within six years.

**Kentucky Promotes "Student Success."** The U. of Kentucky welcomed 4,600 freshmen and 550 transfer students this August, the most in school history. They will choose from more than 200 majors and programs spread across 16 degree-granting colleges and 550 student organizations. They also are supported by UK's Office for Student Success.

*continued on page 2*

## Fall Financial Matters

**New Income-Driven Loan Repayment Plan Will Drastically Reduce Student Debt.** "Saving on a Valuable Education," dubbed SAVE, the Biden Administration's newest income-driven student loan repayment plan is "the most affordable repayment plan ever created."

According to President Biden's White House late August briefing, the income-driven repayment plan (IDR) "calculates payments on a borrower's income and family size, not their loan balance.... The SAVE plan will cut many borrowers' monthly repayment to zero, will save other borrowers around \$1,000 a year."

An estimated 20 million-plus borrowers could benefit from SAVE. The plan comes in the wake of the Supreme Court's invalidation of President Biden's earlier plan to eliminate up to \$20,000 in debt for Pell Grant recipients and others.

For example, under SAVE, borrowers earning less than \$32,800 individually or \$67,500 for a family of four will have no monthly repayment bills.

### Impact on borrowers

Most other undergraduate borrowers will see their payments cut in half. Students who borrow less than \$12,000 will see their balances eliminated after 10 years of repayment, instead of the current 20 to 25 years. And, students who do make monthly repayments will not have any interest added to their student loan balance.

Current IDR plans require undergraduate *continued on page 2*

## INSIDE

- More Financial Matters
- New Reports in Counselor's Corner
- Curriculum Capsules
- And, News You Can Use

COLLEGE BOUND: Publisher/Editor: **R. Craig Sautter**, DePaul University; Chief Operating Officer: **Sally Reed**.

BOARD OF ADVISORS: **Lisa Burnham**, Edina High School, Minnesota; **Claire D. Friedlander**, Bedford (N.Y.) Central School District;

**Matthew Greene**, author and educational advisor; **Mary Ann Willis**, emeritus, Bayside Academy (Daphne, Ala.).

## EARLY REPORTS

*continued from page 1*

**Lebanon Valley C.** Lebanon Valley C. in Pennsylvania welcomed 480 new students to its Class of 2027. Another 49 transfer students enrolled as well. LVC touts its College Research First program that gives first-year students the chance to work with faculty research teams during the summer before their first semester.

"I am proud of everyone at The Valley for their tireless work in recruiting this impressive group of scholars," said Edwin Wright, vice president of admissions.

### **Northeastern Attracted 96,000 Apps.**

In Boston, Northeastern U. received 96,620 applications for 2,600 seats in its Class of 2027, a new record. Admitted students posted an average 4.3 GPA. Those who submitted the SAT scored an average 1493.

Northeastern students participate in experiential learning programs in 148 countries. They work in full-time co-op positions ranging from small startups to large multinational corporations. About 63 percent of Northeastern undergraduates receive financial aid, including merit scholarships and need-based grants. They graduate with 36 percent less debt than a decade ago.

"Meeting full demonstrated financial need is critical in attracting students from all walks of life," says Satyajit Dattagupta, chief enrollment officer. "This results in a classroom setting where students bring diverse ideas and push the status quo."

### **Rice Enrolls its Most Selective Class Yet.**

Rice U. in Houston received 31,056 applications for its Class of 2027 and enrolled 1,140 new students, about 8 percent of those who applied to the university. About 20 percent of the new class self-identify as Mexican American, Chicano, Hispanic or Latino, while 12 percent identify as African American. International students account for 13 percent of the new class and hail from 47 countries. The new "Owls" participated in the annual O-Week, which began August 13.

**South Carolina State Students Travel from 26 States.** South Carolina State U. welcomed its new class of 1,600 freshmen from 36 states, the largest new class in 18 years.

"We know that South Carolina is a relatively small state with many universities including eight HBCUs," said SC State's president, Alexander Conyers, "So we expanded our marketplace and are penetrating markets that we haven't seen before. I've told my marketing team that I want to go into states without HBCUs and tell those students ...that SC State is the HBCU for them." ■

## California Admits Record Number of In-State Residents

The U. of California admitted a record number of California freshmen and its largest class of "underrepresented" freshmen in the system's history. A total of 88,285 California residents were admitted as freshmen, 3.5 percent more than in 2022. Overall, UC accepted 129,685 freshmen and 27,761 transfer students.

Chicano/Latino students account for 37.6 percent of that group. The number of American Indian students increased by 11.6 percent over 2022 to 0.7 percent of newly admitted students. The number of admitted Asian American students reached 34.2 percent. White students comprise 19.1 percent of the incoming admit class, while African-American students make up 5.5 percent of those admitted.

## FALL FINANCIAL

*continued from page 1*

borrowers to repay at least 10 percent of discretionary income each month, but the new plan will cut that to 5 percent. The White House estimates the SAVE plan will cost \$156 billion over the next decade.

Borrowers with federal loans that are due repayment beginning in September should submit an income-driven repayment (IDR) application as soon as possible to join the new program. The White House is partnering with organizations ranging from the Student Debt Crisis Center to the National Urban League to notify borrowers of the new option.

### **What is the Percent of Aid Provided?**

According to the National Center for Education Statistics' "2019-20 National Postsecondary Student Aid Study," 72 percent of all undergraduate students received some type of financial aid in 2019-20. Sixty-four percent received grants, 36 percent took out student loans, 5 percent received work-study awards, 2 percent received federal veterans' education benefits and 4 percent had parents who took out federal Direct PLUS Loans.

The average aid received was \$14,100. The average grant was \$9,300. The average amount received from student loans was \$7,900. The average amount earned through work-study programs was \$2,500. The average veterans' education benefits was \$17,900. Parents of undergraduates borrowed an average of \$16,300 through the federal Direct PLUS Loans.

### **Supreme Court Nullifies Student Debt Forgiveness Plan.**

In a six to three decision issued in June, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled unconstitutional President Biden's plan to cancel \$10,000 in debt for former students earning under \$125,000 and \$20,000 for Pell

### **Overall increase**

The number of freshmen from "underrepresented groups" increased by 4 percent. About 45 percent report coming from low-income families. First-generation students account for 44 percent of the newly-admitted students. The number of nonresidents increased by 3.9 percent over last year, while the number of international students increased by 1 percent.

Admission offers to California Community Colleges contracted slightly from last year and stood at 24,729 students.

The U. of California opened its doors in 1869 with just 10 faculty members and 40 students. Today, the UC system has more than 280,000 students and 227,000 faculty and staff, with 2.0 million alumni living and working around the world. ■

Grant recipients. The plan would have brought relief for 45 million borrowers, who owe a total \$1.6 trillion.

As former Speaker of the House Nancy Pelosi warned last year when the plan was under consideration, only Congress, not the President, can initiate budget action. In the wake of the decision, Congressional Republicans charged that the Biden plan was simply a campaign ploy to corral more of the youth vote in the 2022 mid-term election.

Democrats countered that it was an honest effort to help millions of young people saddled with crippling debt. It is doubtful the current Congress will take up the issue. Most students who are struggling with debt were disappointed, dismayed or angry. Also, the two-year pause in student debt repayment, put on hold because of the pandemic, ends this fall.

**\$39 Billion Forgiven.** Following the Supreme Court's decision, the Biden Administration announced that it was automatically eliminating \$39 billion in student debt for 804,000 borrowers by recalculating the amount due from them through income-driven repayment (IDR) plans.

Under the Higher Education Act and Department of Education regulations, a borrower is eligible for forgiveness after making 240 or 300 monthly payments, the equivalent of 20 or 25 years on an income-driven repayment plan or the standard repayment plan.

"For far too long, borrowers fell through the cracks of a broken system that failed to keep accurate track of their progress towards forgiveness," explained U.S. Secretary of Education Miguel Cardona.

In total, the Biden Administration said it has "approved more than \$116.6 billion in student loan forgiveness for more than 3.4 million borrowers." ■

# New Reports on Admissions Trends

## States Preserved Financial Aid Programs During Pandemic.

According to the State Higher Education Executive Officers Association, “Nearly all states were able to keep their state financial aid programs intact during the pandemic, with 14 states reporting new or expanded state programs as a part of their pandemic response.” Only Nevada and Oregon reported a reduction due to COVID-19.

SHEEO’s most recent survey also confirmed that most undocumented students at public institutions are still ineligible for federal aid, as is the case in most states which follow federal guidelines. About a fourth of the states offer some help. But many require undocumented students at their four-year institutions to pay out-of-state tuition.

**Wealth Counts at the Ivy-Plus.** “Children from families in the top 1 percent are twice as likely to attend an Ivy-Plus college (Ivy League, Stanford, MIT, Duke and Chicago) as those from middle-class families with comparable SAT/ACT scores,” according to a new study, “Diversifying Society’s Leaders? The Determinants and Causal Effects of Admission to Highly Selective Private Colleges.”

The high-income advantages are driven by three factors:

- Preferences for children of alumni,
- Weight placed on non-academic ratings, which tend to be higher for students applying from private high schools that have affluent student bodies, and
- Recruitment of athletes, who tend to come from higher income families.

Attending one of these schools “increases students’ chances of reaching the top 1 percent of the earnings distribution by 60 percent, nearly doubles the chances of attending an elite graduate school and triples their chances of working in a prestigious firm.”

The three Harvard researchers who conducted the study note that, “In contrast, children from high-income families have no admissions advantage at the flagship public colleges.” And they concluded that “highly selective private colleges currently amplify the persistence of privilege across generations, but could diversify the socioeconomic backgrounds of America’s leaders by changing their admissions practices.”

**Dropping Legacy Admissions.** Responding to issues of fairness, Wesleyan U. in Connecticut, Carnegie Mellon U. in Ohio, Carleton C. in Minnesota and the U. of Virginia are among the growing number of institutions ending alumni legacy preferences in their admissions practices.

Johns Hopkins U., Amherst C., the U. of California System, the U. of Pittsburgh, MIT, the U. of Chicago, Duke U., Virginia Tech, the U. of Minnesota and Stanford already ended the practice.

Harvard U. was recently sued for alleged discrimination because of its legacy policy. One study found that 43 percent of white students at Harvard are legacies, athletes or related to donors, faculty or staff.

Virginia Tech also recently dropped its Early Decision option. Historically, about 20 percent of Tech’s new class was selected ED. According to Juan Espinoza, associate vice provost for enrollment management, ED “was not a good option for all our applicants, particularly those needing financial aid....”

**“Some College, No Degree” Initiative.** This summer, New Jersey’s Secretary of Higher Education launched an initiative called “Some College, No Degree” aimed at re-enrolling some of the 750,000 New Jersey residents who completed college credits but did not graduate. There is an “urgent need for a comprehensive strategy to support these individuals in completing their higher education journeys,” said Secretary Brian K. Bridges.

To that end, his department is reaching out to “help them overcome barriers to reenrollment, learn about newly available state resources and financial aid, and emphasize how credentials can open new doors of opportunity.” He has enlisted 200 campus partners representing 42 New Jersey institutions of higher education and individuals with experience in advising, admissions and financial aid to counsel potential students, according to [trentonian.com](http://trentonian.com). The initiative has been funded by the state of New Jersey with \$3 million for 2023, and \$8 million for 2024.

**Lake Michigan C. /Arizona State U. Transfer Agreement.** Lake Michigan C. is partnering with Arizona State U. to create a “seamless transfer experience” for its students using MyPath2ASU. Lake Michigan students are guaranteed general admission to ASU and admission into a specific major if they meet all requirements.

**Dual Enrollment Key to College Attendance.** The state of Tennessee reports that 54 percent of its 2022 high school grads attend college. One- and-a-half percent more Tennessee 2022 high school graduates went on to college than the year before, according to the Tennessee Higher Education Commission. All racial groups increased their college participation.

“Dual enrollment programs play a crucial role in fostering college readiness among Tennessee’s high school students.” ■

## COUNSELOR’S BOOKSHELF

*The Career Arts: Making the Most of College, Credentials, and Connections* by Ben Wildavsky; Princeton University Press (November 2023); ISBN: 9780691239798; \$24.95.

*The Future of Advising: Strategies to Support*

*Student Success*, The Chronicle of Higher Education; 69 pages; \$179. Find it at <https://chronicle.com/products/the-future-of-advising>.

**Top 10 Schools for Financial Aid.** *The Princeton Review’s* annual list of top schools

for financial aid, this year in order: Washington U. in St. Louis, St. Thomas Aquinas C. in California, Skidmore C. in New York, C. of the Atlantic in Maine, Wabash C. in Indiana, Emory U. in Georgia, St. Olaf C. in Minnesota, Reed C. in Oregon, Williams C. in Massachusetts, and Gettysburg C. in Pennsylvania. To see the entire list; [www.princetonreview.com/college-rankings?rankings=great-financial-aid](http://www.princetonreview.com/college-rankings?rankings=great-financial-aid). ■



## Supreme Court Outlaws Affirmative Action in College Admissions

As you know, in the case brought against the U. of North Carolina and Harvard U. by Students for Fair Admission, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled six to three that race-conscious admissions practices must cease and applicants must

be assessed on their own personal merits. Among other rationale, it ironically cited Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 that bars discrimination based on “race, color or national origin....”

About 40 percent of U.S. colleges and universities consider race in some way or another during their admissions decisions. In the past, the Supreme Court said that race could be considered among other factors, but that the use of racial quotas was illegal. In an interview after the decision, Chief Justice John Roberts said that the recent decision was not much different than previous ones.

Roberts also wrote, “As all parties agree, nothing in this opinion should be construed as prohibiting universities from considering an applicant’s discussion of how race affected his or her life, be it through discrimination, inspiration, or otherwise.”

### CURRICULUM CAPSULES

**Clinton C.’s New Nursing BS.** This fall, Clinton C. in Rock Hill, South Carolina, launched a new nursing program. “... we hope to enroll and produce a diverse population of nurses to address the national nursing shortage,” said Lester A. McCorn, president.

**Portland State’s Chicano/Latino Studies BA.** After 20 years of offering a minor or certificate in Chicano/Latino subjects, this fall Portland State U. began offering a Bachelor of Arts in the topic. “A major in Chicano/Latino Studies is long overdue, as it gives our expanding Latinx student population a home where

their experiences matter and where they’re validated,” said Cristina Herrera, director.

**SUNY Cobleskill’s BA in Agricultural Communication.** The State U. of New York at Cobleskill offers “the first and only Ag Communication bachelor’s program in the Northeast.”

The interdisciplinary program prepares students for a variety of professions in the agricultural and food systems industry. It combines technical skills in graphic arts with those in communication and agriculture, among others. ■

### Introduced in 1973

President Richard Nixon first introduced Affirmative Action in 1973 to begin to break down historical barriers that excluded African Americans, other minority groups and women from most areas of American economic and social life. Today’s critics say that 50 years of preferences have leveled the playing field and that now minority students are in a position to fairly compete for positions in institutions of higher education that have overcome their racist past. That of course is debatable, but it will mean that reformers need to work harder to upgrade all high schools to make sure minority students indeed are well prepared for college.

Affirmative Action supporters fear the decision will give cover to those who wish to erode campus diversity.

“As a college president and a legal scholar, I am disappointed by this decision and concerned about the implications for higher education and our country...,” Vincent D. Rougeau, president of the College of the Holy Cross, wrote his college community. “When will we realize our nation’s promise of equal opportunity?”

The American Educational Research Association noted that, “Study after study has found that alternatives to race-conscious admissions put in place by states do not have the same impact as race-conscious policies in achieving that crucial diversity.”

### Impact Uncertain

However, the future impact is yet to be determined and relevant statistics will be closely watched. Most elite schools have reported they want diverse classes of new students and are likely to find legal ways to do so.

CB will keep you posted. ■

### NEWS YOU CAN USE

**The Pandemic and the High School Class of 2023.** An ACT Research/Issue Brief, “Influence of the Coronavirus Pandemic on High School Seniors’ Views: College and Career Choices, Challenges and Opportunities” found that 42 percent of the 1,549 high school students interviewed said the pandemic “affected their thoughts on at least one college or career-related choice and that a third “changed their thoughts on two or more choices.”

This class experienced school closings, online learning, lower academic performance, greater mental health issues such as anxiety, stress and depression, but also had more free time for self-reflection, development and exploration.

About 31 percent reported that the pandemic changed their choice of a future career. About 27 percent said they changed their views on what college majors to pursue, while 26 percent changed their decision on what postsecondary school to attend or whether to attend college at all.

Students from families earning less than \$36,000 a year were more inclined to make these changes, including the decision to attend a more affordable two-year institution. To read this entire fascinating report, see [www.act.org/content/act/en/research/pdfs/Covid-Influence-on-College-and-Career-Choices.html](http://www.act.org/content/act/en/research/pdfs/Covid-Influence-on-College-and-Career-Choices.html).

**Confidence in Higher Ed at Record Low.** A June 2023 Gallup Poll of more than a thousand adults found that confidence in higher education as an institution fell to 36 percent. Some 22 percent of responders had “little confidence,” while 17 percent had a “great deal” of confidence and 40 percent had “some” confidence. Higher Education ranked fourth among the U.S. institutions Gallup measured, following small business, the military and police.

**Americans Want Affordable Higher Ed.** According to Varying Degrees, in its seventh annual education survey, six in 10 of the 1,497 adults surveyed said they “believe that government is responsible for funding education after high school because it is good for society.” Eighty-five and 66 percent, respectively, think community colleges and public for-year colleges are worth the cost.

And nearly 80 percent think that “programs should lose eligibility for federal financial aid if they consistently leave students deeply in debt relative to their earnings, or if they consistently fail to help graduates earn more than those who completed only a high school diploma.”

Three quarters of those surveyed believe that “federal and state government and colleges and universities should work to ensure that students from historically underrepresented backgrounds have access to higher education opportunities.” ■

Production: Design | Americom NW. COLLEGE BOUND is published monthly, ten times a year. Inquiries should be directed to P.O. Box 6536, Evanston, IL 60204; 773-262-5810. Annual subscription: \$59 in North America, \$69 for international orders, including airmail postage. See, [www.collegeboundnews.com](http://www.collegeboundnews.com)  
©2023 COLLEGE BOUND PUBLICATIONS, INC. All rights reserved. ISSN 1068-7912 For photocopy rights, please write the Editors.