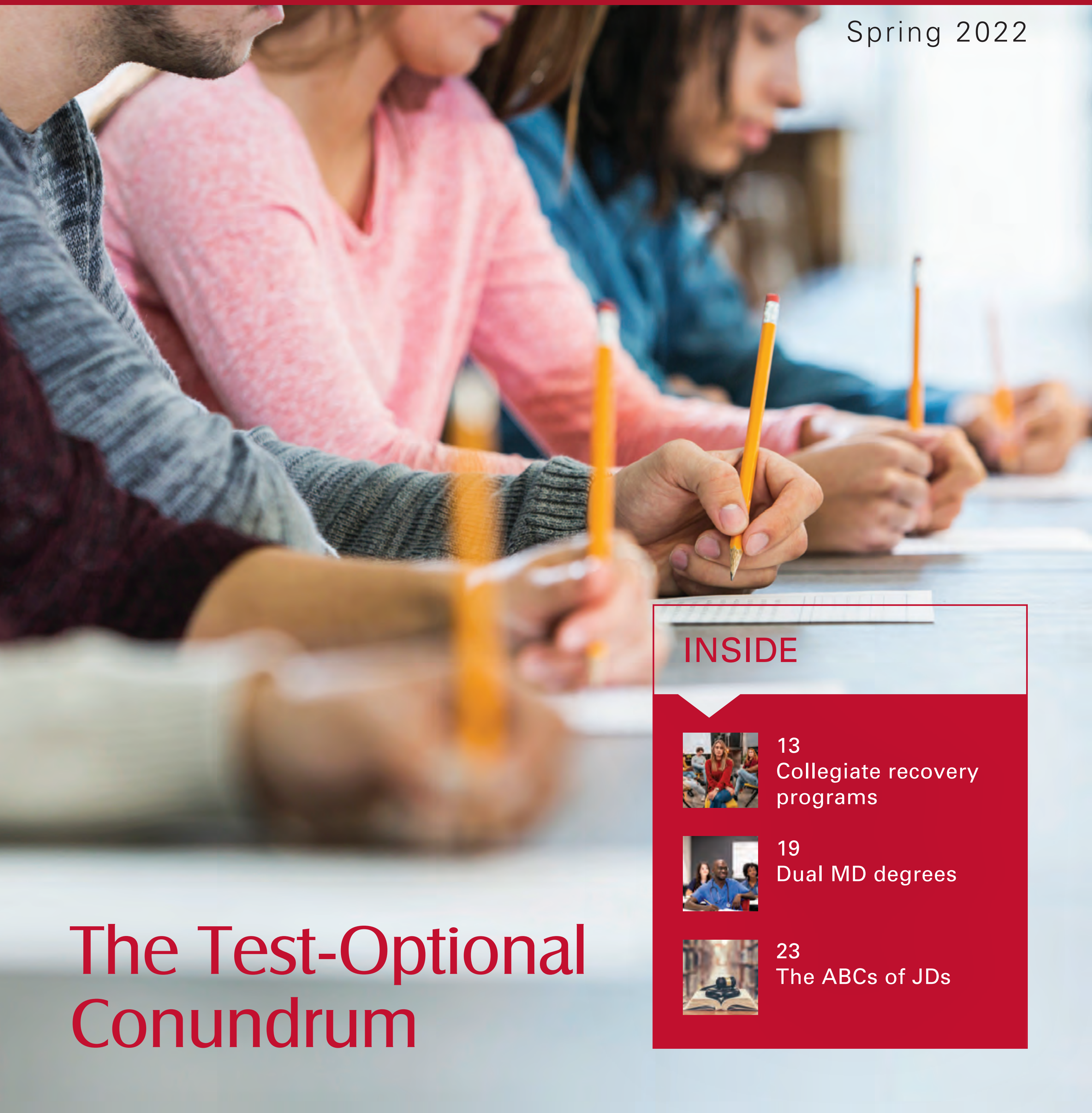
IECA
INSIGHTS
THE JOURNAL OF THE INDEPENDENT EDUCATIONAL CONSULTANTS ASSOCIATION
Spring 2022



The Test-Optional Conundrum

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IECA INSIGHTS

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President's Letter

Kristina Dooley

The Faces of Leadership in IECA

Just over two years ago, Ann Rossbach, IECA past president, reached out to let me know that my name was put forth by the Nominating Committee to become the next president of our Association. I was honored that my peers on the committee felt that I could **lead** our membership, and excited about working with an incredibly strong board and supportive staff in the IECA office. A few months after that initial conversation, our lives changed. The COVID-19 pandemic began to slowly creep around the world and it became clear that what I'd envisioned my term to look like would not be the reality…except for one piece: the abundant **leadership** from our members.

Since those first few months of my tenure in 2020, I have continued to feel grateful for the hundreds of members—both new and long-term—who have stepped up in some way to **lead** and support their peers during the roller-coaster ride of the past two years. From the inception of our original College Conversations, to the establishment of a diverse mix of new Affinity Groups spearheaded by members, our members raised their hands over and over to **lead** new initiatives and groups.

As my tenure as IECA president was coming to a close, the visual learner in me was curious to see a full list of the many accomplishments we've had as an Association since the beginning of the pandemic. With a pen in hand, I began to think through the many things I could add to the list. Five pages of bullet points later—each item flanked by names of those who led each effort—and the magnitude of just how many **leaders** within our membership had stepped up during what most would argue was our most challenging time as an association was staggering. It wasn't just a dozen members who took the **lead**. There were several dozen. There were names that I've known for years, and others who were newly minted members. These **leaders** made a decision that they wanted to support their peers and found opportunity in a time when technology provided a fast turnaround for scheduling gatherings and connecting virtually across time zones. New initiatives literally sprang to life in a matter of days.

Over the past few months, I've continued adding to that original list. The excitement—and demand—for new professional development opportunities and ways to engage with one another has led to newly formed Regional Groups, additional Affinity Groups, and new ways of collaborating across specialty areas. I continue to feel a sense of pride in our Association and our members who take the helm of these initiatives. If I were to share the full list it would certainly fill a full edition of this journal…a tremendous testament to the abundance of **leadership** that exists within IECA.

My hope as I pass the reins and move into my role as past president of the

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In Focus

IECA members hail from 46 US states and 42 countries across the globe, including:

- Australia
- Belgium
- Brazil
- Canada
- China
- Colombia
- Costa Rica
- Denmark
- Dominican Republic
- England
- Ethiopia
- France
- Germany
- Greece
- Guatemala
- Hong Kong
- India
- Italy
- Japan
- Jordan
- Kazakhstan
- Korea, Republic of
- Lebanon
- Mexico
- Montenegro
- Morocco
- Netherlands
- New Zealand
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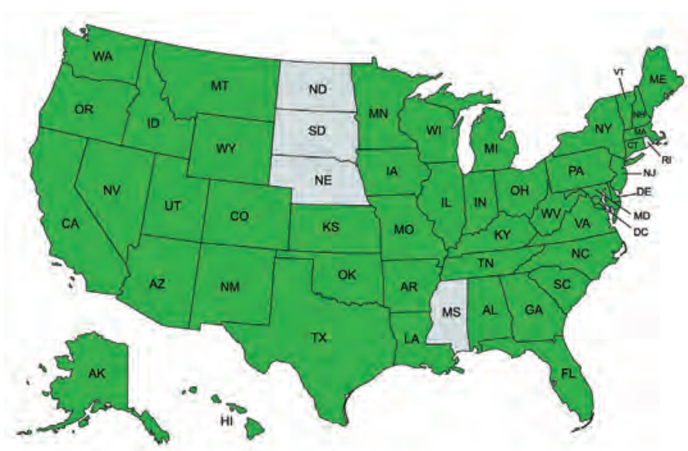
- Switzerland
- Trinidad and Tobago
- Turkey
- United Arab Emirates
- Vietnam



Calendar

For the most up-to-date calendar of events and more details, visit the home page of the IECA Member Network: *network.IECAonline.com*

JUNE

- **01** | Monthly MBA Roundtable
- **08** | Gateway to Graduate School Consulting
- **09** | Black IECs Affinity Group Meeting; Bimonthly New Member Welcome
- **10** | Business Practices Roundtable; Consultants with Young Children Affinity Group Meeting
- **15** | European Regional Group Meeting; Monthly Medical School Roundtable
- **17** | Professional Members Virtual Roundtable
- **24** | Associate & Student Members Virtual Roundtable
- **29** | Global Gathering Open Forum

JULY

- **08** | Business Practices Roundtable; Consultants with Young Children Affinity Group Meeting
- **14** | Black IECs Affinity Group Meeting
- **19** | DEI Book Discussion
- **22** | Bimonthly New Member Welcome
- **25** | IECA Summer Training Institute (Virtual)
- **26** | IECA Summer Training Institute (Virtual)
- **27** | IECA Summer Training Institute (Virtual)
- **28** | IECA Summer Training Institute (Virtual)
- **29** | IECA Summer Training Institute (Virtual)

AUGUST

- **12** | Business Practices Roundtable; Consultants with Young Children Affinity Group Meeting
- **24** | Homeschooling Affinity Group Roundtable
- **26** | Associate & Student Members Virtual Roundtable

IECA Summer Training Institute

Monday, July 25–Friday, July 29, 2022

This five-day Institute (to be held virtually this year) is designed for those who are in the early stages of working as an independent educational consultant (IEC), and for those who are considering becoming an IEC. Whether you are just beginning to think about joining the profession or have been in business for a year or two and seeing clients on a limited basis, the IECA Summer Institute will help to set you up for success as you learn more about managing and promoting a business, working effectively with students and families, building a knowledge of the wide range of options available to students, and establishing a professional, competent, and ethical practice.

The 2022 IECA Summer Training Institute will be virtual due to the ongoing safety and logistical concerns and uncertainty resulting from the COVID-19 global pandemic. All educational sessions will be recorded and available exclusively to registrants through August 31, 2022.

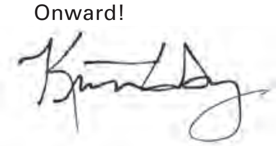
For more information and to apply, visit: link.IECAonline.com/si

President's Letter, from page 4

Association, and as we work our way towards a post-COVID world, is that the excitement of members to help one another continues...and even grows. There are many faces of **leadership** in IECA—all of which hold significant value and importance to the good work that we do as an association and as a profession. I look forward to seeing those five pages of accomplishments grow to 10,15, and 20, and my hope is that the names of those who are stepping up to **lead** these initiatives continues to expand. IECA is YOUR Association and our volunteer **leaders** are key to its value for each and every one of us. If your name is not yet on this growing list, where could it be? That part is up to you.

Thank you, as always, for allowing me to serve as your president for the past two years. I am ever appreciative of the IECA Board of Directors, the IECA staff, our committee chairs, our Regional Group **leaders**, and the many members who have made my tenure one of the true highlights of my time as an IEC. While my term has been filled with twists and turns I would have never predicted, I am incredibly proud of all that we have accomplished. I truly hope you are, too.

Onward!



Kristina Dooley, MA, CEP
IECA President

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The Test-Optional Conundrum

By Lee Shulman Bierer, MEd, IECA (NC); Marla Platt, MBA, IECA (MA); and Amy Sack, PhD, MBA, IECA (FL/CT)

Most independent educational consultants (IECs) have been supportive of colleges and universities moving away from standardized testing to a test-optional (TO) environment which views applicants beyond the measure of SAT/ACT scores. The call for leaving behind test scores—the "defining metric of higher education"—was that colleges could make admission decisions based on "holistic review." Criticism of the utility of standardized tests predated the pandemic for a variety of reasons, concluding that the tests:

- Are biased against underrepresented minorities and students from more modest economic circumstances
- Are an inaccurate predictor of college performance
- Are highly coachable, thus reinforcing a bias in favor of wealthy students
- Increase stress unnecessarily, with many students thinking "this test is going to determine the rest of my life"

As we've observed over the past several years, removing the testing requirement, one of the big barriers to college entry, has in fact boosted diversity in the application and acceptance pools and dramatically increased applications overall.

As you can see in the chart at the bottom of the page, Colgate's application numbers have skyrocketed over 146 percent in the last two years after going TO.

Mari Prauer, Colgate's associate dean of admissions, shared that in addition to increased selectivity, going TO has in fact diversified the freshman class. Colgate's domestic BIPOC numbers have jumped from 25 to 32 percent over the last year.

For colleges, what's not to love? They receive more applications from a more diverse population, deny more students, increase their middle 50 percent test score ranges, and reduce their acceptance rates, thereby enhancing their selectivity. One wonders if before long more and more schools will post SAT 25th to 75th ranges reaching high 700s to 800!

Confusion Around Test-Optional Policies

It is a much murkier discussion for IECs. The burning questions IECs, parents, and students want to better understand are:

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Application Cycle	No. Applications	Acceptance Rate
2019 (pre-pandemic; testing required)	9,000 +/-	24%
2020 (TO)	17,500 +/-	17%
2021 (TO)	21,000 +/-	12%

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Marianapolis is a Catholic co-educational boarding and day school nestled in northeast Connecticut. Located in proximity to major cities such as Boston, New York City, Hartford, and Providence, Marianapolis serves over 300 students from around the globe. Experiential learning is the core of the Marianapolis pedagogy, featuring short-term explorations – offering everything from cranberry bogging to blacksmithing – and a week of travel-based study in the spring. The traditional college-prep curriculum, including 22 AP® courses, can be coupled with targeted tracks in Business & Entrepreneurship, Social Justice, or Innovation. With over 40 clubs and organizations, 12 extracurricular options, and 17 interscholastic programs, Marianapolis has opportunities for every student to make an impact.

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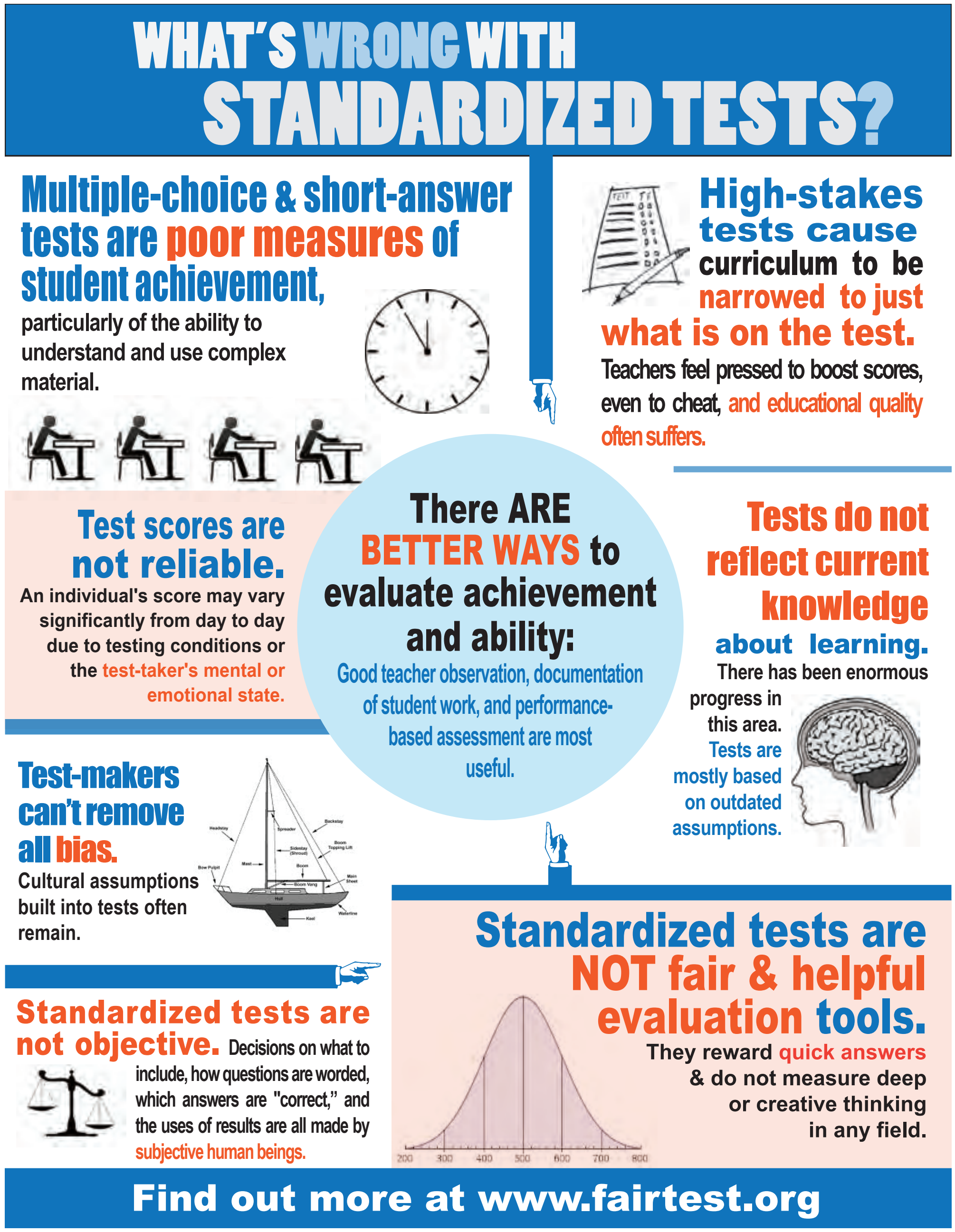
- Does a lack of reported test scores somehow signal to colleges that applicants "tested poorly?"
- What percentage of non-submitters are admitted relative to their numbers in the applicant pool?
- How do we know the assumptions colleges are making when they review a student who has not submitted test scores?
- How do students decide whether or not to send their scores?
- Are the more elite schools "truly" TO or do they really subscribe to a "test-preferred" policy?
- Do applications carry less weight if test scores are not submitted?

The lack of consistency among colleges regarding "to send or not to send" has caused an increasing sense of uncertainty for IECs, parents, and students.



Infographic courtesy of FairTest

Different Approaches to Test Optional

Johns Hopkins University, having extending its TO policy through the 2025-26 application cycle, claims that non-submitters will not face any disadvantage. According to an admissions staffer, "JHU has decided to remain test optional as students have varying and unpredictable circumstances. If an applicant has a test score that adds to the strength of their application, we invite them to share it with us. Half of our applicants in 2020 applied without test scores, and about half of admitted students came from the non-submitter group."

Similarly, Colgate's Prauer shared that Colgate continues to review their applications "holistically" and added "We don't have the time to wonder why 60 percent of our student applicants are not submitting their test scores."

Harvard offers a more nuanced statement attached to its TO policy: "SAT and ACT tests are better predictors of Harvard grades than high school grades, but this can vary greatly for any individual. Students who have not attended well-resourced schools throughout their lives, who come from modest economic backgrounds or first-generation college families have generally had fewer opportunities to prepare for standardized tests. Each application to Harvard is read with great care, keeping in mind that talent is everywhere, but opportunity and access are not."

Harvard suggests that TO may be appropriate for some students—but not all.

MIT describes its policy "as a 'suspension' of their testing requirement, rather than being 'test optional,' because the latter term implies we are agnostic as to whether a student who has taken the exams should submit their scores; as stated above, we encourage students to send scores if they have them, because they help us make better decisions."

If this was not clear enough, there remained little room for doubt after listening to MIT Director of Admissions David duKor-Jackson on a recent webinar describe how they review applications. The takeaway was: *you better send scores or have a great reason not to.**

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What This Means for IECs

Beyond interpreting individual colleges' TO policies, we are focused on helping students interpret their scores. Applicants who submit scores are more likely to share "strong" scores, thus inflating the reported score ranges of admitted students. With the flexibility of TO policies comes the decision of not just whether or not to report scores—but to which colleges. We are spending more time deliberating how a student's test score lands within colleges' reported middle 50 percent ranges and evaluating whether or not their test scores support their application. Consider how those of us are advising applicants to highly selective colleges with highly bifurcated scores, for example, EBRW 650 and Math 780.

> *"Through Feb. 15, 1,161,560 distinct first-year applicants had applied to 853 returning members of the Common App, an increase of 13.9 percent from 1,019,363 in 2019–20. (Due to the pandemic, many of these comparisons are from two years ago.)*
>
> *There were large increases in underrepresented minority and first-generation applicants. Underrepresented minority applicants increased by 17 percent over 2019–20, while first-gen applicants increased 21 percent. The number of first-generation applicants increased at nearly twice the rate of other applicants over the same period."*
>
> Inside Higher Ed*, February 28, 2022*

The decision to report "borderline test scores" becomes even more complicated for students applying to highly selective STEM majors with nuanced application evaluations, such as computer science, engineering, and nursing—majors where applicants are more likely to be evaluated in the context of their test scores, particularly in math. We are finding that TO has also resulted in more Hail Mary applications. Many students who may not have previously considered themselves admissible to uber-selective schools due to their test scores are now saying, "Why not?" For IECs, inflated score ranges and increasing application numbers have clouded our ability to predict outcomes.

We hope that over the next several years TO policies will become clearer and perhaps more consistent, and that the recent surge in applications will level out. In the meantime, we will continue to counsel our students on which individual factors to highlight so that they can submit their most compelling applications.

As IECs, we applaud any policy that levels the playing field for our underrepresented students. Indeed, test optional has made colleges, especially those that are very competitive, more accessible by lowering barriers to entry. And yet, "test optional" in its current form paradoxically poses great challenges to us and to many of our students.

*Update: On March 28, MIT announced a reinstatement of its SAT/ACT requirement for future admission cycles.

Deciding on Collegiate Recovery Programs for Students

By Joanna Lilley, MA, NCC, IECA (MI) and Adrienne N. Frumberg, MA, IECA (CT)

How long does a young adult need to be in treatment before enrolling in or returning to college? How many days, weeks, or months of sobriety should a young adult have before they are "college ready?"

Although statistics will tell you that one year of sobriety in a treatment continuum is often the ticket to a lifetime of recovery, the short answer is that there is no guarantee to sobriety. Especially when we're talking about college-aged young adults, it's hard to wrap anyone's head around the idea of ***forever***. Having this information makes the process of when to return to or enroll in college a challenging subject.

Even with the most solid recovery foundation, a young adult may find themselves in a compromising situation while participating in typical college activities such as sporting events, student group activities, study groups, etc. Transition is hard no matter the situation. And we know the old adage that the opposite of addiction is connection. When you land in a new environment, it's hard sometimes to immediately find connection. For those in recovery, that will be the make or break of them remaining motivated in their recovery as students.

Students will be more successful in maintaining sobriety when their environments have fewer triggers present and the students are truly motivated in their recovery. How can a student set up an environment and support network to maximize the probability of a successful and sober transition? Setting students up for success will involve detailed and advanced planning. The conundrum is: do you pick a college first and then seek out local recovery resources on and off campus, or do you find an established, nationally known off-campus recovery community to engage with, and then enroll in whichever local institutions exist nearby? The key is to select what makes the most sense for the student's needs. It's not a one-size-fits-all admissions recommendation process, as there are several factors that need to be considered.

Here's where this gets tricky. More often than not, parents will be driving a timeline to return (or enroll) and they'll be college-focused, rather than recovery-focused. This is a pretty common situation, and a common challenge for college educational consultants and therapeutic educational consultants alike. From the college consultant lens, conversations about the importance of the recovery community will be key to the college selection. From the therapeutic consultant lens, conversations about "college not going anywhere" are regularly happening. At the end of the day, we have to collectively fight for the safety, well-being, and success of the student. The last thing any

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Adrienne N. Frumberg, Lighthouse Guidance LLC, can be reached at adrienne@lighthouseguidance.co

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Collegiate Recovery Programs, from page 13

professional working with this family wants is to see the student relapse and drop out.

When you find yourself navigating such situations, consider these five steps to a "best fit" in collegiate recovery.

Step 1: Surround the student with a recovery community.

Fight for this because it needs to be the priority! If the family invested a lot of money into treatment, we want to make sure the college search process prioritizes matching the student with a recovery community. Now, what even is a recovery community? A robust recovery community may include:

- Multiple, weekly young-people's recovery meetings in close proximity to campus (AA, SMART, Refuge, Dharma, etc.)
- A sponsor
- Sober fun events on and off campus
- A licensed therapist who is also an addictions counselor
- A psychiatrist if medication management is part of the recovery process

Most colleges do not provide all of these services directly on campus; therefore, it is imperative that the student and parents ensure that all aspects of a robust recovery community are accessible. This will provide the necessary structure and consistency they need to find continued success in their sobriety; only then will students be able to work towards achieving academic success, finding social-emotional wellness, and increasing their sense of independence. Let's help students find their safe place.

Some recovery programs that just so happen to be close to college campuses include Alpha 180 (University of Texas), Green Hill Recovery (NC State), The Haven at College (USC and others), and TreeHouse Learning Communities (Arizona State University).

Step 2: Decide if the student is ready to do college-level work.

Is it more appropriate for the student to take a class or two while acclimating to their new recovery community, or is the student ready to enroll in a part-time or full-time course load? Frequently, there is an invisible pressure to reenter college more quickly than a student is ready for due to pressure from outside influences (parents, peers, social media, and more). It's important to take small steps first. Don't give in to the temptation to run before you're ready to walk! Again, college isn't going anywhere.

Step 3: Identify supports on campus.

If the student wants to reenter college, will they seek a recovery community both off campus and on campus? Few colleges offer collegiate recovery programs on campus through supported sober living options, meetings, planned sober activities, and safe spaces. Information about recovery communities can be found directly

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Collegiate Recovery Programs, from page 15

on college websites or on the Association of Recovery in Higher Education (ARHE) website. There are significant differences in what a college provides for students. On the ARHE website there are 143 institutions that identify as having a College Recovery Program (CRP). Of those, maybe 10 actually have well-established university funding that includes housing, scholarships, activities, recovery meetings, and counseling, for a large student group. Just because a college or university says that they have a CRP, don't take it at face value. With the COVID-19 pandemic, many schools saw their funding cut and/or their student community decrease significantly. Make sure the family is doing their due diligence to ensure those on-campus resources truly exist!

Reputable colleges with established CRPs include Augsburg University, Kennesaw State University, Penn State University, Rutgers University, Texas Tech University, and the University of Colorado Boulder, among others.

Step 4: Set up support on the academic front.

Whether the student is enrolling for the first time or reentering college, they may need to sharpen their student skills; research options for writing center sessions, math tutoring, and/or time management/executive functioning skills. Often, those in recovery have a hard time juggling multiple things at once without letting one of the balls drop. That ball dropping leads to self-shame, which can lead to a relapse. Be proactive and make sure the student gets more coaching and tutoring than they think they need on the front end. Discipline and structure will help every student remain on task, and subsequently complete semesters they are proud of academically. If the student recently received psychological testing while in treatment or in school, make sure to seek services from the office of disability or accessibility to make sure they're receiving any necessary accommodations.

Step 5: Guide the student in making a thoughtful decision.

There is a lot of reflection that must go into the student's decisions—first, whether to attend/return to college or not, and then where to go and using what resources to support them on their journey. We can't emphasize enough that you have to consider the student's overall well-being in making the final decision. Ask: Are they really ready to be back on campus? Are they truly motivated in their recovery? Are the parents prematurely driving this timeline and process? Fight for the student. Encourage the student to find their voice in this! Sometimes students are blinded by the need to be "in college," when, in reality, being back in college is the worst place for them at that moment. Success is not just getting into college—it is also thriving once there. Think through this with the student, and then decide what makes the most sense.

Note: We didn't preface this article to state we would be using the terms recovery and sobriety synonymously. To anyone who understands substance abuse recovery, you know these words are not synonyms. For more in-depth information about the difference, please reach out to us.

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Earning a Dual MD Degree

By Julie Raynor Gross, EdM, MBA, CEP, IECA (NY)

Although the majority of medical students earn a traditional MD degree, students who graduate with dual degrees are uniquely poised to tackle some of healthcare's most pressing challenges. According to recent data from the Association of American Medical Colleges, 10 percent of MD grads earn a second graduate degree, most commonly a PhD (Doctor of Philosophy), an MPH (Master of Public Health) or an MBA (Master of Business Administration).

Such dual degrees give physicians multifaceted—and often, bigger-picture—insights. The MD-MPH examines issues such as health education, controversial public health reform, and disparities in access to healthcare. The MD-MBA trains students to manage issues such as staffing, finance, and communication at medical facilities. And the MD-PhD degree enables students to have dual careers as physicians and researchers, and to translate between these two worlds.

In order to understand the experience of earning these three most common dual MD degrees, as well as the career options they open up, I had in-depth conversations with three physicians who'd each chosen a different educational path. It's my hope that their profiles, below, will help you guide prospective and current medical students toward a dual medical degree, should it suit their interests and ambitions.

Marie Csete, MD, PhD

Marie Csete always knew she wanted to go to medical school, but as an undergraduate at Princeton University majoring in music, "I really didn't have the confidence to apply to MD-PhD programs, and I really didn't know much about them," she says. After medical school at Columbia University, from which she graduated in 1979, though, she had the opportunity to conduct both clinically based and laboratory research in a research fellowship and then as an assistant professor, and discovered she loved it. "Once I moved to UCLA, I was doing laboratory-based research without, really, any formal training," she says. After she was promoted at UCLA, she was offered a sabbatical year, and approached the chair of biology at the California Institute of Technology. "I said, 'I want to learn as much molecular biology as possible, and I'm a hard worker. Throw me in a lab.'" At that point, Csete was in her early 40s, and realized: "If I don't stop and train, I'm not

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Julie Raynor Gross, Collegiate Gateway LLC, can be reached at julie@collegiategateway.com

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going to ever have the opportunity again." So, it was in that lab at Caltech that Csete ultimately earned her PhD in 2000, while still working part-time providing anesthesia for patients undergoing liver transplantation at UCLA.

For students who earn a joint MD-PhD from the get-go, rather than sequentially, the process is a bit different: students often undertake part of their MD, jump out to earn their PhD, then resume and complete their medical degree. The problem with this approach, Csete says, is that, during their PhD years, these students haven't yet accrued the substantial clinical knowledge that comes with residency training. In this sense, Csete's approach—embarking on her PhD as an experienced clinician—was, unintentionally, a blessing, as it allowed her to approach her research from a distinctly clinical perspective.

Some MD-PhDs, Csete says, are successful researchers who do no clinical medicine; others are successful clinical researchers without a lab; and yet others are able to combine both. "That's hard," she says, primarily because grants that fund labs are highly competitive. Not many people with this training, in her view, can sustain productive careers in research and clinical medicine because most are essentially managing two very full-time jobs. As for Csete, at this point in her career, she is serving as the CEO of ConeSight Therapeutics, a startup company out of Harvard working to transplant cells that make cone photoreceptors to treat blindness due to inherited retinal diseases. "Ultimately, we'd also like to use these cone cells with other cell products to address blindness in the context of macular degeneration," she says.

Having both an MD and a PhD, Csete says, has been vital. Csete says her dialogue with the professor of ophthalmology who conducted the foundational research is possible because of their similar PhD training. Her MD training and experience in clinical transplantation, on the other hand, informs her understanding of how to deliver these cells into patients safely and effectively. "PhD language and MD language are two completely different ways of looking at a problem," she says. "The MD-PhDs are the critical translators of medical research."

Peter Slavin, MD, MBA

Peter Slavin's pursuit of a dual MD degree was, like Csete's, a sequential one: he earned his MBA from Harvard Business School in 1990, six years after he'd earned his MD from Harvard Medical School. He'd spent the year after college working in Washington, DC, and started medical school thinking he'd eventually combine a career in medicine with public policy. His plan was, after he earned his MD, to enroll in a master's program in either public health (an MPH degree) or public policy (an MPP). After medical school, though, his inside view of hospital management during his internal medicine residency at Massachusetts General Hospital (MGH) changed his mind. "I became more interested in management than in policy and thought it would be a more interesting and satisfying career," he says. "In management, I found that people were working on many of the same issues, albeit on a smaller scale—not nationally, but within a particular organization—but it was easier to connect the dots between your work and a certain outcome." So, when he'd finished his medical residency, Slavin spent a year doing a combination of clinical care, research, and management at MGH to make sure that management was something he enjoyed. It was, so he enrolled in business school the following year.

After business school, Slavin served as chief medical officer at MGH, then as president of Barnes-Jewish Hospital in St. Louis, Missouri, for three years. After that, he became chairman and chief executive officer of the Massachusetts General Physicians Organization for another three years before becoming the president of MGH, a role he held from 2003 through 2021. Most hospital leaders in the US, he says, are not physicians or clinicians; their graduate degrees are more often in business or public health. "Having a joint MD-MBA degree is far from a requirement to run a hospital in this country," he says. There are also many careers beyond running a hospital that MD-MBAs go on to have, such as healthcare delivery, consulting, biotech, finance, and more. "The healthcare industry is vast," he says.

Slavin feels that, especially early on in his career, having the dual degree opened doors for him. Beyond that, understanding physicians' work in detail has helped him in his management role. "Knowing what it takes, on the ground, to deliver great healthcare to people is a very helpful knowledge base to have when you're trying to lead one of these organizations," he says. "Being a clinician is no guarantee to being good at healthcare management. But overall, it's helpful."

He also was able to see, via his training, important parallels between medicine and business. "In medicine, you're primarily trained, when you're confronted with a human being who's not feeling well, how to systematically go about figuring out what's wrong with them and then figuring out what treatment plan is the most safe and effective. And in business—at least, what I took away from business school—was learning how, when you're faced with a business problem, to go about systematically understanding what the cause is and how to go about coming up with a safe and effective treatment plan," he says. "In one case the unit of analysis is an individual and in one case an organization; and in one case the schools of thought are anatomy and physiology and the heart and the brain, whereas in the other you're thinking about the organization, finances, strategy, operations. The domains are different, but the fundamental thinking is very similar."

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Yair Saperstein, MD, MPH

Before Yair Saperstein earned his MD from Albert Einstein College of Medicine in 2016, he figured that, if he earned a second degree, it would be a PhD. During medical school, though, he transformed START Science, a nonprofit he'd started in college that sends college volunteers into public schools to teach science, into a 501(c)(3), and it went international. He also started a second nonprofit, TEACH, which enriches the educational experience for pediatric patients in hospital playrooms. Beyond his nonprofit work, Saperstein became involved in global health research, and graduated from Albert Einstein with a distinction in research. But, he says, "Once I hit residency, it was like the world came to a stop. Everyone was only focused on clinical medicine." Saperstein felt acutely the lack of interest in a holistic model, so he started to ask around about other opportunities. SUNY Downstate, where he was completing his residency, offered him a partial scholarship to earn an MPH. "I realized that this was the answer I was looking for," he says. "I didn't just want to be a robot doing the work. I wanted to understand what goes into it from a higher level."

Three years later, he'd gained enough insight to start his third company, avoMD. As he progressed in his clinical career, he was elected as chief resident and inducted into Alpha Omega Alpha, the honor society for medicine, as a resident for his teaching. Yet, he says, "I felt like I didn't have access to the information I needed, both from the hospital standpoint and from the clinical standpoint." Different hospitals Saperstein worked in had completely different workflows for each diagnosis—workflows he was supposed to have memorized, even though they were not standardized and constantly changing. "How in the world do I keep all of this in my head for all of the different conditions?" he wondered. "And how do the hospitals expect to have this standardized from an administrative perspective?"

As a clinician, Saperstein started to create notecards he could carry with him with algorithms for each condition and hospital. When there were too many notecards, he took photographs of them; his friends asked for copies, and he started sending them around. "For years, I had been dreaming: is there some kind of solution that can help me be a better doctor?" He joined with a fellow physician who was a software engineer to create avoMD, which transforms clinical workflows and pathways into an app. "But," says Saperstein, "it is the hospitals and clinics that need their physicians to be practicing standardized effective care." He realized that the buyers of the software, the administrators of health systems, are different from the users, the clinicians, through his public health training.

People who hold both an MD and an MPH, Saperstein says, go on to have a wide range of careers. Some focus more on clinical medicine, others more on the administrative aspects.

People who hold both an MD and an MPH, Saperstein says, go on to have a wide range of careers. Some focus more on clinical medicine, others more on the administrative aspects. "Overall, it makes for well-rounded people, because you have the perspectives from many sides," he says. For Saperstein, having both an MD and an MPH has been crucial in paving the way for avoMD. "Being involved in clinical medicine"—Saperstein is affiliated with Mount Sinai Hospital, and still practices every month—"helps me understand the problem," he says. "There's no way I can create a health tech innovation by coming from the outside without understanding the inside." As for the MPH, "If I'm only inside, and I don't have this outside perspective, and I don't understand the system, and I don't understand the administrative aspect and policy and public health, then I'm just going to focus on the narrow clinical tasks. I'm not going to focus on the broader impact," he says. "So, the two of them together inform my process and allow me to communicate well with people who are involved."

* * *

The three dual MD degrees I've outlined above are far from the only options available. Medical doctors also go on to earn JDs, MS (Master of Science) degrees, MPP (Master of Public Policy) degrees, and more. Plus, although the three people I've profiled earned their degrees sequentially, others—who know from the beginning which dual degree they want to pursue—earn both at the same time.

Pursuing a dual MD degree is time-consuming and can be expensive, but for students with specialized career goals, it might be the best option. Each person I spoke with felt strongly that the combination of two degrees not only enabled them to meet their ambitions, but also enriched their approach to addressing healthcare issues. As you advise prospective medical students, consider whether an additional avenue of study might enable them to more successfully meet their ambitions

The ABCs of JDs: Key Points for Advising Pre-Law Students

By Hanna Stotland, JD, IECA (IL)

With the wide range of student interests, almost every college independent educational consultant (IEC) is going to advise prospective pre-laws. Given this, we should all know some basics about law school admission—and legal careers—that will help us serve this population better.

Some 2,300 years ago, the medical profession came up with a principle that is just as valuable for guiding prospective law students as it is for young doctors: "First, do no harm." Going to law school does cause harm to a lot of students. Six-figure debt is very common. A student who invests three years and the price of a house who then can't pass the bar exam, or who can only find legal work that pays too little to service the loans, is far worse off than if they had never gone to law school. You may have heard the truism: "You can do anything with a law degree!" There's some truth to that; I'm one of many IECs with a JD, and there are lots of us in journalism, in Hollywood, etc. But I went to Harvard Law, and my parents paid. A student with those privileges can afford to go to law school just for the intellectual adventure. Most students need to do a cold, mathematical cost-benefit analysis.

Brand Names Matter

The essential insight we need to provide in order for them to make that analysis is this: law is a hierarchical profession. We rank everything, from fields of practice to law firms to judicial circuits.

Many IECs have read Frank Bruni's outstanding book, *Where You Go Is Not Who You'll Be*. It's a great tool for helping parents understand how little a college's brand name matters in comparison to the importance of a student's work during college.

When it comes to law school, though, where you go kind of *is* who you'll be. Yes, every law school can point to alumni who are financially successful, widely respected, saving the world, or all three. My father, valedictorian of his bottom-tier law school in 1964, did just fine. But unlike a college degree, or even a medical degree, the prestige of your law degree follows you throughout your legal career. Some fields of practice are primarily available to graduates of elite law schools, or to the straight-A students at mid-ranked law schools. On the flip side, at some law schools, barely half of graduates are

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able to find jobs practicing law at all. So it's wise to pay a lot of attention to law school rank.

Numbers Come First

How do you get into elite law schools with outstanding career outcomes? College GPA and LSAT score, together, account for about 90 percent of variance in admission outcomes. While there can be a fair amount of leeway for underrepresented minority and first-generation students who present their stories well, this is a numbers-driven process. All other qualifications—work experience, undergraduate major, essays, recommendations, even a PhD—operate in the margins. *Legally Blonde* got this right: Elle Woods, with a 4.0 GPA and +99th percentile LSAT, is going to get into Harvard Law, even if she majored in fashion merchandising at East Nowhere State instead of "CULA." Given the same LSAT score, Elle has better odds of getting into Harvard Law than a student with a 3.5 in chemical engineering from MIT. Why? Because *US News* rankings factor in the GPA and LSAT of each law school's incoming class, with no weighting based on college or major. And *US News* rankings are life and death for law schools.

You may have seen statistics showing that a disproportionate number of students at top law schools went to fancy colleges. That's true, but it's mostly because those fancy colleges are full of terrific test-takers with lots of ambition…in other words, ideal future law students.

You may have seen statistics showing that a disproportionate number of students at top law schools went to fancy colleges. That's true, but it's mostly because those fancy colleges are full of terrific test-takers with lots of ambition…in other words, ideal future law students. There are also many political science majors in law school, but there too, the pattern is driven by the choices students make, not by law schools preferring to admit those students. There are no majors, or even courses, that law schools favor. A course in formal logic will help students get ready for the LSAT, and writing-intensive courses prepare them to excel in law school, but these are neither required nor even recommended for admission purposes.

Scholarships

Just as numbers drive law school admission, they also drive merit scholarships. Need-based aid is less available at law schools than we are used to seeing at the college level; there is no law school equivalent to the list of 20-plus colleges that guarantee to meet demonstrated need for every admitted student. Furthermore, even at Harvard, Yale, and Stanford Law, the best need-based aid packages still require loans. On the other hand, merit money is plentiful at almost every law school outside of those three. It serves the exact same role it does in the undergraduate world: helping to pull in better-qualified students than the school believes it could attract at full price. A student with strong numbers and savvy advising should be able to generate a range of options, including highly ranked law schools at full price, somewhat lower-ranked schools at a discount, or schools a tier or two below for free, possibly including a stipend for living expenses.

What About Academics?

One bright spot in this grim picture is that the intrinsic quality of the education at US law schools is outstanding across the board and varies little from tier to tier. It's extremely competitive to get a teaching job at any law school, so the faculty members are well qualified everywhere, and the rigor and content of the curriculum are largely similar at all law schools. Outside of the 14 or so schools with truly national name brands, geography is an important factor. If a student wants to become a public defender in Kentucky, going to law school at the University of Kentucky is likely a better bet than a higher-ranked (but not top-10) law school.

Some schools attempt to distinguish themselves from their peers by hyping the depth of their offerings in fields like intellectual property or environmental law. We're all familiar with this type of branding, and at the undergraduate level, a student with strong career goals might wisely forgo an Ivy to study petroleum engineering at LSU or hospitality management at UNLV. But at the law school level, these specialties don't justify choosing a much lower-ranked law school. It's only a reasonable criterion to consider when a student is deciding between otherwise similar law schools. For law school, ranking matters; location matters; price matters. Academic variations mostly don't.

Conclusion

Much of what I've said runs counter to our instincts as IECs. Most of us believe in the liberal arts ideal and have experienced the personal and intellectual growth that comes through challenging yourself in college. We don't think education can or should be reduced to an ROI calculation. We don't want to encourage students to choose a college for its low academic pressure or a major because of its easy As. But we have to find a balance between expressing these values and enabling pre-law students to make informed decisions that will impact their future. A lot of would-be pre-laws should not go to law school. Facing the truth about which fights are winnable is a critical lawyering skill.

We All Need Mentors

By David Beecher, IECA (CT)

David Beecher, Sound Consulting, can be reached at dbeecher@ soundconsulting.com

Recently independent education, the consulting profession, IECA, and I all lost a giant among us. Faith Howland, one of the founding members of IECA and a role model for so many of us in this profession, passed away after a distinguished career and wonderful life. The profile of her in the fall 2021 issue of *Insights* (*link.IECAonline.com/ insights-fall-2021-members*) speaks to her integrity, intelligence, and compassion. She was a visionary, with Michael Spence (Emeritus, VT), running one of the most successful consultancies in the country and serving as a resource and mentor to hundreds, if not thousands, of students. When I first entered the boarding school admissions world in the early 1980s, Faith was one of the first people to lend a helping hand, showing me the ropes and providing a patient and understanding ear for my many questions and concerns. I owe a debt of gratitude to Faith for the wisdom, humor, and intelligence she shared with me over three decades of working with her as a boarding school director of admission and headmaster. I know I am not alone in that sentiment. I was blessed to have her as one of my mentors.

As educators or as independent educational consultants (IECs), we often speak to our students/ clients about the wisdom and value of having one or more mentors in their lives. We coach our students/clients to search out women and men of integrity, experience, and compassion to help guide them in loco parentis through the challenges and opportunities they face in school, their social lives, and their activities. We extol the virtues of collecting wisdom and speaking with folks who have been through life's many twists and turns—mentors who can help young adults consider all sides of an issue, leading to a wise decision. We tell our students/ clients that it is not a sign of weakness to reach out to a life guide, but rather a sign of strength to be smart enough to know when you need help and to know which mentor to guide you in that moment.

So why is it then, that we as adults and professionals get to the point where we think we can and should do everything on our own? Why is it that our sense of confidence and our belief in independent achievement keeps us from seeking guidance from sage professionals, wise experienced colleagues, friends, or family who can help us make better decisions, find a new outlook on an issue, or perhaps keep us from making a

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mistake? Is it embarrassment or a lack of confidence that makes us think this is a sign of weakness that will be noticed by colleagues, or perhaps our supervisor or the parent who hired us? Is it a situation where once we've had a successful career, we think we know it all and need no help?

I have a very simple, clear, straightforward view about mentoring: I believe that no matter what age or stage we are in life—personal and professional, all of us need mentors in our lives. We all need some level of support, guidance, and compassion in our lives.

As each day I more fully experience the educational consulting world after more than three decades of work in independent schools and one college, I see three main areas of need where a valued mentor can provide expert help to me, and I am sure others.

Expertise

No one person can know all there is to know about school, college, or therapeutic consulting. Each organization to which we recommend our clients consider is different and just when we believe we come to know them well, they have naturally evolved. Nor can we, no matter our degrees earned or experience gained, know all there is to know about every young person's educational background, neurological condition, etc. To best serve our clients, we rely on colleagues from all walks of education to provide expertise and content. Kim Loughlin, assistant head for enrollment at Bement School, comments, "I attribute much of my success and satisfaction in work to the incredible mentors I have had along the way. Both Jan Scott and William Graham provided guidance, advice, answers, and support….so much that helped me to grow." How many of us (hundreds I assert) have benefited from the wisdom of our living legend, Steve Antonoff (CO)? I have, both as a head of school and now as an IEC. Steve is THE wealth of information for anyone in the college consulting world, and his brilliance is only outdone by his care and concern for the well-being of all of us.

I have a very simple, clear, straightforward view about mentoring: I believe that no matter what age or stage we are in life—personal and professional, all of us need mentors in our lives. We all need some level of support, guidance, and compassion in our lives.

Experience

All of us who enter this vocation come to it with a wealth of experience. The variety of that experience among our membership continues to amaze me. And yet, any of us can benefit from the experience of another member, a veteran of the college, therapeutic, or school business—someone who has walked in shoes we have not. During the latter half of my 17 years as a headmaster, I was blessed to hire a young admission director, Kristen Naspo (CT). I think Krissy would offer that I was not just her supervisor but a valued mentor as well. We developed a close, respectful relationship. She left the school admission world to work for another IECA legend, Cammie Bertram (CT). Krissy, the 2021 IECA Foundation chair, has—as all who follow schools know—developed into a truly outstanding IEC. Now in just my third year as an IECA member, I often reach out to Krissy for her view on topics of need in my consulting work. Is it strange to some that the mentee is now mentoring her former mentor? Maybe. But not to me. I value her experienced hand in helping me solve issues of importance to my clients and me. IECA member Theodra Washington (MD) puts it beautifully this way: "As a mentor, I have found that I strike gold when a natural 'give and take' relationship has been established between my mentee and me."

Understanding

As we all know, there are many situations where we may not need expert counsel or content experience. We just may need a colleague, a friend, a mentor to listen, understand, and support. We may just need a kind word, a patient thought, or help to keep us moving forward with a smile on our face. Over the years as a school administrator, I had a secret weapon in my arsenal: Frank Perrine, the longtime legendary head of Foote and Fessenden schools. His humor, his unflinching support, and his complete honesty helped guide me. As both a headmaster and an IEC, I have benefited from the kind, compassionate, devoted support of such IECA 'gold' (to use Theodra's word) as: Paula Feldman (Emeritus, CA), Jean Hague (Emeritus, FL), Jane Kolber (Emeritus, NY), Lloyd Paradiso (PA), CEO Mark Sklarow, and so many others.

I am continually impressed by the quality of our membership. IECA members routinely change lives. You provide hope where perhaps it had vanished. You help build our future. And yet, we are not superhuman. We all need mentors in our lives to do our work, to do it well, and, to do it at the level of success that we all expect of ourselves. If you have one or more mentors, cherish them and thank them. If you are mentoring another, know you are appreciated. And most importantly, if you need a mentor, ask for help. Amazing colleagues are just a phone call away.

Volunteer to strengthen the IEC profession!

Become an official mentor through the IECA Mentor Match program. You can find details about becoming a mentor or mentee on the Member Network: *network.IECAonline.com*

Consultants Who Give Back

By Ann Rossbach, IECA Foundation Board Chair, and Elizabeth Hall, IECA Foundation Board member


Ann Rossbach

Over the last few years, we have all become aware of the divide within our country. We have found ourselves in conversations with friends and colleagues who have noted with frustration that our more insular society seems less inclined to get involved in charitable and communal support and giving. We also know many people are *increasing* their charitable giving and supporting new causes because of COVID-19 and the impact this has had on our society. What better time to consider ways that you, too, can get involved in supporting an important charitable organization!

Many of us would like to do more pro bono work of our own within our practices, but with the demands on our time and resources, we find that we are limited in how much of this work we can accomplish. This is one more reason why, as members of IECA, we should be proud that we have a foundation that is associated with our membership.

Why do we support the IECA Foundation?

In so many ways, the IECA Foundation (IECAF) reflects the values that drive our work as IECs to support students in making educational choices. The IECAF board is comprised of our colleagues who are all dedicated to the mission of the Foundation; this board works diligently to attract potential grant recipients (often as referrals from our members), rigorously vet potential recipients, and follow recipients' successes. For those of you who may be unfamiliar with the Foundation or its impact, in 2021 the organization provided $96,000 to 20 organizations in 16 states, support which was especially meaningful during COVID. You can read about some of these success stories and see the impact of our financial assistance on our website: *IECAfoundation.org/grant-winners*

The challenge we face and our approach

Since its inception 25 years ago, the Foundation has relied on support from IECA members, some generous therapeutic programs, and a small group of dedicated individuals who recognize the impact of our grant funding. But to be sustainable, the IECA Foundation needs to expand its donor base and find new ways to fundraise.

Elizabeth and I have utilized some creative ways in our own practices that you might like to consider to broaden the scope of donors. This year I strived to serve more students and families pro bono. When I did not reach my goal, I decided to ask one of my clients to consider making a donation to the IECA Foundation rather than paying me directly for my services. Once the family read about the Foundation, the parent readily agreed and *then* got matching funds from her employer! This was a three-way win: my fees went to the Foundation, serving those I couldn't reach; the parent became more educated about the Foundation; and the matching funds doubled the impact of the donation.


Elizabeth Hall

Likewise, Elizabeth was asked by family friends to assist with their son's urgent therapeutic placement. Taking on this family as a paying client did not feel right to Elizabeth. When they insisted on paying her, she suggested they instead consider a donation to the Foundation on behalf of her work. They were delighted at this notion of "giving back" and made a generous donation to the Foundation in acknowledgement of Elizabeth's work. Since then, they've mentioned they plan to continue their philanthropic support of the Foundation now that they are familiar with our important work!

Another family who wanted to give something in return for my work chose to make a donation at a level comfortable for them. On Giving Tuesday last year, Elizabeth and other Foundation board members reached out to family and friends to ask for their support of the Foundation, yielding new donors and increasing the organization's visibility. In each of these situations, Elizabeth and I were proud to share our dedication to the Foundation that does such purposeful work, and to find a way to support it.

This is where you come in!

By becoming an active supporter of the Foundation, you can make a real difference in the lives of students you might not otherwise reach. And, as demonstrated above, there are many creative ways you can get involved. Consider asking your clients, family, and friends to support the Foundation through your work! This year, join fellow IECs in leveraging our knowledge and resources via the Foundation to help deserving students and families. Donate to our Foundation today—because these educational programs and the students they support just can't wait!

Connect with Your Colleagues in an IECA Affinity Group

IECA Affinity Groups are run by IECA members with similar interests in a specific topic. These member-led groups provide an opportunity to connect with a smaller group of your IEC colleagues to share knowledge, ideas, and goals.

To join an existing group and to see the steps required to form a new one, visit: *link.IECAonline.com/affinity*

You can also join Affinity Group discussions on the Member Network: *network.IECAonline.com/communities/affinitygroups*

IECA Affinity Groups include:

Asana Users
Best Notes Users
Black IECs
Cialfo Users
Consultants with Young Children
Day School Consulting
Gap Year Information & Resources
GuidedPath (powered by MyCCA) Users
Homeschooling
IECs Advising College-Bound Student Athletes
IEC Parents with Struggling Children
IECs Who Give Back
Illinois Legislation Response
Intellectual Disabilities & ASD
LatinX/Hispanic IECs
LGBTQIA & Allies
Rural/Small Town Students
Supporting Students Crossing Borders
Technology for IEC Practices
TestPreppers
Transfer Students
Working with Chinese Students and Families
Working with Gifted/Talented and Twice Exceptional Students

Introductions

Please Welcome IECA's New Professional Members

Mary Jane (MJ) Breinholt (MD), who was previously an Associate member, comes to independent educational consulting from a 25-year career in higher education, including admissions at Harvard and as an adjunct professor at UC Berkeley, Georgetown, and the University of Maryland. She holds a PhD in urban planning from UCLA, an MPA from Harvard, and a BA from Pomona College. Breinholt was a Fulbright Scholar in Jakarta, Indonesia.

Breinholt earned an IEC Certificate from UC Irvine Extension and attended IECA's 2014 Summer Training Institute.

Mary Jane (MJ) Breinholt
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Nicole Busby (CT) has been an IEC for five years and was an Associate member. Previously, she worked as a management consultant and digital brand strategist and served as an alumni admissions council director.

Busby graduated with Honors from Northwestern University (BA) and with Distinction from the UCLA Extension College Counseling program. She also serves as a volunteer with the ABC House, New Canaan Community Foundation, and National Charity League. She is a member of NACAC.

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Cristine Butler (CA) has been an IEC for five years. Previously, she worked in finance as well as product placement and marketing. Butler was assistant editor of Ethan Sawyer's book, *College Admissions Essentials*. She has volunteered with the WISH Education Foundation and at Wm. S. Hart High School.

Butler holds a BS from California State University and a Certificate in College Admissions Counseling with Honors from UCSD Extension. She is a member of NACAC and WACAC.

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Jennifer Hendricks (TX) has been an IEC for six years and was an Associate member. Previously, she worked for 20 years as an English teacher, teacher mentor, and class advisor in public and private schools, when she also wrote curriculum and served on NEASC committees.

Hendricks earned an MFA from the University of Arizona and a BA from Sarah Lawrence College. She holds an IEC Certificate from UC Irvine Extension and is a member of TACAC and NACAC.

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Diana Jones (NY) has been an IEC for 18 years and was an Associate member. She holds an MA in counseling psychology from NYU; an MEd from Pace University; and a BA from Hamilton College. She is a member of ARHE, NATSAP, SBSA, College Board, TABS, and the Gap Year Association.

Recently, Jones began Campus Colleagues, a new organization designed to help students acclimate to college by pairing incoming students with upperclassmen/grad students.

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Elizabeth Katz (CA) has been an IEC for nine years. As the owner and sole proprietor of Spark College Consulting, LLC, she works with students with a variety of interests and talents, including athletes, artists, and STEM students.

Katz received an MA and BA in political science from Stanford University and a JD from Berkeley Law. She earned a Certificate in College Counseling from UCLA Extension and is a member of WACAC.

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Stephanie Kennedy (IL) has been an IEC for eight years and was an Associate member. She has 18 years' experience in college admissions and student affairs at several universities. Her background also includes years in marketing, sales training, and professional editing of scientific journals.

Kennedy earned a master's degree in counseling and college student development and a bachelor's degree in English. She attended IECA's 2013 Summer Training Institute.

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Specialty: C

Faith LaRoche (NV) has been an IEC for 17 years and was an Associate member. Her mission is to help students become empowered and resourceful learners. LaRoche co-founded the World Stars Golf Academy to help aspiring professional golfers become successful student-athletes.

LaRoche earned a law degree from Taiwan's National Chengchi University, an MBA in global business management, and a Certificate in College Counseling from UCLA Extension.

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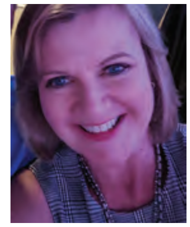

Fran Manning-Smith (PA) has been an IEC for eight years and was an Associate member. Previously, she spent 15 years in development at the University of Pennsylvania's Wharton School and Penn Medicine before starting her own fundraising consultancy.

Manning-Smith has a graduate certificate from Landmark College in executive function and LD, an IEC certificate from UC Irvine Extension, and a BA from Temple University. She attended IECA's 2013 Summer Training Institute and currently co-chairs the IECA PA Regional Group.

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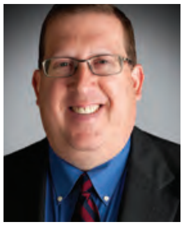
Introductions, from page 31



Stuart Nachbar (NJ) has been an IEC for eight years. Previously, he was senior VP of College Central Network (CCN) and an urban economic development professional.

Nachbar earned an MBA and a BA from Rutgers University, a MUP (Master of Urban Planning) from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, and a Certificate in College Admission Counseling with Distinction from UCLA Extension. He is a member of NJACAC, PACAC, and WACAC, and he is a CEP. He is also the author of *Defending College Heights*, a murder mystery.

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Elise Rowley (MA) has been an IEC for five years and was an Associate member. Previously, she worked as a public school counselor and in college financial aid. Rowley holds an MA in counseling psychology from Lesley University, an MA in Russian language and literature from UCLA, and an AB from Dartmouth College. She attended IECA's 2019 Summer Training Institute and is an active volunteer in her local community.

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Marymichael Neushul (CA) has been an IEC for three years and was an Associate member. Prior to becoming an IEC, she worked as an estate planning attorney.

Neushul earned a JD from the University of San Diego and a BA from UC Santa Barbara, as well as a Certificate of College Counseling with Distinction from UCLA Extension. She attended IECA's 2020 Summer Training Institute.

A member of WACAC, Neushul has volunteered at Matchlighter and serves on the Scholarship Committee for Think Together Faces of the Future.

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Specialty: C

Bill Smith (ME) started his financial aid-focused IEC practice eight years ago, after selling customized financial aid estimators (now net price calculators) to colleges for seven years. Earlier he managed sales and operations for manufacturing companies.

Smith has an MBA from Northwestern, a BA from Williams College, and a Certificate in College Counseling from UCLA Extension. His volunteer activities include lessons on college cost planning and award letter evaluation for high-need students and presenting Financial Aid Nights to high school parents.

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Nancy Steenson (NH) has been an IEC for five years and was an Associate member. She earned a BA from Tufts University, and had a career in sales before deciding to stay home with her children. She became active on her local school board, eventually becoming chair, and was inspired to become an IEC to help members of her community who were falling through the cracks. Today, her practice is based in NH but she works with students all over the northeast and around the country. Steenson is a member of NEACAC.

Nancy Steenson
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nancysteenson@comcast.net
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Specialty: C

Carol Tunstall (PA) has been an IEC for eight years and was an Associate member. Previously, she spent 20 years in higher education in admissions, career development, and learning support services.

Tunstall earned an MS in higher education counseling from West Chester University and a bachelor's from the Wharton School of the University of Pennsylvania. A member of PACAC and NJACAC, she attended IECA's 2016 Summer Training Institute and currently co-chairs the IECA PA Regional Group.

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Specialty: C+LD

In the News

Jennifer Aquino (Singapore) was quoted in the article “Convince Parents to Let You Go to College Overseas” in *US News & World Report* on November 17, 2021.

Laurie Weingarten (NJ) was quoted in “The Rise of High School Internships” in *US News & World Report* on January 14, 2022 and in “Feeling ‘behind’ on life’s milestones? You’re not alone” on the *MassMutual* blog on March 8, 2022.

Jody Dobson (PA) was quoted in “An Exploration of Private High Schools in Philadelphia” and “Exploring Private Elementary Schools in Philadelphia” in *US News & World Report* on February 25, 2022 and March 3, 2022 respectively.

Gina Gerrato Greenhaus (CA) was featured in the fall 2021 issue of *Next Step Magazine* and was quoted in the article, "The Impact of Test-Optional Policies on College Admissions."

Evelyn Jerome-Alexander (CA) was quoted in “College Board Overhauls SAT” in USC Annenberg Media on January 27, 2022.

Gail Curran (AZ) was quoted in “Everyday Heroes: One Adoptee's Journey to Healing with the Help of an Arizona Educational Consultant” in the March/April 2022 issue of *Fostering Families*.

Eric Dobler (CT) was interviewed on NBC CT News for a segment on the stressors of the college admission process on March 17, 2022.

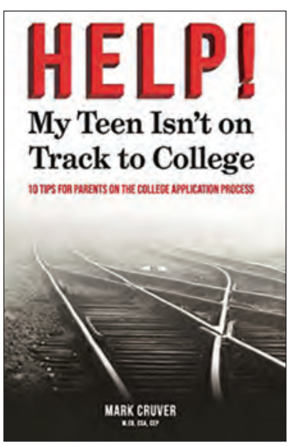
Lee Norwood (Associate, MD) was interviewed in a video/podcast on the topic “How to Pay for College” for *Chesapeake Family Life* magazine in March 2022.

Jill Madenberg (NY) was quoted in "Helping High School Students Who've Fallen Off the College Track" *in US News & World Report* on March 25, 2022.

IECA members: Send us your media appearances to share in a future issue of *Insights* and on the IECA website! Email details to *Insights@IECAonline.com*.

Initiatives

Mark Cruver's (GA) book, *HELP! My Teen Isn't on Track to College: 10 Tips for Parents on the College Application Process*, was published in February 2022.



On March 22, **Jenny Buyens** (MN) and **Julie Ekkers** (MN) presented "Who Pays for College? Demystifying College Cost Planning for Divorced or Separated Parents" to the Minnesota Family Law Institute conference in Minneapolis.

On February 6, Marilyn van **Loben Sels** (CA) keynoted at Mira Loma High School’s College Sunday, an annual event at the IB high school in Sacramento, on the topic “Applying to College During a Pandemic.” She also delivered two workshops (the same one twice) entitled “Decoding Prompts: The Science of Writing College Essays” and covered how to respond to the University of California (UC) Personal Insight Questions, the Common App Prompts, and the Common App supplements.

Regional Groups

Connect with colleagues living in your geographic area! IECA's member-led Regional Groups offer collegiality, communication, and personal interaction among local professionals. We currently have more than 40 Regional Groups and new members are always welcome. Groups may gather monthly via Zoom or in person, or just a few times per year to host a lunch discussion or a presentation by a local college representative.

To join an existing group, visit the Member Network: *network.IECAonline.com/communities/regionalgroups*

Don't see a Regional Group in your area? Start one today! Contact IECA Member Experience Manager Tanesha Norman at *Tanesha@IECAonline.com* or *703-5914850 ext. 6973* to learn how.

A group of IECs from the Connecticut Regional Group braved blustery cold weather to visit UCONN on March 8.

On March 16, members of the Georgia Regional Group and other IECs met with representatives of Lynn University and Verto Education.

Members of the Miami-Dade, Florida Regional Group enjoyed brunch with a representative of High Point University on March 12.

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- How admission reps and IECs bring their relationship to new levels
- Organizing ideas to tackle new information and trends
- Business and marketing solutions for independent educational consulting
- Trends in consulting, counseling, and admission
- Adolescent issues such as learning, emotional, and behavioral difficulties

For more information: **link.iecaonline.com/present**

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