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IECA⁺

INSIGHTS

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE INDEPENDENT EDUCATIONAL CONSULTANTS ASSOCIATION

August/September 2020

Calendar

Because of the COVID-19 pandemic, several IECA events have been rescheduled or gone virtual. IECA is posting the most up-to-date information on the Member Network.

August 11
Webinar: College Consultants Who Care

August 28
Associate & Student Members Virtual Roundtable

September 7
Labor Day: National office closed

September 8
Webinar: College Transition for High-Achieving Students with Preexisting Mental Health Issues

October 13
Webinar: Two Schools' Innovations to Ensure Their Graduates are Prepared

Combating Systemic Racism as an IEC

By Sydney Montgomery, Esq., IECA Associate (MD)



The recent killings of Breonna Taylor, Ahmaud Arbery, and George Floyd have sparked conversations among IECA members and the National

Association for College Admission Counseling (NACAC) about systemic racism and the ways in which individual members can act to combat their own racism and racism in their communities. I am glad these conversations are taking place. According to the 2018 IECA "State of the Profession," there are over 2,700 independent educational consultants (IECs) across various professional organizations. Despite this growth, IECs represented in these organizations continue to be overwhelmingly White.

It is important to the aim of dismantling White supremacy and racial injustice that White allies critically examine their own complicity (however unintentional). My aim is not to quell conversations that are taking place but offer my own perspective as a Black woman coming from a working-class background.

In an effort to do good and reverse the discomfort of providing high-cost services to mostly White students, I have heard many IECs look to providing pro bono resources to underserved Black communities. In fact, on the IECA website and in



promotional materials, we state that one of the things that make IECA members different is that "over 95% of our members provide significant pro bono work, either individually or through charitable community or national organizations." (<https://link.iecaonline.com/IECA-member-difference>)

The desire to help underserved communities is, of course, good in a way (as long as it does not turn into White-saviorism and ego-stroking), but I want to challenge this profession to think critically about the implications of that desire. Put more plainly, I want to challenge this conflation of Black students with pro bono and poor students. Black students aren't just found in Community-Based Organizations (CBOs), non-profits, Boys & Girls Clubs, and low-income

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Opportunities from Adversity

Opportunity. This is likely not a word that most would associate with the first of half of the year 2020. When I was asked to consider moving into the presidency of IECA we had not yet heard of COVID-19, and the important conversations surrounding racism were not yet front and center in the discussions at our board table. We were less than one year past the Varsity Blues scandal and many of our worries were focused on the Department of Justice ruling on NACAC's CEPP. While the issues we are facing now may be different from those front of mind at the start of the year, I remain excited about the **opportunities** that lie ahead for both our association and our profession.

One might assume that IECA members may have been hesitant to voluntarily take on any leadership role in our association during this uncertain time. In fact, the response has actually been just the opposite. The number of members who have stepped up to lead professional development **opportunities** to support their IECA colleagues during these uncertain times has been incredible. In addition, we have been fortunate to have members who have spoken up about the important role we play in combating systemic racism, and have volunteered their time to educate our members on what they can—and should—do to promote anti-discrimination.



Kristina Dooley

This show of support and dedication to the work we do has made me even more excited about the **opportunities** we have to make IECA stronger and even more valuable to our members.

Since COVID-19 hit, the IECA staff has worked tirelessly to transition both our spring conference and Summer Training Institute to an online format. Their dedication during these challenging times has surpassed expectations. They have supported members 24/7 as we have moved to being nearly 100% virtual in our work. They have taken this **opportunity** to look at how we engage with members around the world and have helped us become even more geographically and financially inclusive with our professional development offerings. In addition, they have begun anti-bias training and are participating in their own professional development to learn how to better support our members of color and become a more inclusive association. While the events of the past few months have been a terrible time in our history, they have provided an **opportunity** for all of us in IECA to have a very important conversation on race. This is just the tip of the iceberg.

As an IEC it is in my nature to provide tangible next steps as we move forward. First, I would like to ask all of you to think about who amongst our members, or from the IECA staff, has supported you in some way during the challenging months we have just traversed. Take a moment to let them know that their efforts have not gone unnoticed and thank them for providing **opportunities** to help you grow as a professional during these challenging times. Next, consider the role that YOU play in our association, and think about what excites you and where you think you might be able to contribute your time, talent, and treasures. As an association that relies on volunteers, I am hopeful that many of you who have not yet had an **opportunity** to engage with IECA in this way will consider now the time to do so. Finally, as we move forward, I would like to thank all of you for giving me the **opportunity** to lead our association over the next two years. I am fortunate to be working alongside an exceptional group of board members, committee chairs, regional group leaders, and IECA staff members. I am excited about the many **opportunities** that IECA members will be provided in the coming months and years and am thrilled to have all of you joining me on this journey.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Kristina Dooley'.

Kristina Dooley, CEP
IECA President

IECA⁺ INSIGHTS

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IECA's First Virtual Conference a Success

IECA's 2020 Spring Into Summer Conference—our first-ever all-virtual conference—was a huge success!

More than 1,300 registrants—including 750+ IECs and hundreds of college, program, and school representatives—came together July 13-17 for pre-con workshops and tours as well as three full days of programming, all from the comfort of attendees' own homes! Highlights included:

- Pre-conference sessions on teen anxiety, the evolution of therapeutic consulting, financial aid, and psychoeducational/ neuropsychological evaluations
- College tours of Princeton, University of Connecticut, Clemson, and Cornell
- Live keynotes with ACE speakers exploring the power of emotional intelligence; strategies to support equity and access in educational consulting; and how to recognize and ease student and parent anxiety
- Informative pre-recorded breakout sessions on a range of topics, followed by live Q&As with the panelists



- Fun after-hours social events ranging from yoga to trivia to a “quarantine cruise” and more

Everyone who attended the IECA conference can earn CE hours. Visit the conference website for detailed instructions (<https://link.iecaonline.com/CE-2020Conference>).

Even though the conference has ended, registrants may continue to view the 50+ hours of ACE speakers, breakout sessions, and campus tours, and to visit the Exhibit Hall booths, through August 14 on the conference website (<https://www.eventscribe.com/2020/IECAonline/>).

While we missed seeing you all in person, we appreciate your sense of adventure with this new, interactive format and hope you enjoyed the informative content and multiple opportunities to connect with one another!

“The virtual experience has been better than expected. I love the fact that I can go back to the recorded sessions over the next few weeks and see more than had I attended in person.”

MANY THANKS TO OUR CONFERENCE SPONSORS!

Platinum Sponsors: Dwight Global Online School, Juniper Canyon Recovery Center for Women, North Cedar Academy, and Summit Educational Group. **Silver Sponsors:** Advantage College Planning Franchising, Inc., Brehm Preparatory School, Eagle Hill School-Greenwich, The Evergreen State College, OPTIONS Transitions to Independence, Shrub Oak International School, Spring Ridge Academy, and The Vanguard School. **Bronze Sponsors:** Alpine Academy, Benchmark Transitions, Colleges That Change Lives, Fay School, High Point University, JRI Schools, McLean Hospital, Newport Academy, Northwest College Support, St. Thomas More School, and Visa Life Innovations. **General Sponsors:** Applerouth Tutoring Services, Shire House, SMARTTRACK® College Funding, and Wow Writing Workshop. 



- Stimulating roundtable discussions focused on topics relevant to IECs and program and school representatives
- An Exhibit Hall where IECs could review/download booth resources, engage in live chats with representatives, or leave messages and questions
- The first-ever Dedicated K-12 School Exchange, as well as a Therapeutic Info Swap and College Speaker & College Showcase

“The Scavenger Hunt was a nice way to have us check out all booths [in the Exhibit Hall]. I found vendors that may help our counseling services, and also with my own son as he enters 10th grade with his eyes on college.”

neighborhoods. The repeated fusing of “low-income” and “minority” perpetuates the stereotypes that most Black students are poor and disadvantaged. It sets up a dichotomy that most students are either rich and White or poor and Black. This is a dangerous mental schema for those of us in this profession. Too often the only time Black students are mentioned by IECs is in reference to their income or state of being underprivileged.

Systemic racism doesn't just affect students who are poor and Black. Wealthy Black students are victims of systemic racism. Boarding school and prep school Black students are victims of systemic racism. Black students who get into Princeton and Harvard are victims of systemic racism. Legacy Black students are victims of systemic racism. Systemic racism does not stop affecting Black individuals just because they become the CEO of a company, even if that company makes the Forbes 500 list.

If you are genuine about anti-racist work and committed to dismantling White supremacy, the question you must ask yourself is whether you feel just as passionate about helping dismantle systemic racism for the wealthy Black student with a 4.0 GPA as you do the archetypical “low-income” Black student from a poor neighborhood. I am not implying that these students have equal advantages or are the same, far from it, but what I am saying is that fighting systemic racism cannot just be confined to pro bono work. Black and minority students undermatch in the college application process *across all socioeconomic statuses*.

These students are subject to the ills of systemic racism that many members of IECA are either unaware of, willfully ignorant of, or are staunchly opposed to believing exist. To have (primarily) White IECs who do not understand or believe in systemic racism actively pursue working with students of color on their college search opens the organization up to intense scrutiny as a vehicle through which negligent White educators continue to perpetuate systems of harm. I do not think that the goal of most IECs is to create harm, but the harm occurs through implicit bias, through perpetuating the cycle of undermatching, through micro and macro-aggressions, and ultimately through not fully understanding the needs of these students because they do not understand the systems that affect the day-to-day lived experiences of these students. Without this understanding, how can IECs adequately assess the best fit school for these students? Without understanding systemic racism, how can IECs “know and understand the philosophies, values, missions, goals, approaches, and methods of the schools, universities, programs, and therapeutic institutions they recommend.” (IECA *Principles of Good Practice*. I. Competence, C).

Steps IECA Can Take to Help its Members Combat Systemic Racism

In its statement to the organization last month, IECA neglected to include any concrete action steps it planned to take toward combating systemic racism and/or the lack of diversity in the organization. IECA needs to consider adding cultural competency and/or diversity, equity, and inclusion training as an integral part of membership. There are several reasons why I think this is absolutely necessary.

As part of the benefits of membership, IECA states to provide “Education, Training, and Networking,” however, while there

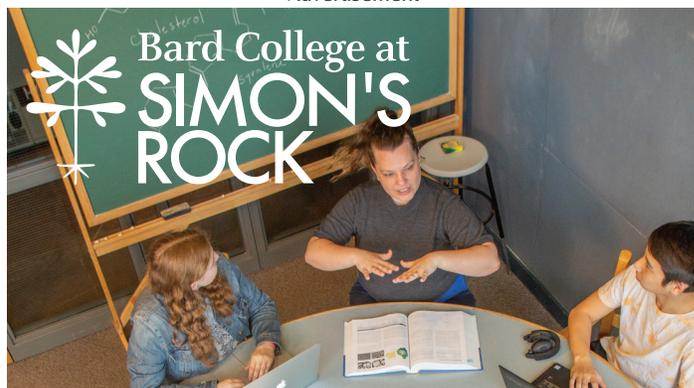
exists ample training on business topics, school and college topics, therapeutic topics, and global topics, there is a dearth of robust and meaningful topics on diversity, equity, or inclusion. IECA cannot uphold the mission of “promoting the highest quality independent educational consulting to students and families seeking skilled, ethical, academic or therapeutic guidance; to enhance professional development; and to foster career satisfaction among members” without critically examining the lack of diversity and cultural competency among its members.

It cannot be part of IECA's Core Values to “recognize the importance of diversity and sensitivity” if IECA does nothing to combat racial inequality and its effects both within the organization and with the students we serve. Cultural competency training is not a partisan or political issue. Many organizations and corporations across the nation have cultural competency training as a mandatory part of Human Resources programming. The *IECA Principles of Good Practice* “are designed to promote and maintain the highest standards of professional service and personal conduct among all IECA members.” In order to deliver high standards of professional service, our members must be competent in their interactions and the context of their relationships.

While the below data points specifically refer to school-based counselors, the same principles hold true for IECs.

In the *Journal of Ethnic & Cultural Diversity in Social Work* (2011), Robert Mindrup, Alicia Lambergheni-West, and Beverly Spray note in their article, “White Privilege and Multicultural Counseling Competence: The Influence of Field of Study, Sex, and Racial/Ethnic

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Exposure” that many counselors work and interact with minority students in their daily activities, yet many White school counselors have limited knowledge of how whiteness and White identity development may influence their interactions with these students.² Counseling literature suggests that mindfulness regarding White privilege and racism are important for White counselors to develop a positive connection with racially and ethnically diverse clients.³

A crucial part of the success of the interactions between White IECs and minority students is the acknowledgment and understanding of White privilege and the systems of inequality present.

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Research by Christine Mulhern at Harvard University, cited in a 2019 article (<https://www.chalkbeat.org/2019/11/20/21121875/it-s-not-just-teachers-how-counselor-diversity-matters-for-students-of-color/>) (among other places) states that there is a 3.8% increase in the likelihood of a low-income minority student graduating from high school when paired with a counselor of the same race. This points to both the need to have more Black and Brown IECs as well as the need to educate the White members of IECA on how to work more conscientiously when interacting with this population of students. Our membership should be aware of and have an understanding of work such as that in “We Want Black Students, Just Not You: How White Admissions Counselors Screen Black Prospective Students,” from Ted Thornhill, an assistant professor of sociology at Florida Gulf Coast University, which shows how racism operates on the college/university admissions level (<https://link.iecaonline.com/race-screening>). A summary of his research can be found in *Forbes* (<https://link.iecaonline.com/race-forbes>). There is also research on gender and ethnic bias in letters of recommendation that directly affects the college applications of the students we serve (<https://link.iecaonline.com/race-gender>). This is not an exhaustive list, but I hope it is a sample that allows you to see why an actual understanding of these issues is integral to the work we do with students.

IECs are Equipped to Enact Real Systemic Change

I think IECs are equipped to enact real systemic change, change that isn't limited to helping five to 10 pro bono students get into college. We can make a change on a larger level. We can make change on a *systemic*, rather than an *individual*, level. I am not saying don't do pro bono work, but don't let pro bono work be the checkbox for you on addressing this issue.

¹ Mindrup, R. M., Spray, B. J., & Lamberghini-West, A. (2011). “White privilege and multicultural counseling competence: The influence of field of study, sex and racial/ ethnic exposure.” *Journal of Ethnic & Cultural Diversity in Social Work*, 20, 20-38. doi:10.1080/15313204.2011.545942

² Moss, Lauren, Singh, Annliese, “White School Counselors Becoming Racial Justice Allies to Students of Color: A Call to the Field of Counseling”; See also, Helms, J. B. (1990). *Black and White Racial Identity: Theory, Research, and Practice*. New York, NY: Greenwood. doi:10.2307/2073777

³ Ancis, J., & Sanchez-Hucles, J. (2000). “A Preliminary Analysis of Counseling Students’ Attitudes Toward Counseling Women and Women of Color: Implications for Cultural Competency Training.” *Journal of Multicultural Counseling & Development*, 28(1), 16-31. doi:0.1002/j.2161-1912.2000.tb00225.x; See also Blitz, L. V. (2006). “Owning Whiteness: The Reinvention of Self and Practice.” *Journal of Emotional Abuse*, 6(2/3), 241-263. doi:10.1300/J135v06n02_15; See also Chao, R. C. (2013). “Race/Ethnicity and Multicultural Competence Among School Counselors: Multicultural Training, Racial/Ethnic Identity, and Color-Blind Racial Attitudes.” *Journal of Counseling and Development*, 91(2), 140-151. Retrieved from <http://search.proquest.com/docview/1330852059?accountid=11920>; Constantine, M. G., Warren, A. K., & Miville, M. L. (2005). “White Racial Identity Dyadic Interactions in Supervision: Implications for Supervisees’ Multicultural Counseling Competence.” *Journal of Counseling Psychology*, 52, 490-496. doi:10.1037/0022-0167.52.4.490

- We must think critically about the diversity within our own organization. How can we recruit more Black and Latinx IECs? What are the barriers to entry (financial and otherwise)? If diversity is an issue this organization cares about, there can be more targeted and meaningful ways to increase it. IECA can dedicate resources, time, and personpower toward sustained recruitment efforts of minority IECs.
- I know for many, being an IEC is not the primary household income. Having more workshops and professional development series that support IECs trying to make this career their primary household income could also lead to greater diversity.
- We should also examine the ways in which this organizational space is welcoming or not welcoming to minorities. White allies can do a better job of calling out and educating colleagues who spread racist views on the Member Network and elsewhere. It is not enough to just be non-racist, IECA should work to make the organization *anti-racist* and offer (and strongly insist that members engage in) professional development geared toward this.
- We have incredible access to college admissions officers. We can make it apparent that diversity is a priority to us. We can mention this during webinars or tours; we can write to our alma maters. We should be inquiring how many admissions recruiters/enrollment managers are Black. We don't have to accept the tagline when colleges continue to say diversity is important to them while doing very little to actually increase their numbers and foster a welcoming and safe racial environment.
- For IECs concerned that their work primarily benefits wealthy White students, I invite you to consider donating a portion of that money to an organization that is fighting systemic racism on a structural level. This could even be a set recurring donation or percentage of your income.
- All of us can advocate and push for legislation and policies that dismantle structural racism by getting in contact with our local and state government officials.

Having Conversations About Race

I want to challenge non-Black IECs to think about the conversations you are having with yourselves and others about racism. Especially when you are in spaces with Black colleagues and friends, I want you to think about whether you are centering yourself in the conversation.

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Combating Systemic Racism, from page 5

“Let’s Talk About Race: Nic Stone and Jodi Picoult” is an excellent talk that speaks to this issue and is beneficial to listen to. The talk can be found on both YouTube (<https://tinyurl.com/letstalkaboutracejodipicoult>) and Facebook.

Some IECs have wondered in these conversations about the “self-segregation” of Black students in the dining halls and on college campuses. I encourage you to read the 20th Anniversary Edition of Dr. Beverly Tatum’s *Why Are All the Black Kids Sitting Together in the Cafeteria? And Other Conversations about Race* which gives an overview at the beginning in which she explains that “because of residential segregation, economic disadvantage and racial disadvantage are inextricably linked. The social context in which students of color and White students enter academic environments together, in those few places where they do, is still a context in which their lived experiences are likely to have been quite different from each other and in which racial stereotyping is still likely to be an inhibiting factor in their cross-group interactions.”

My own two cents is that it is possible, regardless of any differences in income levels, that some Black students do not want to sit with the White students partially because of previous negative social interactions and the fact that Black students are tired. They are tired of being the token minority. They are tired because they have had to overcome several obstacles to get into the schools they did and maybe they just want to sit with their Black friends in the dining hall and recharge before their next assignment/class/test instead of having to be the educator of race for their White peers or endure micro/macro-aggressions.

Resources for IECs

There exists a wealth of resources for cultural competency training in various forms. I would like to see IECA curate a combination of resources that would create the standard of professional development for its members. Some sample programs are included below.

- The American School Counselor Association has a wealth of race and equity resources that is being continually updated. <https://www.schoolcounselor.org/school-counselors/professional-development/learn-more/race-and-equity-resources>
- The University of North Carolina, Charlotte has a Graduate Certificate in Anti-Racism in Urban Education that also provides foundational courses on what racism is in this country. <https://reel.uncc.edu/graduate-certificate-anti-racism-urban-education>
- The Institute for Anti-Racist Education works with school districts, individual schools, departments, and educators on anti-racist pedagogy and practices. <https://www.antiracisted.org/>
- The Center for Racial Justice in Education also offers trainings, consultations, and in-depth partnerships to educators, schools, and educational organizations who want to advance racial justice. <https://centerracialjustice.org/trainings/>
- The Columbia Teachers’ College is offering the recordings from its Reimagining Education: Teaching Learning and Leading for a Racially Just Society Summer Institute online.

<https://www.tc.columbia.edu/continuing-professional-studies/programs/all-offerings/reimagining-education/>

- New York University’s Office of Global Inclusion, Diversity, and Strategic Innovation (OGI) has also curated anti-racism education, programs, and resources. <https://www.nyu.edu/life/global-inclusion-and-diversity/anti-racism.html>
- Jane Elliot, internationally known teacher, lecturer, diversity trainer, and recipient of the National Mental Health Association Award for Excellence in Education has several learning materials including a checklist for combating racism. <https://janeelliott.com/commitment>

Resources For the Families That IECs Work With

Below are some resources that parents may find helpful as they talk to their own children about race. I encourage you to read them and then also share them with the parents and families that you work with. Credit to the Potomac and Chesapeake Association for College Admission Counseling (PCACAC) for sharing some of these in their own newsletter and as part of their public statement condemning racism.

- “Your Kids Aren’t Too Young to Talk About Race: Resource Roundup” written by Katrina Michie: <https://tinyurl.com/talkingtochildrenaboutrace>
- “Talking to Kids about Racism” conversations with Dr. Kira Banks, creator of Raising Equity, and Dr. Beverly Daniel Tatum, author of *Why Are All the Black Kids Sitting Together in the Cafeteria? And Other Conversations About Race*.
Episode 1: <https://tinyurl.com/talkingtokidsepisode1>
Episode 2: <https://tinyurl.com/talkingtokidsepisode2>

Potential Organizations For Donation

Below are some organizations that you can donate to that are working to dismantle White supremacy and increase educational opportunities for Black students:

- Equal Justice Initiative: <https://eji.org/>
- NAACP Legal Defense Fund: <https://naacpldf.org>
- Know Your Rights Camp Legal Defense Initiative: <https://www.knowyourrightscamp.com/legal>
- United Negro College Fund: <https://uncf.org/>
- National Society of Black Engineers: <https://nsbe.org/home.aspx>
- National Black Law Students Association: <https://www.nblsa.org/>
- Thurgood Marshall College Fund: <https://www.tpcf.org/>

It is not enough that our members visit schools, attend tours and webinars, and go to conferences. We must become an organization that refuses to hide behind the veil of ignorance when it comes to our interactions with diverse students and the impact that we have on their education and, ultimately, their future. We can either be part of creating a profound positive impact, or we can be part of a system that, even if unknowingly, perpetuates systems of harm. I hope we can be the former. 

Sydney Montgomery, S. Montgomery Admissions Consulting, can be reached at sydney@smontgomeryconsulting.com



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Supporting the Well-Being of Asian Students During COVID-19

By Caroline Min (Bryn Mawr College); Yining (Elaine) Yan, Intern at Cogita Education Initiatives, Undergraduate student at Tufts University; and Marina Lee, EdM, Former IECA Global Committee Chair (MA)

Asians make up one of the largest minority groups in schools and universities. Within this context, we bring what we hope will be helpful to educators, families, and students during the COVID-19 pandemic.

This year, Asian students found themselves in difficult situations never encountered before. The global crisis seems to reveal and worsen some issues that have long existed in the Asian and Asian American student community. In April and May, the Harvard Graduate School of Education “Let’s Talk!” Conference and the MGH Institute of Health Professions (IHP) collaboratively hosted a COVID-19 webinar series. The goal of this webinar series was to support the emotional well-being of Asian and Asian American students during this time of uncertainty. Professionals from various fields addressed relevant topics and provided specific guidance, two of which were centered around the anti-Asian racism and mental health issues evoked by the pandemic.

Anti-Asian discrimination is not new to the Asian community in the US, but the pandemic has, as stated in one of the webinars, “opened the floodgates” for racism. Terms such as “Wuhan virus” and “Chinese virus” circulate on the internet, encouraging the general public to act out their frustrations on Asian people, specifically of Chinese descent. Recent cases of hate crimes targeting Asians have been reported across the US, demonstrating

the need to address an important question: How do we support Asian and Asian American students during this critical time of physical isolation and xenophobia? Following are some tips from the “Let’s Talk! X MGH” webinar series.

Acknowledge the History of Anti-Asian Racism in the US

Asian immigrants have experienced legal exclusions and severe discrimination since the first flow of Chinese immigration in the 1850s. During that time, Asian immigrants were described as “yellow peril” by the mainstream media and society. This stereotype was shifted in the 1950s. According to Dr. Justin Chen, members of the community started to be seen as “achieve[ing] a higher degree of socio-economic success than the population average.” However, the new label “model minority” did not free Asian Americans from stereotypical images, but rather migrate them from one pigeonhole to another.

This stereotype of “model minority” has remained with Asian students throughout the years. Yet, a recent article by NBC News suggested that the anti-Asian racism elevated by COVID-19 is changing the stereotype of Asian Americans from “model minority” back to “yellow peril.” Despite the fact that we are all victims of this pandemic, many believe

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Yining (Elaine) Yan

that all Asians are to blame. In order to understand students' struggles, it is essential for educators to recognize the root of anti-Asian discrimination in history and the developing aspects in the present. Students, on the other hand, should understand that their struggles are based on deep-rooted history rather than surfacing individual problems.

Recognize the Diverse Cultures and Their Uniqueness Under the Umbrella Term "Asian"

While educators should be aware of the ongoing anti-Asian racism, it is also important to remember that students come from diverse cultures even though they all identify as Asians. During this pandemic, students from every culture are in unique stances, which should be researched and recognized when educators approach them. Chinese students and students who are racialized as Chinese might have very different needs. Understanding the cultural context and using empathy are recommended for IECs who hope to think from the student's perspective and offer individualized solutions.

Understanding the cultural context and using empathy are recommended for IECs who hope to think from the student's perspective and offer individualized solutions.

Educate Students of Other Ethnic Groups

Although guiding and supporting Asian students is a must, schools and IECs should also seek to educate students of other ethnicities. Dr. Taharee A. Jackson countered a quote from Andrew Yang's speech on April 1, 2020, which states that "Asian Americans need to embrace and show our American-ness in ways we never have before." As Dr. Jackson pointed out, we should be holding the perpetrators of racism accountable, not the victims, and educators should work on promoting racial equality in their schools or communities.

Encourage Asian Students to Share Their Stories

It can be emotionally difficult for young adults to share their experiences when they become victims. However, without these voices, the public would take much more time to realize the severity of anti-Asian racism and its traumatic impact on individuals. Other Asian students can also feel empowered and connected with one another through hearing their narratives.

Even without the rise of anti-Asian racism prompted by the onset of COVID-19, the global pandemic has posed other difficulties for Asian students. The mandatory government-imposed self-quarantine regulations led to months of staying indoors, communicating and completing work online from the comfort of our homes. But students who quarantined alone were put at an increased risk of suffering from loneliness, given that humans are naturally social beings that usually need to be of somewhat close physical



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proximity to others. Even those who did not quarantine alone were still susceptible to fear and stress, induced by irrational thoughts regarding the virus and the sudden loss of life's predictability. Students who had to move out of campus mid-semester and return home may have also faced an array of challenges, including the sudden need to code-switch in the presence of family. Going back and forth between two cultures that have different stances, such as the disparities between the generally more conservative nature of Asia and the generally more liberal nature of the US, can create confusion, and students may feel the need to change accordingly each time they move.

Fortunately, there are many ways to help cope with negative thinking. It all starts with acknowledging our feelings without judgment. Some questions to ask ourselves include but are not limited to:

- What are other possibilities in this situation?
- What's the likelihood?
- Evidence for/against?
- How does believing this serve you?
- What would you tell someone else who is thinking about this?

Additionally, there are things we can do to calm down, including:

- Deep breathing, slow and deliberate
- Grounding exercises
- Guided progressive relaxation exercises
- Splashing water on face
- Jumping jacks or taking a walk
- Calling a trusted friend

It is important to seek professional help when needed, such as if you currently are or have been suffering from:

- Suicidal thoughts
- Hallucinations
- Paranoia
- Recurrent panic attacks
- Other issues related to either your body, school, or relationships

For teachers and educators, though much of the advice above can be helpful for non-Asian students, it's important to recognize the cultural pressures of international students that are distinct from those of other students. Brushing their worries aside and minimizing them, even if said with good intentions, can be counterproductive and reinforce self-judgment. Rather, it is better to be curious and present, to listen rather than trying to fix. During this time, creating affinity groups for those who are struggling is also a good idea. Lastly, it is helpful to advocate to students that self-care is not selfish. 

SOURCE:

US Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences, National Center for Education Statistics (2019). *Digest of Education Statistics -- Table 306.20* [Data set].

Information on IECA's Working with Chinese Student Affinity Group can be found on our website: <https://link.iecaonline.com/affinity>

Members can also join this Affinity Group discussion on the IECA Member Network: <http://network.iecaonline.com>



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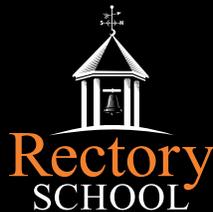
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Practical Strategies for Executive Function-Challenged Students

By Scott Lutotanski, MEd, MC, State Street Education

Most of us have been there. We're working with a student who is just not "starting." It may be their college essays, an application, or schoolwork. Regardless of the details, the story arc is always the same: the student owed you some work for two months, and now it's the night before your deadline and they're emailing you to say they don't know what to do.

One high school junior I worked with had so much difficulty keeping track of his schoolwork, following deadlines, and getting started that three weeks would go by without him completing a single homework assignment. He was unable to answer questions about what he needed to do and he rarely understood, or was aware of, the components of his assignments. Sometimes, he'd play video games for eight hours straight, only to be surprised when he looked up and the sun had set.

This is the hallmark of a student with executive function (EF) challenges. For some students, the root of their problems is development. Others have

a skill gap. Regardless of the cause, they can all end up in the same place: school, college applications, and other tasks are very challenging to start, manage, and see through to the finish line.

Signs of EF Challenges

In many cases, it can be easy to identify a student who struggles with their EFs. There are consistent and archetypal indicators: missing assignments or leaving them incomplete, being constantly behind in their work, scrambling at the last second, misplacing papers or materials, and showing sloppy organization. The inability to create and use systems, routines, and everyday structures makes it especially difficult for these students to manage themselves and their work.

Compounding the issues that these students face is the emotional distress they can cause. EF difficulties can have a far-reaching impact on multiple facets of a student's life. Oftentimes, they interact with a

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Scott Lutotanski, State Street Education, can be reached at Scott@StateStreetEducation.com

student's emotional well-being, causing them to slip into lengthened bouts of anxiety, depression, or just feeling *stuck*.

There are other students who may not exhibit the obvious signs of EF struggles, but demonstrate less obvious indicators instead. For instance, they may have a hard time receiving and carrying out multi-step instructions or solving problems in a sequence—such as higher-level algebra or trigonometry problems. In other cases, these students may struggle with the writing process; this may manifest itself as difficulty with organizing and structuring their thoughts into an outline, writing and rewriting the same sentence or paragraph over and over trying to make it better. They get derailed by writer's block as they struggle to find the "ideal" word to fit in a sentence. Finally, some students may respond to a verbal question more slowly than most others. Typically, this happens when a student is taking longer to process what an instructor has said and keeps working hard to formulate a response. Whether the student is presenting the more obvious EF symptoms or the subtler ones, it is important to monitor not only the EFs themselves, but also their emotional well-being, in order to support that student within the work you do.

The Transition to College

Because I work with both high school and college students, I often observe how the EFs can impact students at different levels of schooling, and how they develop and change over that period of time. Some students who struggle with EFs in high school

do go on to succeed later in college, whereas others continue to struggle, and may experience more drastic negative effects from their EF challenges in the independent living environment that college provides.

Students who continue to underperform typically maintain their same high school patterns and habits in college without seeking change. They ignore building new systems, avoid trying out new strategies, and overlook developing new habits and instead, they wing it. Commonly, these students miss online postings, start to skip class, do not submit regular or weekly submissions, pull all-nighters and cram before tests, wait until the last second to get started on large assignments, and underestimate the time needed for most tasks. In some cases, these students start to withdraw from college life more broadly. They stop attending classes and never leave the dorm. Days can become one long video game stint or marathon Netflix session, without once stepping outside. This creates a multitude of problems that make it increasingly difficult for students to have a successful semester. The problems they experienced in high school become exacerbated in college without the appropriate attention, goal-setting, and practice.

How You Can Help a High School Student Struggling with EFs

One could make the argument that EFs are essential human functions that we should all work to master. In schools, however, they are mostly ignored, or it is assumed that students already have

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these skills. When it comes to building EF skills, the first thing to understand is that students who struggle with their EFs do not have the same thought patterns needed to automatically execute tasks as many other students. Managing the hours of the day by checking off tasks or projects on a to-do list is not intuitive for these students. In fact, it's unnatural and difficult.

The goal is to create a new cognitive roadmap for the student that will provide the structure they need to become better now and in the future.

Because executive functions are neurological skills, it's important to develop a new thought structure to help students execute tasks.

When we understand that these students do not have this innate ability, it can help us change the lens with which we view them. For example, a student will most likely have to observe how papers and assignments go into a folder, learn the strategies of how to be organized, and then practice that system repeatedly, perhaps with scaffolding to support them as they learn. The highest demand is put on EFs when students, like all of us, are faced with tasks that are more novel, more complex, and longer term.

The goal is to create a *new cognitive roadmap* for the student that will provide the structure they need to become better now and in the future. Because executive functions are neurological skills, it's important to develop a new thought structure to help students execute tasks. For example, if we are able to create a new cognitive roadmap for school organization and solidify this new behavior with consistent practice, the mastery of those skills can be applied to other life situations, such as effectively planning and packing a suitcase for a vacation. Naturally, this means that the framework for best supporting students to develop EF skills is to provide them with strategies and interventions to make things less novel, simpler, and shorter term.

The college admissions process is a perfect example of a novel, complex, long-term task. The key to supporting a student with EF challenges to successfully complete a task like this is to provide EF strategies that do the following: model and scaffold an organization system, assign self-imposed deadlines, engage in backwards planning over a long period, break large assignments into smaller steps, use a time tracker, set manageable and realistic goals, and commit to making these habits as routine as possible. An IEC's goal for the student is to help them be more effective, efficient, and independent as they learn to take the structures you initially provide to them and create new cognitive roadmaps that will strengthen and enhance their ability to manage novel tasks in the future. In doing so, you can help address the student's short-term needs as they grapple with the college admissions process, while also building learnable skills they can apply as they transition to college and beyond. 

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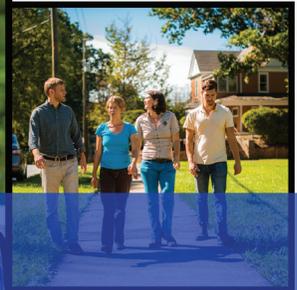
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Elevating the Community College Transfer Pathway for International Students

By Heather Yush, MS, Associate Director of College & Transfer Relations, Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society

“The greatest challenges we face in a changing world are those of perceptions.” Billy Mills, a 1964 Olympic gold medalist, shared his philosophy of self-empowerment with me and a theatre full of fellow coaches and student-athletes on the campus of Coffeyville Community College in Kansas in 2009.

Over a decade later, this quote applies to the opportunity for community colleges to seize the moment and ascend to a position of prominence amidst the rapidly changing higher education landscape. International students stand to benefit in ways that can be life-changing and of intergenerational impact from exposure to the community college transfer pathway.

Independent educational consultants (IECs) collectively possess the power as influencers and educators to simultaneously increase access for international students and expand the reach of community colleges through heightening awareness. Converting the road less traveled to the road traveled will involve encounters with

skeptics, and efforts may be met with resistance. There will be myths to dispel, minds to change, and misconceptions to overcome until the community college transfer pathway becomes recognized and respected as a prudent option. What can IECs do to position more international students for success via community college?

Educate Yourself to Educate Others

The airline industry cautions you to put on your own oxygen mask before assisting others. Similar logic applies here. Challenging yourself to become proficient in this area will make your IEC practice more inclusive and allow you to serve a more globally diverse population of students. Study and familiarize yourself with community colleges in the same way you research four-year institutions. Explore institutional websites, follow official social media pages, and contact community college representatives to ask questions or seek clarification. Include community

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college visits on your campus tour circuits and, perhaps most importantly, talk to students.

In my experience, international students are eager and enthusiastic to share their story, especially to empower other international students. These under-told narratives are some of the most inspiring and courageous stories you will ever hear. Keeping in touch with students after they transfer will provide a network of near peers who can offer guidance to future clients. Immersing yourself in this community of students will allow you to understand their lived experiences and discover resources and opportunities, as well as obstacles and hardships, so you can aptly guide the next student.

Diversify College Lists

A primary function of IECs is the curation of a best-fit list of college options. A balanced list features an assortment of institutions matching the student's academic, financial, and social profile across a spectrum of admission probability. For international students especially, including community colleges on the list drastically expands the range of affordable options. Presenting a client with the direct cost comparison of a four-year institution versus a two-to-four-year option can be eye-opening, and the savings could be even greater if the student earns scholarships *because* of community college.

How do you select the community colleges to add to a list? Consider the student's target four-year institutions and work backwards. Jennie Kent and Jeff Levy's "Financial Aid for Nonresident Alien

Undergraduates" chart is a tremendous resource for investigating affordable four-year options. With the target four-year institution in mind, reverse engineer the path by researching which community colleges serve as pipelines or feeder campuses.

Contact the transfer and international student admission counselors at the four-year institution for recommendations on community colleges where future international students could get their start. These representatives frequently visit community colleges for recruitment purposes (sometimes even holding office hours on those campuses) and often know as much about surrounding community colleges as they do their own institution. They can speak to the transferability of courses, articulation agreements or bridge programs, and on-campus housing, and advise on the optimal plan to maximize scholarship and financial aid eligibility. The prospective student gains an advocate and advisor through early exposure to the admission counselor and avoids being a stealth mode applicant.

Reference the April/May 2018 edition of *Insights* for helpful primers written by Patricia O'Keefe and Jennie Kent on evaluating the fit of a community college campus for an international student. The community college pathway is only a choice for students who are aware it is an option, and IECs are perfectly positioned to create this familiarity.

Provide Evidence of Rigor

An unfortunate misunderstanding about community college is that open access somehow equates to low quality. For evidence of rigor,



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one doesn't need to look much further than the Phi Theta Kappa (PTK) chapter on the community college campus. With nearly 1,300 chapters worldwide, chances are there's a chapter of the official honor society of two-year colleges on a campus near you.

For nearly 70 percent of community colleges, Phi Theta Kappa's Honors in Action program serves as the honors program. Students earn an invitation to join the international honor society based on academic achievement, and members gain access to a wealth of resources and wraparound support services. Members engage in personal and professional development, campaign for leadership positions, compete for individual awards and chapter recognition, participate in academic conferences, and benefit from increased access to scholarships. Students also gain opportunities for publication in PTK's journal of undergraduate research, *Civic Scholar*, and in PTK's online literary journal, *Nota Bene*.

Accepting membership in PTK can help international students find their identity and gain confidence within an inclusive, supportive community of high-achieving peers. Phi Theta Kappa chapters are even more diverse than the colleges they serve in terms of the percentage of international students represented among its membership.

Share Outcomes

It's hard to argue with living proof. Parents and students may be more receptive to the community college pathway if they have real and current success stories. Take for example four

international students who assumed leadership roles in PTK and earned associate degrees from community colleges in New Jersey, Kansas, California, and Oklahoma. Collectively, they saved half a million dollars on their educations, and all four transferred to out-of-state universities to pursue their bachelor's degrees.

Joining PTK places students in a smaller pool to maximize opportunities for exclusive scholarships from the organization in addition to eligibility for designated PTK scholarships at 800+ four-year institutions. Also, over 80 percent of last year's recipients of the prestigious \$40,000-per-year Jack Kent Cooke Foundation Undergraduate Transfer Scholarship were PTK members.

Many students find themselves with a much broader range of four-year college options after community college than they were facing out of high school. Highlighting the scholarships that students receive *because of* community college will strengthen the value proposition and appeal.

It's the role of IECs to help international families understand the merit of the community college transfer pathway. A list of college options that truly reflects the full spectrum of financial fit *should* include community colleges. Help international families to understand this is not a risky proposition (in some states, credit is guaranteed by law to transfer), and the value proposition of saving thousands of dollars can be life-altering. Planned transfer is thoughtful, intentional, and strategic; it is a calculated and informed decision. When perceptions change, students win. 



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When is it Time to Reach Out to Colleagues and Allied Professionals?

By Deborah Barany, PhD, IECA (OR) and Marci Schwartz, LCSW, PhD

Twenty minutes late again. Multiple texts unanswered...where is Sarah? You find yourself waiting and wondering if Sarah forgot her appointment to edit essays, again. Just as you reach for the phone to call her parents, Sarah rushes into your office and apologies for being late. "I totally forgot, sorry." Excuses about her essay, "I have been super distracted and didn't work on it since the last session. I kind of forgot." For Sarah, this is a pattern. For you, a concern. Sarah is struggling in school, struggling to keep up with application deadlines, and struggling to keep appointments. Despite all your reminders, conversations, support, and outreach to her parents, Sarah seems to be slipping academically and emotionally.

This is a common experience in our offices. Most busy students can get back on track with reminders or a long weekend of catch up. But for other students, this is the beginning of a worrying trend. Perhaps Sarah has undiagnosed or undisclosed learning differences. Is she depressed or anxious? Is this a vicious cycle for her now?

As college admissions consultants, we have a unique relationship with students and families. We help guide students on their pathway to college, support them with the application process, and help smooth their transition from high school to university. Our work is all about building trusting, supportive relationships with students and families through their growth and development. Throughout this process, we may recognize areas of concern with some of our students. A student might seem to be struggling in completing assignments you give them or chronically missing scheduled appointments

with you. A student's lack of organization skills or time management skills may be impeding progress. Or, you might notice that their transcript is not reflective of their academic potential.

Sarah is not progressing on her Common Application essay after three appointments. She seems stuck despite text and email reminders and feedback from you. What are her barriers? Are you seeing how she approaches her homework and bigger academic assignments? Sarah reports that she procrastinates ("A LOT—I put off my work until the last minute.") and it takes her longer to do homework ("Hours every night—I stay up really late to get all my work done. I don't sleep much.")

Maybe you have picked up on some anxiety that is impacting the student academically or socially. Could there be more obvious challenges that might indicate a learning difference? Without in-depth information, an IEC would be working blindfolded. Although some parents might be very upfront with you with complete disclosure of information, some may insist that the student will not need to continue academic support after high school. This kind of magical thinking on the part of parents is common with students and families who see the college years as an opportunity for students to resolve their challenges on their own. Both of these situations require the IEC to reach out and look deeper into the background of the student.

"I haven't slept this week at all. I just can't seem to get my work finished on time," Sarah confesses in your office. "All this will get better once I am in college." She looks anxious and exhausted. Are you concerned about her mental health? Do you suspect there are



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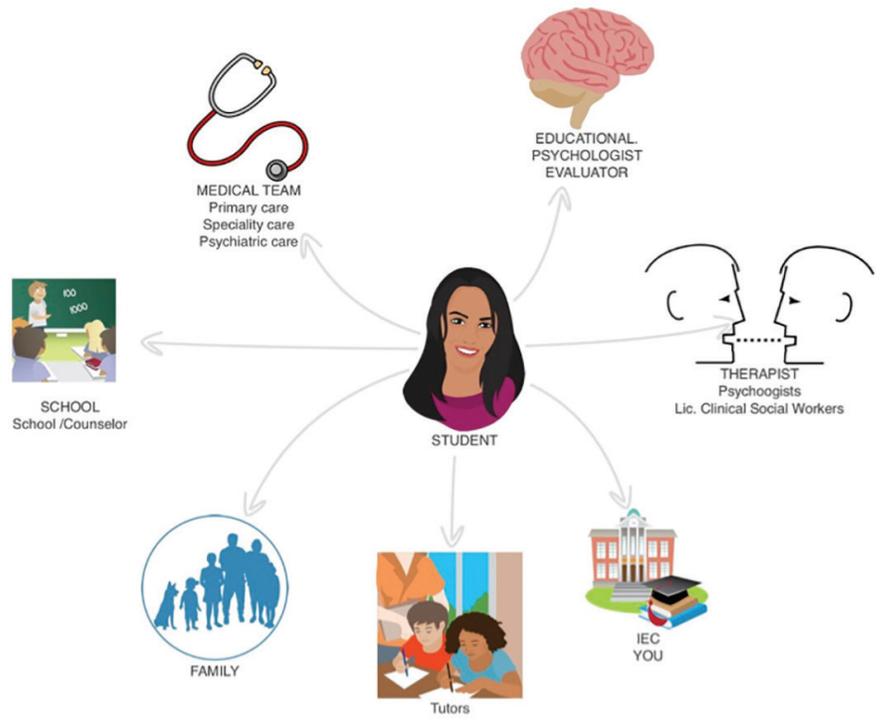


Marci Schwartz, Thrive College Counseling, can be reached at thrivecollegecounseling@gmail.com

underlying issues that Sarah and her family have not disclosed?

These are signs which should concern an IEC.

When is it time to reach out to colleagues and professionals about these concerns, and who will be able to best guide you? After consulting with your group of colleagues, who else might be a resource for you to best support this student in a meaningful and tangible way? Every student is part of an extended social network. As IECs we should see ourselves as part of this support network. Here is where the IEC can reach out into the student's network and find others to work with collaboratively. We, as IECs, can do better work if we see ourselves as part of a larger support community surrounding the student. Each connection we make enables us to guide and support the student and the family.

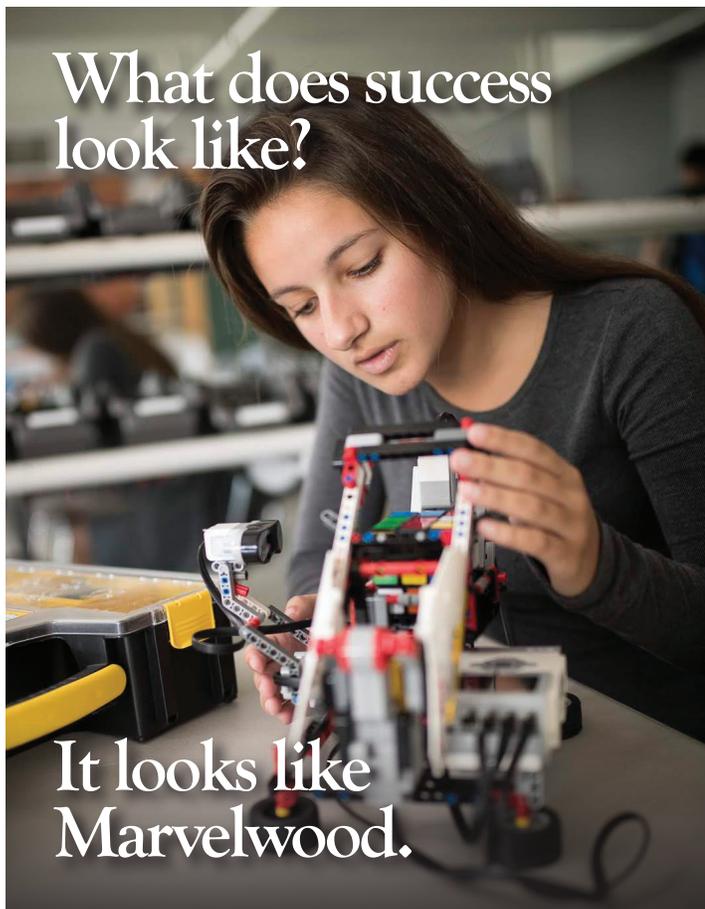


Steps to consider:

Step 1: Meet with the parents and the student to review concerns regarding how the student is managing the responsibilities of the college application process, and your concern regarding how the student will manage the independence and responsibilities of college. Be descriptive in your conversation. IECs cannot and should not use diagnostic language, but we can refer to specialists who can help the student gain insight and skills. Would an assessment be helpful in clarifying concerns?

Step 2: Mine your network. If the student has a therapist, tutor or other supportive resources, connecting with them will be essential to the success of your work with the student. If they do not have these resources, mining your network to make referrals will be important. Be sure to obtain releases of information in order for you to effectively communicate with those working with the student.

continued on page 22



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Reach Out, from page 21

Getting everyone on the same page is critical. For new IECs, this is the opportunity to expand and find trusted professionals to build up your referral network.

Step 3: Match college supports to the student's needs. If it is evident that the student will benefit from a level of support in college that will allow them to succeed, how familiar are you with connecting students with these types of colleges and supports? Do you have colleagues you can reach out to and get their perspective and advice? The goal is to find colleges and programs that are able to serve the student's needs.

Step 4: Connect with other IECs who can share wisdom. Would you as an IEC benefit from a consultation with another IEC who specializes with students like the one you are working with? Would the student benefit from working with a different IEC? Using the IECA website you can search for local and national experts with the "LD" specialty designation in their profile.

Asking for help is not just something that students need to be able to do—it is a skill that we all should have access to in our work. When we ask for help, we can be great role models for our students as they learn to advocate for what they need to be successful. 

Available Resources on the IECA Website

The Learning Disability/Neurodiversity Resources Peer-to-Peer page of the IECA website (<https://link.iecaonline.com/LD-resources>) has a number of great resources that are helpful to both you and your students. For example, there are handouts that summarize the differences between accommodations in high school and college, the differences between the various laws that apply to accessing accommodations and services, and the different types of accommodations in college. When working with a student who has an IEP or a 504 plan, being knowledgeable about these differences and sharing the handouts with the student and parents is extremely helpful. There is a lot of information for families to understand, and having a handout can be important, particularly as many families assume, incorrectly, that the types of accommodations and services a student is receiving in high school will be the same in college.

When working with a student with a disability you are not familiar with, consider exploring the recommended reading list. There is also a handout to help you assess a student's readiness for college from Landmark College. If you are seeking to expand your knowledge through additional training, there is a list of opportunities to gain further education. And always keep in mind that reaching out to IECA members who have experience working with LD/ND students is a wonderful opportunity to deepen your knowledge, connect with other consultants, and increase your professional network.

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In the News

Michelle McAnaney (NY) was interviewed on the segment “What does COVID-19 mean for the future of college admissions?” on the *PBS NewsHour* on May 18.

Elizabeth Levine (NY) was quoted in “ACT vs. SAT: How to Decide Which Test to Take” in *US News & World Report* on June 17.

Belinda Wilkerson (NC) and **Carol Doherty** (GA) were quoted in “How to Get More College Financial Aid During the Coronavirus Crisis” in *Consumer Reports* on May 19.

Lisa Gelman (MA) and **Jeff Levy** (CA) were quoted in “College wait lists used to be where dreams died. The pandemic changed that.” in the *Boston Globe* on May 25.

Mark Sklarow, IECA CEO, was quoted in “Why is Massachusetts’ tech sector so lacking in diversity? Take a look inside AP computer science classes,” in the *Boston Globe* on May 17. He was also quoted in “Even with Operation Varsity Blues guilty pleas, college admission coaches remain unregulated” on *CNBC.com* on July 17.

Lisa Gelman (MA) was quoted in “Amid virus, US students look to colleges closer to home” in the *Associated Press* on June 6.

Diane Vater (PA) was quoted in “For inbound college students—and universities—fall semester presents new choices and dilemmas” in the *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette* on May 11.

Jill Madenburg (NY) was quoted in “Beating the high cost of college: 17 tips for trimming the price tag on that mortarboard” in *Newsday* on July 5.

Ibrahim Firat (TX) was quoted in “What to Know About Deferred College Admission” in the *US News & World Report* on May 15; “How to prepare for and excel at taking the online GMAT, according to testing experts and instructors” in *Business Insider*

on May 18; and “College students don’t want to return in the fall, and it could cause many universities to collapse” in *Business Insider* on May 17.

Debra Felix (MD) was quoted in “From dorm living to classes, here’s how college will be different this fall,” on *CNBC* on June 16.

IECA was featured in “The valuable role of a private college counselor” on *www.mycentraljersey.com* on July 3.

Janet Rosier (CT) was interviewed on *WTNH Channel 8 News New Haven’s Good Morning Connecticut* program for the segment “Tips for Keeping up with the College Admissions Process During the Pandemic” on April 22. She was also quoted in “Prospective students must choose their perfect college ‘fit’ virtually” in the *Connecticut Post* on April 21.

Anne R. Wager (WA) and **Laurie Kopp Weingarten** (NJ) were quoted in “Changing College Plans Amid COVID-19” in *CollegeXpress*.

Barbara Connolly (MI) appeared on *WDIV–Detroit’s Channel 4* on May 22 for a segment discussing summer opportunities for teens amidst coronavirus concerns. Connolly also writes a monthly column for *MediaNews Group* which is published in seven publications, including the *Oakland Press* in Southeastern Michigan.

Initiatives

Carolyn Mulligan (NJ) and **Cathy Zales** (CT), both alumna of Bucknell University, participated in their summer College Admissions Workshop, held June 29-30, 2020. In its 45th year, this legacy event, one of the oldest in the country, was held virtually for the very first time.

IECA’s New Career Center

IECA is excited to announce the launch of our new Career Center, featuring job listings in areas such as educational consulting, admissions, psycho-ed testing, test prep, tutoring, life coaching, and other related professions. It also includes links to webinars and articles on building your consulting practice.

The Career Center is open to our 2,200 members and all related professionals in consulting, as well as schools, colleges, programs, and related areas. **IECA is offering a 20% discount** for the initial posting period (through August) for those posting positions available in franchising, expansion opportunities, admissions, counseling, etc. As we introduce this valuable resource, IECA will no longer allow job opportunities to be placed in the Member Network, to ensure the Network remains an information exchange service. To access the Career Center or place an ad, visit link.iecaonline.com/careers





Regional Groups

New Jersey

Despite being at the epicenter of the COVID-19 pandemic this spring, the NJ IECA Regional Group has been going strong! The group coordinators commend the 85+ NJ-based IEC members for their commitment to continuing education during this difficult time and thank them for their loyalty.

During the second quarter, NJ IECs held Zoom meetings with college representatives from Coastal Carolina (Aleya Tylinski), DePaul University (Amanda Wulle), and University of Miami (Tamara Lapham). They also enjoyed an educational presentation by Karla Robertson, professional certified coach, on “Helping Students Find Their True North.” Members compared notes and supported one another during the group’s first virtual “Whine and Wine” in mid-May. Forthcoming meetings will feature presentations by college reps from WPI, the University of Alabama, and Savannah College of Art and Design.

If you are a NJ IEC and are not receiving notices of these meetings, please contact Hildie Steiner (hildie@highfivecollegeprep.com) or Shari Powell (creatingcollegeoptions@gmail.com).

Broward/Palm Beach, FL

Throughout the fall, the Broward/Palm Beach Regional Group held local meetings with visiting college admissions representatives, and on March 6 IECs attended the SACAC Drive-In Workshop at

Lynn University. Then, the COVID-19 lockdown began. Beginning in April, the group organized Zoom meetings—inspiring opportunities to see one another, share stories, and discuss how to handle students, families, their own families, and more. This summer, the group is reaching out to members who may be struggling with virtual meetings and with keeping their businesses afloat during the pandemic.

Because of the large geographic area of Broward/Palm Beach, it has been difficult to plan in-person get-togethers; Zoom has solved that problem! Virtual meetings have been an easy way to connect and grow closer throughout the COVID-19 pandemic. For more information about this group, contact Susan Groden (sgrodencs@gmail.com).



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IECA[®] Webinar series

Professional Development at Your Fingertips!

August 11: College Consultants Who Care

September 8: College Transition for High-Achieving Students With Preexisting Mental Health Issues

October 13: Two Schools' Innovations to Ensure Their Graduates Are Prepared

All IECA webinars are free to members (live or recorded). For more information and to register, go to <http://webinars.IECAonline.com>.



The IECA Foundation supports small organizations that have a big impact—organizations off the radar screen of major grant makers. For many years, we’ve had the pleasure of watching these organizations thrive. Now, we are seeing that they are uniquely vulnerable.

Ordinarily, the Foundation sponsors one major grant cycle annually, with recipients announced in the fall. This year, to assist organizations in desperate need due to the pandemic, we coordinated an additional round of grants. We are pleased to announce the following programs received funds to sustain them during this difficult time:

- Kids on Point
- Give More HUGS
- Tailored Rides
- MOSTe
- Evanston Scholars
- Riding Unlimited
- Pass with Flying Colors
- Sisters Circle
- College Bound Opportunities

Program Highlight

Give More HUGS (GMH) was established in 2012 in Texas to support both students and teachers in disadvantaged communities to achieve their educational goals. They have three pillars of programming: BookShare, BackPacks, and Ambassadors. The mission of GMH is to provide underprivileged students with the tools to develop a lifelong love for learning, reading, and creativity. In seven years, they have trained 113 students, partnered with 86 teachers, and impacted over 35,000 students’ lives in underserved communities.

As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, GMH asked the IECA Foundation to help support a new project: Care Packages for Students. Through this initiative, GMH’s team of teachers is able to provide students brand new books, healthy snacks, a Flat Stanley of each teacher, and encouragement as they navigate uncertain times.



“It is important for us to come together to help pave a way for students to continue the learning. I am grateful we have supporters and partners who want to help ensure students have access to resources and tools to continue their academic learning,” said Chris McGilvery, volunteer executive director of Give More HUGS. *“Plus, we get to provide encouragement with the handwritten notes, and students need social emotional support as they go through this new journey.”*

Our network of teachers across Texas are ready to support students to continue the learning and reading during these unprecedented times,” McGilvery said. *“Teachers will go to their students’ homes to provide care packages to support both academic and social emotional support.”*



Introductions

Please Welcome IECA's New Professional Members



Jill Athenour (CO) has been an IEC for five years and was an Associate member. Previously, she worked as the co-founder and chief learning

office of StarQuest Learning and as director of marketing and admissions for Regis University's School for Professional Studies.

Athenour holds a BA in business economics from the University of California-Santa Barbara and an MA in counseling from Saint Mary's College of California. She also earned an Independent Educational Consultant Certificate from the University of California-Irvine Extension. Athenour is a member of AICEP and RMACAC.

Athenour served as the chair of the College Consultants of College from 2017 to 2019. She also volunteers as a puppy raiser with Canine Companions and serves as a volunteer with Mt. Evans Hospice.

Athenour lives in beautiful Evergreen, Colorado. She's been married for 30 years and has two children: a daughter who will be a college senior and a son who will finish law school this year, both graduating on the same day. Athenour also has a Canine Companions puppy, bred to be a service dog. Athenour raised her for the first year and a half, then adopted the puppy when she "failed" the training. You just might see the puppy if you are ever on a Zoom call with Athenour!

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Emily Haft Bloom (NY) has been an IEC for 13 years and was an Associate member. Bloom spent 10 years in finance at Credit Suisse First Boston and then published

three books, was a monthly contributor to *Parents Magazine*, and also wrote for *Family Circle* and other national magazines.

Bloom earned a BA in English at Union College and a Certificate with Distinction in College Advising at UCLA Extension. She is currently pursuing a master's in higher education administration at SUNY-Stony Brook. She is a member of NACAC.

Bloom supports five pro bono students per admissions round and volunteers each summer at the College App Boot Camp for students from Harlem Village Academy, NY, to assist with developing and crafting college essays.

Bloom enjoys riding as an EMT for her community volunteer ambulance corps, playing tennis, hiking with her dogs, and spending time with her adult sons.

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Claire Cafaro (NJ) has been an IEC for 16 years. Previously, she worked as a school counselor at Ridgewood High School in Ridgewood, NJ.

Cafaro holds an MA in human development as well as NJ certifications in pupil personnel services, supervision, and secondary school principalship. She is a member of NACAC, NCAG, and NJACAC.

Cafaro currently serves as president of NJACAC and assembly delegate for NACAC. She has devoted much time advocating for students and school and independent counselors through her volunteer work with NJACAC and NACAC.

Cafaro and her husband enjoy spending time in Vermont on the shores of Lake Champlain with family and friends.

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Shakti Dalal (TX) has been an IEC for 10 years. Previously, she taught biology and chemistry at Duchesne Academy, while also serving on the Upper School admissions

committee. Prior to that, she worked as director of admissions and financial assistance at St. Francis Episcopal Day School.

Dalal started Excel Educational Consulting, LLC in 2010. In 2013, she returned to Duchesne Academy to serve as director of admissions. In the spring of 2015, she returned to her practice. She currently helps Holy Spirit Episcopal School with their high school placement, along with her consulting work.

Dalal earned a BS in biology with a minor in religion from Trinity University, and completed her MA in teaching with a concentration in secondary science from Rice University.

Dalal served as parliamentarian for the Houston Area Independent Schools Association's board from 2008 to 2010. She speaks about the private school admissions process to neighborhood parent groups, and volunteers with her kids monthly at Turning Point Shelter, where they prepare and serve food to homeless elderly people.

Dalal is a mother of three at three different private schools in Houston. Her husband of 20 years is a physical therapist. Dalal is a dancer, exercise enthusiast, triathlete, and breast cancer survivor.

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Brooke Daly (NC) has been an IEC for 12 years and was an Associate member. She is owner of Advantage College Planning, manages a team of five, and

has recently opened a second location. For the past four years, she has been a business coach for new IECs emerging in the profession. Previously, she worked as a counselor at Vermont Student Assistance Corporation, a non-profit agency designed to help students save, plan, and pay for college.

Daly holds a BA in business management from Champlain College and earned designation as an Associate Certified Executive Coach from Coach Training EDU. She is a member of NACAC and SACAC, and a former board member of NCAG.

Daly and her husband have two small children, Blake (3) and Madelyn (5), and their first baby, a 15-year-old Yorkie, Buddy. They spend their free time as a family camping in their RV, going to the beach, and visiting family in Vermont.

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Lori Day (MA) has been an IEC for 10 years, specializing in PK-8 advising, and was an Associate member. Previously she worked as head of school for the Odyssey

Day School and as director of admissions and financial aid for The Fenn School. She also served on MIT's undergraduate admissions committee and worked as a school psychologist for various schools in MA and VA.

Day holds a BA in psychology from the University of Virginia, and an MEd and EdS in school psychology from the College of William & Mary. She is the author of *Her Next Chapter: How Mother-Daughter Book Clubs Can Help Girls Navigate Malicious Media, Risky Relationships, Girl Gossip, and So Much More*, published in 2014. Day is also president of the board of directors of the Jeanne Geiger Crisis Center.

Day lives in Newburyport, MA with her husband, Geoffrey. Her daughter, Charlotte, is a graduate of Mount Holyoke College and graduate school at the University of Rhode Island. Day enjoys writing, reading, fishing, boating, swimming, and volunteering.

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Patricia (Patty) Garza (TX) has been an IEC for 12 years and was an Associate member. A graduate of the University of Florida and a master's candidate at University

of Texas RGV, Garza also earned University of California-Irvine Extension's American College Consulting for the International Student Certificate. She attended IECA's 2011 Summer Training Institute.

Garza founded a college mentoring and life skills program in the 1990s for high school students called VIBES, Volunteers Interested in a Better Education for Students, where they help students apply to college, obtain job shadowing positions and scholarships, hear from community leaders, and learn about important life skills. Governor Rick Perry honored her with The Texas Heroes Award for Outstanding Contributions in Education for the state, which sparked her desire to do even more.

More than anything about this career, she loves sharing knowledge and ideas with others, and especially with teens. Over the years she has had the opportunity to present numerous seminars to AP teachers, parent-teacher organizations, high school and middle school students, at-risk students, cotillions, counselors, and advanced academic advisory boards.

Garza resides in South Texas near the Mexican border. Married for 31 years, with two beautiful daughters living in New York and London, she has traveled to 37 countries and 37 states, and has a lot more to go.

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Amanda Hirko (CA) has been an IEC for 14 years. Previously, she worked as a secondary English teacher at Northville High School (MI) and at Bloomington South

High School (IN).

Hirko earned a BA in English and education from Indiana University, a master's in English and education from the University of Michigan, and a Certificate in College Counseling from the University of California-San Diego Extension. She is a CEP.

Hirko lives in San Diego with her husband, while her two college-age daughters continue to move in and out of the house. She loves staying active with her dog, reading, and traveling, and is a forever learner.

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Michelle (Shelly) Humach (CO) has been an IEC for 10 years and was an Associate member. Prior to becoming an IEC, she worked for 23 years as a litigation paralegal.

Humbach earned a BA in sociology from the University of Colorado-Boulder and attended the Denver Paralegal Institute. She is a graduate of the UCLA Extension College Counseling Certificate Course, with distinction, and a Certified Educational Planner. She was recently featured in *VoyageDenver* magazine as part of their "Inspiring Stories" series.

Humbach helps coordinate College Consultants of Colorado volunteers for the Denver Public Schools' annual College Access Days. She also serves on the Advisory Board for College Consultants of Colorado.

Humbach mentors and provides resources and systems to the college planning division of the Bridge Project, a non-profit organization, affiliated with the University of Denver, and a free after-school and tutoring program that reduces educational barriers and improves academic and behavioral outcomes for young people living in Denver public housing communities.

Humbach serves on the Advisory Board for the Together Project, a non-profit that provides free dental and orthodontic services to qualified financially disadvantaged children as well as those with other special needs and circumstances.

Married with three adult daughters, Humbach loves spending time with her husband and girls, and doing anything outdoors: skiing, golfing, and hiking.

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Reena Kamins (NJ) has been an IEC for 17 years and was an Associate member. Previously, she worked as director of admissions at The Pingry School;

admissions counselor at Rutgers University with responsibility for the Educational Opportunity Fund determinations and the Mason Gross School of the Arts Dance and Theater candidates; director of admissions at List College's dual degree programs with Columbia University and Barnard College; interim associate dean of admissions at Brandeis's International Business School; and as admissions counselor at Brandeis University Graduate School of Arts & Sciences.

Kamins graduated with a BA in anthropology from Brandeis University and completed graduate coursework in higher ed administration at Boston University. She also earned an MA in applied psychology with a counseling and guidance concentration from NYU's Steinhardt School of Education. She is a member of NJACAC and NYSACAC.

Kamins has been a reader for the Maltz Museum's "Stop the Hate" essay contest and served on the Coca-Cola Scholars Program Review Committee. Currently, she volunteers with the local chapter of Family Promise, a national organization that serves the homeless. Kamins has served as the sisterhood president and board vice president at her synagogue.

Kamins has twins in high school who teach her new things about parenting and counseling every day. She learns far less from her pups, Velvet and Winston, but she's grateful for the extra time with all of them while they are safe at home together.

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Joanna Lilley (CO) has been an IEC for four years and was an Associate member. Previously, she worked for a private wilderness therapy program

and a wilderness program run by the Department of Children and Family Services. She also worked for a K-12 private school in the Bronx, and an adolescent residential treatment program. Lilley was in higher education for five years in student success/retention, and then employed by the Denver Public Schools as the Coordinator for College Access Initiatives.

Lilley earned a BS in recreation, parks, and tourism and a BS in art education from Radford University, and an MA in counseling from West Virginia University. She attended IECA's 2016 Summer Training Institute and is a member of YATA, GYA, and TCA.

Lilley recently wrapped up a six-class series for parents of incoming college freshmen and anticipates offering a "fall semester" parent series for the transition as well. Although she now works independently, she continues to help with Denver Public Schools' "Application Days" in October and November, which historically have included around 20 high schools and more than 1,500 urban, low-income students applying to college.

Lilley lives in the mountains of Colorado, where you can find her paddleboarding, hiking, or fly fishing with her pup, Luna.

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Meegan McRoberts (MI) has been an IEC for three years and was an Associate member. She founded Future Plan, LLC College Consulting in 2017 and joined the

Collegewise Metro Detroit Affiliate office in June 2020.

McRoberts earned a BA in English from Colgate University and an MED from Washington University. She also received a Certificate of College Counseling from UCLA Extension.

McRoberts attended IECA's 2017 Summer Training Institute and serves as current secretary of MACAC. She volunteers with ScholarMatch and the Joyce Ivy Foundation.

Mother to three almost-grown children, McRoberts enjoys gardening, cooking, reading, and traveling. She has also developed a love of the Peloton bike.

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Kathleen (Kathy) Noble (MI) has been an IEC for five years and was an Associate member. Prior to becoming an IEC, Noble worked for 15 years as a brand and digital

marketing strategist with various consumer products companies such as KitchenAid and Kellogg's. Additionally, she served in a marketing and innovation role at the University of Michigan for 10 years.

Noble earned her undergraduate degree from the University of Michigan and an MBA from the University of Notre Dame. She received a College Counseling Certificate with Distinction from UCLA Extension and a Leadership Coaching Certificate from Northwestern University's School of Education and Social Policy. Noble is a member of NACAC and MACAC.

Noble volunteered as steering committee member and faculty presenter at the Joyce Ivy Foundation's "Launching a Leader, College Admissions Symposium." Through the Joyce Ivy Foundation, she also serves as a volunteer consultant for a cohort of first-generation female students as they navigate the college admissions process.

Noble volunteers each winter with the Washtenaw County Winter Warming Centers. Alongside her kids, she cooks and serves meals for food and housing insecure individuals in the Ann Arbor area.

Noble loves to travel with her family. Whether it's a road trip in the US or an excursion to China, she is always game for a new adventure.

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Nagla Orlando (CA) has been an IEC for six years and was an Associate member. She has 25 years of experience as a high school science educator, teaching AP

and general-studies biology, as well as anatomy and physiology.

Orlando earned a BS in health and human sciences from California State University, an MEd in curriculum and instruction from William Howard Taft University, and a College Counseling Certificate from the University of California-San Diego Extension. She is a member of NACAC and an WACAC affiliate, and chair of the WACAC Central Coast College Fair Site.

Orlando has volunteered as a KAIROS leader and offered college admissions workshops for underserved students. She has also coordinated Girl Scout College Knowledge Badge workshops.

Orlando loves working with students and sharing in the very special part of their life that is filled with hope, excitement and interpersonal growth; she enjoys "de-stressing" the process and instead helping students find joy and excitement about their future.

Orlando has been married for 25 years and is mother to two grown sons: a 22-year-old graduate of the University of Southern California and a 21-year-old graduate of Johns Hopkins University. Orlando loves Pilates and weight training, and recently reached a personal best of a 195-lb. deadlift!

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Debra (Debbie) Schwartz (CT) has been an IEC for six years and was an Associate member. Previously, she worked for the Yale School of Management admissions office. For

many years, she worked with non-profit organizations, including Jewish Family Services of Greenwich and the Westchester Jewish Council. Schwartz created and directed the NJY Camps' Forever Families Weekend, a program for Jewish families formed in part or in whole by adoption.

Schwartz holds an undergraduate degree in economics from Drew University and an MPPM (master's in public and private management) from the Yale School of Management. She attended IECA's 2014 Summer Training Institute and is a member of NEACAC.

In 2010, Schwartz was a recipient of the CCAI Angels in Adoption® Award for her work with pre- and post-adoptive families. She has also held volunteer leadership positions and served on the boards of directors for multiple non-profit organizations. Her article, "Adoption and the College Admissions Process," was published in the April 2017 edition of *Adoption Today*.

Schwartz and her husband are proud parents to two young adults, Jacob (22) and Josh (20), both of whom successfully navigated the college admissions journey.

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William (Bill) Shain (ME) has been an IEC for 12 years. Previously, he was dean of admissions at Bowdoin College. Shain earned an AB from Princeton

University and a JD from Columbia University. He is a member of NACAC.

Upon graduation from law school, Shain taught social studies at Cold Spring Harbor High School (Long Island) where he also coordinated Princeton alumni interviewing in Suffolk County, NY. He left teaching to work in admissions at Princeton, and subsequently headed the admission offices at Macalester College, Vanderbilt University, and Bowdoin.

His most recent leadership contribution was serving as co-chair of the IEC SIG at NACAC. In the past, Shain was at various times chair of the Common Application, on the TOEFL Policy Council, and on the College and University Recognition Task Force for IB–North America.

Shain has been married to Sandra Lipsey for many happy years, and they live just outside Portland, Maine. He enjoys cooking, wine, dining at Portland’s restaurants (may they reopen!), traveling, and fitness. Reading is a major pleasure, including three daily newspapers and many books (contemporary fiction, classics, and mysteries, among others).

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Amy Trinnaman (CT) has been an IEC for three years and was an Associate member. She has more than 15 years of experience in public education including reading

intervention, special education, school counseling, dual enrollment coordination, and policy development. Previously, she worked as a policy analyst and communications director for a non-profit organization.

Trinnaman earned a BA in economics from Hobart and William Smith Colleges and a master’s degree in public administration from The George Washington University. She holds a certificate in Independent Educational Consulting from the University of California-Irvine Extension. She attended IECA’s 2018 Summer Training Institute.

Drawing on her background in writing and data analysis, Trinnaman writes articles on a variety of college admissions topics. She is passionate about increasing college access, and volunteers her time with scholarship organizations and as a mentor to teens in her community.

A lifelong open-water swimmer, Trinnaman enjoys summer evening swims in the ocean and lakes that surround her Connecticut home. Her son is a senior at Bryant University majoring in marketing, and her daughter is a junior at Fordham University majoring in economics. Trinnaman is entertained daily by the antics of her 12-year-old Boston Terrier, Duke.

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Jian-Ping (Michelle) Ye (NY) has been an IEC for four years and was an Associate member. Prior to becoming an IEC, Ye worked in the field of psychological research in California.

She moved to New York to pursue her master’s degree, and started working in the educational field as a student advisor at Kaplan International Inc. Her work in helping students with their college planning and studies inspired her to become an IEC.

Ye completed a BA in linguistics and psychology at UCLA and an MA in cognitive science in education at Columbia University. She also earned a College Counseling Certificate at UCLA Extension. In 2019, Ye attended IECA’s Summer Training Institute, Spring Conference, and Fall Conference. She is a member of ACA, NECA, and WACAC.

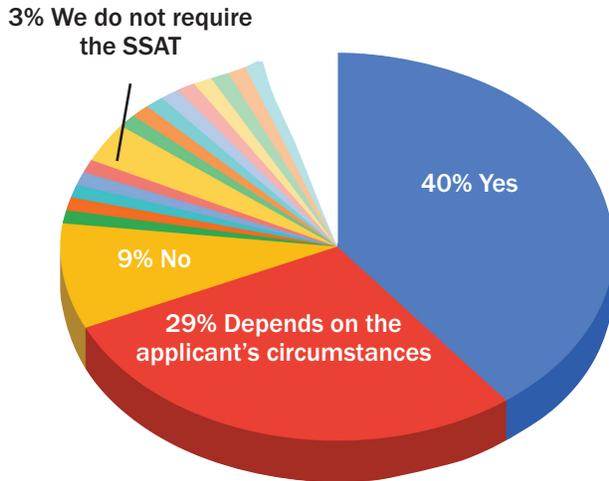
In her free time, Ye enjoys reading books, watching movies, hiking mountains, and traveling.

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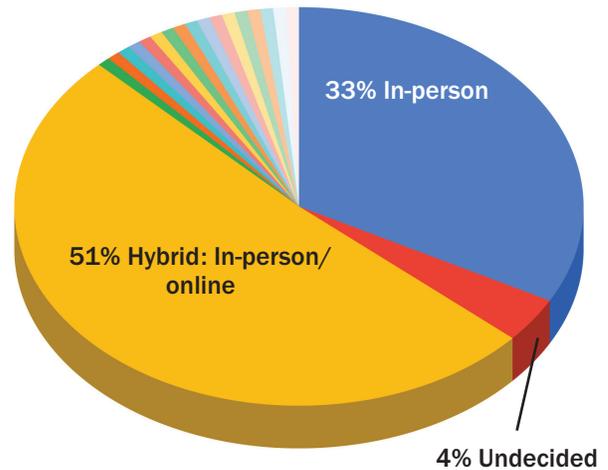
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Fall 2020 Boarding School Plans

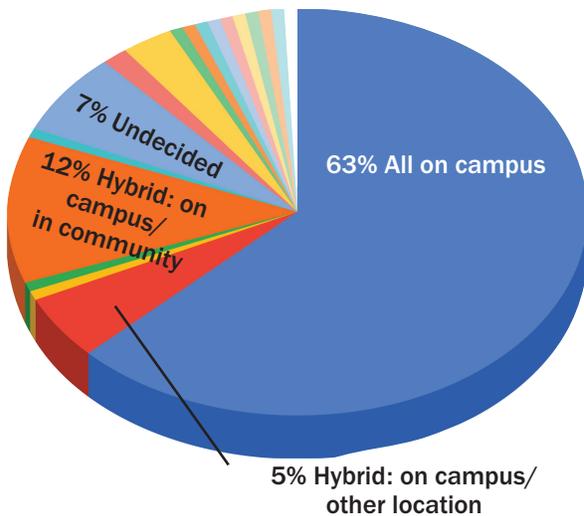
Will the SSAT be optional for current year and 2021-22 applicants?



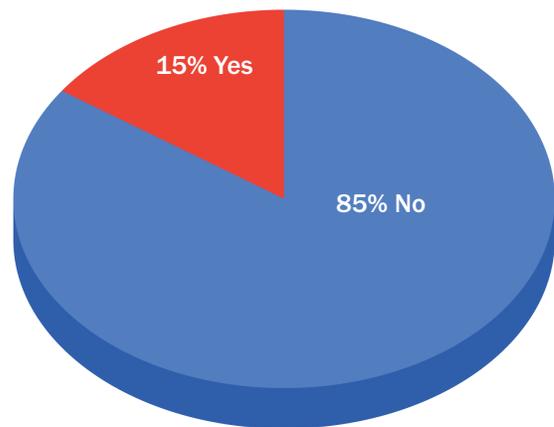
Teaching options



Student Housing Options



Will your school offer an October break?



Source: Survey created by IECA's Heidi Molbak; 56 IECA members reached out to 138 boarding schools for their responses as of 7/24/2020.