A tribute to the sector’s military success stories

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ESSENTIAL TO A HEALTHY LEAD GENERATION STRATEGY.
The Highest Honor
By The Imagine America Foundation and Ryan Swafford
They served our country honorably. Many risked their lives to protect our freedom. Now these former members of the military are on a different mission: pursuing an education at career college institutions. For decades, career education has been the destination for thousands of students with military backgrounds. This month, Career College Central pays tribute to a group of these unique students and graduates by sharing the success stories of those affiliated with the Imagine America Foundation’s scholarship awards programs.

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At a time when there is tremendous support for military veterans and their families, they still face too many challenges. The home lives they put on hold when they serve overseas or are displaced to serve in different parts of the country are as fragile as yours or mine. Yet they choose to make the sacrifices anyway – the ones that involve logistics and time away from family are painful ones, for sure, but they’re nowhere near as final as the risk of making the ultimate sacrifice.

Of the inaccuracies and accusations that have been leveled against career colleges in recent months, it is my opinion that none are more offensive than what has been said about the sector’s impact on military students. Over the last year or so, the media has been especially critical of career colleges and their “aggressive” recruitment of military students. Career colleges have been portrayed as preying on veterans, posing as “military friendly” institutions only to provide them with an average (or worse) education and taking advantage of their GI Bill funds.

The actuality is a far different story from the overwhelmingly negative one that the media tells. For only the second time in the history of this magazine, we’ve decided to dedicate an edition to student success stories – this time with a military theme. Our first foray into allowing career college students and graduates to become the voice of the magazine came in the summer of 2010, at the height of the Department of Education’s gainful employment proposal. Our logic with the What’s at Risk? special issue involved sharing real-life examples of successful graduates in a single publication so those stories could be passed along to influential elected officials and education leaders. The edition presented more than 300 individual testimonies that ultimately showed how career education has bettered the lives of our graduates.

With the November/December issue, we hope to do the same for our students and graduates who come from military backgrounds. According to the Association of Private Sector Colleges and Universities, career colleges educate about 12 percent of postsecondary students, 14 percent of military service and veteran undergraduate students, and 15 percent of graduate students. Military students choose career training-oriented colleges for many reasons, including the focus on careers, flexible scheduling, smaller class sizes, concentrated program offerings and, in some cases, the hands-on learning approach that bears a resemblance to how they were trained in the military.

On the pages that follow, you will see the tremendous stories of lives turned around due to education. To ensure that we were sharing the most remarkable tales of triumph and success, we turned to the Imagine America Foundation, which contributed about 30 stories of students and graduates who’ve benefited from its military scholarship program. We are indebted to the Foundation for allowing us to publish these stories on our pages.

In this issue, you will also see our regular news coverage, including a feature story on the presidential election and how the career college sector will fare given the possible outcomes. There is much at stake this election, and the rise of one regime over another could present significant change to the sector.
When we received notification that Empire College had been named to the 2012 President’s Higher Education Community Service Honor Roll with Distinction, we immediately checked the list to see which of our colleagues had also been recognized with this national honor.

Sadly, we could count the number of private sector career colleges on one hand and had fingers to spare. In a year when most of us were focused on complying with new regulatory requirements, voluntarily completing even more forms probably seemed like a daunting task. However, it proved to be a worthwhile endeavor for Empire College and could be for others in our sector that place an emphasis on service learning and volunteerism. We urge you to apply this year.

The process
In late September, the Corporation for National and Community Service sent an email invitation to Title IV participants to apply for the Honor Roll. At Empire College, that message was received by our president and was the only announcement...
he received. Because Empire has a long history of integrating community service projects into our education platform, what could have been an innocuous email message resonated with us.

While completing the application takes some thought and time, it is certainly possible and is something we encourage you to consider for the positive focus it places on your institution and our sector, as well as the potential media coverage about your valuable contribution to the community.

The first step in the process is to register your institution at myproject.nationalservice.gov/honorroll. Next, start gathering statistics about your institution’s community service impact. For example:

- Number of students engaged in academic service learning
- Estimated number of students involved in community service of any kind
- Number of students who participated in at least 20 hours of community service per academic term
- Total number of all community service hours engaged in by the institution’s students
- Number of participating faculty and their estimated service hours
- Number of academic service-learning courses offered by your institution
- Evidence of your projects’ effectiveness (number of houses built, meals served, books read, students tutored, cans/bottles collected, health screenings provided, military families assisted, funds raised for nonprofits, etc.)
- Percentage of your institution’s Federal Work Study funding that is allocated to community service

The application includes four primary components: an overall statement about your institution’s commitment to service (limited to 4,000 characters) and descriptions of three service projects (1,500-3,000 characters), supported by the measurable outcomes achieved by each project. The only specific measurement that must be met, if an institution participates in the Federal Work Study program, is the statutory 7 percent minimum FWS community service requirement. Otherwise, it is entirely possible for an institution of any size to be admitted to the Honor Roll. The key is to demonstrate a high level of institutional commitment (500 of our 700 students were engaged in academic service learning during 2011 for a total of 9,140 volunteer hours), strong community partnerships and measurable outcomes. The online application is due in early December. In addition to the narrative, supporting photos and documents may be uploaded.

**Empire College's application**

As a private college, Empire’s institutional service culture is focused on supporting the community at all levels and includes the president (board member and former chairman of the Sonoma County Workforce Investment Board), faculty and staff (through academic and co-curricular service-learning curriculum, as well as personal modeling of volunteerism), and students in each of our 21 occupational Associate degree/diploma programs and our Law School’s Juris Doctor program.

Empire’s overall statement gave specific examples of free services provided to local residents and nonprofit agencies. It also described how each program is designed to hone students’ skill sets through project-based, experiential learning and to foster volunteerism and the importance of community involvement.

The impact of Empire's commitment to the community was demonstrated by listing the dollar amount of tax refunds prepared by advanced accounting students for low-income taxpayers, the equivalent dollar value of law students’ pro bono
legal services, money raised for charitable causes, number of free flu vaccinations administered by medical assisting students, and pounds of food and units of blood collected.

The rewards
There have been several articles in local newspapers announcing Empire College’s Honor Roll with Distinction status, noting our placement in the same category as just 18 California institutions, including Stanford University. The major newspaper in our area also published a complimentary half-page congratulatory advertisement.

The media kit provided to Honor Roll institutions is extensive, including sample press releases, tweets and posts, web banners, and exhibit posters. We immediately incorporated the logo into our print and Internet campaigns, which we will continue through year-end.

This recognition has provided tremendous institutional branding benefits to Empire College. It is our sincere hope that more private sector colleges with similar commitments to community outreach will be recognized in the future for their valuable service. This is a wonderful opportunity to spread our sector’s positive story!

What is the President’s Higher Education Community Service Honor Roll?

Launched in 2006 as part of President Obama’s pledge to make service a central cause of his administration, this program annually highlights the role colleges and universities play in solving community problems and placing more students on a lifelong path of civic engagement by recognizing institutions that achieve meaningful, measurable outcomes in the communities they serve. The Corporation for National and Community Service oversees the Honor Roll in collaboration with the Department of Education, Department of Housing and Urban Development, Campus Compact, and the American Council on Education.

Sherie Hurd is the Executive Vice President – Marketing and Operations for Empire College in Santa Rosa, Calif. She has more than 30 years of experience in the career college sector of higher education, including community outreach, career services and regulatory compliance. During her 25 years with Empire College, the school has been recognized with the Career College Association’s 2007 Community Service Award, by the California Association of Private Postsecondary Schools as the 2009 School of the Year, and by the Corporation for National and Community Service and the U.S. Department of Education to the 2012 President’s Higher Education Community Service Honor Roll with Distinction. Hurd serves as an evaluator for the Association of Independent Colleges and Schools.
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The Highest Honor

Imagine America Foundation LDRSHIP Award recipients share their successes in the classroom and in service to our nation

By The Imagine America Foundation and Ryan Swafford, Staff Writer
The dream for World War II veterans was to return home safely and get married. For many of today’s members of the military, the ambition is to attain a college degree and provide for their families with a successful career.

After they’ve served their country honorably, though, many veterans and active-duty members are faced with bleak career prospects. Since lots of soldiers are recruited out of high school and have more vital commitments, such as children or full-time jobs, they are unable to devote themselves to continuing their education at traditional institutions. Understanding their dilemmas, veterans have found an alternative but viable starting place with career colleges.

Career colleges offer a practicality and flexibility that allow military members to maintain their responsibilities while also giving them the opportunity to focus on learning. Most importantly, however, they’re able to acquire a position in the workforce quickly because of shorter programs. According to the 2008 National Postsecondary Student Aid Survey, about 80 percent of veterans were enrolled in the top three programs nationally: business, information technology and healthcare. These fields plus the well-known, hands-on approach taken by the instructors of countless career colleges will enable veterans to secure jobs the moment they graduate.

Traditional universities educate about the same number of military members as career colleges, but the inconvenient scheduling and lack of one-on-one time with professors is too much to bear for some. The Association of Private Sector Colleges and Universities infers this is the reason why the attendance among veterans at career colleges is substantially greater in comparison to traditional universities. The way career colleges are able to facilitate veterans’ education is having an effect. In September 2012, the Bureau of Labor Statistics reported that the veteran unemployment rate had decreased to 6.9 percent, whereas last September it was broadcast at 12.1 percent.

Active-duty soldiers and veterans who have sacrificed significantly in service to this country now have the outlets necessary to continue their education. Career colleges are best able to serve these military members by helping them obtain a career that can better their lives.

The America Foundation provided us with the following stories of military students who have been honored with the Imagine America LDRSHIP Award. These incredible stories mark the impact career training-oriented colleges are having on higher education and the American labor force.
Adam Holybee
U.S. Marine Corps
Remington College

College experience statement
In my time at Remington College, I have learned a great deal more than just textbook information. My professors are very knowledgeable and very willing to delve into topics – in great detail – related to the subject being discussed. This is important to me because I intend to work toward my doctorate degree. This is why all of the extra information and clarification of more advanced topics in the different subject areas will assist me in reaching my ultimate goal. The administrative personnel are also very good, due to their professionalism, courtesies and speed at which they process my requests, which makes everything much easier for me and my family.

Military experience statement
I gained a great deal of discipline and experience that I could not have acquired anywhere else. I credit this experience with helping me prepare for college. My combat experiences in Iraq and Afghanistan taught me that, even though I have a strong desire to protect my country from attack, there are also many innocent people in the countries where I was deployed. These people need protection, and as a military infantry member, I was able to help provide them with that protection. Therefore, when I finish my education, I plan to become an officer, to put all of my education and experience into protecting this country and those in other countries who also need protection from people who would take advantage of them.

Awards
- Combat Action Ribbon, Afghanistan
- Navy Unit Commendation
- National Defense Service Medal
- Afghanistan Campaign Medal
- Iraq Campaign Medal
- Global War on Terrorism Service Medal
- Sea Service Deployment Ribbon (2nd Award)
- Certificate of Appreciation

Cheryl Ann Carr
U.S. Navy
The Art Institute

College experience statement
After a long day working at the dermatologist’s office, I drove home wondering if I would ever feel a passion for my job, like I did in the military as a hospital corpsman. When I got home, I started rearranging furniture, sewing pillows for my couch and planning out what colors to paint my bedroom. My husband politely asked, “Will there be a day that I can come home and sit in the same place to watch TV?” I politely responded, “Probably not!” I learned at a young age how to build retaining walls and carports, how to pour concrete, hang sheetrock and paint. So, from a young age, I guess, I was destined to be an interior designer. This short story led me to seek out the Bachelor’s degree program at The Art Institute of Indianapolis. After I had called the school to make an appointment to see an admissions counselor, butterflies were churning in my stomach. Was I doing the right thing by leaving my full-time job to pursue my passion, my dream and the job that makes me giddy every time I speak about it?

After 10 months of classes and 21 more to go, I would have to say, without a doubt, yes! As soon as I stepped into the admissions office and explained my dreams and scholastic goals to my counselor, she and I agreed that this program at The Art Institute was right for me.

Right from the beginning, this institution has had my best interests at heart, from the admissions counselor’s honest and straightforward questions to the guidance of the financial aid department ensuring I had the funds to pursue my degree, and to the close monitoring and truly caring attitude of my program liaisons, Travis and Fabiola. They all worked so diligently and with such professionalism to ensure that I had received and will continue to receive a rewarding, pertinent education. With my Bachelor’s in interior design, I will bring to any community or corporation that I work for a professional point of view and attitude with a well-versed knowledge base to provide excellent customer service.

The instructors I have had are professionals in their areas of expertise. What better way to learn than from professionals who are practicing artists, sculptors, architects, interior designers and graphic designers? Courses I have taken have taught me about drawing and perspective, computer-aided drafting, space planning for residential applications, color rendering, and the history
Christina Jaramillo  
U.S. Air Force  
Provo College

**College experience statement**

Through the National League of Nursing Accreditation Commission, I learned about Provo College and its program. Its credentials are important to me for two reasons: First, I needed assurance that my Associate degree would be transferable toward my completion of a Bachelor’s degree; and second, I needed to know that the program I completed would allow me to sit for the National Council Licensure Examination for Registered Nurses. Without that provision, I could not work as a nurse. I took advantage of the accelerated program (18 to 24 months), which included time needed to finish my prerequisites. The diversity in past and current clinical experiences as well as academics among the nursing instructors allows my learning to be maximized beyond the textbook and into practical settings with real-world applications. I truly consider myself fortunate for being able to commute such a long distance to attend a solid nursing program. This being said, driving approximately 140 miles for class (no classes missed thus far), always striving for academic excellence, going to National Guard drills, the possibility of my husband going to Iraq, and the impending post-graduation loan repayment schedule makes worrying inevitable.

**Military experience statement**

My Navy career spanned five years, from June 2001 to June 2006. While at boot camp, my instructors told me about recruitment for the Ceremonial Guard in Washington, D.C. With the Ceremonial Guard, I would perform funeral ceremonies at Arlington National Cemetery, various joint service ceremonies, retirements and special events. After two years in D.C., it was time for me to go to school to be a hospital corpsman. I was off to Great Lakes, Ill., where I stayed from August to December 2003. After graduating at the top of my class, I was stationed at the Naval Hospital in Bremerton, Wash. During my tour at Bremerton, I was able to go out to sea with the USS Camden and assist its medical department in preparation for a three-month deployment. Overall, my experience in the Navy is one that I will never forget, one that I will tell my future children about, and one that will remain a part of me for the rest of my life. I am very grateful to our armed services and very proud to be a veteran.

**Awards**

- National Defense Service Medal
- Global War on Terrorism Service Medal
- Navy and Marine Corps Achievement Medal
- Navy Good Conduct Medal
- Navy Ceremonial Guard Ribbon

I could go on for pages about my experience and the courses I have had at The Art Institute, but it would turn into a small novel, because my experience has been nothing short of amazing. At this institution, I was able to express my talents and my concerns and show my true passions for interior design in ways I never thought possible. I’m still forging ahead with my eyes wide open and my ears tingling with new information. My brain is ready to absorb more information and store many more experiences. I couldn’t have asked for a more stellar education experience.

Military statement

My Navy career spanned five years, from June 2001 to June 2006. While at boot camp, my instructors told me about recruitment for the Ceremonial Guard in Washington, D.C. With the Ceremonial Guard, I would perform funeral ceremonies at Arlington National Cemetery, various joint service ceremonies, retirements and special events. After two years in D.C., it was time for me to go to school to be a hospital corpsman. I was off to Great Lakes, Ill., where I stayed from August to December 2003. After graduating at the top of my class, I was stationed at the Naval Hospital in Bremerton, Wash. During my tour at Bremerton, I was able to go out to sea with the USS Camden and assist its medical department in preparation for a three-month deployment. Overall, my experience in the Navy is one that I will never forget, one that I will tell my future children about, and one that will remain a part of me for the rest of my life. I am very grateful to our armed services and very proud to be a veteran.

**Awards**

- UASFE Olson/Wegner Outstanding Aeromedical Airman of the Year, 2001
- Air Force Commendation Medal
- Air Force Achievement Medal
- Air Force Outstanding Unit Award
Juan Sapon  
U.S. Marine Corps  
ITT Technical Institute

**College experience statement**

My first introduction to ITT Technical Institute was via a television commercial. Second, while I was working offshore, I met a gentleman who attended ITT Tech and later became my friend. This gentleman told me what it was like to be a student at ITT Tech and advised that it was a good school for computer technology. After returning home, I stopped by the school to get more information about the different degree programs. My friend is now currently employed by Schlumberger Drilling and Fluids Co. He is also one of the success stories from one of the ITT Tech commercials.

Almost a year later, I am halfway to the realization of my degree goal. I chose computer and electronics engineering technology because I like to troubleshoot computers and devices. After graduation, I will be going back to the oil and gas industry, but this time with a specialty title such as field technician because of my degree. One of the major reasons I chose ITT Tech for my education was because of its famous practical application, or hands-on training labs. I have to admit that I learn more when I use my hands. One of my instructors always says, “Remember to always start with the basics when troubleshooting,” and he believes there should be a law to use the basics. I enjoyed his sense of humor. In fact, my experience has been so positive that I have convinced my younger brother to enroll. It will become a family tradition.

**Military experience statement**

My younger brother and I used to play all the time as soldiers and guerrillas. Although we never experienced combat firsthand while growing up in Guatemala, I always had respect for soldiers. I was 14 years old when I arrived in Houston, Texas, and my first introduction to the U.S. Armed Forces was the JROTC program in high school. In JROTC, I learned about “The Few, the Proud, the Marines,” and I enlisted two days after the Sept. 11 attack in New York. On April 9, 2003, we made it to Baghdad. We were the first American unit to get there. We encountered all kinds of people, good and bad, but most were friendly, happy or trying to feed us. Some even gave us flowers. No matter what my future holds, I know where my past is, and who I am. I am proud to be a Marine and even prouder to be educated with a future.

**Awards**

- Iraq Campaign Medal
- Navy Presidential Unit Citation
- National Defense Service Medal
- Global War on Terrorism Service Medal
- Global War on Terrorism Expeditionary Medal
- Combat Action Ribbon

Latisha Jefferson  
U.S. Army  
Remington College

**College experience statement**

I would have to say that my experience at Remington College has been wonderful, exciting and challenging all at the same time. I was very nervous and scared about starting college, because I have been out of high school for 12 years. I have always wanted to attend college, but being a single parent with no help and no money is very hard. From the moment I arrived at Remington, everyone welcomed me with open arms. They assured me that I would do just fine and not to worry. I love the small environment, because it allows the instructors to provide more of the one-on-one help that a lot of students need. The instructors are very educated, knowledgeable and always there if you need extra help or have questions. The financial staff is just great. They do everything in their power to assure that students receive all the financial help they can get.

Attending college at Remington has given me the confidence and knowledge to believe that I can do this. I can graduate with a degree and become very successful so that I can provide a better life for myself and my children.

**Military experience statement**

My military experience was very life-changing. Being in the military helped me become more responsible and a better person altogether. I joined the Air Force Reserve, where I was stationed at Keesler Air Force Base in Biloxi, Miss., as an aviation resource management apprentice from August 2003 to November 2006. That November, I switched military branches without a break in service and went active duty Army. I was deployed to Mosul, Iraq, with the 4th Brigade 2, 13th Cavalry Regiment. Being deployed gave me the opportunity to be a part of something that is going to make history. It has also made me appreciate life so much more and everything that I’m blessed with.

**Awards**

- National Defense Service Medal
- Global War on Terrorism Service Medal
- Iraq Campaign Medal
Matthew Demaske  
U.S. Marine Corps  
ECPI University

College experience statement
My college experience is a wonderful lesson on never giving up on my dream of graduating from college. I was an average C student in high school. I had the ability to do the work, but my focus was elsewhere. Enlisting in the Marine Corps and the lessons I learned throughout my tour enabled me to see the results of hard work and personal discipline. My educational outlook was transformed. Due to my deployments, I was never capable of attending courses at the local colleges at my duty station. I wanted to give my full attention to my studies once my military career came to an end. I moved to Charleston, S.C., so that my girlfriend could be closer to her family. My research into the ECPI campus in Charleston led me to apply. I loved the fast-track program, small class size and the real-world educational tools used by the staff. I never came close to obtaining a 4.0 GPA in my pre-college years. I am a 4.0 GPA student as of today, and I am thrilled to death. I received my first A in math since the sixth grade – a subject I’ve always struggled with in my past. To me, it’s not just about the grades; it’s about finishing something I should have finished seven years ago. I am thankful that my military service has provided me with the tools to complete my degree. I will graduate one day, but I will never stop learning.

Military experience statement
Enlisting in the Marine Corps changed my life. I was a lazy, undisciplined college dropout with no job and no future. That changed in October 2004 when I set foot on those terrifying yellow footsteps at Parris Island. I never knew how much I would benefit from my five years of service. I learned to challenge myself in ways I did not know existed.

Awards
- Marine Corps Good Conduct Medal
- Sea Service Deployment Ribbon
- Afghanistan Campaign Medal
- Iraq Campaign Medal

Lauren Santiago  
U.S. Navy  
Anthem College

College experience statement
My experience at Anthem has been wonderful. All my instructors are very caring and hands-on, and I love that. I have received many compliments from faculty and staff on my work ethic, grades and overall personality. The staff here makes me feel welcome and at home when I come in every day for class. This is by far the warmest and most positive environment as far as a college setting goes. I really wish I could go for my Master’s and Bachelor’s degrees here. I honestly love my dean of education. She is the best, and I could not have asked for a better school. Anthem is truly a blessing. I am proud to say that I am receiving my Associate degree here at Anthem. I feel that the surgical technology program will put me in the best direction to further my career goals. I am happy to have enrolled in this institution. I feel I will become very successful due to the fact that there is a team of professionals to back me up.

Military experience statement
I enlisted in the Navy in February 2002 and served on the USS George Washington. I feel that by going into the Navy at 18, it created a valuable foundation for my adult career goals.

Awards
- Letter of Commendation
- Most Valuable Sailor (2005, within division)
- National Defense Service Medal
- Global War on Terrorism Service Medal
- Meritorious Unit Commendation,
Christopher Harkleroad
U.S. Army
Triangle Tech

**College experience statement**
Honestly, on my first day of school, I had mixed feelings. I was a little apprehensive, because some of the people I talked to said school was for young people. I was excited, though, because it was a chance to meet new people. I am 37 years old, not your typical-aged student. I didn’t want to be the oldest in the class and never considered myself very smart, but I have always applied myself to whatever I do. On that first day, I met one person older than me, and I’m glad I did, because all through the first semester we pushed each other to succeed. The two of us, along with one other person, would weld together, give pointers to each other and try to get the best test scores in the class. I really needed someone to help me excel. We still give each other pointers and push each other. I was also excited to be there to meet new people from different areas and backgrounds, all with different ambitions and dreams, thus making the college experience more worthwhile. I look at this as a chance to make some lifelong friendships and build a network. The instructors here are all knowledgeable, and I think that if I can learn a fraction of what they have to offer, I’d be an educated man. I feel I’ve benefited from attending school, because life itself offers education. It is a quest we all endure, and its value is priceless.

**Military experience statement**
During high school, I had no inclination of what I wanted to do after school. Then one day, almost by accident, an Army recruiter stopped to ask directions, so I asked him what the Army was about. He told me of travel, job opportunity and serving my country. So, after some thought, I signed up. I arrived for basic training at Fort Leonard Wood, Mo., in June 1989 to become a combat engineer. I spent the next nine weeks getting yelled at, doing more physical stuff than I have ever done in my life and other tasks that would seem impossible. I was then assigned to my first duty station, Charlie Company, 8th Engineer Battalion, 1st Cavalry Division, Fort Hood, Texas. In October 1990, we deployed to Saudi Arabia for Operation Desert Shield and Desert Storm.

**Awards**
- Army Commendation Medal (3rd Award)
- Army Achievement Medal (3rd Award)
- Good Conduct Medal (3rd Award)
- Southwest Asian Service Medal (With Three Bronze Service Stars)
- Overseas Service Ribbon
- Kuwait Liberation Ribbon

Jason Brandon
U.S. Army
Westwood College

**College experience statement**
I have had a great experience so far at Westwood College. I began attending in May 2006 with a goal in mind: to be the best that I can be. I am pursuing a Bachelor’s in game software development. I dedicated seven years of my life to exploring exactly what it is that I want to do. Once I found my path, I began pursuing it diligently. Aside from my family, the most important part of my life is my education and career. I constantly strive for success, and as a result, I have had the highest GPA in all of the classes related to my major. I also maintain a full-time job and have a 6-year-old son. However, I am still able to maintain my focus, and I have a 3.85 overall GPA. In my opinion, if you have a goal, a purpose, and you work hard, you can achieve it. The staff and instructors at Westwood have really helped me embrace that idea as well. I have truly been enjoying my experience at Westwood College. I have learned a lot and look forward to completing my degree here.

**Military experience statement**
My experience in the military was very memorable. I enlisted in Corona, Calif., in January 1999 as an O2L, otherwise known as a saxophone player. I was on delayed entry for a year, waiting for a spot at the Military School of Music to open, and changed my specialty to 75H, human resources. My first duty station was at Fort Lewis, Wash. While there, I was promoted to specialist and was the most highly decorated one in my company. After two years at Fort Lewis, I was sent to Camp Casey in Korea for a year-long deployment. During that year, I was promoted to sergeant and graduated from the Primary Leadership Development Course. There were things that I liked and disliked about military service, but I will never forget what I have done and accomplished in the Army.

**Awards**
- Army Commendation Medal (2nd Award)
- Army Achievement Medal (4th Award)
- Army Good Conduct Medal
Jeff Sedgwick
U.S. Marine Corps
MIAT College of Technology

College experience statement
When I first started to go to the MIAT College of Technology, I didn’t know what to expect. I didn’t know how I would do. After all, it had been almost 10 years since I had been in school, but I knew this was what I wanted to do. The teachers I have had so far explain in great detail, and if you don’t understand something, they will take extra time to explain it in a way you will understand. I also like the fact that the classes are not very big, so that way it is easier for the teachers to have one-on-one time with certain students who are having more trouble than other students. I have raised almost all of my classmates’ GPAs due to my studying habits and by quizzing them before tests. I explain certain things that they have trouble understanding and that I understand fairly well. I would have to say the best experience I have had so far in school was just in this last class. I got to take apart the cabin of a Cessna 150 to remove and replace the fuel flow shut-off valve. My teacher said he knew that my lab partner and I would take it apart and put it back together right. That is why he let only us work on the plane. It let me experience what it was like to work on something that you can’t see and just have to take apart by feel. It also let me know of the challenges of working in small spaces with limited wrenching room. I can’t wait to see what the rest of my time at Michigan Institute of Aviation and Technology will teach me and what I will experience.

Military experience statement
I went into the U.S. Marine Corps in December 2004. I got to my duty station, Kaneohe Bay, Hawaii, in July 2005. My unit had just gotten back from a tour in Fallujah, Iraq. We deployed in January 2006 to the Kunar Province in eastern Afghanistan. We were constantly going out on missions that lasted weeks and carrying a lot of weight up very high, steep mountains. We were relieved by the Army after conducting a major operation through one of the most dangerous areas in eastern Afghanistan. We redeployed in March 2007 to Haqlaniyah, Iraq. During my time in Iraq, I effectively led my fire team on 150 combat patrols. My ability to interact with the Iraqi populace helped my squad gain the respect and trust of the Iraqi people.

Michael Vera
U.S. Marine Corps
DeVry University

College experience statement
As I transitioned out of military service, one of my main goals was to continue my education. During a six-month search and several campus visits, I took the time to visit DeVry University. I was very impressed with the campus and motivated by its dedication to higher education, especially for returning adults. The first visit to DeVry, I met with the admissions adviser who asked several questions regarding my educational interests and if I had decided on a specific degree course. We sat down and discussed my future plans, my goals, my educational needs and current schedule to properly plan for future enrollment. The adviser assisted with the development of a study plan, which has been very effective in reaching both my short-term and long-term goals and eliminating conflicts with my daily schedule. The adviser’s efforts made my decision to enroll an easy choice. My second visit to DeVry, I met with a financial adviser who took the time to assist and ensure that I properly completed all financial documents and developed a financial plan to address all my financial concerns and needs. Although this is my second semester attending DeVry, my college experience so far has been exceptional. Their dedication to teaching gives all students, including myself, the desire to learn and motivation to push forward to complete our educational goals. In my opinion, the staff at DeVry continues to go above and beyond to assist students and ensure that they are receiving the best education possible.

Awards
• Navy and Marine Corps Commendation Medal
• Global War on Terrorism Service Medal
• National Defense Service Medal
• Navy Meritorious Unit Commendation
**College experience statement**

As a student of Lincoln College of Technology, my life has turned around completely. I never had thought that I would be able to work on cars and bring them back on the road. I love cars; I watched my father work on his cars as a young boy. My father worked on those cars so that our family would save some money versus paying a mechanic to fix them. Since then, I told myself that someday, if I had the opportunity to go to school, I would in a heartbeat. As a young boy, all I ever wanted to be when I grew up was a soldier or mechanic. So far, I have accomplished one by serving my country in “The Few, the Proud, the Marines.” Now I’m fulfilling my second dream, all thanks to this school, to the staff and to the good instructors who are always here for me.

I could have gone to any other school, but I made the choice to come to Lincoln College of Technology. After doing research on which school would give me the best knowledge, I made my decision, and it could not have been a better decision than to come to one of the greatest schools for the automotive business. This school has one of the best staffs I have ever seen – from the president to the supervisors, the financial aid representatives and all the way to the instructors. They all come together to make a difference in someone’s dream. Here, I have hands-on training with ASE-certified instructors who take me step-by-step toward my knowledge of auto technology. They have classes to fit any schedule for those who decide to come in the morning, evening or even at night. There’s always a way here at Lincoln College.

I have been here for almost five months, and I have learned so much more about vehicles than a mechanic who has been doing it for years, thanks to the great instructors who care about each of their students. I’m always on time to class, and every time I show up to school, the instructors are always there 30 minutes prior to class. It’s intense from the beginning to the end of class, and I learn so much that sometimes I feel that I just don’t want to go home; I want to keep on learning and learning. I have a 4.0 GPA and 100 percent attendance at this school, and I plan to keep it that way until I graduate, if God grants me life and wisdom.

In conclusion, I drive an hour and a half to get to school and to get back home. That’s a total of three hours on the road each day I go to school. As soon as I get back home, I have to go to my job at Chili’s. My day begins at 5 a.m., and it ends at 1 a.m., Monday through Friday. I hardly get enough sleep, but I think that it’s the average person who works hard to become better in life and who really wants to succeed in their hopes and dreams. Thank you very much for your time.

**Military experience statement**

Upon joining the Marines back in July 1999, I did not know what I got myself into, but I knew that it was something beneficial for my future. I couldn’t have made a better choice than to serve my country in a military manner and, at the same time, help my future by going to college later on.

**Awards**

- Marine Corps Good Conduct Medal
- National Defense Service Medal
- Sea Service Deployment Ribbon
Sokmaly Prak  
U.S. Army  
ITT Technical Institute

College experience statement
When I ETS'd (expiration of term of service) out of the Army, I needed to attend an educational institute where I could learn the skills I needed to succeed and have a brighter future. I didn’t want to go to college because of the large class sizes and no one-on-one feedback from the instructors. One day, I was watching TV, and I saw a commercial from ITT Tech. I called the school and set an appointment to start my path to a new career. The sales representative was most helpful. He didn’t pressure me to attend the school; he only showed the course options that would interest me. He went step-by-step through the career fields in high demand, and that is why I chose the computer networking system course.

The staff itself went out of their way to make sure I have the resources necessary to attend the school. The financial aid administrator helped with the form so that I would have the money to attend, and he went out of his way to help me apply for VA benefits. The career counselors will help me with my resume and help me find a job or internship when I am about to graduate. The school, including the dean and instructors, understood when I had to attend to military duties. They allowed me to make up the work and gave me learning aids so I wouldn’t be left behind. The dean herself went out of her way to find student scholarships and other things that might benefit the students. The staff would find the littlest things that would make students excel in their course.

The best experience I had with ITT Tech has been the instructors. With a small classroom size and one-on-one student-instructor relationships, it made learning so much easier, because they are giving you their undivided attention. The teachers here also went out of their way to give students extra tutoring when they needed it, and they would stop the class until everyone understood the material (you can’t get that in a traditional college). With the instructors’ help, I made the dean’s list twice, something I could never have done when I was in community college.

Military experience statement
Overall, my military experiences were great, and I enjoyed serving my country. I believe young adults should serve their country at least once, not just because of the money they can get for going to school, but because it’s an experience they can use when they are back home.

Awards
• Army Achievement Medal
• National Defense Service Medal
• Global War on Terrorism Service Medal
• Korea Defense Service Medal
Wayne Geldbach  
U.S. Army  
Everest University  

College experience statement  
When I started thinking about my college experiences, I had to divide them into two separate times in my life. My first experience began while I was in the Army on active duty with the Joint Communications Support Element at MacDill Air Force Base, Fla. While serving there in my capacity as a communicator, I began to realize that, if I was going to become more valuable to the Army as well as future employers, I was going to need a better education than the high school diploma that I had earned to that point. My wife and I were beginning to think about children and establishing a more permanent existence. With the encouragement of my supervisors and peers alike, I began taking classes with the intent of improving myself, improving my income to make my family’s existence better, and improving my worth to whomever I chose to work for in the future. This was a time when the military encouraged and even helped soldiers to benefit from advanced education. I had completed almost enough classes to get an Associate degree but did not actually receive one because I was two classes short of what was required. 

I tried to complete my education many times while still in the service of my country but was not able to do so due to demands from my job and my growing family. I retired from military service but was shuffled out due to the build-up from the first Gulf War. I was forced to make arrangements for taking care of my family and to locate employment because of the lack of normal programs afforded retirees when being separated from the military. My final military unit was deployed to the Persian Gulf during Desert Storm. It took me about five years to become stable enough in supporting my family to even begin to think of completing my education. That is when my wife announced that she had breast cancer. All of my attention and resources were then concentrated on getting her through her crisis. She knew how much my education meant to me and promised that after she got well I could complete school. She fought nobly for eight years and finally passed away. I miss her terribly, but I realized that she had unselfishly given me the inspiration and the ability to go back and complete my education as a tribute to her life. I applied for and was denied benefits from the VA for education under the Montgomery GI Bill because I had been out for longer than 10 years. They would not make an exception. Additionally, I began to see big changes in the career field that I had chosen when I left military life and realized it was time for me to make a career change from an electronics repairman; the field was dwindling due to throw-away modularization. The computer field appears to be the newest wave of electronics and looks very promising for future growth. So I decided to make a career change to the computer science field. 

The second half of my educational experience began when I enrolled at Everest University in the Bachelor’s completion program for computer information sciences. I learned two very important concepts almost immediately upon starting with Everest University. It is never too late to learn, and if you are not learning something new each day, you are not paying enough attention to what you are learning. With the death of my son while in school, I learned another important concept: Life goes on, and we need to make the absolute best of every opportunity we are given, because we never know when we will be called back to our creator. I found that I have a unique talent for helping others through their own adversities, and I decided to share this talent with others by getting involved in the Igniter Ambassador program. It is for student leaders interested in reaching out a helping hand to new students who are having trouble acclimating themselves into their studies or to students with commitment difficulties who start having problems continuing with their studies. I help provide a forum for them so that they can work out their personal problems and continue with their studies at a level that is easier for them—the level of a fellow student willing to provide academic and counseling assistance when needed. It is a highly rewarding function within our university. I attend new student orientations and wear distinctive clothing to classes to identify myself as an Igniter Ambassador, and I make myself available for tutoring. 

I am also involved in the Everest University CIS Club and have been called upon to assist in school projects that involve setting up student equipment and installing equipment on the server. I have assisted with troubleshooting the system on occasion and helped to streamline and make the server more efficient and secure. I have currently been asked by my department chair to assist with operations when the school moves into its new facilities later this year. I have also been asked to help instructors
Sarah Ambrozik
U.S. Army
DeVry University

College experience statement
My college goals came into clear focus one day during a Blackhawk training exercise with the Florida National Guard. Prior to this day, I was attending DeVry University with the hope of earning an Associate degree as a computer technician, though unsure of what I wanted to do afterward and only attending college because it was the right move once honorably discharged from active duty. As I started to become familiar with the other students in the same program, I unfortunately learned that many were not content. They were deciding to change to a four-year engineering program with greater opportunities. I kept that thought in the back of my mind as I was getting ready for my last training requirement for the Florida National Guard. I was excited to find out we were going to be working with Blackhawk helicopters, the same helicopter I worked on when I was on active duty. That day, I was reminded of the love I had for the Blackhawk. Leaving the event, I kept thinking of a way I could get back to working with the helicopter as a civilian, and the engineering program that the other DeVry students had suggested was the key to this opportunity. The next day I went to school, talked to my dean and, that very same day, changed my program to electrical engineering. I vowed to myself that I would one day be back to working on helicopters.

Awards
- Army Commendation Medal
- Army Achievement Medal
- Army Good Conduct Medal
- National Defense Service Medal

Military experience statement
My experiences in the military have been many and diverse. Not only did the military allow me to mature, but it gave me a whole set of ideals and ethics that would have taken me a lifetime to develop on my own. Everything you use in the accomplishment of a task or goal is a tool, and tools must be properly maintained and prepared in order to work properly.

Awards
- Defense Meritorious Service Medal
- Joint Service Commendation Medal
- Humanitarian Service Medal

with their class presentations and assist them in other capacities when needed. I also aid the academic staff when tasked with calling students and planning and executing student activities, such as student appreciation gatherings.

Overall, my school has provided me with a vast array of talent and experience that I will be able to use as tools to achieve goals and complete projects in the business world upon graduation. My experiences have brought me from an individual who hated school and couldn’t wait to graduate high school to a student who loves to learn new things and looks forward to applying the concepts that I have learned. I have truly learned to appreciate my learning experience and will continue to learn as I continue on in life.
Latonya Davis
U.S. Navy
Herzing College

College experience statement
My college life is a wonderful and culturally diverse learning experience that’s helping me prepare for a new civilian life. This time around at college, I feel I am more focused, and my GPA is good. I am eager to learn and prepare myself for a successful job in the medical field. I have always enjoyed being around people of all races and cultures. Without diversity, life would just be boring. After coming from overseas, I still want some type of culture in my life. College is the place for diversity.

College is preparing me to get a degree in health science, medical billing and coding. It has also given me a chance to do my internship and work with people in the medical field who are not in the military. I need this opportunity to prepare myself for my new career.

Military experience statement
The military helped me, while I was on active duty, to be in the medical field. It kept me focused and gave me the discipline I need to succeed in life.

Awards
- Navy and Marine Corps Achievement Medal
- Good conduct Medal
- Humanitarian Service Medal

Manuel DaRosa
U.S. Navy
Everest College

College experience statement
I have put a high level of energy into my military, academic and philosophical achievements. This stems from significant reading about historical figures and their qualities for success. I am on the path of emulating these academic and philosophical achievements, having learned much in the military. My academic quest started in 2008, having morphed from the Associate to the Bachelor’s program. Success, in my case, has been measured by knowledge, presidential awards, a magna cum laude status and maturity. Although I chose computer information science, college is more of an “experience” than the end result. Along with my chosen program, I’ve enjoyed the personal additions of philosophy, history and metaphysics. Everest has provided the tools and instruments to carve out knowledge within computer information science. My horizon has also improved through life-based pursuits outside of school and the military.

Military experience statement
My military experience is one of my treasured life endeavors. It has improved my decision making, mental precision and leadership qualities a lot.

Awards
- National Defense Medal
- Global War on Terrorism Service Medal
- Navy Good Conduct Award
- Sea Service Deployment Ribbon
Joy Mattson-Dossey  
U.S. Air Force  
Harrison College

College experience statement
My college experience at Harrison has been wonderful to date. I love the small classroom sizes and the fact that most instructors will go out of their way to help me succeed. Harrison is a very diverse career college. They do not make you take classes that really do not apply to your major course of study, so I feel like I have gotten right down to the meat and potatoes of my majors. As an adult student returning to school later in life, this is important to me. At Harrison, I feel like I have already learned a lot and have even been refreshed on a few things that I had forgotten. It is very exciting to know that by the end of this year, I will have two Associate degrees and be halfway to my Bachelor’s degree. I am making many new friends at school and studying hard to stay on the dean’s list. I feel like it is important to always do your best no matter what you are doing.

About a year ago, I joined a student organization on campus, Community Outreach Efforts, and I am now the secretary/treasurer. C.O.R.E. is involved in a fundraiser for the student emergency fund; a fundraiser for a Christmas assistance program; The Exchange Magazine (campus magazine); working at Second Helpings, a call-a-thon reminding students when classes are starting; Summer Jam/Open House; and many more activities. It was a step out of my comfort zone to join and become involved with C.O.R.E., but I am so glad that I did. I feel fortunate and blessed in my life, so I wanted to be able to help others and give back.

Military experience statement
The Army, without question, was a most exciting time. It taught me discipline, leadership and teamwork, as well as how to treat others with dignity and respect. Through military schools and physical training, I gained moral and mental courage that I use every day to make tough decisions.

Awards
- Bronze Star Medal
- Meritorious Service Medal
- Army Commendation Medal
- UAS/USAF Pres Unit Citation

James Ramirez  
U.S. Army  
Marine Mechanics Institute

College experience statement
Attending Marine Mechanics Institute has been one of the most beneficial decisions I have made in choosing a new career. The experience of learning from some of the top technicians in the field is what makes this school so rewarding. Learning the tools and techniques and knowing that what is being taught is how things are being applied in the industry are what keep me coming back day after day. I have learned so much in the past months, and I’m looking forward to graduating. I believe that the knowledge I obtain at MMI will help me be successful when pursuing a career as a marine mechanic.

Awards
- Air Medal
- Air Force Aerial Achievement Medal
- Army Commendation Medal

Edwin Ramos Rey  
U.S. Army  
Heritage Institute

College experience statement
Heritage Institute is a top-notch educational organization that prepares its students to succeed in the medical world. The staff has a very positive attitude and instills that same attitude into their students. Students are empowered to learn and to seek self-improvement in all aspects of their lives. The teachers are concerned experts in their field, and it is my perception that they are also here to coach, mentor and impart knowledge. Pharmacy technician is a new career I’ve chosen, and it signifies a big change in life for me. I am very fortunate to have enrolled in Heritage Institute.
Mark Rauschenberg
Air National Guard
National College

College experience statement
I am currently going to college to get my Associate degree and certification as a registered health information technician. I chose this profession because the medical field is growing in the area where I live, and I felt this would be the best opportunity to establish a new career for myself so that I may be able to better provide for my two children. This new job will give me the chance to work closely with people and the ability to later move into a supervisory position in the medical field, where I will be able to use my management skills from the military. Upon completion of this step in my education, I plan to keep moving forward and also get my certification in cancer registries. I am very happy with my choice in this field and am discovering that the sky is the limit for me once again.

Military experience statement
Upon leaving active duty with the Air Force, I enlisted with the Air National Guard and found the need for a full-time job. The jobs that I had were in the construction/trades field, which is what I do in the military. My last job was as a fireplace installer and insulator. I was away on orders with the military when I got a phone call stating that our company was closing their doors for good. They were shutting down due to the decline in the housing market and economy, and they would be closed before I got back from duty.

Awards
- Air Force Outstanding Unit Award
- Air Force Good Conduct Medal
- National Defense Medal
- Armed Forces Expeditionary Medal
- Stellar Performer Award (2004, 2008)
- Global War on Terrorism Medal
- Air Reserve Forces Meritorious Service Medal

Raymond Havnen Jr.
U.S. Air Force
Vatterott College

College experience statement
College has been a great experience for me. Every night that I attend class, I know for a fact that I have chosen the right college and degree program. Balancing being in the Air Force, going to college four nights a week and spending quality time with my family has proven to be extremely challenging. My experience in the Air Force has given me the drive and determination to do my best in college. Also, knowing that doing well in college will provide for my family in the future pushes me to do my best while attending Vatterott College. Vatterott offers so very much to its students to ensure their success, and I ensure I use all the tools they provide for my future success. From job placement to the small class sizes to the wealth of knowledge the instructors have, I know that Vatterott College has provided me the skills and resources that will give me that extra edge over my competition while job hunting.

Military experience statement
"Integrity first, service before self, and excellence in all we do." Those are the Air Force core values and a way of life for me.

Awards
- Air Force Commendation Medal
- Air Force Achievement Medal
- Good Conduct Medal
- Humanitarian Service Medal
- Southwest Asia Service Medal
Keven Robinson  
U.S. Army  
Lincoln College of Technology

**College experience statement**

Oct. 22, 2010, was the day I started going to school here at Lincoln College of Technology in Grand Prairie, Texas. The instructors here are top-notch and care about the quality of education that the students receive. One evening, I was working on changing the brakes of my Dodge Grand Caravan when I was unsure how to do a certain procedure. I decided to call Mr. Childs. Within 10 minutes, Mr. Childs took time from his schedule on a Saturday to return my phone call and answer whatever questions I had. Mr. Davidson has also returned calls when I needed a quick answer. Mr. Hanington loves to work out in the shop and loves to help students fix whatever problems they are working on. One day, Mr. Hanington was helping us troubleshoot a rear taillight that was not working on a Chevy Venture minivan. We found that the problem was a loose connector inside the taillight assembly. He showed us how to disassemble the taillight and fix the loose connector. That was a big savings to the person who could have purchased a new assembly for $150 from the dealership. I really enjoy working with all the instructors here at Lincoln College of Technology and the hands-on experience that will prepare me for the industry when I graduate.

**Military experience statement**

Sept. 10, 2002, almost the one-year anniversary of 9/11, was a very important day for me and the start of a time in which I served my country until April 6, 2010. As a heavy equipment operator stationed at Fort Hood, Texas, I have many experiences that I can write about, so here are a few of my experiences in the Army. During the first couple months when the war in Iraq kicked off, I was assigned to the DRFT detail, which means that I was responsible for making sure that all the equipment was properly weighed, proper load plans were inside military containers, and that all military equipment and personnel arrived at the correct place. I organized hundreds of motor pools throughout Fort Hood. Everyone was always happy with our work, and we made the job much easier with the heavy equipment that was issued to us, which also meant that the soldiers got to go home earlier and spend time with their families. Of the 7.5 years at Ford Hood, 15 months were spent in Qwest, Iraq, which is 30 miles south of Mosul. The first six months in Iraq were really special to me. I was in charge of turning in all work orders for the soldiers' barracks. Many of the soldiers thanked me for my hard work, I wanted to make sure that they had a nice, air-conditioned home away from home. The rest of the nine months was spent being in charge of eight soldiers at the entry control point in Qwest. In the nine months that we spent at the entry control point, no soldiers or civilians were injured or killed. All members of my unit, the 263rd Maintenance Company, returned home.

**Awards**

- Army Commendation Medal
- Army Achievement Medal
- Army Good Conduct Medal (2nd Award)
- National Defense Service Medal
- Global War on Terrorism Service Medal
- Armed Forces Service Medal
- Iraq Campaign Medal
- Overseas Service Ribbon
Sharonda Davis  
U.S. Navy  
Concorde Career College

**College experience statement**  
My experience at Concorde has been worth every minute. The staff eagerly allowed me the time to get into the groove of returning to college after some period of time. The information, although taught at an extremely quick pace, is presented with such understanding that it makes me more prone to learn the material. Upon first arriving, I questioned myself, wondering if I could make the transition from military life to attending a college with individuals who never entered the armed services. This is now the farthest thing from my mind. This is the most amazing choice that I could have made for my life at this current time. I feel honored to wear the Concorde uniform and be a part of the best college to further my education. I feel that once I graduate, all the skills I will need to complete my job will have been provided.

**Awards**
- Navy and Marine Corps Achievement Medal
- Good Conduct Medal
- National Defense Service Medal
- Sea Service Deployment Ribbon

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Hong-ye Haung  
U.S. Marine Corps  
ECPI University

**College experience statement**  
I have attended ECPI since Jan. 7, 2008, and my expectations have been met. The schedule is very convenient, allowing me to only have to focus on two classes every five weeks. The five hours per day from Monday to Thursday is also convenient because some classes offer a lot of material to study. I feel relieved that I have energy whenever I return home, rather than being burnt out. Lastly, the class size is small enough that I can ask questions to help me understand the subject. I don’t agree with the fact that if you are paying for college, you cannot ask the instructors to clarify any misunderstandings.

**Military experience statement**  
My experience as a Marine was the toughest challenge that I have ever experienced. I have learned to cope with stress, have discipline and work as part of a team.

**Awards**
- Global War on Terrorism Expeditionary Medal
- Humanitarian Service Medal
- Marine Corps Good Conduct Medal

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Read more military success stories online at www.CareerCollegeCentral.com/MilitarySuccess2012
Alfredo Rosado  
U.S. Marine Corps  
Westwood College

**Military experience statement**  
My experience in the military was like no other experience I have ever encountered. The 13 weeks of boot camp showed me that what I was about to get myself into was no joke and there was no turning back. But I was ready for whatever came to me. I knew what I wanted, and that was to serve my country. Being in the fleet where it’s the real deal has changed my view of the military forever. I was one of the most dedicated and motivated Marines at my shop, which at the time was a mechanic shop. I was shipped out to bay after three months of being in the fleet and spent three months at where I think is the hottest place on Earth. When I got back, it didn’t take too long for me to get promoted to sergeant. Something not everyone can do in four years, I did. I won’t take it back for anything in the world and would go back if my country needed me.

**Awards**  
- Navy and Marine Corps Achievement Medals  
- Marine Corps Good Conduct Medal  
- Sea Service Deployment Ribbon  
- Iraq Campaign Medal  
- National Defense Service Medal  
- Global War on Terrorism Service Medal  
- Letter of Appreciation

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Lance Joel Credeur  
U.S. Army  
Remington College

**College experience statement**  
I am currently attending Remington College at Lafayette, and my experience there has been very enlightening. Knowing that it is a technical college, I did not expect to get the quality of education I am getting. I have great instructors, and they have all passed on a great deal of knowledge to me as well as a great friendship. My instructors are always helpful and willing to work out whatever problem I or someone else in the class have. Remington College also has a great schedule, allowing me to hold a full-time job with the Lafayette Parish School Board as an electrician while still attending class. I am very pleased with my enrollment there, and I am sure it will only get better.

**Military experience statement**  
My military experience has been one of the greatest experiences of my life. I was in the active-duty Army for three years, stationed in Vilseck, Germany, with the 1st Infantry Division, 63rd Armored Regiment. I also went to Iraq with this unit in 2003 to serve in Operation Iraqi Freedom. I was also stationed in Vilseck when the 63rd cased their colors; it was an honor I will never forget, being one of the last occupants of the post before the unit returned to Fort Riley, Kan. I am currently serving in the Louisiana National Guard and now have seven years of military service. I am proud of my service to my country and all the knowledge I have gained in the process.

**Awards**  
- Army Commendation Medal  
- Army Achievement Medal  
- Joint Meritorious Unit Award  
- National Defense Service Medal
Throughout the last year, the media have been telling an incomplete story about career colleges. Some of the more common myths include:

- Career colleges charge high tuition rates
- Career colleges generate a high cost to taxpayers
- Students at career colleges are not getting a good education
- Students cannot find jobs after graduating from career colleges

In the Fact Book 2013: A Profile of Career Colleges and Universities, scheduled for release in early 2013, we hope to illustrate through data the full story of career colleges and dispel the myths.

Find more information on the Fact Book, visit imagine-america.org/factbook or contact Robert L. Martin, President and CEO of the Imagine America Foundation, at 202.336.6758 or bobm@imagine-america.org.

The Educational Benchmark Study, conducted jointly by the Imagine America Foundation (IAF) and Wonderlic, is nearing completion. We already revealed some of our findings at the APSCU Annual Convention; several articles summarizing the study results have also appeared in earlier issues of Career College Central. In our earlier articles, we discussed what schools can do to increase student engagement based on our findings.

Student engagement is at the heart of our research because it has the greatest impact on educational outcomes. For example, higher levels of student engagement are associated with higher grade point averages, better attendance rates and fewer dropped classes; they also correlate with stronger intentions to pay back student loans and more positive perceptions of career colleges. All things considered, it is not surprising that engaged students are more likely to graduate.

In addition to collecting data on students who are currently enrolled at career colleges, we also sampled graduates, dropouts and those who decided not to enroll. This wide sample size creates fruitful comparisons between engaged students (graduates) and disengaged students (dropouts). Indeed, as the graph to the upper right depicts, graduates of career colleges are more engaged than their dropout counterparts.
The graph below depicts the employment status (unemployed, part-time employment or full-time employment) for each enrollment status category (current students, graduates, dropouts or never enrolled).

The graph below depicts the employment status (unemployed, part-time employment or full-time employment) for each enrollment status category (current students, graduates, dropouts or never enrolled).
Upon graduation, the vast majority of career college graduates are working full-time, and these graduates have the lowest rate of unemployment. Perhaps most importantly, our analyses also suggest that engaged students are more likely than disengaged students to be employed full time; i.e., career college graduates are 1.5 times more likely than dropouts to be employed full time (53 percent vs. 35 percent).

To this end, career college educators should ensure that their students are engaged learners by focusing on improving their school resources and catering to individual students.

In closing, we are nearing the completion of the Educational Benchmark Study. The information presented in our series of articles was intended to be a demonstration of some of the relationships we uncovered throughout our analyses. In time, we will disseminate additional detailed findings through publications, presentations and workshops. We will also offer webinars geared toward specific administrative departments (e.g., financial aid, student services and career development). In the immediate future, Wonderlic will begin to offer the Student Engagement Survey as a product for educational institutions. As users of the Student Engagement Survey, colleges and other institutions will be able to identify and prioritize problem areas, set baselines for measuring future improvement, validate school and program initiatives, and gauge benchmarks against other schools.

For more information on the Educational Benchmark Study, please contact Ken Silber at ken.silber@wonderlic.com or 1.800.977.1401.

While career college graduates are more likely to be employed full time, this is only part of the story. In the course of our analyses, we also found that graduating conveys a greater likelihood of finding gainful employment. As the graph above shows, of those who are employed at least part time, graduates are five times more likely than dropouts to be employed within their field of study (56 percent vs. 11 percent).

Given the recent national discussions regarding the need for career colleges to better prepare students for gainful employment, our results are very promising. Overall, graduates are more likely to be employed full time within their field of study. More importantly, our model suggests that this is largely due to differences in student engagement – that is to say, engaged students are more likely than disengaged students to graduate and obtain gainful employment.
The one characteristic most associated with college students — no matter what age they are or where they attend school — is that they aren’t exactly rolling in money. Money may be tight during the college years, but that doesn’t mean that students’ financial decisions during this critical period of time should leave them in debt for the rest of their lives.

If you are a student considering student loans, you should plan to take out the least amount of loan debt as possible. After you’ve made the decision to return to college — and well before you arrive on campus — it’s important that you also develop a personal budget. During the budgeting process, if your expenses exceed your income, you obviously need to consider cutting some of your extraneous purchases to stay on track financially.

Of course, one of the first processes in budgeting is determining exactly which expenses you actually need to survive, and which ones are superfluous. The process of determining needs versus wants is an essential skill that will help you both develop a realistic budget for living expenses and avoid considerable debt that will be difficult to repay later.

More than ever before, the career college sector of education is committed to helping students understand the financial challenges they are about to take on when pursuing an education. In this
spirit, the Imagine America Foundation developed its Financial Planning Made Simple (FPMS) tool, an online tool that helps career college students protect their future by making responsible borrowing decisions.

FPMS consists of an 18-minute animated video tutorial with the student’s choice of two avatars to walk the user through the budgeting, borrowing and repayment process. The video provides applicants to the Foundation’s various scholarship programs the opportunity to calculate their own budgets by using the downloadable FPMS Student Financial Planning Tool. The tool allows users to visually see exactly how their money is being spent so that students can strategically decrease overspending and increase their savings.

The first step to prioritizing expenses is to make a list of the items you think you truly need. Then, while reviewing the list, consider this: What would happen if an item on the list went missing from your life? What sort of difficulties would you experience? Would you be able to carry on with your life without it? Obviously, the list of needs will vary depending on a number of factors, including the area in which you live and perhaps even your health.

Some of the more common examples of needs are:
  • Rent or mortgage payments
  • Transportation (car loan, public transportation fees, etc.)
  • Utilities
  • Food
  • Medications

Once your needs have been clarified, anything else on your list of potential purchases can be classified as wants – but that doesn’t mean that it doesn’t make good financial sense to purchase those items. As long as you exercise discretion and prioritize your wants shrewdly, you should be able to maintain a personal budget that allows you a few extra treats for yourself now and then.

To prioritize your wants, make a list of the items you were considering purchasing in the near future. Again, you can review this list by considering what value each of these items would bring to your life. If you find that they would add a great deal to your life and would be used frequently, these items can be ranked at the top of the list.

Your list of wants can span a full range of possible expenditures, but wants are always purchases you can live without, such as:
  • Eating out
  • Going to the movies
  • Designer clothes or new fashions when older clothes are still functional
  • Cable TV
  • Extensive travel
  • Video games and other technology that goes beyond the needs of student life

Without question, the act of determining needs versus wants is an essential skill for students to keep their spending in line; it can also help students afford to pay back what they’ve borrowed for their education upon graduation. In that sense, the process of personal budgeting is a need in itself, and an important one that can keep students on track for solid financial future and allow them and their families to reap the full benefits of a career education.

For more information on FPMS or to see a demo contact Robert L. Martin at bobm@imagine-america.org or 202.336.6758.
Imagine America LDRSHIP Award

Honoring soldiers who have bravely fought for our country has become a tradition at the Imagine America Foundation. Through the LDRSHIP Award, the Foundation has recognized 75 exceptional military students attending career colleges and has provided more than $350,000 in direct cash grants.

2004 LDRSHIP Award Recipients
Cynthia Bandoy - Remington College
Juan Bautista - The Art Institute of California
Richard Calarco - Sullivan University
Stan Mays Jr. - Herzing College
Sherri Weimern - ITT Technical Institute

2005 LDRSHIP Award Recipients
Kimberly Atkins - ECPI College of Technology
Thelma Cross - Remington College
Sang Kim - Universal Technical Institute
Gerardo Murillo - Universal Technical Institute
Jeremy Tredway - Platt College

2006 LDRSHIP Award Recipients
Tim Boltin - New England Culinary Institute
Philip Cook - National College
Matthew Kwiatkowski - ITT Technical Institute
Henry Lopez - Westwood College
James Newman - ITT Technical Institute
Kevin Olech - NASCAR Technical Institute
Darrell Smith - National College
Margaret Walter - The Refrigeration School

2007 LDRSHIP Award Recipients
Yanse Aseng - Florida National College
Alex Briones - Draughons Junior College
Benjamin Claus - Triangle Tech
Corie Clements - Everest University
Matthew Gorab - Everest University
Mark Harris - MedVance Institute
Dennis Johnson - Grantham University
Eduardo Marroquin - Colorado Technical University
Christopher Miller - Universal Technical Institute
Travis Nissen - ECPI College of Technology
Lenard Watson - Art Institute of California

2008 LDRSHIP Award Recipients
Jason Brandon - Westwood College
Cheryl Carr - Art Institute of Indianapolis
Sharonda Davis - Concorde Career Institute
Latonya Davis - Herzing University
Wayne Geldbach - Everest University
Raymond Havnen, Jr. - Vatterott College
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Christina Jaramillo - Provo College
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Moises Torres - Lincoln College of Technology

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Kimberly Cupery - Herzing University
Matthew Demaske - ECPI College of Technology
Melissa Gridley - Art Institute of Tampa
Latisha Jefferson - Remington College
Jessica McGloin - International Academy of Design & Technology
Mark Rauschenberg - National College
Edwin Raymosrey - Heritage Institute
Alfredo Rosado - Westwood College

2011 LDRSHIP Award Recipients
Edward Costantino - Pittsburgh Institute of Aeronautics
Manuel DaRosa - Everest University
Adam Holybee - Remington College
Santoria Hornsby-Johnson - Virginia College
DeAnne Jacobsen - InTellitec Colleges
Joy Mattson-Dossey - Harrison College
Donna Parker - Miller-Motte Technical College
Keven Robinson - Lincoln College of Technology
Lauren Santiago - Anthem College
Jeff Sedgwick - Michigan Institute of Aviation and Technology

2012 LDRSHIP Award Recipients
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Shara Diaz - InTellitec Colleges
Somatie Dowell - Art Institute of Virginia Beach
Cory Gifford - Harrison College
Nichole Gladkowski - Colorado Technical University
Jill Guilfoyle - Daymar College
Rudy Hernandez - Westwood College - Los Angeles
Stephen Long - NASCAR Technical Institute
Janet Nielsen - YTI Career Institute-Mechanicsburg
Daniel Pennington - Lincoln College of Technology
Miguel Urbina - San Joaquin Valley College

The Imagine America Foundation is able to provide these cash grants because of contributions made to the 21st Century Workforce Fund. If you are interested in contributing to the LDRSHIP Award, contact Robert L. Martin, President and CEO at (202) 336-6758 or bobm@imagine-america.org
Part three in our series on the history of accreditation

By Dr. Marylin Newell, College Matters

From its simple beginnings as state-authorized oversight (NY Regents, 1787) to a non-regulatory, peer review function by industry-specific organizations and through the emergence of a number of independent accrediting agencies (first regional, then national and programmatic), higher education accreditation has morphed into a powerful force with significant influence over U.S. colleges and universities.

Until 1944, higher education accreditation had maintained its distance from regulatory responsibility and federal oversight. The 1944 Serviceman’s Readjustment Act, which provided federal funding for the retraining of military personnel returning from the war, led to a significant increase in the number of new schools cropping up to provide vocational education and technical training; with those new schools came widespread concerns about abuse of the newly available funds. Concern mounted, and between 1950 and 1952, several high-level investigations by “the VA, the General Accountability Office (GAO), the Bureau of the Budget and two special committees appointed by the House of Representatives” (Lee & Merisotis, 1990) brought significant changes through the 1952 Veteran’s Readjustment Act, also known as the Korean War GI Bill.

Along with expanding federal funding for postsecondary education, the GI Bill stipulated that only schools accredited by agencies approved by the Commissioner of Education could participate in the federal funding. At this point, accrediting agencies became the gatekeepers of federal funding – an unlikely and, by several accounts, unwanted role. The alternative, however, was for institutions to not receive federal funds. So, with this shift, “the federal government’s use of accreditation and its foothold on accreditation became firmly established” (Matthews, 2012). Accrediting agencies were now part of what has been dubbed the “triad,” a system for providing access to federal funds that tied accreditation to state authorization and federal approvals.

These events marked only the beginning of government intervention in the accreditation process. During President Lyndon B. Johnson’s administration, the Higher Education Act of 1965 (HEA) expanded access to education for the masses by increasing the availability of federal funding and increasing federal regulation of accrediting agencies, which now needed to be a “nationally recognized accrediting agency or associations approved by the Commissioner for this purpose” (Pub. L. 89-329). What followed was a series of regulations that both prescribed the conditions under which accrediting agencies would be listed as approved and provided corresponding criteria that these agencies would need to apply to the institutions they accredited.

The 1968 reauthorization of the Higher Education Act established the Division of Accreditation and Institutional Eligibility “to review all policies, develop criteria for the recognition of accrediting associations, and recommend accrediting associations for federal recognition” (Finken, 1994). The apparent theory that conferred gatekeeper status to accrediting agencies in the 1965 HEA was that accreditation was a good measure of educational quality. With the higher stakes of additional federal funding, the government began prescribing standards by which schools could be accredited and accrediting agencies could be recognized – i.e., approved.

Government intervention accelerated in 1992 when student default rates rose to an all-time high of 22.4 percent (OSFAP) and “the Department of Education’s Inspector General testified before the House Education and Labor Committee that billions of dollars available to students each year through loans and grants are at risk, in part because the recognition
process does not assure that the accrediting agencies use appropriate and effective policies to accredit schools” (Martin, 1994).

Following the committee’s report and subsequent heated debates, which included recommendations to rescind the role of accreditation in access to federal funds, Higher Education Act amendments were enacted that substantially regulated the nature of the accreditation standards agencies were required to use in the approval process. Among the standards now required were metrics in student achievement, curricula, faculty, facilities, fiscal and administrative capacity, student support services, recruiting and admissions, program length, student complaints, and compliance with federal loan program criteria.

THE HIGHER EDUCATION ACT OF 1965 (HEA) EXPANDED ACCESS TO EDUCATION FOR THE MASSES BY INCREASING THE AVAILABILITY OF FEDERAL FUNDING AND INCREASING FEDERAL REGULATION OF ACCREDITING AGENCIES

The increase in government regulation of accreditation and the specification of standards, which until now had been left to the discretion of the accrediting agencies, were accompanied by the appointment of a National Advisory Committee on Accreditation and Institutional Eligibility (NACAIE), a policy advisory committee to the Commissioner of Education. Subsequent authorizations of the 1965 Higher Education Act replaced the NACAIE with the National Advisory Committee on Institutional Quality and Improvement in 1992, and in 1998 with the National Advisory Committee on Institutional Quality and Integrity (NACIQI).
According to the Department of Education’s description of the NACIQI, government oversight of accreditation through the committee expanded to the following areas:

- The establishment and enforcement of criteria for recognition of accrediting agencies or associations under Subpart 2 of Part H, Title IV, of the HEA
- The recognition of specific accrediting agencies or associations or a specific state approval agency
- The preparation and publication of the list of nationally recognized accrediting agencies and associations
- The eligibility and certification process for institutions of higher education under Title IV of the HEA
- The relationship between (1) accreditation of institutions of higher education and the certification and eligibility of such institutions, and (2) state licensing responsibilities with respect to such institutions
- Any other advisory functions relating to accreditation and institutional eligibility that the secretary may prescribe

The members of the NACIQI are appointed for three- to six-year terms in equal numbers of representation by the secretary of education, the president pro tempore of the Senate, and the speaker of the House. A list of the current members of the committee, the sources of their appointment and a brief biographical sketch of each member is available at the Department of Education’s website.

What started out as a voluntary, self-regulated peer review process has – over time and in the interest of access to federal funds – succumbed to increasing, and somewhat surreptitious, federal regulation of academic practices. This is the very state of affairs accrediting agencies and the higher education sector hoped to guard against. The organizations that began as a collegial association of institutions now control one of the largest pools of resources in higher education; an estimated $169 billion in federal funds was awarded in 2011 to students attending schools accredited by agencies approved by the federal government.

Accrediting bodies’ increased responsibility to serve as the gatekeepers of federal dollars – a responsibility thrust onto them by legislation and the accrediting industry’s willingness to take on that role rather than allow government to have greater direct regulatory control over higher education – has positioned accrediting agencies as larger-than-life organizations that hold the future of their member institutions at the mercy of what many consider a flawed process.

Citations:


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Adam Smith famously noted in his treatise “The Wealth of Nations,” “It is not from the benevolence of the butcher, the brewer or the baker that we expect our dinner, but from their regard to their own interest.” Given this widely accepted premise as a rigorous argument for the organizing of economic activity around markets, why then has modern society overlooked the role of the private marketplace in education? Instead, it has come to rely on the presumed benevolence of bureaucrats, politicians, school administrators and teachers when attempting to obtain for its children an education that will prepare them for the challenges of the future. Many in society seem to view profit and education as diabolical opposites, presumably as a matter of principle. Those who hold this view contend that the objective of the private sector is to maximize profits at all costs, including the detriment of educational quality; therefore, the private sector cannot be trusted to look out for the best interests of students. Yet others, admittedly a minority, hold a more optimistic view of the profit motive in education, seeing it as a means to improve educational outcomes. Those in the latter camp see the profit motive as a factor that drives competition and innovation, which in turn lead to efficient production and quality improvement in the private sector, and they believe that the same market forces can be harnessed to improve the efficiency and quality of education provision.
that generous government student aid programs have created the opportunity for some myopic investors to engage in moral hazard by offering programs of dubious quality in order to generate a quick profit from student aid programs. Such unscrupulous business practices are unsustainable, as they result in the development of a poor reputation that will drive customers away and lead to the offending firm’s demise – but not without inflicting short-term damage, as students are often left heavily indebted and taxpayers are cheated out of scarce resources. Although instances of moral hazard are the exception within the industry rather than the norm, they have resulted in considerable political and regulatory risk for the entire sector, such as the recent gainful employment revisions.

An earlier essay in this section by Toby Young, co-founder of the first free school in the UK, describes the challenges that his group faced in setting up the West London Free School, including a lack of clear policy guidance and coordination from public officials, the difficulty of securing a property lease without a credit history or guarantor, and the responsibility of delegating tasks among a group of volunteers. Young describes the process as trying to navigate through a “bureaucratic labyrinth … [where] the ground keeps shifting beneath your feet” as the legal and regulatory framework continually evolve. In the following essays, Peje Emilsson and Barbara Bergstrom – both of whom founded successful chains of for-profit schools in Sweden following establishment of the nation’s voucher system in the early 1990s – describe how the market-oriented reforms have stimulated choice among parents as well as competition and innovation among providers. The authors both state that these changes have culminated in considerable political and regulatory risk for the entire sector, such as the recent gainful employment revisions.

The second section of the IEA volume, appropriately titled “Lessons from the UK and Abroad,” contains five essays, three of which chronicle the experience of education entrepreneurs in the UK and Sweden. The fourth, written by Stanfield, describes how the private sector has opened the doors to education for millions of children in the developing world; the last is a contribution that I co-authored with Adam Lucchesi and Richard Vedder analyzing the growth of for-profit higher education in the United States. In this chapter, my co-authors and I explain why economic theory suggests that educational institutions will not earn profits without providing a quality product that is in demand by the market. We also note

**OTHERS, ADMITTEDLY A MINORITY, HOLD A MORE OPTIMISTIC VIEW OF THE PROFIT MOTIVE IN EDUCATION, SEEING IT AS A MEANS TO IMPROVE EDUCATIONAL OUTCOMES.**
world to improve educational access and outcomes. In particular, he describes the success of budget for-profit education ventures in opening the doors to affordable education to the children of poor families in developing countries such as Ghana, Kenya and India for the first time. This success suggests that the “growth and development of a number of pioneering chains of private schools … is part of a much broader trend toward using the power of the profit motive and entrepreneurship to help serve the basic needs of the poor.” Stanfield also describes a recent paradigm shift by the United Nations, which had previously restricted its education policy programs to those involving only the government, to embrace an outcomes-based approach that provides a role for entrepreneurs and the private sector in effecting positive social change through education. Alluding to the ideas of the late Nobel Laureate F.A. Hayek, who suggested that decisions are best made at the local level due to tacit knowledge, Stanfield says of the reversion of policy by the development community that “it is perhaps ironic that the UN had previously justified increasing levels of government planning because of the increasing complexity of global problems. Today, it is this same complexity which is now making central government planning redundant” due to the role of entrepreneurs in meeting the demands of the local market in the developing world.

The final section of the volume, “New Models of Education,” consists of four essays that propose alternative education market structures. The first essay is written by Anders Hultin, who played an instrumental role in instituting the Swedish voucher system and was one of the co-founders of Kunskapskolan (along with Peje Emilsson). His essay describes the three primary systems of delivering education: a state model that is driven by political incentives; a semi-private model that is driven by philanthropic incentives; and a market model that is driven by profit incentives based on choice, competition and private investment. He argues that the former two models do not correctly align the needs of the market with the interests of the suppliers to create a high-quality education system, suggesting that “in a competitive environment profit reflects quality – never the other way around. Armed with this experience, I find it hard to believe that there is an in-built conflict between the profit motive and quality. In reality, it is the other way around; without the motivation of profit the quality of delivery can be jeopardized.” To illustrate his point, Hultin proclaims that IKEA would not be able to offer affordable, quality furniture to its customers worldwide if it were operated by the state or a private charity, indicating that only the profit motive allows it to do so. Similarly, it is likely infeasible that Walmart would offer everyday low prices on thousands of products to millions of worldwide customers if it were operated by the government or a private charity, rather than a profit-seeking firm.

J.R. Shackleton, an academic economist and former business school dean, argues in his essay that business education should be operated on a for-profit basis rather than being utilized as a cash cow by non-profit universities to cross-subsidize unpopular academic programs and endeavors. Emphasizing the need to privatize business education, he notes that “there is surely something of a paradox in the fact that mainstream business education … largely aimed at preparing young people … for work in a market economy … should be in the hands of institutions which do not fully engage with that economy and for which there is no profit objective to focus and discipline their collective efforts.” Shackleton further notes the fundamental disconnect between business education and the business world by adding that “university-based business schools have developed as high-cost operations with insufficient links with business, excessive emphasis on esoteric research and inadequate customer care.” Operators of career colleges may be empathetic to Shackleton’s position, given their shared vision of providing practical education programs designed to prepare students for the careers that they will enter.

The final two essays of the volume relate to technology and education and are written by Frederick Hess, an education policy expert, and Tom Vander Ark, a partner at an education technology venture capital firm. As the latter author indicates, even in the wake of the information technology revolution that has witnessed productivity gains in nearly every sector of contemporary society, “There has been very little productivity improvement in U.S. schools, despite a doubling of per-pupil funding over the past two decades.” He contributes this stagnation to an inflexible and overly bureaucratic public school franchise that lacks the incentive to enhance performance. Both Hess and Vander Ark provide a glimpse into the classroom of the future in predicting an unbundling of the current “batch process,” or “whole school” approach to delivering education, and the rise of dynamic, customizable student learning packages that are integrated with advanced information technology. Both authors think that the time for Schumpeterian creative destruction in education is now and indicate that innovation leading to a new education “ecosystem” will be the product of experimentation by entrepreneurs who are willing to risk their own capital and time to pursue productivity – and learning-enhancing education innovations.

The essays in The Profit Motive in Education provide their reader with a better grasp of the motivation that drives education entrepreneurs to improve the means of delivering education as well as of the challenges that they face along the way. Reading their stories makes it apparent that the primary motivation is not – as might be assumed – earning a profit, although that certainly can be an incentive and should be a reward for successful innovations. Rather, the goal is transforming a largely bureaucratic, inefficient and stagnant education system that is increasingly perceived to be failing the workforce of the next generation into a dynamic education ecosystem that delivers superior educational outcomes and meets the diverse needs of students at a fraction of the cost. As is stressed by many of the authors, the innovation necessary to succeed in such a transformation is not possible under the direction of politicians, bureaucrats and others who benefit under the current regime, but will instead require competition, innovation and private investment, which are only possible in a profit-driven market system that is not onerously constrained by the largesse of government.
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Once every two years, Washington engages in full-time politics. Congress adjourns or recesses to return home and campaign. The President has a schedule that is dominated by campaigning, except in times of crisis. The political strategists of both parties stretch out across the country to offer help in key races.

I have often suggested that during the campaigns the candidates need us – the voters and supporters. Once elected, we need them! While this analysis is relevant to how we engage in our grassroots activities, it also describes the bigger separation of the political clock between politics and policy.

Recently speaking to one of many groups in our sector, I was asked how I felt the election would impact our sector – specifically, whether I felt there would be a difference depending upon the outcome. My answer – half in jest and equally serious – was: “If the Democrats control the White House, the Senate and the House, we’ll see plenty of funding for Title IV and even more regulations! If the Republicans win control of all three bodies, we’ll be...
deregulated and defunded!” In today’s polarized politics, there is more truth to this than one wants to admit.

Yet if the election were held today, most political observers predict that split control of government between the two political parties will continue. And so, again, we’ll be asked to navigate the impact of politics on policy.

There is, however, one big mistake in everything you have read. There is an assumption in the above writing that suggests politics is only engaged by the two political parties, and that it only happens during the prime campaign season.

The reality is that politics happens all the time – in electing our government leaders and in working with them to advance one’s political views in the actions of government. Yes, this is the prime political season, but it’s not the only time political activity occurs.

Since being given the honor of leading APSCU, I have talked extensively of the need to “change the conversation!” If we continue to react defensively to the attacks from opponents of our sector, we’ll allow them to set the agenda. The best we can hope for in such an environment is that the reporter calls us for a reaction to the latest attack. If lucky, our words will be found deep in the heart of the article – seldom read or remembered by most readers.

Earlier this fall, I was asked to speak in New York City. In preparing for my remarks, I looked at that day’s news clippings to see if there was a potential theme … and there was. In one day:

- 37 percent of National Federation of Independent Business members reported few or no qualified applicants for open positions

- U.S. News & World Report projected 20 million new jobs and 34 million vacancies by 2020

- Colorlines produced the article “Are For-Profit Colleges the Answer for Black Students?” The article reported that between 2004 and 2010 black enrollment in four-year PSCUs increased 264 percent compared to 24 percent in traditional public colleges

- FoxNews.com reported Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) data showing 3.7 million job openings without skilled applicants late this summer. (Former President Clinton used the same remark at the Democratic convention)

- The Organization for Economic Coordination and Development reported that “the odds are just 29 percent that students will pursue higher education if their parents didn’t complete high school”

- The Georgetown Center for Education and the Workforce released its report showing that 25 percent of Americans who earn postsecondary certificates go on to earn a college degree

**There is a skills gap!**

And there is also a capacity gap! Our public sector colleges and universities are struggling with the decrease in public support in ways that are limiting enrollments. Anthony Carnevale of the Georgetown Center on Education and the Workforce projects we will need 20 million “additional” workers with postsecondary skills by 2025. According to his study, we will need 15 million new B.A. degrees (375,000 per year); 4 million new non-degree credentials (100,000 per year); and 1 million new A.A. degrees (25,000 per year). The only possible way to achieve these goals in today’s fiscal environment is through private sector investment in new expanded delivery.

**Then, there is the opportunity gap!**

You’ve seen the numbers. Ninety-six percent of our students are dependent on Title IV financial aid (and that is Senator Harkin’s number!). Sixty-one percent were adults. Thirty-eight percent are African-American or Hispanic. Such numbers, and more like them, continue to lift up the incredible bridge of opportunity our sector provides to students who otherwise would have little chance of additional education and skills leading to real jobs, real incomes and real opportunities for opportunity.

It is in this context that we use the politics of a skilled workforce and the politics of opportunity to present our sector as the solution! And it is by effectively using the politics of our sector’s service that we can create the policies that enable us to move forward.

Join us for this discussion in ways that lead us from politics – theirs and ours – to policy!
If there is something that we can all agree on, it is that private sector colleges and universities will face any number of challenges in the year to come. These challenges will be both legislative and regulatory; they will come from Capitol Hill, the Department of Education and state legislatures. They will threaten both the way we deliver skills-based education and the manner in which our universities are structured and operate.

As we prepare to face these challenges, one of my biggest concerns is effectively communicating to elected officials, policymakers and the general public about who exactly we are and what it is that we do to further the cause of postsecondary education in America, and by doing so, prepare our workforce for 21st century competitiveness.

Since coming to APSCU, I have been taken aback by how few people truly understand the role that career colleges can and should play and that we are a significant part of the higher education landscape, instead of an alternative to it. While people may recognize the high-profile names associated with our sector, they do not understand the breadth or reach of the schools and universities that annually provide 4 million students with the education and skills they need to be competitive in high-demand occupations. The greatest challenge we face will be telling our own story instead of letting others tell it for us.

While we might not be as well-known as our colleagues in public and not-for-profit higher education, our contributions are just as critical. We open doors for many of the nearly 13 million unemployed and 90 million undereducated Americans, and to stay competitive, we must add an additional 8 to 23 million postsecondary-educated Americans to the workforce. Our contribution to this goal has been 1 million postsecondary credentials in the first academic year of the decade, and we have done so without any direct taxpayer subsidies. Instead, we have paid about $1.7 billion in taxes.

In order to tell this story, and tell it effectively, we must speak as one voice for the students we serve. This won’t be easy. We are a diverse association with a membership that ranges from small colleges to the largest universities in the country. We are spread out across the map, and our students, while they share fundamental commonalities, are scattered across industries from nursing to auto repair. In order to do this, we must focus on outcomes and results.

Whether our graduates are veterans, single parents or working adults, they are all part of a community that in 2011 saw a 16 percent increase in degrees earned. They are a community that saw their personal income increase by 54 percent after graduation, and they are a community finding jobs, earning paychecks and helping to close the skills gap we are facing in America.

I came to APSCU to help tell this story. I have worked on shaping and creating higher education policy since my first job out of law school in 1982 at the Pennsylvania Higher Education Assistance Agency. Having learned the intricacies of higher education in America, I am acutely aware of the vital role private sector colleges and universities can play in closing this skills gap and serving students who need flexible learning schedules and opportunities. In my 10 years on Capitol Hill and four years at the Department of Education, I came to respect and admire all sectors of higher education and what they each offer to our nation’s students. But more importantly, I came to realize that higher education works best when all sectors work together to ensure that all students are receiving the education that is right for them, no matter the delivery system.

These are the realizations that I hope to convey to policymakers, elected officials and their staffs. Our schools are not an alternative; they are part of the higher education landscape, and our failures and successes are no different from the more traditional universities with whom we share this landscape.
The question comes up the closer we get to Nov. 6: What will the elections mean for private sector colleges and universities? It’s not only a fair question, it’s a crucial question that will be even more important in the post-mortem following the election. An upcoming three-day symposium sponsored by APSCU will attempt to answer that question and much more. From Politics to Policy: The Private Sector College and University Perspective will showcase a string of compelling panels, experts and critical dialogue on what this year’s political landscape means for our sector and what we should expect in terms of public policy when all the votes are counted.

Taking place inside Washington, D.C.’s historic Omni Shoreham Hotel, the symposium kicks off on Wednesday, Dec. 5 and ends Friday, Dec. 7. The first day won’t waste any time getting to the central question of the symposium, especially with the event taking place a full month after one of the most contentious elections in recent American memory. From "An Inside Analysis of the Politics and Messages of 2012" to "What it All Means for Higher Education," the symposium promises to closely examine election outcomes, covering a wide range of political contests from the presidential race to down ballot House and Senate races.

More importantly, however, is a very real and practical examination of what happens once the leaders have been elected. In a presidential race defined mostly by economic concerns, neither of the candidates have engaged in much debate over the future of higher education. In the post-election phase, rubber meets the road as re-elected incumbents and newly elected challengers face the pressing and very conflicting needs of a demanding constituency. Campaigning is one thing, but what really counts is governance and public policy.

Thus, this year’s symposium seeks to focus on key issues for the higher education sector such as the state of the federal budget ("Budget and Tax Policy Over the Next Two Years"), taxes, students ("Defining our Higher Education Challenges in the Next Five Years"), and what our sector should expect and do as hundreds of thousands of troops return home from theatres of war ("Serving the Veteran Population").

But, there is also the reality of how the private college and university sector must adapt to a rapidly growing and interconnected global marketplace. Panels such as "Global Education: International Deals and Emerging Markets" and "Education, the Economy and Free Enterprise: Our Role?" will attempt to address the many questions attendees are certain to have as the sector continually evolves. We look forward to seeing you in December!
APSCU Symposium 2012

From Politics to Policy: The Private Sector College and University Perspective

DRAFT AGENDA 8/24/2012

Wednesday, December 5, 2012

11:00 – 11:15 a.m. Opening Remarks
11:15 – 12:30 p.m. Election 2012: An Inside Analysis of the Politics and Messages of 2012
12:30 – 1:30 p.m. Buffet Lunch
1:30 – 2:15 p.m. Election 2012: Budget and Tax Policy Over the Next Two Years
3:15 – 3:45 p.m. Refreshment/Networking Break
3:45 – 4:30 p.m. Election 2012: What it Means for the States
4:30 – 5:15 p.m. Election 2012: What it All Means for Higher Education
5:15 – 6:15 p.m. Welcome Reception

Thursday, December 6, 2012

8:00 – 8:30 a.m. Registration and Continental Breakfast
8:30 – 9:30 a.m. Education for Jobs – Digging into the Details of Job Projections
9:30 – 10:30 a.m. Defining Higher Education Challenges in the Next Five Years
10:30 – 11:00 a.m. Refreshment/Networking Break
11:00 – 12:00 p.m. Serving the Veteran Population
12:00 – 12:30 p.m. Luncheon Buffet
12:30 – 1:15 p.m. Luncheon Keynote: Education and Jobs: The Higher Education Partnership
1:15 – 2:15 p.m. Financial Overview – State of the Public Markets
2:15 – 3:15 p.m. Defining our Role: Moving Toward a Common Definition?
3:15 – 3:45 p.m. Refreshment/Networking Break
3:45 – 4:45 p.m. Global Education: International Deals and Emerging Markets
4:45 – 5:45 p.m. The Higher Education Revolution and What it Means for Us
5:45 – 6:45 p.m. Reception

Friday, December 7, 2012

7:30 – 8:00 a.m. Continental Breakfast
8:00 – 9:00 a.m. Education, the Economy and Free Enterprise: Our Role?
9:00 – 10:00 a.m. Can We Really Speak With a Common Voice?
10:00 – 11:00 a.m. Closing Keynote: Framing the Future
11:00 a.m. Conference Adjourns
Building Community Support from the Ground Up

By Rick Jerue, President, The Art Institute of Charleston

Next year, Congress will assess, update and reauthorize the Higher Education Act, which expires at the end of 2013. As part of this review, all postsecondary education – but especially private sector colleges and universities – will be under the microscope. Private sector career schools have a great story to tell, and we need to tell it in a way that resonates with both Democrats and Republicans.

Before pursuing an administrative career in postsecondary education, I worked for more than two decades in government and spent many years in Washington on Capitol Hill. I saw firsthand how voices from “back home” can cut through partisan politics and make a strong impression on elected leaders. While politics have become increasingly divisive in recent years, elected leaders across the political spectrum listen closely to their constituents and maintain strong allegiances with home districts.

On this count, career-focused schools have the potential to make a significant advocacy impact. Career schools largely draw students from their local communities and meet the educational needs of local employers.

Historically, career schools were founded to equip students with skills they needed for specific local employment. New York City’s Apex Technical School, for instance, began because of the city’s need for skilled building and equipment technicians. In Cleveland, what is now Ohio Technical College started as Ohio Diesel to train mechanics for industrial and automotive work. Both of these schools – and hundreds of others – have evolved to meet community workforce needs.

To be strong advocates for our schools and to earn support from our communities, leaders of career colleges must do more than ensure that students are well educated. We must also continually earn the support of our communities and draw on a greater range of voices to advocate on our behalf.

The Art Institute of Charleston, where I serve as president, opened just six years ago, but we are already strongly established in the community. For example, we sponsor the Charleston Wine and Food Festival, and I serve as chair of the event’s board. Our students and faculty volunteer at a public K-8 charter school, where we helped establish a student fashion show and a yearbook.

We also open up our facilities for community events. Charleston has a vibrant African-American arts community, and we recently hosted an exhibit and reception for local artists in our gallery. Our student-run restaurant, part of our culinary school, regularly donates gift certificates for dinner parties to charitable auctions. The larger Charleston community learns about our activities because we reach out regularly to local print, broadcast and online media.

Every career school can find opportunities to build community relationships through activities that benefit host communities while highlighting a school’s economic and charitable contributions.
School leaders should also strive to build and strengthen ties with civic and business leaders, as well as with elected officials and their staff. This means participating in city council meetings, attending political events and hosting fundraisers for candidates.

Relationship building cannot happen overnight or in response to a crisis. It is a long-term, ongoing process. From the launch of The Art Institute of Charleston in 2006, we have maintained strong ties with the office of Mayor Joseph P. Riley Jr. The Mayor spoke at our inaugural commencement, and The Art Institute has taken an active role in several events at his request. Today, he is one of our strongest supporters. We also have an ally in U.S. Representative Jim Clyburn (D-SC).

If you do not have strong ties with your local city government, community leaders, and state and federal legislators, then start building these ties today. This type of outreach should be an ongoing activity of every career school leader.

When Congress debates the Higher Education Act next year, we can expect a great deal of emphasis to be placed on accountability and outcomes. Traditional four-year colleges and universities, community colleges, and private sector career schools will all have to show that they serve society and help meet future workforce needs.

In Charleston, The Art Institute has focused on being accountable to our community. As a result, we have many allies who recognize the value of our school and, when asked, will be our champions to Congress and other policymakers. In addition to community leaders, these allies include our students, teachers, alumni, local employers and businesses that benefit from our operations.

 Legendary Speaker of the House Tip O’Neill famously said, “All politics is local.” Unlike many elite colleges and universities, private sector career schools are truly local: We attract local students, meet the needs of local employers and industries, and educate people who enrich our local host communities. To make a positive impact on federal debates about education, career school leaders must engage locally and highlight achievements at the local level.

*Rick Jerue is President of The Art Institute of Charleston. Prior to his career in private sector education, he held several staff positions on Capitol Hill, where he focused on postsecondary education, financial aid and other issues.*
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The true power of higher education has been receiving a great deal of attention in the media lately. This exposure appears to gain greater momentum during the national elections.

Modern U.S. high school students have developed heightened educational ambitions. More than 88 percent of middle school students surveyed expect to partake in some form of postsecondary education. In October 2011, the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics reported that 68.3 percent of 2011 high school graduates were currently enrolled in colleges or universities. American College Testing (ACT) released the 2012 edition of “The Condition of College & Career Readiness” report based on information collected from high school graduates taking the ACT College and Career Readiness exam. This year is the first time more than half of the U.S. high school graduating class took the ACT exam. The data reported indicates that more than a quarter of the students did not meet the ACT College Readiness Benchmarks for English, mathematics, reading and science.

The results clearly suggest that a significant number of students enrolled as college and university freshmen this fall have not been adequately prepared by their high schools to produce college-level work or to adequately perform in a rigorous higher education environment (Lawrence, 2012). This lack of preparation is not an entirely new phenomenon; the Stanford Policy Brief released in 2003 indicated that 40 percent of students in four-year institutions took some remedial education as compared with 63 percent at two-year institutions. These rates are symptoms of a greater problem: Our high-school students are not prepared for college and university work, a reality that has clearly become the norm.

The current compulsory education systems result in a lack of understanding among students, parents and K-12 teachers regarding what conditions students require to be able to succeed in higher education (Venezia, 2003). A contributing problem is a lack of student preparedness – the education preparedness link between high school and college simply does not exist.
High schools teach from knowledge bases and skill sets that do not fulfill college entrance and placement requirements. This lack of consistency leads to students graduating from high school under one set of academic principles and, three months later, finding themselves required to participate under a completely new set of academic principles in college and university settings. As a result, higher education resources are fruitlessly spent on inadequately prepared students – education dollars that could be better spent cultivating knowledge that would prove relevant to higher education and prepare students for successful, productive futures. We can all agree that students entering higher education without the basic skills needed to be successful, competitive and truly efficient in the higher education environment is unacceptable.

Former U.S. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice said at the 2012 Republican Convention, “The greatest ally in controlling your response to your circumstances has been a quality education. But today, when I can look at your Zip code and I can tell whether you’re going to get a good education, can I honestly say it does not matter where you came from, it matters where you are going? The crisis in K-12 education is a threat to the very fabric of who we are.”

Clearly, students’ locales determine the standard of education – and this standard has become a dollars-and-cents problem. Poor communities have a demonstrably lower quality of education. Does this discrepancy really have financial causes, or do schools have too many standards and no accountability? Is the end goal a set of deliberately defined classes of people? Regardless, we as a community are wasting our number one resource: our children.
Linked – LinkedIn connection

The main problem as I see it is that the students’ preparations between high school and college are not linked; pondering the need for this “linked” element leads me to surmise that perhaps social media and its limitless education outreach could possibly support the joined efforts of many stakeholders in education, resulting in reducing or eliminating the K-12 and college/university disconnect altogether. To test this idea, I turned to LinkedIn. LinkedIn purports itself to be the world’s largest professional network, with more than 175 million members; the site permits its users to exchange knowledge, ideas and opportunities with a large network of professionals. This exchange of knowledge and ideas stimulated me to write this article.

I posted the following question on five education-related discussion groups on LinkedIn: “I believe higher education cannot create success unless K-12 does; what do you say?” I found that many members shared a similar opinion to mine, regardless of where the members were located in the world. The current education systems are not prepared to address students’ needs across education systems, many members agreed, and no one is held accountable for issues related to student transitions from high school to college/university. This was the consensus among LinkedIn professionals from the United States, United Kingdom, Germany, Trinidad/Tobago, Australia, India and South Africa.

These ideas were suggested as solutions during our discussion:

1. Greater talk about the skill of learning; increased communication internally and externally with the entire education community

2. Equipping students for learning for the rest of their lives, both for higher education and for life beyond college

3. Competent administrators who have a clear vision of what 21st century teaching and a removal of the “this is how we have always done it” mindset from the education community

4. Removal of barriers earlier in K-12 to create a quality education environment before postsecondary education

5. Adoption of ideas that work, which are shared with the entire education community

6. Parent involvement and resources offered to parents that instruct them on how to support their children in learning

7. Provision of “thirteenth-year” counselors at the high school level

8. Creation of partnerships between colleges/universities and elementary/high schools

9. Programs patterned after Google’s Successful Transitions And Retention Track (START), a program that takes high school dropouts and creates amazing success stories. Perhaps the education community can take this concept and engage students before they drop out of school altogether and create this type of successful environments in high schools

From these nine points, a picture emerges of engaging students earlier in the education process and promoting a successful educational transition from K-12 to higher education. For this to happen, partnerships must be formed between colleges, universities and their local K-12 schools. I believe that the great minds and spirits of all our citizens are clearly our number one natural resource. Collaborative efforts between the K-12 and the higher education community are important and powerful.

Modern technology forces change upon us at an unlimited pace; can the education community keep up and adapt to this change while improving education quality? Since belief is 99 percent of reality, I believe the education community can keep up and adapt to this change while improving educational quality when we collaborate, communicate and equip students to learn for the rest of their lives.

Citations:


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Dr. Pete Savo is the CFO of a Service Disabled Veteran Owned Small Business (SDVOSB), a higher education service business that provides qualified student candidates to military friendly colleges and universities nationwide. Savo, a respected lecturer and published author, spent 18 years with Sikorsky Aircraft and six years as a Direct Business Operations and Lean Manufacturing Consultant for the U.S. Air Force Small Business Manufacturing Technical Assistance Production Program (MTAPP), Air Force Outreach Program Office and the Department of Defense (DOD) supply chain missions. He can be reached at psavo@education-resource-information.org or 603.321.6224.
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THE BEST PATH?

During the presidential elections, Americans are introduced to two disparate approaches to education

By Jenni Valentino, Staff Writer

Pumpkin lattes, crisp breezes, changing leaves: After a summer of drought and record-breaking temperatures, the autumn of 2012 has finally arrived. This year, however, heralds more than the traditional pumpkin lattes, football games, crisp breezes and changing leaves. Mudslinging, red and blue bumper stickers, and eyeroll-worthy social media posts herald another presidential election.

As always, more sensational issues – including taxation, healthcare, abortion and foreign policy – have overshadowed education in the months leading up to November 2012. While education policy is generally too tame to land at the forefront of the media, its presence is alive in the close race between Democratic President Barack Obama and his Republican competitor, Mitt Romney.

At varying points, Romney has accused Obama of failing to restrain the soaring costs of college tuition, and Obama has in turn accused Romney of planning to remove federal aid options that make these tuition prices feasible for college students. Additionally, the candidates remain acutely divided over the role of for-profit education in America.
In some ways, the candidates’ divergent views on the future of education in America – and the government’s right and responsibility to help shape it – are representative of their views on the role of government in general, a wide-reaching spectrum that divides voters in election after election.

Of course, it is safe to assume that each candidate aims to educate America in his own way – in fact, President Obama has been quoted as saying that “education should not be a Democratic or Republican issue” but “an American issue.” Still, the fact remains that the man who ends up in office for the next four years will drastically change the landscape of American education.

President Obama has prioritized education throughout his three years in office, though not necessarily in ways that the career college sector appreciates. By signing the gainful employment regulations into effect and slowly increasing the budget available to Education Secretary Arne Duncan – a longtime enemy of for-profit schools – he dealt the sector its biggest blow in decades.

He has worked to expand the role of government in education – where many capitalists believe it has no place – by funneling $100 billion into individual states in the 2009 stimulus, pushing elementary and secondary education reform, expanding federal financial aid for college students, and averting teacher layoffs throughout the states.

In his goal to make America the most educated country in the world again by 2020, he has also implemented a number of measures that have been successful so far. His 2009 Race to the Top stimulus bill introduced competition among the states, awarding grants to 18 states and the District of Columbia for their college and career readiness plans, and also included student-tracking data systems, recruitment and efforts to turn around struggling schools. Furthermore, his $40 billion addition to the Pell Grant program has helped send countless students to college.

Republican candidate Mitt Romney is a proponent of the private sector’s involvement in education, from early childhood through career colleges. His education platform encourages private sector participation in all areas of teaching and training. He also plans to involve private banks in the federal student loan program, allowing them to take over an unknown amount of student loans.

The fact remains that the man who ends up in office for the next four years will drastically change the landscape of American education.
According to a report released by the Center for American Progress Action Fund, Romney’s stance on a variety of education topics have greatly evolved over the years, causing detractors to accuse him of flip-flopping. His stances were clearly laid with the release of Romney’s white paper on education, “A Chance for Every Child.” Romney favors a redirection of the monies the states and the federal government already spend on education: He wants more taxpayer money to go to online education, especially for-profit colleges, as well as charter schools and school vouchers.

Any feeling that Romney’s education platform is fluid and voter-influenced was lessened when he announced Paul Ryan, a politician with very strong views on education, as his running mate. In 2011 and 2012 alone, Paul Ryan voted to extend funding for the D.C. Opportunity Scholarship Program, a voucher system that gives low-income students federal money to attend private schools; voted to stop the DoE from implementing gainful employment regulations, and repeatedly voted against increasing Pell Grants.

Romney’s current education policy aims to increase the quality of American education through tactics like keeping K-12 schools accountable by grading their state test results A-F, eliminating the requirement that teachers obtain state certification in order to enter the classroom, and vetoing the DREAM Act, but allowing more funding for ESL programs.

A solid number of ideas and goals, including a more educated workforce, improved evaluation systems across the board, merit-based pay for teachers, charter school funding and increased opportunities for advancement, are shared by both parties.

Mitt Romney on ...

Career colleges
Romney has long been in support of the career college industry, touting the schools’ offerings as a vital component of higher education and workforce training. Early in his campaign, before a federal court judge struck down many provisions of the Department of Education’s “gainful employment” rule, Romney said he would push to undo the rule altogether if elected. Romney’s campaign trail included multiple stops at for-profit campuses, most notably Full Sail University in Florida. Full Sail’s CEO, Bill Heavener, is a famous donor to Romney’s campaign.

Charters and vouchers
Romney believes that the public K-12 school system is in need of overhaul, and if elected, he would again call on the private sector for reform. Under Romney’s plan, up to $25 billion in federal aid would be redirected to the states and dedicated to helping schools serve disabled, impoverished and otherwise disadvantaged children. These students would then be able to use the funds to pay for tuition at private or religious schools in areas with failing public schools. They would also be able to enroll in charter schools (schools which are publicly funded but privately managed) that might not otherwise have the resources to admit them.

Pell Grant cuts
Originally, Romney’s individual education plan included cuts to the number of students eligible for Pell Grants. He believes that the availability of federal dollars drives up college costs and leads to entitlement. His selection of Paul Ryan as his running mate has made this an even greater probability – Ryan’s budget plan includes deep budget cuts to education, especially in Pell Grants.
Barack Obama on ...

**Career colleges**
Throughout his administration, President Obama and his Secretary of Education, Arne Duncan, have worked to oppress the career college industry. He has accused the schools of over-promising and under-delivering by enrolling students who have a slim chance of graduating and not explaining to them effectively the debt that they are choosing to take on. Under his reign, the gainful employment ruling went into effect, and aims to eventually pull federal aid from schools that cannot meet its stringent regulations. In a poll conducted by consulting firm Whiteboard Advisors, 38 percent of for-profit industry leaders noted “strong concern” at the prospect of the president’s re-election, and 21 percent noted “panic.”

**Charters and vouchers**
President Obama does not support vouchers but has embraced the push toward charter schools. He continues to encourage states to allow more charter schools to open. Additionally, he has funneled federal funds into some of the most successful charter schools.

**Pell Grant cuts**
Obama plans to keep or increase the amount of Pell Grant funds available to college students and has accused Romney, who he views as out-of-touch with the financial struggles of America, of planning to cut college access to millions.

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Jim Haga: Report Says MOOCs Could Pose a Financial Challenge to For-Profit Colleges: The report, released on Wednesday and available only to subscribers of the credit-rating agency, is called “Shifting Ground: Technology Begins to Alter Centuries-Old Business Model for Universities.” It says that offering free online courses will help well-known universities bring in new revenue, heighten brand recognition, and reduce operating costs.

Chris Hutchings: Colleges that choose to ignore this trend may suffer fates similar to those of the music business and record labels. Finding ways to embrace this change and reinvent your business model will be crucial.

Dr. Jerald L. Feinstein: When analysts like Trace think that the conclusions of the report are “a little silly” and that “there is no business model at the moment for MOOCs in the education system,” it echoes back to the days when the Web was new. I recall when advising major accounting companies on emerging applications, they would retort – quite pompously – that there is absolutely no business model that could exist on the Internet (possibly engineering applications, but no business applications), and some of their clients listened.

Trace Urdan: I'm sorry, Dr. Feinstein, but the folks that are pompous in this case are the universities that believe now, 15 years in, that they have arrived, that postsecondary education on the Internet is suddenly legitimate.

There is no question that MOOCs are an exciting phenomenon that are garnering a tremendous amount of interest and enthusiasm, but they represent just one more aspect of higher education in which undergraduates (and their parents) are subsidizing someone else's education. They show promise as a screening device for employers, but because they are predicated on a very elaborate and expensive infrastructure, they are incapable of supplanting anything.

Tracy Kreikemeier: Getting Out of the Catch-up Business: It is obvious this needs to happen – does anyone know what any of the best practices are that Duncan refers to? It appears we have a good handle on the issue, but no viable plan for progress.

Link: http://www.kansascity.com/2012/09/19/3821930/in-education-secretary-duncan.html

Michael Platt: Duncan has stated the obvious issues, but he is a politician, not a businessperson. He focuses on the problem, while businesspeople identify the problem only as a precursor to developing and executing a solution. His only suggestion here is "more money," an old strategy that has failed to yield results.

I think each area needs attention, but the unwillingness of U.S. leaders to put excellence above equality will continue to impede progress. Let's take his comment about 3,000 fewer words and parental involvement, throw out the need to protect old methods and political dogma, and apply entrepreneurial thinking. Remember, I said, "improve," which does not imply a total fix. Too often, failure to achieve perfection becomes the excuse and justification to do nothing at all.

Career College Central LinkedIn group is a forum full of invoking questions, thoughtful responses and animated discussion. If you haven’t joined our LinkedIn page yet, then you’re missing out. Come join us, and make your voice heard!
So you want "more" parents working on vocabulary with toddlers? Open up to a voucher system and privatize, allowing parents to choose schools instead of geography choosing children. Private schools, unencumbered by union regulations, can compete for students (better curriculum, better teachers and teaching strategy parents believe in), while students compete to get into the best schools. If you want more parental involvement, create consequences for parents who do not spend time working with their kids. I guarantee more parents will get, and stay, involved as each level of education becomes more competitive.

Dr. Pietro (Pete) Savo: What I find interesting is when I research the subject of education best practices, what I find is Mitt Romney's “Plan for Education.” Education Secretary Duncan’s talking points are not well-founded in any consensus of best practices; this is my opinion.

I also believe Secretary Duncan's strategy is to disclose as little as possible, playing it safe.

Aaron Edwards: Love the burning Pell Grants comment. Offering support to lesser-prepared individuals means we are wasting money? I thought it meant we were promoting/allowing for opportunity.
Secretary of Education Arne Duncan’s cross-country caravan for his back-to-school tour made its way to the middle of the country and the state of Kansas in September in time to mark the historic Brown v. Board of Education anniversary in Topeka. Stops along the Sunflower State route included Emporia and Kansas City, and while the locations changed, much of the message remained the same.

Duncan reiterated the administration’s commitment to need-based college funding, but he also lamented that unprepared students are “burning Pell Grants.” He told audiences that the education sector needs to get out of the blame game when determining why we are playing catch up with college-bound students who are not college-ready.

“Far too many of those who do graduate need remedial classes,” Duncan said. “They’re really not ready. I think the courage we’ve seen in many, many states, including here in Kansas, in raising standards, college- and career-rated standards – I think that’s a game changer.”

However, many critics of Obama’s education policy would argue that standardized testing requirements tied to Title IV money are not helping matters. Emporia State University Professor John Schrock took his view to Kansas Public Radio.

“So many of us thought that when Obama came in the No Child Left Behind disaster that was under Bush would come to an end, and it would turn around. Teachers would gain back some professional freedom and not be test-preparation assembly line workers,” Schrock said. “Instead, it got worse.”
While the skills gap – a lack of trained and educated graduates to match up with today’s employment needs – is a top topic for the proprietary sector, Duncan talked more about what he calls the opportunity gap.

“The American dream was never about guaranteeing the equality of results. But it was always about assuring equality of opportunity,” said Duncan. “Our children are as smart, as creative, as entrepreneurial as children anywhere in the world. We just have to level the playing field. A strong economy and a great education – those two things are inextricably linked. We have to educate our way to a better economy.”

“We have to work with both four-year and two-year institutions of higher education to keep costs down, to keep college affordable and to make sure they’re building cultures around completion.”

U.S. Secretary of Education Arne Duncan

Speaking later to Career College Central, Duncan elaborated, “Jobs are going to go to the most educated workforce, and I absolutely want that to be the United States. I don’t want that to be other countries.”

“We have to work with both four-year and two-year institutions of higher education to keep costs down, to keep college affordable and to make sure they’re building cultures around completion.”

Other stops along the Education Drives America tour included Sacramento, Calif.; Lexington, Ky.; and Richmond, Va.

Kelly Duffy is a seven-time Emmy Award-winning investigative reporter, producer and news manager. Contact her at kellyd@careercollegecentral.com.
SHOWCASING
STUDENT
SUCCESSES

Pima Medical Institute’s 40-year celebration highlights graduates’ impacts

By Dr. Susan F. Schulz, President, Susan F. Schulz & Associates Inc.

How can we demonstrate the role of the career school and college sector in higher education and the positive impact it has on so many people? Pima Medical Institute (PMI), headquartered in Tucson, Ariz., has found a way. This fall, it has started a campus-wide, seven-state celebration that recognizes 40 years of offering quality allied healthcare education.

PMI has 13 campuses located in Arizona, California, Colorado, New Mexico, Nevada, Texas and Washington state, plus an online campus. The flagship Tucson campus has been operating for 40 years, and the other campuses have been educating students for anywhere from six to 27 years. The upcoming celebration is part of PMI’s ongoing focus on student and graduate appreciation. PMI is well-known for leading the way in honoring its students. It has set the standards for career school alumni communities, which are set up to continue to serve students after they graduate. The 40th anniversary events and resultant publicity are expected to enhance public opinion of the value of career school and college education. Ideally, this publicity will have a ripple effect throughout U.S. career schools.

Five years ago, PMI celebrated 35 years of operation on a similarly large scale. To commemorate this milestone, PMI published its 35th Anniversary Alumni Success Story Book. What better way to convey the success of a career school education than through the voices of career school graduates? As PMI’s CEO Richard L. Luebke Jr. wrote, “the only real measuring stick of a school’s success is the achievement of its students.” The 35th anniversary book included more than 40 stories of individual alumni and their accomplishments. For each graduate, the book featured a full-page photo along with the alumnus’s inspiring story.
The 40th Anniversary Alumni Success Story Book highlights more than 50 graduate stories, including a poignant tribute to founder Richard Luebke Sr. Many alumni who shared their stories include students who have served in the military:

- Heather Haley, a respiratory therapy graduate, initially came to PMI after serving 12 years in the U.S. Air Force. She didn’t know what to do with her life, and on a whim, she enrolled in PMI. After graduation, she was hired at a top medical facility in Virginia. The skills Haley developed and the personal support and encouragement she received while at PMI contributed to her success.

- Jerry East enrolled in PMI’s Houston campus after leaving the military; for 30 years, he had paid only sporadic attention to his education. He overcame many barriers, including living on just his wife’s income while in school. Today, East is employed as a radiographer.

- Karey Downing was a grandfather and retired military robotics technician when he enrolled as a medical assistant student at the Colorado Springs campus. During his enrollment, he survived a heart attack as well as a coronary stent placement. Downing’s primary concern was that his heart issues would ruin his perfect attendance record.

- Ken Haskins was successful in the U.S. Navy and then had a career in automotive technology. He was happy in his field, but something was lacking. Then he discovered respiratory therapy and fueled his passion by graduating from PMI. Haskins is now an instructor at PMI’s Chula Vista campus, where he helps his students live their dreams.

- Marlene Rodriguez served in multiple tours of duty in Iraq for the U.S. Army. Her graduation from the pharmacy technician program took extra hard work and determination because she was struggling with a brain injury. Her injury was caused by a roadside bomb during her last tour, which she was the only one to survive. Rodriguez is grateful to her PMI instructors, who continually supported her goals.

In addition to this publication, more inspirational messages and stories are displayed on posters at PMI campuses and the corporate office. Now, prospective students and their families are surrounded by success stories as they wait for their interviews. Current students are constantly reminded of their own graduation goals, the struggles to get there and the results that can be achieved. Out-of-work students can see the employment possibilities that may await them once they finish their programs.
The distribution of the initial copies of The 40th Anniversary Alumni Success Story Book has been planned. All 1,000 PMI employees will receive their own copy of the book at the anniversary celebrations. Books will be placed in lobbies and reception areas of all 13 campuses and will be distributed to admissions and career service departments as well as shared with advisory board members and employers. Books will be sent to licensing boards, regulatory and accrediting agencies, local government officials, and state and federal senators and Congress people. An electronic version of the book will be available on the PMI alumni website.

The anniversary book was scheduled to be published in conjunction with 40th anniversary parties and celebrations that will be held at each campus. In September, October and November, PMI scheduled events at all 13 campuses on selected Fridays and invited current students and graduates from the past 40 years to luncheon celebrations; employers, advisory board members, and local dignitaries were also included. Other events at offsite venues were held in the evening, including open houses for employees, Hall of Fame honorees, select community leaders, employers and outstanding graduates who have shared their success stories. PMI owners and directors greeted these guests, who then viewed a 40th anniversary video focusing on the PMI story and how career school education changes lives.

The feeling of pride accompanied by events like this is fostered by the increase of success story posters that hang in each campus. All employees, current students and attending graduates received 40th anniversary shirts and pens. PMI’s 40th anniversary will be a well-known event throughout seven states and beyond.

These events and success stories may seem like they have been 40 years in the making, and they have. They are a demonstration of the success and pride in career school education that the PMI community feels, and they enhance pride for everyone related to the career school sector.

Why is PMI choosing to use its time and resources to host these large celebrations? The reason may be that 40 years of success in the career school and college sector is an extraordinary accomplishment. Many career schools that also began in the 1970s are no longer around. The celebration is a testimony to the legacy of PMI founder Richard Luebke Sr.

Not every career school has reached this kind of landmark; however, every career school can choose to follow regulatory guidelines and focus on student success and satisfaction. School administrations can adopt the PMI model and build loyalty through student, alumni and community appreciation. These kinds of policies often result in positive results such as increased enrollment, higher retention rates, and growth in job openings and placement. Maybe success is as easy as recognizing alumni and holding campus-wide celebrations.
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In a previous article, I wrote about the compliance philosophy of a successful CEO, Tim Foster, and his passion to share his philosophy with the career college community at large. Based on questions from readers, I am focusing this column on the learning objectives of a compliance training course that has been developed in collaboration with Foster.

CM104 – Compliant Interactions: Acting with Integrity is targeted to admissions, financial aid and career services professionals. This course provides a clear and practical understanding of the federal and state regulatory standards that govern the conduct of an institution and correspondingly underlie the performance of each job function.

The purpose of the course, though, is not to train participants to be regulatory experts but to provide the information they need to act or speak in a way that complies with regulations when interacting with both prospective and enrolled students. The course also covers the consequences of doing or saying the wrong thing, whether by mistake or with intent.

More importantly, the course emphasizes that “doing the right thing” is more than simply compliance and support of the mission and values of our institutions. Following these standards of behavior ensures that we provide an environment of trust in which prospective students receive the information they need to make informed decisions about their education. In short, it helps us help our students change their lives.

The online course has four modules, and each module takes about one hour to complete. I have outlined the learning objectives for each module below.

Module 1: Do the Right Thing
- Relate your personal values and expectations to your students and your job
- Describe the impact of your institution’s mission and values on your job performance
- Become aware of regulatory oversight as it relates to your school
- Recognize your institution’s standards for conduct and transparency
- Identify the consequences of doing the wrong thing
- Recognize why doing the right thing is the foundation for competitive success

Module 2: Create Transparency/Marketing and Disclosures
- Understand direct-response marketing and advertising practices/standards
- Adhere to disclosures and related regulations
- Recognize the importance of communicating educational program expectations clearly
- Identify specific requirements for communicating completion and graduate employment outcomes

Module 3: Create Transparency/Representations
- Recognize and thoroughly comprehend the nature of misrepresentations
- Describe specific areas of the Department of Education’s focus on misrepresentations
- Identify admissions and financial aid prohibitions
- Understand competitive misrepresentations
Module 4: Other Important Regulations

- Understand prohibited inducements and incentives
- Act in accordance with the Do-Not-Call guidelines
- Act in accordance with the CAN-SPAM guidelines
- Identify prohibited locations for admissions
- Review student right to privacy and FERPA

The course is delivered in an asynchronous fashion with the support of a compliance training facilitator, who is available to coach the learning process and answer questions on the course’s discussion forums. The course also includes avatar-based scenarios as well as other activities and assessments to reinforce learning. The course is available on more than 25 association training portals powered by MaxKnowledge, including the National Association of State Administrators and Supervisors of Private Schools (NASASPS) and the Association of Private Sector Colleges and Universities (APSCU). Private and customized versions of the course are available for larger institutions through the Center for Excellence in Education (CEE), MaxKnowledge's employee development initiative with the Imagine America Foundation (IAF).

For more information, contact Cindy Bryant at cindyb@maxknowledge.com.

Dr. Amir Moghadam is the Founder and CEO of MaxKnowledge, the leading employee training company for the career college sector of higher education. He has over 20 years of experience in career education, serving in many capacities including Professor, Director of Education, Academic Dean, Director of Student Affairs, Campus Director, and College President and Owner. Moghadam earned his Ph.D. in Engineering from the University of Cambridge at the age of 22. He is a recognized leader in career education and has been selected as a Top Innovator by Career College Central. Moghadam can be reached at amirm@maxknowledge.com.
At first glance, it may seem to readers that the difficulties of the business world and the ubiquitous chaos of combat require two very different types of leadership. However, Jeff Cannon and Lt. Cmdr. Jon Cannon, authors of Leadership Lessons of the Navy Seals: Battle-Tested Strategies for Creating Successful Organizations and Inspiring Extraordinary Results, reveal that many of the challenges faced by employees and managers across the country are often encountered by Navy SEALs. The book provides insightful tips for constructing a successful organization that have worked for one of the most elite military forces in the world.

After quickly examining the collapse of corporate America in the 1990s, the authors succinctly describe how to return a business to profitability through the implementation of effective management methods. These techniques have been tested in some of the most dangerous places around the world and have proven effective. Some of those include:

• Prioritize long-term goals while monitoring their relevance to the organization’s overall mission

• An organization must have one leader who takes charge and makes tough, unpopular decisions. “Democracy doesn’t work in the workplace”

Jeff and Jon Cannon identify leadership strategies that are sure to provide timely resolutions during a hectic work day, imparting wisdom from their initial recommendation: “Setting a realistic goal for your team is the first step toward reaching a goal that is meaningful. It not only helps you define potential hurdles, but also helps you define how your team should be organized.”

From office work to implementation of wartime tactics, this book allows any individual to gain an understanding of essential leadership skills. Candidly shared by a former Navy SEAL and successful advertising executive, their guidelines will help businesspeople, or anyone who wants to become a better leader, operate a successful business.
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As a specialist in the education field, Scaramuzzo works nationally with universities, colleges, and online and career schools. He can be contacted at vincent@ed-exec.com or 860.781.7641.
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Shortage of miners allows South Dakota school to compete with Harvard

Graduates from South Dakota School of Mines & Technology have recently been able to attain careers with salaries equivalent to that of Harvard graduates. Over the past 10 years, a worldwide bull market for commodities has partly caused a shortage of skilled miners and ore, resulting in high demand for those learning the profession. Other trends have also affected this deficiency, including the decline in mining programs offered by U.S. universities and increased demand for commodities by countries like China.

According to PayScale Inc., this year’s graduates from the South Dakota school, located in Rapid City, are earning an entry-level, median salary of $56,700, whereas recent Harvard graduates are currently earning an entry-level, median salary of $54,100. In fact, prospective May graduates are already receiving offers from mining businesses. “It doesn’t seem to be too hard to get a job in mining,” said Jaymie Trask, a 22-year-old chemical engineering major who was offered a post paying more than $60,000 a year at Freeport-McMoRan (FCX) Copper & Gold Inc. “If you work hard in school for four or five years, you’re pretty much set.”

Throughout this decade, the demand will only continue to grow. In January, the Society of Mining, Metallurgy & Exploration reported that possibly 78,000 additional miners will be needed by 2019, due to the needs of countries like Australia, the largest shipper of coal and iron in the world, and China, a big consumer of both coal and copper. Thus far, the mining industry has failed to keep up, partly because of the high demand and partly because they have found it hard to fill positions with skilled workers.

Ashford University reorganizes staff, seeking accreditation

In an effort to meet the requirements of two regional accreditation councils, Ashford University is remodeling its organizational structure to provide current and future students with the best possible academic experience, said Shari Rodriguez, a spokeswoman for Ashford’s parent company Bridgepoint Education Inc.

Out of more than 2,000 admissions staff members, 450 were cut. Among those 450 employees, 400 were reassigned to a new “department of student inquiry” designed primarily to support students. Rodriguez said the student-inquiry staff’s main responsibility would be to “work with prospective students to ensure they are sufficiently prepared for the demands of a university education.” By gauging prospective students’ readiness, Ashford will make “an effort to address our nation’s focus on student outcomes and success.”

Ashford, which has 90,000 online students and another 1,000 enrolled at the Iowa campus, must meet accreditation requirements by this December. Accredited by the Higher Learning Commission since 2005 when Ashford purchased the Franciscan University of the Prairies, which is located in eastern Iowa, the university had fallen out of favor with the Commission’s “substantial presence” requirement. The regulation states that the majority of a college’s operations and campus need to be positioned within the agency’s 19-state circumference. Although Ashford’s campus in Iowa meets the prerequisite, most of the university’s operations are located in San Diego, Calif.

As a response, Ashford sought accreditation from the Western Association of Schools and Colleges in July. Their application was denied after the Western Association found the school lacking appropriate faculty and student support staff. They were also concerned about the university’s sustainability, with a high turnover of students, unreliable curricula and inadequate spending on instruction all affecting the Association’s decision.

Synopsis of: "Ashford U. Cuts Recruiting Staff and Focuses More on Student Support"
Source: The Chronicle of Higher Education
Date: Sept. 24, 2012
**Introduced legislation comes down hard on for-profit colleges**

In the U.S. House of Representatives in September, the College Student Rebate Act was introduced by Democratic Representatives George Miller and John Tierney. The motivation behind the legislation is to certify that student loan and grant money is being put directly into students’ education. Likewise, one of the priorities of the bill is to ensure that 80 percent of the total revenue of for-profit colleges is being placed into the educational process.

The legislation places an intense focus on for-profit colleges because these schools tend to receive a big amount of revenue directly from the federal government, said Rep. Miller. Since the cost of a college education has skyrocketed, Miller asserts that this measure, an emphasis on the “delivery system” of education, is necessary in the face of so much scrutiny around the country. Should for-profit colleges fail to meet this condition, they will be forced to give rebates to students, taxpayers or both.

Steve Gunderson, CEO of the Association of Private Sector Colleges and Universities, defended for-profit colleges by responding to the notion of the bill: “Unlike traditional colleges and universities, we serve a wide-ranging student demographic who do not get their information from guidance counselors and college advisors. Instead, we need to reach them where they are, and that means utilizing more traditional means of marketing and advertising so that working men and women can learn about the educational opportunities we offer.”

**Career colleges see dip in employment**

A fall 2011 study by the U.S. Education Department’s National Center for Education Statistics has released data on employment trends among career colleges, private not-for-profit colleges, and public colleges and universities. While administrative staff increased at all three types of colleges, the number of instructors actually dropped at for-profit institutions. Despite the rising number of for-profit institutions over the last two years, the reduction in the number of employees is thought to be the effect of a poor economy.

Overall, employment at federal financial aid-eligible colleges has risen slightly since 2010, but it “was the smallest increase in postsecondary employees since at least 2003.” Author Doug Lederman reports that “nearly 7,400 institutions employed 3,920,836 employees in fall 2011, edging up slightly from just under 3.9 million the year before.” The employment rates at public institutions have remained relatively consistent over the past two years; however, private not-for-profit colleges have seen a 2.6 percent increase in the number of their employees, including increases in both administrative staff and instructors.

In the 2011-12 academic year, there were 7,398 institutions eligible to award financial aid in the United States. This 3.1 percent growth from last year can be attributed solely to the rise in for-profit colleges. Even though the administrative staff has grown collectively, the number of people employed has dropped from 295,495 in fall 2010 to 288,890.

**Synopsis of: "New Bill by Congressional Democrats Targets For-Profit Colleges"**

Source: *U.S. News & World Report*
Date: Sept. 24, 2012

**Synopsis of: "Campus Employment Stagnates"**

Source: *Inside Higher Education*
Date: Sept. 26, 2012
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“Attending beauty school at age 45 is crazy!”

Crazy or not, that’s exactly what I did a few short years ago. I’ve been in the beauty industry my entire life. Starting out sweeping hair in the back room of my mother’s salon in New York during long weekends and summer breaks built an early passion for beauty that has stayed with me. Naturally, I joined the professional industry after high school and subsequently worked in salons for about 10 years.

My journey, however, didn’t settle in the salon. In the early 1990s, I was invited to join the education ranks of Creative Nail Design, which at the time was part of the portfolio at Revlon Professional. I stayed with the company for almost 20 years, working in sales, marketing and education, but I missed my roots in the salon. After many years out of the salon, it was vital that I update my training and re-hone my skills, so I quit my job and enrolled at Bellus Academy in Poway, Calif.

Let’s be honest: My tenure in the corporate side of the beauty industry gave me a unique insight into the beauty school business, so I carried high expectations. My goal was to find a beauty school that was industry recognized for its exceptionally high standards, created a state-of-the-art experience for its students and taught at an above-average level. To put it simply, I wanted what I considered to be a Master’s-level educational experience.

Bellus Academy fit my high expectations based on its national recognition as the top-ranked beauty school in North America, its impressive campus and a terrific list of instructors. Managed under the artistic direction of Diego Raviglione, a well-known and respected beauty industry icon, the student experience was all that I expected and more.

Throughout my education, I was lucky to meet many talented young hopefuls that I stay in touch with today. It’s great to hear the stories of people who are living their dreams of being successful stylists in local top salons.

I spent a few years working in salons after graduation and even opened my own studio. Being back in the salon working with clients is a wonderful experience, and I’ve been blessed. My greatest accomplishment post-graduation, however, has been accepting the position of Global Education Leader (Director) of USP LLC.

Based in Oceanside, Calif., USP is the parent company of ENJOY Professional Hair Care, hbl Hair Care, SKINJOY Professional Skin Care and Health Beauty Life. It’s funny how life continues to loop in full circles, and there’s really no end to our journey. This new professional adventure, in my humble opinion, would not be part of my life had I not chosen to leave my job and attend Bellus Academy.

To nominate a student for Why I Chose, contact news@careercollegecentral.com.
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