

The College Venture

A once in a lifetime adventure or a lifetime of debt!

As college tuition becomes increasingly more important in today's job market, the college bill has been at its highest in recent years. The question for many high school seniors now is whether college is worth the premium price tag?

By: **Dongwei Wu**

As many seniors approach the end of their career in high school, they must decide if they want to continue their education career. Ahh yes, the long-valued tradition of college is what comes to mind. The place where people spend (more or less) four years in order to earn a piece of paper that proves their worthiness in today's job economy. But it's much more than that, it's where students experience being an adult for the first time. People came for the diploma, but stayed for the adventures that they will encounter in college.

However, all of this comes with a price, and in recent times, it is at an all-time high. Many are deciding whether if this is worth the price or to just skip the \$60k college price tag.

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Newport University Graduation Ceremony
Credit: WordPress

Becoming a full-time worker from being just a newly high school graduate is a hard transition. This is where college can be vital for some, filling up this awkward gap with the skillset to become a functioning member of the work force. It prepares college students with experience of what their future job is like. Karie Cheung, a college graduate from University of Maryland, College Park, realized, “... *I grew a lot at the University of Maryland ... socially, emotionally and definitely mentally.*” Like Karie, many college students go through a lot in college that slowly molds them from immature high school students to responsible adults. With challenging courses in college, it simulates real life situations pertaining to their future jobs. Of course, not all courses will pertain to a specific major, however it does make the student a better-rounded person overall. College allows students to take classes that are not necessarily related to their field of work, meaning it allows them to pursue

their curiosity outside of their studies. Honestly, when will you ever get the time to learn about the human mind outside of college? Unless you are a psychology major or a pre-med student. So, if you’re interested about cheese, now is the perfect time to take that cheese course. These kinds of arrangements will prepare college grads for their future and be responsible for themselves. Besides classes, college offers another crucial aspect for their students: intellectual growth. Whenever students have free time, they have the option to attend events or clubs that interest them. If they are interested in learning about another culture, they can join one of the many cultural interest clubs. Or if they just want to meet new people or network, they can join a social Fraternity or Sorority. As explained by Jake Melie, a College Student, “*I’ve gotten to meet all these people from all over the world, with all these different experiences.*” Whatever interest it may be, students will be able to pursue this

passion of theirs along with other people who are just as interested, creating a network of friends in the process. Who knows, you might meet the next Facebook creator, and be hired for their company just for knowing about them throughout college. Like Jake, college gives the opportunity to interact with a wide variety of people in college, each with a unique personality of their own.

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Want to be a system analyst for Google or a writer for the New York Times? Well in today’s economy, competition for jobs is at an all-time high. According to Louisa Peacock, “...there were 40 candidates for every role in office administration...”. Office jobs are a popular career option, however what will set you apart from other applicants? Well I do not know, but what I do know is that to be even competitive for a job like this

you would need at least a bachelor degree of some sort. College graduates are more likely to receive a job over someone who only has a high school diploma. As reported by a research conducted by Otani, “several sets of government data to show that job opportunities for college-educated workers have grown, and college graduates produce more than half of the country's economic value.”

A college degree represents a qualification that a college student has for a particular job. Graduating with such degree from a college shows to an employer that this college graduate is ready to work in their company. Another reason for the high demand in college graduates in today’s economy is because of the innovation of technology. Otani states that, “...low-skill labor roles, such as fast-food server, retail worker, and dishwasher, now make up only 29 percent of jobs.” The reason for this decline in lower level jobs is because most these are being replaced by machines that can do them more efficiently. As

technology starts taking the jobs from humans, the job market is increasingly more competitive. There are jobs that are reserved for high-skilled individuals, which college graduates can qualify for with their experience that they gained from college. According to research conducted by Georgetown University, “...By 2020, 65 percent of all jobs in the economy will require postsecondary education ... 35 percent of the job openings will require at least a bachelor's degree.” Meaning, the job market will be hard on someone who doesn't have at least a bachelor's degree. With a proper college education, graduates will have an edge in today's job market. So, it is well advised that you quickly enroll in a college and get that diploma, as that is your ticket into the job world.

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Many however are reconsidering college due to the price of a traditional four-year college. The truth about college is that it is an expensive investment, it is a long-term commitment, and it might even break all your piggy banks that you had since you were four. However, there are many ways to get around this financial situation. Most students now a day can take loans from the bank to help pay for the school bills. Scholarships are another opportunity for students, and some of them give students to enter college on a full-ride. According to the College Board, “*about two-thirds of full-time students paid for college with the help of financial aid in the form of grants and scholarships,*” which can relieve some of the stress students and parents may have about the price of college. But I will not lie to you, college will still be a big venture. In fact, according to Allie Bidwell, “*The average amount of student loan debt again crept up for the Class of 2013, and is approaching \$30,000.*” This amount of money is a large sum,

and it is not easy to come by. However, the outcome of college is too essential to be thinking about the cost. In fact, the money earned from a college graduate will be much higher than the debt from college. The output of college will outweigh any amount of money invested in college, and with the many financial options out there, it makes college a reachable goal for many students.

“With a college degree, you can earn a substantially higher salary than someone with just a high school diploma.”

Now I am not selling college to you, I am just simply stating all potential benefits from college. And a little disclaimer, not everyone will experience the same thing. College is like a relationship, you only get what you put in. So, if you do decide to go to college, just make the best out of it! College is essentially your first taste as an adult. You are dropped into a new environment where you will slowly mature into

an adult. You will learn the essential skillset for your future job. And it will get tougher after each semester, just like adulthood. But don't let my down talk bring you down, because there are finer things in (college) life. For example, you might meet your future best man there, or join the various clubs offered at your campus. Maybe you will even take a class that you wanted to but never had the chance to. Other than that, college offers an edge in the job field, as many employers require a bachelor degree to work in their company. Think that college is expensive? Well it is, but don't worry, there are many options to help you get by your college debts such as scholarships or federal loans. The moral is, if you ever want to make it big in the world and make a lot of money, **GO TO COLLEGE!** However, there is the occasional Bill Gates exception in the world, so unless you have the next big company idea, college is still your safest bet at achieving a successful life, because nobody wants to stay with

their parents forever, nor do they want to be sweaty fry cooks for the rest of their life.

Work Cited

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