

More to love about an ivy league

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The freedom in America that gives everyone, no matter what background they come from, the opportunity of rising to success has been reinforced by tuition changes made by colleges, which have always been an ideal conduit to this success. In an attempt to make their schools a more equalized and diverse society, renowned (and expensive) universities such as Brown, Stanford and Yale have eliminated tuition for students coming from lower-income families. These actions succeed ones made already by other Ivy League schools, including Harvard and Dartmouth.

Universities making these changes are implying easy access for all prospective students to their highly eminent reputations, thereby benefiting as well by the increase in applicants. Whether universities are expanding their financial aid guidelines out of understanding the difficulty that some students have in paying the tuition or if they are simply keeping up with their rivaling schools, the overall achievement is still out of a unified purpose: to give all students the chance of attending their school, without monetary obstacles preventing them from their dream. Many potential students in the past have been forced to give up their dreams of attending one of the illustrious Ivy League schools due to the high tuition expected from them. By eliminating this barrier, these colleges are opening their doors to a larger variety of backgrounds and earning a name for being equitable in addition to a connotation of academic excellence and elitism. Stanford announced that its annual financial aid budget has been increased to \$114 million and Yale stands at \$86 million.

These changes by America's wealthiest universities coincide with the increasingly overt scrutiny and criticism they are receiving from Washington

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lawmakers for continuing to increase tuitions though their endowments has been constantly mounting. However, to counteract this appraisal, Stanford has increased its endowment payout to 5.5 percent and launched a fundraising campaign to double its financial aid budget to \$200 million. This series of adjustments proves false the common belief that wealthy universities, particularly the Ivy League institutions, show an incessant demand of money rather than concern to their potential students. Senator Charles E.

Grassley, the senior Republican on the Senate Finance Committee said that he hopes these unanimous changes by the Ivy League schools show a shift in thinking and will become a trend. He has also stated that spending some more money on their students will not “break the bank for well-funded school.” The decision of eliminating tuition for low-income students and increasing financial aid for middle-class families will start to democratize the elite colleges’ student bodies and act as an effort to factor in student sentiment to their new policies. The once-laughable possibility that attending the nation’s most eminent private universities could be less costly than attending public colleges is starting to seem a lot less absurd.