

Thought You Should Know:

College Applications on the Rise, and So Are Rejections

By ROSE PALAZZOLO



April 6, 2006 — As applying to college becomes more competitive, high school students cast a wide net, sometimes applying to dozens of schools. As a result, many colleges and universities have issued a record number of rejections in the past year.

Educators cite several reasons for the record number of applications, including more aggressive outreach by admissions offices, demographic changes that put more 18-year-olds in the college pipeline, and the increased competition at all levels of education.

"It becomes a game. Somebody has described it as a drunken freshman throwing darts at a board," said Lloyd Thacker, author of "College Unranked: Ending the College Admissions Frenzy" and founder of the Education Conservancy, a nonprofit organization whose focus is college admissions.

At the University of Michigan, spokeswoman Julie Peterson said the final numbers haven't been counted, but the school has likely received the most applications in its history.

Last year, of the more than 25,000 students who applied, U of M admitted just over 6,000 — more than in any other year. The past two falls have seen the largest classes ever at the Ann Arbor campus. So for the coming school year, the college has to pare down admissions to make up for the jump in the last two years.

"We try to keep the classes down to 5,500," Peterson said.

Looking for Prestige

With more high school students planning to go to college, many hedge their bets, applying not just to their first, second and third choices but sometimes to their 20th or even 30th choice schools.

And online applications may make that easier for students.



Toll Free: 1-877-GO-EUREKA
www.EurekaReview.com

Thought You Should Know:

Thyra Briggs, dean of enrollment at Sarah Lawrence College, said that the school has made the writing portion of the application harder to weed out applicants who aren't serious about attending the school.

"Lots of students are finding it easy to apply online," said Briggs. "I am not convinced that those are all real applications, though. So to make the process more streamlined in terms of who applies here, we decided to not make it as easy."

Outsmart the SAT with Eureka: 1-877-GO-EUREKA