



# **Does the Early Bird Get The Worm?: Supporting International Students Seeking Aid and Early Admission**

**Session 1 - 9:15-10:25 AM**



# Presenters

**Ruby Bhattacharya**  
**Associate Director of Admissions**  
**Barnard College, NY, USA**

**Ben Gutierrez**  
**International Admissions Counselor**  
**Johns Hopkins University, MD, USA**

**Joan Liu**  
**College Counselor**  
**United World College of South East Asia,**  
**East Campus, Singapore**

**Simon Nascimento**  
**Director of International Admissions**  
**University of Chicago, IL, USA**



# Case Study

- **You are working with a full financial aid student who wants to go to the US**
- **His EFC is 0**
- **Would you encourage him to do an early decision? Or a regular decision application?**
- **What would your advice to this student be?**



# How did this come about?

**While traveling internationally, we have heard counselors telling their students that if they need any kind of funding, ED/EA is not an option for them.**

**We are seeing significant increases in our early application numbers.**

**Misconceptions about need-based financial aid versus “scholarships”**

**Enrollment management: implications on the university side**



# Trends in Highly Selective US Admissions

- Highly selective admissions are NOT representative of American higher education broadly
  - There are over 5,000 colleges and universities in the U.S.A. According to a 2016-2017, NACAC report, the average acceptance rate across all 4-year colleges in the U.S. is approximately 65.4%
  - Almost 500 four-year colleges accept more than 75% of applicants and FEWER than 70 US Colleges admit less than 25% of applicants (Source: The College Board).
- High school population demographics are changing.
  - The number of high school graduates overall are declining in the United States.
  - Application numbers from outside of the United States continue to grow.
- Impact of technology → Rise in application numbers while college enrollment remains relatively steady, especially at the most highly selective institutions
- Implications of Early Admission: Early Decision, Early Action, etc.
- Parent perceptions are often shaped by what admission rates were when they were applying to university and/or if they were applying to undergraduate versus graduate programs in the U.S.



# What does meeting full demonstrated need mean?

- Less than 1% US universities that meet 100% of demonstrated need for admitted students
- The benefits of need-aware financial aid process for international students requesting aid
- Rise in % of ED/EA students in first year classes
- While numbers may seem high, still competitive pool for different reasons



# The Counselor's Role

**Mentor**

**Coach**

**Facilitator**

**Steward**

**Advocate**

**Negotiator**

**Advisor**

**Timekeeper**

**Facilitator**

**Bystander**

**Dictator**



# Case Study

- **What would you do - if you had an EFC 0 kid, and their dream university is scheduled for a fall school visit.**
- **What would you do?**
- **What has worked for for you?**





# How can we work together across the desk?

- **Calculator resources (domestic students)**
- **Better leveraging interactions: school visits and phone calls**
- **Use your visit schedule**
- **Demonstrate interest**
- **Obtain information that helps your students**
- **Assess the student's chances**
- **List management is key**
- **Be a proactive advocate and strong negotiator, vs a facilitating bystander**
- **Understand that fit is a privilege**
- **Be thoughtful about terminology: need-based aid versus scholarships**



# Q&A



# Contact Information

**Ruby Bhattacharya**  
**Barnard College, NY, USA**  
**rbhattac@barnard.edu**

**Ben Gutierrez**  
**Johns Hopkins University, MD, USA**  
**benjamin.gutierrez@jhu.edu**

**Joan Liu**  
**United World College of South East Asia,**  
**East Campus, Singapore**  
**jli@gapps.uwcsea.edu.sg**

**Simon Nascimento**  
**University of Chicago, IL, USA**  
**snascimento@uchicago.edu**

