Recruiting (and Parenting) Gen Z Students: Two Perspectives on College Admissions

PRESENTED BY GIGI MCGUIRE AND DARIUS RIGGINS
Who are we?

GIGI MCGUIRE
- Assistant Director, Student Outreach and Recruitment, CSU Northridge
- Over 30 years in profession
- Parent of one child in high school

DARIUS RIGGINS
- Director, University Outreach, CSU Bakersfield
- Over 14 years in profession
- Parent of 3 children – 1 in college, 1 in high school, 1 in middle school
Who are our children?

HEZEKIAH RIGGINS
Generation Z
Class of 2016
Second year in college
4th generation to go to college

JEREMIAH RIGGINS
Generation Z
Class of 2019
Junior in high school (until yesterday)
4th generation to go to college
Who are our children?

MERANIE MCGUIRE

Generation Z
Junior in high school (until yesterday)
Class of 2019
3rd generation to go to college
Generation Z – what the experts say

From the book Generation Z Goes to College – Corey Seemiller & Meghan Grace

Generation Z – Born between 1995 – 2010

Important to understand what motivates them – money, relationships, beliefs and perspectives

Role of parents in decision making – sees them as trusted mentors, guides, rather than enforcers or influencers

Use social media to stay connected, but still prefer personal interaction

Learning environment is important to them and impacts success at college
What we taught our kids about college

Gigi to Meranie

- Importance of going to college to be successful
- Academics – get good grades, GPA matters; choose challenging courses, but don’t put too much pressure on yourself
- You’re not a first-gen/low income student – you won’t get any grants via FAFSA
- You have to get scholarships! This means you have a part to play in this - pick a sport, an instrument or something to master, be a leader and put in the work so you can get paid to go to college
- College search – apply broadly, do your research, consider what’s important to you and what services they offer for a student like you
What we taught our kids about college

Darius to Hezekiah and Jeremiah

- It’s all on you! Nobody is going to force you to do anything. Being successful, academically is your decision and choice
- It will not be easy
- Best time of your life!
- You’ll probably meet your future wife and don’t even realize it
- Changing your major is ok
- Must have a plan for your career. Don’t just get a degree. How will you use it?
- Be smart about your choices
- As long as you are in college, I will support you. Once you stop going or you graduate, you’re on your own!
- Get help when you need it – don’t try to do it by yourself
What do the students think about college?

JEREMIAH

Wants to go to college

Going to college will help me to get a six-figure salary

Going to college will increase my knowledge
What do the students think about college?

MERANIE

Relevant for what you want to do

Is going to college worth the money and the time?

Necessary for what I want to do

Will allow me to be around people who are as smart or smarter than me

Overall, I’m excited to go to college
Professional vs Parent

Expectations:
- Understanding of admissions process
- Websites – similar elements, available information
- Mail – College Board names, invitations to visit and apply
- Costs higher at out of state, private campuses
- Visits – campus, housing, presentations
- Scholarship searches

Surprises:
- Naviance
- Common App
- Privates – flexible funding, no app fees, no student loans
- Visits – variety in tours, diversity
- Additional scholarship resources
Preparation and readiness

Maturity
- Integrity
- If student gets into a lot of trouble, what is it and where does it take place?
  - Does student take actions to modify behavior?
  - Do they respect authority?

Community/High School Involvement

GPA

Types of courses completed at high school level

The degree of challenge – (Honors & AP classes)

The degree of self-motivation

The willingness to put in hard work and long hours to be academically successful

Choosing to do well academically with no prodding by parents

Type of college counseling/advice received in HS (though a student may not be in control of this point, it has potential to make a big difference)
Factors in selecting a college

- Big name vs great school
- Will the student succeed?
- Welcoming environment – especially as students of color
- Geographic environment – things for California natives to consider
Final thoughts

Gen Z sees themselves as ‘realistic’

Lead with the truth when marketing to them

They know that you have information they need, but can see through the hype

They prefer to hear from current students – information they can’t find in our brochures

They will consider ‘real life’ at college campuses before making a decision – where to eat, dorm life, navigating the campus, things to do on the weekends, etc.