



Newsletter N. 3

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*Confident Student has been selected as an "Approved Provider" by the Maryland State Department of Education Department of Rehabilitative Services (DORS)*

## NEW COLLEGE RANKING SYSTEM DEBUTS

Until recently, *U.S. News and World Reports* has been the loudest and most authoritative voice in the college ranking business. However, this past summer, sixty-one liberal arts universities declared that they would no longer allow their schools to participate in the annual report, citing dissatisfaction with not only the ranking system but with the rankings themselves.

Into this breach steps the *Washington Monthly* with its own system and its own rankings. According to the magazine, their college rankings are meant to provide “a guide not just to what colleges can do for you, but what colleges are doing for the country.” The magazine also differs from the traditional ranking system in its criteria, which focuses on three main areas: social mobility (does the school do a good job recruiting and graduating poorer students?), research (is the school supporting scientific and humanistic study by producing PhDs and winning grants?), and service (does the school foster an ethic of giving back to the country through either military or civil service?). The magazine also focused their attention on Community Colleges which are usually ignored or undervalued by most ranking systems.

The results were surprising. *Out of the U.S. News and World Reports'* top ten, only one school, Stanford, made the *Washington Monthly* top ten. Also, the Ivy League, perennially lauded as the country's most treasured institutions, only had three representatives and none in the top twenty-five.

Here is the *Monthly's* top five with each school's rank on the *U.S. News and World Reports* list in parentheses:

- 1) Texas A&M (60)
- 2) University of California, Los Angeles (26)
- 3) University of California, Berkeley (21)
- 4) University of California, San Diego (38)
- 5) Penn. State University, University Park (47)

The Washington Monthly takes a principled stand behind its rankings and methodology. They claim that if their rankings were deemed as important as *U.S. News and World Reports*, “the whole screwy social structure of higher education would change. Schools would no longer obsess over SAT scores in order to be recognized as great. Instead, to boost their scores on our list, they would have to recruit and graduate more low-income kids, train more scientists and engineers, and encourage more of their students to serve their country. The end result would be healthier, happier, prouder college campuses, and a more democratic, equitable, and prosperous America. Those are goals we can all rank highly.”

For the complete rankings and more information on this article, go to <http://www2.washingtonmonthly.com/features/2007/0709.guideintro.html> .

## REALIZING A CONFIDENT STUDENT

The personality characteristics that make up ADHD are hyper, impulsive and distractible. But these seemingly negative traits can actually be a positive in certain life situations.

When Dr. Allen of Knoxville, TN talks to young people about their ADHD diagnosis, he often draws them a chart of behaviors that describe the disorder and more positive ways to think about it.

If you're hyperactive, you can also be considered energetic. If you're impulsive, you may have the ability to make decisions quickly. And if you're easily distracted, you probably pay good attention to detail.

Dr. Allen says, "So all those traits that look like ADHD, are really a personality style that can help you in some situations and hurt you in others."

Many children are on medicine to combat their ADHD symptoms and that helps them focus in the classroom. But that same medicine can actually slow them down on the soccer field. And in fact, some children come off medication in the summer or during vacation.

There's no doubt medicine can change a child's quality of life, but Dr. Allen guards against using medicine as the only treatment for ADHD, "Sometimes you can take it for a year or two and develop better resources and not need it later. I know college students and adults that use it selectively."

And there are certain professions where ADHD personality traits are helpful, like working in a newsroom or even in a court of law. Dr. Allen says, "I know an attorney who says in court, it helps him to be energetic, notice details and think quickly. Those are all the positive sides of ADHD. When he has to sit and read legal briefs all day, it's very demanding."

And in that case, ADHD medicine would help.

In order to properly diagnose ADHD, you must talk with your child's school psychologist, and be sure the proper cognitive and academic testing is done. Parents and teachers will also be asked for their input.

Experts like Dr. Allen say ADHD is over-diagnosed and often a symptom of something else, whether it be stress, depression, a learning disability or possibly an autism spectrum disorder.

**Source:** <http://www.volunteertv.com/health/headlines/10236841.html>