

## MISSION STATEMENT

Henry David Thoreau once wrote: “**SIMPLIFY, SIMPLIFY, SIMPLIFY...**” His message was intended for us to learn how to unravel our lives, and unfold ourselves, so that Life becomes more manageable and meaningful... rather than allowing our lives to become overwhelmed with trivialities, distorted ideals, and confusion.

**Ken Krueger’s College Planning Guide** is designed to help you do the same. This resource book is intended to help you “simplify, simplify, simplify” the somewhat tedious and always confusing college planning, admissions, and financial aid processes. It will guide you gently through the maze, and walk with you, step by step, so that **your** first step onto your dream school college campus is a light one.

How did this book project start? Since 2004, thoughts have twirled around my brain. I wrote a book outline with chapter topics at that time for this “future” book, if ever it was written...

Although the project was delayed for five years, ideas for it were incubating. I must say that many times, questions and doubts arose in my mind as to whether I could produce this book, and if so, how?

**“Many people give up just when they’re about to achieve success.  
They quit on the one-yard line.  
They give up at the last minute of the game,  
one foot from a winning touchdown.”  
- H. Ross Perot**

This project was put on the back burner quite often because of my seven-days-a-week consulting and tutoring schedule. Other times the project was dismissed as being nearly impossible to effectively do – perhaps there were too many topics to address. This finished project has come to pass. It was continually inspired by a vision – this thought which sustained me throughout – “as huge an undertaking as this may seem to be, there nevertheless is a great need for it.”

I decided, finally, in January, 2009, that this was the time to move forward with this and share what I know and what I have learned as a professional educator during the past thirty-six years. It was time to help students and parents of today answer these questions which have been asked of me over and over again through the years: “**Where do I start? How do I get there?**”

As with any book worth its salt, a mission statement needs to be presented, goals need to be set and discussed. Throughout this book, I encourage students and parents to set goals and strive to achieve them. It is my sincere hope that this resource book helps them reach those self-set goals. I have confidence that it will.

In addition, I, too, have set goals for this college planning guide. Some of the goals of this book are:

- To help you manage the whole college planning, admissions, and financial aid processes without being overwhelmed.
- To assuage the concerns, and fears of families facing the burden of financing college in today's economy.
- To be sensitive to the needs, desires, and goals of students facing the challenge of college admissions and its demands, and to relate to their deeper feelings and ideals.
- To engage the reader into the sometimes mundane college planning process by using engrossing language and providing reflections on personal stories, situations, and events that truly make the book's lessons come alive.
- To demystify the college mythos and to distinguish facts from fiction.
- To provide straightforward information for a winding maze to the ivory tower, and provide a necessary roadmap for navigating the course to college.
- To make the book a user-friendly guide that allows college planning accessible and affordable to all.
- To provide the most up-to-date information on admissions and financial aid in the e-book version and to update that version.
- To allow the book to be an inspirational resource by presenting, in first person format, positive encouragement, words of advice, and wisdom.
- To help you help yourself; to help you avoid paying exorbitant college consultant fees; to help you become independent of state and federal bureaucracies.
- To empower you with information that will help you see that **you** are in control of these processes more than you know – **not the other way around.**

By the way, did you ever try to interpret the directions manual for assembling a patio table that arrives from the warehouse packed in a box? It's all Greek to me. The directions seem like they were written by a space engineer from NASA. I feel helpless; so much so that I become willing to pay someone to assemble the table for me. It's like the manufacturer is saying: "And there you have it."

**Ken Krueger's College Planning Guide** is a directions manual for college planning, written for **you – students, parents, and counselors.** It is written in a clear, concise, conversational, person-to-person style, not in a heady, authoritative, or preachy style. It is a book that leaves no base uncovered. It will not only provide you with all of the tools needed, but also help you learn how to use them.

Keep in mind, however, that this resource guide is very comprehensive, and is not designed to be absorbed and understood in one sitting. There may also be sections of it that might not pertain to your college planning or search. It is not a novel to be read from beginning to end. It is a four year planning guide that will assist you and serve as a road map during the various stages of your college planning journey. The information you need is all here for you whenever, and however, you want to explore it. Take what you need and leave the rest for later. This book can and should be your one-stop-shop source of information – at least that is what the goal of this book has been all along.

You will discover admissions and financial aid information and opportunities that you perhaps never knew existed. For example, did you know about the changes that went into effect in July

2009 that affect the whole financial aid application process? The new FAFSA process - (Free Application for Federal Student Aid) - will be much more user friendly. It is estimated that one million more students across the country will now be encouraged to apply, not discouraged from applying, to college and for financial aid made available through both the public and private sectors. Students and parents will be able to file a much more streamlined FAFSA in 2010.

The journey we are about to embark upon is a long, hard, stressful one at times with a destination unknown but soon to be discovered. Students, we will get there together, and it will be the greatest odyssey of your life to date! The high school experience and all that it offers, your preparation for getting into college, and your college search all help create a truly magical, memorable time. Do not waste that time by fretting, by being stressed out, by being depressed or overwhelmed. It is simply a wonderful time and with the help of this guide you will come to that realization and have a great time exploring the unknown.

**“To be successful, you only have to work half a day  
and it doesn’t matter which twelve hours  
of the day you work.”  
-Robert Scott Furst  
father of my good friend, Tim Furst.**

It will be hard work, and although sometimes the stakes seem so high, the rewards are so tremendously fulfilling, that they make this worth all the effort. Nothing comes easily. In this day and age of possible personal economic uncertainty and hardship, having a guiding and experienced hand to help give you an edge in the college admissions and financial aid processes can only help make your college dreams and aspirations become an even more satisfying and financially affordable reality – but **you** have to meet me halfway here.

I personally believe that **our thoughts have the power to create our reality**. Henry Ford once said: “Whether you think you can or can’t, you are right.” So let’s go in the positive direction with this process, not the negative. Put in the time and effort to make things happen. Visualize your dream school becoming a reality, and work hard to make that dream happen. This book may read like advice from Dad, but you’ll want to pay attention.

**Ken Krueger’s College Planning Guide** is being self-published, and a portion of the proceeds from the sale of this book will be donated to the schools which have helped shape my life, as well as to charitable organizations for the deaf and hearing-impaired.

You may have seen the bumper sticker: “If you can read this, thank a teacher.” I would love to thank the person who came up with that slogan. Teachers do not expect to be thanked – it goes along with the territory – almost as if it were part of their job description.

**“There are two kinds of teachers:  
The kind that fill you with so much quail shot  
That you can’t move,  
And the kind that just gives you a little prod behind  
And you jump to the skies.”  
- Robert Frost**

My deepest and most heartfelt thanks go to my elementary and high school teachers, college professors, and the many, many teacher colleague friends of mine through the years who have helped create a better world, and who have been strong influences in my life.

Perhaps you feel the same way. Perhaps you can think of teachers who impacted you, whether in a small or a big way, and who helped you become the person you are today and continue to grow to be.

This book is written in honor of those special teachers who propelled me along different paths and to different levels in my life – and who all along the way, believed in me. Personally, this book is a collective product of their impact on my life. Without their positive influence, and without, first and foremost, my parents’ loving and guiding hands, it would not have been possible for this book to be written.

A very special thank you goes to my lifelong good friend, Mike Nath. Our paths crossed way back in high school during our football-playing and discus-throwing days in Sandusky, Ohio. Mike has so professionally edited and massaged into an easily readable and comprehensible book format some twelve hours of my voice recordings of college planning information, and has done so painstakingly and diligently, with patience and expertise that are second to none.

**“When you cease to make a contribution,  
you begin to die.”  
– Eleanor Roosevelt.**

This book is our gift to students, parents, and counselors everywhere who we hope find this resource guide to be the roadmap that they have been looking for. Relax and enjoy the ride, and along the way, thank a teacher, and remember to “Simplify, simplify, simplify.....”

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