

IT'S NOVEMBER 2017 AND I'M APPLYING TO SEVEN SCHOOLS. MY APPLICATIONS COST OVER FIVE HUNDRED DOLLARS.

COLLEGE IS EXCITING. AFTER FOUR YEARS OF HIGH SCHOOL AND STRESS THE IDEA OF GRADUATION HAS MANIFESTED INTO THIS BEAUTIFUL ESCAPE, THE INTRODUCTION INTO A NEW WORLD OF HIGHER EDUCATION, INDEPENDENCE AND COLLEGE DEBT.

EVERYONE AROUND ME BUBBLES ABOUT LEAVING INDIANA AND FINDING THAT PRESTIGIOUS OUT OF STATE UNIVERSITY

I KNOW THAT MY FAMILY CAN'T AFFORD THE \$50,000 A YEAR IT'S GOING TO COST TO GO TO UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON OR UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA, BUT JUST THE IDEA OF FINDING THAT NEW EXPERIENCE IS BREATHTAKING. MY DAD.THINKS OTHERWISE

[RECORDER CLICK NOISE]

[START DAD]

[STOP DAD]

[RECORDER CLICK]

IT'S APRIL 2018 AND I'VE BEEN ACCEPTED INTO SEVEN SCHOOLS. MY TOP THREE CHOICES ARE UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON, UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA AND IU.

AND I KNOW IU IS A GREAT SCHOOL AND IT'S A FULL RIDE AND IT'S FAMILIAR, BUT UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON WAS BEAUTIFUL AND FLORIDA ARE AMAZING SCHOOLS THEY'RE JUST SO EXPENSIVE, BUT I COULD TAKE LOANS OUT AND.... THE DECISION WEIGHTS ON ME LIKE A TON OF BRICKS. THIS WAS

THE NEXT FOUR YEARS WE WERE TALKING ABOUT AND QUITE POSSIBLY
SOMETHING THAT COULD AFFECT ME FOR THE REST OF MY LIFE. HOW COULD I
MAKE THAT CHOICE? ALL I HAVE IS A PROS AND CONS LIST
UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON PROS

[START GRADUATION MUSIC]

IT'S BEAUTIFUL

I LOVE SEATTLE

IT'S SUCH A GREAT SCHOOL

IT'S IMPRESSIVE

IT'S FAR FROM HOME

I FEEL AT HOME ON CAMPUS

ALL MY FRIENDS SAY I SHOULD GO HERE

I DON'T HAVE TO TELL MY FRIENDS I'M GOING TO IU

CON'S

THE DEBT

THE DEBT

THE DEBT

[STOP GRADUATION MUSIC]

[RECORDER CLICK NOISE]

[START DAD]

[STOP DAD]

[RECORDER CLICK]

THE AVERAGE STUDENT GRADUATES WITH 37 THOUSAND DOLLARS IN STUDENT LOANS THAT'S MORE THAN MY DAD MADE IN THE PAST YEAR AND A HALF. OF COURSE IT DOESN'T SEEM LIKE A BIG DEAL WHEN YOU SIGN THAT CONTRACT, BUT EVERY DOLLAR HURTS DOWN THE ROAD. THE AVERAGE THIRTY-FIVE-YEAR-OLD STILL OWES OVER \$18000.

WHEN LIVING IN ONE OF THE RICHEST TOWNS IN INDIANA THIS MAY NOT PRESENT AS TOO MUCH OF A PROBLEM. IT SEEMS AS IF EVERYONE I TALK TO IS OBSESSED WITH FINDING THAT EXCITING BIG NAME COLLEGE, THE FARTHER AWAY THE BETTER. EVERY CONVERSATION I HAVE SEEMS TO RING THE SAME
“JUST GO WHERE MAKES YOU HAPPY”

“MONEY ISN'T IMPORTANT, WHAT'S IMPORTANT IS WHERE YOU WANT TO GO”

“IU IS JUST A CARMEL AWAY FROM CARMEL”

“I WOULD RATHER DIE THAN BE STUCK IN INDIANA”

IT'S ONLY WHEN YOU TALK FROM SOMEONE WITH THE SAME FINANCIAL BACKGROUND WHEN YOU HEAR A DIFFERENT SIDE TO THE STORY.

[START INTERVIEW WITH KILEY]

[STOP INTERVIEW WITH KILEY]

PERHAPS THE WORST PART ABOUT THE COST OF COLLEGE, IS THE AMOUNT OF JUDGEMENT YOU GET FROM NOT BEING ABLE TO PAY EVEN MORE. STUDENT'S JUDGE YOU FOR GOING TO IU, THEY JUDGE YOU FOR STAYING INSTATE. I'VE BEEN TOLD THAT AN ACCEPTANCE RATE ABOVE FORTY IS NOTHING. IT'S TAKEN ME A LONG TIME TO REALIZE THAT *NONE OF IT MATTERS*.

[RECORDER CLICK NOISE]

[START DAD]

[STOP DAD]

[RECORDER CLICK]

IT'S MAY 2018 AND I'M NO LONGER EMBARRASSED TO SAY I'M NOT GOING OUT OF STATE.

KILEY AND I HAVE BOTH ENROLLED AT IU AND WE'RE BOTH INCREDIBLY EXCITED. I'VE STOPPED LISTENING TO THOSE KIDS WHO'D RATHER DIE THAN BE STUCK IN INDIANA AND I'VE STARTED TO PREPARE FOR JUST AN AMAZING EXPERIENCE. COLLEGE IS EXCITING. NO MATTER WHERE. NO MATTER HOW MUCH.

FOR 91.3 WHJE THIS HAS BEEN ALEX CROOKSHANKS SIGNING OFF FOR THE LAST TIME. TO ALL THE OTHER GRADS OF 2018 CONGRATULAITONS, WE MADE IT. I HOPE THAT YOU LOVE THE NEXT FOUR YEARS AND EVERY DECADE AFTER THAT. FOR MORE GREAT WORK VISIT OUR WEBSITE AT WHJE.COM