# Argumentation: How Ivy League Schools Are Not Really All That

During the second semester of my sophomore year, my district was passing out a newsletter featuring the valedictorians and salutatorians in each high school. I was intrigued as to how people were highly praising the three graduates who got accepted into Harvard University. The local news even got their scoop behind the story of these three people's decision to attend Harvard. I get it. It is three people of the same class in the same district that got into an exceptionally reputable and highly-selective Ivy League college. My peers around me have always viewed Ivy League schools as a god-send if they could even have the chance to get admitted or acknowledged by them. Known for their prestige, academic resources, and connections, an Ivy League education can be very valuable for many people. However, it is possible to get quality benefits somewhere else for a fraction of the cost.

Most people believe that those who attend these eminent schools usually have greater opportunities than some others: strong alumni networks, research and studying materials written by the brightest intellectuals, and a head start in immensely competitive fields. I mean, that is true. These universities have graduating classes dating back from the 1700's. Their power of alumni network is very impactful and essential to students' lives and futures. Attending an Ivy League can provide you with the resources and connections needed to get into world-renowned companies. Just having a diploma from an Ivy League school could open doors to better job opportunities, including the potential of securing an above average salary in the future. They are able to gain more recognition and bias due to attending one of the most infamous schools ever known. When I talked with some alumnis and upperclassmen friends about why they were pining after Ivy Leagues so much, their answers seemed as if they just wanted to go for the name. For the glory. For them to be able to boast that they were able to surpass everyone else and get chosen to attend a notable school. I mean, it is not wrong to brag. Anyone would be jubilant to gain the attention of an A-list university. It fuels their pride, making them more confident in themselves and more motivated to work even harder. Nonetheless, I wish that my peers could realize that those honored traits from these conspicuous schools could be found at other colleges. For instance, there are small liberal arts colleges, state universities, and private schools with viable financial aid programs and academic excellences that are on par with the Ivy League. Rice University, the University of Texas at Austin, and Texas A&M are a few of the most prestigious institutions of higher learning in the state of Texas.

People always strive for the best of the best, but they do not realize that the best offers may be right under their noses this whole time. I had a friend in the graduating class of 2019 who painstakingly worked hard to apply for some of the most finest schools, Harvard and Yale. Almost every single day, he would talk about his interviews with colleges and how he is yearning to get accepted into a high-profile university. He would always reprimand me, saying how I should not go after an average or "low-quality" school (like the University of Houston) and that I should reach for noteworthy ones instead. Eventually, he pursued the University of Houston-Honors College due to lower costs and grander circumstances. I came to the realization that it does not matter which school you go to; the only two things that actually matter is money and a good education. Choosing the right school is a part of how your life will turn out as you find a job, but also how you are planning to thrive in the environment. According to Dr.

Kat Cohen, the founder and CEO of college-counseling firm IvyWise, “Simply attending an elite college isn’t enough to guarantee long-term career success; students need to be active on campus, maintain top grades, develop defined interests, and connect with colleagues and alumni in order to get the most out of their educational experience.” Only attending an Ivy League school does not mean automatic success; it does not mean that you will graduate with honors or even graduate at all. Although having the name of a famous university on your diploma or resume may give you an advantage when applying for a job, it all winds down to how high your degree and skills are, so your chances of getting your desired job straight out of college are not guaranteed. It depends on how hard you have been working throughout your college career, whether it is Cornell or a local community college. Although these regal universities have implemented a majestic image in most of our heads, showing how their students are going to be somewhere in life and those going to a school other than theirs are not, it is not really the best choice for every major. Yes, I know that these top colleges have top-rated educational courses and a great amount of networks that could assist students on their path to their dream job, but it does not mean that they are the best at everything. You could find programs in an in-state, public university that are more highly appraised than one at Harvard or Princeton. Furthermore, most people who apply to these prominent institutions are rejected. Imagine though. These Ivy League applicants consists of some of the most successful and talented students in their appropriate classes. In fact, there are tons of famous people have become prosperous despite getting declined by a top-tier school. Tina Fey was rejected by Princeton University and now she is living her life as an actress, comedian, writer, producer, and playwright for SNL (Saturday Night Live) and 30 Rock. Her hard work was recognized and it established her as one of the leading comedians in the early 21st century. Seeing how celebrities, respectful businessmen, and many more have been rejected their dream Ivy League school shows me that it is not important if you are accepted into one or not, but it is how you build up your career to become influential and significant.

Now, I am at the age and grade level where I am supposed to think of colleges that I want to apply to. For sure, I will not apply to an Ivy League university.