November 17, 1999

Unquestionably, Brigadier General John L. Clay is a man of unwavering loyalty and dedication. He has earned the respect of his colleagues in the Air Force, defense contractors, and members of Congress.

On behalf of the Senate, I am pleased to convey my congratulations to General Clay, my fellow Utahns, and his wife, Beverly. Our best wishes on the occasion of his retirement.

MAYOR FRANCIS H. DUEHAY OF CAMBRIDGE

Mr. KENNEDY. Mr. President, it is an honor to take this opportunity to recognize a leader who has given so much to the people of Cambridge, Massachusetts. Mayor Francis H. Duehay has been an elected official in the City of Cambridge for thirty-six consecutive years. Under his leadership, the city has made great progress in housing, welfare, employment, and many other important issues for the people. This year, Frank is retiring, and his loss will be felt deeply by all those whose lives he has touched.

Frank's commitment to public service is extraordinary. Throughout his years as Mayor, City Councilor, and on the School Committee he has taken pride in his commitment to work directly with the people he represents, in order to learn their concerns firsthand. Frank works with city officials and numerous other organizations to open new lines of communication between the city government and the people of Cambridge has created a local government at its best—responsive to the needs of the people, accountable for its actions, and always open to new ideas.

Frank worked tirelessly to improve the quality of life for Cambridge families. He served as the chairperson for the Cambridge Kids’ Council, where he’s worked to create greater opportunities in the community, giving hope to children and families and providing a model for cities throughout the state. The Mayor’s Summer Youth Employment Program has been extremely successful in giving young men and women the opportunity to serve in their city during the summer months, enabling them to explore their interests and enhance their lives. Frank has fought hard for the families of Cambridge, and his legacy will live on through their success.

In all of these and many other ways, Frank Duehay has served the people of Cambridge with great distinction. I am honored to pay tribute to this remarkable leader. His public service and generosity are shining examples to us all. I know that all of the people of Cambridge when I say thank you, Frank, for your commitment and dedication to public service. You will be deeply missed.

MICHIGAN TEACHER OF THE YEAR MARGARET HOLTSCHLAG TRIBUTE

Mr. ABRAHAM. Mr. President, I rise today to congratulate Margaret Holtschlag, a fourth grade teacher at Murphy Elementary School in the Haslet School District, who was selected from nearly thirty regional finalists as the Michigan Teacher of the Year.

Mrs. Holtschlag has devoted her life to teaching and making a positive impact on each and every student she encounters. Her captivating teaching style inspires both students and colleagues alike. This is truly a rare gift.

A quality education is one of the most important tools that a child needs and it gives me great joy to know that such a dynamic and caring teacher is helping to shape the lives of Michigan students.

NICHOLAS W. ALLARD ON THE COLLEGE APPLICATION PROCESS

Mr. KENNEDY. Mr. President, families across the country know that a college education is essential for their children. A college graduate earns twice what a high school graduate earns in a year, and close to three times what a high school dropout earns. More and more students are applying for college each year—over 2 million freshmen began college last year. The result is increasingly heavy pressures on schools, families, and colleges.

No one understands these pressures more than prospective college students and their families who are now filling out applications, visiting college campuses, and preparing to make the all-important choices for their futures.

An article by Nicholas W. Allard, in the Washington Post last week, provides excellent common sense advice to prospective students and their families about the college application process. Mr. Allard, whom many of us recall as a former member of the Senate Judiciary Committee, has had extensive experience in interviewing college applicants. I believe his article will be of interest to all of us in the Senate, and I ask that it be printed in the RECORD.

The article follows.

[From the Washington Post, Nov. 9, 1999]

NAVIGATING THE COLLEGE ADMISSIONS PROCESS

(By Nicholas W. Allard, Associated Press)

A friend who is intelligent, high educated, and a wonderful parent recently called me in a meltdown panic over whether to give white or manila envelopes to their teenager’s teachers for college recommendations.

My anxious friend has lots of company. Every year this is the season when tree leaves turn color and drop, and common sense about college admissions heads south.

Aside from the uselessness of self-inflicted pressure, important decisions by college prospects are often based on inadequate information and worse advice. So I can’t resist these simple tips on how to

APPLY TO THE COLLEGES YOU WANT TO ATTEND

Pretty basic, huh? Yet how many times have you heard advice such as: “You need some ‘reach’ schools.” Or “Where’s your ‘safety school’?” In other words, you’re encouraged to think about schools in a way that ranks their desirability according to the difficulty of being admitted. This approach makes you feel like you are “settling”: if you decide to attend anywhere but one of the most selective schools.

According to Peterson’s Annual Survey of Undergraduate Institutions, in the United States there are almost 2,000 accredited, public and private four-year colleges and universities. They vary tremendously.

Find a handful or so of colleges out of this very large number you would be enthusiastic about attending. Then, once you’ve got your working list together, turn to the issue of how to get admitted to your top schools.

THE EARLY APPLICATION PROGRAM

In you’re considering participating in an early application program because you are very, very sure that a college is your top choice, then go ahead. If you’re not sure, then don’t do it. Think about it. What if you succeed and are admitted to a place that you are not sure is your first choice?

If the early acceptance is nonbinding, you’re going to apply elsewhere anyway. If it is binding, then you are stuck. You are not going to find any college that will tell you it’s relatively easy to be admitted at the early stage. But you’ll tell me you are worried that some colleges admit so many students early that there seem to be very few places left if you wait.

Keep your head. Those people who are so well qualified that colleges are sure they want to offer them a binding offer at the early stage are taken off of the pool of applicants. They are not filing multiple applications to schools that may interest you. You even may appear to be a relatively strong candidate in the remaining pool come spring, especially after your strong academic performance this fall.

And, remember, many, if not most, college applications are not accepted at the early stage. Are you sure that you want to go through the angst of applying to college for
If you’re already in your senior year and haven’t decided where you want to go, of course, after you are accepted at a college you certainly have the opportunity to visit before you make your decision.

MAKE YOUR OWN DECISION

When you’re applying to college you certainly want to put your best foot forward and present an accurate and compelling case for admission. But above all things, remember to be yourself.

Suppose, if by some miracle, you actually were able to gussy up your application and essays to come across as a different person or convincingly act out a role in an interview. Would the college be accepting the wrong person? More practically, it just often doesn’t work to try to be someone else. Pohniness is difficult to maintain, and in most cases it’s transparent.

This also means that the application form that you complete should be your own work. Relax; take the task seriously; do the best job you can and don’t forget: Parents, teachers and consultants who write a lot of hand in preparing applications leave very visible fingerprints.

THE INTERVIEW PROCESS

Colleges generally do not require interviews, but, if available, they provide an opportunity to learn more about a school and to supplement your written application.

If you have an interview with an admissions officer, remember they are not decision makers. Their task is to collect information and pass it on. They can be very good or very bad. Count on this: Whatever they report to their alma maters will be taken with a full shaker of salt. Their views will not outweigh the record you have built up, the evaluations of professional teachers who have seen you in a class context or your own profile that appears on the written application.

Still, alumni interviews can help uncover or reinforce strengths and corroborate the picture that appears on the written application file. Again, be yourself, and be prepared for a variation of the inevitable final interview question: “Tell me more anything else you would like to ask me?”

Also, if you’re wondering about what to wear to the interview, the acceptable range of attire is very broad. On matters of dress, and all such questions about your application, let your own judgment be your guide.

DON’T WORRY ABOUT OTHER APPLICANTS

It is simply not true that somebody else in your school or your neighborhood is competing with you for a spot that they might take away your space at a college that you want to attend.

At the very most selective colleges you are not competing against the person sitting next to you in a classroom, you’re competing against the nation’s pool of applicants.

In colleges that are less selective, if you make a compelling case that satisfies its requirements there’s a very good chance of being accepted. Your case for acceptance is not diminished, it is not less compelling if other qualified candidates in your community are accepted.

In any event, know that any information you have about other candidates for acceptence at the college or board scores supposedly are or are not; whether or not a particular college has a quota for your high school; what a college has supposedly committed to a committed athlete; what has been told; whether students with learning disabilities get a fair shake—it’s all unreliable.

None of it helps you make your case and it will get your stomach juices roiling if you pay attention to such gossip.

CONGRESSIONAL RECORD—SENATE

November 17, 1999

Have confidence in yourself. Focus on what you can do something about, which is your own application and at the end of the day things will work out just fine. Be happy if people you know also are accepted to a college of your choice. You’ll already know people to embrace or avoid when you get to campus in the fall.

MAKING YOUR DECISION

Don’t torture yourself about the choice you make. Remember, you’re carefully compiled a list of schools that make sense for you. Be liberated in the idea that you can’t make a wrong decision.

PAYING FOR COLLEGE

Think about what it’s going to be like to be on your own and to live, study and goof off in a new place, meeting new people. Take advantage of the pause, to make a detailed report about what you’ve accomplished in this first part of your life. In this way the college application can be more than a chore. It can be a satisfying inventory of positives and promote honest self-evaluation of how you want to grow or change or improve.

The application process doesn’t have to be nerve-racking. If you only apply to schools that really turn you on, then you really don’t have to worry about being accepted to the wrong place.

In the unlikely event that you do not gain acceptance to any of your favorite schools, maybe you should take another year and do something that interests you or prepare yourself to reapply to colleges after spending some time better equipping yourself for college.

The dirty little secret is that there simply is no single school that will make or break your future.

Be a ‘SMART SHOPPER’

You are in the market for one of the most expensive, most valuable things you will ever acquire; a college education.

Have you talked to people who have recently attended the colleges that you are considering? Have you read about the colleges? Have you visited colleges that you are seriously considering, alone, without your family?

The traditional family summer tour of colleges is a nice starting point and often can be very helpful in eliminating college choices. But in terms of getting a good feel for what it’s like to be a student on campus during a term, there is only so much you can learn by reading stacks and mortars from the outside of empty buildings, while trying to act as if you are not actually part of your family encourage—how embarrassing.

Thump the melon, test-drive the car, try to get, on your own, to the few colleges that most interest you. Bring a sleeping bag, arrange to stay. If you can, in the dorm room of a friend or a friend who graduated from your home area high schools. Attend class, find out how bad the food is in the dining hall, attend an athletic event or concert, go read, in the library and work on some homework in the midst of other students doing the same thing.

TRIBUTE TO MR. BOBBY BOSS

Mr. CLELAND. Mr. President, I rise today to recognize a great American institution and its leader. The American Legion Barrett-Davis-Watson Post