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In! College Admissions and Beyond

Jennifer Bloom
Lillian Luterman
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Given the intense competition surrounding college admissions, it is not enough anymore to create a college application piecemeal. Rather, the materials must function together as a whole. Co-authors Lillian Luterman and Jennifer Bloom have written a book that helps students combine application, essays, standardized test scores, interviews, and other pertinent information into a comprehensive and effective strategy for acceptance into the college of their choice.

The book's three main sections—Be Alike, Spike, and Pulling Together—are informative reading from beginning to end. But this volume can also be used for answers to specific areas of interest, such as "Researching and Creating a Working College List" or "How to Visit Colleges."

Written for college-bound high school students, the authors hope that parents will also read and digest the information so they can help their teens with the arduous project of preparing college admissions packets. A section on the parents' role is useful for guardians to define the ways they can help, but not take over, their child's responsibilities. One of the dozens of cartoons sprinkled throughout the book shows two mothers talking. One says to the other: "It's a lot of pressure on me not to pressure him."

The Spike section introduces an interesting concept: "identifying a passion and layering it—showcasing the student's interest in many ways." Case studies are used to explain how students can build on a skill or interest to stand out from the pack—something that makes them truly memorable to "an admissions officer who has just finished reading a hundred applications from well-qualified students." A young woman who takes four years of French is used as an example. She joins the French Club at school, then volunteers to teach French to younger students and creates an online community of other high school Francophiles, demonstrating more passion than the student who belongs to the French Club alone.

The authors are mother and daughter. Luterman, the elder, is a graduate of McGill University and has a master's degree in speech pathology and counseling. She has advised students on college admissions since 1989. Bloom graduated from Cambridge University and Harvard Business School.

Appendices include a College Preparation Timeline, Waitlist and Deferral Strategies, Resources, and a Selected Bibliography. Well-written and informative, IN! College Admissions and Beyond is a book for every college-bound student's shelves, as well as those lining public and school libraries.
PENNY HASTINGS (March / April 2011)

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