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Position Synthesis

Is Higher Education for Everyone?

Prospective High school graduates all around the nation are busily preparing for their graduation. After graduation the students will part their ways and go in many different paths. What is right for someone may not be the wishes of another for their future. For many different reasons some will chose to end their formal education with a high school diploma. A large proportion of people who are prepared for college will choose not to attend. Going to college can be a waste of time if the choice is not thoroughly considered. What is the value of higher education? For many students, college is a time for personal growth. It all boils down to personal decision- where will you be the most happy and successful? Why do some choose higher education while others do not?

Mike Rose is the author of an article entitled, "Blue Collar Brilliance". Rose states that some people seem to believe the notion that work requiring less schooling requires less intelligence. Without many blue collar jobs our society wouldn't move forward as smoothly. Rose shares examples of his mother and uncle and their work in restaurants and assembly lines. I am not sure if Rose's mother and uncle were given a formal opportunity to attend college. I am not sure what their response would have been regarding that opportunity. However from reading Rose's article I can conclude that they were successful in their chosen paths. On the job training is essential for success and is irreplaceable. Experience in the field can be more beneficial than traditional education. A person's contribution to society is not limited on the degree or certificate they received. There is so much done behind the scenes of life by remarkable people who do not necessarily have a college education. Rose shares that

higher education is not the only recipe for success. Reeves, a published author in the “USA Today Magazine,” researched more about the higher education experience. He states that many high school students and their parents think that a college degree is the only way for success in the 21st century. Success can be different for different people.

Charles Murray argues that the commitment to attend college is not for everyone. Going to college can be a waste of time if the choice to go is not thoroughly considered. It should be a personal decision. However it is best when one really takes the time to rhetorically explore all options for themselves and their future. One never wants to consider something that they are doing to be a waste of time. Higher education may not be for everyone. However some may never try because of fear of the unknown. Receiving a traditional education from books in a brick building is not always the dream. Are some people limiting themselves from achieving all that they can? W.J. Reeves encourages society to understand the commitment involved in higher education. One cannot just go through the motions while attending college. The commitment level of higher education is much greater compared to high school education. It requires both feet in, focused on the endeavor and the support of many people. Davis states that though many people believe that a college degree is needed for success, only one in three students who enroll in college will eventually earn a degree.

Charles Murray goes on to challenge that after all the time and effort to gain a higher education some employers do not value what the student learned while at school, just that they have a degree. Some students spend so much time studying in one field and then cannot find a job where he can use his education. Income for a wide variety of occupations that do not require a college degree is higher than average income for many occupations requiring a bachelor’s degree. Are we being closed minded in thinking that college is the only answer for success? A good way to find work is to be the best at whatever you decide to do and accomplish.

The patterns and behaviors developed in education can influence success in life. Charles Murray argues that participation in any culture requires familiarity with a wide variety of knowledge. Higher education may not be for everyone, however those who choose to gain it will be more successful and prepared for a variety of occupations. Reeves participates in the ongoing conversation by bringing the point that the patterns and behaviors developed in education can influence your success in life. College not only prepares you academically but also helps to develop key qualities desirable by any employer. There is great personal growth and social development that takes place in a higher education setting. Undergraduate studies are a time to stretch one's intellect. Everything you learn in the classroom will not directly be associated with your chosen career path. However it will mold you to be the person that you are. Murray states that in a culture it is necessary to have core knowledge on basic topics to be considered literate. Through elementary to high school, topics are discussed at a level appropriate to their students. Participation in any culture requires familiarity with a wide variety of knowledge.

When choosing a school for your higher education choose wisely. There are so many options available to anyone in the nation with a desire to further their education. With so many options one might be short selling themselves of the opportunity to progress further in life. Liz Addison argues that universities no longer matter as much as they once did instead she encourage starting at a community college. Many people don't know where to start when they decide to gain higher education. Success in life is not based on education alone. However as we look around us, everyone knows someone who is not achieving their highest potential in life. Community colleges offer a chance to try out the college experience. If chosen after community college one can transfer to a larger University to gain further education. Addison advocates for the cause of great teachers and professors who want to see success in their students. Hacker and Dreifus encourage readers to choose a school where the energy of the teachers is focused on educating undergraduates and giving them the keys to succeed. Colleges and Universities should make students think and use their minds. Choose a school where academics are

celebrated. Reeves states that college not only prepares you academically but also helps to develop key qualities.

Hacker and Dreifus explore the question of, "Is Higher Education worth the price of admission?" Tuition can be a great deciding factor in whether higher education seems feasible. Parents want what is best for their children. There can be a great financial burden associated with higher education. However there are options such as federal aid, grants and scholarships available if one meets their requirements. Hacker and Dreifus state that graduating with six figures of debt is becoming more common. Some colleges offer tuition-free education. Whether the school is tuition free or there is tuition is not a factor on whether they are giving their students the keys to success. Community colleges offer a less expensive starting option versus more expensive larger universities. Murray states that individuals with a bachelor's degree earn more on average than people without them. Rose states in his article how hard his mother needed to work to earn a living. One might conclude that with a higher education she might have been able to earn more for her efforts.

Overall as I researched, "Is Higher Education for everyone?" I came to the conclusion that there are so many options available to further your education. Some may be comfortable where they are currently. However some may just not know where to begin. The thought of gaining a higher education may be a daunting task for some. We all know someone who is not achieving their highest potential in life, we yearn for them to have a desire to change and improve their situation. It is possible to be successful in life without a higher education. However with a higher education so readily available one might be selling themselves short by choosing to not explore their options. A higher education does not need to exclusively include gaining a Bachelor's degree and above. Instead a higher education might be gaining vocational training that can be used for a specific line of work. Personal progression can add a sense of accomplishment and security. Accomplishment, because you set your mind to something and

did your best at something that required a lot of commitment. Security because with higher education the job opportunities are numberless. Employers value the commitment needed for higher education. Higher education allows for a person to be more of an asset to society and the culture around them in their community. Is Higher Education for everyone? I think that this is still a personal decision as to whether one might commit them-selves to the task. However I feel that the benefits of higher education are worth the efforts put forth. The personal growth and development associated with gaining a higher education are irreplaceable.

Works Cited

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