



SUPERIOR COURT OF NEW JERSEY

CHANCERY DIVISION

FAMILY PART

ATLANTIC COUNTY

MARCH 2007

ATLANTIC CITY, NEW JERSEY

REPORT FOR THE COURT SUBMITTED BY

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OUTLINE OF CONTENT

- A. List of all materials considered that are not professional publications.
- B. A summary of any discussions held with any party in the action or such other key fact witness (in this case Luis, Jr.).
- C. A statement of relevant statutes, court cases, or other publications, periodicals, etc. that are relied upon by experts in the field that were used in this report.
- D. An analysis of the facts to the law or authorities. In this case, the evaluation of Luis Jr. as if he came to me like any of my private clients.
- E. My overall recommendation to the court. In this case, what is the most “reasonable” course for Luis Jr. to pursue given his educational background, performance on the SATs, and his career aspirations.

NOTE: This is the format provided by the lawyer used by experts in Family Law cases.



A. List of All Materials Considered

- 1) Conversation with Luis Jr. on February 22, 2007 (lasting 101 minutes).
- 2) Conversation with Luis Jr. on February 24, 2007 (lasting 44 minutes).
- 3) Emails from Mr. XXXXXXXXX to Luis Sr. that were forwarded to me.
- 4) Field, A. (March 12, 2001). *A Guide to Lead You through the College Maze* from Business Week Online at www.businessweek.com
- 5) Paragraph 14 of the Consent Order Modifying the Final Judgment of Divorce (1/3/96)
- 6) Harris-Tuck, L., Price, A., & Robertson, M. (2004). *Career Patterns: A Kaleidoscope of Possibilities* (2nd ed.). Pearson Education, Inc.: Upper Saddle River, N.J.
- 7) The College Board (2006a). *Book of Majors* (First ed.). College Board Publications: New York, N.Y.
- 8) The College Board (2006b). *College Handbook* (43rd ed.). College Board Publications: New York, N.Y.
- 9) Website for Quinnipiac University: www.quinnipiac.edu
- 10) Website for Rutgers University: www.rutgers.edu
- 11) Website for Florida State University: www.fsu.edu
- 12) Website for Framingham State College: www.framingham.edu
- 13) Student publications (i.e. magazines) that will be mentioned but not cited from.
- 14) Interest inventories and skills surveys that will be mentioned but not cited from.
- 15) Career and occupations publications that will be mentioned but not cited from.
- 16) The student newspaper for Quinnipiac University: www.quchronicle.com
- 17) The website for St. Augustine Prep: www.hermits.com
- 18) National Center for Education Statistics *College Opportunities Online Locator*:
<http://nces.ed.gov/ipeds/cool>



B. Summary of Discussions with Luis Jr.

- 1) First conversation was on February 22, 2007 for 101 minutes
- 2) Second conversation was on February 24, 2007 for 44 minutes

At the request of Luis Sr. I spoke with his son about his planning for college. Dad called him in advance so that he knew to expect my phone call(s). I found the son to be quite cooperative and willing to speak with me. We talked about everything from his private high school, his activities on campus, to his plans for the upcoming year.

Luis Jr. told me that he had graduated from a private high school in New Jersey. He had attended a public high school during his freshman and sophomore years and then his mother enrolled him at St. Augustine Prep. He said that his graduating class was just over 100 students and that they had two college counselors. Ms. YYYYYYY advised him during his junior year and Mr. XXXXXXXX worked with him during his senior year.

Asking him about how he did in school there, he told me that his grades were not bad and that he enjoyed his time at Prep. He told me that his SAT I scores were: math 580, verbal 500, and writing 580 for a total of 1660. Luis Jr. added that he took the test four separate times. I asked if he had taken any career interest inventories and he said that he had but that he couldn't recall the names of them. When asked about any aptitude testing he responded in the negative. When he first started meeting with Mr. XXXXXX in the fall he brought his resume' and an initial list of 20 colleges and universities to be considered. His counselor suggested a couple new schools that might be better suited for him, but he chose not to apply to either of them.

I asked him what Mr. XXXXXXXX did for him and he said that he critiqued his essays and reviewed his applications. Due to an interest in film studies, Luis Jr. was



considering applying to New York University. He said that Mr. XXXXXX made a call to the school on his behalf to schedule an interview, but he decided not to show up for it. He added that he did participate in an interview session at Quinnipiac University. Luis Jr. added that he had attended a film institute over the summer offered through the New York Film Institute at Princeton University. This led to his interest in applying to colleges and universities as a communications major for his freshman year.

When we started conversing about the schools that he eventually applied to, he said that there were six but that he could only remember five of them: Northeastern University in Boston, MA; Temple University in Philadelphia, PA; Fairleigh Dickinson University in Teaneck, NJ; Rochester Institute of Technology in NY; and Quinnipiac in Hamden, CT. He said that he had been accepted to all of them, but that he had initially been denied at Northeastern. He filed an appeal and was waitlisted. He petitioned again and was admitted for the spring semester in January of 2007.

Luis Jr. told me that he had visited all of the campuses except for RIT. He had a friend attend there who told him that the dorms were run down. Northeastern wasn't a formal visit, but he had been to the Boston area several times and felt comfortable with applying there just the same. He didn't like the layout and feel of the Dickinson campus and decided that it was too close to home. Temple was in a bad neighborhood. Quinnipiac, however, was in a quiet setting that was "sheltered and bubble-like". It was not too close and it was not too far from home. And it did factor into his decision that he had a cousin attending QU on an athletic scholarship – so he already knew somebody.

Of note, Luis Jr. did add that his father had flown him down to south Florida to check out some schools in the region. Florida Atlantic University in Boca Raton and



Florida International University in Miami are both four-year state schools. They also visited Miami-Dade Community College due to the fact that it has an honors college and a communications program. He commented that he didn't want to attend a community college due to the fact that they have "lower standards". [Ironically of note, according to The College Board 2006 *College Handbook* the honors college requires a 1200 on the SAT math and verbal and Luis Jr. only had a 1080.]

When I asked Luis Jr. about the aid packages offered by the schools, he said that he received no grant money from any of them. RIT offered no money whatsoever, but FDU offered him a \$64,000 scholarship over four years. If he applied for the honors scholarship it would pay him \$100,000 over the same four years. Temple (the only public school) offered him \$2500 per year to attend. Being that he had initially been denied admission, Northeastern offered him no money at all. He said that attending Quinnipiac was "a last second decision" and as a result was offered no money by the school. He also added that QU's tuition was increasing by \$2,000 for next year.

We talked about student life at Quinnipiac and what activities he had been participating in. He is an active member of two clubs on campus. He is the vice president of Schools for Schools and the president of Q Stand, a group against genocide. Due to a trip he took to Africa while he was in high school, he explained that he feels a need to make people aware of the atrocities taking place in Darfur. Luis Jr. described the mentality of the student body by saying the "campus is apathetic". He wanted people to understand that there is more going on in the world than getting their tickets for that weekend's ice hockey series (Quinnipiac has a Division I program). He added that this "school is for rich kids who want to party and just want to get by".



The conversation later turned to his academics while at Quinnipiac. Luis Jr. said that he applied as a communications major because he was interested in doing something with films. After looking into it further he shared that he was very discouraged by the whole process of how one becomes a screenwriter, producer, and/or director and figured that he needed to switch to something that he was good at. Hence, he changed his major to English in October of 2006 while still in only his first semester of college. During the early part of this spring semester he determined that he wasn't really learning anything new, so he once again changed his major to biology/pre-medicine.

I felt compelled to ask him why he was choosing pre-med and he told me that he now wanted to be a doctor of some sort. While researching the situation in Darfur some more, he realized that he could probably help people there more if he were able to join the Doctors Without Borders program. When I asked him what type of medicine he was leaning toward he replied with "pathology".

In his wanting to get caught up with his science peers, Luis Jr. told me that he intends to take five science courses over the summer. Two or three would be "online" through QU and two or three would be taken at the local community college near his mother's house. I thought this was rather interesting considering his earlier comment about community colleges having "lower standards". To round out his time over the summer, he said that he would be volunteering at a local hospital six nights a week for four hour shifts. He didn't explain why he hadn't volunteered during the school year.

Now that he was entering his third major while still in his first year of college I had to ask him if he felt as though he had researched schools and programs well enough. Luis Jr. admitted to me that he had been "apathetic and lazy" during his senior year of



high school and that he only “cared about my life”. I took that to mean that he didn’t necessarily have his priorities set appropriately and/or that his real goals and values hadn’t been determined yet. This was in stark contrast to his thoughts on Africa and his reasons for picking his new major.

With all of the colleges and universities in the United States to choose from, I asked him why he hadn’t applied to any public schools other than Temple. Considering that he qualified for in-state tuition in **both** New Jersey and Florida I was quite surprised that none were on his final list from those two states. Luis Jr. told me that it was “my mistake” and that he “didn’t know about” any of the public programs found in either state; or anywhere else for that matter. This would fall back to his describing himself as “apathetic and lazy” earlier, for it would take more time and effort to research so many other schools and programs of study.

When we talked about the private tuition at Quinnipiac, Luis Jr. agreed that it was expensive. He told me that he had decided that he would transfer out of QU after his sophomore year. When I informed him that he was quite likely to lose many of his credits for trying to transfer in so many science courses to his new school, he said that he was willing to repeat them if he had to. This, of course, would take more time and money to complete the same program if all of his credits were not accepted by his new school. He said that he had to stay another year at Quinnipiac because he felt he needed to get the message of Africa out to the student body and because he had signed a lease.

Knowing that his father is paying for his college education at QU to the tune of \$40,000 per year, I asked him if he would be attending the same school and spending the same amount of money if his mother was footing the bill. His response was simply “no”.



C. Other Publications and Periodicals

Alliance for Excellent in Education (2002). *Every Child a Graduate: A Framework for An Excellent Education for all Middle School and High School Students.*

Washington, D.C.: Scott Joftus.

American School Counselor Association (2003). *The ASCA National Model: A Framework for School Counseling Programs.* Alexandria, VA: Author.

American School Counselor Association (2004). *Ethical Standards for School Counselors* (4th ed.) [Bulletin]. Alexandria, VA: Author.

America's Career Resource Network (n/a). *National Career Development Guidelines.*

Retrieved March 2, 2007 from <http://www.acrnetwork.org/ncdg/documents/NCDG.pdf>.

Barnett, M. (2006). Paying for College: Mistakes to Avoid. *U.S. News & World Report, America's Best Colleges*, p. 58 – 60.

Brown, D. (2003). *Career Information, Career Counseling, and Career Development* (8th ed.). Allyn and Bacon: Boston.

Hawkins, D. A., & Lautz, J. (2005). *State of College Admission.* Alexandria, VA: National Association for College Admission Counseling.

Lum, Christie (2000). *A Guide to State Laws and Regulations on Professional School Counseling.* Alexandria, VA: American Counseling Association.

National Association for College Admission Counseling (1990). *Statement on Precollege Guidance and the Role of the School Counselor.* Alexandria, VA.

National Association for College Admission Counseling (2004). *Admission and Counseling Trends Survey.* Alexandria, VA.



National Association for College Admission Counseling (2006a). *Students' Rights and Responsibilities in the College Admission Process*. [Brochure].

National Association for College Admission Counseling (2006b). *Effective Counseling In Schools Increases College Access*. [Practice Brief]. Alexandria, VA:

Patricia McDonough.

Pathways to College Network (2004). *Parental and Family Involvement Literature Review and Bibliography: An Exploratory Report*. Boston, MA.

Shelton, C.F., & James, E.L. (2005). *Best Practices for Effective Secondary School Counselors*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.

U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, The Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System, Peer Analysis System (2001).

Washington, D.C.



D. An Analysis of the Facts

According to the Alliance for Excellent Education (2002), the development of an individualized educational plan during high school can increase the chances for postsecondary access and success. Of the high schools that require such a plan, the majority of private schools were found to begin such guidance after the start of the junior year. The *Admission and Counseling Trends Survey* found that 82% of schools that require initiation of a postsecondary college plan in ninth grade are public (NACAC, 2004). This is particularly important as Luis Jr. transferred to a private school after his sophomore year. He had two different opportunities to establish a college guidance plan with each school's advisors. Most students only get one chance.

Other than the guidance counselors, parental involvement is crucial in any effort to improve achievement and increase access to postsecondary education within the school (Pathways to College Network, 2004). Luis Jr. has a mother local in New Jersey and a father in southern Florida. Presumably, each wants what is best for their son. However, the amount of information that each has access to will affect how informed their advice may be. Living out-of-state, Luis Sr. would be at a distinct disadvantage for being as up to date with what was taking place at the private high school, St. Augustine Prep.

According to the *Ethical Standards for School Counselors* (ASCA, 2004), in cases of divorce a good-faith effort is made to keep "both parents informed" with regard to critical information. From what is presented, this doesn't appear to be the case in this instance.

In emails from Mr. XXXXXX to Mr. ZZZZZZZ, it is stated that Luis Jr. was assigned to Ms. YYYYYYY for his college advising. However, Luis Jr. would visit with Mr. XXXXXX from time to time for advice on applications. This would lead to lack of



continuity for the student and present greater challenges for sharing information with the parents. So while Mr. XXXXXX may have set up an interview at NYU for Luis Jr., he writes that he “was not the primary contact for college discussions”. This could cause additional confusion for the colleges and affect the understanding and transmissions of communications between all parties involved.

In reading the St. Augustine Prep website, it becomes apparent that the private school does not have state certified guidance counselors on staff. Ms. YYYYYY and Mr. XXXXXX are listed as being English teachers at the school and the college advisors. This would make a tremendous difference in the quality of counseling programs offered to the student body. The guidance director was a physical education teacher and athletic director before accepting employment at Prep. The profile for Ms. YYYYYY says that she attended college at Merrimack College without any mention of any graduate work. Lum (2000) wrote that public school counselors were significantly more likely to have completed graduate coursework than private school counselors due to certification requirements in all 50 states that public school counselors hold a master’s degree.

The National Association for College Admission Counseling developed a *Statement on Precollege Guidance and Counseling and the Role of the School Counselor* to ensure that any counseling professional who provides at least some counseling in the college admissions process could build an effective program. Precollege counseling includes activities that help students 1) pursue the most challenging curriculum that results in enhanced postsecondary educational options, 2) identify and satisfy attendant requirements for college access, and 3) navigate the maze of financial aid, college choice, and other processes related to college application and admission (NACAC, 1990).



This same document asserts that assisting students in reaching their full potential requires “a trained staff of school counselors” who are able to facilitate student development and achievement. Of particular importance to student success is access to a strong precollege guidance and counseling program “that begins early in the student’s education” (NACAC, 1990). Students face additional challenges without a strong counselor to help them. Within schools, no professional is more important to improving college enrollments than counselors (NACAC, 2006b).

The American School Counseling Association has established national standards for students based upon academic development, career exploration, and personal/social awareness (ASCA, 2003). Under the academic domain, students will take responsibility for their actions, use assessment results in educational planning, and identify post-secondary options consistent with interests, achievement, aptitude, and abilities. From the career domain, students will learn to make decisions and understand the importance of planning. They will apply decision-making skills to career planning and course selection and then select course work that is related to their career interests.

Luis Jr. graduated from a private parochial school of approximately 400 students. According to NACAC’s practice brief *Effective Counseling in Schools Increases College Access* (2006b), the average amount of a counselor’s time spent on the task of “Occupational Counseling and Job Placement” from such an institution was only 3.67%. Based on a seven hour school day for pupils, this would translate to only 15 minutes per day for the entire caseload of that counselor. Giving each student the whole fifteen minutes, with two college counselors for the entire student body (200 students each), that would mean it would then take 200 days for each of them to see each student one time for



career advising. Based on a five day school week, it would take 40 weeks to see each student one time. The normal school year lasts only 36 weeks. Add into that equation that both college counselors/advisors are English teachers at the school, they then have even less time to spend on any type of career planning and exploration.

Luis Jr. eventually enrolled at Quinnipiac University. In his own words, he admitted that he didn't come to this decision until the "last minute". In the *State of College Admission*, 70% of institutions reported that considering demonstrated interest contributes to understanding whether the student will be an appropriate "fit" for the institution (Hawkins and Lautz, 2005). One example of how a college may ascertain a student's interest is through early application using either early action or early decision. Luis Jr. did not apply to any schools on his final list through early decision.

It is also evident that Quinnipiac was not the first choice school for Luis Jr. For if it had been, he would not have bothered to appeal the rejection letter from Northeastern. And he certainly would not have appealed it twice. This establishes that his heart was not completely vested in attending Quinnipiac. Referring back to the St. Augustine website, the school compiled the final acceptance list for the class of 2006. Of the 115 graduates, statistics for 105 of them were posted. At this late date there had been no acceptance by anyone to Quinnipiac University. This shows that Luis Jr. was among the final 9% of his classmates to make an official decision as to which college to attend.

This fact becomes particularly important when a scholar is seeking to receive financial funding from an institution. Clearly stated in the *Students' Rights and Responsibilities in the College Admission Process*, a student must notify each college that accepts them whether they will be attending "no later than May 1" (NACAC, 2006a).



This detail becomes even more significant when viewed in light of *Paragraph 14 of the Consent Order* (1996) stating that the mother of Luis Jr. shall provide his father with written notice of her choice of school. This is to have been done six months prior to making a deposit for enrollment. If a university does not know that a person will be attending then they have no reason to save any remaining monies for them.

The website for St. Augustine Prep says that the graduating class of 2006 earned \$13 million in college scholarships and grants and accepted over \$5 million of it. It would make one wonder why Luis Jr. was not receiving any money from any outside sources. According to the U.S. Department of Education (2001), the institutions with the highest tuition are private institutions with small enrollments. Luis Jr. said that he is receiving no money from Quinnipiac University, hence putting the entire burden of the expense upon his father.

While researching the fees at Quinnipiac even further using the National Center for Education Statistics website, it was shown that the tuition has increased by almost \$2,000 each of the past three years. Add to that Luis Jr. said it was rising again next year by the same amount (that information is also posted on the school's website for the incoming students). On campus room and board has also increased by \$400 each of the past three years. So in only four years the total expense has grown by nearly \$10,000.

In the 2004 NACAC survey, 95% of high schools reported that counselors are the staff members primarily responsible for conveying financial aid information directly to students. Because students and families overwhelmingly rely on counselors for this data, it is crucial that they are educated and trained to convey timely and accurate information. In the NACAC (2006b) practice brief, 76% of counselors reported needing more support



and training to provide financial aid advice. Having said that, when taking the \$5+ million awarded to Prep's 105 enrolled graduates that still comes out to approximately \$50,000 each. So what is the reason for Luis Jr. having no outside assistance at all?

In her article for U.S. News and World Report, Barnett (2006) listed some of the biggest mistakes in dealing with financial aid as: 1) not applying to all programs, 2) missing out on scholarships, 3) sending forms in too late, 4) failing to negotiate offers, and 5) not shopping around for the best deals. To receive absolutely no money whatsoever from your final choice school and from no outside sources at all shows a serious lack of proper planning in this case. Everyone can get some money for college.

To turn down significant offers of aid from other institutions (FDU) shows a complete indifference to the financial burden placed upon others involved. There is no justifiable reason for anyone to have to pay 100% of the expenses for college out-of-pocket. There are far too many sources of aid available to students to have nothing to decrease the overall expense. There is a noticeable double-standard being used here when Luis Jr. says that he would not attend Quinnipiac if his mother had to pay the expenses instead. One would have to ask why this is the prevailing mindset here.

Financial aid can be broken down into five major sources: 1) high school graduated from, 2) private agencies and foundations, 3) college attending, 4) state of residence, and 5) the federal government. Each of these can then be categorized in one of two ways, either need-based or merit based. So even if your family makes lots of money and you don't qualify for aid based on "need", there are still hundreds of sources that award based on the student's personal qualifications; such as test scores, community service, grades, recommendations, etc. All one has to do is search and apply for them.



E. Overall Recommendation to the Court

Referring once again to the emails sent by Mr. XXXXXX, Luis Jr. graduated with an 89 average and scored a 1080 on his SAT (math = 580 and verbal = 500). Mind you, those scores are the highest pulled from each section after four attempts. Using the data provided on the St. Augustine website, the median SAT score for the graduating class of 2005 was 1210 (math = 620 and verbal = 590). This would mean that Luis Jr. scored, on average, 130 points below the previous class at Prep. A current train of thought in the area of education is that standardized testing is a valid means of balancing the playing field against students who receive inflated grades at schools around the country.

In light of the fact that Luis Jr. has now had three different majors during his freshman year of college, I would have to say that the planning involved was not overly successful. The value of the student's individualized college plan cannot be overstressed. When I advise students I take them through a highly comprehensive guidance program that has 33 different modules, spanning from the initial organization of materials to the final comparison of award letters. Included are specific lessons and activities dealing with educational publications, interest inventories, career exploration, educational statistics and research, job shadowing, informational interviewing, selection of major, searching for schools, and financial aid and scholarships.

I have never personally heard of a freshman having three different majors during their first year of college. When the college advising program at any high school is not fully meeting the needs of a student, there are always other options available. There is an entire national association of private college advisors. Families may review the complete directory of the Higher Education Consultants Association and hire a consultant to work



with their child/ren. In the 2001 Business Week article by Anne Field, it was noted that 11% of the 2000 college freshmen class used a private counselor. This number should be higher five years later as more people learn of such available resources. For a parent who is willing to spend over \$10,000 per year for private school tuition and fees (as posted on the Prep website), the expense for a private educational consultant would be nominal.

There are many FREE resources readily available to families who are willing to put forth the extra effort to be informed and knowledgeable. Student publications such as *College Times*, *nextSTEP*, *Careers and Colleges*, *Life 101*, *Latino U*, and *InDemand* can be picked up at any high school guidance office. For more information about work and careers, the National Association of Colleges and Employers publishes a specialized magazine called *Job Choices*. One edition is for business and liberal arts students while the other is for science, engineering, and technology students. The U.S. government provides the O'Net System and the *Occupational Outlook Handbook* which presents detailed reports about every career choice available.

To assist in discovering one's interests and strengths, The College Board offers its MyRoad™ program for free and the Department of Defense offers the Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery (ASVAB) career exploration program for free. There are others, but these are just well-known examples. For those families seeking more specialized assessments, Brown (2003) lists four work values inventories, eight interest inventories, two personality inventories, three multiple aptitude test batteries, five diagnostic inventories, and one multipurpose test. Each of these instruments was determined to be appropriate for high school age students with normal cognitive functioning. A trained counselor would interpret the results and make recommendations.



As Luis Jr. has told me that his main reasons for wanting to stay at Quinnipiac University for a second year and major in biology are to change the mindset of the student body about the injustices in Africa and to later become a doctor, I have to wonder why this was not realized before entering the college (and spending \$40,000). The *National Career Development Guidelines* (ACRN, n/a) include a reflection stage when creating a process of decision-making for career development. Most notably, components include: assessing how well one uses information (about oneself) to make decisions, evaluating the affect of personal priorities and beliefs on decisions, and assessing how well one explores options when making decisions.

Luis Jr. could have easily evaluated the attitude of the students on the Quinnipiac campus in advance by being a regular reader of the independent student newspaper, *The Quinnipiac Chronicle*. The newspaper's website is quite extensive and even today there is an opinion article specifically addressing the topic of Drafar. The third domain of the ASCA national model [personal/social] addresses specific components such as: 1) identifying values, attitudes, and beliefs, 2) understanding the consequences of decisions and choices, and 3) developing an action plan to set and achieve realistic goals (2003). To assist with this, I assign to my private clients the Career Patterns workbook (Harris-Tuck and Robertson, 2004) which has an entire chapter on "Discovering Your Values".

Now that Luis Jr. is changing majors again, he is essentially starting from the beginning in the sense of earning a degree in biology. Yes, some credits will be counted as general electives, but it is not likely that all of them will be counted toward the new program. This translates to thousands of lost dollars and more time spent in school, as each class costs approximately \$3500 and additional room and board fees would be



incurred. In listening to the plans that Luis Jr. has for the summer I advised him that his choices were not in his best interest. He wanted to get caught up with the other science majors at QU and said that he was willing to repeat any courses lost when he transferred in the future. This would increase the out-of-pocket expenses to Luis Sr. yet again.

Whoever is giving Luis Jr. advice right now is doing him an incredible disservice. I contacted the admissions offices at the medical schools of the University of Florida, University of Miami, University of Massachusetts, and Rutgers University. I told them about Luis Jr.'s plans to take science classes online and at a local community college over the summer. They **all** told me that they would NOT accept any sciences courses that had been taken online. On top of that, they all strongly recommended against taking science courses at community colleges to "get caught up". The reason being, that he would be compared against other medical school applicants who had taken all of their science classes at four year colleges and he would be placed at a distinct disadvantage.

In terms of preparing for a specific career, the student must be able to gain admission into the school, college, or program that prepares individuals for that occupation (Shelton and James, 2005). So spending thousands of dollars on classes that won't be credited by the graduate admissions office and wasting that amount of time is completely unreasonable and not in the best interest of the student or the student's family. Knowing that Luis Jr. is interested in transferring to a school in Massachusetts to complete his bachelor's degree, I found it interesting to learn that the UMass medical school does not accept any out-of-state applicants, by order of the state legislature.

Luis Jr. said that he has recently changed his major to biology from English, and from communications before that. Perusing the listing of biology programs found in The



College Board *Book of Majors* (2006), there are literally hundreds of accredited science departments at colleges and universities across the country. Each medical school I spoke with said that students would have equal chances of admission when graduating with accredited four year degrees, provided that gpa's and MCAT scores were within the acceptable ranges. It was clearly stated to me that attending an expensive, private college would give no advantage whatsoever to any hopeful applicant to medical schools.

Taking into consideration that Luis Jr. qualifies for in-state tuition in both Florida and New Jersey due to the residency of his parents, I am including one public school from each state for comparison against the expenses levied at Quinnipiac University. These will be Florida State University and Rutgers University. To be fair to Luis Jr., knowing that he would like to transfer to a school in Massachusetts, I am also including a public school from that state. I chose Framingham State College due to its proximity to his grandparent's home and his familiarity with the area (as we had discussed). Each institution listed in the table offers a bachelor's degree in biology.

SCHOOL	TUITION	ROOM/BOARD	FEES	TOTAL
QUINNIPIAC	\$28,720*	\$11,500	\$2,000	\$42,220
RUTGERS	\$7,923	\$9,042	\$2,035	\$19,000
FRAMINGHAM	\$7,050**	\$6,699	\$4,479	\$18,228
FLORIDA ST.	\$3,307	\$7,078	\$1,000	\$11,385

* Tuition is for 2007-08 (only data posted)

**Out-of-state tuition

Anyone reading this document will be able to readily discern the huge disparity between the total expense at private Quinnipiac University and public Florida State University. I could not find in any reference publication where QU's science department was considered to be higher quality than that of FSU. All of the information in the table was taken directly from the official website of each institution.



Referring back to the St. Augustine Prep website, the expenses for attending are approximately the same as those at FSU when adding in textbooks and a meal plan. So for the price of a private high school diploma, Luis Jr. could receive a biology degree from a nationally recognized institution of higher education that would most definitely qualify him for application to any medical school in the country. Looking at the statistics on the same website, it is clearly posted that there were no less than 28 applications sent to colleges and universities in the state of Florida. So it cannot be said that the advisors at Prep tried to discourage any of their students from applying to Florida schools.

Based on the information that I have received directly from Luis Jr., that I have found through the efforts of my own research, and that has been shared with me by others in the admissions field, **I can not find any justifiable reason for Luis Jr. to continue on his present course of action.** By his own admission, he is factoring in repeating classes in advance and he would not be attending Quinnipiac if his mother were paying the bill. He has stated that he plans to transfer and all information provided indicates that he should not be taking any community college or online science courses before doing so. Why would anyone want to spend more money and waste more time repeating courses?

I would recommend that Luis Jr. not take any science courses over the summer. The terms are shorter and the work less intense and the medical schools agreed. I would also urge him to transfer into a new school before he begins taking his full load of science courses. For the expense that would be incurred next year at QU, he could have paid for at least two years at any of the others schools taken into consideration. That one year alone would almost pay for the whole degree program at Florida State University. When viewed in that light, I don't see how anyone else could disagree with this assessment.