These 11 Colleges Just Hit The Jackpot In Obama's New Education Plan

Walter Hickey, provided by BUSINESS INSIDER | August 23, 2013

President Obama is touring the country promoting his new proposal for paying for college.

The Department of Education is planning to develop a rating system for colleges that will help decide which students will receive additional aid from the government.

Students attending the higher-ranked schools will be eligible for more tuition help.

The rating system is comprised of the following three quantitative elements:

- **Accessibility.** Are the colleges accessible to low-income students?
- **Affordability.** Are the colleges inexpensive?
- **Outcomes.** Are the students successful? Did they graduate?

Since everyone is interested in which schools will win out, we built a model to give a rough estimation of the future scores of schools.

We raided the Department of Education's Integrated Postgraduate Educational Data System (IPEDS) and scored statistics on thousands of colleges.

Each element — accessibility, affordability, and outcomes — was worth one-third of the final score.

For accessibility, we used the percent of first-year, first-time students who benefit from the Pell Grant program at each school.

For affordability, it was important to not use "sticker price," as many colleges have generous aid packages. We calculated the sum of the net price of the college for someone after benefiting from aid funding and the amount of federal, state, and local aid. The final number is the ticket price of the college minus the institutional aid granted to students. This number was adjusted to lie on a scale between 0 and 1 based on the statistics of other colleges.

For outcomes, we looked at the graduation rate (worth 66% of the outcome score) and the normalized median starting salary, accessed from PayScale (worth 33% of the outcome score).
We used 2011 numbers. These scores were evenly averaged to produce the final scores.

Here are Barack Obama's new favorite colleges. All salary data from PayScale, all other data from IPEDS.

11. CUNY Baruch College

The City University of New York's Baruch College received very high marks. 63% of freshman students graduate, and those who do, enjoy a starting median salary of $46,300. Half of the class there are on Pell grants, demonstrating that Baruch is very accessible to go to. Moreover, at a yearly price of $14,620, Baruch is very affordable.

10. Alabama A&M University

The Alabama Agricultural and Mechanical University is a shining example of what the President is looking for in colleges. At $14,193 per year, the 32% who graduate enjoy a starting median salary of $39,100. Three out of every four students are on Pell grants.
9. Fayetteville State University

Located in Fayetteville, North Carolina, one can attend this state school for a mere $12,300 per year and enjoy a $36,000 median salary upon graduation. Seventy-five percent of students are on Pell Grants, demonstrating how accessible Fayetteville is. Thirty-one percent of students graduate.

8. Winston-Salem State University

Also in North Carolina, graduates see a $39,400 median starting salary for the price of $12,300 per year. Seventy-three percent of students are on Pell Grants and 31% of students graduate.

7. North Carolina A&T State University

The North Carolina Agricultural and Technical State University costs $14,600 per year, but the 41% who graduate will see a $44,600 median salary after graduation. A whopping 87% of students are on Pell Grants.
6. California State University Dominguez Hills

At California State University - Dominguez Hills, students pay only $9,300 per year, and 74% of them are on Pell Grants. Starting Median Salary is $38,000 and 24% of students graduate.

5. California State University Los Angeles

The Median starting salary for CSU-LA is $44,000, and students only pay $10,900 to attend. Pell Grants help 67% of CSU-LA students pay for school, and 36% graduate.
4. Tennessee State University

You can attend TSU for $16,300 a year, and enjoy a $42,900 salary upon graduation. Eighty percent of students are on Pell Grants and 36% graduate.

3. CUNY Lehman College

At the City University of New York - Lehman College, Students pay only $12,600 per year. After school, the median starting salary is $39,600. Forty percent of students graduate. Seventy-three percent of students are on Pell Grants.

2. Trident University International

The only for-profit online college to break the top ten, the former Touro college affiliate gets high marks. The median starting salary is $52,000, and students pay only $18,000 per year. Seventy-two percent graduate, and 58% are on Pell Grants.
1. Touro College

Out on Long Island, Touro College takes the top spot in the potential Obama college ranking. The starting median salary is likewise $52,000, the yearly price is $21,200, 75% of students are on Pell Grants and 34% graduate. Under our estimation of the President's rating system, this is POTUS' favorite school in the country.

So what are the trends?

Most of them are state schools.

All of these schools have a large percentage of the student body benefiting from Pell Grants. While the graduation rates may not be magnificent, students graduate to reasonable median incomes, much higher than they would potentially have without access to the degree. And finally, all of them are remarkably cheap.