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Admissions Dean Featured in New Book, Get Into College

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Admissions Dean Featured in New Book, *Get Into College*

BLOOMINGTON, Ill. – In the world of higher education, April is the time when high school students venture onto college campuses in an effort to find just the right fit. It is a tradition that Illinois Wesleyan University Dean of Admissions Tony Bankston sees as a necessary step in the college process.

“You can view all the Web sites, brochures and catalogs you want, but the best way to get the feel of an institution is to visit,” said Bankston, who was chosen to lend his expertise to a new book, *Get Into College* (Hundreds of Heads Books, 2009). Bankston was one of the admissions officers of highly selective schools whom editors of the book contacted, including Harvard College, Johns Hopkins University and Notre Dame University. Along with university officers, the book offers additional strategies for getting admitted from parents and high school guidance counselors. Bankston said he was impressed with the format of the book, which places advice in small, conversational tips.

“When you see books like this, it usually only includes tips from the author,” said Bankston, “but this book pulled together ideas from people who are working with admissions every day. I approached it as though I was talking to a family.”

In the book, Bankston offers advice to students on areas from writing a college essay to the importance of an honest letter of reference. With 17 years of experience in admissions, Bankston said many of the conversations he has with parents tend to focus on the same worries, such as getting into a “dream” college. “With 3,400 colleges and universities in the United States, there really isn’t a worry about whether a person can go to college. The worry is whether they will get into the most selective 300,” he said, noting competition is high to get into schools like Illinois Wesleyan, which are ranked in such publications as *The Princeton Review*.

Walking parents and students through the admission process remains an enjoyable experience for Bankston, especially when he assists students in finding the right match with Illinois Wesleyan. “The most important thing I can emphasize to any parent or student is to ask questions of the professionals at an institution,” said Bankston “You might hear a school is great from friends and relatives, but until they experience it, they will never know if they make that all-important connection.”

The book *Get Into College* was released this month, and is available now.