I side pro on the resolution: Resolved: The costs of a college education outweigh the benefits.

The Oxford English Dictionary defines a college as:

an educational institution or establishment, in particular, (within a university) a school offering a general liberal arts curriculum leading only to a bachelor’s degree.

Thus, the Con can’t defend trade schools as colleges.

We’ll prove the resolution in three ways.

First, High School education is geared towards getting kids into good colleges.

Lisa Nielsen of the International Society for Technology in Education found that High School education is centered on college readiness. The pressures we put on high school students, to gear all aspects of high school towards getting into a good school, doesn’t provide the environment we need for educating these students in fields they’re passionate about, an injustice by itself.

Harvard Professor Louis Menand found high school students’ preoccupation with sucking up to teachers and reformattting their resumes comes at the expense of personal and intellectual growth.

And second, these pressures we put on students have incredible negative effects.

The New York Times found that exposing our high school students to such stress kills virtually all mental cognition.

The Guardian Newspaper found a near consensus that high school stress is building over time. The national sleep foundation found on average, a high schooler gets 3 hours less sleep per night than he

4. http://www.guardian.co.uk/education/2008/mar/18/schools.uk8
should, causing significant depression rates. One in three American children now suffers from depression, the rate doubled between 1995 and 2002.

The center for disease control found in a national survey of high schoolers, 15% had considered suicide strongly, 11% had a plan in place, and 7% had attempted it. According to the U.S. surgeon general, a young person commits suicide every 2 hours.

**Third, we exchange these health risks for uncertain economic gains of college.**

The project on student debt found two-thirds of College seniors who graduated in 2010 still have debt today, reaching 25,250 dollars on average, and Unemployment rates are growing significantly for recent college graduates. The U.S. Department of Education sets the default rate on student debt as 8.8%.

Americans have over 1 trillion dollars in student debt.

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7. National Mental Health Association


And the New York Times found college degrees hardly guarantee good jobs in today’s economy. Class of 2010 Graduates are finding 10% lower starting salaries, a 50% loss in employment compared to that of the class of 2006 or 2007.14

According to the College Board, it takes 14 years for a four-year college grad to start to make more money than the high school graduate.15

Jack Hough of the Wall Street Journal compared the average earnings calculating the cost of college with the average earnings of someone who didn’t go to college, and found that at the age of 65, on average, someone who didn’t go to college will have earned over three times as much when savings and investments are taking into account16.

Forbes Magazine reported in November that the college debt bubble will eventually pop, leading to yet another large taxpayer bailout, and slowing even further our economic recovery. And further, that all the growth in college enrollment over the last 25 years is composed of students pursuing degrees in subjects that won’t help them economically, and business cycle theory mandates that these degrees that don’t end up being used drag the economy from its ideal growth, costing America trillions of dollars in lost growth and productivity.17

Harvard University reported European countries have stressed vocational education in high school,

http://blogs.telegraph.co.uk/finance/richardblackden/100013711/anaemic-recovery-risks-americas-appetite-for-degrees/

14 http://www.nytimes.com/2011/05/19/business/economy/19grads.html


and as a result their individuals are benefiting from better employment prospects, and their society is benefiting from higher graduation rates and a more educated workforce. Harvard claims the U.S. should follow Europe’s lead in order to recover lost ground in world high school and college graduation rankings.

According to the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, the benefits of vocational education are great – to both the individual, the economy, and society as a whole. Individuals are less likely to drop out of their respective programs, more likely to earn a livable wage, have the potential for further education, and be personally satisfied with their job with vocational training.

The resolution prompts a cost benefit analysis of college: The benefits are uncertain economic gains, while the costs are a lack of proper education, mental health problems, enormous student debt, and a weaker economy. Thus, we urge a pro ballot.
