

# SUU: An Official Top Ten Best Value in America

Consumers Digest has distinguished Southern Utah University as one of the ten best places in the United States to get an education. The May/June 2004 issue of Consumers Digest includes its list of Best Values in Colleges and Universities in America and SUU lands in the Top Ten on the national ranking!

The ranking takes into consideration, first, academic excellence and the educational quality offered by each institution, before any costs are considered. This ranking determines which colleges and universities are offering the most academic value per dollar.

Southern Utah University President **Steven D. Bennion** was thrilled to learn the news, "To make the top ten, which represents both the high quality and cost effective measure of the University, is outstanding."

Prospective students consider many factors when selecting a University and this special investigative article looked at many of those while building its list. Consumers Digest first narrowed the field from the thousands of colleges in the country with an in-depth evaluation of academic excellence.

SUU's Marketing Director, **Dean O'Driscoll**, said, "When a national publication known for researching, and determining the best values in the country says that you are among the ten best in the nation at anything, it is a highly valuable validation of what you are doing."

Consumers Digest then applied a formula that balances academic excellence with the education quality offered to compile a "value-index score" for each institution.

That score and the estimated cost of attending each college for the 2003-04 academic year were then applied to a formula to determine which schools offered the most academic value.

President Bennion added, "This is splendid news that

also shows students how valuable their diplomas are."

The study compared out-of-state tuition, required fees and an average cost of room and board. Only nonresident tuition figures were considered so that the value for all potential students would be the same

"It's been easy up until now to



Above: SUU pre-dental students. SUU medical, law, veterinarian, pre-dental, and pharmaceutical students are accepted into reputable graduate programs at rates of 90% and better--figures higher than the national average.

reflects well on the quality of the people who work at SUU. We're eager for people to understand both dimensions: quality and efficiency."

In the first phase of review, factors like standardized test scores, high-school rank and grade point average of entering freshmen, were used to determine a school's academic excellence. The educational quality offered by each institution was determined by such factors as student-to-faculty ratio, graduation rate, and percentage of faculty holding a PhD or other terminal degrees.

"This is obviously great news for us," said O'Driscoll, "They consider the quality of our faculty, our students and our meritorious academics before they ever look at our tuition and fees. This recognition tells everyone that SUU is an excellent value, both economically and educationally. It

compare numbers and see that we have been a great value considering tuition costs," said O'Driscoll, "But to have those whose job it is to be analytical say that we have excellent faculty helping our students to be high-achievers is gratifying. This is a great compliment to the faculty, staff and students at Southern Utah University who have made this recognition possible."

North Carolina native **Carolyn Sloat** ('04 (*Communications and Political Science*), said, "I feel like SUU is finally getting recognized for the great education its graduates receive." Carolyn was accepted to the U of U Law School this fall and credits her admission to her undergraduate education at SUU. "Getting my education at SUU helped me realize that I did want to continue, because I really enjoyed it there. My professors were so great in encouraging me

to pursue an advanced degree,” she said.

Current student **BreAnn Fowles** who will graduate December '04 in elementary and early childhood education hopes the national honor will motivate the state legislature to fund a new teacher education building. “It would be really cool to get the new building and maybe this is a way to do that,” Fowles said. “It’s a great school that produces great

teachers, and I love it here.”

National Alumni President **Greg Pitt** commented, “We’ve always known that SUU in all its forms has been a tremendous place to get an education with the outstanding location, wonderful lifestyle, and exceptional learning environment.” Former President **Gerald R. Sherratt** said, “This recognition represents many years of hard work and dedication to the principles and vision of the

founders. And to be recognized in this manner shows that we are finally being discovered.” He adds, “You can’t have a better designation than that.”

Consumers Digest narrowed down the thousands of colleges throughout the country with a preliminary evaluation of academic excellence using assistance from CollegeBoard.com to determine the top 125 public and 132 private colleges. **3.11**

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