

# Study: College aspirations connected to income

**Special to Sentinel-Voice**  
 WASHINGTON—Money and preparation count more than brains in determining who goes to college, a government study says.  
 A private study for the Department of Education found that high school students from low-income families and with high scores on a standard test were less likely to attend college than all students from the top income group.

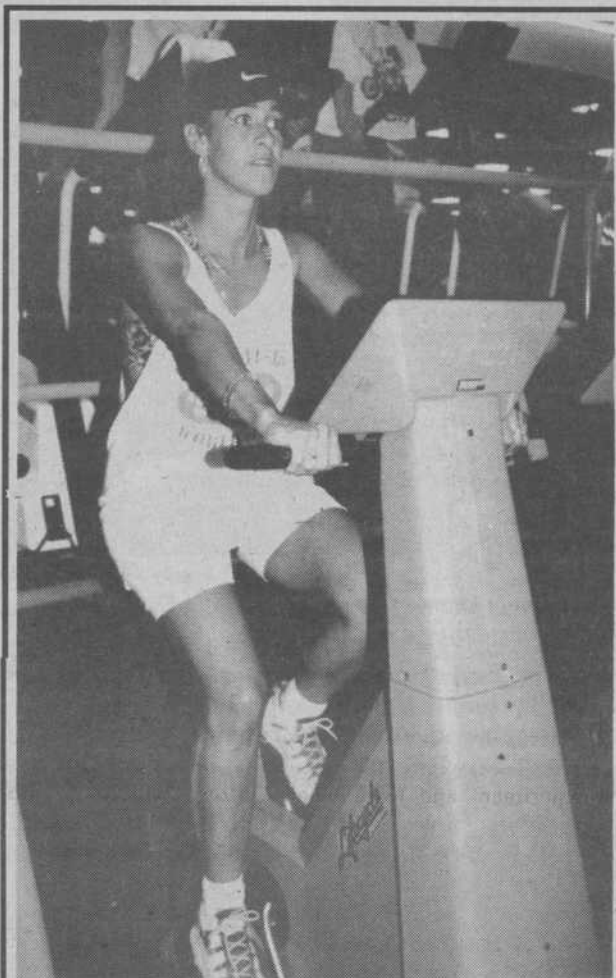
Students from middle-income families and with high test scores were just as likely to attend college as all students from the top income group.  
 Among the low-income students who weren't planning to attend college despite high test scores, 57 percent said it was because they couldn't afford it.  
 Low-income families were those earning less than \$25,000 a year. High-income families

earned more than \$50,000.  
 The study by Mathtech Inc. looked at 13,000 students who were eighth-graders in 1988. Six years later, some 63 percent were in college.  
 Nearly 44 percent of the bottom-income group were in college, compared with 69 percent of the middle-income group and 86 percent of the top income group.  
 The same group had been given standard tests. Researchers found that 75 percent of the high-scoring students from low-income families went on to college,

compared with 86 percent of the middle-income students who scored high. Ninety-five percent of the top-income students who scored high went to college.  
 The researchers concluded that early information about both the right courses to take and the availability of financial aid played an important role in the students' decisions to attend college.  
 "Students form their educational expectations early, and courses taken early on in high school and junior high (or middle school) are closely

related" to college attendance, the study said.  
 For instance, low income students who took advanced math and science courses were more likely to attend college than those who didn't take those courses. But students in the top income group were more likely to have taken those courses.  
 "Evidence also shows the importance of financial aid knowledge, information and receipt" on college attendance, the Princeton, N.J., research firm said.  
 Congress and the

administration are looking at the issues, and some proposals could become law.  
 The House-passed spending bill for 1999 increases the amount of aid available to needy students through Pell Grants and work-study.  
 Also, a new program sought by the Clinton administration to put universities in touch with poor children in middle school is included in the House and Senate versions of a higher education bill.  
 The Chronicle of Higher Education, a trade publication, first reported on the study.



Sentinel-Voice photo by Ramon Savoy  
 Wanda Cordero exercises before heading to the office.

## Exercise

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brain chemicals known as endorphins. Endorphins are thought to have a physiological effect that reduces anxiety after more intense exercise.

O'Connor and Breus did not measure how long the anxiety reduction lasted. But based on other work with average-anxiety-level subjects, the reduction could last three or four hours, fading over that time, commented researcher Jack Raglin of Indiana University, who did not work on the Breus-O'Connor paper.

However, this would apply to aerobic exercise, not to weight training, Raglin said, explaining that the rhythm of aerobic exercise may help to distract people.

Weight training did not seem to reduce anxiety levels, possibly because weight trainers are constantly starting and stopping, making decisions about what to lift and when to lift it, he said.

Exercise does seem to help patients with anxiety, commented Dr. Ronald I. Kamm, a psychiatrist in Oakhurst, N.J. "I can't quantify it, but my anxious patients do better when they have exercised and are more anxious when they don't," said Kamm, who prescribes exercise.

Exercise is one way in which a person can get time away from his or her problems, Kamm said. "Taking time for oneself is one of the biggest predictors of whether a person can cope with stress," he said. "I would not minimize the taking time."

The study is a good test for the timeout hypothesis, but it is still possible that endorphin levels may affect the result, said researcher William P. Morgan of the University of Wisconsin. The Georgia researchers did not look specifically at endorphin levels.

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