

How I found Webb:

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There are so many stories that I have heard from my peers about how they found out about Webb. Some of my peers knew that they wanted to go to Webb because they knew an alumnus, or they wanted to carry on the family legacy. Others chose Webb because of the rigorous engineering curriculum or the full tuition scholarship. Of course, there are also the stories the ones that simply love boats and knew that Webb was a perfect fit.

Many people ask me how I found out about Webb. Growing up in a landlocked part of the country, I never dreamed of designing boats, though I did love boating. The first time I heard about Webb was through the *Princeton Review's Best 361 Colleges in America*. I received the guide for my birthday during the Spring Semester of my junior year of high school and promptly started looking through prospective schools. My brother was flipping through the guide picking colleges at random when he came upon the review of Webb Institute. He was reading the review aloud to my family, and when he told us how many people were enrolled, we all started laughing. The consensus was that the people who chose to go to such a small school were crazy, to which my brother immediately added that I would fit in perfectly.

I did not think twice about considering Webb until I read another review. In the *Barron's Guide to the 50 Most Competitive Colleges*, there was a much longer and in-depth review about Webb than in the *Princeton Review*. Throughout my whole life I had a passion for science and mathematics, and during high school I realized that engineering would combine and apply mathematics and science. I knew I wanted to go to a school with a strong engineering program. I also "knew" that I wanted to go to a school with a student body of at least 1,000. While reading the *Barron's Guide*, I was intrigued by the article about Webb Institute. Most schools of under 1,000 students I eliminated simply based on size, but the article about Webb emphasized the strong engineering curriculum, the rigorous workload, as well as the community aspect of Webb. This was enough to make me go to the Webb website and learn more.

After looking around the website, I requested more information, and was thrilled when I got a postcard that had my name on it with a unique website for me to visit. Although the website was not much, I later received an application for admissions. The application for admissions was quite shocking. I thought that part of the application was missing. I could not believe that I did not need to write an essay, and that I only needed a few letters of recommendation to complete the application. Applying to Webb was so easy considering that I was in the process of applying to six other schools and had quite a few essays to write.

My parents were skeptical about Webb, as was I, even though I had made the decision to apply. Because my mom and I were going to visit East Coast colleges, we decided to stop at Webb and take a tour. Sadly, it was the tour that almost drove me away from Webb. I was given a tour by Mr. Murray, and at the end of my tour I was not very impressed by Webb. I thought that the campus was fantastic; however, Mr. Murray was not at all personable and seemed to be shying me away from Webb as opposed to welcoming me. I had read on the website prospective student could sit in on classes while they were visiting. In my correspondence with Mr. Murray, I

was never offered the opportunity to sit in on a class. True, I did not take the initiative to ask if I could sit in on a class, but I did not think I would have to ask. I thought that I would be offered the chance to do so. My mom and I felt very disappointed while we were leaving Webb. As it turned out, I had already sent in my admissions application to Webb. I may not have sent in my application had I received the same treatment beforehand.

Mentally, I was prepared to go to Northwestern University in Chicago. My parents are both alumni, and my extended family lives throughout the Midwest. Northwestern was going to be a good fit. However, on my 18th birthday, exactly one year after I had found out about Webb, I received a call telling me that I had made it through the first round of the admissions process at Webb. At that point, I decided to give Webb a second chance. I really liked the engineering focus of the curriculum. I knew at other schools I would have to pad my schedule with humanities courses, a fact that I was loathing. Also, the idea of having eight months of practical work experience after graduating was enticing. Of course, in the back of my mind I also was thinking about tuition costs. My parents always told me that they would pay for my college tuition, and that money was no object. Although I knew that my parents would pay the \$50,000 per year to send me to Northwestern, I simply did not want them to pay that amount.

Coming back to New York for the interview was interesting, to say the least. Mr. Murray told me that people often come for a whole weekend as a pre-frosh. Since I was paying so much to fly out to Webb, I figured that I would come on a Thursday, interview on a Friday, and leave Sunday morning. Most people were shocked that I was staying so long. I guess I felt a little misled about the length of stay for regular "P.F." As soon as I got to Webb, it was suddenly apparent what student life was really like. When I had originally visited, I was at Webb in the middle of the morning. Everyone was in class, and the building had a rather vacant feel. I happened to walk into Webb as a bunch of the sophomores were recreating scenes from the Odyssey. The students gave life to the school that had previously seemed lifeless.

That night I was introduced to many of the freshmen, and my host took me around the school, though she had a lot of homework to do. I ended up hanging out with a few of her classmates in the pub, just talking and playing pool. Although I was bit shy at the time, I started to see myself as a student at Webb. The interview with Mr. Kiss was very relaxed compared to the other admissions interviews I had endured. I enjoyed the classes that I attended, and simply felt welcomed into Webb. I was hooked, and Webb suddenly became my top choice for prospective schools.

I was thrilled when I found out that I was accepted into Webb. In the end, the two most significant deciding factors about coming to Webb were the curriculum and the student body. Without having experienced these aspects of student life, I never would have chosen Webb. The students and the academic rigor make Webb Institute the best.

Because the students are the life of Webb Institute, I plan to conduct a survey of all of the students. In the survey I will ask students to answer the following questions:

1. How did you first hear about Webb?
2. What attracted you to seek further information?

3. How did you follow up after receiving that information?
4. What were the two most significant factors in deciding to enroll?
5. If you had to repeat the college admissions process again, would you pick Webb? Why or why not?

Once the survey is complete, I will assess the results. Because there are so many stories about how people chose Webb, I imagine that there will be a myriad of answers to the survey. Hopefully these answers will help us to understand what factors attract students to Webb.