U.S. News & World Report - PR Newswire (USA) - September 10, 2018

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WASHINGTON, Sept. 10, 2018 /PRNewswire/ -- **U.S. News** & **World Report**, the global authority in education rankings, today unveiled the 2019 Best Colleges, with data on more than 1,800 schools across the country. For the first time, the University of California-Los Angeles is the sole No. 1 Top Public School among National Universities, having tied for first in the 2018 **ranking**. The California university **system** improved in the rankings because of their performance graduating high proportions of low-income students - new this year in the Best Colleges methodology.

Five of the top 10 schools on the top publics list belong to California schools. The University of California-Santa Barbara moved up three spots to a tie at No. 5 on this list, and the University of California-Irvine also improved, rising from a tie at No. 9 to No. 7. Among the overall Best National Universities, Princeton University is No. 1 for the eighth straight year, and Williams College maintains its 16-year streak as the Best National Liberal Arts College.

Focusing on academic excellence, the Best Colleges rankings evaluate schools on hundreds of data points using up to 16 measures of academic quality. **U.S. News** updated the Best Colleges methodology to further emphasize student outcomes, which hold the most weight at 35 percent - up from 30 percent last year. Through this update, **U.S. News** is measuring how well schools support low-income students through graduation. The methodology changes are summarized below.

• Added social mobility indicators: To analyze how well schools succeed at enrolling and graduating students from low-income families, **U.S. News** incorporated two new factors: 1) the graduation rates of students who receive federal Pell Grants, and 2) the differences in graduation rates of Pell Grant students versus non-Pell Grant recipients at schools, if any.

• Eliminated acceptance rate as a factor: **U.S. News** dropped acceptance rate - which previously had a weight of 1.25 percent - from the Best Colleges methodology altogether to give more weight to outcome measures.

• Reduced input measures: **U.S. News** reduced the weight of expert opinions, SAT/ACT scores and more."A university is not successful if it does not graduate its students, which is why the Best Colleges rankings place the greatest value on outcomes, including graduation and retention rates," said Robert Morse, chief data strategist at **U.S. News**. "By including social mobility indicators, **U.S. News** is further recognizing colleges that serve all of their students, regardless of economic status."

Beyond the overall rankings, **U.S. News** Best Colleges offers:

•Rankings, lists and additional data: Students can research Regional Universities and Regional Colleges, the Best Value Schools, Historically Black Colleges and Universities, Most Innovative

Schools and a list of the A-plus Schools for B Students. Additional data include schools with the - most Economic Diversity and Campus Ethnic Diversity, as well as the Most International Students. For students with specific career paths in mind, **U.S. News** ranks the top schools in undergraduate engineering and business.

•User Ratings, Reviews and Q&As: Students and families researching their college options can now see reviews and ratings from current students, alumni, staff and more. Reviews encompass a range of topics on college experiences, and a Q&A portion answers prospective students' questions about campus culture, dining, extracurricular activities, teaching styles and more. This content does not influence the rankings, which are based on academic quality. To get started, users can find their schools using the **U.S. News** College Search tool.

•Postgraduate salary information on 1,500 schools: Using data provided by PayScale, **U.S. News** displays alumni salary information on school profile pages. Subscribers to the **U.S. News** College Compass, which provides access to the complete rankings and data, will also see salaries broken down by major per school. Salary was not a factor in determining the rankings."College is often one of the most expensive investments a person will ever make. Best Colleges provides the in-depth information students need to begin their search, with rankings, articles, user reviews, salary information and more," said Brian Kelly, editor and chief content officer of **U.S. News**. "We have driven transparency in higher education for more than 30 years so that students have access to robust data and information to make well-informed choices."

The launch of this edition of Best Colleges is being sponsored by Fidelity Investments, one of the leading providers of retirement solutions to colleges and universities. To learn more about the **U.S. News** College Compass, or to order a copy of the "Best Colleges 2019" guidebook (ISBN 978-1-931469-91-3), visit the online **U.S. News** store.

2019 **U.S. News** & **World Report** Best Colleges

National Universities - Top 51. Princeton University (NJ)2. Harvard University (MA)3. Columbia University (NY) (tie)3. Massachusetts Institute of Technology (tie)3. University of Chicago (tie)3. Yale University (CT) (tie)

National Liberal Arts Colleges - Top 51. Williams College (MA)2. Amherst College (MA)3. Swarthmore College (PA) (tie)3. Wellesley College (MA) (tie)5. Bowdoin College (ME) (tie)5. Carleton College (MN) (tie)5. Middlebury College (VT) (tie)5. Pomona College (CA) (tie)

Top Public Schools

National Universities - Top 51. University of California-Los Angeles2. University of California-Berkeley3. University of Virginia4. University of Michigan-Ann Arbor5. University of California-Santa Barbara (tie)5. University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill (tie)

National Liberal Arts Colleges - Top 51. United States Military Academy (NY)2. United States Naval Academy (MD)3. United States Air Force Academy (CO)4. Virginia Military Institute5. New College of Florida

Best Value Schools

National Universities - Top 51. Princeton University (NJ)2. Harvard University (MA)3. Massachusetts Institute of Technology4. Yale University (CT)5. Stanford University (CA)

National Liberal Arts Colleges - Top 51. Williams College (MA)2. Pomona College (CA)3. Amherst College (MA)4. Swarthmore College (PA)5. Principia College (IL)

For more information, visit Best Colleges and share your school's rankings using #BestColleges on Facebook and Twitter.

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