

## CPSi Interview in Bellevue Reporter

CPSi President Bob Mahmoudi was interviewed by Bellevue Reporter staff writer Leyna Krow for an article on college admission and selection. The article, which was featured in the April 11, 2008 edition of the newspaper, is featured below.

Accepted to a College? Now the real work begins  
By Leyna Krow  
It's that time of year again. The envelopes, both fat and thin, acceptances and rejections, have been received and Bellevue's brightest high school seniors must now make the decision about what colleges they will be attending in the fall.

With more than 2,200 four-year colleges and universities to choose from in the United States, this can be a daunting task. Granted, students don't apply to all of them, but even a high school senior who has received acceptance letters from five schools may feel overwhelmed by the decision of where to attend.

Bob Mahmoudi, executive director of Bellevue-based private college counseling center College Planning Solutions, offers a few suggestions to help students narrow their options and find a school that's a perfect fit.  
Reporter: Do all of your clients dream of attending Ivy League schools?

Mahmoudi: Everyone has certain clichés. But we try to help them become realistic about the options. The younger the student is, the more they talk about Stanford and Harvard and other big names. But the truth is, there are so many outstanding schools in the country, many of them most people don't even know about.  
Reporter: What's the biggest mistake students make when looking at colleges?

Mahmoudi: They think about the fame of a graduate school at a university, and assume that the undergraduate education will be the same. But there's no correlation. Two different admission policies, two different schools.  
Reporter: What is the most important thing students should look for when making their college selection?

Mahmoudi: Wherever students choose to go, they should be following a passion. What do they really want to learn so much about? Then find out which colleges and universities offer that course of study to undergraduates.  
Reporter: It seems like a lot to ask of a high school senior to know what his or her life's passion will be. How do you help students figure out what they're most interested in pursuing academically?  
Mahmoudi: I have developed a specific interview worksheet, with 200 to 700 questions that we ask the student. On the basis of that, we actually get to know the student so much better than their parents, objectively that is. It's absolutely fantastic to really get to know these young people this way.  
Reporter: Once students have received their acceptance letters, where do they go from there?

Mahmoudi: Students should start by deciding which of the schools are their top three. Once they have done that, my recommendation is to go to each one of those schools, spend the night and go sit on some classes, particularly in the areas they wish to pursue. At this point, when students go to visit colleges, they go with the eye to buy, which is different than just going with the eye to visit. It's very important for students to do this because they'll be spending four years of their life at college, so it is their responsibility to make sure a school is the best fit.