

Christopher Rim heads a company that helps kids get into Ivy Leagues (Image: No credit)

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Elite college consultants charge parents \$120,000 to get kids into Ivy League

The Independent Educational Consultants Association estimates that up to 25,000 full- and part-time IECs will be working in the U.S. this year. The market research firm IBISWorld estimates it to be a \$2.9 billion industry.

By **Yaela Mandenberg**, News Reporter
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Elite consultants are charging parents a whopping \$120,000 to help their kids get into top US colleges.

These consultants promise to give kids "a road map" to getting into one of their dream colleges - but it comes with a hefty price tag. The Independent Educational Consultants Association reckons that up to 25,000 full- and part-time IECs will be working in the U.S. this year. Market research firm IBISWorld thinks it's a \$2.9 billion industry.

Most consultants ask for around \$4,000 to \$7,500, but some, like Christopher Rim, charge over \$120,000, which is about 94,000 GBP. Christopher Rim has been an "independent education consultant" for nearly a decade, helping those who can afford his services navigate the increasingly tough college admissions process, which ends its current round in February.

He started by editing college essays from his Yale dorm room for \$50 an hour but now charges the parents of his company's 190 clients \$120,000 a year to help them "create a narrative" he believes will appeal to college admissions officers. Most of his clients are private school kids, many of them in New York.



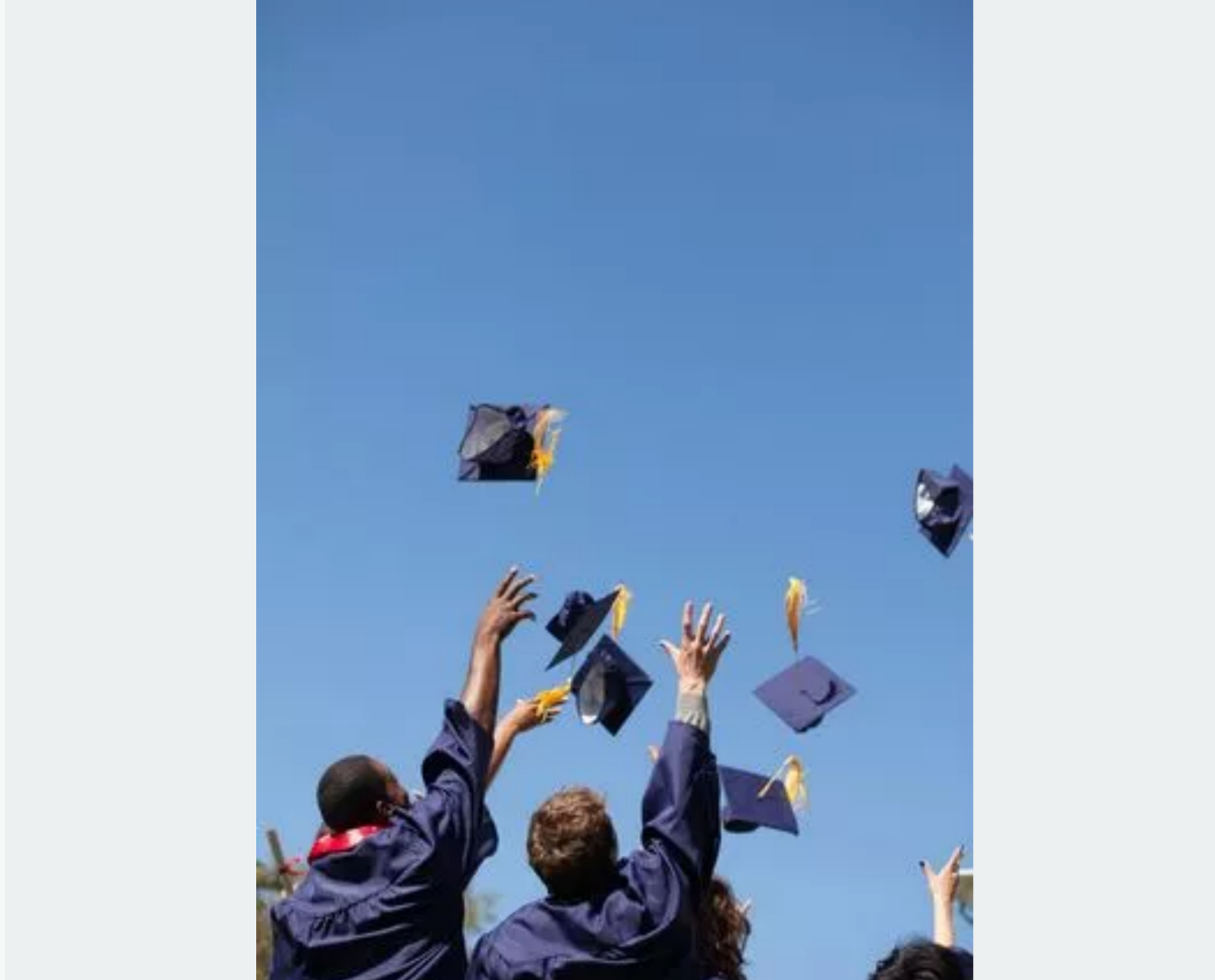
Dr Kat Cohen is another founder helping families get their kids into the best schools (Image: Dr Kat Cohen/Instagram)

Rim, the boss of college consulting firm Command Education, pointed out that "tuition and cost of attendance is not just going up at Ivy League and competitive schools. It's going up everywhere." He asks, "If a Rolls-Royce and a Toyota are the exact same price, which one would you want?"

Command Education, a company with 41 full-time staff members, mostly recent graduates from top-tier colleges, offers a "personalized, white glove" service. They help students with everything from choosing extracurricular activities to securing summer internships and managing their course loads.

"We are texting students, I think it's like 15 minutes before their math class, to make sure they are turning in their homework," says the company's boss. Parents are finding it increasingly difficult to get their children into prestigious schools. Legacy admissions or alumni contributions no longer guarantee a place, and donations are now reaching around \$10 million as a baseline.

According to Business Insider, some parents are paying consultants up to \$750,000 to enhance their kids' college applications. This trend of extreme college prep starts as early as seventh grade. Hope Choi, whose son got into Yale, believes that spending all that money on consultants was worth it.



Parents of middle-school aged children are already investing thousands to ensure their academic performance is enough to warrant admission (Image: Getty Images)

Addison Witucki, 18, who wants to be a doctor and dreamed of going to Harvard or Brown, once said, "What's a couple thousand more dollars in debt?" But she didn't get into those Ivy League schools and plans to attend the University of Kentucky instead. Her mom, Sarah, shared that Addison was fairly happy because she won't have as much debt. The University of Kentucky costs less than Brown for local students.

"Even that's still so much money," said Sarah Witucki about the cost of state school. Out of over 59,000 students who applied to the University of Pennsylvania, only 2,400 got in. Yale University's acceptance rate this year was super low at just 4.35 percent. They got more applications than ever before.

Eric Sherman, a college counselor, said it's like wanting a fancy Hermes bag. "You hit a certain point where quality is legitimately increased, and then everything above that is just brand." He added: "I think that there is a really powerful element here where parents, if they're at a cocktail party, they might want to say, 'Oh, I drive a Maserati and my daughter goes to Penn.'"

Hope Choi shared how lucky her family feels: "We are fortunate that price is no object. Prestige carries a lot of weight and we want him to attend the best college for his future."

* An AI tool was used to add an extra layer to the editing process for this story.

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