

FORGET THE RANKINGS
THE **VALUES-DRIVEN** COLLEGE SEARCH

ORGANIZATION PROFILE
& Capabilities Statement

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THE VALUES-DRIVEN COLLEGE SEARCH

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01. MISSION, VISION, & VALUES

More than a card-sort & web platform, Forget the Rankings aims to increase access to a variety of high quality college & career counseling tools for counselors to help students make decisions based on core values, not prestige or rankings.

02. WHAT IS FORGET THE RANKINGS?

Where mental health and post-secondary planning intersect - we have curriculum, card-sorts, web platforms, and SO much more! Our goal is to create innovative tools for counselors to use as they help students access college & career.

03. WHO ARE JARED & JEN?

With over 30 years of experience combined, Jared & Jen have done it all! Worked as therapists, opened new schools, managed non-profit programs, and worked as the field of college & career counseling in public, private, & charter schools.

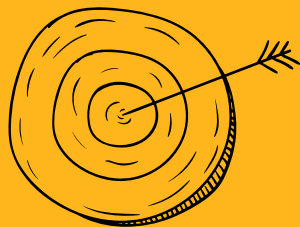
04. CONSULTING SERVICES

Looking for support building a college & career program? Trying to infuse creativity and innovation into your school counseling program? Looking for a dynamic presentation or professional development for your staff? Check out our consulting services!

05. IN THE MEDIA

Check out some of our recent podcasts, articles, and public speaking engagements!

MISSION, VISION, & VALUES



MISSION

At Forget the Rankings, drawing upon over three decades of experience spanning K-12 and higher education, the non-profit sector, as well as the mental health field, we are dedicated to shifting the narrative surrounding college admission.

Our mission is to empower students, families, and counselors with creative tools and curriculum to make college & career decisions rooted in core values, not prestige or rankings.

We equip schools, counselors, and students with practical tools for growth - from interactive card-based learning activities to a powerful web platform. Through targeted workshops, custom curriculum design, and specialized products, we address each client's specific challenges.



VISION

To transform the post-secondary landscape by prioritizing student well-being and empowering them to choose colleges and careers based on personal values, not prestige or rankings. We envision a future where every student can access resources to find a college and/or career where they truly belong, thrive, and make a meaningful impact on the world.



VALUES

Authenticity

(Be who you are & be that well.)

Creativity & Innovation

(Every problem has a creative solution.)

Gratitude

(It's the key to a joyful heart.)

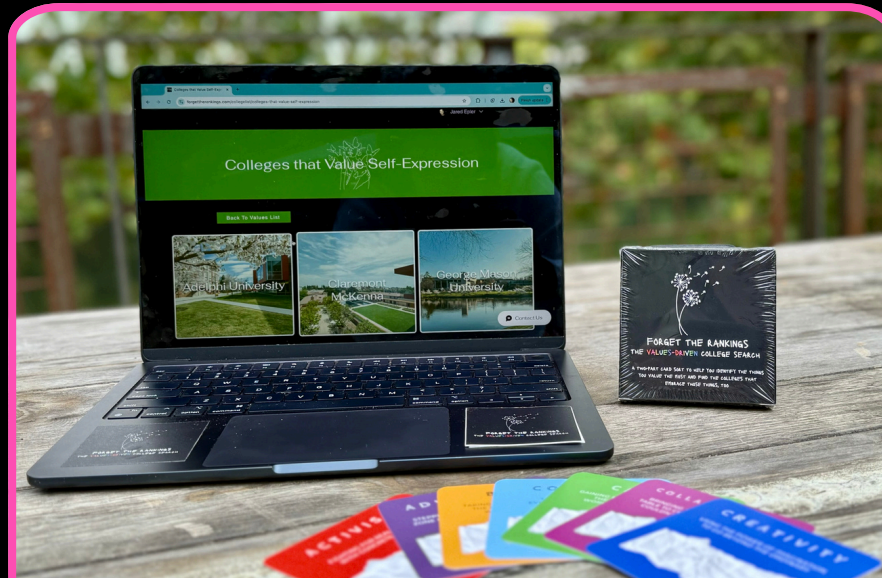
Humor & Fun

(A life well lived is a face full of laugh lines.)

Wellness

(Be kind and good to yourself to be kind & good to others.)

WHAT IS FORGET THE RANKINGS?



Our flagship solution, **Forget the Rankings: The Values-Driven College Search**, combines innovative tactile tools with a comprehensive digital platform. At the core, our unique card sorting activity guides students through a two-part process of criteria and values-based discovery. This foundational experience connects seamlessly with our exclusive web platform, featuring curated college lists with over 370 carefully crafted college profiles aligned with students' identified values.

OUR EXPANDED METHODOLOGY ADDRESSING VARIOUS NEEDS IN EDUCATION:

Values-Based Career Search

Card-sorting activity to help align your career path with your core values

Parent Handbook Navigating the College Journey

A comprehensive guide helping parents and guardians unpack their own expectations, anxieties, and hopes around their child's college process

Values-Based Essay Writing Card Sort

A specialized tool designed to help students identify and articulate their most meaningful experiences and values for authentic college essays

Adaptive Core Values Card Sort

A thoughtfully modified version of our card-sorting system specifically designed for students with high-support learning differences

WHO ARE JARED & JEN?



Jared Epler

Co-Founder

Jared Epler is a K-12 certified school counselor, licensed professional counselor, and advocate for transformative change in college access and mental health support. As co-founder of Forget the Rankings: The Values-Driven College Search, he is revolutionizing how students approach college selection by prioritizing well-being over prestige. With over 15 years of experience spanning K-12 education, higher education, and mental health counseling, Jared currently serves as Career & College Access Counselor at Lower Merion High School. His career journey includes pioneering roles at Summer Search, founding the college counseling program at Cristo Rey Philadelphia High School, and directing TRIO College Access Programs at the Philadelphia Education Fund.

An adjunct faculty member at the University of Pennsylvania's Graduate School of Education, Jared holds an M.S.Ed. from Penn and is pursuing his doctorate in Educational Leadership at Saint Joseph's University. Through his work with national organizations and frequent conference presentations, he advocates for a holistic, student-centered approach to college and career counseling that emphasizes mental health and personal values.



Jen Vallieres

Co-Founder

With a background in cultural anthropology and K-12 education, Jen brings a unique lens to Forget the Rankings. Recognizing the profound impact that rankings-driven college admissions has on student mental health, she co-launched this movement to empower students to choose schools based on personal values and genuine fit rather than prestige. For over 15 years, she has been a proud conduit of growth to individuals at all stages of life, from early childhood through graduate school. With multiple certifications in school counseling, elementary education, and English language learner development, she has developed curricula for schools and nonprofits, taught 4th grade, worked with special education students, and provided college and career counseling.

As a Licensed Professional Counselor (LPC), Jen grounds her therapeutic counseling work in narrative theory, believing that individual growth creates ripples throughout the community. Through her diverse roles as educator, counselor, and advocate, she continues to champion a future where students can discover their authentic path and create meaningful change in the world.

CONSULTING SERVICES



*Forget the Rankings offers specialized consulting services leveraging our 25+ years of combined college, career, & school counseling expertise across public/private schools and college admissions. We offer professional development workshops, create curriculum, and work closely with organizations searching for creative solutions to complex problems. Our experience includes volunteer management & development, career & college counseling, program & curriculum development, team building, and collective care. A sampling of our consulting workshops and services appears below. **Reach out to inquire about developing specific services for your organization.***

School Program Development

- Comprehensive assessment and enhancement of existing college counseling programs
- Creation of new college counseling departments and frameworks
- Implementation of values-based counseling methodologies
- Development of custom resources and materials

Professional Development & Training

- Interactive workshops for counseling teams
- Values-based college search implementation training
- Best practices for supporting student mental health during college search
- Strategies for managing large caseloads effectively
- Tools for promoting equity and access

Speaking Engagements

- Keynote presentations on values-driven college search
- Parent education workshops
- Student seminars on college exploration
- Professional conference sessions
- Webinars on specialized topics (transfer students, athletes, international applicants)

Student Wellness Programming

- Evidence-based anxiety management techniques for college search/applications
- Boundary-setting and healthy decision-making workshops
- Stress reduction strategies for high-achieving students
- Identity development and values clarification
- Coping skills for academic pressure and family expectations
- Group counseling frameworks for college-related stress

Counselor Wellness & Sustainability

- Burnout prevention strategies for high-volume caseloads
- Compassion fatigue management techniques
- Work-life balance optimization
- Secondary trauma awareness and prevention
- Establishing healthy professional boundaries
- Crisis response and emotional support protocols
- Self-care implementation within institutional constraints

IN THE MEDIA



Going To College Doesn't Have to Suck

By: Sara Goldrick-Raab
Published in *Diverse Issues in Higher Education*

[READ IT HERE.](#)



Rethinking College Choice: Embracing Values Over Rankings

Interview w/ Ryan Steuer
Magnify Learning: PBL Simplified Podcast

[LISTEN HERE.](#)



Values Over Rankings: There's Life Beyond the Top 25 Lists

By: Jared & Jen
Published in *Link for Counselors*

[READ IT HERE.](#)



Ditching Prestige for Purpose in the College Search

By: Jared & Jen
Published in *admissions.blog*

[READ IT HERE.](#)



Clarity with David Prosper Podcast

Podcast Interview w/ David Prosper
Clarity Podcast



High School Counseling Conversations w/ Lauren Tingle

Podcast Interview w/ Lauren Tingle
High School Counseling Conversations Podcast

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