

# THE CHRONICLE OF HIGHER EDUCATION

## People

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‘Where You Go Is Not Who You’ll Be’

**George L. Hanbury II**, *president of Nova Southeastern University, in Florida.*

I recently finished reading Frank Bruni’s book *Where You Go Is Not Who You’ll Be: An Antidote to the College Admissions Mania*. The book reminds me of a quote by Henry van Dyke, "The woods would be quiet if no bird sang but the one that sang best."

Every college and university president knows that it’s not the institution’s *U.S. News & World Report* rankings or the historical prestige of its name or the ivy on its walls that determines the success of its students. It’s those universities and colleges whose faculty and staff members mentor and engage their students and empower them to unleash their potential to be leaders and critical thinkers, and to take the knowledge that they have learned and continue to learn, focusing on a worthy goal as they face the unknown.

A report on a Gallup-Purdue Index of 30,000 college graduates, which Mr. Bruni quotes, says it all: "If graduates had a professor who cared about them as a person, made them excited about learning, and encouraged them to pursue their dreams, their odds of being engaged at work more than doubled, as did their odds of thriving in their well-being."

Mr. Bruni’s book is a must-read for high-school students, their parents, and university administrators who place greater emphasis on the university that sings the best versus the universities that help create the cacophony of sounds that make life meaningful.