

August 6, 2013

# Helping the Poor Go to Good Colleges

To the Editor:

Re “[Elite Colleges Differ on How They Aid Poor](#)” (front page, July 31):

At the country’s most competitive colleges and universities, only 14 percent of students are from the lower half of the income spectrum. The article reports a range of reasons and apologies for this state of affairs from officials at many of the foremost institutions.

I have a solution for them. Forty-five percent of the undergraduates in the United States attend community colleges. That’s 13 million students, and almost all of them fall into that neglected lower half of family income.

At Miami Dade College, 46 percent of our students live beneath the federal poverty standard, and 67 percent are low income. We have an endless supply of brilliant low-income students who would love to attend these great universities. We would be more than willing to assist these students.

Our country faces an expanding and dangerous division between rich and poor. Our system of government does not promise prosperity, but we should be very concerned when the opportunity to learn and prosper is held at a premium.

EDUARDO J. PADRÓN  
President, Miami Dade College  
Miami, July 31, 2013