

# Guided Launches to Show Families the ROI of a Specific School and Major Before They Enroll

*New platform connects career goals, education pathways, true cost, debt and expected earnings in one personalized plan.*

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Families can now see the likely return on a specific school and major before they enroll. [Guided](#), a new college,

career and financial planning platform, made its national debut at the National Association for College Admission Counseling (NACAC) Conference, held Oct. 8–10 at the Minneapolis Convention Center. The platform connects career goals, education options, college costs, debt and expected earnings in one individualized plan.



“

I created Guided because every student should have affordable access to information and tools that can materially improve the decisions they make – and potentially the course of their lives.”

*Jesse Hedrick, Founder of  
Guided*

The problem facing college-bound families is not a lack of tools. It is that the tools – and the decisions they support – are fragmented. Guided was built to connect them.

For many families, college is a \$200,000-plus decision. College Board reports average published tuition and fees at private nonprofit four-year institutions reached \$45,000 for 2025-26 – \$180,000 over four years before housing, food and books.<sup>1</sup> Yet college choices are often driven by reputation, campus experience or where a student feels comfortable, without the return-on-investment discipline families apply to other major uses of capital.

Those decisions are linked. Career choice affects major; major and school affect cost; cost affects debt; and all of them shape earnings and long-term outcomes. Guided does not ask families to choose between fit and financial logic. It brings them together.

Students can compare careers and programs – including community college, trade, certificate and military pathways – evaluate colleges, model debt and see how earnings and loan payments

may shape life after graduation. More than 40 short learning modules and practical action items make complex concepts easier for teens to understand and act on.<sup>2</sup>

Unlike many new education tools, Guided does not rely on generative AI. Its recommendations come from a rules-based engine that responds to each student's own choices, drawing on data aggregated from verified public and private sources and refreshed quarterly. That means every result can be traced to underlying data rather than to a model's best guess.

Guided was built with the people who know the problem best. Fifty high school counselors, serving a wide range of schools and student populations, helped shape the platform, and their input drove what it is today. At NACAC, counselors from across the country echoed the same view: finally, a comprehensive tool that shows students the real impact of their pathway choices.

That matters because counselors are stretched thin, and college and career advising is only one part of a demanding job. Guided gives students a structured system to use between counseling meetings while preserving the counselor's essential role.

"The kind of high-level career, college and financial planning I provided privately was largely available only to families with significant resources," said Jesse Hedrick, Founder of Guided. "I created Guided because every student should have affordable access to information and tools that can materially improve the decisions they make – and potentially the course of their lives."

Affordability is central to Guided's mission. Core resources are free; the advanced planning platform is \$250 per year, and Guided [ACT Prep](#) is \$175 per year.<sup>2</sup> By comparison, many independent educational consultants charge just under \$140 an hour, according to the Independent Educational Consultants Association – meaning a year of Guided's advanced planning platform costs less than two hours of private advising.<sup>3</sup>

The stakes continue after graduation: 42% of recent college graduates were underemployed in the second quarter of 2026.<sup>4</sup> Guided helps families move beyond "Where can I get in?" to ask: What path fits this student? What will it cost? Where is it likely to lead? And is the expected outcome worth the investment?

The goal is not merely to get students into college. It is to help them build a smarter path to what comes after it.

#### About Guided

Guided is a comprehensive college, career and financial planning platform that gives each student a personalized plan based on fit, ROI and real-world outcomes. Learn more at [ProjectGuided.com](https://ProjectGuided.com).

#### Sources

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