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A New Record

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With a second straight year of record applications, the University of Dayton has started a wait list for admissions for its fall 2009 class and, even with the economic downturn, sees good indications of a strong class.

As of mid-February, applications to the University already topped last year's record total of 11,610. Nearly all acceptance letters have been sent out for fall 2009, according to Rob Durkle, assistant vice president and dean of admission. Durkle said the University is "cautiously optimistic," about emerging trends.

"I think we're in a much better position than most schools," he said. "The University's financial position is very strong, applications hit a new record and we're seeing an applicant pool that is academically better qualified, more ethnically diverse and, for the first time in our history, we have a greater number of out-of-state applicants."

Durkle said more students with higher SAT and ACT test scores applied, one measure of academic preparedness.

"We've had a record number of campus visitors, students and families who come to check out the University in person and many of those have told us that the University of Dayton is their top choice," he said.

With increased competition for students both in Ohio and across the nation, Durkle is pleased that out-of-state applications have increased about 4 percent to outnumber in-state applications.

"We saw substantially more applications this year from Illinois, New York, Kentucky, Maryland and Wisconsin, among others," Durkle said. "The word is getting out about the quality of our programs and how happy our students are with their educational experience here."

With "rolling" admissions, the University of Dayton will accept applications through May, the deadline for student deposits. Durkle said the University is not planning to increase its number of acceptances but will offer wait list spots to some students whose applications come before the deadline. More than 100 students have already been placed on the list.

While the true test will come over the next several months as deposit checks come in, Durkle said he believes recent outreach and marketing initiatives are reaching those students across the country who would find the University of Dayton to be a good fit.

With the economic downturn, Durkle said finances will be an important consideration for students. The University is working to assist students in several ways, such as taking a second look at financial aid when new test scores come in.

"Some students take the test again in December to try to improve their scores. If those new scores come in, we're taking a look at them to see if we can increase the financial aid. It might help some students," he said.

The University also has additional resources to help some students with finances. A recent \$10 million gift from an anonymous donor is dedicated to scholarships for education, business and engineering students. New state scholarship programs for students in the STEM fields science, technology, engineering, math and medical are also available.

Durkle said the University is one of only a very few schools offering pre-enrollment coaching for high school students. The program gives college-bound students personal attention and support to help them navigate the college application process, he said.

Once they enroll, students can take advantage of the new Office of Student Success dedicated to helping students succeed at the University of Dayton by offering support and assistance in adjustment, academics and even finances.

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