

# World's Most Successful College Students

Contributed by Aaron Hertzog

There are many reasons why people go to college. It can be to further your education, work toward a dream job, or maybe it's just the next logical step after high school. Most of these reasons have one thing in common: to achieve a certain level of success. For many people, graduation is the beginning of the path to success but for a few, success comes early. They laugh in the face of those that say that you must have a degree to achieve. Instead of biding their time in college hoping adulthood will never come they springboard themselves to wealth and power...fueled by dining hall food.

**Warren Buffett:** The Wharton School, University of Pennsylvania (1947-49) B.S. University of Nebraska (1950) M.S. in Economics, Columbia University (1951)

Net Worth: \$58 billion

Biggest Business Deal: Pledged \$32 billion to the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation

2008 has been a horrible year for Mr. Buffett. How horrible? Well, estimates suggest that this year his net worth has dropped by \$4 billion. Before you shed a tear and send a donation, you should realize that Buffett is in no need of your dimes and pennies. The Oracle of Omaha is still the richest man in the world, with an estimated net worth of \$58 billion. Being his kid must make being a Hilton look like being a Cratchit, right? Not so fast: most of this money he plans to give to charity, instead of passing it all down to his children. Buffett once said "I want to give my kids just enough so that they would feel that they could do anything, but not so much that they would feel like doing nothing." Thanks for nothing, pops.

**Bill Gates:** Harvard University (dropped out in 1975, honorary degree in 2007)

Net Worth: \$58 billion

Biggest Business Deal: launched Microsoft Windows on November 20, 1985 and the PC has never been the same

If you're ever having a tough semester and your parents are getting on you about your grades just look them in the eye and say "But mom and dad, Bill Gates dropped out of college and he's doing pretty ok." This trick is guaranteed to (not at all) work. Just because dropping out of school worked for Bill Gates and his tiny, little, microscopic company doesn't mean you will have success with your crappy band, or your hacky novel, or whatever other horrible idea you have. Gates recently stepped down from full time to part time work at Microsoft to concentrate on working with the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, the largest transparently operated private foundation in the world (thanks in part to that large donation from Mr. Buffett). The foundation aims to enhance healthcare, expand educational opportunities and access to information technology, and reduce extreme poverty.

**Larry Page and Sergey Brin:** Stanford

Net Worth: \$18 billion

Biggest Business Deal: purchased a Boeing 767 airliner for their business and personal needs

Oh computers, they really are the wave of the future. That is why in a little over ten years Google has gone from a simple search engine to a one-stop internet hot spot for news, e-mail, directions, weather, and everything you need to never have another productive day at the office again. In the process, it has made creators Page and Brin two of the youngest billionaires in the world. If you need any more evidence that Google is taking over the world, just get on your computer and do a Google Earth search for your present location. In just a few seconds you can zero in on yourself looking at yourself on the computer, looking at yourself on a computer, looking at yourself on a computer....Ok not really, but soon enough, who knows?

**Mark Zuckerberg:** Harvard

Net Worth: \$1.5 billion

Biggest Business Deal: sold 2.6% of Facebook to Microsoft in 2006 for 256 million dollars

The second Harvard dropout to make the list, Zuckerberg's claim to fame (and super mad riches) is as the inventor of Facebook. In 2008 Forbes Magazine declared him "[the] youngest billionaire on earth and possibly the youngest self-made billionaire ever". All for coming up with yet another way for people to waste their days away in front of a computer. While social networking sites come and go (Friendster, anyone?) Facebook has been holding strong since 2004. Plus, it's the best way to get people to join in crazy groups like "End Women's Suffrage", "Irony Lovers Anonymous" and one of the hundreds of "I Swear, This is the Largest Facebook Group on Facebook." Zuckerberg's followers are so hooked, that even when they protest changes made to the design of Facebook, they do it using Facebook.

**Wilt Chamberlain:** Kansas

Biggest Business Deal: as a rookie was the highest paid player in the NBA with a salary of \$30,000 in 1959: in 1967 signed a one-year contract for \$250,000

Most people know that Wilt The Stilt was one of the greatest basketball players to ever live. What a lot of people don't know is that he was also one of the greatest college students to ever step foot on a campus. The Big Dipper not only dominated the basketball court, but was also a great track and field athlete. He ran the 100-yard dash in 10.9 seconds, threw the shot put 56 feet, triple jumped more than 50 feet, and won the high jump in the Big Eight track and field championships three straight years. He was also a member of Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity, where he was the president of his pledge class (yeah, bro!) There is also Chamberlain's famous claim that he slept with over 20,000 different women in his lifetime, and while many of his conquests probably happened while traveling the road as an NBA star, he must have also bedded his fair share of Kansas tail. Rock, Chalk, Jayhawk!

Ricky VanVeen: Wake Forest

Biggest Business Deal: his site, collegehumor.com was earning between \$5-10 million per year when he sold a controlling stake to InterActiveCorp

VanVeen started Collegehumor.com in 1999 as a way to keep in touch with his friends from high school. It quickly grew into a website with millions of visitors each month. The site now features original comedy videos and articles from the site's staff of writers, directors, editors, actors and producers as long as user submitted material. The site is operated by Connected Ventures, a New York company that also owns Defunker, BustedTees and Vimeo. Not too shabby for a site that until just a few years ago was pretty much just another place on the internet to look at boobs.

Sarah Palin: Hawaii Pacific College, North Idaho community college, University of Idaho, Matanuska-Susitna College, back to University of Idaho

Biggest Business Deal: being in the right place at the right time

John McCain's running mate loved college so much she couldn't possibly go to just one. Palin spent a few semesters here, and a few semesters there, and in the middle placed third in the 1984 Miss Alaska pageant. She finally finished school at the University of Idaho, getting her degree in communications-journalism (great job!) How did any of this prepare her to possibly hold one of the most powerful positions in the world? Well, gee, golly-gosh-darn, I'm going to have to look that one up and get back to you. It does, however, qualify her for this list.