Common College App

Resolution 2018-05

Whereas, the Common College Application, or “Common App,” is a powerful interactive online tool that permits prospective students to apply to multiple colleges with a single application, search databases, track deadlines, and manage the submission of transcripts and test scores; and
Whereas, the Common App is used by more than 5 million students every year to apply for admission to undergraduate programs, making it the primary way that American students apply to college; and
Whereas, for approximately one-third of the 700 member colleges and universities, the Common App is the only way for students to apply for admission; and
Whereas, a 2015 review of the Common App website by members of the Bay State Council of the Blind who are also experts in the field of assistive technology concluded that the Common App is largely inaccessible to blind students who use screen-reader software; and
Whereas, these experts documented several conversations with Common Application Inc., in which senior management was informed that the website was in violation of the Americans with Disabilities Act; and
Whereas, in spite of the addition of accessible PDFs that students with vision loss may use to file an application, the Common App website's interactive features remain inaccessible; and
Whereas, the inaccessibility of the Common App also impacts blind teachers, guidance counselors, parents, and other stakeholders who cannot use the tool for employment or to advise and support students; and
Whereas, an unequal application process creates an unnecessary barrier to higher education and employment for individuals who use adaptive technology;
Now, therefore, be it resolved by the American Council of the Blind in convention assembled on the 5th day of July, 2018, at the Union Station Hotel in St. Louis, Mo., that this organization review the 2018-2019 Common College Application for accessibility after its next release on August 1, 2018; and
Be it further resolved that if the Common Application remains inaccessible after August 1, this organization shall use all appropriate resources and influence to pursue full accessibility of the Common College Application for the release scheduled for August 1, 2019.
Adopted.
Ray Campbell, Secretary