



## **College Students Putting Their Money Where Their Cause Is**

*-Latest Alloy College Explorer Findings Suggest Students Politically Charged and More Socially Aware*

*-Students Voice Out: Front Runner For President and Top Corporations Doing Good*

(New York, NY) – September 6, 2007 – In findings released today, Alloy Media + Marketing’s (NASDAQ: ALOY) 2007 Alloy College Explorer, powered by Harris Interactive, finds the current college class (students 18-30 years of age) heading back to campus in record numbers and with mounting concern surrounding the state of the union and the future of their country. Today’s college class is proving their weight not only in size and purchasing power, but showing significant muscle as they strive to have their voices heard amidst what appears to them, an uncertain political landscape. As the nation heads into an important election year, students state dissatisfaction with the current administration and intend on playing a large role in the movement for change. This year’s report finds a massive 94% of respondents expressing plans to head to the polls in 2008 to vote for a specific candidate for President and offers an intriguing peak as to who might win their vote.

Empowered to make a difference personally, students continue to push for a socially responsible Corporate America and name their choices for the Top 10 “Most Socially Responsible” brands with the announcement of the annual “Alloy U” Awards.

Samantha Skey, EVP, Strategic Marketing, Alloy Media + Marketing commented, “College students have shown interest in rewarding “good” brands and corporations for a few years now. It’s fascinating to see how students define corporate social responsibility and to hear how far that ‘good works’ perception moves the needle in purchase intent.”

### **My World, My Way**

According to responses in this year’s study, the majority of college students do not hold a positive view on the state of affairs in the country, nor do they give high marks to the current administration. Asked to rate the state of things in the U.S today, 58% (net) responded that the current situation is only fair or poor and similarly, their feelings on President George W. Bush’s performance in the White House garnered only fair or poor marks with almost three-quarters (73%) expressing dissatisfaction.

Interestingly, this educated and reported politically disillusioned group appear confident in their ability to do something about their discontent. When asked which group has the greatest ability to make positive changes in the world, ranking at the top, a resounding 35% expressed that people their age have what it takes to impact positive world change, more so than the U.S Government, with only 24% reporting, and Fortune 500 Companies at 12% confidence.

## **My Vote Will Count**

With students expressing gaining confidence in their own voice and appearing optimistic about the impact their contributions can make on the world, this year's class appears to value their right to vote and the importance of being a participant in choosing our next leader.

Remarkably, a whopping 80% of students (ages 18-30) surveyed report being registered to vote, and further, 94% of those registered voters have indicated they plan to vote for a specific candidate for President.

Dana Markow, VP, Youth Research, Harris Interactive stated, "Though historically, actual participation in elections is lower than what is self-reported, it will be interesting to see the effect of this passionate generation's turnout in 2008 as this could potentially be the term that we will see the largest voter turnout among the college population to date."

## **Who Will Get My Vote**

So, who'd get the vote if the election were today? With a large number of students expressing intent to vote in 2008, candidates are well aware of the influence this politically aware bunch will have on the outcome of the coming presidential election. And, they should also pay attention to the sources this increasingly mobile group are tapping for information. Today, 70% of students who say they have an issue that will impact their vote in 2008 claim they are getting their information about these issues online, almost equal to information viewed on TV - and more than half (55%) rely on good ol' word of mouth from friends, more so than parents' influence.

If votes were tallied today, Barack Obama is the apparent frontrunner, getting the majority vote with 22% of students naming him our next President. Hillary Clinton comes in a close second, getting 19% of the student vote. Though it appears students today are leaning heavily Democratic, the Republicans are garnering their attention with Rudy Giuliani trailing close behind Hillary with 11% of the vote, and Senator John McCain squeezing in with 6%. Al Gore still gets students support. With 5% of the students choosing him, it appears they think he should be on the ballot.

## **Candidates –Listen up!**

And what's on student's minds as they contemplate our next leader - the War in Iraq is top concern for students, with two-thirds (66%) reporting that this issue will most influence their vote. The economy plays an equally pivotal role with 54% reporting significance, followed by healthcare issues (48%), social security (47%), the environment (46%) and immigration (43%). Candidates' stance on gay marriages (40%) and homeland security (37%) garner considerable attention as well.

## **My Money Where it Matters**

This year's report finds students avidly aware of where their \$198 billion dollars in consumer power<sup>1</sup> is being spent and they continue to show commitment towards brands that are improving and contributing to the issues that matter to them. Social consciousness among this group heightens, with 37% (net) of respondents stating they prefer brands that are socially conscientious. That's a slight 4% increase over last year's figures.

The study asked students what indicators are most important to them in determining a company's social responsibility. Significantly, 74% list a company's fair labor practice as most important, followed by eco-friendly or green practices at 66%. Philanthropy holds import as well - companies that donate to a charity or cause rank high, with 63% reporting its significance.

The College Explorer study continues with it's annual "Alloy U" awards in this category, asking students to name the brands they perceive to be most socially responsible. Among the top finishers were several companies garnering top honors again; Ben & Jerry's, creator of the "Lick Global Warming" campaign, Yoplait which produces "Save Lids to Save Lives" in support of breast cancer, and Burt's Bees, a company at the forefront of earth-friendly practices. While some brands dropped off the top list this year, notable newcomers hitting a mark with students include Target and Whole Foods Market.

"Social responsibility continues to be a focal point for this generation. Good will branding, if consistent, relevant and authentic, has great potential to influence both purchase intent and longer term loyalty," said Skey.

## **The 2007 Alloy U Award winners for Top Socially Responsible Brands as recognized by college students are: <sup>2</sup>**

- 1) BEN & JERRY'S**
- 2) WALMART**
- 3) COCA-COLA**
- 4) NEWMAN'S OWN**
- 5) TARGET**
- 6) YOPLAIT**
- 7) WHOLE FOODS MARKET**
- 8) BURT'S BEES**
- 9) STARBUCKS**
- 10) KASHI**

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<sup>1</sup> Calculation based on survey findings among 18-30 year old students projected to the universe of 12.9 million 18-30 year old college students as determined by the National Center for Education Statistics (2005)

<sup>2</sup> Respondents were asked to choose up to three companies from a provided list, or to specify a company outside the list, that they feel give back to the community, support a specific cause, are environmentally friendly or are socially responsible.



"It's an honor to be recognized by Alloy and its many devotees for what we set out to do every day as a values-led business: To be a progressive force for the environment and social and economic justice everyday and everywhere we do business," said Walt Freese, Ben & Jerry's CEO (a.k.a Chief Euphoria Officer). "Being awarded this recognition two years in a row is the cherry on top of our ice cream sundae!"

"Active participation in our communities and caring about our environment is a core value at Whole Foods Market," said Kate Lowery, Whole Foods Market spokeswoman. "It's energizing to be recognized for walking our talk, especially among a growing segment of young shoppers who seem more committed than ever to natural and organic foods."

Mike Indursky, Burt's Bees Chief Marketing and Strategic Officer commented, "We are so proud to once again be among the top 10 socially responsible brands. At the core of what we call, *The Greater Good*, Burt's Bees is committed to providing earth friendly natural personal care products at the highest possible level of corporate social responsibility. We view this notable mention as a reward for those efforts and take pride in the fact that our next generation of leaders will take corporate social responsibility as an every day part of doing business."

"The insights gained from the Alloy College Explorer continues to be an invaluable key to understanding what moves and motivates a class that not only is growing in size and number, but also appears increasingly able and ready to prove their worth," concluded Skey.

### **Methodology**

This survey was conducted online within the United States by Harris Interactive on behalf of Alloy Media + Marketing between April 11 and April 30, 2007 among 1,592 adults (college students (full-time, part-time, 4-yr., 2-yr., ages 18 to 30)). Figures for age, sex, race/ethnicity, region and school status (full-time, part-time, 4-yr., 2-yr.) were weighted where necessary to bring them into line with their actual proportions in the population. Propensity score weighting was also used to adjust for respondents' propensity to be online.

With a pure probability sample of 1,592, one could say with a ninety-five percent probability that the overall results would have a sampling error of +/- 3 percentage points. Sampling error for data based on sub-samples would be higher and would vary. However, that does not take other sources of error into account. This online survey is not based on a probability sample and therefore no theoretical sampling error can be calculated.

### **About Alloy Media + Marketing**

Alloy Media + Marketing is one of the country's largest providers of nontraditional media programs reaching targeted consumer segments. AM+M manages a diverse array of assets and services in interactive, display, direct mail, content production and educational programming. AM+M works with over 1500 companies including half of the Fortune 200. For more information on AM+M services and investor relations (**NASDAQ: ALOY**), please visit [www.AlloyMarketing.com](http://www.AlloyMarketing.com)



### **About Harris Interactive**

Harris Interactive is the 13th largest and fastest-growing market research firm in the world. The company provides innovative research, insights and strategic advice to help its clients make more confident decisions which lead to measurable and enduring improvements in performance. Harris Interactive is widely known for The Harris Poll, one of the longest running, independent opinion polls and for pioneering online market research methods. The company has built what it believes to be the world's largest panel of survey respondents, the Harris Poll Online. Harris Interactive serves clients worldwide through its North American, European and Asian offices, and through a global network of independent market research firms. More information about Harris Interactive may be obtained at [www.harrisinteractive.com](http://www.harrisinteractive.com).

To become a member of the Harris Poll Online and be invited to participate in online surveys, register at [www.harrispollonline.com](http://www.harrispollonline.com).

### **PRESS CONTACT:**

Jodi Smith  
VP, Public Relations  
Alloy Media + Marketing  
212-329-8359  
[jsmith@alloymarketing.com](mailto:jsmith@alloymarketing.com)

or

Nancy Wong  
Harris Interactive  
(609) 919-2426  
[nwong@harrisinteractive.com](mailto:nwong@harrisinteractive.com)