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## Carnegie Mellon student wins tuition in poker tournament

By [Michael Agostino](#)  
TRIBUNE-REVIEW

Friday, November 18, 2005

College students and their families are always seeking out new sources for financial aid, but online poker?

Jeremy Olisar, 21, a Carnegie Mellon University student from Naperville, Ill., will receive a check this month covering his fall tuition from AbsolutePoker.com after winning the "Win Your Tuition" online poker tournament in October. Olisar outplayed students from more than 300 colleges in the free No Limit Texas Hold'em tournament and endured a 5 1/2-hour final round to win the grand prize.

But why is an online poker site giving money away to college students? Business development manager Michael Edwards says it just made sense.

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"We want to create customer loyalty and brand recognition, and college players are the fastest growing segment of online poker participants," Edwards says. "But we're also a young company, and not too separated from the years when Ramen noodles and Kraft dinners were our main meals."

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This desire to cater to college students and do something that would benefit players and generate positive feedback for the company resulted in the "Win Your Tuition" tournament, which will make its next appearance in May 2006.

AbsolutePoker.com doesn't just give money away to any college student. The student must be in good standing with their college or university, show proof of enrollment and be able to produce proof of fees for tuition and books. Olisar will receive about \$15,000, Edwards says.

And Olisar isn't just any college student. He's a senior clarinet performance and music education double major, with four other minors and a 4.0 GPA. He is also involved in Carnegie Mellon's Kiltie Band,

All-University Orchestra, Astronomy Club and the Pipe and Drum Band. He also finds time to teach every Saturday in Carnegie Mellon's Music Preparatory School.

But while Olisar was excited to win the tournament, he says the tournament hasn't altered his future plans.



"I don't see myself living off of poker," Olisar says. "I am probably going to pursue a career in music, and right now I am planning to go to grad school for a master's in teaching."

Olisar says he will play in the next "Win Your Tuition," and is up for the challenge, even though he knows that many other players will be "gunning" for him. He doesn't recommend that other college students take part in the tournament, however, because it means more competition for him.

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