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*Poker is now
part of campus
culture.*

Texas Hold'Em Becomes Tuition Pay'Em

POKER MAY NOT BE THE MOST CONVENTIONAL way of earning tuition dollars, but students from more than 300 colleges worldwide thought they'd give it a try this fall, when the website AbsolutePoker.com held its second free "Win Your Tuition" tournament.

And while educators may not be thrilled about students participating in a contest that could help them become hooked on an activity typically played with cash on the line, there is no denying that poker is getting young people's attention these days. "Poker is on fire," says Mike Edwards, business development manager for the website. "I would suggest that it's not a fad. It's part of student culture as much as football games and going to parties."

That has led officials at several colleges to realize that poker can be a viable, fun way to raise money for charities. Edwards even claims that a handful of institutions, including **Cornell University** (N.Y.), gave AbsolutePoker.com the chance to announce the tournament to their students. (Cornell officials did not return *UB's* telephone calls.) It was 21-year-old **Carnegie Mellon University** (Pa.) student Jeremy Olisar (pictured above) who cashed in the top prize, worth about \$15,000, enough to cover the fall semester. He reportedly plans to enter [AbsolutePoker.com's](http://AbsolutePoker.com) upcoming spring tournament, as well. —*M.E.*