

## College Fairs

Ask your high school about college fairs. This is an efficient way to get information from lots of colleges at once. College representatives will answer questions and provide specific information about their school. They don't replace visits, but they're a good first step in sifting through the wealth of colleges available. A partial list of large, registered fairs can be found at the end of this manual, and your high school may also be aware of more local opportunities.

### Preparing for the Fair

Prior to attending the fair, have some questions in mind that are important to you and that will help you determine which colleges to target. Think about topics such as admissions criteria – are you likely to get in based on GPA and SAT statistics? Ask about location, is it public or private, total enrollment, cost, majors and/or honors programs offered and strength thereof, the makeup and style of the student body, etc.

Answer the following questions to help you determine what kind of school would best suit you:

- Do you want to attend a two- or four-year institution? Co-ed or single sex?
- What size school do you want to attend?
- What programs of study are you considering?
- How far from home do you want to go?
- Do you wish to participate in any specific extra-curricular activities or athletics?
- Do you want to attend a school in an urban, suburban or rural environment?
- Do you require any special services (i.e. tutoring, note takers, readers, TDD or interpreters)?

Before you go, it may also be wise to discuss your college plans with your guidance counselor, family, teachers and friends. Also, research your colleges of interest on the Internet and in your guidance office and/or library. The internet may be all you need for your preliminary research.

### What to Bring

Bring a pencil or pen. You will often be given cards to fill out so that the college can send you additional information. Jot down notes as well. For the efficiency-minded, type up your own "card" and print multiple copies so that you can leave them with the colleges you are interested in. This will save you a LOT of time and make a positive impression (neat, organized, error-free). You should be able to fit 2 or 3 of these "cards" on a normal piece of paper. Set it up to look something like this, but with your information filled in:

Name _____	Current Classes:
Address _____	1. _____
City _____	2. _____
State _____ Zip _____ Date of Birth ___/___/___	3. _____
Telephone (     ) _____	4. _____
GPA _____ Rank _____ out of _____	5. _____
PSAT/SAT/ACT Scores: M _____ CR _____ W _____	6. _____
Graduation Year _____ School CEEB Code _____	
School Name _____	Academic Interest _____
Extracurricular Activities _____	
Email _____	

**At the Fair**

When you get there, large fairs may provide you with a map or directory. If so, take a minute to circle or otherwise identify your top priority schools so you are sure to visit those first. It's wise to allow some time for simply browsing, as you might discover a school you hadn't planned on including on your list. Check the agenda for any special information sessions or presentations that might be of interest. Hopefully you will receive a bag in which to place materials you may gather.

Next, leave your inhibitions behind you and prepare to reach out with your questions. The fairs can be crowded. Be considerate, but you deserve a turn.

On the following pages we have provided a fair checklist that you may find helpful, along with the NACAC's current schedule of upcoming fairs as of this printing. Visit their website to double check the current schedule, as it can change. And remember, there are most likely smaller, local fairs in your area as well.

NACAC Fair Schedule: [www.nacacnet.org/MemberPortal/Events/CollegeFairs/NCF](http://www.nacacnet.org/MemberPortal/Events/CollegeFairs/NCF)

## Checklist for College Fairs

- For each fair in your area, review the list of college participants. (which schools will be there)
- Determine which ones you want to interview/talk to.
- Check out the fair's other information sessions to see if you should work them in.
- Determine questions you'd like to ask each school and jot them down, such as:
  - What is your profile of admitted students? (GPA, test scores etc.)
  - What percent of applicants do you admit? What is the retention rate?
  - What are your most popular majors?
  - Are individual interviews offered? Group? How do I set up a campus visit?
  - What types of admission are offered? (Early action, early decision etc.)
  - What is the tuition? Room and Board? What financial aid options are offered?
  - What is the average class size? What percent are taught by student TA's?
  - Are professors accessible outside of class?
  - What type of housing is available and for which years?
  - How are roommates selected?
  - Are there sororities and fraternities and how prevalent is Greek life?
  - What is the campus like on weekend? Do most students leave or stay?
  - What sorts of meal plans are offered? How is the food?
  - What are the sports opportunities for \_\_\_\_\_ (specify which interest you, if any)
  - Do sports play a major role at the school? Which teams are Division I?
  - What is the school known for? What makes it unique?
  - What is the surrounding community like? Is it safe? Friendly?
  - (think of other questions that relate to your particular interests and needs)
- Have a convenient way to take notes about each school efficiently – something to write with and on.
- Have a way (bag, case) to hang on to business cards and information that they will give you. Plastic bags are often provided at the fair, but you might want to bring one too.
- To save time, you might pre-type up cards or labels with your contact information on them. Include name, address, email, phone, high school, graduation year, GPA, test scores, intended major and extracurricular activities. (anything else outstanding about you as well)
- Use the fairs extensively. They are a great time saver because you can often narrow down your list at fairs instead of having to visit every single school you've considered.

**Upcoming Fall 2007 Fairs (as of this printing – double check on the NACAC website)**

<b>City</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Location</b>
Birmingham, AL	Sunday, September 16	Birmingham-Jefferson Complex Birmingham, AL
Long Island, NY	Sunday, September 30	Nassau Veterans Memorial Coliseum Uniondale, NY
Austin, TX	Sunday, September 30	Austin Convention Center Austin, TX
Cincinnati, OH	Sunday, October 7	Duke Energy Center Cincinnati, OH
Minneapolis, MN	Tuesday, October 9 Wednesday, October 10	Minneapolis Convention Center Minneapolis, MN
Jacksonville, FL	Saturday, October 13	Prime F. Osborn III Convention Center Jacksonville, FL
Chicago, IL	Saturday, October 20	Navy Pier Chicago, IL
Milwaukee, WI	Sunday, October 21	Midwest Airlines Center Milwaukee, WI
St. Louis, MO	Sunday, October 21	St. Louis University St. Louis, MO
Baton Rouge, LA	Tuesday, October 23	Baton Rouge River Center Baton Rouge, LA
Greater Phoenix, AZ	Sunday, October 28	Phoenix Civic Plaza Phoenix, AZ
Atlantic City, NJ	Tuesday, October 30	Atlantic City Convention Center Atlantic City, NJ
Spokane, WA	Tuesday, October 30	Spokane Convention Center Spokane, WA
Portland, OR	Friday, November 2 Saturday, November 3	Oregon Convention Center Portland, OR
Philadelphia, PA	Sunday, November 4	Pennsylvania Convention Center Philadelphia, PA
Seattle, WA	Sunday, November 4 Monday, November 5	Washington State Convention & Trade Center Seattle, WA
Boise, ID	Tuesday, November 6	Boise Centre on the Grove Boise, ID
Greater Washington, DC	Thursday, November 8	Washington Convention Center Washington, DC
Baltimore, MD	Monday, November 12 Tuesday, November 13	Baltimore Convention Center Baltimore, MD

**Spring Fairs 2008 (as of this printing – double check on the NACAC website)**

<b>City</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Location</b>
Louisville	Saturday, February 2 1:00 p.m.-4:00 p.m.	Kentucky Int'l Convention Center Louisville, KY
Atlanta	Sunday, February 10 12:00 p.m.-4:00 p.m.	Georgia International Convention Center College Park, GA
Miami	Sunday, February 17 12:00 p.m.-4:00 p.m.	Sheraton Miami Mart Hotel (formerly Radisson Mart Plaza) Miami, FL
Pittsburgh	Thursday, February 28 9:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m. 6:00 p.m.-9:00 p.m.	David L. Lawrence Convention Center Pittsburgh, PA
	Friday, February 29 9:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m.	
Tampa	Sunday, March 2 12:00 p.m.-3:00 p.m.	Tampa Convention Center Tampa, FL
Springfield	Sunday, March 2 12:00 p.m.-4:00 p.m. Monday, March 3 9:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m.	Eastern States Exposition (The Big E) West Springfield, MA
Memphis	Sunday, March 16 1:00 p.m.- 4:00 p.m.	Memphis Cook Convention Center Memphis, TN
Charlotte	Sunday, March 30 12:00 p.m.-4:00 p.m.	Charlotte Merchandise Mart Charlotte, NC
Buffalo	Tuesday, April 1 9:00 a.m.- 1:00 p.m. 6:00 p.m.- 8:30 p.m. Wednesday, April 2 9:00 a.m.- 12:00 p.m.	Buffalo Niagara Convention Center Buffalo, NY
Hartford	Thursday, April 3 9:00 a.m.-11:30 a.m. 6:30 p.m.- 8:30 p.m. Friday, April 4 9:00 a.m.-11:30 a.m.	Connecticut Expo Center Hartford, CT
Rochester	Friday, April 4 9:00 a.m.- 12:00 p.m. Saturday, April 5 1:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.	Rochester Riverside Convention Center Rochester, NY
Houston	Sunday, April 6 1:00 p.m. - 4:00p.m.	George R. Brown Convention Center Houston, TX
Orange County	Sunday, April 6 1:30 p.m. - 4:30 p.m.	Orange County Fair & Exposition Center Costa Mesa, CA
Syracuse	Sunday, April 6 1:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.	Onondaga County Convention Center

	Monday, April 7 9:00 a.m.- 12:00 p.m.	At OnCenter, Syracuse, NY
Inland Empire	Tuesday, April 8 9:00 a.m. -12:00 p.m. 6:00 p.m. - 8:30 p.m.	Ontario Convention Center Ontario, CA
Boston	Tuesday, April 8 9:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m. 6:00 p.m. - 9:00 p.m. Wednesday, April 9 9:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.	Bayside Expo Center Boston, MA
San Diego	Thursday, April 10 9:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m. 5:30 p.m. - 8:30 p.m.	San Diego Convention Center San Diego, CA
Cleveland	Sunday, April 13 1:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.	Wolstein Center Cleveland, OH
New York	Sunday, April 13 12:00 p.m.- 4:00 p.m.	Jacob K. Javits Convention Center New York, NY
Greater Los Angeles	Sunday, April 13 1:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m. Monday, April 14 8:30 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.	University of Southern California Galen Center, Los Angeles, CA
Ventura/Tri County	Tuesday, April 15 5:30 p.m. – 8:30 p.m.	Seaside Park Ventura, CA
West Michigan	Tuesday, April 15 8:30 a.m.-11:30 a.m. 6:00 p.m.- 8:00 p.m.	DeVos Place Grand Rapids, MI
Montgomery County	Wednesday, April 16 9:45 a.m. – 12:45 p.m. 6:30 p.m. – 8:30 p.m. Thursday, April 17 9:45 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.	Montgomery County Agricultural Center Gaithersburg, MD
Metro Detroit	Thursday, April 17 9:00 a.m. -11:30 a.m. 6:30 p.m. - 8:30 p.m.	Burton Manor Banquet and Conference Center Livonia, MI
San Francisco	Thursday, April 17 3:00 p.m. – 7:00 p.m.	Concourse Exhibition Center San Francisco, CA
Honolulu	Thursday, April 24 8:30 a.m. -11:30 a.m. 5:00 p.m. -8:00 p.m.	Hawaii Convention Center Honolulu, HI
Providence	Saturday, April 26 1:00 p.m.-4:00 p.m.	Rhode Island Convention Center Providence, RI
Nashville	Sunday, April 27 1:00 p.m.-4:00p.m.	Nashville Convention Center Nashville, TN
New Jersey	Wednesday, April 30 9:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m. 6:00 p.m.-9:00 p.m. Thursday, May 1 9:00 a.m.-11:45 a.m.	New Jersey Convention and Exposition Center Edison, NJ