

EducationQuest Foundation

College Planning Bulletin

A monthly college planning guide for Nebraska high school students

October 2009

Lincoln, Omaha College Fairs coming up!

Don't miss the opportunity to visit with representatives from state, regional and national colleges during the upcoming Lincoln and Omaha College Fairs.

The **Lincoln Area College Fair is Sunday, October 18** from 1:00-3:30 p.m. at Southeast Community College, 8800 O Street in Lincoln.

The **Omaha Area College Fair is Sunday, October 25** from 1:00-4:00 p.m. at the University of Nebraska-Omaha Sapp Fieldhouse.

Both events will feature representatives from over 120 colleges and universities along with financial aid presentations conducted by EducationQuest Foundation.

The College Fairs are sponsored by EducationQuest through partnerships with the Nebraska Association of College Registrars and Admissions Officers and Nebraska high school counselors.

Follow these tips to help you make the most of your College Fair visit:

Before you attend, determine which colleges you want to visit (a list is available in the [College Fair article](#) at [EducationQuest.org](#)).

Prepare a list of questions to ask the college representatives. Ask about deadlines for admission, scholarships and financial aid.

Prepare pre-printed labels with your name and address to stick on information cards at college booths where you want additional information.

Attend a financial aid program at the College Fair to learn about types of aid and how to apply.

If you have questions about the Lincoln Area College Fair, contact the EducationQuest Lincoln office at 402-475-5222 or 800-303-3745. For questions about the Omaha Area College Fair, contact the EducationQuest Omaha office at 402-391-4033 or 888-357-6300.

New tools will help you find the right fit for college

Check out the updated [College Profiles](#) at [EducationQuest.org](#) to research colleges in Nebraska and across the country that are the best fit for you.

By using *College Profiles*, you can search for schools based on location, size, school type, cost, major, activities and services for students with disabilities. Your search results page will list colleges that match your criteria and provide a link to more information about the school.

Video demonstrates college selection process – and shoe shopping!

In our newest EducationQuest video, "Find the Right Fit," high school seniors Maya and Mike demonstrate how searching for the right college is like shopping for a good pair of shoes. Available at

[EducationQuest.org](#), [YouTube](#) and [Facebook](#), this 10-minute video provides college selection guidance and tips.

Seniors...have you visited your top colleges?

If you haven't done so already, visit your top college choices *soon* as application deadlines will start hitting this fall. Follow these tips for a successful visit:

Contact the admissions office at least two weeks in advance to schedule your visit. Make appointments with an admissions representative, financial aid counselor and a faculty member in the area of study that interests you.

Check out the college Web site before your visit. Most college sites have a section for prospective students where you can learn about the school's admissions process, types of majors, student services and employment opportunities. You might even be able to schedule your visit online.

Visit while school is in session. You won't get the true flavor during breaks or finals week.

Get a feel for the campus. Hang out in the student union, find coffee shops with wireless Internet access, eat in a restaurant close to campus or attend athletic or cultural events.

Ask LOTS of questions. See the EducationQuest *College Prep Handbook* or Web site for [good questions to ask](#).

Winning the scholarship game

Follow these tips to increase your chances of earning scholarships:

Don't pay for scholarship searches! Use free search sites including [ScholarshipQuest](#) at [EducationQuest.org](#) with over 2,000 state and local awards. Scholarship resources are also available at your local library and at the EducationQuest offices in Kearney, Lincoln and Omaha.

Visit your guidance counselor weekly for information about local scholarships.

Get organized. Place scholarship applications in deadline order and prioritize each award. Local and college-specific scholarships deserve top priority because you're more likely to earn them.

Continually update your activities, honors and volunteer or paid jobs using the [Activities Resume](#) at [EducationQuest.org](#).

Earn the best possible ACT/SAT scores by taking the exams in the spring of your junior year and again in the fall of your senior year.

Use quality references such as a teacher, coach or counselor. Encourage them to write specific examples of your leadership skills. Give them advance notice and a specific deadline.

Get an early start on essays. Describe your interests, hopes for the future, and leadership abilities – but be sure to tailor your essay to the scholarship topic.

Pay close attention to grammar, spelling and neatness. Ask at least two people to proofread your application.

Watch your mailbox ...

Seniors...your parents will soon receive a postcard from EducationQuest highlighting what you should do this fall to prepare for college. Review this information carefully with them to make sure you complete important tasks before the deadlines.

October “To Do” List

Complete these tasks during October to stay on the right college-planning track.

Juniors and Seniors:

Attend the College Fair or Educational Planning Program in your area.

Seniors:

Schedule campus visits.

Narrow your college choices and be aware of application deadlines and criteria.

Register by September 18 for the October 24 ACT.

Register by October 1 for the November 7 SAT.

Register by October 30 for the December 5 SAT.

Register by November 6 for the December 12 ACT.

For free help with college planning, contact EducationQuest Foundation:

Kearney

308-234-6310

800-666-3721

Lincoln

402-475-5222

800-303-3745

Omaha

402-391-4033

888-357-6300

EducationQuest.org

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