

EducationQuest Foundation

College Planning Bulletin

A monthly college planning guide for Nebraska high school students

October 2007

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 website 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 website 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 www.educationquest.org that lists over 1,600 state and local awards. Check out free national sites such as FastWeb, SRN Express and FastAid. 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 www.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 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.

It's College Fair season!

This fall, EducationQuest will sponsor College Fairs featuring representatives from as many as 200 colleges. Upcoming Fairs include:

Tri-State College Fair, Sunday, October 7, 1:00-3:30 p.m. – Marina Center - South Sioux City
Scottsbluff/Gering Area College Fair, Sunday, October 14, 1:00-3:30 p.m. – Gering Civic Center
Lincoln Area College Fair, Sunday, October 21, 1:00-3:30 p.m. – Southeast Community College
Omaha Area College Fair, Sunday, October 28, 12:30-4:00 p.m. – University of Nebraska-Omaha

For a list of colleges registered for the Fairs, visit www.educationquest.org.

Educational Planning Programs also feature college reps

If you can't make it to a College Fair, attend an Educational Planning Program at your high school or a school near you. These programs also feature college representatives. See the "Upcoming Events" section at www.educationquest.org for dates and locations.

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 21 for the October 27 ACT.
 - ___ register by October 2 for the November 3 SAT.
 - ___ register by October 30 for the December 1 SAT.
 - ___ register by November 3 for the December 9 ACT.
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For free help with college planning, contact EducationQuest Foundation:

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www.educationquest.org

EducationQuest Foundation is a private, nonprofit organization with a mission to improve access to higher education in Nebraska.