

THE COLLEGE VISIT

Would you spend thousands of dollars to buy a new car without taking a test drive? Probably not. Since a college education costs considerably more than a new car, it makes sense to test the college with a visit to the campus. Once you have narrowed your choices to a manageable number, consider this step of the selection process a MUST.

Following are a few hints that may make your college visit more productive:

- Prior to your visit, go to the college website to find out all pertinent information (i.e. tour times, school closings, special events).
- Plan to visit no more than two colleges in one day.
- Plan your visit when school is in session. A great time to do this is teacher work days. Fairfax County Public Schools allows pre-arranged absences for college tours.
- Make arrangements to attend an admission information session and to take a student led tour of the campus.
- If possible, arrange to stay overnight in a residence hall with a current student.
- Plan to drive at least one mile in each direction around the campus to see what the surrounding area is like. Check on public or school sponsored transportation.
- Dress comfortably and casually but appropriately.
- Allow enough time to see everything that is of interest to you (e.g. residence hall, libraries, laboratories, student center, cafeteria, athletic facilities).
- Call ahead to arrange to sit in on a class of your academic interest.
- Talk with students, faculty, admissions personnel, and campus security.
- Take a notebook to record answers to your questions as well as your impressions of the school.
- Take a bag or carrier for the literature you will collect.
- REMEMBER you are making an impression on college personnel who will later decide the outcome of your admissions application. EVERYTHING counts! Ask relevant questions; show your level of interest in the school; and take ownership of the process.