Guidelines for National College Fair Alumni Representatives

NACAC National College Fairs Background
The National Association for College Admission Counseling (NACAC), founded in 1937, is an organization of more than 11,000 professionals from around the world dedicated to serving students as they make choices about pursuing postsecondary education. Headquartered near the nation's capital, NACAC strives to effectively represent its membership, the profession and students.

The mission of the association is to support and advance the work of counseling and enrollment professionals as they help all students realize their full educational potential, with particular emphasis on the transition to postsecondary education. NACAC is committed to promoting high professional standards that foster ethical and social responsibility.

The National College Fairs (NCF) program has been one of the most visible and professional college recruitment programs since its inception in 1972. Today, the association sponsors 50 NCFs nationwide, attracting over 800,000 students each year. Through the participation of colleges and universities, students are afforded the opportunity to learn firsthand about college admission, campus life, financial aid, and other essential information that will assist them in their college selection.

Since fall 1994, alumni have been allowed to serve as primary representatives for their institutions at the NACAC National College Fairs. This new policy allows colleges to participate in more National College Fairs through the use of alumni, and it is expected that all exhibitors maintain a professional bearing and abide by NACAC policies while representing their respective colleges and universities.

National College Fair Exhibitor Guidelines for Alumni
Each National College Fair exposes students to the wide variety of options available to them as they pursue their education beyond high school. As an alumnus/alumna representing a college or university, it is important to remember that the students and parents visiting the National College Fair will be expecting to receive information about the institution that is current, accurate and factual. In addition, the following guidelines for NCF exhibitors must be observed:

- All registered booth representatives must wear a name badge.
- No more than three representatives may staff a booth at one time.
- Representatives must remain within their booths when interacting with attendees.
- Displays may not exceed the height of the booth, standard height is eight feet.
- Displays must be no greater than six feet wide and three feet deep, the standard six foot table size.
- Displays must be placed in the rear of the booth.
Promotional materials (pens, pencils, buttons, bags, pennants, food items, etc.) may not be distributed to attendees or placed in restrooms, lobbies or any other public areas in the facility.

- Demonstrations such as food preparation, drawings (raffles) or similar activities are not permitted.
- Audiovisual equipment is permitted, but must be confined to the registrant’s booth and used at a low volume.
- Aisles must be kept completely clear of materials and displays.
- No combustible decorations are permitted.
- All packing containers, excelsior and wrapping paper must be flameproof and are to be removed from the exhibit hall after set-up.
- Certain materials must withstand a fireproof test as prescribed by the fire ordinance of the host city.
- Open flames, butane gas, oxygen tanks or other flammable substances are not permitted.
- Items may not be attached to any structures in the facility including columns, walls, floors, etc.

Your Training as an Alumni Representative

As an alumni admission representative, your training is the direct responsibility of the institution you are representing. It is crucial that the information you give be accurate, since the students and parents who will attend the National College Fair will ask specific questions regarding your college or university. Regardless of the fact that you attended the institution and also participated in a formal admission training session, you should take advantage of every opportunity to stay informed about new programs of study that are being offered, new facilities on campus, student activities, and as many other aspects of the institution as possible. Colleges are constantly changing, and the institution you attended may be very different now than it was when you were there. Students and parents attending a National College Fair expect to speak with someone who can converse knowledgeably about all current aspects of the institution. Training of alumni representatives may be conducted in several ways. Listed below are a few methods utilized by colleges and universities:

On-site: On-site training of alumni in the recruiting process is similar to on-the-job training. The alumni representative attends a college night, college fair or high school visit with a staff member of the institution. The alumni trainee assists the admission professional in the dissemination of information and answering questions. Through the interaction with prospective students and in observing the admission representative, the alumni are able to learn about campus life, major fields of study, application deadlines, admission and financial aid requirements, and can anticipate the types of questions students will ask at a college fair.

Off-site: Off-site training can take place in a formal setting such as a conference center, campus-based meeting facility, hotel meeting room, etc. This method of training is usually geared to group alumni training sessions. It is a structured program where the ABCs of recruitment are presented and explored. Alumni are updated on campus-based programs and college life on the campus. Various recruitment techniques and discussions on the institutions’ philosophies regarding recruitment and admission practices are presented. The trainers also provide an in-depth description of interviewing procedures, college nights, college fairs, and discuss the proper ethics to follow in representing their institution as an alumni representative.
Correspondence: Correspondence training involves mailing admission materials to alumni representatives for study and preparation. This information includes items such as catalogs, view books, campus newspapers, departmental announcements, college profiles, and other pertinent information which allows the alumni representative the opportunity to explore the university and develop sound marketing strategies to attract students to the college.

Colleges and universities should design their alumni training programs to include the following areas of concentration: admission and financial aid procedures and requirements, academics and programs of study, special programs, student life, and extracurricular activities.

Sample Questions for Representatives
The following list of questions is included in the promotional material that NACAC sends to high schools prior to the National College Fairs. Students are encouraged to review these questions before coming to the fair, so all college representatives should be familiar with them as well.

Admission
- What are the general admission requirements?
- What are the admission requirements for international students?
- What qualities should prospective students have?
- Which standardized test scores do you require?
- What are the application deadlines for admission?
- Are interviews required? Are there group or individual interviews?
- How can I arrange a campus visit?
- How long should I expect to wait for an answer once I submit my application?

Financial Aid
- How much will it cost?
- What financial aid options are offered?
- When is your financial aid deadline?
- Estimate the percentage of work study, loans, grants, and scholarships awarded in your financial aid packages.

Academics
- What is the average class size?
- How accessible are professors outside of class?
- Will professors or graduate students teach my courses?
- When must I choose a major?
- What majors are offered? What’s the most popular?
- Do I need a computer?
- What student services are offered (tutoring, career counseling, study workshops)?
- How are the libraries and computer labs?
- Are there study abroad programs?
Housing
• What type of housing is available?
• Is student housing guaranteed for four years?
• Would I have a roommate or live alone?
• How are roommates selected?

Student Life
• What special interest groups, activities, fraternities/sororities are available?
• What’s it like on campus on the weekends?
• Are any programs offered to help students adjust to the college life?
• What programs are available for students with learning disabilities?
• Are intramural, club, and varsity sports offered?
• How are the sports facilities?
• What types of meal plans are available?

Just the Facts
• What is the school known for?
• What are recent graduates doing now?
• How many freshman return for their sophomore year?
• How safe is the campus and its surrounding neighborhoods?

Monitoring of Alumni Representatives at the National College Fair
It is expected that all alumni representatives attending a National College Fair will have gone through one or more of the previously mentioned training methods. Directors of admission will be notified if any of their representatives violate any of the rules set forth and exhibit conduct that is not in keeping with the standards of the National College Fair program. Specific requirements for alumni representatives attending National College Fairs are as follows:

• Institutions should provide the alumni representative with a copy of the Guidelines for National College Fair Alumni Representatives.
• All institutional representatives must check-in at the College Representative Information Desk prior to going to their booth.
• Alumni representatives must wear a name badge indicating that they are an alumni representative during the fair.

National College Fair Expectations
The National College Fair program promotes professional standards in the admission recruiting process. Students and parents expect quality service from each exhibitor who represents their respective institution. Consequently, each college representative should project a professional demeanor while attending a National College Fair. Here are a few tips to help alumni representatives do an effective job at the college fair:

www.nacacnet.org/fairs
• Be familiar with all the questions that appear in this training guide as they pertain to your institution. Parents and students view you as an expert on the institution you are representing. If you are uncertain about the answer to a question do not give misleading and/or incorrect information. Let them know that you will either get back in touch with them, give them a person to contact or have someone contact them with the correct information.
• Do not promise admission and/or financial aid to students.
• Familiarize yourself with admission terminology, especially such terms as early decision, early action, regular decision, rolling admission and waiting list.
• Review the Statement of Principles of Good Practice (SPGP) with your trainer. Emphasize Article II, Section B, items 5a through 5e, which urge applicants to understand their responsibilities in the admission process. The SPGP can be obtained through the NACAC National Office if not provided by your institution.
• Remember most consumers attending the fair do not view you as an alumni representative. You are viewed as a member of the admission staff. They expect to receive the highest quality of professional service. Be familiar with the institution you are representing and its programs.
• Arrive at the fair on time. Check with your institution to make sure you have the time, place and travel information. You should arrive at the fair at least an hour before the fair begins to set up your booth and to make sure all of your materials have arrived. Do not be late because attendees may be disappointed if they stop by your booth and no one is there. You should be in your booth, ready to promote your institution when the fair opens.
• Check in at the registration booth to pick up a name tag if not provided by the institution you are representing.
• Do not spend too much time in the hospitality room talking to colleagues. There are students waiting to see you.
• Do not leave the fair until it closes. Parents and students travel great distances and will be disappointed to find that you have left the fair before they had a chance to learn about your institution.
• Do not sit in your booth reading the newspaper and/or other materials. Be eager and enthusiastic to talk with students. Remain at your booth, behind the table, when talking with students. Refrain from recruiting students in the aisles.
• Be familiar with your institutions’ criteria for admission (i.e. class rank, test score requirements, grade point average, etc.)
• As a representative of your institution, you are attempting to find the right fit for each student who stops to speak with you. Be fair with your assessment of a student’s abilities and interests. Do not be afraid to recommend him/her to other institutions that could meet his/her particular needs. You should never make disparaging comments about another institution or representative.
• Make sure you return your evaluation to the appropriate person before you leave the fair.
• Be a professional – treat each student with dignity and a smile.