

College Night Programs and College Fairs

APART members have the opportunity to represent B-W at area college night programs and college fairs in the fall and spring of each school year. College fairs are typically large programs with representatives from many colleges and universities. Each college has its own table/area to meet with interested students who have questions or are looking to pick up information on the college. This type of program brings hundreds of new prospective students to B-W each year.

As often as possible, within time and budget constraints, admission staff members attend college fairs. It is impossible to participate in every fair that B-W is invited to attend. Therefore, APART representatives are essential to this effort and will be asked to attend college fairs on behalf of the College.

Process

If there is a program in your area to which we receive an invitation but cannot attend, the Admission Counselor responsible for your area will contact you about attending on B-W's behalf. Please respond to the counselor's request as soon as possible; these programs have registration deadlines, and the counselor may have to find other coverage if you are not available.

Once you have committed to attend the event, we will send you program information confirming date, time, location, and directions. The Admission Office handles registration and fees. Two weeks prior to the fair, you will receive a complete supply of recruitment material to use at the fair and instructions on follow-up.

Supplies will include:

- B-W table banner
- B-W display board
- Summary of information and how to use it
- Liberal Arts and Conservatory information brochures
- Scholarship and Financial Aid brochures
- Inquiry cards
- Applications
- Business cards of the counselor responsible for that territory
- B-W Pens
- B-W Information Folders for the school(s) sponsoring the fair
- APART College Night Program and College Fair Evaluation Form
- Business reply envelope to return inquiry cards, table banner, and evaluation form

Attendance at all college fairs requires an invitation. If you know of college fairs in your area and think would be worthwhile for B-W to attend, please let us know, and we will make every effort to obtain an invitation. We are constantly striving to increase B-W's name recognition, but we will not ask APART members to attend college fairs that have no proven benefit.

Preparation and Expectations

College fairs are usually held in a central, easily accessible location such as a high school gym or cafeteria. A table will be provided for your materials, and colleges are usually arranged in alphabetical order. Allow yourself plenty of time to arrive at the fair half an hour before it is scheduled to begin. Use this time to find your location and set-up your table.

Expectations

The beginning of a college fair is exciting; most attendees arrive early or on time. You may observe students who will look at the name and location of the school, pick up your literature, and move on. The best approach to students is, "Are there any questions I can answer for you about Baldwin-Wallace College?"

NACAC regulations require that you remain standing behind your table and that you do not distribute any promotional materials except appropriate college literature (no candy, pencils, etc.). Please take some time to read the NACAC College Fair Guidelines to familiarize yourself with these NACAC regulations.

College Fairs are often part of the preliminary college search, held in the fall for seniors and in the spring for juniors. Students may not yet be focused on their educational goals; therefore, do not expect a lot of detailed discussion and do not push material on them or question them about their academic credentials. Your role is to answer questions as directly as possible, refer inquiries you cannot handle to the admission office, and distribute B-W literature. If you are not busy, it is helpful to spend quality time with a truly interested student. If there are several people waiting to talk with you, try to spend a few minutes with each.

Follow-Up

At the end of the program, take any leftover literature with you. As soon as possible, complete the APART College Night Program and College Fair Evaluation and send it with the Inquiry Cards to the admission office. In the evaluation, we ask for your candid input as to the value of B-W attending the program. You and your counselor will work together to determine which fairs benefit the recruitment effort. If you are willing to spend an evening because you believe B-W's presence is important, we respect that initiative. If you attend the same fair two years in a row and see little interest from the students attending, we will not ask you to attend again. We rely on your judgment about events in your hometown and appreciate your support as we promote B-W.

While college fairs can be frustrating in areas where B-W is not well known, they can also be extremely productive. If only a few students stop at your table, but you have worthwhile conversations that lead to further inquiry, application to B-W, and eventual enrollment, the process is worthwhile - even if it is just one student.