

Maximize Your Law School Caravan Visit!

Every year, MAPLA's Law School Caravan unites students, alumni, and recruiters at several university caravan sites. In October, along with the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, Indiana University-Bloomington, and the University of Iowa, the University of Wisconsin-Madison will host over 100 law school representatives who journey from the large Chicago regional Law School Forum to share information about their schools' facilities, curricular offerings, faculty, and career opportunities. Because each Caravan promises potential applicants access to admissions staff, it's wise for candidates to prepare in advance.

Students who are well-prepared feel more comfortable communicating with admissions staff not only at the Caravan site but also while on law school visits. If your students are attending the fair on Monday, please share these guidelines with them.

Date: Monday, Oct. 19, 2009

Place: Great Hall, Memorial Union

Time: 11:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.

Attire: Neat, casual

For list of schools, go to

http://www.lssaa.wisc.edu/70bascom/academic_advising/prelaw/lawfair.html

Some useful guidelines:

- Don't ask a law school representative "What do I need to get into your school?"
This information is available on websites, the ABA/LSAC Law School Guide, MAPLA's *Profiles*, and commercial guides.
- Demonstrate that you have researched schools that interest you.
You want recruiters to realize that you are a "good fit." After examining websites and written material, seek other useful sources of information. Some include:
 1. Alumna:
Graduates of your undergrad institution can be forthcoming about such vital concerns as teacher-student contact, externships, facilities, diversity, and mentoring. Alumna can help you to assess the climate and "personality" of the law school. *Don't be afraid to seek alumni contact information from admissions staff! They may be able to send this to you, if you are courteous and they have time to do so.*
 2. Newsletters and other Law school publications:
All law schools publish online newsletters and annual reports that highlight exciting programs, people, and events. Perusing newsletters is a great way to learn about the law school's intrinsic values and future plans. For example, the University of

Michigan's published *Law Quadrangle Notes* provides a Dean's Message, alumni features, special sections on students' experiences, and faculty updates.

3. Law Reviews:

Peruse law reviews at your library. One can learn a lot about the intellectual vitality and vision of students by reading student-edited law reviews. These journals offer a window into the scope of curricular offerings on campus, as well. You can contact editors to ask questions about the law school, its faculty, climate, and opportunities for creative work.

4. Student Organizations:

Opportunities to expand leadership potential through student organizations exist at all law schools. Candidates can contact student leaders at law schools that interest them to find out about law school relations with the community at large, opportunities for study abroad, and a wealth of other concerns.

5. Scholarships and Loan Forgiveness programs:

While most law schools offer merit-based scholarships (related to LSAT scores), most offer scholarships for those with track records in community leadership among disenfranchised populations. While endowment funding for loan forgiveness programs is declining, some law schools still offer loan forgiveness programs to those who desire to assist low-income non-profits, etc. If these are of interest to you, ask the representatives how you might gain more information on the ways that they disperse them. You may also want to ask about scholarships for Teach for America or Peace Corps volunteers.

6. Explore Nexis and other newspaper searches:

Check to see if there are news stories related to the law schools to which you may be interested in applying. Have they started new clinics? Any internal problems (i.e. leadership, financial)? This can be very influential in your decision-making.

- Ask about Open Houses:

Law schools hold "Open Houses" for those interested in site visits.

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