

# Seeing is Believing: The Power of a Campus Visit

Once the general characteristics of appropriate college have been evaluated, serious choices should be identified. The colleges must then be contacted, interviews arranged, and family visits planned. Campus tours and the opportunity to sit in on classes must be given particular attention, since it is extremely important for a student who has a learning disability to personally judge the level of difficulty of the instruction, observe the interaction of the students, and gain for himself or herself a sense of the relationship between the students and the faculty.



## Questions to Ask When Visiting Colleges

The admissions interview may not answer all the questions regarding programs for students with learning disabilities. If it does not, the student and parents must seek out and meet with a member of the learning disabilities program staff. A list of questions based on family concerns and perhaps stimulated by a review of college catalogs and websites or discussions with high school guidance personnel should be prepared prior to the visit. Questions might include the following:

- Is the program run by full-time trained personnel?
- What is the application process for students with disabilities?
- What services are available?
- What documentation is necessary for the specific program?
- Are there additional fees for services?
- How many students with learning disabilities are on campus?
- Who counsels students with needs during registration, orientation and course selection?
- How does the school address a specific need?
- Is remediation and/or support provided on a one-to-one basis or in a group? If a group, how large is it?
- Are faculty and administrators aware of the needs of the students as well as their potential for success.
- Is outside tutoring available when necessary, and who does it- students or staff?
- Is tutoring automatic, or must the student request assistance?
- Are courses in study skills or writing skills offered?
- May students with special needs take a lighter course load?
- Who should students contact if they have concerns during the academic year?
- How many students with learning disabilities have graduated from this program?
- What have they done since graduation?