Office of Intramural TRAINING & EDUCATION
www.training.nih.gov

OFFICE OF INTRAMURAL TRAINING & EDUCATION • 2 CENTER DRIVE • BUILDING 2, SECOND FLOOR • BETHESDA, MD 20892-0240 • 301 496 2427
The NIH is dedicated to building a diverse community in its training and employment programs.

Preparing for the NIH Graduate and Professional School Fair

1) Map out your day. Use the Web to find out what schools are attending. The list of schools is posted at: http://www.training.nih.gov/grad-fair/participants.asp. Find out a little bit about each school that interests you, what programs the school offers, application deadlines, etc., so that you appear knowledgeable and prepared.

2) Panels: Know what sessions are available and when/where they are being held. Write down the names and institutions for all the panelists so that you can follow up with them later. Take notes on the information that they have transmitted. Listen carefully to the questions and answers as it is likely that others may be asking the same questions you have. If time permits, approach the panelists after the session for follow up questions and to get a business card.

3) Dress appropriately and be neatly groomed: no T-shirts, shorts, or flip-flops. You want the schools' representatives to know that you take this opportunity seriously.

4) Bring copies of a one-page resume that is appropriate for the educational path you plan to pursue. Your resume should include your contact information (e-mail address that you check regularly and that you will continue to use after you leave the NIH and phone numbers), as well as your academic information (college/university, city and state) and highlights of your qualifications. Make certain that the document is grammatically perfect.
Some individuals also choose to bring business cards to give out. If you are planning to give out a business card please make sure that it is professional and contains your name. contact information, and current position.

Depending on your proposed educational path, you should make sure you include the following on your resume:

- PhD and master's programs
  - All science research experience, at the NIH or elsewhere
  - Meetings attended
  - Publications
- Medical school
  - Clinically-related experience, volunteer or paid
  - Laboratory research experience, at the NIH or elsewhere
- Public health: public health-related experiences, volunteer or paid (for example, health fairs, food/clothing drives, volunteer work at a homeless shelter)
- Psychology (clinical): clinical experience, volunteer or paid outreach experience
- MD/PhD programs: both clinical and research experience

Please note that some representatives may request this information and others may not. Be prepared for either alternative. If you have already applied to medical school you may want to bring copies of your AMCAS application.

5) Make certain your handshake is firm. Practice with your friends or people in your research group. See http://www.livescience.com/health/080507-firm-handshake.html for additional pointers.

6) Turn off your cell phone or blackberry. When you are talking to school representatives you want them to know that you value their time.

7) Speak clearly and concisely; make sure you can be heard over all the noise. Maintain eye contact and focus on what's being said.

8) Prepare questions to ask recruiters. Make sure that the questions are relevant to the program and not ones that you could have answered by researching their Web site in advance.

9) Bring writing materials with you. You may want to take notes on some of the points that you discuss.

10) Follow up later. Take the card of the recruiter or ask for his/her contact information if this is a school that you wish to consider.

11) Respect the fact that many students may want to speak with a recruiter; do not monopolize him/her. Be concise. When you are finished, thank the person for her/his time.

12) Most important, have fun; be open to meeting new people and learning about schools and programs that are not currently on your "apply" list.