

COLLEGE CONVERSATIONS

Presented by



DATES AND TIMES:

Monday, Sept. 13 - Thursday, Sept. 16th, 7-9 p.m. EST
Friday, Sept. 17th, 5-6:30 p.m. EST, and 7-8 p.m. EST

LOCATION:

Whova virtual event platform

HISTORY AND OVERVIEW:

The District of Columbia Office of the State Superintendent of Education (OSSE) is excited to bring [College Conversations](#) back in 2021! Traditionally, this has been an invite-only recruitment event that brings together high-achieving high school seniors from District of Columbia public and charter schools and selective colleges and universities in an effort to address the issue of student “undermatching” at the postsecondary level. College Conversations allows students and admissions counselors to meet each other in a more personal setting than a traditional college fair through panel discussions and small group conversations.

This year, in partnership with the George Washington University (GW), we are going virtual and maximizing the benefits of that format to also include underclassmen, over a full week of activities with college representatives and scholarship organizations, **Sept. 13-17, 2021**. Students have the opportunity to attend topical panels on which representatives from college and financial aid entities will discuss the theme for that panel. Seniors will also be able to engage in small college conversations with representatives through breakout rooms following each panel. On Wednesday, all participants may attend panel discussions on financial aid, and parents and families are encouraged to join in! There will be a culminating college fair opportunity for all participating institutions, including a Scholarship Showcase, on Friday, Sept. 17, just for seniors.

PLATFORM:

We will use the Whova virtual event platform, which will host all events throughout the week for student attendees. After invited students register to attend, they will receive detailed instructions on how to create a participant profile in Whova so that colleges will know who they are talking to throughout the event. Students will be able to interact with fellow participants and compete in a Passport Contest by visiting virtual college booths and participating in panel discussions.

WHOM WE INVITE - REPS & ORGS:

Our goal is to introduce qualified students to a range of academically rigorous institutions and the exceptional opportunities offered by the schools invited to this event. A list of criteria used to identify participating institutions is included on [our website](#). This year, we are also inviting a select number of local and national scholarship and financial aid organizations to participate in a special "Scholarship Showcase" within the college fair on Friday. A preview of registered organizations is provided on the last page of this document.

WHOM WE INVITE - STUDENTS:

Invited students include: top 5 seniors from every high school in the District of Columbia, and 10th-11th grade students ranking in the top 3 percent of their high school class; students participating in dual enrollment and early college opportunities with a 3.5 cumulative GPA; and students participating in [OSSE Scholars](#), a unique program that sends District students to rigorous college summer programs throughout the nation.

EVENT STRUCTURE

PANELS:

Each evening, Monday through Friday, two panel discussions are offered – one aimed at high school seniors and one aimed at sophomores and juniors. Panels include four to six college representatives and registered students will be able to access panel discussions only through the Whova event platform.

Topics:

Monday	7 p.m.	Benefits of Attending a Liberal Arts College (12 th grade) Curriculum Planning for College (10 th and 11 th grades)
Tuesday	7 p.m.	Benefits of Attending a Research University (12 th grade) Alternative Paths to Elite Schools (10 th and 11 th grades)
Wednesday	7 p.m.	DC and FSA Financial Aid Panel (all grade levels and families)
	8 p.m.	College Financial Aid Panel (all grade levels and families)
<i>NOTE: There will be no College Conversations following panels on Wednesday evening.</i>		
Thursday	7 p.m.	Benefits of Attending an HBCU (12 th grade) Understanding "Match and Fit" (10 th and 11 th grades)
Friday	7 p.m.	Finalizing your College Application List (12 th grade)
	8 p.m.	Creating an Activity Resume (10 th and 11 th grades)
<i>NOTE: There will be no College Conversations following panels on Friday evening.</i>		

Each panel is moderated by either OSSE or GW staff. Each panelist will provide a brief overview of their institution and then respond to questions on the panel topic, presented by the moderator. Ample time is built in for audience Q&A - and participants receive "stamps" for the Passport Contest by engaging and asking questions!

COLLEGE CONVERSATIONS

On Monday, Tuesday and Thursday evenings following the panels, seniors have the opportunity to visit each of the panelists in a 30-minute breakout session for “college conversations” - where students who have interest in a particular institution can go to ask specific questions. Seniors are free to move from room to room during this time and, similar to panels, will earn “stamps” for the Passport Contest by visiting the most booths and engaging with the reps!

COLLEGE FAIR:

On Friday, Sept. 17, from 5-6:30 p.m. EST, all registered college, scholarship, and financial aid organizations, regardless of participation in panels throughout the week, will participate in our virtual college fair and scholarship showcase. Rising seniors can visit virtual booths, as they would in a physical college fair, to ask specific questions about each institution or organization, and can move freely from booth to booth during the 90-minutes, earning more stamps for the Passport Contest along the way!

Select local and national scholarship organizations will also participate the college fair in a section called the “Scholarship Showcase,” and many colleges offering institutional scholarships and programs will be featured as well. Seniors are encouraged to peruse the information provided in each booth at their leisure.

All booth information will be available for participants for three months following the event.

EVENT SCHEDULE AT-A-GLANCE

A preview of the event schedule is included on the following page. Full event schedule with session descriptions and participating panelists and institutions are available within the Whova event site to all registered participants. An app is also available for download.

PARTICIPATING INSTITUTIONS AND ORGANIZATIONS

A preview of the registered colleges, universities, scholarship, and financial aid organizations is included on the following pages. Full event schedule with institutions participating on panels is available within the Whova event site to all registered participants. An app is also available for download.

CONTACTS:

Janel Young at OSSE, Janel.Young@dc.gov or (202) 481-3485

Chris Butler at The George Washington University, cjwbutler@gwu.edu or (202) 994-9091



EVENT SCHEDULE AT-A-GLANCE

Full event schedule with session descriptions are available within the Whova event site to all registered participants. An app is also available for download.

2021 College Conversations Series

Week of Sept. 13-17, 2021

	Monday		Tuesday		Wednesday	Thursday		Friday	
7-8 PM	Panel	Panel	Panel	Panel	Panel	Panel	Panel	Panel	Panel
Topic	Liberal Arts Colleges	Curriculum Planning for College	Research Institutions	Alternative Paths to Elite Schools (incl. AP/IB/DE)	DC & FSA Financial Aid Panel	HBCUs	Match & Fit	Finalizing Your College List	Creating an Activity Resume
Audience	Seniors only	10-12th	Seniors only	10-12th	All students & parents	Seniors only	10-12th	Seniors only	10-12th
Colleges	TBD	TBD	TBD	TBD	DC CAP, OSSE (DC TAG, Mayor's Scholars), FSA rep	TBD	TBD	TBD	TBD
8-8:30 PM (M, T, Th) 8-9 PM (W)	Breakouts		Breakouts		College Financial Aid Panel	Breakouts		"College Fair" 5:00 - 6:30 PM	
Audience	Seniors only		Seniors only		All students & parents	Seniors only		Seniors only	
Colleges	TBD	TBD	TBD	TBD	TBD	TBD	TBD	TBD	

PARTICIPATING INSTITUTIONS AND ORGANIZATIONS

Colleges and Universities:

American University	Spelman College
Bowdoin College	Stanford University
Carnegie Mellon University	Syracuse University
Columbia University	Trinity Washington University
Dartmouth College	University of California, Berkeley
Davidson College	University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA)
Emory University	University of Chicago
George Washington University	University of Maryland
Georgetown University	University of Michigan
Hampton University	University of the District of Columbia - CC
Harvard College	University of Virginia
Howard University	Vanderbilt University
Johns Hopkins University	Virginia Tech
Middlebury College	Wake Forest University
New York University	Washington College
North Carolina A&T	Wellesley College
Northwestern University	Wesleyan University
Oberlin College	William & Mary
Rhode Island School of Design (RISD)	Yale University
Smith College	

Scholarship Organizations:

American University: District Scholars
The Economic Club of Washington, D.C.
George Washington University | Stephen Joel Trachtenberg (SJT) Scholarship & District Scholars
Georgetown University | Georgetown Scholars
Jack Kent Cooke Foundation | Cooke College Scholarship Program
Junior League of Washington | Meg Graham Scholarship
The Milken Scholars Program
QuestBridge | Scholars and National Match

College Access and Financial Aid Organizations:

DC College Access Program (DC-CAP) | Last Dollar Award, Ward 7 & 8 Scholars, University Partners Scholarship
DC Office of the State Superintendent of Education (OSSE) | DC Dual Enrollment, DC TAG, Mayor's Scholars
Federal Student Aid | FAFSA, federal grants, loans, and work-study programs
University of the District of Columbia – CC | CARE Dual Enrollment Program

CONTACTS:

Janel Young at OSSE, Janel.Young@dc.gov or (202) 481-3485
Chris Butler at The George Washington University, cjwbutler@gwu.edu or (202) 994-9091

