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City's College Fair Inspires Students

More than 100 middle and high school students and their parents took part in the City of Perris's college fair Feb. 18, taking advantage of the opportunity to chat with college and university representatives, quiz them about course and extra-curricular activities and paths to educational and employment success.

Representatives from UC Riverside, California State University, San Bernardino, California Baptist University, Notre Dame, Mount San Jacinto College, San Joaquin Valley College and the Art Institute of California took part in the college fair at Bob Glass Gymnasium.

The event marked the first time the City of Perris has sponsored a college fair. Previous events have been sponsored by various school districts.

Perris Mayor Michael Vargas also attended the college fair.

"This is a great, great opportunity for our high school students to learn about what they need to prepare for college," Vargas said. "It's important for us to expose to our Perris youth the college opportunities that are available to them. This is another form of community engagement. It's a fantastic event."



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Perris Mayor Michael Vargas shakes hands with a student who attended the City of Perris College Fair program Feb. 18 in the Bob Glass Gymnasium.

Making the rounds

Ebere Amadi, 16, a junior at the California Military Institute and a member of the City's Youth Advisory Committee, talked with representatives of several universities and community colleges. He plans to study statistics and political science in college. His number one choice for college? Stanford. But if that doesn't work out, Amadi said it was good to learn about other higher education options.

"This is about information gathering," Amadi said. "It's great that the City of Perris hosts events like this. It builds a stronger connection between the City and institutes of higher education."

Adriana Osorio, 16, a junior at Perris High School, used the fair to learn more about the performing arts classes available in college. She's interested in studying ballet dancing and said the fair provided the kind of information needed to make a wise choice about college. She said she is considering attended UCR, Cal State San Bernardino and Mount San Jacinto College.

"It really helps us know what's out there—what's close, and what various colleges and universities cost," Osorio said. "It's really amazing that the City is offering this experience. It shows students how you can continue your education and pursue your dreams."

Adam Anaya, 16, a Perris High School sophomore, is considering a career in software engineering and programming. He's also a member of the Panthers football team so his college career may include juggling academics and athletics. One of his stops included a chat with Dave Gomez, Inland Empire Admissions Coordinator for Notre Dame, one of the top universities in the country.

"I like to see what's available to me," Anaya said. "This fair is a great chance to talk to counselors and advisors."





CMI student Ebere Amadi picks up some information about the University of Notre Dame while chatting with Inland Empire Admissions Coordinator Dave Gomez.

Starting early

The fair drew Riverside residents Jason Hendrix and his son, Nathan, 13, who considers Notre Dame his dream school. The college fair taught him it's not too early for him to take advanced courses now, even at his early age.

"I need to start thinking about college now and enroll in college level courses as soon as possible," Nathan said.

Gomez, the local admissions coordinator for Notre Dame, said the City of Perris deserves praise for organizing and sponsoring the college fair.

"It's encouraging for Perris residents that the City cares about their education," Gomez said. "There's no reason that Perris students can't attend great schools like Notre Dame."



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