Making the Most of the Health Professions Fair

Visit as many schools as you can.
• Don’t limit your table stops. What you think you know about a school may be quite different from the reality.

Visit professions/programs outside your target field.
• Take the opportunity to learn about other health care fields and programs.
• You may learn about fields you didn’t know existed. Everyone should have a parallel career path.

Ask questions you won’t be able to read about on their website.
• Engage in conversation about your particular interests and how their school may fit them.

Prepare your Elevator Speech - Interaction time can be limited, let this be your personal-selling statement
• Greeting: “Hello my name is__”
• Educational Background: “I’m majoring in __ with an area of concentration/minor in __ and graduate in __”
• Description of Interests: I’m interested in __ opportunity because of my experience in __” Or “my goal is to__”
• Strengths and Accomplishments: 5-10 seconds
• Closing: “I’m hoping you could___”, I’d love to speak with you about __”, I’m very interested in learning about __”

Don’t ask about minimum GPA and test scores.
• Catalog minimums are nowhere near the class averages and ranges of the scores preferred by the admissions committees. Ask about those instead (if you must).

Ask about how non-academic factors are valued.
• How much weight is given to the personal statement? What clichés should be avoided?
• What makes letters valuable? How can they stand out?
• How can you articulate special or unique circumstances (working full-time, academic mis-step, career change, etc.)?

Ask about the curriculum.
• The organization and structure of the curriculum can vary. When does clinical exposure begin?
• How are classes taught the first year? In the second? Are there electives, or are classes the same for all?
• Where are clinical rotations? How far will you travel?

Ask about the cost of attendance rather than cost of tuition – the two can vary greatly.
• What is the average cost of attendance? What are average rent costs?
• Are there scholarships, or do most students take loans to finance education and living expenses?
• What is the average graduating student debt load?

Ask about the student body.
• What undergrad majors, undergrad schools and/or states are most represented?
• What is the gender, racial or ethnic, and socio-economic backgrounds of a typical class?
• How competitive or collaborative are students? Can you share some specific examples?
• Are students ranked against each other? What factors are used?

And you can also ask about:
• School setting – part of a university or stand-alone? Urban, suburban or rural?
• Housing – on-campus, off-campus nearby or farther away?
• Access to non-academic campus facilities you have come to expect (rec center, food court, intramurals)?
• Board passage rates and school-sponsored preparation?
• Career services, graduate destinations, alumni network?

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