

# Prep now for *Latino College Expo*



BY ANTONIO  
APONTE &  
DAMARIS L.  
MERCADO  
info@LatinoCollege-Expo.org

As you prepare for most college fairs, in particular, the 30th Latino College Expo this Saturday, March 18th, from 12-3 p.m. and the Leadership Summit from 9 a.m.-12 p.m., at Borough of Manhattan Community College, it's important that you attend prepared to maximize the opportunity and experience.

At the LCE30 we will have over 50 Colleges, and Community Based-Organizations in attendance prepared to share information about their schools, and their program services/opportunities. Please see the full list provided here.

This is a "one-stop shop" of sorts. It's rare that you attend



LATINO COLLEGE EXPO

an event that not only provides college information, but it also provides the chance to meet organizations that can assist you with all areas related to college prep, test prep, interview prep, financial aid and scholarship search, and career & internship opportunities (some paid).

As LCE has shared in past

monthly articles, we tackled issues focused on the importance of "telling your story", "the fortune is in the follow-up", and the various "opportunity programs" colleges offer for access and success.

At the LCE30, you can now apply all of these techniques and attend with the proper

mindset to "stand out in the crowd."

## "The Time Is Now"

"Dress the Part" - No one expects formal attire, especially on a Saturday. You should however be aware not to be overly casual. Wearing a nice top (with no inappropriate sayings), will be fine.

Comfortable pants, shoes/sneakers with a nice top (shirt, sweater, blouse will show admissions you take this process seriously.

"Take the Initiative" - Introduce yourself, be engaged, ask questions, be respectful, speak up, listen, take some quick notes, and complete any information form neatly, so the colleges can follow up with you.

"Ask questions" - Getting to a college fair early will enhance your time to engage in a bit more conversation. Also, you are there to discover, so if you see a college table that is not busy, then go there to learn about them. That could be an intimate moment to share your story and learn about a new school (that's what you're there for).

"Eye Contact/handshake" - We talk about this all the time, but those little things matter. You can even do a "fist bump" in this age

of COVID, which will go a long way.

"Follow up" - Be proactive and follow up within a few days with a thank you. Admissions people meet many students, so following up with a thank you, and referencing the exact fair and anything that was memorable will help them remember you and demonstrate your interest.

Being admissions professionals, we write quick notes or a word when meeting someone engaging, interested, prepared, polite, articulate, see family support (that is why parent involvement is key) to remember the person we meet and to do some follow-up because of a connection. This is why it's important that you go prepared, do some research prior, ask questions, be in the moment, and at the end "follow up!"

Antonio Aponte & Damaris L. Mercado are the founders of Latino College Expo & Making IT Happen