

Paying for College Bus Tour

What is the Paying for College Bus Tour?

The Paying for College Bus Tour is The Sallie Mae Fund's coast-to-coast campaign designed to unleash college opportunities for thousands of low-income and minority young adults. Visiting approximately 60 cities nationwide during the 2007-2008 school year, the Tour unites community-based organizations, financial aid professionals and educational institutions to encourage young people in underserved communities to set their sights on college. Along the Tour, The Sallie Mae Fund provides free workshops on planning and paying for college for both students and parents in English and Spanish. Workshops are presented by a dynamic spokesperson who overcame many obstacles to graduate from college. Families are invited aboard the Paying for College bus, a mobile college counseling center, to search for scholarships or to begin the federal financial aid application process. Scholarships of \$250 to \$1,000 are awarded to one participant at each workshop.



The Tour's message of college attainability is being heard: 82 percent of families who participated in a workshop said they believed they would be able to pay for college, as opposed to 27 percent prior to attending the event. Since 2004, the Paying for College Bus Tour has reached more than 130,000 people nationwide and has awarded over \$400,000 in scholarships.

Why is this issue important?

Studies by The Sallie Mae Fund and others indicate that there is an "information divide" on knowledge of financial aid among low-income and minority populations. While knowledge about financial aid is a key predictor of whether a student is likely to attend college, those who have the greatest need for information actually have the least access to it. Nearly, three out of four young adults indicated that they would have been more likely to attend college if they had been aware of their financial aid options.

Tour objectives

1. To communicate the benefits of a college education
2. To demonstrate that college is affordable and accessible for all families
3. To help increase the number of low-income and minority students enrolling in college

Tour partners

The Sallie Mae Fund works with schools and community groups to reach students and families most in need of financial aid information. National Tour partners include the Congressional Hispanic Caucus Institute, the National Association for College Admission Counseling, the National Council for Community and Education Partnerships, MTV Tr3s, and Project GRAD USA. Locally, The Fund works with school districts, college-access programs and other organizations.

Spring 2008 Bus Tour Schedule

	<u>City, State</u>	<u>Date</u>
1.	Pharr/McAllen, TX	January 8-9
2.	Corpus Christi, TX	January 10
3.	San Antonio, TX	January 14-15
4.	Austin, TX	January 17
5.	Houston, TX	January 22-23
6.	Tyler, TX	January 25-26
7.	Dallas, TX	January 28-29
8.	Tulsa, OK	January 31
9.	Oklahoma City, OK	February 4
10.	El Paso, TX	February 7-9
11.	Las Cruces, NM	February 11-12
12.	Albuquerque, NM	February 13-14
13.	Tucson, AZ	February 19
14.	Phoenix, AZ	February 21-22
15.	San Diego, CA	February 25-26
16.	Las Vegas, NV	February 28-29
17.	Inland Empire, CA	March 3-4
18.	Los Angeles, CA	March 5-7
19.	Merced, CA	March 10
20.	Fresno, CA	March 11
21.	San Jose, CA	March 13-14
22.	San Francisco, CA	March 17-18
23.	Oakland, CA	March 18-19
24.	Sacramento, CA	March 25-26
25.	Reno, NV	March 27-28

The Paying for College Bus has already visited more than 30 communities this fall in the Midwest, East and South. Fall 2008 cities and dates coming soon.

For more information or to get involved

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