

APL's University Fair to showcase Canadian and international opportunities for students

As Grade 12 students look ahead to their post-secondary careers, representatives from Canadian and international colleges and universities are set to descend on Aurora to meet with students and share all the possibilities.

This Monday, October 6, the Aurora Public Library will host its third annual College and University Fair, from 4 p.m. to 7 p.m.

The fair will include representatives from universities and colleges from across Canada, the United Kingdom, and the United States.

According to Aurora Public Library CEO Jodi Marr, the event is designed to be accessible to all area teens and their parents, provide an opportunity to have all their questions answered, and be able to make an informed decision when it comes to determining the next chapter of their lives.

"It's our mission to support lifelong learning and help young people kind of chart their future, and this is one of the ways we can do that," says Marr, adding that coming out to fairs like these removes some of the guesswork on what can sometimes be a daunting application process. "It's so much more customized to what your needs are when you go and speak to a representative in person versus viewing their website. A website is a great source of information and nothing beats going and talking to a representative from that school about the specific program [you're interested in].

"This helps you narrow things down so that you can go further. Later in the year, you might go on a school tour or things like that to really nail down what you want your final choices to be."

The College and University Fair is being organized by APL's Teen Librarian Virgilio Medina who says the aim of the event is to ensure the community "has access to information about the programs, scholarships, admission requirements" each school is looking for.

"Sometimes preparing for a university application is very overwhelming; you have so many questions " the cost, the process, and other things you have to consider in order to get admitted," he says. "Getting into a course that's very competitive, you should be ready with everything you need because there's a limited number of students that can be accepted. I think this is a great opportunity for high school students to just go to the Library and explore the options available."

At press time this week, more than 40 post-secondary institutions had confirmed their attendance, and there will be additional representatives on site for resources related to scholarship coaching and other areas to make sure your admission applications are all they can be " all close to home.

"We've heard so much feedback that [students and families] are having a hard time going downtown just to be able to have this kind of fair, so we thought, why don't we just bring them here and make it more accessible?" Medina adds. "I think there are so many misconceptions that teenagers have at the moment because they think there is only one course, a popular course like engineering and computer science, but one of the things I really want to emphasize through this event is there are more opportunities you can have. There are different career pathways, not just those surrounding engineering and medical. I would like to give students more opportunities to explore and give them a lot of choices " that their choices are not limited to just those popular programs, but a lot of options where they can really be successful in their own journey."

Marr adds that this upcoming Fair is just one of the many ways the APL invests in youth " and this particular initiative is an investment not only in youth, but in support of the "long-term growth and vitality of our community by making sure that the students of Aurora, our residents, get connected with the right information, so they can meet their needs and continue to grow."

And, as students grow, APL is equipped to help them on each step of their academic journey.

“We are seeing a lot more teens using the Library,” says Marr. “Teens love using the Library; I thought maybe with moving Dr. G.W. Williams Secondary School over to the other side of Town, we’d see less teens, but that hasn’t turned into that. We are a hot study spot for the youth of Aurora and we’re so happy to have them.

“It’s nice to see the Library used by teens in that way, to be seen as a place to go after school so that they can get group work done, individual study, or even just socialize. That’s been a really important part. The Library has come a long way in the last few years as with the teens using the Library, and that’s one of the reasons why our numbers are so high when we come to in-person visits.”

For more information on Monday’s College & University Fair, including a regularly-updated list of attending universities, colleges, and like organizations, visit tinyurl.com/APLFAIR.

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