

## 2018 College Visits and Fairs

By Michael Clancy, Director of College Counseling



*Tour guide tells group about Robert Woodruff's (former Coca-Cola Chairman) contributions to Emory University.*

During what has come to be known as Trip Week at George Walton, several students in grades nine to 11 traveled around Georgia and beyond visiting a variety of universities. College visits during Trip Week started last year under the leadership of Ms. Lindsey Bailey when students visited Berry College, Mercer University, Georgia Southern University and the University of North Georgia. This year, under the guidance of Mr. Michael Clancy, GWA students had the opportunity to visit five institutions: Georgia College, Auburn University, the University of West Georgia, Kennesaw State University, and both campuses of Emory University. The purpose of the tour was to allow students to learn about several different kinds of institutions. Large, medium and small; public and private; those in cities, towns and more rural locales; some that are highly selective and others that admit about half that apply.

According to Mr. Clancy, "The goal was not just to view the architecture, but to allow students to experience what it would be like to be a student on a particular campus." As a result, one of the selection criteria was that classes would be in session. Claire Volk, Class of 2021 said, "I really liked getting to visit the classrooms and see what student life would be like. I also appreciated being able to hear a student's perspective about what it was like to attend the college."

On the first day, students traveled to Emory University's Atlanta Campus where they learned what highly selective universities look for during the admissions process. Students participated in a game titled, "Beyond the Numbers," where they learned about holistic admissions, which considers not just GPA and test scores, but also prioritizes recommendations, student essays and extracurricular activities.



*"Beyond the Numbers" at Emory University.*



*What happens when you're guilty of academic dishonesty. 3.8 was kicked out of the game.*

After a hectic lunch in one of Emory Atlanta’s dining facilities where students learned how to balance a tray while navigating through a crowded cafeteria, the group was off to the Oxford College Campus. The group was welcomed by Dr. Douglas Hicks, Dean of Oxford and a George Walton parent. Dr. Hicks spoke about the small size and intellectual vitality of Oxford College and how it would be a good fit for some George Walton students. Although some of students said they drive by the campus regularly, none had actually been on it.

On Day Two, the group visited Kennesaw State University (KSU). The first stop was the dining hall where the students were joined by GWA alumnus, Taylor Maddox, Class of 2017. The tour guide, a senior and a member of Kennesaw’s first recruited class for football, explained to students the value of monitoring their social media “footprint” and why they should be sure to keep it clean. On the way home, the group swung by Hebron Christian for a College Fair that the school was hosting. This allowed students to interact with other colleges from the southeast region. According to Mr. Clancy, “the exposure to two other colleges allowed students to ask more informed questions.”



*Walking the halls of Kennesaw State University.*



*Don't step on the seal, or it's one more year at Georgia College!*

On Day Three, the group embarked on the overnight and out-of-state portion on the trip. The first stop was Georgia College in Milledgeville. The weather was nice, many students were out and about and the campus was lively. “We noticed a number of students dressed in business attire, which threw us at first, but then we learned there was a job fair on campus,” said Mr. Clancy.

On Day Four, the group visited Auburn University, the only out-of-state college on the tour. Nicolas Jacoby, GWA Class of 2021, said he “really liked Auburn’s recreation center,” which was part of Auburn’s work hard, play hard philosophy.



The final stop on the tour was the University of West Georgia in Carrollton. Students liked the small size of UWG as well as the Covington-like feel of downtown Carrollton. Ashlyn Turner, Class of 2021, said, “The night when we all ate pizza in Carrollton” was her favorite part of the tour.

Several students expressed that traveling with a group of fellow George Walton students made the trip a more enjoyable experience and less of a chore. Isabella Hurley, GWA Class of 2019, said the most valuable part of the tour was not seeing a particular campus but, “getting to hear opinions other than my own from my classmates, as well as hearing them ask questions that I wouldn’t have thought to ask.”

Jacob Maddox, GWA Class of 2021, said a valuable part of the experience is “being able to compare all the different types of programs/degrees colleges offer.” But Jacob still has three years to compare and contrast. For Matthew McMain, GWA Class of 2019, the time to apply is just around the corner. Matthew said the best part of going on the tour was “seeing college life and getting excited for college.”

A few additional half-day tours are in the works for April. For those interested in attending a large college fair with many out-of-state universities, check out the Atlanta National College Fair at the Georgia International Convention Center on Sunday, March 25, from 12:30 to 4 p.m. <https://www.nacacfairs.org/attend/national-college-fairs/atlanta-national-college-fair/>



*Visiting the University of West Georgia campus*