

COLLEGE & CAREER FAIR

2026 | QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

A preliminary planning guide for dancers and families

WHEN	Friday, November 6, 2026	WHERE Hyatt Regency Schaumburg Chicago

At a glance: High school juniors and seniors can take a full day of classes, be observed by representatives from 40+ dance programs, visit school booths, and attend student and parent panels—all at one event.

PLEASE NOTE This guide answers general planning questions. Registered families will receive a final 2026 attendee email with the confirmed schedule, class genres, forms, deadlines, arrival instructions, and what-to-bring details.

About the Event

What is the CNADM College & Career Fair?

It is a one-day dance recruitment and exploration event designed to connect high school juniors and seniors with college dance departments, conservatories, and career-focused training programs. Dancers participate in collegiate-level classes while representatives observe, recruit, and identify potential candidates for department acceptance, scholarships, summer programs, and other opportunities.

Who may participate?

The event is designed for high school juniors and seniors who are considering a college dance program or a dance-related career. A dancer does not need to have chosen a major—or even a specific school—to benefit from the experience.

Is the fair only for students planning to major in dance?

No. The strongest emphasis is on college and conservatory dance programs, but the event is also useful for dancers exploring performance, teaching, choreography, musical theatre, commercial dance, and other dance-related paths. Because the attending programs vary, dancers should review the current school list and ask representatives about each program’s focus.

What is the cost?

The 2026 Classes/Auditions registration fee is \$340. CNADM member discounts are available. Parent seminars are included. Registration opens July 1 for CNADM members and July 15 for the public; space is limited and the event is expected to fill.

How the Day Works

What happens during the day?

Dancers take a full day of classes taught by representatives from attending programs. Representatives may move between rooms and observe the classes most relevant to their programs. Each school also has a booth where dancers and parents can ask questions. Student and parent panel discussions are included, along with dedicated time to visit school booths.

How do schools identify the dancers?

Each registered dancer wears an assigned number. Attending programs receive a participant roster with the information submitted during registration and may observe dancers throughout the day. This allows representatives to connect class observations with each dancer's materials and follow up after the event when appropriate.

What are the estimated event hours?

Plan for a full day, approximately 7:00 a.m.–6:00 p.m. In prior years, dancer check-in opened at 7:00 a.m., classes ran through late afternoon, and school visits continued afterward. Exact 2026 check-in, class, panel, and booth-visit times will be provided in the final attendee email.

Which programs will be represented?

More than 40 colleges, universities, conservatories, and professional training programs are scheduled to attend. The confirmed 2026 list is included at the end of this guide. Participation may change, so check the CNADM event webpage for the most current information.

Auditions, Acceptances & Scholarships

Is this an audition?

Yes—and it is also a day of master classes and exploration. Schools use different criteria and may observe only the genres most relevant to their programs. Dancers should approach every class as both a learning opportunity and a chance to demonstrate preparation, adaptability, professionalism, and persistence.

Should seniors apply to colleges before the fair?

Yes. If a senior is especially interested in a school, begin that school's application process as early as possible. College performing arts admission often has two parts: acceptance to the institution and acceptance to the dance department. The CCF can support department evaluation and scholarship consideration, but it does not replace a college's general application or other required steps.

Can a dancer be accepted by more than one program?

Yes. Many programs can evaluate dancers for department acceptance at this event, and a dancer may receive interest or acceptance from multiple programs. Remember that performing arts admission commonly involves two separate steps: admission to the college or university and acceptance into its dance department. Each school sets its own process and requirements.

Do attending schools offer scholarships?

Opportunities differ by school. Many participating programs have indicated that they may offer scholarships, most often to seniors. Juniors have also received summer intensive scholarships and invitations. Possible outcomes include department acceptances, scholarships, summer intensive offers, pre-screen opportunities, and personal invitations.

When will dancers hear from schools?

Timing varies. A school may make an offer on-site, ask to speak with a dancer during the event, or follow up later by email or phone. Other programs may need additional application materials or faculty review. Dancers should not be discouraged if they receive no decision on audition day.

What should juniors expect?

Juniors should treat the day as an early introduction to programs and recruiters. While college admission decisions are generally aimed at seniors, juniors may receive feedback, summer intensive opportunities, invitations, or scholarship consideration—and they can begin building relationships before senior-year auditions.

Preparing for Classes**What should dancers wear?**

Choose polished, form-fitting dancewear that allows instructors and recruiters to see alignment and movement. Dancers may change between classes when appropriate. Avoid crop tops, booty shorts, oversized layers, distracting accessories, or clothing that obscures the body. Hair should be secure and performance-ready.

Are pointe shoes required?

No. Pointe shoes are not required. During a ballet/pointe class, dancers with appropriate pointe training may be invited to put on pointe shoes; other dancers remain in ballet shoes. This is common and will not prevent a dancer from participating.

Are character shoes required for musical theatre?

No. Dancers who own and regularly use character shoes may bring them. Jazz shoes are an appropriate alternative.

What if a dancer has limited experience in one of the class styles?

Stay on the dance floor and participate safely. Recruiters understand that dancers have different training backgrounds. They are often watching how a student listens, adapts, recovers from mistakes, and approaches unfamiliar material—not only whether every step is perfect. The day should also be viewed as a valuable master-class experience.

What should dancers bring?

Plan to bring several appropriate shoe options, dancewear for the full day, warm-ups, water, hair supplies, and any personal care items needed between classes. Food arrangements and the final list of class genres and supplies will be confirmed in the attendee email; use that message as the official packing list.

Will dancers need to submit additional information?

Most likely. In prior years, registered dancers completed a follow-up form with personal and audition information so each school could match the dancer's number to their materials. Complete any 2026 follow-up form accurately and by the stated deadline, and provide an email address that can be monitored during the event in case a representative requests an on-site conversation.

For Parents & Families

What can parents do during the event?

Parents and guardians may attend parent seminars, join the panel discussion when indicated in the final schedule, and visit school booths. Topics may include dance degrees, applications, transferable skills, career options, financial considerations, and the transition to collegiate dance. Bring questions and use booth time to compare programs.

May younger siblings attend the parent seminars?

The seminars are intended for registered parents and guardians, and seating is planned according to the number of parents listed during registration. Space for younger children cannot be accommodated. Families should make other arrangements.

How should families follow up after the fair?

Make notes during booth visits, collect contact information, and follow each program's stated next steps. If a dancer is especially interested in a school, send a brief follow-up soon after the event, mention participation in the CNADM College & Career Fair, and ask whether any additional application or audition materials are needed.

Registration, Hotel & Updates

Where is the event held?

Hyatt Regency Schaumburg Chicago, 1800 E. Golf Road, Schaumburg, Illinois 60173. CNADM has announced a special group rate of \$144, available while rooms remain and when reserved by October 8, 2026.

Where can we register or find updates?

Visit cnadm.com/college-career-fair-nov-6 for registration, hotel information, and the latest event updates.

2026 Attending Schools & Programs

Current as of July 20, 2026. Participating programs are subject to change; consult the event webpage for the latest list.

AMDA College of the Performing Arts	Steps On Broadway
Arizona State University School of Music, Dance and Theatre	Störling Conservatory of Dance
Ball State University	Texas A&M University Dance Program
Bennington College, BFA Dance Lab	The Hartt School, University of Hartford
Brenau University	The Juilliard School
CLI Conservatory	The Norwalk Conservatory of the Arts
Dobbins Conservatory at SEMO	Towson University
Florida Southern College	UNC School of the Arts
Grand Canyon University	University at Buffalo, State University of New York
Grand Valley State University	University of Cincinnati, Ballet + Contemporary Dance, College-Conservatory of Music
Hope College	University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign
Illinois State University	University of Iowa
Indiana University Jacobs Dance	University of Kentucky
Lindenwood University	University of Memphis
Loyola Marymount University	University of Missouri–Kansas City Conservatory
North Central College, Naperville's University	University of Nebraska–Lincoln
Northeastern University NYC	University of Roehampton London
Northern Illinois University	University of South Florida
Oakland University School of Music, Theatre and Dance	University of Wisconsin–Madison
Oklahoma City University	University of Wisconsin–Milwaukee
Point Park University's School of Dance	University of Wisconsin–Stevens Point
Purdue University	USC Kaufman School of Dance
Roosevelt University (Chicago College of Performing Arts)	Wayne State University
Ruth Page School of Dance	Webster University
Sacred Heart University	Western Kentucky University
Southern Illinois University Edwardsville	Western Michigan University

ONE DAY • 40+ PROGRAMS • COUNTLESS POSSIBILITIES