



LAKE NORMAN SOCCER CLUB RECRUITING GUIDE



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Introduction

The college recruiting process can seem like a daunting and intimidating process. It spans several years and soccer seasons, and will ultimately determine a pathway your athlete is likely to stay on for 4 years of their life. As a club we hope to provide the best possible service to our members in our Senior Eclipse & Force Programs. This guide is to serve as a resource for the Lake Norman Soccer Club community to aide them in the process of placing their prospective student-athlete in a collegiate soccer program.

It is very important to understand that the recruiting process is different for every player, no two are alike. Each collegiate program may look for different things within the process and student athlete. But there are many things you need to know about the process before you begin. When beginning this process, remember a few things:

- Rejection will be a part of this process. You may get rejected on something you cannot even control such as the position you play.
- Be realistic about your playing expectations for schools.
- Good grammar and etiquette goes a long way.
- Don't allow other athletes' recruiting process to influence you.
- You are being recruited, not your parents, this is your process as an athlete.
- If a coach reaches out to you, take the time to do the same, even if not interested in the school.
- You will get out of it what you put in to it.

Collegiate programs and coaches look for several things, but at the core of this is a player who is a good student. One of the most important things to remember is that your grades can directly affect your ability to play at the next level. You should be a student first and an athlete second.

We are providing you this packet in hope that it helps guide you through this endeavor. There are virtually endless resources at your disposal if you put in the effort. Throughout this process we encourage you to continuously utilize your respective Coach, Director of Coaching, our college panel discussion & meeting, and our College Recruiting Coordinator. All of these people and tools are in place to help you reach your goals.

Good luck,

LNSC Staff

The Recruiting Timeline

This timeline is particular to NCAA schools primarily, please reference links following this section for more information on other competitive organizations. Governing organizations meet on a regular basis and can change rules frequently.

Sophomore Year

NCAA Division I and Division II coaches cannot call or write you, Division III coaches can communicate with you freely. Coaches can only communicate general school information and camp information. Do not assume a coach is not receiving your communication or be discouraged by no response. Coaches can respond to emails regarding camp only. Players physically on campus can meet and communicate freely with any college coach at any NCAA level.

- Be aware of your grades.
- Start making your college list (15 - 20 schools), identify potential programs, identify the most important criteria for you to select a school.
- Begin researching schools' academic and athletic programs.
- Consider an SAT/ACT prep course.
- Create an introduction letter to share with schools as well as a player profile.
- Review NCAA Clearinghouse eligibility requirements. Register with the NCAA Clearinghouse prior to Junior Year.
- Showcase yourself at tournaments, showcases, and ID or combine events.

Junior Year

Starting September 1st of your Junior high school year you can now talk via phone, email, or text with a coach at NCAA Division I level. Starting June 15th of your Junior high school year you can now talk via phone, email, or text at the NCAA Division II level. Players physically on campus can meet and communicate freely with any college coach at any NCAA level. Players can only take unofficial visits their Junior year of high school.

- Organize your recruiting process as efficiently as possible, take notes, record contact, save emails, etc.
- Update your player profile as needed, communicate event schedules regularly and promptly (remember coaches can only view so many players at an event).
- Communicate any attendance at ID or combine events as well as any visits to a campus.
- Begin ranking your schools by priority and contacting as such.
- Be consistent with your contact with coaches. Keep them up to date, informed, and aware of who you are.
- Showcase yourself at tournaments or showcases as well as ID or combine events.
- Visit your top schools, view the campus, and attempt to meet with the coaching staff. Watch them play a match (style of play is important).
- Consider attending the summer soccer camps of chosen schools prior to and after Junior year.
- Take your entry based tests, SAT or ACT. Follow up with schools on academic updates such as test scores. Maximize your efforts to improve your grades.
- Confirm your clearance with NCAA Clearinghouse.
- Obtain and complete Financial Aid Forms (FAFSA).

Senior Year

NCAA Division I, Division II, and Division III have essentially no limitations on any form of communication at this point. Coaches may visit and communicate with you freely in any environment. Upon the start of 1st day of Senior classes you may start taking official visits to schools that have interest in you. Official visits are limited to 48 hours on campus and 5 in total. Unofficial visits are unlimited in number.

- Complete all your academic requirements with maximal effort, grades dictate your academic-based aid.
- Confirm your clearance with NCAA Clearinghouse.
- Finalize your school list into two categories: (1) application schools, you will apply to these schools, prioritize them in order, 3-4 schools (2) back-up schools, 1-2 schools.
- Complete your FAFSA form again with most recent tax information.
- Seek out feedback from your priority schools on your potential for being a part of the program.
- Official visits, paid for by the schools, become more possible now. Seek out overnight visits where you can engrain yourself in the team & school environment.
- Keep coaches updated on your achievements by sending them your profile throughout the Fall. Play in high level events in November and December.
- Continue to utilize your Coach, Director of Coaching, College Recruiting Coordinator, and Guidance Counselor as resources. Provide your school lists to your Guidance Counselor.
- Finalize your decision.

Creating Your List of Schools

When selecting schools initially your criteria should be limited to core needs, then expanded or reduced based on research. We recommend selecting your schools based on several important questions:

1. How far from home are you willing to travel? Keep in mind a direct flight can be cheaper and more efficient than a multiple hour drive.
2. How big of a school would you like to attend? Schools range from 500 students all the way up to 60,000 students.
3. What do you plan on majoring in or what field of study do you wish to pursue? You do not have to have a specific major, but a course of study such as health/medicine or business/marketing is a vital tool to build your initial list.
4. What do you want your playing experience to be like? Are you willing to not play for a duration of time behind more senior players? Do you want to contribute immediately?

Don't be intimidated by a longer list of schools initially, even 20 or more. You can always reduce and expand your schools going forward. Do not be deterred by private vs. public or in-state vs. out-of-state schools at this point. There are too many variables further in the process that can actually make schools you would not consider normally more affordable. Your schools should reflect the line of work you plan on entering post graduation, not necessarily your athletic aspirations. Keep in mind that serious injury, family circumstances, etc can all change and affect your status as an athlete.

Other things to consider as you move forward in the process:

1. If soccer was not an option, would I attend the school?
2. What level of play is appropriate for me? Div I vs. Div II vs. Div III
3. What type of relationship do I have with the coach? Would I enjoy playing for them?
4. Does the playing style suit my talents?
5. Am I academically capable of being accepted to this school?
6. What type of area do I want to be in? Large city vs. rural area vs. small town.
7. What about my values as a person and beliefs? Religion, political orientation, etc.

Research Your Schools and Record Information

Invest in your process, you will get out of it what you put in to it. Once you have created a list begin researching the schools. Utilize all the resources at your disposal online, in your school, and with your coaches. You can learn more than enough information to know if that school should remain on your list via 5-7 minutes of research in the right places. Utilize these most common resources for information:

- School Website & Athletic Website.
- School Wikipedia page.
- Princeton Review (www.princetonreview.com) *yearly review
- U.S News Review(www.colleges.usnews.rankingsandreviews.com) *yearly review

Transfer the information you obtain regarding the school, academics, and athletics to the communication you have with your top schools. Reference this information in your emails and conversations. Show that you invested time into getting to know the specific college/university.

Research NCAA and Other Organizations' Guidelines

Students that plan to compete in athletics at the college level must meet certain eligibility requirements set forth by the NCAA (or competing organization). Students who have not met eligibility requirements will not be allowed to participate in college athletics. Utilize the NCAA college bound student-athlete portal to learn more: http://web1.ncaa.org/ECWR2/NCAA_EMS/NCAA.jsp

Registering for the NCAA Clearinghouse

Players who attempt to play in the NCAA Division I or Division II level must complete the NCAA Clearinghouse form in order to confirm their eligibility. Playing at the Division III level does not require use of the eligibility center below. Registering for the NCAA Clearinghouse does require a small fee of \$30. The steps for registering online are as follows:

1. Go to the NCAA Clearinghouse web site at: http://web1.ncaa.org/ECWR2/NCAA_EMS/NCAA.jsp
2. Once there, click on "prospective student-athlete."
3. Once on the "welcome to student information page," click on "domestic student release form."
4. Once on the student release form page, complete this page accurately.
5. Print an extra copy of your student release form for your counselor.
6. You will still need to notify your counselor that you registered online so that your transcript will be sent to the NCAA Clearinghouse.

What is an Athletic Scholarship?

An athletic scholarship is a form of scholarship to attend a college or university awarded to an individual based predominantly on his or her ability to play in a sport. Athletic scholarships are common in the NCAA Division I and II levels but are not offered at the Division III level. Athletic programs can have varying numbers of scholarship money available based on multiple variables. Scholarships can be broken into incremental amounts across multiple students as long as the scholarships set by the NCAA and the respective athletic program are not surpassed.

Full Scholarships Per Program	Men	Women	Average Athletic Scholarship (men)	Average Athletic Scholarship (women)
NCAA Division I	9.9	14	\$14,264	\$15,411
NCAA Division II	9	9.9	\$5,958	\$7,258
NCAA Division III	Not available	Not available	Not available	Not Available

What are the Divisions of the NCAA?

Division I

Division I schools must field teams in at least seven sports for men and seven for women, or six for men and eight for women, with at least two team sports for each gender. Division I schools must meet minimum financial aid awards for their athletics program, and there are maximum financial aid awards for each sport that a Division I school cannot exceed. There are several other NCAA sanctioned minimums and differences that distinguish Division I from Divisions II and III. Each playing season has to be represented by each gender as well. There are contest and participant minimums for each sport, as well as scheduling criteria.

For a list of Division I schools: <http://web1.ncaa.org/memberLinks/links.jsp?div=1>

Division II

Division II schools have to sponsor at least five sports for men and five for women, or four for men and six for women, with two team sports for each gender, and each playing season represented by each gender. There are contest and participant minimums for each sport, as well as scheduling criteria. There are maximum financial aid awards for each sport that a Division II school must not exceed. Division II teams usually feature a number of local or in-state student-athletes. Many Division II student-athletes pay for school through a combination of scholarship money, grants, student loans and employment earnings. Division II athletics programs are financed in the institution's budget like other academic departments on campus. Traditional rivalries with regional institutions dominate schedules of many Division II athletics programs.

For a list of Division II schools: <http://web1.ncaa.org/memberLinks/links.jsp?div=2>

Division III

Division III schools have to sponsor at least five sports for men and five for women, with two team sports for each gender, and each playing season represented by each gender. There are minimum contest and participant minimums for each sport. Division III athletics features student-athletes who receive no financial aid related to their athletic ability and athletic departments are staffed and funded like any other department in the university. Student athletes also can not redshirt as freshmen, and they may not use endowments or funds whose primary purpose is to benefit athletic programs. Also, under NCAA rules, Division III schools "shall not award financial aid to any student on the basis of athletics leadership, ability, participation or performance". Financial aid given to athletes must be awarded under the same procedures as for the general student body, and the proportion of total financial aid given to athletes "shall be closely equivalent to the percentage of student-athletes within the student body." Division III athletics departments place special importance on the impact of athletics on the participants rather than on the spectators. The student-athlete's experience is of paramount concern. Division III athletics encourages participation by maximizing the number and variety of athletics opportunities available to students, placing primary emphasis on regional in-season and conference competition.

For a list of Division III schools: <http://web1.ncaa.org/memberLinks/links.jsp?div=3>

NAIA (National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics)

The NAIA is an athletic association that organizes college and university level athletic programs among smaller institutions primarily across the United States, but also outside the US in Canada. The NAIA has different eligibility requirements from the NCAA. To be eligible to participate in NAIA athletics as a freshman, two of the following three requirements must be met:

1. Achieve a minimum overall GPA of 2.0 on a 4.0 scale.
2. Achieve a minimum of 18 on the ACT or an 860 minimum on the SAT.
3. Graduate in the top half of your class.

Student-athletes must also have on file at the college an official ACT Assessment or SAT score report from the appropriate national testing center. Results reported on the student's high school transcript are not acceptable. Students must request that their test scores be forwarded to the college's admission office.

For a list of NAIA schools: <http://www.naia.org/ViewArticle.dbml?ATCLID=205322922>

For the NAIA eligibility center: <http://www.playnaia.org>

NJCAA (National Junior College Athletic Association)

The NJCAA is an association of community college and junior college athletic departments throughout the United States. The NJCAA is the governing body of intercollegiate athletics for two-year colleges. As such, its programs are designed to meet the unique needs of a diverse group of student-athletes who come from both traditional and nontraditional backgrounds and whose purpose in selecting a junior college may be as varied as their experiences before attending college. NJCAA schools can serve as a deliberate spring-board to NCAA programs as they are frequently recruited from due to minimum transfer requirements outside academic qualifications.

For a list of NJCAA schools: <http://www.njcaa.org/colleges.cfm>

For information on eligibility requirements go to: <http://eligibilitycorner.njcaa.org>

NCCAA (National Christian College Athletic Association)

The NCCAA is an association of Christian universities, colleges, and Bible colleges in the United States and Canada whose mission is "the promotion and enhancement of intercollegiate athletic competition with a Christian perspective." The NCCAA functions uniquely as a national and international agency for the promotion of outreach and ministry, and for the maintenance, enhancement, and promotion of intercollegiate athletic competition with a Christian perspective. Member institutions can also be also in other athletics associations, including NCAA and NAIA.

For a list of NCCAA schools:

http://www.thenccaa.org/custompages/2014-15_Membership_Directory.pdf

For information on eligibility: <http://www.thenccaa.org>

Home School Athletes

Students who were home schooled for any part of high school (grades 9 - 12) must register with the NCAA Eligibility Center. The NCAA Eligibility Center will determine whether home schooled prospective student-athletes will be eligible for practice, competition, and institutional financial aid at an NCAA Division I or II college or university during their freshman year. The NCAA Eligibility Center will perform preliminary and final certification reports for home schooled students. The preliminary analysis of a student's academic record will enable the student to become aware of any deficiencies in their academic record and allow the student to rectify those deficiencies prior to high school graduation. The following information is required for the NCAA eligibility center:

1. Standardized test scores from an official transcript from a traditional high school or directly from the testing agency.
2. Transcript listing credits earned and grades.
3. Proof of high school graduation.
4. Evidence that home schooling was conducted in accordance with state law.
5. List of texts used throughout home schooling.
6. Completion of Core-Course Worksheets.

For more information refer to the NCAA website at:

https://web3.ncaa.org/ECWR2/NCAA_EMS/pdf/Home_School_Checklist_Example.pdf

**It is important for you to check with the colleges you are interested in to verify your courses and any other requirements.*

College Coach Communication

This information is particular to NCAA schools primarily, please reference links regarding other organizations for more information on other competitive organizations. Governing organizations meet on a regular basis and can change rules frequently.

The question of what is allowed, as well as when and how, when communicating with college coaches is the most often asked question. It can be confusing, but below we lay out some simple guidelines to help you navigate the communication process:

Sophomore Year - NCAA Division I and Division II coaches cannot call or write you, Division III coaches can communicate with you freely. Coaches can only communicate general school information and camp information. Do not assume a coach is not receiving your communication or be discouraged by no response. Coaches can respond to emails regarding camp only. Players physically on campus can meet and communicate freely with any college coach at any NCAA level.

Junior Year - Starting September 1st of your Junior HS year you can now talk via phone, email, or text with a coach at NCAA Division I level. Starting June 15th of your Junior HS year you can now talk via phone, email, or text at the NCAA Division II level. Division III coaches can communicate freely. Players can only take unofficial visits their Junior year of high school, the amount of time you can spend on campus in a single visit is unlimited. Unofficial visits are unlimited in number.

Senior Year - Starting the 1st day of school your Senior year NCAA Division I, Division II, and Division III have essentially no limitations on any form of communication at this point. Coaches may visit and communicate with you freely in any environment. Upon the start of 1st day of Senior classes you may start taking official visits to schools that have interest in you. Official visits are limited to 48 hours on campus and 5 in total. Unofficial visits are unlimited in number.

Other guidelines:

- Coaches cannot place an OUTBOUND call to you your Freshmen or Sophomore year. A coach cannot initiate a visit to your home, or any environment other than their campus, at any point your Freshmen or Sophomore year.
- You can place an INBOUND call to coaches at any point in your high school career. You can meet with and communicate freely on campus with any coach. All meeting arrangements must be initiated by the player. Second parties, such as your coach, can be useful in this process.
- Campus visits and meetings, when unofficial and prior to the Senior year, are unlimited.
- Seniors are allowed 5 total official visits. Official visits are paid for by the school and are limited to 48 hours on campus.

For more information utilize this simple NCAA recruiting cheat-sheet:

<http://colsoc.com/Portals/0/NCAA+Recruiting+Rules.pdf>

What Does it Mean if a College Coach Sends a Questionnaire?

Colleges may ask you to complete an on-line questionnaire or mail you one to complete. It is a way for them to get initial information on you. Always answer any questionnaires sent from schools on your list. If you are not interested in a school, communicate that to the coach.

Why Responding to all College Coaches is Important

Keep in mind college coaches can only communicate general school and camp information to you prior to your Junior year. Most student-athletes will receive contact from colleges in the form of general admissions information, questionnaires, and camp information. Always take the time to reply to schools communicating with you. Why should you respond to any communication?

- Coaches put underclassmen's names on admissions lists to see if they will respond.
- If you do not respond to a coach or return their questionnaire, they may stop recruiting you.
- College coaches do change schools. You may choose to ignore a coach only to see them hired at your top program.
- College coaches network frequently at events, within conference, and through general work related activities. Coaches do not appreciate it when a student-athlete ignores a contact. Keep in mind others are waiting potentially due to your negligence. Do not give a coach a reason to have something bad to say about you.
- Be respectful; if a coach can spare 5 minutes to communicate with you, then share that common courtesy.
- Responding to a college coach will demonstrate that you are mature and responsible. For example, most of the information asked on the questionnaire is to test your responsibility and ability to follow directions.

Contacting College Programs

Introduction Letter (Email)

These letters serve as an introduction to the coach and his staff. It should accomplish three things:

1. Informing the coaching staff of your interest in their program and why you are interested.
2. Inform the coaching staff of your abilities as a player and why you are a positive fit for their program.
3. Inform the coaching staff of your academic abilities and why you are a positive fit for their college or university.

Your introduction should be brief, to the point, and not long-winded. You want to provide a very quick at-a-glance perspective of yourself that allows coaches to comprehend your potential and place you as such. This letter is also a positive way to request information on the school and your specific career path. Your letter should include the following details if possible:

- Name, high school, and current grade level.
- Contact information.
- Individual scholastic and club soccer experience.
- Individual soccer recognition and awards.
- Relevant auxiliary soccer experience (ODP, id2, US Market Training, etc).
- Current class rank, weighted/unweighted GPA, and standardized testing scores.
- Individual academic recognition and awards.
- Any relevant extra-curricular activities that may make you a more desirable student-athlete.

Within your introduction letter here are some simple guidelines to follow:

- Grammar does matter. Show you take pride in what you do.
- Check, double-check, and triple-check any outgoing emails.
- Do not draft a long letter. Coaches don't want to spend 10 minutes on one email.
- Be careful how many schools you contact initially. Keep in mind coaches communicate regularly. You do not want coaches thinking you are "spamming" every school in the region.

Sample Letter

January 1, 2015

John Smith - Head Coach Women's Soccer
University Name
School Address
City, State, Zip Code

Dear Coach Smith,

I am a Junior at _____ High School in Mooresville, North Carolina and am interested in attending the University of _____ to study economics due to the quality of the program as advised by the Princeton Review this year.

I am very interested in playing soccer for your program. I have played predominantly right back for the past six years for Lake Norman Soccer Club and the 98 LNSC Eclipse team. We are an NCYSA Premier League team and were recently NCYSA State Cup runners up in 2014. This past year I was selected for the NC-1 98 ODP team as well as starting every game for the _____ varsity soccer team which won the _____ conference title.

My academics are very important to me, and I currently hold a 3.7 unweighted GPA and 4.2 weighted GPA. I am ranked in the top 25% of my class and was selected this past year into Beta Club as the Junior class representative. I plan on taking the SAT this coming Spring

Enclosed you will find my athletic resume with more information. I have applied for clearance from the NCAA Clearing House and will make that information available to you once I have it. My LNSC Eclipse team will be participating in the upcoming Disney Soccer Showcase and Southern Soccer Showcase, and I would appreciate a chance to be viewed by your staff.

Thank you for your consideration. I would love to receive any information you would be willing to provide on your program. Please feel free to contact my references or coaches at any point. I hope you have an opportunity to see me play in the near future.

Sincerely,
Mary Jones

Player Profile

Players should provide coaches an at-a-glance profile that gives your key information and a snapshot of your academic, athletic, and personal information. Your scholastic and athletic achievements should be listed to make yourself more marketable as a prospective student-athlete. Extracurricular activities (school clubs or volunteer activities) can be a positive influence in the recruiting process as well. Provide all pertinent information for player viewing, player background, player contact, and player references.

Name:	Mary Jones
Contact:	123 Anywhere Dr. Mooresville, NC 28117 - (704) 600 - 6000 (home)
Email:	LNSCsoccer11@yahoo.com
School:	_____ High School - Class of 2017
Stats:	Height: 5'8 - Weight: 135lbs - Foot: Left - Position: Left-Back
Profile:	<p>Class of 2017 -</p> <p>Lake Norman Soccer Club 98 Eclipse - '11, '12, '13, '14, & '15</p> <p>TEAM HIGHLIGHTS: NCYSA/USYSA State Cup Finalist - 2013 NCYSA/USYSA State Cup Final Four - 2014 Region III Premier League Participant - 2012, 2013 Disney Soccer Showcase Participants - 2012, 2013, 2014 Jefferson Cup Participants - 2012, 2013 Southern Soccer Showcase Champions - 2014 Atlanta Cup Champions - 2014</p> <p>INDIVIDUAL HIGHLIGHTS: LNSC Eclipse 98 Team Captain 2012 & 2013 NC-1 98 ODP - Left Back _____ High School Varsity - Conference Champions - 2014 (<i>starting left back or left mid-field</i>)</p> <p>ACADEMICS: SAT - _____ ACT - _____ Member of Beta Club Member of Young Life GPA ____ (unweighted), ____ (weighted) Class Rank - 23 of 325</p>
Upcoming Events:	<p><u>Southern Soccer Showcase</u> - Winston Salem, NC - April 2015 <u>CSA Adidas Cup</u> - Charlotte, NC - August 2015 <u>NYCSA State Cup</u> - Various Locations, NC - November 2015 <u>CASL Showcase</u> - Raleigh, NC - December 2015 <u>Disney Soccer Showcase</u> - Orlando, FL - January 2016</p>
References:	<p><i>Director of Coaching</i> - John Smith - jsmith@lakenormansoccer.com - (704) ### - #### <i>Technical Director</i> - Paul Jones - pjones@lakenormansoccer.com - (704) ### - #### <i>High School Coach</i> - Nick Miller - nmiller@lakenormansoccer.com - (704) ### - #### <i>ODP Coach</i> - Peter Jones - pjones@ncuniv.edu - (704) ### - ####</p>

Do You Need a Video?

With technology ever expanding into the game of soccer, it can be a useful tool in the college recruiting process. Are highlight tapes necessary? Absolutely not. Can they be a valuable asset in showcasing yourself to a program? Absolutely yes. Highlight videos do not need to be elaborate productions or laden with professional quality content. Video content should follow the below guidelines:

- 4 - 7 minutes at most. Coaches do not want to spend an exuberant amount of time watching.
- Provide quality resolution video. Provide stable video that is not shaking.
- Showcase your strengths and desirable traits.
- Showcase common soccer strengths: shooting, passing (various types), dribbling, goal scoring, 1v1 defending or attacking situations, aerial battles, & competitive situations.
- Goalkeepers can utilize training environment situations and non-game exercises.

Provide a link to your video within your introduction letter and your player profile. Updated video can be sent at times but do not “spam” a coach’s account with video.

Visiting College Campuses

This information pertains primarily to NCAA schools. When referencing non NCAA programs, always check with the organization’s website to insure compliance with recruitment rules. The governing organizations meet on a regular basis and can change rules.

You can only learn so much from websites, the internet, and discussions with a coach. The best way to understand and learn about a specific college or university environment is to immerse yourself in it. Once you have finalized your top priority schools, you should attempt to arrange visits to each campus. While on campus try to do the following:

- Take a provided campus tour.
- Arrange a meeting with a prospective student counselor.
- Arrange a meeting with the coaching staff.
- Observe the quality of food, living arrangements, campus life, campus activities, etc. If possible eat a meal on campus and walk through the student recreation and activities areas.

Try to visit while school is in Fall or Spring semester if possible; this way you can see the students interacting and get a more realistic view of the environment. If you visit over the summer, keep in mind many colleges do offer summer programs; therefore, the students you see on campus may not be full-time students. The one benefit to summer visits is that they can be arranged around camp attendance, and coaching staff members are usually more free to meet.

While on campus, try to schedule a time to visit with the coaching staff. This is a great opportunity to get one-on-one time and learn as much as possible about the staff, program, and overall athletic environment. This is also a great time to begin to build a relationship with the coaching staff and see if on a personal level that coach suits you. When meeting with staff, keep a copy of your transcript and player profile on hand. Bring a parent if possible, but keep in mind the coach is not recruiting your parents; they are recruiting you, and they will likely want one-on-one time with you as a young adult. Be prepared to both answer and ask questions.

Official vs. Unofficial Visits

Simply put an official visit is paid for by the school, limited to 48 hours on campus, and you are only allowed 5 total your Senior year of high school. Unofficial visits are at your own expense, time, and are unlimited. Completion of the SAT and/or ACT, as well as high school transcript are prerequisites to an official visit. Usually an official visit consists of an overnight stay where you will have a member of the soccer team as your host. You will meet the coach and the team, learn more about the program, attend a class, and possibly attend a game. You may also meet other recruited athletes there for a visit. While

there, talk to people and learn as much as you can. College coaches usually reserve official visits for already verbally-committed players, but exceptions can be made.

When arranging an official or unofficial visit, here are some tips:

- Communicate a clear date you will be on campus well in advance.
- Communicate the best possible contact information to reach you at by phone or email.
- In case you are a Sophomore, or unavailable, communicate contact information for your coach.
- Try to plan your visit around a game, meeting with coaching staff post-game can be easier.
- Ask to meet with a member of the department of interest for your career path.
- Ask to meet with an admissions counselor.
- Try to see the campus on a regular school day while class is in session.
- Follow up with the staff post visit with a thank you email.

Tryouts

This information pertains primarily to NCAA schools. When referencing non NCAA programs always check with the other organizations website to insure compliance with recruitment rules. The governing organizations meet on a regular basis and can change rules.

NCAA Division I and Division III programs cannot in any form or fashion provide a tryout nor conduct any physical activity (practice session, workout, etc) at which one or more prospective student-athletes display their athletic ability. In short you cannot tryout for, or participate in training, at the Division I and III level while on official or unofficial visits.

NCAA Division II programs can allow participation at utilized facilities for a prospective student-athlete under two conditions:

1. No more than one “tryout” allowed for a student.
2. The player must be a high school senior participating in his respective sport’s high school season or have already completed it.

Your Personal Recruiting Timeline

Your recruiting timeline is yours and yours only. Each process is different for each player. Do not get caught up in recruiting “envy” or ever feel that you are falling behind others. There are too many variables between yourself, the program, and the recruiting process to make assumptions.

Communicate as clearly as you can, and only worry about what you can control. It is not uncommon for players to verbally commit as early as their Sophomore year, while it is more common for verbal commitments to take place within the Spring of Junior year and Fall of Senior year. It is not uncommon at all for players to commit after signing day (February of Senior year). Keep in mind that just like your club soccer team, a college team can change as players graduate, transfer, quit, etc. When these things happen, potential scholarship money and roster spots become available.

National Letter of Intent

The NLI is a binding agreement between a prospective student-athlete and an NLI member institution stating two conditions:

1. A prospective student-athlete agrees to attend the institution full-time for one academic year (two semesters or three quarters).
2. The institution agrees to provide athletics financial aid for one academic year (two semesters or three quarters).

Basic penalty for not fulfilling the NLI agreement: A student-athlete has to serve one year in residence (full-time, two semesters or three quarters) at the next NLI member institution and lose one season of competition in all sports. If you have questions about the NLI visit the web site at: <http://www.national-letter.org>

Parent Information

This information pertains primarily to NCAA schools. When referencing non NCAA programs, always check with the other organization's website to insure compliance with recruitment rules. The governing organizations meet on a regular basis and can change rules.

We recommend you read the NCAA Prospective Student-Athlete Publication. This is updated yearly and released at no cost. You can utilize the two links below to find the most recent edition:

- 1) <https://www.ncaapublications.com/p-4354-2014-15-ncaa-guide-for-the-college-bound-student-athlete-sold-as-a-package-of-25.aspx>
- 2) <http://www.ncaapublications.com/productdownloads/CBSA15.pdf>

Financial Aid

If your child is eligible to participate in intercollegiate athletics and is accepted as a full-time student at a Division I or II school, they may receive athletics-based financial aid from the school. That aid could include tuition and fees, room and board, and books. Division III schools do not award financial aid based on athletic ability. A Division III college may award aid based on need or academics. Some parents are uncomfortable pursuing private out-of-state Division III institutions because of the sticker price. Do not think that just because a college costs \$40,000 or more per year that you cannot afford to attend. The cost of college all comes down to your ultimate out-of-pocket cost, which is not necessarily the tuition price inside the college catalog.

Although Division III institutions do not offer athletic scholarships, there are definite avenues to receive financial assistance such as need-based or academic-based aid. A non-qualifier may receive only need-based financial aid (aid not related to athletics). A non-qualifier also may receive non-athletics aid from private sources or government programs (such as Pell grants). For more information contact the college's financial aid office.

Here are some important things to know about athletic scholarships from Division I and II schools:

- All athletics scholarships are limited to one year. There are no four-year athletic scholarships.
- Athletics scholarships may be renewed annually for a maximum of five years within a six-year period of continuous college attendance. Athletics aid may be canceled or reduced at the end of each year for any reason.
- Athletics scholarships are awarded in a variety of amounts, ranging from full scholarships (tuition, room and board, etc.) to small scholarships (books).
- The total amount of financial aid a student-athlete may receive and the total amount of athletic scholarship money a player may receive can be limited. These limits can affect whether a student athlete may accept additional financial aid from other sources. You must inform the college financial aid office about scholarships received from all sources, such as civic or booster clubs.
- The athletics scholarship can be a benefit to your family, but it is always best to have a plan to pay for college if an athletic scholarship is canceled or reduced.

For information on financial aid utilize the FAFSA website: <https://fafsa.ed.gov>

What is FAFSA?

The first step for obtaining financial aid is to fill out the FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid) at www.fafsa.ed.gov. The biggest mistake a lot of families make is not filling out the FAFSA out because they think their family income is too high. This could not be further from the truth. Most colleges offer every academically qualified student, with a FAFSA on file, some amount of financial aid. To qualify for any financial aid, colleges require that FAFSA be completed each year.

On the FAFSA final page, in very small type, there will be a number. That is your EFC (expected family contribution). The cost of attendance above your EFC becomes your need-based financial aid eligibility. Even if you do not receive a significant amount of financial aid, you should still complete the FAFSA because it can act as an insurance policy for your prospective student-athlete's education. If there is a change or loss of income, or an emergency in your family, reconsideration may be requested if you have completed the FAFSA for that year.

The first date you may submit the FAFSA is January 1 of your prospective student-athlete's senior year. Submit the FAFSA on, or as soon after January 1 as possible. You may use accurately estimated financial figures if you have not yet completed your tax return. Later, with your completed tax return, you will go back in and update the information. University financial aid budgets are limited and are awarded on a first-come-first-served basis. Completing FAFSA early in the year may improve your chances of receiving aid. Each college/university has a specific deadline and at a certain point, the money does run out.

If you have questions regarding FAFSA or would like guidance on the best financial aid options for you in your college search, feel free to contact Dr. George Gately with Succeed Where It Counts at: george@succeedwhereitcounts.com

Stacking

Aid comes from schools in three forms (1) Need-Based Aid (2) Athletic Aid and (3) Merit Aid. Need-Based Aid means that your family's financial resources, as measured by a formula established by the federal government, are not sufficient to cover your educational costs. Athletic Aid is awarded based on evaluation of your athletic ability. Merit Aid is awarded based on qualifying standards such as academic or extracurricular merit.

The primary piece of information you need to know is specific institutions allow different ways for these type of aid to come together, or "stack." Some schools allow all three to stack, some only allow two to stack, some don't allow any stacking at all. Some schools may even cap the amount you can stack in a specific type of aid, based on other awarded amounts. Again it is important to note these types of regulations are college or university specific and you need to obtain this information from the institution, coaching staff, or student enrollment counselor.

Recruiting Programs (Agents)

During high school, you might be contacted by a scouting/recruiting service. The NCAA does not sanction or endorse any of these services. Remember, a scouting/recruiting service cannot base its fee on the amount of the student's scholarship. There cannot be any money back guarantee. LNSC does not recommend utilizing a recruiting service.

In closing, always remember to ask questions when you are not certain, let the player be the driving force in this process, and utilize all the resources at your disposal. You are always welcome to contact your Director of Coaching, your Coach, or previous LNSC players that have been through the college recruitment process. We wish you the best of luck in your endeavors to become a college student-athlete.

With regards,

LNSC Soccer Staff