

College Bound Birmingham



Students touring UNC at Chapel Hill listen to a campus guide.

By **JOHNNY NATHAN**
Staff Writer

For the past three years, Kristine Sartelle has been running College Bound Birmingham, an organization that helps expose teens to different types of colleges. On these trips, Sartelle takes students from Birmingham on visits to colleges around the South. Prior to each of the trips, Sartelle thoroughly plans out places to visit and people to meet at each school.

"I do this in order for the students to get a better feel for the campuses," Sartelle said.

These trips, designed to help students get an idea of where they want to go to college, take place throughout the year.

"On these trips, I want students to be able to gain exposure to different colleges and also have a chance to talk to students and professors at

Photo courtesy of Kristine Sartelle the colleges, eat meals around the campuses and explore different areas of the colleges that might interest them," Sartelle said.

Sartelle has had a lot of experience in helping high schoolers prepare for college. Sartelle said, "Before starting College Bound Birmingham, I worked in the admissions office at Birmingham-Southern College. I also ran the Summer Scholars Program at Birmingham-Southern, in which high school students spent the summer attending college classes and 'practicing' being a college student."

Sartelle is going to be taking several more trips this year because of increased demand. "Interest for the College Bound trips has grown immensely over the past three years," she said.

This week, from Sept. 27 to Sept. 29, she took a group on a trip to tour some of the colleges in Texas. "Later

in the year, from Feb. 14 to Feb. 18, I will take a group to visit Georgetown, W&L, UVA, Wake Forest, UNC at Chapel Hill, Duke, Furman and Georgia."

Sartelle also hopes to be able to organize a trip for either the spring or summer of 2019 to visit Clemson, College of Charleston and Wofford.

Sartelle said, "One of the main reasons I started College Bound was in order to 'open the doors' for students and to introduce them to their options for colleges."

Many students who have attended some of Sartelle's trips in the past found the experience rewarding.

"College Bound Birmingham really helped me get a feel for the type of campus and school I was looking for," said junior Mac Scott. Scott attended a College Bound trip in January, visiting Georgetown, W&L, UVA, Wake Forest, UNC at Chapel Hill and Davidson.

"I was pretty sure I wanted to go to a larger school that had some Greek life, and the College Bound trip simply helped me confirm that."

Ricky Gauld, a senior who at-

tended the same trip as Scott, said, "College Bound prioritized being in the college atmosphere and benefited me more than any presentation, picture or brochure could do." The reason for this, Gauld said, "is because of how personalized Mrs. Sartelle makes the trips. She finds out what each individual student is interested in, and she plans the trips to encapsulate those interests."

If students are interested in attending one of the College Bound trips, they can get in touch with Sar-

telle through the College Bound website, www.collegeboundbirmingham.com. The next available trip will be from Feb. 14 to Feb. 18 and will

again include some of the Southeastern schools, including Georgetown, W&L, UVA, Wake Forest, UNC at Chapel Hill, Furman and Georgia. The cost of this trip will be \$1950, including airfare.

Sartelle hopes that support for the trips will continue to grow, as it has in the past. "I look forward to setting more students on the right path to choosing a college."

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