

TOP HIGH SCHOOLS RECRUIT AT ROBERT TREAT ACADEMY

Griseo Belem took the day off from her job as a beautician at Jersey Gardens Mall.

But Belem, the mother of Robert Treat Academy eighth grader Ileanic Alifonso, had a full schedule.

From 9 a.m. to 3 p.m., Belem and her daughter spent the day at Robert Treat Academy's high school fair interviewing with admissions officers from 12 schools, many of them prestigious preparatory schools in New England and as far south as Virginia.

"This is a good opportunity for the students," said Belem, whose daughter plays the violin, piano and trumpet and is hoping to attend the Lawrenceville School next fall.

Admissions officers from 30 private boarding, day and parochial high schools filled Robert Treat Academy's multipurpose room for its fifth annual high school fair Sept. 23. As classical music played softly, students and their parents interviewed with admissions officers from the best high schools on the East Coast.

"It's really the first step in the application process," said Robert Treat Academy Principal Michael Pallante. "The kids really prepare for this day. They are ready to be interviewed and they put their best foot forward."

Robert Treat, a 2008 Blue Ribbon charter school founded in 1997 in Newark's North Ward, has sent an unusually large percentage of its graduates to private high schools. Last year's graduating class received scholarship offers of more than \$3.1 million.

Yuri Francis, the director of multicultural enrollment and planning at St. Paul's School in New Hampshire, said Robert Treat has sent seven students to the school since 2005.

"The students have done well,"



Robert Treat Academy student Brittany D'Oleo interviews with Rob Mitchell, the assistant director of admissions and financial aid at the Morristown Board School in Morristown.

Francis said. "We think Robert Treat is doing a great job of preparing students for independent school. We want to continue building on the relationship."

Francis said the school actively recruits in urban areas like Newark to ensure its student population is diverse. The tuition at the school is \$42,900 this year, but Robert Treat graduates who attended have received full scholarships.

"There's only a small segment of the population that can afford our tuition," Francis said. "We could easily fill our kids with students paying the full tuition. But we don't want to do that. It would be a disservice. Students from urban areas diversify the dialog in the classroom."

Emily Atkinson, the director of admissions at Episcopal High School in Alexandria, Va., said students from Robert Treat are well prepared to handle the rigorous academic program

at Episcopal, where tuition is \$42,000 annually. Each grade at the high school has at least one student from Robert Treat.

"The students from Robert Treat are leaders, they are purposeful and they have a great deal of integrity," Atkinson said. "Students from Robert Treat benefit from being at a school with a first-rate academic program and access to all the resources of the nation's capital. They enjoy being in a 100 percent boarding community with other motivated and focused students from around the world."

Other high schools who were at the fair: Portsmouth Abbey, Groton, Blair Academy, Phillips Exeter, George School, St. Andrews, Middlesex, Canterbury, Queen of Peace, Newark Academy, Montclair Kimberly Academy, Delbarton, Morristown Beard, Peddie School, Christ the King Prep, Miss Porters, Loomis-Chaffee,

Suffield, Williston Northhampton, The Hill School, Lawrenceville, Pennington, Hotchkiss, St. Marks, Wyoming Seminary, Northfield Mt. Hermon, Church Farm School and Ethel Walker.

Migdalia Ramos said she is impressed with the boarding schools, but her son Eugene Harry Ramos, is interested in the private and parochial schools in New Jersey. His top three choices are Montclair Kimberly Academy in Montclair, the Delbarton School in Morristown and Seton Hall Prep in West Orange.

"I look forward to the day he goes away to college," Ramos said. "But he has a younger sibling and he wants to be a big brother. He has high goals. He wants to be a cardiologist and he's looking to go to Harvard. He's very motivated and excited about the challenges that lie ahead."

Stephen N. Aduabato, the founder of Robert Treat Academy who dropped in on the high school fair, said it is one of the most exciting days at the school.

"These students are getting opportunities that few children in urban areas have," Aduabato said, who also founded The North Ward Center. "The fact that these kids are from Newark is not a disadvantage. When they attend these prestigious high schools, they are just as well prepared academically as every other student."

Adrienne Davis, the executive director of The North Ward Center and the vice president of Robert Treat's board of trustees, said the high school fair is a great way for students to see where they may fit in best.

"Not every student will end up at a boarding school," Davis said. "Our goal is to make sure they attend a high school where they will reach their full potential."