

West Virginia University
Parents Electronic News
November 25, 2008

I hope you are all gearing up for the tour-de-turkey in two short days as many of us will trek from family-member's-house to family-member's-house grazing all day. And then comes the next best thing - leftovers - at least for the first few days. The good news is, just when you are getting tired of all those leftovers, you can clean out the fridge and send the rest back to college with your student. Free, home-cooked food is always something to be thankful for as a college student!

I do hope your students have all arrived safely at home and are enjoying their week of R&R catching up with old friends and enjoying time with family over this week-long break. During this time, parents typically begin to hear chatter about housing for next fall. Details on this process - on campus and off campus options - are included below and more information will be forthcoming about the spring Off-Campus Housing Fair in future Parent E-Newsletters. As we look ahead, although officially still fall for nearly another month, winter weather has already descended upon Morgantown. Snow cover has come and gone several times already but daily dustings continue so remind those on the

roadways to use caution as folks head back to town this coming weekend. Once back, students will face one short week of classes just prior to finals week - December 8-13, 2008. The full schedule for finals can be found online at:

<http://www.wvu.edu/Redirect/?id=954>. Also be sure to check out the residence hall opening and closing information for

Thanksgiving and Winter Breaks online at <http://www.wvu.edu/Redirect/?id=955>. Be sure to read on for more

campus happenings and until next time, Happy Thanksgiving everyone! In this edition:

- ***NEW* WINTER 2008 MOUNTAINEER PARENTS CLUB NEWSLETTER AVAILABLE**

ONLINE ONLY

- **DECEMBER CONVOCATION JUST AROUND THE CORNER - Sunday, December 14**

- **SHOULD I STAY OR SHOULD I GO NOW? LIVING ARRANGEMENTS FOR 2009-2010**

- **SO YOUR STUDENT WANTS TO MOVE OFF CAMPUS NEXT YEAR...**

- **ON CAMPUS OPTIONS FOR UPPERCLASSMEN**

- **2009-2010 RESIDENT ASSISTANT APPLICATIONS NOW BEING ACCEPTED**

- **WOODBURN HALL LIGHT UP NIGHT - Tuesday, December 2**

- **TIPS FROM THE TRENCHES - MAJOR EXPLORATION AT WVU...THE OPPORTUNITIES**

ARE ENDLESS

***NEW* WINTER 2008 MOUNTAINEER PARENTS CLUB NEWSLETTER
AVAILABLE ONLINE ONLY**

The Mountaineer Parents Club is happy to announce that the Winter 2008 newsletter can be found online! As part of the University-wide effort to "Go Green", this issue of the Mountaineer Parents Club Newsletter will be available on our website ONLY. Also, on our web site go to the Question of the Month and let us know what you think of the new format. Please go to <http://www.wvu.edu/Redirect/?id=956> to read the newsletter.

DECEMBER CONVOCATION JUST AROUND THE CORNER - Sunday, December 14

Congratulations to those of your getting ready to be the parents of a WVU Graduate! In December graduates are recognized during a university-wide Convocation as degrees are not officially conferred the day of the ceremony. That said, this ceremony still resembles the May Commencement ceremonies and is filled with tradition, including students and faculty in full academic regalia.

December graduates are reminded to RSVP to participate in the December Graduates Convocation -- scheduled for Sunday, December 14 at 1:30 p.m. at the Coliseum. This University-wide event will recognize those completing their degrees in August and December 2008. Students should check with their academic advisors to confirm that they have met all requirements, apply for graduation, and pay any applicable fees. The University will again partner with Bob Knight Photography to capture graduation photos of each student on-stage, and proofs will be e-mailed within 24 hours the event conclusion. To RSVP and for complete event details please, visit <http://www.wvu.edu/Redirect/?id=957>.

SHOULD I STAY OR SHOULD I GO NOW? LIVING ARRANGEMENTS FOR 2009-2010

Below are a three articles to consider as your students begin to think about housing arrangements - on campus or off campus - for next year. Please read on and check out the links for additional information on these options:

- SO YOUR STUDENT WANTS TO MOVE OFF CAMPUS NEXT YEAR...

If your students come home during Thanksgiving Break and begin discussing off-campus living options with you, we suggest that you tell them to wait until the spring semester after they have at least one semester's grades under their belts. Also at this point will be the Off-Campus Housing Fair scheduled to be held, Wednesday, January 14 from 10-3 in the Mountainlair Ballrooms where students can make one stop to gain useful information, meet landlords and collect information about possible rentals. In West Virginia, leases are nearly impossible to break, which means that once a student signs on the dotted line, he or she is obligated to pay rent for the entire term of the lease, no matter what happens. Many landlords permit subleasing, but it can be a difficult process to sublease an apartment or a place in an apartment, and students who sublease their apartments are still

ultimately responsible for any damages caused by the new tenant. Furthermore, the majority of leases for students in the Morgantown area involve joint and several liability, meaning that if a student does not come back to campus, the landlord may look to the remaining tenants to make up the remainder of rent due. Individual leases are available from a few apartment complexes, which limits each student's liability to only his or her own portion of the rent and security deposit.

For first-year students, it's a good idea for them to begin looking around the areas where many students live. However, keep in mind that they are also welcome to reapply to live in the residence halls, which they must do before January 24, 2009. While the majority of students do move off-campus for their second year and this can be an exciting time for them, please tell your student to do his or her homework first. Students should begin by creating a budget for their off-campus living expenses; this should include rent, cost of utilities, food, furnishings, and other expenses. Then, after arriving at a comfortable budget, students should then begin to look at apartments in their price range. Before signing a lease, however, students should call Allegheny Power and Dominion Hope Gas to obtain an average monthly estimate of the electric and gas bills for the particular unit they are considering renting. The offices of Off Campus Housing and also Student Legal Services are available to help students understand and navigate this process, but you as parents are huge assets as well. For more tips you can visit the Off-Campus Housing website at: <http://www.wvu.edu/Redirect/?id=958>.

- RETURNING TO LIVE ON CAMPUS NEXT YEAR 2009-2010

Although many students choose to move off campus after their freshman year, we do offer on-campus housing options for those wishing to return to the residence halls. Both you and your student will receive information shortly after Thanksgiving Break about on-campus housing options available.

The process starts December 1, with a cutoff date of January 20, 2009, to submit the Housing Application and \$225 deposit. A designated number of rooms for current WVU students will be allotted on a first-come, first-served basis and room selection will take place shortly after the January 20th deadline. Students can choose to "homestead"-keep their current room-or choose another room. For specific details, a checklist and frequently asked questions about the process, go to <http://www.wvu.edu/Redirect/?id=959>.

- FALL 2009-SPRING 2010 RESIDENT ASSISTANT APPLICATIONS NOW BEING ACCEPTED

If your student is looking for an opportunity to stay on campus but take on some additional responsibilities and earn some money, the Resident Assistant (RA) position may be the perfect fit. Being an RA provides a unique opportunity to grow personally while helping residence hall students succeed at the university. Due to the unique nature and impact of the position, the selection process is very competitive.

Since Resident Assistants must be full time students at WVU, we encourage students to think carefully about their own academic expectations and the possible impact of the Resident Assistant position. Our experience has been that the academic demands of professional programs (i.e., medicine, fifth year of teacher education program, dentistry, and law) are very time consuming and may not allow a student the time necessary to fulfill the duties of a Resident Assistant.

Students should check with their department if they have any questions regarding their program commitments.

NOTE: If your student wants to live in University housing and they are not hired as an RA, they should meet all on campus housing application deadlines. If your student applies to live in University housing and are subsequently hired to be an RA, he or she will be released from the regular housing contract and the full amount of the housing deposit will be credited back to the student account. The Resident Assistant position provides full coverage for a single room and meals during the appointment period. This is considered to be a resource for purposes of financial aid and scholarship processing and can impact on other aid programs and/or scholarships for which a student might otherwise qualify.

Applications are due hand-delivered or postmarked no later than NOON on Friday, January 23, 2009 to the Office of Residential Education in Brooke Tower. For more on this process, please go to: <http://www.wvu.edu/Redirect/?id=960>.

WOODBURN HALL LIGHT UP NIGHT - Tuesday, December 2

We hope you have a safe, relaxing, and enjoyable break with your students. When they return, encourage them to drop by as we kick off the holiday season with the annual lighting of Woodburn Hall on December 2, at 7 p.m.

TIPS FROM THE TRENCHES

MAJOR EXPLORATION AT WVU...THE OPPORTUNITIES ARE ENDLESS

by: Amber Hines - Davis College, Assistant Director of Student Recruitment and Retention and Katie Utterback - Parent Advocate

As we approach the end of the semester, often we find students who start considering a major change. As parents this can be overwhelming at times, but in the end, this process and exploration can be healthy to assure students are headed in the right direction for the right reason. When advising in my previous position, I had a student who came to college and enrolled as an engineering student. After a semester of fighting with the extensive math and science course load and realizing there was plenty more where that came from, I suggested he take a step back and look at what else was out there and what he really wanted to do with as a career. To my surprise, he had never even explored a fraction of the majors WVU has to offer. He had come to WVU with one idea and began

pursuing it. He was going to be an engineer and make good money. However, when I asked him to really reflect on what he was passionate about, it was working outside and with his hands. With this info I suggested he consider looking at our Landscape Architecture program. He had never considered this avenue and while there would still be some more math and science courses and the major can be competitive, it told me he felt like he finally knew exactly what he wanted to do and had landed where he wanted to be - he just didn't know it was out there before.

If this sounds like your student, they should know that there are many resources available to them and many of these can be found online and utilized over holiday breaks. I would first suggest they log on to the major flyers website where all WVU's majors are brought together and displayed in a similar format. This allows students to obtain the same information about each and compare and contrast likes and dislikes with some easy fact finding. These can be found online at: <http://www.wvu.edu/Redirect/?id=961>. Secondly, it always amazes me how many students never open their undergraduate catalog. This is a great resource and gives details about each major, course requirements for each, pre-requisites for each, as well as graduation requirements among other things. This too can be found online at <http://www.wvu.edu/Redirect/?id=962>.

The saying goes there are many means to the same end, and I think it is one of the most rewarding things to help a student who may feel like they are facing a life changing decision and show them that there are always other ways to reach their goal. To expand on this statement, I want to highlight just one of our thirteen Colleges to show the breadth of options and often hidden gems that may be exactly what your student is looking for but didn't know it until now!

The following was submitted by Amber Hines, Assistant Director of Student Recruitment and Retention for the Davis College of Agriculture, Forestry and Consumer Sciences.

Are you saying, surely nothing here could be for your student? I think you too will be pleasantly surprised... Read on and check out the links provided as I think you may also be pleasantly surprised!

DAVIS COLLEGE DETAILS:

Is your student still undecided about which college major to pursue? Has he or she explored the variety of majors available in the WVU Davis College of Agriculture, Forestry and Consumer Sciences? While the College's name may lead you to believe the majority of our graduates work exclusively on farms or in forests, don't let it deceive you. The College has so much more to offer.

Have a flair for fashion? Perhaps one of our design programs – Interior Design, Design Studies, or Fashion Design and Merchandising - would be a perfect fit for your student. The innovative programs offer design education that develops broad and flexible skills

that allow graduates to find employment as designers, managers, researchers, strategists and communicators.

In this eco-conscious world, maybe your son or daughter is interested in environmentally friendly approaches to agricultural production. Our Agroecology major teaches students to combine the concepts of crop production and environmental protection to create a sustained balance between production and environmental issues. Our nationally recognized faculty help prepare students for jobs with environmental consulting firms, organic farms and government support agencies - just to name a few.

We even offer programs for students who want to be doctors or veterinarians (Animal and Nutritional Sciences), dieticians (Human Nutrition & Foods), procurement foresters (Wood Science and Technology), and agricultural teachers (Agricultural and Extension Education). Log on to <http://www.wvu.edu/Redirect/?id=963> for more information about majors in the Davis College of Agriculture, Forestry and Consumer Sciences or contact Amber Hines, Assistant Director of Student Recruitment and Retention at 304-293-2691 or amber.hines@mail.wvu.edu.

Katie Utterback
Parent Advocate Office