Dear Ohio State Parents:

College is an exciting and challenging time in a young person’s life, and I share your pride, hopes and concerns as you watch your daughter or son embark on this journey. At Ohio State, we offer an abundance of opportunity that can be found only at a large, comprehensive teaching and research university, but we also are committed to creating a small, intimate environment where we know the best learning occurs. One way we do this is by creating living-learning centers that allow students with common academic or lifestyle interests to live and study in close-knit communities. Another is through the many offerings of the First Year Experience program, which helps students adjust to university life and still others will be found by participating in one or more of the 750 organized extracurricular student activities.

As parents, you are vital partners in education with your student and with Ohio State. I encourage you to stay involved with the university and track the progress of your student. Ask about classes, visit when you can, and encourage their participation in campus activities. Students who are involved in the campus community often enjoy the most successful and rewarding college experience. Familiarize yourself with the resources available so you will be able to respond to issues that may arise.

Keep this publication and refer to it when you have questions or concerns. You will discover an entire campus community ready to help. Finally, since communication is key to a successful partnership, please feel free to write to our university faculty or staff—or to me—with any concerns you have. Best wishes to your student for a highly successful year.

President Karen A. Holbrook

Building a college foundation with a solid first-year experience

By PHYLLIS MILLER
First Year Experience

As we welcome the entering class of 2004 to their first year at Ohio State, we know that as parents and family members, you are eager to learn more about the many experiences awaiting your student on our campus. Their new world will be filled with a host of first-year experiences, designed to enhance their academic experience and support them in achieving the ultimate goal: a successful college career leading to graduation. The important foundation for that success is built during a student’s first year.

Across our campus, you will find many programs, activities and events specifically targeted toward enhancing your student’s first-year experience. Whether it is our award-winning living-learning communities, the first quarter survey classes and support programs conducted by our colleges, Freshman Seminars, or our Buckeye Book Community and Distincted Speaker series, the university community provides resources specifically designed to assist our newest Buckeyes. Many of these programs are outlined in the following pages. All of our initiatives are planned to help your student maximize their first year at Ohio State by getting comfortable on campus, becoming connected with the university and thinking of Ohio State as their new home.

At orientation, we talk with your student about making the most of this important first year.

Welcome, parents of new Buckeyes! The Ohio State University Parent Association understands that having your son or daughter — whether your first child or your last — enter college can sometimes be a tough transition. As a parent, you will share with your student in the achievements, challenges, joys and frustrations that come with the college experience. We recognize and appreciate that today’s parents are more involved in their children’s college lives than previous generations were.

The OSU Parent Association exists to ensure that parents act as partners with the university in the educational experiences of their student. We strive to be a one-stop location for information — it is the real world. Learning to manage time and newfound independence will result in first-year students who are on their way to graduation.

Getting in the conversation

Education isn’t a passive experience. It’s a vibrant exchange of ideas. Nowhere is that more true than at Ohio State. We want our newest students to debate, question and contribute in the classroom, in their residence halls and in student activities. Their first year at Ohio State provides an opportunity to explore values and beliefs and to get energized by the diversity of thought and culture that is all around them. Successful students understand the difference between pursuing an education and getting a degree.

Becoming a Buckeye

Also key to a successful first year at Ohio State is a heart-felt membership in the greater university community. Involvement may consist of serving on a residence hall council, volunteering at University Hospitals or attending a hockey game. The opportunities are vast, but one thing is true: promising students get invested in Ohio State and the people around them. Our campus becomes home to first-year students as they learn the traditions and lore that permeates the university. Students spend their first year discovering the meaning of the last lines of our alma mater, Carmen Ohio: “How firm thy friendship…O-H-I-O!”

Family members as partners

As your student heads into his or her first year at Ohio State, it’s important to keep in mind that a partnership is forming among your student, the university and your family. All three have a vital interest in your student becoming an Ohio State success story. We hope that the information and resources provided to you form the basis of a very successful partnership.

Phyllis Miller is director of First Year Experience Programs in the Office of Undergraduate Admissions and First Year Experience.

This publication courtesy of onCampus, Ohio State’s faculty-staff newspaper.
An FYE welcome...

Dear Family Members

This may or may not be the first time you've sent a child off to college, but I know from personal experience that it is never easy... no matter how much practice you've had. You are confronted with a barrage of questions and emotions and your own excitement and high hopes for your child to succeed — and, candidly, there may be a touch of concern.

College is a special time in a young adult’s life, and while he or she may experience much of it on his or her own, we know that it is helpful for students to have the support of family and friends. Transitioning into college also is a new life experience for parents and family members, and we hope that the information Ohio State will help prepare you, as well as your student, for this special first year.

Ohio State realizes that a successful first year of college is key to the ultimate goal — staying in school and graduating. The editor and staff of onCampus, the faculty-staff newspaper for students, believe that through the orientation session at Ohio State today will help prepare family and friends. Transitioning into college also is a new life experience for parents and family members, and we hope that the information Ohio State will help prepare you, as well as your student, for this special first year.

While academic pursuit is the primary purpose for a student to come to Ohio State, this will also be a time of personal growth — decision-making, time and financial management, risk-taking and, sometimes, pushing the limits of newfound freedom. The university strives to foster a positive, safe and academically conducive environment. Ohio State has taken a nation-leading role in encouraging responsible college behavior and promoting community citizenship.

Critical to student success is the knowledge and familiarity of the various policies and regulations under which the university operates. Documents, such as the Code of Student Conduct, are made available to every student at various points of orientation and registration through the Office of Student Affairs and on the Web at studentaffairs.osu.edu, and provide the framework of university expectations, values and aspirations. We encourage you to review these documents with your student.

As you read in this insert, the university offers a number of structured programs and activities to contribute to student success, responsible behavior and a positive college experience.

Our Web site, www.osu.edu, is a great place to search for activities and resources, including those created specifically for parents or addressing issues of particular relevance to parents. Two sites worthy of mention are the Parents Web site at parents.osu.edu, and the Ohio State Parent Association at osuparents.org.

You can help your student build a strong foundation for his or her college career by familiarizing yourself with all that is available to you, and by expressing your support and your expectations. We want the college years to be pivotal to our students’ growth and development so that they may leave the university as educated citizens with talents and skills that will benefit our larger society. We also want, however, our students and their family members to truly enjoy the college years and experience the fun, the laughter, the friendships and the memories that make college such a unique experience.

We’ve included a regular insert of onCampus to give you a feel for the caliber of our faculty and administration, the spirit of the university, and the breadth of knowledge available to help your student — and you! — succeed during this first year of college. We thank you for being a partner with us in helping your student become a successful Buckeye and we welcome you to Ohio State!

— Mabel G. Freeman
Assistant Vice President
Undergraduate Admissions and First Year Experience

onCampus wishes to thank the following offices who made this insert possible:

Student Affairs
Multicultural Center
OSU Parent Association
Residence Life
Student Activities
Student Advocacy
Student Wellness Center
Undergraduate Admissions/First Year Experience

Photos by Kevin Fitzsimmons, Phil Larson, Eric Lowery and Jo McCullough

Success Series
helps students adjust to college life on their own

By Laura Ledée Kruty
Stanton Express

There is no doubt that the biggest challenge new college students face is negotiating a successful transition from high school to college and from their hometowns. How can Ohio State help?

One of the ways the university community helps students with that transition is through the First Year Experience. First-year students and some transfer students are required to take a one-credit hour survey course taught by their academic advisor during the student’s first quarter of enrollment.

Intended to assist the student in transitioning academically into the university, the survey course focuses on topics such as the scheduling of courses, the use of the library, information about majors or possible majors, career outlooks and academic opportunities.

Complementing the survey course, the First Year Success Series consists of more than 200 seminars organized around themes that echo the challenges students face during their university transition: dealing with difference, discovering their leadership style, managing choices about drugs and alcohol, staying mentally and physically well, managing finances and engaging in the academic community.

Campus and community experts teach these seminars, ranging in topics from “Women and Alcohol” and “Overcoming Test Anxiety,” to “Students and Academic Advisors: Partners in Academic Success” and “Financial Aid 101.” A number of programs relate to the Buckeye Book Community summer reading selections. Other sessions focus on bringing community leaders to campus to discuss their career paths and visions of leadership. In recent years, the Success Series has hosted astronaut and Senator John Glenn, Columbus City Schools Superintendent Gene Harris, Alumni Association President/CEO and Hornstein Trophy winner Archie Griffin, and a range of business and nonprofit leaders.

Survey course instructors may assign certain sessions, but students are free to attend as many as they would like.

Registration for the sessions can be found on the First Year Experience Web site at fyelive.osu.edu, and parents are encouraged to participate in this process by reviewing the topics and encouraging their student to attend appropriate sessions.

To discourage a passive experience, students are asked to write one-minute reflection papers at the end of each program. In these, students describe or reflect about what they have learned in that program and share what this topic means for them personally. Reflection papers also provide the student the opportunity to ask any questions about the topic in a confidential manner. Completed reflection papers are delivered to the appropriate academic adviser the following week so that advisers can keep abreast of their students’ thoughts and feelings.

Laura Lembo Kraus is associate director in the Office of Undergraduate Admissions and First Year Experience.

Money management:
Discussion, guidelines encourage sound fiscal practices

By Ruth Gerstner
Student Affairs

Parents, have you had “the talk” with your college-bound son or daughter? The one about money? College is a major expense and each family will have its own way of handling it. The important thing is that both parents and students have a clear understanding of how financial responsibilities will be divided in their family.

Larry Christopherson, financial counselor in the Student Wellness Center, offers free classes, workshops and individual counseling for students on personal finance issues. His top tips include:

1. Create a budget that shows anticipated expenses: tuition and fees, housing and food, books and supplies, clothing, entertainment, travel. Don’t forget to include a reserve for unexpected expenses or an emergency. Calculate how much money is available and where it is coming from — student’s savings and income, parental contributions, financial aid. Are adjustments needed to balance income with expenses?

2. Manage debt wisely. Paying interest on a student loan used for tuition and fees is a good investment. Paying interest on credit card purchases of fast food and entertainment is not. One credit card is sufficient for almost all students and should be reduced to essential uses — not everyday expenses. Keep the balance low and pay it off entirely as often as possible.

3. Buck-ID and/or a bank debit card provide the convenience of a credit card without the risk of incurring debt. Parents may make deposits to Buck-ID accounts through the Web site or phone.

4. Be wary of any money-making offers that require upfront costs to join, base income on the number of others you recruit to join or emphasize secrecy. These are highly likely to be scams. The university does not permit solicitation for these kinds of businesses on campus, but students are often approached privately and, unfortunately, some do lose money (and time) trying to cash in on what are essentially pyramid schemes.

A 2002 study of student employment showed that two-thirds of Ohio State undergraduates were employed during the academic year. More than 80 percent of them worked part time, averaging about 21 hours per week, at an average hourly rate of $8.24.

For many students, especially first-year students, working on campus is a good choice. Last year, about 11,650 students were employed in part-time university jobs in libraries, offices, laboratories, food service, housekeeping and maintenance operations, and a host of other places. The advantages of on-campus work include no need for transportation, scheduling that takes course work and university holidays into consideration, and, often, a mentoring relationship with faculty and staff. Students interested in finding university employment can attend a job fair during Welcome Week, contact the Student Employment Office, or contact a department or office in which they have interest. Campus jobs also are often advertised by fliers and ads in The Lantern.

Ruth Gerstner is director of communications in the Office of Student Affairs.
On Campus

Summer 2004 3

Health 101: Take care of your body while feeding your mind

By RUTH GERSTNER
director of communications
in the Office of Student Affairs.

When health and wellness topics come up at orientation, now college students often “zone out,” but moms and dads have lots of questions. The university, therefore, wants to make sure that parents, as well as students, are aware of the services available.

These services are for all students. Many of them, especially the preventive services offered by the Student Wellness Center, are free. No one should ask a student about payment or her or her parents seeking aid for health and wellness problems, physical or mental. If paying for necessary services is a problem, the university will work with the student and family to find a solution.

More detailed information about each of these areas is provided in the Resource Guide distributed to parents and students at orientation. Each office also has a Web site, which can be accessed from the Office of Student Affairs homepage (studentaffairs.osu.edu). If you have questions, don’t hesitate to call or e-mail.

Medical care

The Wexner Student Health Center is a fully accredited outpatient facility, staffed by physicians, registered nurses and other highly qualified health care professionals. It provides primary care as well as a number of specialty services. All students are eligible to use the Student Health Center and are encouraged to develop a relationship with one of the primary care physicians on staff, who can serve as their “family doctor” while they’re on campus.

Among the services offered by the health center are allergy treatments, immunizations, a full-service pharmacy, laboratory, radiology, physical therapy, sports medicine, dental and optometric services, and women’s and men’s specialty care.

Most services are provided by appointment, but injuries or illnesses that require immediate attention will be scheduled for a physician visit on the same day. In addition, students can visit the Advice Nurse. The Advice Nurse, available by phone at 292-4321 during regular hours, can help a student decide whether or not symptoms indicate a need to see a doctor, provide first aid information and schedule appointments with physicians.

Students with on-going or chronic health problems are encouraged to consider enrolling in the Student Wellness Center in advance of their arrival so that appropriate coordination of care can be arranged with their current health care providers.

Students with urgent medical needs on evenings and weekends are directed to the OSU Medical Center emergency department. The Medical Center also is a place where a student needing hospital services would be taken by an EMT unit. Specialty services not offered at the Student Health Center are available at the Medical Center, located on the south end of campus.

All students on the Columbus campus are required to have adequate medical insurance. They may choose to enroll in the university-sponsored plan or may be covered by another plan, such as one offered by a parent’s employer. Students not choosing the university plan must provide proof of other, similar coverage.

Wellness

Wellness is more than the absence of disease. It is a multidimensional way to look at health, encompassing the social, intellectual, career/occupational, emotional and spiritual aspects of an individual, as well as physical well-being. The Student Wellness Center, located in the Wexner Student Health Center, promotes health-enhancing behaviors affecting all dimensions of wellness.

Some examples of the programs and activities directed toward alcohol and other drug abuse prevention, smoking cessation, sexual health, nutrition and financial education. Individual consultations are available, as well as group programs. Visit swc.osu.edu for a complete list of programs and services. The Student Wellness Center is largely an educational unit dedicated to helping students identify and address unhealthy behaviors and situations in their own lives.

Free health risk appraisals are available to all students. First, they fill out a confidential online questionnaire (swc.osu.edu/ HRA/surveya.asp) about lifestyle, then schedule an individual appointment for follow-up and screenings for body fat, cholesterol, blood pressure and other health risk factors.

Alcohol

Alcohol abuse is a major problem for many college students, including those at Ohio State, contributing to poor academic performance, injuries and assaults, difficulties with interpersonal relationships and health concerns. Alcohol abuse on the campus or off campus is a factor in many cases of sexual assault. Many of the Wellness Center initiatives are directed toward reducing the negative effects of alcohol among students. A new feature is MyStudentBody.com, a Web site where students can honestly and anonymously assess the effect drinking has in their lives. Students who wish to enter the site should use the school code BUCKEYES, and parents may enter using WELLNESS as the school code.

The university and the local police strictly enforce Ohio’s alcohol laws, which forbid anyone under the age of 21 to drink or possess beer or any other alcoholic beverage. First offenses student support roles. The department provides programs and sponsors events that stimulate the intellect on multicultural and intercultural concerns, and it promotes student involvement and leadership development through work with many student organizations.

A few of the many offerings of the MCC in any year include student events such as the African-American Expressions, Appalachian Workshops, Asian Pacific American Heritage Month, Fall Fest, Martin Luther King Jr. Day, Multicultural Awareness, Multicultural Leadership Awards, National Coming Out Day, Self-Defense Classes for Women and the Women’s Leadership Forum. The center also has provided opportunities for students to mingle with notable persons. The MCC co-sponsored the campus visit of Morris Dees of the Southern Poverty Law Center and Tolerance.org as part of the President and Provost’s Diversity Lecture Series. In April, Judge Joe Brown presided over putting hip hop on trial at an MCC Town Hall Forum, and the author of the novel The Dirty Girls Social Club, Alisa Valdes-Rodriguez, garnered rave reviews for her talk reflecting on the complexities of social and cultural identity development.

Events and opportunities

The MCC has a dual mission to serve both academic and student support roles. The department provides programs and sponsors events that stimulate the intellect on multicultural and intercultural concerns, and it promotes student involvement and leadership development through work with many student organizations.

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Many events throughout the year occur in the MCC, and several casually appointed student lounges and meeting rooms are especially inviting. One contains a large-screen TV that is perfect for the drop-in viewing during the day or by reservation for events in the evening. In addition, students serve as key leaders on major projects and programs sponsored by the center. Students are members of the advisory councils for the offices in the MCC, and many student organizations meet in the center regularly. The center sponsors numerous multicultural outings each year, and promotes diversity involvement in OSU traditions. Employment for students with Federal Work Study as part of their financial aid awards is available. Also, the center connects communities on and off campus through promoting diversity, and enhances academic experiences by providing internship opportunities for students.

Visit the Multicultural Center to learn more about what’s happening and how to get involved on campus. Check out the MCC on the Web at multiculturalcenter.osu.edu or call 688-4449. Contact MCC offices directly for further information on getting involved and receiving regular e-mail updates from particular offices.

Jennifer Nichols is coordinator of new diversity initiatives and Willis Young is associate director of the Multicultural Center.
A Buckeye view:
A student and her mother talk candidly about the first-year experience

onCampus invited Bethany Willis, a freshman majoring in industrial and systems engineering, and her mother, Wanda Bayless Willis, an Ohio State alumna, to share their views of the first year of college.

onCampus: Do you think you and your mom/daughter had similar expectations for how the first year at OSU would be?

Wanda: I expected Bethany to do well in college, coming off a successful high school career. However, she was vacillating among three majors, so that was stressful for us at first. We soon realized that she didn’t have to make the decision immediately, that there were plenty of resources here to assist her in her choice. With the help of aptitude testing and interest inventories performed through the Career Connection at the Youkunin Success Center, Bethany ultimately settled on a major that combined all three of the areas that were competing for her attention from the beginning.

Bethany: Even though I was stressed, I soon realized it was wonderful to have the opportunity to explore my options. The advising through the Youkunin Success Center’s career counseling office helped me define my strengths, values and interests. They compared my results against all the majors offered here to be sure I wasn’t missing another possibility.

onCampus: How does college differ from high school?

Bethany: College is much more challenging than high school. Information comes much faster, and you don’t have as much time to review it and make sure you understand it. College also is very unstructured. While you can schedule classes based on your preferred schedule, you rarely can complete work during class, so you must manage your time to fit in all your assignments. I thought I’d have more free time here — between classes and in the evenings, but it seems all my time is really taken up. I try to make the most of pockets of my free time to get my work done.

onCampus: How did new student orientation help prepare you for OSU?

Wanda: I was very pleased with the orientation program. The various sessions provided a lot of information in terms of campus life, what to expect and resources to tap. It reminded parents that college is different — it’s more challenging — than it may have been in our day. We also found the customized sessions for various groups, such as for minority students and honors students, helpful.

Bethany: I had the opportunity to confer with advisers from different departments who were on hand to answer questions on the various courses and the nuances between courses that appeared similar or were offered in different departments.

onCampus: What campus programs or resources did you use throughout the year?

Bethany: I learned about a number of resources through the required freshman survey course autumn quarter, and the First Year Success Series. I learned about the Financial Education and Credit Counseling Program at the Student Wellness Center and the Multicultural Center, and all the services and opportunities they offer. I used the tutoring offered through the Office of Minority Affairs and the tutor rooms around campus, where you can drop in and graduate students assist you in just about every subject.

Wanda: From orientation, I knew of a number of resources available on campus, so when Bethany was trying to decide her major, we thought Career Connection might be a good place to start. I also suggested the Engineering Career Services office, thinking Bethany could go there to see what types of jobs appealed to her and what the requirements were to get her an idea of what major she might want to pursue. I also think it is important for parents to know who to call in the residence hall in case there is a problem or if you need to contact your son or daughter. Parents should know as much about the campus as possible.

onCampus: How do you do at balancing academics and free time/fun/hobbies?

Bethany: It’s a matter of choosing what things will fit into your schedule and making sure the social activities do not take the place of academics. There are so many wonderful programs available here. I am heavily involved in my residence hall, which makes it easier to return home after class. I’m on the hall council and treasurer of my dorm, which has allowed me to interact with fellow residents.

Wanda: Our relationship has matured; I see her as more of an adult. I provide guidance now in a different way than when she was younger. My job of teaching and training is finished, so now my role is to provide guidance for life as an adult. And because of this transition, I am finding Bethany is becoming increasingly sure of her own decisions.

onCampus: Wanda, what advice do you have for parents of future Buckeyes?

Wanda: Know and trust your child. Make sure you are there to listen — that’s the most important piece. Don’t be the advice-giver or judge. Guide them through their own decision-making, but be there for them. It is the support piece that they are looking for. You are the foundation, and you still need to be there for them to stand on that foundation, even though they are beginning to fly. Listen.
Students living locally with their parents, or nontraditional first-year students who live off campus and commute to class have the additional challenge of pursuing on their own the supportive and social aspects of campus life. Ohio State maintains a strong Office of Off-campus Student Services that provides a number of programs and community-building resources to help commuter students — about 10 percent of incoming students — meet each other and achieve a sense of university community.

“I tell commuter students there is nothing on this campus that isn’t accessible to them,” said Sean McLaughlin, assistant director of off-campus student services. “We encourage them to take advantage of everything that’s here, not be resistant to staying on campus after class, and to become involved. Even finding a job near or on campus will further tie you in.”

McLaughlin said the office, in the Ohio Union, attempts to offer a “home away from home” to commuter students on campus for the day, including a lounge with television and Internet computer terminals, a kitchenette and even lockers so students don’t have to run to their car to drop off or pick up books or lunch. The office hosts a number of events, such as the annual Commuter Preview Day in September, designed to familiarize commuters with campus, parking regulations and important office locations. It also sponsors a Commuter Student Organization, which holds euchre tournaments and Mudball games, and publishes a quarterly newsletter, Connection.

“We also collaborate with other offices to get commuter students involved with programs that already exist,” he said. In addition to getting used to the commute, their classes and the campus, McLaughlin advised commuter students to address the impact their family environment may have on their studies — a factor campus residents don’t directly experience. Students may need uninterrupted study time, and perhaps a more flexible curfew to accommodate extracurricular and social activities, as well as perhaps a job. Again, McLaughlin stresses, it’s all about communication and agreeing to the terms.

“In most cases, the family environment needs to change,” McLaughlin said. “Parents may need to negotiate a new relationship with the student, who now has new responsibilities, new expectations and the potential for a new lifestyle, or at least different needs.

Students in the commuter lounge challenge their minds as well as each other with a game of chess. A number of activities are available for commuter students who are on campus for the day.

Commuters should go the extra mile

Students who don’t live in a hall with a dedicated program are not left out, however. According to Klein, a number of activities and structured programs exist within each hall to help students connect both academically and socially.

One example is “Winterviews,” where all first-year students schedule an appointment with their resident adviser during winter quarter to discuss their academic achievement fall quarter, their involvement level at Ohio State, their understanding of their diverse environment, and their decision-making regarding alcohol and other drugs. Academic incentive programs, free tutoring and interaction with faculty mentors also are coordinated through the residence halls.

“We strongly encourage each student to become involved, and we hope that parents — within the first six weeks of the quarter — will ask their student “What are you involved in?”” Klein said. “We in residence life consider the living environment a continuation of the classroom. In fact sometimes what you learn outside the classroom is critical to your success as a student, and later as a professional and even as a productive member of society.”

Klein refers to her own experience. An international economics major at Valparaiso University in Indiana, she served a stint as a resident assistant, and decided to make it a career.

“My involvement in college launched my career as a housing professional,” she said. “Sometimes your extracurricular activities can be as significant in your career decision and future as what you learn in class. Because of this, residence life pays heavy emphasis on involving and connecting students, providing a number of programs and community-building resources to help commuter students — about 10 percent of incoming students — meet each other and achieve a sense of university community.

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Looking to meet fellow commuters? Visit osu.oncampus.com
Get involved! That’s a piece of advice students are going to hear over and over. During orientation and Welcome Week, in residence hall meetings, at First Year Experience events, in e-mails from the vice president for student affairs, the message will be repeated: Get involved!

Why is Ohio State pushing involvement so hard? Because research and experience show that involvement in university activities in addition to academics is extremely important to the overall college experience. The benefits are almost too numerous to mention. Compared to those who are uninvolved, college students who are meaningfully involved in at least one thing other than class work:

- Are more successful academically
- Are more likely to graduate
- Are better problem solvers
- Are more-connected to their university
- Manage their time better
- Create a larger and more supportive network of friends
- Experience more diversity
- Are happier and more satisfied with college

Despite an army of peers, staff, faculty, mentors and parents constantly extolling the virtues of getting involved, many students still don’t seem to take the message to heart. These students are much less likely to return for a second year, or even a second quarter, and the ratings of their satisfaction with their college experience are dramatically lower than those of students who found an outlet for their stress, creativity and desire to lead and serve.

There may not be a university in the world that offers more opportunities for involvement than Ohio State. There are more than 750 student organizations, hundreds of organizations looking for volunteers, dozens of performing arts groups, and one of the largest intramural sports programs in the nation, just to name a few.

With such a wealth of choices, where does one start? Here are 10 quick ways parents can recommend to their students:

1. **The Student Involvement Fair.** Held on Monday afternoon of Welcome Week, this event is the first and best way to get an overview of what’s available. More than 500 organizations will host information booths. Food, giveaways and prizes are also part of the fun. More information is at www.osu.edu/welcomeweek.

2. **Student Organization Directory.** This online directory (www.ohiounion.com/studentorgs) is a quick and easy way to research registered student organizations. You can sort by interest or peruse the whole list.

3. **Attend with a friend.** It can be a little intimidating to attend an event or meeting alone. Recommend pairing up with a friend from class or the residence hall.

4. **Intramurals and sports clubs.** There are athletic activities at varying levels of competitiveness, from the nearly-varsity to the frankly-just-for-fun, for male, female and co-ed teams and individual sports. A majority of Ohio State students participate in at least one intramural sport during their time on campus.

5. **Volunteering.** Service to the community is a major priority for the university and an essential component of a modern college education. One of the best places to find information about service opportunities is through Project Community in room 211 of the Ohio Union. Call 282-SERV or visit online at www.ohiounion.com/2serv. The Community Connection Database at communityconnection.osu.edu is an incredible resource for students interested in service of any kind.

6. **Get a job.** Employment on campus is a popular way for students to be involved with the university and earn a little extra spending money. Students can visit the on-campus job fair in the Ohio Union on Thursday of Welcome Week.

7. **Religious and spiritual communities.** Religion and spirituality is an important aspect of many students’ lives, and one that they hope to maintain or explore in college. The University Interfaith Association (studentaffairs.osu.edu/wellness_uia/app) provides students with information on how to find their spiritual community.

8. **Campus activities and events.** Literally thousands of events occur annually on campus. Most are free and open to all. The Ohio Union Activities Board and the Office of Student Activities present lectures, concerts, comedians, films and special events several times a week. The Office of First Year Experience sponsors a distinguished speaker series. The Wexner Center for the Arts, the College of the Arts, the Multicultural Center, the Frank H. Ribicoff Cultural Center, the Schottenstein Center and Department of Athletics also provide numerous events. Web sites, ads, posters, e-mail and word of mouth are the ways to find out what’s happening.

9. **Late Night programming.** These substance-free weekend events offer a variety of entertaining options into the early morning. Fun and free, they take place all over campus and sometimes off-campus (such as at the Columbus Zoo). A schedule can be found at swc.osu.edu and clicking on “Late Night.”

10. **Residence halls.** Every residence hall offers programs, events, hall council involvement and student employ- ment, right where the student lives. Many first-year students find that getting started in the residence halls is a comfortable way to get involved.

An important part of being a Buckeye is being involved in the university community. We hope this list has given you and your student some ideas about how to get started on this exciting and fulfilling part of the total educational experience.

Matt Couch is senior assistant director in the Office of Student Activities.

The Parent Association also offers several special opportunities for parents and family members to star connected to their Ohio State student. The two largest annual events are Family Weekend and Sibs Weekend.

This year, Family Weekend will be Oct. 15-17. Mark your calendar now for this fun event for family members to visit campus for a weekend of activities that range from tours of Ohio State landmarks to receptions with faculty in the colleges. The highlight is always the big tailgate party at the French Field House to watch a tense Ohio State football game — this year against the Hawkeyes in Iowa City.

Sibs Weekend, which takes place in late April or early May, allows students to host a younger brother or friend on campus for a weekend of fun activities designed to expose these future Buckeyes to college life and, in particular, to the Ohio State campus.

In addition, the Parent Association offers opportunities throughout the year for parents to volunteer at university programs and events.

We encourage you to join the Parent Association and become a partner with the university, and, welcome, a part of the large community of Ohio State students have done, benefit from the services and programs we offer.

Jackie Lipson is a program director for the OSU Parent Association.
onCampus: How critical to that first year experience is it for students to learn and understand the role of their adviser and then use this resource?

Valerie: My relationship with Jennifer was my most beneficial upon arriving here. The first year of classes as a freshman can be overwhelming because it’s completely different than anything encountered in high school. I’ve learned so much, and just formulating that relationship with her and knowing she is there has been a tremendous comfort to me. Even when I had questions as basic as where to park my car, she had an answer.

Jennifer: My goal as an adviser is to play a major role in a student’s academic career here at Ohio State and advise them appropriately to allow them to earn their degree in a timely fashion. It’s exciting to come to college. Everything is brand new and fun. But there are times when you’ll be overwhelmed with classes, life in general, living in the dorms, not knowing what to do, and your adviser is here to help.

Brian: Your adviser is a key resource for questions, problems or concerns. Jennifer really reaches out to students and works to build a personal relationship, which enables her to offer guidance along the way. She is active in our living-learning residence hall, so I see her often in passing and can touch base with her as needed.

onCampus: What’s your most effective method of communication with students?

Jennifer: I strongly encourage an initial meeting at the start of the first year to discuss goals, embark on the degree plan and share interests. After that, I rely on e-mail and the phone for quick questions. Based on the question or depth of the issue, I may insist they schedule an appointment, but part of building those relationships is getting to know the students and getting to know how much they need from me and in what fashion. I see them often in other settings. Although it’s not the confidential, advising setting, that personal contact both in and out of the office is important to me.

onCampus: What advice would you give to parents in encouraging their students to build a relationship with their adviser?

Jennifer: Parents should have a discussion with their student before arriving at Ohio State; definitely before attending orientation and even possibly before the decision to attend college is made. Parents should then maintain that open communication throughout the student’s college career. Parents also might periodically inquire to see if their student is still happy with their progress, their decisions and their experiences. OSU has to be the “supermarket of majors,” meaning if a student isn’t happy in their chosen major, there are so many other options available to them, and parents should encourage their students to seek assistance. And elaborate when discussing your student’s progress: inquire into their classes, projects and lab partners; ask about their professors. Don’t just settle for “fine” when asking how things are going. Notice if they mention names, especially first names.

Brian: There’s a certain level of fear coming to college, partly because OSU is a big place. But the need for advising doesn’t even compare to your needs in high school. You’d think it would be more impersonal because of the number of students and the size, but I am closer and have a more personal relationship with Jennifer than I did with my high school counselor, and it’s obviously contributing to my positive experience and academic success here at Ohio State.
Tips from the Student Advocacy Center can help students thrive

By KAREN KYLE
Student Advocacy Center

The expert problem-solvers in the Student Advocacy Center present these tips to help students succeed in navigating the challenges of college:

Don’t be afraid to ask questions of professors and TAs

Classes can be very large at Ohio State, particularly during your first year when you are not yet taking your major courses, but don’t let that intimidate you. It helps for instructors to put a face with a name, and it’s their role to answer your course-related questions. Take advantage of their office hours to ask questions or use e-mail if that is less intimidating. You might be surprised at how willing they are to assist you with your concerns.

Know the Freshman Forgiveness Rule

Freshman year can be a tough adjustment, and sometimes even the most intelligent student can do poorly in a class. If a course in which you receive a “D,” “D” or “E” during your freshman year (within the first 44 credit hours), your grade will automatically be excluded from your cumulative GPA. You can do this for a maximum of 15 credit hours. You do not need permission if you received an “E” in the class.

Know that the university realizes that “life happens”

There might be a time in your college career when personal, medical problems or other complicating circumstances prevent you from being successful in or completing your courses for a quarter. If this ever happens, don’t stay enrolled in classes because you don’t know what else to do. Talk to your college office, academic advisor or the Student Advocacy Center. We can help you withdraw for the quarter or explore other options.

Get to know your academic adviser

Use your academic adviser to help you stay on track for graduation. If you are in your major program and are assigned a faculty adviser, understand that this person will give you guidance in major coursework and on the discipline in which you are majoring. If you need academic advising related to general education courses, graduation requirements, adding or dropping a class, or other administrative questions, turn to your college office. Each college office has academic advisers who handle these questions.

Learn the value of career services now

Ohio State’s Career Connection Office can be very helpful to you at this point in your college experience. They can help you identify your strengths and interests and will help you explore a variety of career possibilities. Once you have selected a major and are ready to explore internships and jobs, contact your college office. Each college office has a career services office that is designed to meet your major’s specific needs and to assist you in finding employment. Many even offer job fairs to help you connect with future employers.

Understand the university’s grade grievance policy

There will likely be an occasion during your college career when you believe that you received a lower grade than you feel you earned. If this happens, the university has a specific policy that outlines how you can voice your concerns. First, talk to your instructor. If the instructor does not agree that an error was made in your grade, then you may meet with the department chair to discuss your situation. If the department chair concurs with the instructor and you still believe an error was made, you may request that a grade grievance committee be established to review your concern.

Remember to pay your “little deths”

It is common for students to receive a parking ticket or return a book late to the library and then later find that a “hold” has been placed on their account because they did not pay those fines. A hold can cause problems because it will prevent you from scheduling courses, receiving grades or transcripts, and using university facilities. Be sure to get the little things taken care of, too.

Get acquainted with the university’s resources

Ohio State is an exceptionally large university that can feel overwhelming to new students. But if you take the time to walk around campus and explore the resources available to you (learning centers, writing labs, libraries), OSU will become a “smaller” and more manageable place.

Remember the university’s important dates and deadlines

It’s easy to get caught up in your school activities and homework assignments and as a result, forget to write important dates (i.e. add/drop deadlines, FAFSA deadlines) in your calendar. This can lead to big problems because missing payment deadlines or registration opportunities can result in late fees, waitlists and being dropped. Make sure to keep track of important university dates and deadlines so that you are timely in handling university matters. Remember that fees are due in full on the first day of each quarter.

Need some useful tips? Visit studentaffairs.osu.edu/student_advocacy