Hello Penn Parents and Families:

Believe it or not, we are halfway through the fall semester! We were thrilled to have the opportunity to meet many of you during Family Weekend or at our Parent Corners at Penn to You events in Chicago or Washington, D.C. As you are aware, your Penn child is preparing or may have already taken mid-term exams and is beginning to prepare for final exams and room selection for next term. We have connected with our colleagues in Penn Libraries and Weigle Information Commons as well as Residential Services to provide you with information on how your Penn child can use the learning resources available and enjoy a successful end of the fall semester. Finally, our VPUL Spotlight features the Office of Fraternity and Sorority Life, highlighting the ways Penn works to with Penn students involved in “Greek Life” through outreach and educational programs. We wish you all the best at this point in the semester.

Homecoming Weekend featuring Arts & Culture at Penn: October 31 – November 2

Today marks the start of Homecoming Weekend featuring Arts & Culture at Penn. The weekend features a variety of family events including art exhibits, musical performances, and athletic events on campus. For more information and registration, please visit the Homecoming Weekend website: www.alumni.upenn.edu/homecoming

Happy Birthday to the Weingarten Learning Resources Center!

This year, the Weingarten Center celebrates ten years of supporting Penn students’ academic goals. Over the last decade, this student-focused department has innovated and expanded group programming throughout campus, in classrooms, residences, and within its own beautiful space. New strategies and approaches to learning have kept pace with changing technologies and teaching practices and have been integrated into appointments with individual students.

Please click here for more information.

The Weingarten Center staff understands that life at Penn is fast-paced and challenging. Your students are here to learn, grow, and taste success. Student won’t let challenges stand in their way. Neither will the staff at the Weingarten Learning Resources Center.

An integral department in the Division of the Vice Provost for University Life, the Weingarten Center assists Penn students as they strive to reach their fullest potential. The Center offers study strategies and time management advice to help students become more productive and empowered.

Weingarten is made up of the Office of Learning Resources and the Office of Student Disabilities Services. Centrally located in Stouffer Commons, Weingarten invites students to use its study lounge, conference room, and computer lab. The staff welcomes your children to stop by, explore the space, meet a Learning Instructor, attend an interactive workshop or choose a handful of take-home resources.

The Office of Learning Resources (OLR) exists to expand horizons and help students fall in love with learning. Helping your child to navigate his/her college experience is their mission. OLR instructors are learning specialists trained to work with each student individually, from freshmen to doctoral candidates, every major, every discipline. Staff will provide reading, writing and study strategies and help students learn to balance their academic, professional and social commitments.

Student Disabilities Services (SDS) helps students with disabilities enjoy equal access and academic opportunities so they can participate in all University-sponsored programs. SDS staff can assist your student with accommodations and auxiliary services. SDS professional staff assists students in understanding their strengths and needs and accessing the resources that will lead to continued success.

Weingarten has a proud Penn Parent to thank for its name. He said it best when he described Weingarten’s mission to harness “human potential.”

“Intelligence and creativity can be expressed in so many ways and the Learning Resources Center enables all students to find outlets for and the resources to demonstrate their abilities.” — Jeffrey Weingarten, W’70 PAR ’05.

To receive the latest news from the Weingarten Center, sign up for their PAR’05.

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Penn has 31 recognized chapters in the Interfraternity Council, nine Panhellenic Council chapters, and 14 chapters represented within the Multicultural Greek Council. All of these chapters are supported and advised by OFSL. Importantly, Greek members interact regularly with inter/national leaders and distinguished alumni. All recognized Greek chapters are also required to follow University health and wellness protocols and responsible event planning mandates.

We strongly encourage all parents of students who may be interested in joining a Penn fraternity or sorority to read the OFSL website, and to take particular note of the menu highlighting sections that:

- Provide more information about our community (GREEK LIFE AT PENN)
- Explain the “why” and “how” of the recruitment process (JOINING)
- Address a number of parental questions and concerns (PARENTS)

Please note that each Council recruitment/intake process is different. Due to the increased demand on their time and energy, first-year students are prohibited from joining a fraternity/sorority until their second semester on campus, until they have a strong sense of what it will take to be successful at Penn. Please also note that there are a handful of unauthorized groups at Penn that recruit members as if they were Greek organizations, which they are not. These underground groups are not sanctioned and receive no oversight, resources or support from the University. We urge parents to visit the OFSL website ("Don’t Fall For The Fakes!") to get informed and be able to speak frankly with their students about the realities of joining, or attending parties hosted by, unrecognized groups.

Not all student groups are alike. Please discuss these issues to help your student make informed choices. Your student can learn more by visiting the OFSL website.

**Advanced Registration for Spring 2015 Courses**

Advanced Registration for the Spring 2015 Term began on October 27th and will end November 9th. For more information, students are encouraged to visit the Office of the University Registrar website.

**Closing Thoughts……Fall is here!**

Dear Proud Penn Parents,

It has been wonderful to connect with so many of you in person through the Parent Corners or during Family Weekend and I have enjoyed the email exchanges and phone conversations with many of you throughout the fall as well. In each interaction I am reminded that we are no longer transitioning your Penn student to the University because we have now officially reached the mid-point of the semester. With that in mind I want to use this e-newsletter as a method of providing you with news and information that will be useful to you as you talk with your Penn student at this point in the semester. As you may know, students are tackling a variety of decisions this fall: “Where do I want to live next fall?” “What classes do I take next semester.” And in some cases... “What do I do to avoid winter break?” We partnered with our colleagues across campus to share some insight about these topics so that you can remain abreast of all that the University has to offer and in turn you are able to support your student in making informed choices. Additionally, our colleagues in VPUL and the Weigle Information Commons have provided insight about the wealth of resources in place to support your Penn student as they participate in University traditions and celebrations such as Homecoming Weekend featuring Arts & Culture Weekend, explore their options to learn more about Fraternity and Sorority Life or prepare for papers and exams. In sum, there is always something happening at Penn and it is my hope that whether you are a freshman parent or a senior parent, you embrace your role as a Proud Penn Parent and that you remain connected to our great University this fall.

Take Good Care,

Kenya LeNoir Messer Ed. D.
Director
Parent Outreach and Development/ Penn Parents

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**Update from the Commons at Penn Libraries**

We have had a busy year here at the David B. Weigle Information Commons(WIC) and the Education Commons (EC). One major priority has been working on the Commons footprint online. We are creating a new website that will highlight similar offerings across the two spaces, using input from focus groups of students and faculty as a starting point and guide. In addition, our PennWIC blog now includes 41 posts featuring student voices, and student posts have been popular! Student-created videos are another fun part of our blog; check out this year's winners. The blog was also instrumental in attracting almost 200 faculty and graduate students to the 2014 Engaging Students Through Technology Symposium, part of which is meant to help address the question of what works in Penn classrooms.

Utilizing classroom space and technologies in the classroom in novel ways has been a hot topic on campus this year. We are conducting a student survey through the symposium to better understand the student perspective on what we can do to make classroom learning more engaging and fruitful. We do already know that our iPads in the Classroom project continues to be well-used, with interesting insect-related applications! The “flipped classroom” has been generating a lot of buzz on campus, as well; some of our work is described here. We continue to receive national attention for our understanding of learning space design, and our work on supporting courses at Penn was featured on October 27 in the Educause Online Review.

Over the past year, we have also assisted our library colleagues with specialized workshops on open access and digital scholarship in addition to holding our own workshops on fun topics from the Makey Makey to our Make and Take series. Please encourage your student to learn more about us by visiting us online.

**Prep for 2015-2016 Room Selection**

**Room Selection for On-Campus Residents**
Complete information about the on-campus room selection process for Fall 2015 will go live on the Residential Services website starting November 1. Details will include dates for each phase of the application process, specific instructions for residents about when and how to apply for housing for next year.

**Information Sessions are scheduled for November 10th and 19th and in early Spring 2015 (dates, times and locations will be posted as the sessions are confirmed). Residents can attend any information session and are not restricted to those held in their current house.**

Residential Programs applications take place in January; in-house and inter-house processes take place throughout February. Residents may apply for the waitlist at any time after room selection concludes. More details, including FAQs for parents can be found on the "Friends and Family-Need to Know" tab of the Residential Services website.

**Off-Campus Housing 2015-2016 Academic Year**

The Off Campus Services website and office provides resources for students considering off campus housing. Website features include a searchable online listing database that allows you to search by landlord, location, price, size of unit and so on. The site provides tips on planning your search, navigating the landlord-tenant neighborhood profiles, community resources and data and tips on how to access services and utilities. More details, including FAQs, can be found by visiting the Off Campus Services website.

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Kenya LeNoir Messer Ed. D.
Director
Parent Outreach and Development/ Penn Parents
SAVE THE DATE!
DAY OF GIVING

Show your support for Penn and make a gift on November 20th