

SPRING 2009 intouch ▶

Student Involvement & Leadership Development

parents'
ASSOCIATION



Dear NIU Parents,

As another NIU academic year winds down, I'm still in shock at how quickly the year has gone by. It seems like just yesterday I was setting out 'NIU Parent' t-shirts at our Huskie Bash booth and welcoming new faces as well as re-connecting with returning ones. Since then, the Parents' Association staff has welcomed Huskie parents back to campus not once

or twice but THREE times. We had record attendance for Family Weekend 2008, and our Dads' Weekend and Moms' Weekend participants were able to enjoy a variety of activities on and off campus with their students and other Huskie parents.

As your students head home for the summer, you may find them remaining busy. Some will be taking classes, some will be working or trying to stay connected with friends...others may have even opted to stay on campus for the summer. Regardless, keep the communication open with them so that you can find out the best way to provide them with support. Most (if not all!) on-campus services (counseling, health services, career services, etc.) will continue to be provided throughout the summer, so keep this in mind as situations arise.

Mark your calendars now for important events here at NIU. The Great Huskie Bash will be held on Thursday, August 20th. Join us for food and entertainment, and don't forget to stop by the Parents' Association booth to get some free stuff and say hello! Family Weekend has been set for September 11-13. Get ready for some exciting Huskie Football! All members will be notified once event information is available on the Parents' Association web site.

We'd like to remind you that your membership to the Parents' Association is a lifetime one; however, if you prefer to be removed from our communication list at this time for whatever reason (i.e. graduation, transfer), just contact us at either parents@niu.edu or (815) 752-2222 so that we can update our records.

Of course, if I can be of any assistance to you throughout the summer, please don't hesitate to contact me. We'll see you all in a few months!

GO HUSKIES!

Becky Harlow
Assistant Director
Student Involvement and Leadership Development

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Parents' Association: Who Are We?

Our Mission of the NIU Parents' Association is to provide a link between the university and the families of NIU students. The Parents' Association provides:

- An opportunity for families to play an active, supportive role in the education of their student.
- A forum for fellowship and networking opportunities with other parents via workshops or other activities.
- An opportunity to be informed of events and activities at NIU that might be of interest to families.
- Events to bring families back to the university (i.e., Move-In Day, Family Weekend, Homecoming, Meetings, Special Events and more).
- An arena to pose questions, express concerns, and learn more about campus issues.
- A chance to further the educational goals of Northern Illinois University by improving communication between families and the university community.

We are able to answer questions, refer you to appropriate offices, listen to your concerns, and help you get the most out of your Northern Illinois University experience.

Please feel free to contact us:

Address:

Student Involvement & Leadership Development
Parents' Association
Campus Life Building 150
DeKalb, IL 60115

Phone: 815-752-2222

FAX: 815-753-2905

E-Mail: parents@niu.edu

Web: <http://www.niu.edu/studentinvolvement/parentsassoc/index.shtml>

Adviser: Becky Harlow

Phone: (815) 753-6703

E-Mail: rharlow@niu.edu

Womens Resource Center

If you aren't familiar with the Women's Resource Center, now is a good time to get to know us better. Whether you have a daughter or a son at NIU, the Women's Resource Center has a little something for everyone. Each semester, the WRC has an exciting line-up of programs and events that are designed to get students thinking about how gender impacts us every day. From programs on women and tattoos, to salary negotiation workshops, the Women's Center has a lot going on. In addition, we are thrilled to have a corps of students who volunteer at the Center, using their free time to help us make NIU a better place for all students. So don't let your son or daughter ever tell you that there's nothing to do on campus! Encourage them to stop by – and feel free to stop by yourself the next time you're in the area. We love visitors!

In addition, the WRC is an ideal place for students to get some studying done or just to meet new people and hang out. We have a computer lounge for student use, a conference room perfect for enjoying your lunch, as well as a newly remodeled lounge upstairs, complete with new couches, and satellite TV service on a big screen television! In addition to our cutting edge programs, volunteer and internship opportunities and great space for students to meet, our full-time staff members are also available to assist students needing individual advocacy, including issues ranging from interpersonal violence response to academic concerns, among others.

The Women's Resource Center is also on Facebook and MySpace, so encourage your student to be our friend! Our office hours are from 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday, but we're often found here after hours and on weekends doing all kinds of great activities. We hope that if you and your student haven't been to the WRC, that you'll make the time to stop in and say hello. Our amazing student staff members are always happy to give you a tour when you drop in and let you know about the programs and events that we have coming up. So stop in and say hi, or join us at our next event. We look forward to seeing you and/or your student in the near future!

Your Student's Success is Important to Career Services

By Joyce Keller
Associate Director, Career Counseling
and Internships

In the current economy, job-seekers will face a more challenging labor market than in years past. Some students will experience a heightened sense of anxiety as they communicate with employers and consider their career options. We hope to reassure you during this difficult time that the top priority of NIU Career Services is to advocate for the career development needs of your student. As part of our commitment, we have collaborated with employers on the following strategies:

- Employers who have changed their immediate hiring strategies but are still committed to a strong recruitment presence at NIU, are maintaining an on-campus relationship with our students. These relationship-building strategies may take the forms of information sessions, employer-sponsored career workshops, or employer guest speaking engagements in classes. We're confident that our staff's management of employer relations during this time will produce significant long-term benefits for your student.
- We've made it easier to use our internship and job database, Victor eRecruiting, by creating an online tutorial (<http://www.niu.edu/careerservices/orientation/>). Completing the tutorial will help your student search more effectively for openings and use features such as saved searches and publishing their résumé to electronic subfolders that employers can easily search to target candidates meeting specific criteria.



- To improve students' interview skills, we offer Perfect Interview, a digital video recording program that allows students to capture their responses to interview questions and improve their skills. The Perfect Interview software provides videotaped examples of how to best answer interview questions, offers "coaching" segments to teach students additional interviewing skills, and allows students to discover the verbal and nonverbal strengths and areas of growth they bring to the interviewing process.
- Our team of career counselors will assist your student with decision-making and developing a job search strategy. Your student can call (815) 753-1641 to schedule an appointment.

Our team of peer advisors is available to review résumés and offer suggestions (available 8:30 to 3:30 Mondays through Fridays, in Campus Life Building 235).

- Finally, despite the challenging economic times we're facing, hiring is still occurring. Students who begin their job searches earlier and are able to be flexible in regard to their employment preferences will have a definite advantage in the hiring process.

Our staff is here to assist your student in any way possible. If your student has any questions or concerns, please call 815-753-1641, or send an e-mail message to careerservices@niu.edu. Your student's success is important to us.

Study Abroad: A Value-Added Component of an Education at NIU

Participation in a study abroad program adds value to any degree, undergraduate or graduate. The value of study abroad can be found in student development, students' experience, and future employability of students who have studied abroad, among other benefits. Study abroad programs and/or internships are available for students in every major offered at NIU.

Study abroad can cost more than studying at the NIU campus in DeKalb, but the skills, qualities and experiences a student will gain make study abroad a very sound investment. Also, scholarships and financial aid are available to make study abroad more affordable for every student.

Student Development

Many students who study abroad assert that "study abroad changed my life." While this statement may seem dramatic, there is research to support it. Research on the learning outcomes of study abroad is an expanding field, and there are several recent and ongoing studies that suggest that study abroad helps students to develop in many ways, helping them become more independent, flexible, and aware of their place in the world. Many of these developments are part of any college education, but are enhanced and deepened through study abroad.

Students' Experiences

In NIU's twice-weekly Study Abroad 101 information sessions, we tell students to "do it now, while you still can!" When else is financial aid going to help your student travel the world and have once-in-a-lifetime experiences? Also, many students make friends and contacts throughout the world that last much longer than the experience itself. These contacts can be a big part of the rest of the student's life."

I gained lifelong relationships with people around the world that I maintain today. It makes living in this world seem much more connected as a result of my studies abroad. I developed a greater confidence about living away from friends and family which made working in the corporate world and moving 6 times over the course of my career much more appealing."

Michael Coburn, Director of Customer Service, Nestlé USA, Alumnus of NIU Study Abroad Program with Denmark's International Study (DIS)

Future Employability

A recent study by the Council on International Educational Exchange (CIEE) found that employers value the skills and characteristics that students who have studied abroad possess. Qualities such as risk taking, flexibility and creativity are valuable to employers, and study abroad enhances these. For this reason, study abroad can be seen as a direct investment in the future of a student. A study abroad experience may help the student to get a better job after graduation. As the world gets "smaller" or "flatter," the value of study abroad to employers can only increase.

Study Abroad Options for NIU Students

NIU students can choose from several study abroad options such as winter break, semester, summer or year-long programs. Staff in the Study Abroad Office are available to advise and guide students through the process. Please feel free to call, e-mail, or visit us.

Study Abroad Office - Williston Hall 417
- DeKalb, IL 60115 - Telephone: 815-753-7399 or 753-0700 - E-mail: niuabroad@niu.edu - <http://www.studyabroad.niu.edu>.



Academic Advising Center

The **Academic Advising Center (AAC)** works with “undecided-any college” students from the time they arrive on campus until they’ve made an informed decision to declare a major. In addition to serving “undecided” students, the AAC also assists students seeking alternative majors and students reassessing their current academic situation. 2008-09 has been an exciting year and we are pleased to highlight some of the unique programming our office coordinates in addition to our more traditional advising, major exploration, and course planning services. For example:

- In conjunction with Housing & Dining Services, the Academic Advising Center manages the **Exploring Majors House (EMH)**, a living-learning community for students who are exploring majors. The EMH is located in Grant B Tower and provides residents opportunities to: explore their interests, abilities, strengths, and values; learn about majors at NIU; and meet faculty from across campus. Learning Experiences have included trips to area employers, electronic career exploration nights, the “date your major” series of mini-presentations offered in a “speed dating” format, and a number of cultural and civic activities throughout the year. Sophomores who are still undecided as to their major are encouraged to consider living in the EMH. Information the Exploring Majors House can be viewed at <http://www.advisingcenter.niu.edu/advising/>
- The AAC is the host for the annual Exploring Majors Fair. The Fair is designed for all students who want to find out more about majors, minors, and other academic opportunities. Students have the opportunity to speak with faculty members and staff from each of the university’s academic units in one centralized location. The Fall 2009 Exploring Majors Fair will be held on October 8, 2009 in the Duke Ellington Ballroom of the Holmes Student Center.
- New in 2008-09, the AAC worked with many offices across campus to host the “**Mid-Semester Check**” event. This event is offered in a mini-conference format and provides students opportunities to learn academic success strategies. Six scholarships were given away at the spring event. The Mid-Semester Check will be offered again in October 2009 – watch for more information on the AAC website at www.advisingcenter.niu.edu

As this academic year winds down, the **Academic Advising Center (AAC)** is already looking toward the start of the 2009-10 year. If they have not already done so, all NIU students are encouraged to meet with their academic advisors now to plan their fall semester schedules.

Mark Your Calendars!

Please mark your calendars for the upcoming Fall 2009 events!

August 20 – Move In Day

September 11-13- Family Weekend

October 13- Homecoming

When Your Student Comes Home

Home for the Summer: Tips for Helping Students and Family Survive (and Enjoy!) the Summer Break

Summer Break is fast approaching. You may encounter some changes in your student as well as your family dynamic. Communicate your expectations with your student. Expectations, summer plans and responsibilities can all be discussed. Tina M. Radcliffe from College Tips for Parents.org has some tips for “surviving” summer break. Visit <http://collegetipsforparents.org/college-summer.html> for more information.

Important Phone Numbers From This Issue’s Contributors

Career Services: 815-753-1641

Study Abroad: 815-753-0700

Women’s Resource Center:
815-753-0320

Academic Advising Center:
815-753-2573

Student Involvement &
Leadership Development:
815-753-1421

Parents’ Association:
815-752-2222

Student Involvement & Leadership Development
Division of Student Affairs

Campus Life Building 150
DeKalb, IL 60115



Contact Information

Parent's Name: _____ Phone: _____

Full Address: _____ E-mail: _____

Student's Name: _____ Phone: _____

Student Address: _____ E-Mail: _____

Year in School: Freshman Sophomore Junior Senior Transfer Student

Parents' Association Membership Fee \$50.00

Payment Information

Cash Check Credit Card # _____
 Visa MasterCard Discover

Print Name (as it appears on credit card) _____

Signature _____ Expiration Date _____

<p>Office Use Only Membership Number: _____ Date Processed: _____ Staff: _____ Campus Life Building, Suite 150, 815-752-2222, parents@niu.edu</p>
