November 2012
Upcoming events:

**Academic Calendar**

- Thanksgiving Recess
  November 21-25 (incl.)
- Last day for undergraduate day classes
  December 7
- Residence Halls close
  December 16
- Winter Recess
  December 16-January 6 (incl.)
- Residence Halls open
  January 4
- Classes begin
  January 7

**Does Your Student Need a Ride Home?**

Pitt offers a service called “Buses Home for the Holidays” that is designed to provide our students with safe, comfortable, round trip transportation to many regional areas for the Thanksgiving, winter, and spring breaks. For details please go to [Buses Home for the Holidays](#).

**Over 1,250 families registered for and attended Family Weekend festivities on October 26–28. From Trick-or-Treating at the haunted William Pitt Union to tailgating and watching Pitt beat Temple, to touring Pittsburgh neighborhoods and shopping districts on a double decker bus, students shared good times with their families and friends.**

One very special Pitt family celebrated in style thanks to Catie Riccelli, who won the Family of the Year Essay Contest. Catie’s essay about her family’s enthusiasm for Pitt and their support for her college endeavors was chosen from many compelling entries. The freshman biology major received a laptop computer and her family received Family of the Year recognition at the football game, a hotel stay, and an engraved clock, which symbolized both time spent at Pitt and time spent with each other.

So many Pitt families deserve to be the Family of the Year. Every day we hear students acknowledge their parents as the center of their support system. We hope that your student will enter next year’s essay contest. We want to hear about YOUR family and YOUR support for the University of Pittsburgh!

Hail to Pitt!

To stay current with what’s happening on campus, visit the Student Affairs Web site at [www.studentaffairs.pitt.edu](http://www.studentaffairs.pitt.edu)
Time passes so quickly. It’s hard to believe that students will start final exams in about three weeks and that Thanksgiving break is already upon us! Please consult the Academic Calendar as well as Buses Home for the Holidays for detailed information to help you plan for your student’s holiday breaks and transportation. These and other informational links are always located on our front page.

In this Panther Connections issue, we look back at fall events as well as look forward to spring, 2013, at Pitt. We have included some On Campus Living vs. Off Campus Living comparisons and ways you can talk to your student about being safe no matter where he/she lives.

You will see that the safety article was written by a Panther Parent Ambassador, Officer Fred Tolerico, a Pennsylvania State Trooper. If you have experience or expertise that would benefit Pitt parents and you would consider sharing that knowledge, we invite you to write an article for Parent Connections. Please contact me if you have any questions.

As always, I invite you to consider becoming a Panther Parent Ambassador. We have a great core group and enjoy each other’s company. We all have something in common – students at Pitt! See our recent meeting minutes in this newsletter.

These newsletters are produced to keep you informed. We welcome your comments and suggestions which you can submit to parents@pitt.edu or by calling me at 412-624-8548.

Have wonderful Thanksgiving and winter break, enjoy having your students at home, and—Hail to Pitt!

Sandy
Sandy Talbott
Parent and Family Liaison
UNIVERSITY HONORS COLLEGE
NATIONAL SCHOLARSHIPS

Considering the increasing costs of a university education, most families appreciate knowing what scholarships may be available for their students. Pitt’s University Honors College (UHC) facilitates several national scholarships for graduate and undergraduate students in a variety of disciplines. These scholarships are advertised throughout the year by the UHC located at 1229 Cathedral of Learning. Pitt students are encouraged to apply.

Below is a brief list of scholarships with upcoming deadline dates. For a complete list of graduate and undergraduate scholarships and fellowships, please click here. Website information can be found at http://scholarships.honorscollege.pitt.edu.

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<tr>
<th>Name of Scholarship</th>
<th>Deadline</th>
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<td>Spring Brackenridge Fellowships</td>
<td>November 18</td>
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<td>Boren Scholarship</td>
<td>December 3</td>
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<td>Goldwater Scholarship</td>
<td>December 3</td>
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<td>Truman Scholarship</td>
<td>December 10</td>
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<td>SMART Defense Education Program</td>
<td>December 14</td>
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<td>Carnegie Endowment for International Peace</td>
<td>December 16</td>
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<tr>
<td>Junior Fellows Program</td>
<td>December 16</td>
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<tr>
<td>Udall Scholarship</td>
<td>January 7</td>
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In addition to national scholarships, your student’s college may offer its own set of scholarships, so be sure to have your student check with his or her academic department.

PITT TRADITIONS:
CATHEDRAL VICTORY LIGHTS

Welcome to Pitt Traditions! Each Panther Connections newsletter will introduce a new Pitt tradition. Today’s tradition centers around our beautiful campus landmark; the Cathedral of Learning.

Have you ever been on campus after a prominent athletic victory or other major Pitt achievement? If so, you may have noticed a golden glow emanating from the top section of the Cathedral of Learning. These are called the Cathedral Victory Lights.

The Cathedral can be seen for miles and is symbolic of academic excellence at the University of Pittsburgh. When the Cathedral glows, it is also symbolic of an extraordinary achievement at the University. Hail to Pitt!

HURRICANE SANDY

The Office of Parent and Family Resources sends sincere thoughts and prayers to families who are still feeling the devastating affects of Hurricane Sandy. Many of our east coast and mid-atlantic students are struggling to focus on academics, knowing that their families are struggling with every day life circumstances at home.

If you feel that your student needs additional support as you work through this time, please let us know by calling 412-624-8548 or emailing parents@pitt.edu. We want to reassure you that your student is being cared for here as you take care of concerns at home.
Sixteen Panther Parent Ambassadors plus guests, gathered for breakfast on Sunday morning, October 28, 2012. During breakfast, Pitt juniors Rose Choi and Claire Bissa, presented the mission, goals, and activities of Phi Beta Lambda, Pitt’s undergraduate professional business organization.

An Ambassador meeting followed breakfast with the following general discussions:
- Panther Parent Ambassadors, our mission and goals
- Eventual Parent Council formation
- Sorority and Fraternity rush concerns and student alcohol use.

Action topics:
- Make a Parent Social checklist so that those who would like to host parties have a template.
  - Alane Nebbia and Laura Heleniak
- Research a possible tour of health facilities on campus for Ambassadors
- Establish a Facebook group
- Reach out to Admissions regarding current parents helping with College Fairs
- Signed sheet to release contact information to Ambassador group
  - If other Ambassadors agree to release their contact information, please contact Sandy Talbott
- Newsletter contributions
  - Fred Tolerico and Melissa Gargani will write for upcoming newsletters
- Move-out social with t-shirt
- Book suggestion Don't Tell Me What to Do, Just Send Money by Helen E. Johnson and Christine Schelhas-Miller

We invite you to become a Panther Parent Ambassador! For information, details, and to register, click here.

Hail to Pitt and Hail to Pitt Parents!

Join Us! Become a Panther Parent Ambassador

Enjoy meeting and mingling with other Pitt Parents both on campus and in your area. Assist with parent programs like Family Weekend and Orientation. Have some fun!

Panther Parent Ambassadors will receive:
- Special invitations to specific programs
- Electronic calendars with upcoming student activities
- Custom Parent Ambassador polo shirt
- Parent Ambassador Towel
- Pitt decal
- Parent Ambassador tote bag
- Pompoms for your next Pitt game!
- Membership business card

Pitt Juniors Rose Choi and Claire Bissa of Phi Beta Lambda, shared their organization’s mission and activities with Parent Ambassadors during a Family Weekend breakfast.
SAFETY AND YOUR CHILD

By Fred Tolerico
Pitt Parent Ambassador and Pennsylvania State Trooper

As parents, our paramount concern is the safety of our children, especially since we no longer have direct control over the activities in which our college students engage. While it would be great if they would just stay home and study, that is not a realistic option. So what can we do from a distance to help keep our children safe?

My career has exposed me to numerous tragedies and incidents that undoubtedly influence my view of the world and influence the safety principles I have long advocated for my children. Like me, you probably started teaching your children about the ways of the world long before they left home for college. This is no time to stop. In fact, now is the most important time to keep reminding them of safety, because they still need our help even if they don’t realize it.

After Sandy asked me to write this article, I consulted with my daughter – a senior at Pitt – to ascertain if she practices what I preached over the years. Here are the common sense greatest hits as practiced by my daughter, and continuously preached by me.

• Anticipate things that could go wrong and don’t do something that doesn’t seem right – regardless of peer pressure.
• Know your environment and travel in numbers whenever possible.
• When walking alone at night, stay on the main streets as long as possible and don’t wear headphones because they drown out important sounds around you.
• Instead of looking at your feet or phone while walking, continuously scan the area far ahead to see who – or what – you may encounter.
• Avoid dark alleys regardless of how much time they save.
• Read the local papers to know what is going on in your neighborhood.
• Finally, you and your students should have the 24-hour Pitt Police dispatch phone number saved in your phone in case you ever need to speak with an officer in a hurry. That number is 412-624-2121.

Stay safe out there.

PLEASE TAKE OUR SURVEY

Please take a minute and provide us with some feedback about our parent and family newsletter. By answering a few simple questions you will help us produce newsletters that are informative and beneficial to you. Please click here to take the survey. If you have a question for which you would like a response, please send it via parents@pitt.edu.
PITT ARTS: JOIN THE FUN!

By Annabelle Clippinger,
Director, PITT ARTS

For sixteen years, PITT ARTS has been connecting Pitt students to the vibrant arts and culture scene of Pittsburgh. Undergraduate students can enjoy the symphony, opera, ballet, jazz concerts, museum and gallery exhibits, independent films, lectures, plays, spoken word, and so much more. PITT ARTS offers 110 Free Arts Encounters programs including free tickets to excellent seats, free transportation, a free meal or dessert, and an encounter with stars of the art world, including celebrities like Joshua Bell, Spike Lee, Philip Glass, and Midori.

PITT ARTS offerings are completely alcohol-free. Students can sign up for an arts program with a friend or on their own. Even if they attend individually, they are sure to meet other Pitt students who share a deep appreciation for the arts. Communities are formed, and friendships are made at PITT ARTS’ outings.

Each year more than 15,000 Pitt students also enjoy the benefit of attending six of the local museums for free by using their valid Pitt Oakland campus ID, thanks to PITT ARTS. These are the Carnegie Museums of Art and Natural History, Phipps Conservatory and Botanical Gardens, Andy Warhol Museum, Mattress Factory, Soldiers and Sailors Memorial Hall and Museum, and the Senator John Heinz History Center.

And parents, when you visit your student at Pitt, ask them to pick up some Cheap Seats tickets at PITT ARTS so you can attend a Broadway musical, opera, symphony, ballet, or play together! The nice thing about Cheap Seats is that as long as the Pitt student is attending, they can purchase up to four tickets for guests. Families and friends are welcome to join their Pitt student and get the same discounted prices!

All of this is available to your student through PITT ARTS.
Over 3,000 students participated in community service projects during this year’s Pitt Make a Difference Day.

Remind your student: Senior Portraits

Schedule your appointment at www.ouryear.com or call 1-800-OUR-YEAR(687-9327)

Source code: 403

Portrait session dates:

**Monday, Nov. 26**
9 a.m. - 6 p.m.
WPU Dining Room A

**Tuesday, Nov. 27**
9 a.m. - 6 p.m.
WPU Dining Room A

**Wednesday, Nov. 28**
9 a.m. - 6 p.m.
WPU Dining Room A

**Thursday, Nov. 29**
9 a.m. - 6 p.m.
WPU Dining Room A

**Friday, Nov. 30**
9 a.m. - 6 p.m.
WPU Dining Room B

*Walk-ins are welcome!*

There is no cost to be photographed or to have your portrait appear in the yearbook! When you schedule your appointment you will receive complete information on how to prepare for your portrait sitting.

Trouble viewing the newsletter?

We understand that a few families who read our newsletter using Mac products are having difficulty viewing the entire page. Please check your settings to enable better viewing.
SUBSTANCE ABUSE
INTERVENTION ACTIONS

By Michelle D’Amico Jarvis, Addictions Counselor, University Counseling Center

Substance abuse is a serious problem facing college students. It can have damaging, devastating and even long lasting consequences. While alcohol is the most commonly abused substance, studies have shown that there has been a rise in the use of marijuana and prescription drugs on campuses. For students who are caught in the cycle of substance abuse, their lives can be negatively impacted with stressed relationships, poor grades and a general apathy towards achieving their goals. In order to help a loved one who is abusing substances, the “Intervention Actions” noted within this article can be helpful. Perhaps these actions can even mean the difference between a student getting back on track versus staying off track for many years to come.

1. Stay Involved – Be aware of the type of friends and social activities your student is involved in. By paying attention early on and showing interest, it can clearly demonstrate your proactive approach, grounded in love and care.

2. Recognize Warning Signs – In general, a warning sign for substance abuse is some kind of a change from the norm. Examples of changes can occur with physical appearance, sudden health problems, poor financial management, emotional instability, academic decline, increased isolationism and/or gravitation towards friends who are known substance abusers.

3. Act with Care – If you believe your student may be abusing substances, it is important to have a conversation. Remember, your support and guidance will demonstrate an ongoing connection, focused on your student’s health and well-being.

4. Know the Resources – Once you have had a conversation, the next step is to discuss which resource would be most helpful to your student. Offer a “menu of options” for treatment, such as, the University’s Counseling Center (412.648.7930), Student Health Services, Support Group Meetings (AA, NA), Drug and Alcohol Treatment Facilities and Mental Health Centers.

5. Get Connected – In taking proactive steps to help your student, you may need to assist with making connections for treatment. By sharing the available resources, for instance, and encouraging your loved one to access treatment, you will set the stage for recovery and success.

Resources
http://www.counseling.pitt.edu
http://www.collegedrinkingprevention.gov/
http://www.nida.nih.gov/nidahome.html