Parents Encouraged to Attend Pitt Day in Harrisburg March 13

Last week, Governor Tom Corbett released the proposed state budget for 2012-13, and for the second consecutive year, deep and disproportionate cuts were recommended to the University of Pittsburgh state allocations.

On Tuesday, March 13, Pitt students, parents, alumni, faculty, staff, and friends of the University will come together in our state capitol to meet with lawmakers to talk about these unprecedented cuts during our annual Pitt Day in Harrisburg.

As a parent of a Pitt student, we really need you and your student to attend this event if at all possible. We need you to communicate directly to state legislators the importance of maintaining affordable higher education in Pennsylvania. You can help us make a difference. Last year, after months of advocacy by the Pitt community, the proposed $100 million cut was trimmed to less than half of the original amount.

This year’s budget proposal includes a cut of nearly 30 percent to Pitt’s general allocation and totals nearly $42 million.

If this budget proposal is passed, the cumulative two-year cuts in state support for Pitt will be well over $100 million.

Our state support will be reduced to levels that we have not seen since the mid-1980s, more than a quarter century ago when the state’s budget was about one-third of its current size.

When adjusted for inflation, our state support would be reduced to the lowest level since Pitt became a state-related university in 1966.

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- In terms of proportionality, the overall state budget would be reduced by less than one-tenth of 1 percent (or $22.46 million). The proposed cuts just for Pitt are nearly double that amount!

(For more information regarding the proposed budget cuts, please read the statement from Chancellor Mark A. Nordenberg.)

To register for Pitt Day in Harrisburg, click here. If you cannot personally join us in Harrisburg, please consider writing letters to elected officials and local newspapers, call your legislators, make visits to legislative district offices, and recruit family, neighbors, alumni, and other friends to join Pitt Advocates.

Pitt Advocates is a network of people who share a commitment to public higher education and the University of Pittsburgh. This group communicates to elected officials Pitt’s accomplishments, goals, needs, and the importance of supporting an outstanding public teaching and research institution. The Pitt Advocates Web site is a good resource where you will find contact information for elected officials, talking points, and sample letters. Any questions should be directed to Jennifer Poller, Manager of Alumni Advocacy, at 412-624-0108 or poller@pitt.edu.

Despite repeated reductions in state allocations, the University of Pittsburgh continues to excel as one of the nation’s leaders in academic excellence, research, and community outreach. Our administrators and faculty recognize that we must be good stewards of taxpayer and tuition dollars, and we embrace that responsibility.

Thank you for your support and Hail to Pitt!

Paul A. Sapowitz
Vice Chancellor, Governmental Relations
University of Pittsburgh

Jennifer L. Poller,
Manager of Alumni Advocacy
Office of Alumni Relations, University of Pittsburgh

FROM OUR FAMILY TO YOURS

Dear Parents and Families,

Greetings from the Office of Parent and Family Resources! I recently joined the Division of Student Affairs to serve as the University’s Parent and Family Liaison and I am pleased to share this edition of Panther Connections.

Like you, I am the parent of a young adult at Pitt, so I have appreciated the challenges and rewards of parenting a college student. I hope to use this experience to help you successfully assist your student.

The spring semester is well underway and filled with new challenges, excitement and activities including our 36th Annual Honors Convocation, the kickoff to Pitt’s 225th Anniversary Celebration, and Pitt Day in Harrisburg. This newsletter addresses those early spring events along with other information that is tailored toward you as a parent and/or family member. You will receive a March/April newsletter which will address late spring, summer, and early fall activities.

Speaking of activities, your student isn’t the only one who can get involved in the action! In the coming months, the Office of Parent Resources will host regional parent socials. These gatherings will permit us to meet in a casual atmosphere and discuss Pitt Student Affairs and how our office may better serve you. From events such as these, we will establish a Panther Parents Council. Ideas and plans for the council are in progress now, so stay tuned! If you would like to be involved in formulating the Panther Parents Council, please contact me. Meanwhile, please visit our Parent’s Web site at www.studentaffairs.pitt.edu/parents.

You will find links to all our Student Affairs departments and the services they provide.

It is my sincere desire to assist you with any questions regarding your student’s Pitt experience so that together, we can give your student the best collegiate experience in the world!

Please contact me at 412-624-8548, or parents@pitt.edu to introduce yourself, inquire about the Panther Parents Council, or to address any concerns.

From our Pitt family to yours, we wish you and your student a wonderful semester!

Hail to Pitt!

Sandra S. Talbott, M.Ed
Parent and Family Liaison

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 online at: www.zoomerang.com/Survey/WEB22DDGHRMJ8L you will help us produce newsletters that are informative and beneficial to you. If you have a question for which you would like a response, please send it via parents@pitt.edu

HONORS CONVOCATION

Each year the University of Pittsburgh recognizes and celebrates the many achievements of alumni, faculty, staff and students. This year, we will celebrate the 36th Annual Honors Convocation on Friday, February 24th in the Carnegie Music Hall on Forbes Avenue, adjacent to Pitt’s Cathedral of Learning in Oakland.

During this year’s Convocation, we will also announce and launch Pitt’s 225th Anniversary of Building Better Lives. More detailed information regarding the 225th Anniversary and the Honors Convocation is available on our Web site at www.pitt.edu.

Congratulations to all of our honorees!
Pitt Celebrates 225th Anniversary

The year was 1787. The United States Constitution would be ratified in September of that year. Delegates from Delaware, Pennsylvania and New Jersey would vote to establish these three colonies as the first three states in the United States of America. It would be two more years before George Washington would be inaugurated as the first President of the newly-formed nation. Buffalo, mountain lions and elk still roamed the land and in Europe, Mozart was still writing some of his most renowned operas.

On February 28, 1787, a charter was granted to a small group of frontier community leaders to begin building better lives for settlers who were moving west of the Allegheny Mountains. The charter established one of the first and oldest continuously operating institutions of higher learning in the United States – the University of Pittsburgh.

Pitt is in good company. Few other United States institutions can claim the honor of celebrating 225 years or more of service to students in higher education. Included in that small circle are: Harvard University in Massachusetts, The College of William and Mary in Virginia, and Columbia University in New York.

Originally known as Pittsburgh Academy, the one room log cabin was situated near the confluence of the Monongahela and Allegheny Rivers. The landmark of the University, the Cathedral of Learning, is located in the Oakland section of Pittsburgh. It contains over 2,000 rooms and is the tallest building of higher education in the western hemisphere, standing at a height of 353 feet and 42 stories.

Today, in addition to its main campus, the University has four regional campuses in Pennsylvania and has recently added a location in Beijing, China. What began as an effort to build better lives in the western frontier in 1787 has evolved to building better lives throughout our country and the globe in the new millennium.

To celebrate the many accomplishments of our graduates, the University of Pittsburgh will launch several months of celebratory events beginning with the 36th Annual Honors Convocation on Friday, February 25, 2012. Many students, faculty, staff and alumni will be recognized for their academic, research, and leadership contributions to the University, region and the world. Honorees will include university scholars, student from academic honor societies, graduates and undergraduates from individual schools and regional campuses, and outstanding research and teaching faculty. In addition, select Pitt alumni will be recognized for achievement and service to their communities and society. Current staff members will be honored for unparalleled dedication to the University community.

Hail to Pitt!

Parents: HEADS UP

Panther Parents Association Mission:

The mission of the Panther Parents Association is to provide parents and families access to information and resources through Pitt’s University offers and to encourage student success. The Panther Parents Association was established to create a community of active University of Pittsburgh parents and families and to develop an affinity for the University of Pittsburgh.

For more information on Pitt Celebrates 225th Anniversary visit www.225.pitt.edu.

For more information, call the Counseling Center at: 412-648-7930.

Open to University of Pittsburgh students only.

Groups Offered by the Counseling Center

Beat the Blues: A place to learn strategies to cope and meet other students who can relate to how you’re feeling.

Coping with Family Drama: A support group for students who wish to work on relationships with their families.

Grad Student Support Group: Weekly support for graduate students in any discipline.

Sexual Abuse Recovery Group: A safe place for women who have experienced any type of sexual assault or abuse.

Coping With Grief: A support group for students who have lost family members or other loved ones.

Double Trouble: Exploration in substance abuse, recovery, and self discovery.

LGBTQ Group: A safe place for undergrad and grad students to come and talk about being LGBTQ at Pitt.

For more information, please visit: www.studentaffairs.pitt.edu/healthyu.
PLANNING AHEAD FOR TODAY’S JOB MARKET

If your student is heading home for spring break, chances are he or she has big plans for catching up on sleep, enjoying some home-cooked meals, and taking advantage of your washer and dryer. But consider this: spring break is the perfect time to help your student plan ahead even if graduation is a few years away. In today’s competitive job market, a student leaving Pitt with no substantial work experience will be at a significant disadvantage compared to those who have completed internships, co-ops, and undergraduate research positions. The Office of Career Development & Placement Assistance suggests the following tips for helping your student make the most of spring break:

• Think ahead to summer. What is your student’s goal? If an internship or other experiential learning opportunity is the top priority, have them start the search now and consider not only paid experiences but also those that are unpaid but for academic credit. If pay is a concern, your student might consider finding a part-time unpaid internship and use the extra hours every week for an hourly job.

• Encourage your student to set up a job shadow experience. Help brainstorm a list of networking contacts that could include your colleagues, relatives, neighbors, or parents of their friends who work in a field of interest. Most will be more than happy to host an enthusiastic college student for a half or full day job shadow, and your student will gain some valuable insight about the work environment.

• Help them polish their résumé and interviewing skills. Since applications and interviews for summer internships or jobs will likely occur between now and the end of the semester, spring break is a great time for your student to get prepared. Remember, Pitt’s spring semester ends the final week of April, meaning your student can start a position earlier than many college students. For some employers, this is a bonus!

• Encourage your student to visit our office, located in 200 William Pitt Union or by calling 412-648-7130, or check us out online at www.careers.pitt.edu and www.hrc.pitt.edu.

Career Development & Placement Assistance

Summer Survival Job Fair

Wednesday, April 4th, 2012
William Pitt Union, Assembly Room
12 p.m. - 3 p.m.
If your student is staying in Pittsburgh during the summer of 2012, he or she should attend the Summer Job Fair. Your student can meet with nearly 75 companies.

CAREER EVENTS

Carnegie Mellon University, the University of Pittsburgh, Duquesne University, Robert Morris University, Point Park University, and the Forbes Fund

Org NonProfit Job and Internship Fair
Wednesday, February 29, 2012
Carnegie Mellon University, Rangos Ballroom, University Center
10:30 a.m. - 3 p.m.
This fair is a great opportunity to find out what the nonprofit industry has to offer.

Big East Career Consortium
Big East Career Fair
Friday, March 9th, 2012
Madison Square Garden
10 a.m. - 3 p.m.
Students travel to Madison Square Garden for the opportunity to meet with representatives from 150 outstanding organizations. Admission is free but travel and lodging are paid by the student.

http://www.bigeastcareerfair.org/students-alumni/event-details.html

WestPACS
WestPACS Job & Internship Fair
Wednesday, March 28, 2012
Monroeville Convention Center
10 a.m. - 3 p.m.
This is the largest job fair in the Pittsburgh region! Opportunities to meet with employers and attend various workshops offered to Pitt students and alumni. This event is free if students preregister by March 26th, 2012 and is $5 at the door.

http://www.westpacs.org/page.aspx?PID=34

Panther Leadership Summit

Parents! Please encourage your student(s) to register and attend the upcoming, 6th Annual Panther Leadership Summit to be held at the William Pitt Union on Saturday, February 25, 2012 from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. The goal is to provide high-quality leadership training and development to Pitt students, as well as college students from throughout the region.

The Summit will focus on Personal Leadership, Organizational Leadership and Civil Leadership through a morning series of eight to ten minute TEDx-style presentations (http://www.ted.com/pages/about_tedx) and afternoon breakout workshops. Topics will address issues that affect personal and professional relationships with students, professors, organizations, employers, and society in general. These sessions will also help students to gain a better understanding of self at a pivotal time in their lives.

Leadership areas of interest will be introduced by national and global leaders including but not limited to:

• Tina Doerffer – Lawyer, Author, and current Program Manager, Leadership Program at Bertelsmann Foundation (through live satellite feed from Germany)

• Keith Schaefcr – Alumna and University of Pittsburgh Board of Trustees member, and President and CEO Chief Executive Officer of IPL Global, Ltd.

• Sharon Smith – Educator, Economist, Author, and President of the University of Pittsburgh at Greensburg.

• Donna Sanft – Senior Associate Athletic Director for Administration, Student Life and Compliance – University of Pittsburgh

• Al Condeluci – Advocate, Author, University of Pittsburgh Alumni and Professor, and Executive Director of the United Cerebral Palsy, Pittsburgh District.

A sample list of topics includes:

• Marketing Leadership Skills

• Thinking Outside of the Box (Creative Thinking)

• Professionalism and Etiquette

• Productive Time Management

• Self-Motivation and Initiative

• Valuing Diversity

• Negotiating Effectively

• Personal Goal Planning and Implementation

• Identifying and Capitalizing on Others Strengths

• Personal Values and Ethics

• Personal Leadership Styles

• Managing Expectations

• Effective Problem Solving or Solution Building

• Learning How to Listen

• Networking/Building Relationships

• Managing Conflict

• Recruitment and Continuity

• How to Manage a Meeting

• Delegating Tasks

• Motivating Others

• Budgeting

• Organizational Goal Planning/ Strategic Planning

• Fundraising

• Decision Making Models

• Volunteer Management (managing non-paid students)

• Creating Community Partnerships

• Social Justice

• Power, Privilege, and Responsibility

• Service Learning in Student Organizations

• Organizing for Social Problems

• Politics and Advocacy

• Building Inclusive Communities

Student Affairs leadership development professionals will facilitate three 50-minute breakout sessions in the afternoon. Discussions from the morning presentation will help students to process what it means to be a current student leader, a leader in the community, and even world leader after graduation.

The Student Affairs Division is proud to present this entire event free of charge to all registered participants. Lunch is included. Registration ends on February 22, 2012. Students may register at http://pantherleadershipsummit2012.eventbrite.com/
OCC Enhances the Student Experience

The Outside the Classroom Curriculum (OCC) provides a pathway for students to have the best possible collegiate experience by engaging in a wide range of programs and activities designed to educate the whole student. The OCC is a University-wide initiative that is designed to help students receive a well-rounded education; get connected to their peers and the many great resources and programs here at Pitt; and ultimately gain a competitive edge for the job marketplace or graduate or professional schools.

The OCC is a collection of programs, activities, and experiences at Pitt that will help students make the most of their collegiate experience. Pitt offers many quality activities, events and programs to help students receive a well-rounded education and fulfill the OCC requirements. The OCC is for all Pitt students, regardless of major or career path, and helps students to develop highly desirable character traits and life skills.

Students who fully participate in the OCC report that they are more engaged in campus life, feel more connected to the University and their peers, and more knowledgeable about the resources and services at Pitt. And, perhaps most importantly, students who complete the OCC feel well prepared in interviews for internships, admission to professional schools.

One significant change to the curriculum is the addition of a tenth goal area: Initiative and Drive. This tenth goal allows students to demonstrate their ability to conceptualize an ambitious goal, develop a plan to accomplish the goal, and complete all tasks needed to successfully achieve the goal. Students showcase their accomplishments such as being published, conducting a research project, and forming a new student organization.

This new goal area was added based on feedback from employers who have shared that with the addition of Initiative and Drive, the skills and experiences students gain in the OCC match almost perfectly with their hiring manuals.

Students can complete the OCC at their own pace, and when the requirements are fulfilled, students are eligible to be inducted into the OCC Honorary Society. Members of this organization will enjoy receptions with employers and campus leaders, invitations to special campus events, and continued leadership development opportunities. Students who complete OCC will receive a green cord of distinction to wear during the graduation ceremony. The cord is green because it represents our schools colors, blue and gold, blended together to symbolize the education of the whole student.

Ways to encourage your student to participate in the OCC:

- Meet with OCC coordinator Scott Hoffman to develop a plan to complete the OCC program. Contact Scott at 412-648-7142 or e-mail sch44@pitt.edu.
- Encourage them to register in the system: my.pitt.edu
- Speak to your student about the value of being involved with a variety of programs
- Encourage them to become more familiar with the 10 OCC goals:
  - Leadership Development
  - Career Preparation
  - Communication Skills
  - Global and Cultural Awareness
  - Sense of Self
  - Service to Others
  - Pitt Pride
  - Wellness
  - Appreciation of the Arts
  - Initiative and Drive

Pitt Opens New O’Hara Student Center

The Grand Opening of the O’Hara Student Center took place on Monday, December 5, 2011, with an official ribbon cutting ceremony by Chancellor Mark A. Nordenberg, university officials and student leaders.

The center, formerly a private social and literary gathering place known as The Concordia Club, is located in mid-campus at 4024 O’Hara Street. The 35,000 square foot building was recently renovated under the direction of Pitt’s Office of Facilities Management and under the auspices of the University’s Division of Student Affairs. The renovations included moving walls, updating the heating and cooling system, roof replacement, improving the sound systems, refurbishing chandeliers and providing additional energy-efficient lighting.

University officials were successful in providing the center with a new, up-to-date look, while also maintaining its original, Romanesque Revival integrity and charm. New furniture and fresh colors give it a student friendly, welcoming appearance.

The building now provides services for all students and staff at the University of Pittsburgh along with resources and catering for outside programs. Event spaces consist of the O’Hara Ballroom and Dining Room which can accommodate up to 400 people for theatre-style seating or up to 200 guests for lunch or dinner receptions. In addition, the first floor includes a conference room that will comfortably accommodate 20 guests.

Academic needs are also addressed at the O’Hara Student Center. The building houses the Writing Center and Math Assistance Center which provide staff and resources to improve student writing and math skills. The main floor contains two quiet study areas and the third floor includes office space for twelve recognized student organizations where students are able to plan activities and events.

Please encourage your student to visit the new O’Hara Student Center, and stop by when you are on campus.

Busses, Trains, Airplanes!

Spring break is almost here! There are no classes from March 4 through March 11, and the University is closed on March 9. If your student will be travelling over the break, please know that Pitt has several transportation options for them to get home or wherever their spring break travels take them.

Students can use their Pitt Student ID to board any Allegheny County Port Authority vehicle for free, including busses that frequently loop through downtown Pittsburgh. This makes access to the Greyhound and Amtrak stations convenient and easily accessible for regional and national travel.

The Port Authority Route 28X bus is free of charge and will transport Pitt students from Oakland to the Pittsburgh International Airport. Depending on traffic and time of day, travel time to the airport is about one hour. If your student will be using this option, please make them aware of time restraints and arriving at the airport in plenty of time to check-in, go through security and board their flight.

An informal ride-share system exists on campus bulletin boards. Many students will network to share the costs of fuel and tolls with another student whose travel plans take them in the same direction. And finally, the University of Pittsburgh offers the Busses Home for the Holidays option. This option offers transportation from lower campus to and from 13 destinations in Pennsylvania, New York, Ohio, Maryland and Washington DC with several stops along the way. For additional information and associated costs, go to http://www.pc.pitt.edu/transportation/buses_springrecess.html
What is Alternative Break?

Pitt’s Alternative Break program is much more than a volunteer experience over spring break. The program offers community-based projects that include engagement with members of the community and exposure to the problems, customs, and culture of the region. Our teams are trained by the community partner to understand the specific content of their service work and are prepared to carry out their tasks. Alternative Break creates an experience that influences participants to reflect on the impact and meaning of their service, to transfer what they have learned to their own communities, and to start them on a course of lifelong active citizenship.

What We Do on Alternative Break

During the week of Alternative Break, a team of Pitt students participate in a daily volunteering service project with a local nonprofit organization or community partner. Students travel by chartered bus, train, or van to the service site. The sponsoring agency gives an orientation that outlines the social issues and local impact in the community. Students participate in 30 hours of service over four days with community participants. The last day is set aside for sightseeing and exploring the area. The team leader ends each day with group and individual reflection. Alternative Break is drug and alcohol-free.

Applications are being accepted for the Alternative Break program.

March 4-10, 2012 Service Sites:

- Cumberland Trail/Soddy Daisy, Tennessee/$335
- Camp Sequanota/Jennerstown, Pennsylvania/$200
- Youth Service Opportunities Project/ Washington D.C./$450
- Habitat for Humanity/Wilmington, Delaware/$370

For more information go to www.altbreak.pitt.edu or contact us at 923 William Pitt Union/412 624-1065

Alternative Break….it’s the break that will last a lifetime!