Fall Regional Events and Kid’s Day

By Lynne Miller
Coordinator of Commuter Student and Family Programs

This past fall, Parent and Family Resources held two pilot regional events for parents and families in both Philadelphia and Buffalo. The events, which were held at local establishments and planned by current Pitt parents Navin Sharma and Ruthanne Trinca-Conley respectively, were designed to allow parents and families from the particular regions a chance to meet each other, network, and watch some Panther football. At the Buffalo event, we found that parents were so engaged with each other that the game went unnoticed! By all accounts the events were widely enjoyed by the participants and we have plans to extend the regional events to other areas in the future. If you are interested in coordinating an event in your area, please e-mail us at parents@pitt.edu.

Kid’s Day

By Lynne Miller
Coordinator of Commuter Student and Family Programs

Next month Pitt introduces our first-ever Kids Day for families of Pitt Students! Families, especially kids ages 6-18, are invited to spend a day at Pitt with their student on Saturday, February 19, 2011. The staff is currently planning some fun activities including a women’s basketball game, family movie, and much more! Online registration is currently available at www.familyweekend.pitt.edu/kidsday, deadline is Thursday, February 10, 2011. We hope to see you there!
Greetings,

Welcome to our fourth newsletter and a new year and a new semester. We hope everyone had a wonderful and relaxing winter break. This issue focuses on the topic of housing options for students in all years for on and off-campus. Deadlines for applying for housing are next month so this is timely. We also have our regular features of Didja Know, and First Year Parent “Heads up”. We hope you enjoy it and find it helpful. As always we welcome article ideas you would like to see. Just send them to parents@pitt.edu. Thank you to those of you who already sent us ideas.

Have a great semester and Hail to Pitt!

Sincerely,

Marv Roth

An Exciting Opportunity for Pitt Parents!

Would you like to be more involved and contribute to the advancement of parent resources and programming at Pitt?

Do you have knowledge or a talent that you feel might be beneficial to the University? If you said yes to either of these questions, then we may have just the opportunity for you!

The Office of Parent and Family Resources introduces the Panther Parent Council, a group of parent volunteers that will be able to directly impact the direction of parent programs at Pitt. This group of 20 families (comprised of five families from each class year) will have input and engagement in such areas as:

* Parent programming at New Student Orientation and Family Weekend
* Parent communications efforts, including the Panther Connections newsletter
* Creation of and involvement with new regional parent clubs

The application process starts on Thursday November 18, 2010. To learn more about this exciting opportunity and to apply to become a member, please visit: www.parents.pitt.edu/offsa/parentcouncil.html

Thank you for considering this service to the University and Hail to Pitt!
Fifth Annual Panther Leadership Summit

The Fifth Annual Panther Leadership Summit is hosted by the University of Pittsburgh Division of Student Affairs. Since its inception, the Summit has been a convenient, affordable, and effective means of providing University of Pittsburgh and Pittsburgh Council of Higher Education (PCHE) consortium students with high-quality leadership training and development.

The Panther Leadership Summit on February 26, 2011 is open to Pitt students and students from higher education institutions around the state. The summit’s morning program will feature 8 to 10 minute leadership development presentations by notable alumni and friends of Pitt in a dynamic format similar to the TEDx model that is sweeping the nation.

The afternoon will focus on giving students the opportunity to enhance their leadership development with 45 minute interactive workshops presented by student affairs professionals.

Workshop topics will feature the Summit’s five content areas: diversity in leadership, leadership identity, critical thinking skills, leadership theory and communication and transferable skills for the workplace.

The Summit features programs facilitated by noted leaders, consultants, lecturers, faculty, and student development practitioners. The Summit provides students with opportunities to network, interact with and learn from professionals with experience and expertise in student leadership development in the three dimensions of the Summit: personal, organizational, and civic leadership.

To Register Now
Interested students should go to the following link for more information: www.regonline.com/pantherleadershipsummit2010

Where is Your Student Going to Live Next Year?

Can you imagine a residence hall living experience that extends learning beyond the walls of the traditional classroom and provides students with the direction and support they need to help prepare for their best possible future? This is exactly the residential experience students will have if they choose to participate in any of our upper-class living-learning communities.

To help students decide whether a living-learning community is right for them, we have designed a Housing Fair in the Towers Lobby on January 25, 2011 from 10am-noon and January 26 from 2pm-4pm. Additionally, an LLC Open House event on Wednesday, January 26, 2011 from 7:00 – 9:30pm in Panther and Pennsylvania Halls. Representatives from each upper-class living-learning community will be on hand to answer questions and provide tours of the residence halls. In addition, students who commit to living within an LLC will get to bypass the regular room selection process for upper-class students.

Upper-class living-learning communities available for the 2010-2011 academic year include the following:

- Civic Engagement and Community Service
- Leadership Community
- Pre-Med Community
- Entrepreneurial Community
- Multicultural Community
- Social Science Research
- French Language and Culture
- Natural Sciences Research
- Upper-class Engineering
- Italian Language and Culture
- Pre-Law Community

For detailed information about a specific living-learning community or for the application to be a member of an LLC, please go to: www.reslife.pitt.edu/competitiveedge/index.html and click on the corresponding link.

Please take our survey

Please take a minute and provide us with some feedback about our parent and family newsletter at: www.zoomerang.com/Survey/WEB22B0QNEKXP4S

If you have a question for which you would like a response, please send it via parents@pitt.edu.
The Office of Off-Campus Living (OCL) provides students who choose to live off campus with necessary information and tools they will need to make educated decisions on their housing options. OCL provides resources such as a renter's guide, apartment listings, neighborhood descriptions, and a roommate and subletting service.

**Renter's Guide**
For University of Pittsburgh students considering or currently residing in off-campus accommodations, the University has prepared a detailed renters’ guide to assist students in the many facets of off-campus living. The information and tools included are rental basics, before you sign a lease, and after you sign a lease in order to be fully equipped for your off-campus living experience.

**Apartment Listings**
Off-Campus Living provides apartment listings that are excellent sources for determining what accommodations are available. The listings categories are: University-owned, apartment buildings, and complexes directory.

When looking for an apartment in Oakland and the surrounding area, keep in mind that timing is key, and the housing market around the University is driven by the academic calendar. Most leases start in August and last for 12 months.

Available apartments are plentiful in March, April, and May, but do not panic if students start the search in June or July, one can still find an apartment. The search will be easier if the student is flexible about start dates, prices, and types of units.

**Roommates and Sublets**
Off-Campus Living offers a roommate matching service to help match students who are looking for apartments with students who have apartments and are looking for roommates and a sublet service to help students find replacement tenants to assume the remaining terms of their leases.

**Roommate Matching Service**
Off-Campus Living posts listings on their Web site, as well as in the office. Lists are updated regularly to keep them current.

If the student would like to be listed on the roommate matching list, complete the online application at: [www.ocl.pitt.edu](http://www.ocl.pitt.edu) or stop by the office.

Students assume any and all risks involved in participation in the roommate matching service. Participation in this service is voluntary and requires that students check the roommate matching listings and find their own roommate. If they decide to list with OCL, call at 412-624-6998 after they find a roommate so their name can be removed from the list.

**Sublet Service**
The sublet list is available online and also is posted in the office. It is updated regularly to keep listings current.

Students add their name to the sublet using the online sublet application, or by contacting OCL. The listings and applications are available at OCL.

A sublet involves taking possession of an entire apartment. A sublet should be used only when occupancy of an entire lease will be taken over. Use the sublet listing for students who are looking for people to take over their leases.

The student assumes any and all risks involved in participation in the sublet service. Participation in this service is voluntary and requires students to check the sublet service listings and to decide whether a sublet is right for them. If a student decides to list with OCL, students should call them when they find a student to take over the lease so that they can be taken off the list.

Off-Campus Living is open from 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday. You’re welcome to stop in with questions or concerns.

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**THE OFFICE OF OFF-CAMPUS LIVING (OCL)**
127 N. Bellefield Ave.
412-624-6998
[www.ocl.pitt.edu](http://www.ocl.pitt.edu)
E-mail: ocl@bc.pitt.edu

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**BROWN BAG-INAR SERIES**
Introducing the Parent and Family Resources “Brown Bag-inar” Series.

As promised the Brown Bag-inar series is here. The first will be January 26, 2011. The program will focus on career development programs with special emphasis on career fairs at Pitt. You will hear about how these experiences can be beneficial for all students including freshmen.

The time will be 12:10 p.m. to 12:40 p.m. with “Q and A” from 12:40 to 12:50 p.m.

To register, e-mail us at parents@pitt.edu and just say you want to participate in the webinar. We will then send you log-in information. Registration is open until January 25, 2011 at noon.

We hope you can join us.
Emerging Leaders is a 2-hour per week, 10-week training program offered in the fall and spring term by the Division of Student Affairs. Emerging Leaders takes a lively and exciting team approach to learning leadership skills and behaviors. Students participate in small and large group activities and exercises that explore topics such as group dynamics, conflict management, diversity, power and influence, ethics, and life planning.

There are several benefits to students involved with Emerging Leaders. In addition to meeting a diverse population of students who are interested in leadership, they will develop a positive sense of personal identity, understand and strengthen personal leadership skills and style, and practice proven leadership behaviors.

Emerging Leaders helps students to become the leader they have always wanted to be. Each semester hundreds of Pitt student-leaders participate in Emerging Leaders and receive opportunities and experiences that are only available in this exclusive program. Emerging Leaders participants have gone on to become resident assistants, presidents and council officers of fraternities and sororities, Student Government Board, Black Action Society and many other student organizations on campus.

Students should register on-line at the Emerging Leaders Web site: www.emergingleaders.pitt.edu

Follow the “Register Now” link on the main page. The deadline and start date for the program is February 1, 2011. There is a $60 fee for the program.
It is time to begin the on-campus housing application process for the 2011-2012 school year. Every resident student must process a housing application in order to be eligible for the next year’s on-campus housing selection process. On-campus housing consists of residence hall, apartment-style and fraternity accommodations.

At the end of January, all current students living on campus will receive housing application and selection information in their campus mailbox. All literature included in this housing packet will be posted online on the Panther Central website. This information can be found by going to the Panther Central website, http://www.pc.pitt.edu, and clicking on the Publications link.

Full-time students who have lived on campus during their first year with a housing guarantee are guaranteed housing for their second and third years if they continue to satisfy all housing application and deadline requirements in each successive year. For guaranteed students to maintain their guaranteed status, the $325 housing deposit, Housing and Dining Services Contract, and re-application must be completed by midnight, February 11, 2011. Each spring eligible students living on campus have the opportunity to select their accommodations for the following academic year through an online lottery.

Room Selection Process
Each spring eligible juniors-to-be and sophomores-to-be select their residence hall rooms for the next academic year in a lottery determined by academic class and a randomly assigned housing selection index number.

Suite and Apartment-Style Selection Process
• Multi-room, multi-person, and single-unit suites are available in several residence halls. Multi-room, multi-person, and single-unit apartments are available in apartment-style accommodations. Groups of suitemates and apartmentmates (eligible juniors-to-be and sophomores-to-be) bid on suites and apartment-style accommodations using a point system based upon academic class and years of residence in the desired building. Ties are broken by the lowest randomly assigned housing selection index number in each group.

Room, Suite, and Apartment-Style Retention
• Eligible juniors-to-be and sophomores-to-be may retain their rooms, suites, or apartment-style accommodations for the following academic year. The University retains the right to designate currently occupied rooms, suites, and apartment-style accommodations as unavailable for the following year.

Important Upcoming Selection Dates for Guaranteed Sophomores-to-be and Guaranteed Juniors-to-be:
• February 1 - Suite Selection Forms and Room Retention Forms available at Panther Central.
• February 11 - $325 Housing Deposit, Housing and Dining Services Contract, and Re-application Due.
• February 14 – Room, Suite, and Apartment-Style Retention forms due to Panther Central.
• February 15 – Room, Suite, and Apartment-Style Retention takes place online.
• February 17 – Suite and Apartment-Style Selection forms due to Panther Central.
• March 1 thru March 25 – Upperclassmen Selection takes place online. (see Panther Central calendar at: www.pc.pitt.edu for specific dates and times.)

For non-guaranteed students, accommodations will be assigned as housing becomes available based on the students’ contract received date. Typically Panther Central will be able to begin to assign non-guaranteed students from the waiting list in June as space becomes available, and will continue to place students from the waitlist throughout the summer even into the fall semester.

For incoming freshmen students who are admitted for the fall term and pay their $300 enrollment fee by May 1st and their $325 housing deposit by the deadline printed on their two-term housing contract are guaranteed on-campus housing. This guarantee is good for three years provided that all housing application and deposit deadlines in each subsequent year are met. Panther Central assigns all first-year on-campus students to rooms in the residence halls.
By Mary Utter, 
Coordinator of First Year Experience

The First Year Mentors (FYMs) are a group of 15 upper-class students who work with the office of First Year Experience. Their mission is to facilitate programs, services and relationships that assist with the transition experience for first year students. The FYM position is year round and includes pre-matriculation programs, orientation events and a year long program series.

Throughout the summer they facilitate the Life on Campus program during PittStart sessions which focuses on introducing incoming students to the Division of Student Affairs. The goal of this program is to open the lines of communication between students and staff, parents and staff, as well as parents and students. The feature of this session is a series of skits which highlight different aspects of college life. These scenes introduce students to a variety of situations they may encounter while in college including homesickness, academic problems, roommate issues, campus safety and many more.

After the skits, FYMs lead small discussion groups in which incoming students are able to get to know one another and ask questions related to Pitt.

First Year Mentors also plan the Pitt Odyssey outdoor adventure program which occurs in July. During this program, incoming students are taken to Outdoor Odyssey in Boswell, PA for three days and two nights. The program includes hiking, low and high rope courses, as well as leadership team builder activities. Students are given the opportunity to get to know their FYMs as well as Student Affairs staff and their fellow classmates.

When the FYMs are not busy with PittStart and Pitt Odyssey, they are planning over 20 social events for New Student Orientation. Planning for orientation begins in May and continues throughout the summer. Every detail from food to decorations, activities and supplies are meticulously planned out by the First Year Mentors.

During the Fall and Spring semesters, FYMs continue to support first year students through the First Year Success Series. This program series provides events that help students acclimate to their new community and campus. Events include walking tours of downtown Pittsburgh, meditation seminars, a career preparation fashion show and stress relief finals programs. The Office of First Year Experience and the FYMs also promote and encourage first year students to attend campus-wide events such as the Volunteer Fair, Career Fair, Academic Rush, Pitt Make A Difference Day and more.

Is your student looking for a leadership opportunity on campus? Or do they enjoy mentoring younger students and planning programs? Encourage them to apply to become a First Year Mentor. For an application and complete information on the First Year Experience Office and the First Year Mentors, visit www.fye.pitt.edu.
“Must do’s” for success
Students and their families spend a lot of time during the high school years thinking about and planning for the “next big step” – entering college. Then, upon becoming a college student, the focus of the “next step” changes to life beyond commencement. Whether it is full-time professional employment, entry into a graduate program, military service or working for a service organization, everyone asks college students, “What’s your next step going to be?”

Upon entering the College of Business Administration (CBA), all of our business students (freshmen and transfers alike) are introduced to the five “Must-Do’s” they need to embrace and practice in order to make their next steps highly successful ones. We are outlining the first two of these Must-Do’s in this article and will present the remaining Must-Do’s in future issues of the Newsletter.

Must-do #1: Own your academic and career development.
To become ready to take a highly successful next step, business students must own their academic and career development. Ownership implies that students understand there is a cost to their college experience and someone (the student, his/her parents, a scholarship benefactor) is paying that cost. Recognizing this cost, students come to value and protect the opportunity, take responsibility for it, take pride in it and work hard to increase its value. Students who take ownership of their academic and career development are most ready to take a highly successful post-college step. These students have learned that their actions and choices will shape their futures.

Must-do #2: Clarify your aspirations and direction.
Business students who move early during their college careers to clarify their aspirations and direction also become most ready to take successful post-college steps. Yes, choosing a major is part of clarifying a direction, but it is critical to consider your aspirations, too. Aspirations include things like the type of work that will be done, the role of their work relative to the rest of society, the importance of career flexibility, opportunities for travel, and future earning potential. Students have to not only clarify where they want to go, but how they are going to get there.

For more information please visit our website at www.cba.pitt.edu.
This article is in response to the question, how do students get help on choosing a major or a career?

By Karin Asher, Ph. D. Interim director of Career Development

Your student is probably becoming quite adept at keeping up with class assignments and exam schedules, and is likely a pro at updating his or her facebook profile on a regular basis… but what about keeping on track for life after Pitt?

The Career Development Office (CDO) has a plan to help. The Career Action Plan, offered to all freshmen, sophomores, and juniors, gives students the opportunity to know what career-related experiences they should be having each year at Pitt in order to set the stage for a successful graduate school or job search when the time comes. It takes just a few minutes to complete, and students can revisit their Career Action Plan at any time to update it with new experiences. By following these suggestions and interacting with our CDO staff, your student can feel confident that they have the information needed to stay on track with their career plans.

The Career Action Plan is located in FutureLinks, Pitt’s online career resource and job listing website. Students can access FutureLinks through their Pitt Portal and visit the Career Action Plan tab to get started. If your student has not yet completed the plan, encourage him or her to take advantage of this resource!

Reflection Retreat: Registration is Open!

Is your student looking for direction at Pitt? Have you ever wondered if he or she could use some inspiration in making decisions about the future?

Registration is now open for Pitt’s annual two-day Reflection Retreat at the Lakeview Resort in Morgantown, West Virginia, scheduled this year for February 11-12, 2011. Hosted by the Division of Student Affairs, the retreat provides a unique opportunity for students to connect in a fun, interactive environment and further develop their awareness of personal values, beliefs, and attitudes related to life purpose and direction. A staff of Student Affairs professionals will facilitate the retreat and help students build a foundation that can further guide them as they navigate important life decisions.

During the Reflection Retreat, students are given an opportunity to develop a personal mission statement, as well as engage in dialogue with staff regarding how the student can focus their energies while at Pitt. Students are also encouraged to use the weekend to make new connections with one another in addition to relaxing and enjoying the amenities of the resort.

Registration is free for students, but spots fill up quickly. Encourage your student to visit www.careers.pitt.edu today to learn more and sign up!
Becoming A Just Community
in Celebration of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

Monday, January 17
Day of Service
A Day On, Not A Day Off!
Students will participate in various service activities throughout the community. You can sign up individually or as an organization.
For more information or to register for one of the two shifts - 10 a.m. and 1:30 p.m. - please visit:
www.zoomerang.com/Survey/WEB22BLDC6SERV/

Sponsored by: Black Action Society, Jumpstart, and First Year Experience

Candlelight Vigil
in Remembrance of Dr. King
Cathedral of Learning Steps
7:06 p.m.
Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Inc. would like to honor the memory of their fellow brother, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. A discussion will be held in David Lawrence, Room 205, following the vigil.

Tuesday, January 18
Pursuing the Promise:
Youth Reflect on Dr. King
William Pitt Union, Sixth Floor
3-4:30 p.m.
The University of Pittsburgh hosts the Pursing the Promise Program that provides area youth with scholarship opportunities. Join us as youth reflect on King’s legacy.

CommonGround Workshop
Resisting Oppression Together
William Pitt Union, Room 540
8:45-10 p.m.
Come engage with your peers in honest dialogue about the systems underlying all forms of injustice. Don’t miss this valuable opportunity to learn how to be an ally for social groups other than your own.

Presented by the Campus Women’s Organization and facilitated by Student Allies Intergroup Dialogue.

Thursday, January 20
Social Justice Symposium
Special Guest Tim Wise
University Club
9:30 a.m.-2:30 p.m.
This is a development opportunity for University of Pittsburgh faculty, staff, and graduate students only. Contact Tynetta Hall at hallt@pitt.edu for more information.

Race and Diversity Lecture
White Privilege and Racism in America
Special Guest Tim Wise
William Pitt Union, Assembly Room
7-8:30 p.m.
Author and activist Tim Wise will be making a community address regarding persistent inequalities in our society. This event is open to all students, faculty, staff, and the greater Pittsburgh community.

Sponsored by: The Office of Cross Cultural and Leadership Development

Friday, January 21
Equipoise Unity Brunch
William Pitt Union, Assembly Room
11:30 a.m.-1 p.m.
This annual tradition will be hosted by Equipoise and will feature international arts leader, Andre Kimo Stone Guess, President and CEO of the August Wilson Center for African American Culture.

“Life’s most persistent and urgent question is, What are you doing for others?”

Picture of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.
**Alternative Break: “A Break That Will Last A Lifetime”**

By Terrence Milani, PhD  
Associate Director, Office of Student Life

Pitt’s Student Volunteer Outreach Alternative Break program is much more than a volunteer vacation experience. Its eight essential components combine to create an experience that is intended to influence participants to transfer what they have learned to their own communities and to start them on a course of lifelong active citizenship. It is intended to truly be “a break that will last a lifetime.”

**Direct Service:**
The service projects selected for Alternative Break are intended to provide transformational learning and developmental experiences. They feature sponsorship by local agencies that are proponents of the goals of Alternative Break programs. They offer community based projects that include engagement with members of the community and exposure to the problems, customs and culture of the community and region.

**Reflection:**
The participants’ individual and group experiences are processed by reflections throughout the experience. Participants keep personal journals and the teams reflect on their day’s experience in the evening. A team reflection activity at the end of the project explores the meaning and value of their team’s experience. Program evaluations by participants are conducted after returning to campus.

**Orientation:**
The Pitt Alternative Break experience starts with an application process and the selection of a service site. The next step is an orientation program designed to provide participants with the mission and goals of the program, the responsibilities of participants, expectations for participation, information about the host agency, the service project and the community.

**Education:**
The Alternative Break teams examine the context of their respective service project in terms of the broader social issues that underlie the problem and the nature of the region and community in which they will serve.

**Training:**
Teams are prepared to understand the specific content of their service work and are prepared to carry out their tasks.

**Diversity:**
Participation is open to all undergraduate students and reflects the demographics of the student body. Participants can expect to address problems and engage members of the community with whom they otherwise would have had little or no direct experience or contact. The experience is an immersion into a diverse environment where in the participants will experience, reflect upon, learn from and understand the attendant social issues.

**Alcohol and Other Drug Free:**
Participants sign an agreement that they will refrain from any consumption of alcohol or use of any other drug for the duration of their service project from departure to return to campus. Those that violate the agreement are subject to disciplinary action and having to refund the cost of their participation.

The Student Volunteer Outreach’s 15th annual Alternative Break program is already accepting applications for spring break, March 6-12, 2011. The details about the service projects and the application are available at www.altbreak.pitt.edu.

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**STUDENT VOLUNTEER OUTREACH**
923 William Pitt Union  
www.svo.pitt.edu  
E-mail: svo@pitt.edu  
412-648-1486

**ALTERNATIVE BREAK @ PITT**
www.altbreak.pitt.edu  
412-624-1065  
altbreak@pitt.edu
Nationality Rooms a Popular and Unique Tradition

The Cathedral of Learning Nationality Rooms date back to the construction of the Cathedral itself, being the vision of then Chancellor John G. Bowman. The work began in nationality communities of Allegheny County as they responded to the invitation from Chancellor Bowman to create classrooms that would represent highly creative periods or aspects of their heritage. Men, women, and children in church, school, fraternal, labor, and social organizations labored with pride to finance these unique gifts to a burgeoning urban university where generations of their descendants would study.

The tours of the rooms are a popular activity by thousands of people. As every year, the Nationality Rooms were decorated in traditional holiday styles from November 13th, 2010 through January 14th, 2011.

The decorations are removed January 15 and 16, 2011. Upon January 22, weekend tape tours are available for the rooms in their normal appearance. Reservations for guided tours are accepted for groups of ten or more, made by prior arrangement.

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Spring 2011 Career Fair

February 8–9, 2011 • 10 a.m.–3 p.m.
William Pitt Union, Main Floor

Tuesday, February 8: Technical Majors
(engineering, computer, and information sciences)

Wednesday, February 9: Nontechnical Majors
(business, arts, sciences, and health sciences)

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The University of Pittsburgh is an affirmative action, equal opportunity institution.