FALL 2013
Upcoming events:

• Family Weekend
  October 18-20

• Pitt Make a Difference Day
  October 26

• Academic Calendar for
  holiday and winter break

Fall is a busy time at the University of Pittsburgh. Students are going
to class, studying, working on research and lab reports and gearing
up for mid-term exams. Over 3,000 students and 240 employers
participated in the annual Fall Career Fair on September 25, and the
University community welcomed alumni with a full week of homecoming
festivities including the annual laser show and fireworks display. The
week culminated with an exciting ACC victory over the University of
Virginia! Now we look forward to welcoming over 1,000 families for
Family Weekend on October 18-20, 2013!

In response to your requests this year’s schedule includes activities not
previously offered for Family Weekend, including: academic and student
affairs open houses on Friday afternoon, a welcome reception on Friday
evening with Vice Provost and Dean of Students, Dr. Kathy Humphrey, a
Family Weekend tailgate at Heinz Field, and an ice cream social on Satur-
day before the football game. These activities are in addition to the Fam-
ily Weekend football game, the Explore Pittsburgh double-decker bus tour
and Saturday on campus cultural events.

At the time of this publication, online registration is no longer available.
However on-site registration is available from 10 a.m. – 7 p.m. on Fri-
day, October 18, and from 9 a.m. – 2 p.m. on Saturday, October 19 in the
O’Hara Student Center Ballroom. Page 2 of the Family Weekend schedule
includes a map with check-in location. Questions? Please go to:
www.familyweekend.pitt.edu  for frequently asked questions and com-
plete details. We hope to see you there!
**Division of Student Affairs**
www.studentaffairs.pitt.edu
412-648-1006

**Disability Resources and Services**
www.drs.pitt.edu
412-648-7890

**Career Development and Placement Assistance**
www.careers.pitt.edu
412-648-7130

**Cross Cultural and Leadership Development**
www.ccld.pitt.edu
412-648-9523

**International Services**
www.ois.pitt.edu
412-624-7120

**Intramurals and Recreation**
www.intramurals.pitt.edu
412-648-8279

**Office of Parent and Family Resources**
www.parents.pitt.edu
412-648-8548

**Residence Life**
www.reslife.pitt.edu
412-648-1200

**Student Life**
www.studentlife.pitt.edu
412-648-1200

**Student Health Service**
www.studenthealth.pitt.edu
412-383-1800

**Counseling Center**
www.counseling.pitt.edu
412-648-7930

**Office of Student Conduct**
www.studentaffairs.pitt.edu/conduct
412-648-7910

---

**IT’S A BALANCING ACT**

You probably know by now that having a college student can be emotionally draining (as well as financially draining)! A conversation with your student during the beginning of a week can leave you feeling confident that she is having a wonderful time and couldn’t be happier. By the end of that same week, the conversation may be just the opposite and you wonder “How did that happen? – and so quickly!” To help put situations like this into perspective, and to help you support your college student, I would like to recommend some insightful reading.

In 2012, syndicated columnist, Harlan Cohen, wrote a book entitled The Naked Roommate: FOR PARENTS ONLY. This publication addresses topics such as communication with your student, campus visits, drugs and alcohol, and much more. These issues are presented with thoughtful combinations of facts, statistics, compassion, and a few measures of humor. As part of Family Weekend, Friday, October 18, from 3 – 4 p.m. in the O’Hara Student Center, this book will be used for a book discussion. At the time of this writing, Harlan has indicated that he is available to participate through a remote connection. Please consider purchasing, reading the book, and bringing it with you for discussion. It is available at most major book stores. A limited number of copies will be raffled that day.

We hope to see many of you at Family Weekend. October 1 was the last day to change or begin online registration. However, if you would still like to participate in the programming that is offered, you may register on site at the O’Hara Student Center Ballroom check-in location during limited hours. Please go to www.familyweekend.pitt.edu for details. All remaining football, Pittsburgh bus tour, Carnegie Museum and Phipps Conservatory tickets will be sold on a first-come, first-served basis during check-in.

As always, if you have any questions, concerns or suggestions please write to us at parents@pitt.edu or call 412-624-8548.

Sandy Talbott
Parent and Family Liaison

---

**Concern and Support: A Student’s Perspective**

By Abigail Cohen, First Year Mentor, Abigail.Cohen@pitt.edu

Hello! My name is Abigail Cohen and I am one of the University’s First Year Mentors. As a First Year Mentor (FYM) it is my job to help students and parents feel more comfortable and connected to campus during this time of transition. Besides being an FYM and a Junior Economics and Philosophy double major, I am also the oldest child in my family. I’ve been the “guinea pig” my entire life, but being the first child to leave for college posed a completely different challenge for my parents and me. Our biggest struggle was finding the right way to balance being concerned and being supportive.

Initially, it was a challenge. Mom wasn’t quite sure how to react when I told her that I had not done as well as I had planned on my first big college exam. Dad did not know how to console his daughter who was six hours away when she was having trouble with her roommate. But eventually a routine worked itself out where they could let me be independent encourage me at the same time. While there may have been 250 miles between us, my parents were always able to show their love by being present and supportive in my life. Whether it was hour long phone call, or just a quick “Good Luck!” text, having my parents there to listen to my concerns about my new college experience really helped me keep a positive attitude.

This sporadic and non-committal kind of communication helped me to grow as a student, because I was able to speak freely with my parents, without having to totally depend on them. This also benefited my parents, because they were able to remain as constants in my life without me getting annoyed with them for being too overprotective.

My only complaint was that my parents did not send me enough care packages with goodies from home. Every college student will tell you that getting packages at school is better than opening presents on your birthday!

But even if you don’t send candy or balloons, any method of sending love and support to your student is always appreciated. Hail to Pitt!

---

**COMMENCEMENT PREPARATION**

The University of Pittsburgh Class of 2014 will celebrate Commencement on Sunday, April 27, 2014!

It’s not too early to make Commencement lodging arrangements. For a list Pittsburgh region accommodations, along with an option to get directions from your home, please visit this link.
Parents on Facebook

In our effort to connect parents with each other and with the University, we have established the Panther Parents Association Facebook group. Over 500 current parents have joined this open group and posted on topics such as Oakland apartment rentals, good places to take students to eat, transportation to and from campus, and more. Panther Central also has a Facebook page for parents and students so you can stay informed about important deadlines, events and newsworthy Pitt information. For more information, go to the Panther Central Facebook page. As always, if you have a question or concern which is specific or not appropriate for a public forum, please send that inquiry to parents@pitt.edu

Talk About It: Helping Students Get Help

By Deanna Burkett, Consultation and Outreach Coordinator, Counseling Center Advisor

"I need help can be a scary thing to admit, especially when mental health is involved. The Give Depression a Voice: Talk About It campaign is one way Pitt is acknowledging and fighting the stigma which can prevent students from seeking supportive mental health services.

Each year Talk About It sponsors events to raise student awareness around the prevalence of depression, its symptoms, and how students can get help. This year, in addition to its regular programming and advocacy efforts, Talk About It will sponsor National Depression Screening Day. On Thursday, October 10, working in collaboration with the University Counseling Center, Talk About It will encourage students to get a free screening and support other students in their wellness efforts.

The following week, leading up to Family Weekend, Talk About It will launch Pitt Cares Week, with programming to teach wellness habits and to remind students that when they do need help there are readily available resources and many people who care. Programming topics include gratitude, random acts of kindness, mindfulness meditation, and how to reach out to someone who is struggling.

Pitt Cares Week culminates on Saturday with the distribution of bright green rally towels, green being the recognized color for depression awareness. Look for Talk About It students on game day at the William Pitt Union, and take a towel to increase campus awareness around wellness and help-seeking behavior! Hail to Pitt!

PLEASE TAKE OUR SURVEY

By answering a few simple questions online 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 e-mail us.

EMERGING LEADERS

By Callie Rosenfeld, Emerging Leaders Undergraduate Intern

Arriving at school freshman year was overwhelming, to say the least. With so many organizations and opportunities I wanted to ensure that I was getting involved in the right activities from the start. Then, I found the Emerging Leaders program.

Before the program began I was unsure what to expect; I had been to leadership programs before, but never attended a leadership program in college. To my surprise, by the second week of the ten week program, I began to feel comfortable with my group and I could see a change in the way I interacted with people. Whether it was the discussions about what makes a leader successful, the various activities we did that week, or the discussions our Peers helped to lead, they each changed my perspective on leadership and daily interactions. No longer was I focused on only what I was saying, but now the emphasis moved to how I was saying it and who I was saying it to; allowing me to better engage my audience and have a larger impact.

Each week held a new challenge. Keeping in mind the five core values of the program – valuing others, integrity, self-knowledge, accountability and change – my knowledge of leadership continued to grow. Having the chance to learn about the way I lead, how others lead, how to best interact with specific personality types, and the importance of considering diversity in every situation, fully prepared me for the leadership roles I would soon take on at the University of Pittsburgh.

For more information visit www.emergingleaders.pitt.edu

BOOK DISCUSSION VIA SKYPE WITH NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLING AUTHOR, SPEAKER, AND COLUMNIST, HARLAN COHEN!

Check the Family Weekend schedule and join us on Friday, October 18, 2013 from 3-4 p.m. when Harlan Cohen will share insights and answer your questions regarding topics in his book, The Naked Roommate: FOR PARENTS ONLY. Several books will be raffled to attendees at the end of the presentation.
AlcoholEdu: Not Just for Your Student

By Megan E. Stahl
Health Educator - Alcohol, Tobacco and Other Drugs

What’s all the buzz about AlcoholEdu? AlcoholEdu is an online, alcohol prevention program administered to incoming freshmen at colleges and universities across the nation. At the University of Pittsburgh, completion of this program, which consists of two separate modules, is mandatory for all incoming students prior to starting their first year.

Fall 2013 marks the third year AlcoholEdu has been incorporated as part of orientation to the University. The course uses a sophisticated algorithm that allows it to customize itself to each individual student who takes the program, producing a more meaningful and effective educational experience. It also measures the student’s alcohol-related attitudes and behaviors and applies a superior tracking and measurement tool that will allow us to measure discrete goals and evaluate our prevention strategy. This program encourages safer decision making skills. It is a significant component of our comprehensive prevention effort at the University of Pittsburgh. You may have heard your student talk about AlcoholEdu as they prepared for their first semester at the University. However, did you know there is also an AlcoholEdu program available for parents?

Although your student is required to complete AlcoholEdu for Students, the parent program is an optional tool available exclusively for you. Your student may also find additional resources and services at the Wellness Center, Student Health Service, which is located in our newest residential facility at Norddenberg Hall. Located at the Wellness Center, a variety of programs, services and resources is offered by the University Counseling Center, Student Health Service and Office of Health Education and Promotion to assist your student while at the University of Pittsburgh. For more information on our available services and programs, please visit their Web site.

Get Your Student Plugged In at Pitt: the OCC!

By Sandy Tolbott
Parent and Family Liaison

Most parents want their students to have a great college experience, right? And, it is the mission of the Division of Student Affairs to provide our students with the best collegiate experience in the world.

Every student has slightly different expectations of college life along with varying interests. Some students are focused on research and academic activities while other students look for their development outside of the classroom.

At Pitt, we encourage students to investigate and become involved in our Outside the Class Curriculum (OCC). Launched in 2008, students receive extracurricular credit for participating in 10 different categories of student development. When they complete the requirements for the OCC, they receive tangible recognition in the form of the green honors cords (combination of Pitt’s blue and gold colors). But much more important are the growing experiences that students have along the way; experiences in leadership, community service, sense of self, the arts and so much more.

So, the next time you talk with your student, ask him or her if they have investigated the OCC. Better yet, ask her about getting tickets for the family to attend a Pitt Arts program when you’re in town. You and your student will get some cultural exposure, get some quality time together, and your student will begin or add to his OCC completion.

To see a partial listing of student activities on campus, including many that fall under OCC guidelines, please check out the student events calendar.

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 in your region and, when possible, on campus. 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!
• Family Weekend Registration discount
• Magnetic Name Badge
SAFETY ON CAMPUS
By Gabby DiFiore, Freshmen Neuroscience Major

My name is Gabby DiFiore and I am currently a freshman majoring in neuroscience at the University of Pittsburgh. Since my parents live seven hours away in Long Island, New York, they worry about my safety at school. So, I’d like to share with you some of the things that I share with them about being safe at Pitt. The University is a safe place to be if you are conscious of your surroundings and smart about exercising cautious behavior.

A very important thing for students to remember is how to cross the streets on campus, more importantly, Fifth Avenue. It is a one-way street with the exception of the bus lane. Crossing with the light and on the crosswalk is the safest way to go and will ensure that your student gets across Fifth Avenue safely.

If your student needs to get to upper campus, he can use the University shuttles. Living on lower campus, I use the 10A from outside the Cathedral of Learning to visit a friend. The shuttles are very convenient and are free for students with a valid Pitt ID. You can even track their route schedules online or via cell phone. The shuttles run at night and can eliminate the need to walk alone or in the dark to get to upper campus. Students can access the shuttle’s virtual location by going to Pitt Shuttle Service.

Did you know there are over 500 blue emergency lights on campus? Indoor and out, your student will always have a way to contact campus police if she is in need of help in the event of an emergency. In addition, encourage your student to add the Campus Police phone number in their contact list. It is 412-624-2121.

Students should avoid walking alone at night. If your student needs a ride home late at night, he should call Safe Rider. This University-run service transports students during the evening and early morning hours when special, nonemergency needs arise. For more information visit SafeRider.

In addition, you probably want to know if there is ever an emergency on campus. The University of Pittsburgh offers the Emergency Notification Service (ENS) where you and your student can receive a text, email or voice message if there is a campus emergency. To subscribe and your student can receive a text, email or voice message if there is a campus emergency. To subscribe visit ENS Portal.

Overall, the University of Pittsburgh is a safe environment for students. They should feel safe if they use the resources available to them along with having the knowledge to be smart and aware of their surroundings. If you remind your student to practice safe habits during their time on campus, they will remember to take precautionary actions every day.

CAREER CHOICES: MAJOR DECISIONS
By Sandy Talbott, Office of Parent and Family Resources and Sarah Meiss, Career Development Placement Assistance

Sometimes students are overwhelmed and even confused with career choices and/or their college major. Each fall, the University of Pittsburgh hosts two events that are designed to help students address any confusion so that they can make their passion their profession.

On September 25, Pitt hosted over 250 employers in the Petersen Events Center for our annual Career Day. Earlier that week the office of Career Development Placement Assistance hosted Career Day previews. These previews apprised students of the upcoming event, encouraged them to attend with current resume in hand, and to business attire that is appropriate for a business setting.

First year students had the option to attend group tours during the event. Select employers spoke to them about what should be included in a resume and what they look for when interviewing candidates for employment. Freshmen could also ask questions of employers as well as observe appropriate attire for job seekers, all in a non-threatening environment. Some of these same students may also meet with academic professionals at our upcoming academic expo.

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 visit Buses Home for the Holidays.
PITT ARTS--CHEAP SEATS!

By Sandy Talbott, Parent and Family Liaison and Annabelle Clippinger, Director, Pitt Arts

Are you looking for a nice, convenient gift for your Pitt student? Are you looking for ways to support your student’s weekend activities? Look no further! For a few dollars, students can attend a Cheap Seat cultural event by purchasing their tickets online and using a Pitt Arts discount code. Students may buy up to four tickets per show (there are some exceptions), and they may even buy tickets for non-Pitt people if the purchasing Pitt person attends, so maybe you can accompany your student when visiting Oakland!

In addition to the Cheap Seats programs, please encourage your student to take advantage of free museum visits. All Pitt Oakland campus students with valid Pitt IDs get in free during the academic year and over holiday break to: The Andy Warhol Museum, the Carnegie Museums of Art and Natural History, the Mattress Factory, Phipps Conservatory and Botanical Gardens, The Senator John Heinz History Center, and Soldiers and Sailors Memorial Hall and Museum. All students need to do is swipe their ID at the admissions desk.

And, Pitt offers Artful Wednesdays, a fantastic program that takes place nearly every Wednesday from noon-1 p.m. in Nordy’s Place on the Lower Level of the William Pitt Union. Artful Wednesdays includes a free lunch and a free exciting performance.

Many Pitt Arts performances also qualify for OCC credit, so encourage your student to take advantage of these healthy and fun opportunities for on and off campus entertainment and enrichment.

Details, parents and families can go to www.pittarts.pitt.edu. Please note, however, that parents may not purchase tickets. Purchasing must be done by the student.

PARENT AMBASSADOR CONTACTS

The below Panther Parent Ambassadors have generously offered their contact information so that you may e-mail them if you have a general question from a parent perspective. If you do contact them, please identify yourself as a Pitt parent in the subject line and thank them for their service!

Albanonite, Sarah
Fairfax VA

Gargani, Melissa
Houston TX

Krinock, John and Tara
Nazareth PA

Majstorovic, Michele
Orchard Park NY

Nebbia, Alaine and Mark
Bethlehem PA

Ricelli, Angie
Pittsburgh PA

Todd, Joan
Sykesville MD

Tolentino, Fred
Carbondale, PA

If you are interested in learning more about the benefits and activities of being a Panther Parent Ambassador, please contact Sandy Talbott.