



a newsletter for parents & families

August 2014

"I'm Leaving for School in a Few Short Weeks!"

It's likely hitting your daughter now... she's heading to college very soon! With that revelation will likely come some excitement – and some anxiety – regarding topics such as:

- Will people like me?
- Will I find friends as good as the ones I have here at home?
- How will I find a place to belong?
- Will I be able to handle college academics?
- How will I find my way around campus?
- Who will I turn to if I'm struggling?
- Will I still be as connected to my family/friends?
- What if I don't get along with my roommate?
- What's it going to be like sharing a bathroom with other students?
- How will I fit all my stuff into that campus room?

These concerns are very normal. Listen, care, and listen some more.

Starting Off on the Right Foot

The beginning of a new academic year gives all of us an opportunity to start fresh. You can help your student start off on the right foot by considering the following...

People. Connecting with others on campus gives students a sense of place and belonging that is critical to their college success. So, ask who she is looking forward to connecting with on campus this year. How will she find mentors and support systems on campus? And how will she be the most open, giving community member and friend that she can be?

Priorities. Thinking ahead about priorities can help students organize, plan and feel ready to tackle the new year ahead. So, ask what priorities she can identify for herself. How will she truly *make* those things priorities? And where can she go for help when it feels like her priorities might be slipping?

Plunging In

Encourage your daughter to talk with people about what she's interested in, to ask questions and to try out organizational interest meetings. Plunging in can be very easy when students show enthusiasm and interest!



Places. Creating and maximizing campus spaces helps students really feel like they belong. So, ask how she is planning to make the most of her living space. Where might she study on campus? And where can she go when she needs to recharge and put things in perspective?

Possibilities. Getting involved in campus life is a key way that students feel more engaged with their institution – and more likely to stay! So, ask what possibilities for involvement are appealing to her. How can she pursue these possibilities? And how might she stretch herself to be open to possibilities she hadn't previously considered?

By thinking about these four P's and more, your daughter will be ready for that fresh start!

Helping Students Handle Their Fears

Getting involved, meeting new people and finding your place on campus can be overwhelming for some students. They may have certain fears – whether you deem them “rational” or not – about all of it.

Fear Factors

Here are some of the fears they may express when thinking about getting involved:

- ⇒ Will people accept me?
- ⇒ I'm afraid I'll look stupid.
- ⇒ What if no one agrees with what I say?
- ⇒ What if I can't find anyone to connect with?
- ⇒ This is my chance to make a good first impression – I don't want people thinking I'm a dork.
- ⇒ What if my voice shakes when I talk or I don't make any sense?
- ⇒ What if I'm so different from the others that we have nothing in common?
- ⇒ Will I self disclose too much, making others uncomfortable?
- ⇒ Will I seem smart enough to be in college if I open my mouth?



You Can Help

Some students imagine the “what ifs” and let their fears get the better of them. You can help by:

- ⇒ Listening without judgment.
- ⇒ Not just offering “You can do it!” encouragement, but going the next step to help them figure out *how* they can do it.
- ⇒ Reminding them that college is full of all sorts of people to connect with, not necessarily the cliques they may have experienced other places.
- ⇒ Encouraging them to talk with a support person on campus about their fears, whether it's a residence hall director, an advisor, a coach or a staff member – there are lots of folks ready and willing to listen and problem-solve with your daughter!
- ⇒ Letting your student know that you support her, no matter what, and reminding her of times when she's attacked her fears successfully. That'll help build her confidence mightily.

It's natural to have some fear of the unknown – and college life holds its share. Yet, with your support and that of other good folks on campus, we can all set your daughter up for success!

The Value of Campus Jobs

Campus jobs are a way for students to engage with their community, participate in the running of their institution and make some money along the way!

Here are some other reasons they can be valuable...

Connections. Students who work on campus will have built-in references and mentors, if they do their jobs well.

These connections are great in the moment and in the future, too.



Experience. Those who work on campus experience what it's like to help an institution hum. It's different than working off-campus, where it can be easier to be detached. Students working on campus are part of their community while gaining valuable work experience.

Flexibility. On campus jobs often have an element of flexibility to them, as long as it's not misused. This can help if a student is in the midst of exams and more.

Transportation. Working right on campus deletes the transportation worry involved in off-campus work. Students can walk to work before or after classes.

If your daughter is looking for work in the year ahead and is eligible for a federal work study position, encourage her to think about working on campus. The benefits are plentiful!

To apply for a CSM federal work study position, visit this site:

<https://my.csm.edu/Services/HR/WorkStudy/default.aspx>

* Your daughter will need her username and password for CSM to get onto this website.

Connecting on Campus

People need people. And while meeting new folks on campus can be exciting, it also takes effort and skill. Here are a few tips to encourage your daughter to try to make the most of her campus connections...

Show Interest. When meeting new folks, show interest in who they are, where they're from and what they're about. Asking a few simple questions shows that you're genuinely interested and want to know them beyond the surface stuff.

Listen. The second part of showing interest is *really* listening to the answers! If you ask a question, mean it and focus on the person's answer by nodding, asking any clarifying questions and even repeating some things back to the person to show that you're truly listening.

Reach Out. Sometimes the best thing that someone who is uncertain can do is reach out to others who may also be unsure of how to navigate these new waters. So ask others on your floor or in class to grab a coffee or head to the dining hall. Some of those built-in necessities, like eating, can be non-threatening ways to connect with others.

Follow-up. Once you've established an initial connection over coffee or lunch, you can follow-up with an invitation to study, play basketball, check out a campus event or participate in another of the multiple campus happenings. Do things one-on-one or in small groups, depending on your comfort level.

Those initial connections are often based on simple efforts that take minimal effort, yet can offer maximum opportunities.



Tapping Into Community Resources

The resources available to students and their families around here are numerous! There are a few resources within the community that you may want to get intimately familiar with right away, such as...

A Bank. Where will your daughter do her banking when she's at school? Getting this situated now will make things easier throughout the year.

A Mechanic. If your student has a car on campus, urge her to ask around to see whom local folks use as their mechanic. Asking people staff and faculty members makes a lot of sense – they know this town!

A Place of Worship. If your student wants to attend services, there are options on and around campus. Campus Ministry can help point you in the right direction!

A Spot of Nature. It's good for students to have a little campus get-away, whether it's a city park, a hiking trail or a lake. CSM is adjacent to the Keystone Trail and Stinson Park, and others are close, too!

Connecting with these community resources – and more – now will add to the comfort level in your daughter's new town. Our community is looking forward to welcoming you and your student!

Health Care Options

In partnership with Alegant Creighton Health, CSM offers the Medical Assistance Program (MAP) and Counseling Assistance Program (CAP) for our students.

MAP

An occupational health provider is available Monday-Friday, 7am-4:30pm for student illness evaluations. Call (402) 398-6581 to make an appointment. The Bergan clinic can accept cash, check or credit/debit cards. The fee to see a provider is \$40.00. For x-rays or additional testing, additional fees will be required.

Bergan Mercy Medical Building One/7710 Mercy Road, Suite 124

CAP

Today, students may be trying to balance different aspects of life and may experience academic, personal and family pressures. CAP is FREE to all full-time CSM students.

Professional Center Bergan 2

7710 Mercy Road, Suite 303

(402) 398-5566

alegrentcreighton.com/cap

These offices are within two blocks of campus for your daughter.

Organizing Residence Hall Rooms

What's the difference between a residence hall room that's a hovel and one that's a haven? Organization!

Going in with a desire to organize and maximize the available space can help students focus on the positive – and what they can do about it.

Some simple tips to share with your daughter about getting organized right off the bat include...

Clear the Desk. Get ready to plunge into studying by setting your desk up now. Make it an academic space for your computer, supplies and books. Try not to clutter it up with framed photos and knick-knacks, because a full space is often less effective, just like a cluttered mind takes *much* longer to get things done!

Put Clothes Away. If possible, only bring the clothes you'll need for that season. Others can be picked up at home or mailed when needed. There's only so much space! Consider storing lesser-worn items in an under-bed box or suitcase.

Contain Food. Try to keep food items to a minimum to reduce clutter – and to discourage bugs! Use airtight containers, keep a few things in the fridge and don't have too many dishes. Things can always be washed and it's rare that you will be eating a full dinner in your room.

Minimize Books & Papers. College life can include printed "stuff" that can get overwhelming. Consider a file crate or small file cabinet for the room where you can file things regularly. Only bring a few books from home – there's not a lot of space for those plus all the textbooks you'll be buying. Keep documents electronically instead of printing them and support CSM's sustainability initiatives! And try to employ the "touch it once" method of paper management to avoid piles!

One of the keys to staying organized in a residence hall room is not having TOO much stuff! If there are leftover boxes on move-in day and no place to store certain items, take things home. It'll be a tough decision on the spot yet will help your student feel less overwhelmed – and much more organized.



Important CSM Dates to Remember:

- * Thursday, August 7—Soccer and Volleyball Athletes Move-In
- * Saturday, August 9—Mothers Living & Learning (MLL) Move-In
- * Sunday, August 10—CSM Advantage Students Move-In
- * Saturday, August 16—Move-In for All Other New Students
Blessing of all new students at 5pm
- * Saturday, August 16—Tuesday, August 19—Welcome Days
- * Monday, August 18—Casino Night
- * Wednesday, August 20—CLASSES BEGIN



Greetings from the Vice President for Student Development!



Dear Parents and Families,

As a parent, you play a very important and critical role in helping your daughter handle issues she faces by providing suggestions and offering guidance. Our newsletter, sent each month, will offer resources for you to use during these important conversations, as well as current information about campus events and deadlines.

Sincerely,

Tara Knudson Carl, Ph.D.