Warm Greetings from the Parents Association!

As I drove away from Keene after my fourth and last Parent Family Weekend, I thought back to the first time my daughter and I visited the campus. On a relative whim, she and a teammate had asked to divert our trip home from Burlington, Vermont, after a successful team run at a soccer tournament one very hot June Sunday in 2009 to check out Keene State. Sometimes those side trips are the last thing we, as parents, want to do, but here were two rising seniors making a pretty reasonable request. We parked right in front of Appian Way on Main Street, and we strolled the beautifully manicured and nearly empty campus, stopping in at Mason Library – where amiable staffers quickly provided us with viewbooks of the College – and peeking into classrooms, the gym, and the dining hall.

It was the way each of us felt that day – comfortable, welcome, at home – that resulted in both girls choosing Keene for their respective studies in psychology and math and the fine arts. It was that same feeling that propelled me to get involved with the Parents Association the next year. And it was that same comfort that I felt at Parent Family Weekend again this year, as we were welcomed to campus, and even to the President’s residence, by Interim President Jay Kahn and the entire KSC community.

We New Englanders are often unfairly portrayed as meeting others with a wintery coolness or having a frugal approach to both fiscal and interpersonal relationships. But at Keene, our other New England image – our neighborliness – is on display. Roommates are warm and friendly and gratefully accept our offers of dinner (or make sure our kids are taken out when their own parents are in town). Professors past and present stop to say hello when they see their students in town or at the grocery store. Parents connect with each other through social media and at events. Staff answer student and parent questions, listen to complaints and suggestions, and assist in any way they can. And everyone hugs. A lot.

How I felt that very first day, and still do, is how I want every parent to feel about our Parents Association. I want you to feel comfortable as a member of the organization, and I encourage you to pass on that great feeling to other parents, current and prospective.

Support and advocate for our students and the College, I am grateful for your involvement. Feel free to contact the Parents Association at any time with your input; I look forward to your participation.

All best wishes, and a hug!

Lynn Rice Scozzafava

New Owl Card

This year, Keene State College has a new College ID design with many added features! Incoming first-year students were the first to receive the Owl card, and other students (and faculty and staff) lined up shortly after that.

The implementation of the Owl card has been a collaborative effort across campus. Campus Safety, Residential Life, Information Technology, Dining Services, and other offices have all been working together to create this all-in-one card. Even our student designers pitched in: We held a contest in which students submitted their design ideas. We put the designs before a campus-wide vote, and the new card’s sharp look really reflects our campus!

Here are some highlights of the new Owl Card

- It gives students appropriate access to resident halls and the dining commons.
- It can be used at KSC’s Mason Library and Keene Public Library.
- Money can be deposited straight to the Owl card. (You can do so here: https://owlcard.netcardmanager.com/reference.dca?cdx=login)
- It can be used at 27 on-campus locations, including vending machines, campus dining locations, and athletic concession stands.
- If KSC decides to add more services to the Owl card in the future, we’ll be able to do so.

The old card still works, and has all the functions the new card does. If you have any other questions, please email owlcard@keene.edu.
What’s New at Campus Safety?

Campus Safety officially has a new home on the first floor of Keddy House (right next to the visitor parking lot on Wyman Way). All of our contact information is the same. Grafton House, long past its prime, was razed in August to make room for more visitor parking and to improve the Wyman Way entrance to campus. The project also included improvements to pedestrian safety, with a raised crosswalk across Wyman Way.

Campus Safety is rolling out the Campus Safety Advisory Group (CSAG) this fall to create an avenue for students, faculty, and staff for more formalized input into safety on campus. Director of Campus Safety Amanda Warman said she receives many e-mails and phone calls about general safety issues, and creating this advisory group will provide a more centralized way to discuss the issues that affect campus life. It’s also an opportunity for Campus Safety to share information with the community.

Additional enhancements to physical safety include installation of CCTV cameras around the exteriors of many residence halls and other areas on campus and increased use of the new Owl card for access.

Campus Safety continues to work with the campus community on awareness and education. The CSI: Keene program, now in its eighth year, pairs officers with first-year residence halls to help with programming and develop positive relationships with students. Emergency Management for College Personnel, presented in partnership with Environmental Health and Safety, provides staff and faculty information on the College’s Emergency Operations Plan and how they can assist if needed.

September was National Campus Crime Awareness Month and National Campus Fire Safety Awareness Month. Campus Safety once again partnered with student organizations and the Keene Police Department to run the second annual campus fair in late September. Over 600 students, faculty and staff stopped in to participate in interactive exercises and learn about crime and fire safety awareness.

Stay Connected

This summer, the Parents Association created more ways for parents to connect and stay in touch with one another and the College. Besides our newsletter, which is sent out twice a year, we also now have a Twitter page (twitter.com/kscparents – Twitter handle: @KSCParents) and a Facebook page (www.facebook.com/keenestateparents).

Do you want to add an email address for another family member? Let us know! Email us at parents@keene.edu with your students name, your student’s email address, and the intended recipient’s name and email address.

Encourage Your Student to Get Involved on Campus

Studies have shown that students who get involved with on-campus clubs, organizations, and other co-curricular opportunities find college a more rewarding experience, maintain a higher GPA, are more likely to stay through graduation, and make valuable networking connections that follow them after college. Keene State offers a wealth of extra-curricular activities that enhance student life and complement the learning that goes on inside the classroom. The Office of Student Involvement, housed within the Student Center, supports such programs as Student Activities & Organizations, Greek Life, Community Service, and Leadership Development, offer opportunities for students to get practical experience in areas of interest.

Serving as treasurer of a student organization, leading an Alternative Spring Break trip, participating in community-service projects in the Keene area, planning and executing events with the student program board, serving as a representative on student government, finding a family away from home through a fraternity or sorority, serving as a student representative on a campus decision-making committee, or joining one of the special-interest campus clubs are only a handful of the great ways for students to get involved at Keene State.

Why should you encourage your student to get involved?

There are lots of advantages open to involved students: They learn communication and time-management skills, develop an alternative academic support network, enjoy a vibrant and meaningful social life, acquire conflict resolution experience and leadership skills, and encounter many opportunities to explore different career paths and create professional relationships. Students who are involved on campus report that they enjoy their college experience more than those who don’t engage.

eMentoring

Most students looking to enter the job market have questions about the best course to follow here at KSC, or about an effective career path, or how to create a resume or write a cover letter, or how to prepare for an interview.

Current students need advice with the pre-employment challenges that many alums and parents have navigated. Therefore, Alumni and Parent Relations and the Academic and Career Advising Office, with support from the Alumni and Parent associations, have created an important new online mentoring program for students, alumni, and parents.

The KSC eMentoring Network is open to all students, alumni, and parents looking for advice, or to advise. The online platform allows students to hook up with a mentor who can offer support and guidance based on the student’s individual needs and interests.

Sound worthwhile? Visit the KSC eMentoring Information page to learn more: www.keene.edu/alumni/kscementoring.cfm
How can your student get involved?

With over 115 recognized student organizations, weekly events and programs, campus traditions and major weekends, intramural sports, campus employment opportunities, committees, and community-service opportunities, there is a place for every student to make a real connection. If your student is looking to get involved and has questions, please encourage him/her to contact Jen Ferrell, director of Student Involvement, at jferrell1@keene.edu or visit the Student Center website at www.keene.edu/young. Follow – or encourage your student to follow – our office on Twitter for news and information: @kscinvolvement.

What is Greek Life all about at KSC?

One of the great ways for your student to get involved is in Greek Life. Keene State’s Greek community has been growing, and today involves about 4% of the students on campus. There are five recognized fraternities and four recognized sororities at KSC, so there are several different opportunities to find the group that’s the right fit. Some helpful tips/info for you to consider:

• KSC practices “deferred” recruitment, which means that freshmen cannot join a Greek organization until their spring semester. This allows them the opportunity to settle into campus life and develop the necessary study skills.

• To be eligible to join a Greek organization, KSC requires a minimum GPA of 2.3. Some organizations have higher minimum GPA standards.

• Our organizations are involved in a variety of service and philanthropy opportunities, including Up ‘til Dawn (supports St. Jude Children’s Research Hospital), Relay for Life (supports the American Cancer Society), and the Walk A Mile In Her Shoes March (raises awareness of violence against women).

• Don’t be afraid to ask questions. Engage your student about their experiences, what they are learning, and the programs they are participating in. If your student is looking to be a part of the Greek community and has questions, please encourage him/her to contact Alex Brown, Coordinator of Greek Life & Student Leadership at abrown9@keene.edu. Follow – or encourage your student to follow – the community on Twitter: @kscgreeklife.

Recent KSC Graduates Step Up to the Challenge!

Bruce LeVine Mellion ’69 challenged Keene State College graduates from classes 2001 through 2011 to make a gift of any size to KSC. Bruce, who has been a donor to KSC since his graduation, realizes that hundreds of small gifts can be just as important as a few large ones. Recent graduates rose to the challenge, and 510 of them made gifts ranging from $1 to $100, increasing their participation by 60%! Over $7,800 was raised and, because of the effort, Bruce made a gift of $2,500. All gifts directly impacted current KSC students.

Recent graduates learned from Bruce’s example that a gift of any size combined with the generosity of others creates a significant impact. As a parent of a KSC student, you are one of our strongest supporters. We want to formally recognize your support, and we’ll soon launch the KSC Parent Fund. Gifts to the KSC Parent Fund will be used at the President’s discretion to benefit current students. For additional information, or to make your gift, please call Lori Zaniboni in the Development office at 603-358-2304.

Be A KSC Advocate!

Learn more at www.keene.edu/parents/advocate.cfm

Is Your Student Considering a Move off Campus? These Tools May Help

Allison Riley, Coordinator of Student and Community Relations

One of the keys to living off-campus successfully is to be a well-informed tenant before signing the lease. If you have a rising junior or senior student who is looking to move off campus, here are a few tools that can aid them in their search.

The City of Keene began a new Voluntary Minimum Housing and Safety Standards Inspection Program this summer. It is intended to provide tenants with information about rental properties whose owners have voluntarily agreed to be inspected on the basis of safety-oriented guidelines. To support the City’s inspection program, Keene State is only posting rental properties on its website that have passed the City’s inspection. The College views this new program as a benefit to the Keene community and as an opportunity to help students and parents make more informed decisions about off-campus housing. The off-campus apartment listings can be accessed by clicking “Off-Campus Housing” on the College’s Residential Life webpage: www.keene.edu/reslife/
Home for the Holidays

No doubt as you have seen in the past two months or past few years, your student will come home a changed person. This is ok. In fact, this is a good sign. New ideas, exposure to different points of view, cultures and experiences will begin to reshape their views on everything in life.

There are other adjustments as you consider the independence your student has gained and how that new found freedom may alter their expectations during a return home. A few things for you to consider and possibly discuss:

• You may wish to be more explicit regarding your wishes and expectations regarding participation in family traditions, religious activities, household chores, expected attire, use of the car, etc. Clear communication in advance will aid in mutual respect and reduce stress for the whole family. Ask clarifying questions to understand better their perspective, and then share your own expectations.

• Students are emerging into adulthood. Embrace this opportunity to have conversations; listening to their feelings and needs. Don’t try to guilt them into doing what you want. Additionally, most have just gone through a stressful period of studying, papers or exams so try and take it easy.

• Start the “negotiations” early—starting the conversation sooner can prevent conflict later. It can be done early in the break or even before—don’t try to have this talk during exam time—students are usually feeling stressed enough.

• As we know, some college students alter their appearance, perhaps getting a tattoo, piercing, or changing their hair color. If family members judge them too harshly, it can lead to hurt feelings. It is important to support your student. You don’t have to always agree, but you have to try to respect their choices.

• Many students will want to reconnect with high school friends; however, they may find that these friendships may not be the same. People change; have different interests. Be prepared to listen if your students struggle with changes and loss.

• Grades and interest may cause students to reevaluate their major. If your student is unsure, job shadowing over winter break may be a good time investment. Help them make connections and network with a wide variety of professionals.

• Do not let a challenging semester define your student’s success. Talk about what went well and specific strategies to combat issues and engage in supportive conversations of how he/she can improve. Listen and don’t jump the gun and take over when there is a problem. A family’s love and support are most important. How you react may dictate what they tell you in the future. Sometimes it is not winning the race, but simply finishing it.

Special thanks to Cindy Beaman of Vincennes University for sharing some of this advice.