Get your ducks in line before you sign … an off-campus lease, that is.

Allison Riley, coordinator of Student and Community Relations

We are all familiar with the adage “too little, too late.” Don’t let this ring true for you and your student once you’ve signed a lease on an off-campus apartment. Too many times I hear from parents – after they have co-signed a lease – with questions that really should have been asked prior to signing. If you have a rising junior or senior student who is looking to move off campus next year, here are a few things to keep in mind as you support him/her through the apartment search:

How do we find out what off-campus housing is available?

Off-campus apartment listings can be accessed by clicking “Off-Campus Housing” on KSC’s Residential Life webpage. Or, your student can check out one of the Off-Campus Housing Fairs that are held on campus. This fall's fair will take place on Wednesday, November 6, from 5–7 p.m. in the Student Center, and the spring fair is scheduled for Feb. 19. Local landlords will be at the fairs to talk about their apartments, and KSC and City staff will have information to help students with their transition.

Has the apartment been inspected by the City of Keene?

The City of Keene has a Voluntary Minimum Housing and Safety Standards Inspection Program that is in its second year. The program 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 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.

Does the apartment meet city fire code?

We encourage you to make use of other City resources that are available to you as a potential renter. For instance, if you have questions about fire safety related to the apartment you will be renting, including egress and smoke detection, you can call the City’s Fire Department and request an inspection.

Has an attorney looked over the lease?

We suggest having an attorney review the lease before you and your student sign it. There is often confusing language that is best reviewed and explained by a trained professional. You’ll want to understand what you are liable for if a roommate moves out and ceases paying rent, if damage is done to the apartment, etc.

For more information related to off-campus living, please contact Allison Riley, coordinator of Student and Community Relations, at 603-358-2994 or ariley3@keene.edu.

An Excerpt from Dr. Huot’s Student Success Forum Remarks from Parent Family Weekend

What is student success? Here at Keene State College it starts with recruiting students who have the aptitude to be successful in a nurturing environment with rigorous academic standards and equally high expectations for student development. Once here, we strive to encourage our students to think critically and creatively, to engage in active citizenship, and to pursue meaningful work. Ultimately of course, the goal is persistence and graduation.

The behaviors and practices that lead to student success have been studied and reported on by many. In essence, individual effort and involvement are the critical determinants of college impact. Individual effort means time on task, time management, being prepared, attending class and developing rigorous study habits outside of class. Beyond that, we know that being engaged/involved is a key component of student success. The research tells
us that students who are engaged are more satisfied with their experience and more likely to graduate. These same students tend to enroll full-time, live on campus, and start and stay at the same college. Put another way, being purposeful about involvement on and off campus is important. We want to induce our students to do the right things. To channel their energy toward the right activities.

So, what can parents do to support their student’s success and academic achievement? You can actively and continually reinforce the advice from other KSC students:

• Don’t be afraid to ask anyone at this college for help.
• Take advantage of relationships with faculty and staff – in and out of the classroom, at jobs, in residence halls, on the fields, at the rec center, on the stage, in meetings.
• Find the academic help centers soon, not on the day of your test. There’s a writing center, a math center, disability services, tutoring services, and more.
• Use campus resources – there’s a counseling center, a heath and wellness center, a recreation center, and more.

On-Campus Work Study

All students enrolled full time at KSC are eligible to work on campus, either under the Federal Work Study Program or under KSC’s Student Hourly Program. The Federal Work Study Program is financed by both Federal and institutional funds. Please remember that, even if the student is eligible for work study, he/she is not guaranteed a job on campus. The College posts a list of currently open employment opportunities, but there are a limited number of positions available. Also remember that, if the student does receive a work-study job, he or she will receive a check for their wages, and it’s the student’s responsibility to apply that money towards academic expenses. The College does not automatically apply wages towards tuition or any other KSC fees.

If your student is interested in applying for an on-campus position, direct them to this website: keene.edu/admissions/aid/employment/

What Are Soft Skills and Why Do They Matter?

For many students, they know the technical (or hard) skills they learn while studying a specific subject while in college is crucial to be considered for jobs, internships, and networking opportunities. There is a second set of skills individuals can develop that will enhance their social, personal, and career prospects – these are called soft skills, and they’re critical for interacting effectively with others. These skills enhance an individual’s interpersonal interactions and career performance. The following list includes just a few of them:

• Following regulations
• Accepting and learning from criticism
• Accountability
• Adaptability
• Caring about seeing the team succeed
• Confidence
• Cooperation
• Dependability
• Making eye contact
• Flexibility
• Motivational skills
• Personal energy
• Positive work ethic
• Reliability
• Self-direction
• Staying with the job until it is finished
• Telephone etiquette
• Time management

Students can strengthen their soft skills in many ways. They can take a public-speaking course, join an organization, or create a study group with classmates. Those who want to improve their communication soft skills can do so by practicing different communication techniques, such as phone calls, formal emails, and face-to-face interactions. Strong soft skills will create more opportunities for personal and professional development.

Helping Your Student to Navigate Problems

Kay Kimball Gruder, Successful College Parenting

Sometimes it just seems so much easier and more efficient to make the phone call, to write the email, to offer the solution, to correct the mistake, etc., but each time we step in to solve a problem or to do for our student, we will likely find our son or daughter making the same mistakes, poor choices, and counter-productive decisions again and again. This doesn’t mean that we have to take an entirely hands-off approach; it does mean that the approaches taken need to include:

• ways for your student to learn from the situations that he or she encounters
• opportunities for your student to take action, practicing and applying the life skills that he or she needs now and throughout adulthood
• acknowledgement when you see that your student has made a positive change.
Very few problems, with the exceptions of physical, mental, and emotional health, require immediate solutions or intervention — as in THIS MOMENT. So when your student shares a problem that he or she is experiencing, or you sense a challenge emerging, consider the following questions as you begin to help your student to navigate problems:

1. What is your “gut” reaction to the situation?
   This is an important question, because one’s gut reaction often drives one’s actions.

2. What skills, knowledge, or perspectives would you like your student to enhance or gain during this challenge?
   Take time to think what your student really needs to learn and experience from the particular challenge.

3. What is one parenting trap/habit that you might want to avoid?
   We all have them, and they usually only add negativity to an already stressful situation.

4. What do you want your role to be during this developmental opportunity for your student?
   For example, are you going to be the coach, role-playing possible steps and actions; the guide, helping your student to identify campus resources and key people who can advise him or her; or the brainstorming partner, talking together about possible solutions that will solve or, at a minimum, will make the best of a situation?

5. What campus resources exist to support your student during this challenge?
   Use the College’s website to fully explore campus resources that exist to support and guide your student. At college, very few problems that arise are unique — most emerge because of the demands and very nature of being in a college environment.

   Colleges recognize this, and there are staff members throughout the many departments to help students with every aspect of their college experience.

6. What previous situations has your student experienced from which he or she can recall skills that can be used to navigate or solve this new problem or challenge?
   Students benefit when reminded of the problem-solving skills they already have and also of their successes in navigating or getting through past problems.

“The measure of success is not whether you have a tough problem to deal with, but whether it is the same problem you had last year.”
— John Foster Dulles

Kay Kimball Gruder, M.Ed., Parent Coaching Institute™ Certified Parent Coach® and the founder of SuccessfulCollegeParenting.com, has over 20 years of experience in higher education providing advising to students and their families. Parents of college students get a bad rap by the media for being over involved in their students’ lives, yet more and more research supports that the right kind of involvement, what Kay calls the “parent-as-coach” model, effectively guides students to make the most of their college experience and prompts them to learn important life skills during college. Kay enjoys helping parents move from challenges to solutions, to worry less, and to engage in new parenting patterns as their relationship changes with their student.

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KSCPA Connection Corner

One key way the Parents Association is getting information to the families of KSC students is through email. Want to add an email address or another family member? Let us know! Email us at parents@keene.edu with the student's name, your student's email address, and the intended recipient’s name and email address.

The Parents Association knows that the fastest way to connect with people, find out information, and keep up to date is through social media. This past school year, we have launched both a Facebook page www.facebook.com/keenestateparents and a Twitter account @kscparents or twitter.com/kscparents. Join in on conversations, meet other KSC parents, and hear the latest on what is happening on campus.

Want to get involved with the KSCPA?

At Keene State, we value service and involvement for all members of our community — and as a parent of a Keene State College student, you are a part of the KSC community! Throughout the time you are a KSC parent, the KSCPA has opportunities for you to get involved. Here are some ways:

Parents Board: The Parents Association Executive Board oversees the Association and helps promote the interests of students, parents, and the College.

Parent Family Weekend: Welcome other parents and families to KSC and host events throughout the weekend.

eMentoring Network: Create a connection with a student via our online database; support them by being a contact for networking, careers, and more.

Care Package Distribution: Assist in distributing care packages to Keene State students a few times a year.

Gatherings & Networks: Want to meet parents in your area? You can host or help connect with other local parents.

Admitted Student Day Table: Come help answer questions and talk to parents of possible KSC students!

Career Support Programs: Participate in resumé reviews, mock interviews, panel discussions, are more!

Interested and want more information? Let us know! You can email us at parents@keene.edu or call Patty Farmer, Director of Alumni and Parent Relations, at 603-358-2370
Important Reminders from Student Accounts

Rob Tilton, Student Accounts

1. Encourage your student to check their MyKSC e-mail daily!
   • KSC now bills electronically (eBills); no paper bills are mailed.
   • Each time a new eBill is posted on QuikPAY, students receive a notice at their MyKSC e-mail account.
   • Additionally, our office sends important billing and billing-related reminders to the MyKSC account.

2. Payment deadlines
   • The fall payment deadline is the first Friday in August.
   • The spring payment deadline is the first Friday in December.

3. QuikPAY
   • QuikPAY now reflects real-time account activity.
   • QuikPAY is KSC’s web-based service that provides view, print, and payment options for the KSC student accounts.
   • QuikPAY is available to all active, matriculated KSC students and their authorized payers.
   • Your student will assign you a separate QuickPAY login and password when he or she sets you up as an authorized payer.

4. Authorized payer access
   • Authorized payers have direct access to their student’s account, and will receive billing and billing-related emails directly.
   • Students must set up an authorized payer in the QuikPAY system in order for anyone else to access the account information or pay bills through QuikPAY.
   • Unless your student is paying all their own college-related bills, we recommend that you have them set you up as an authorized payer on QuikPAY.

5. Financial Information Release
   • Due to the Federal government’s Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), Keene State College is not allowed to discuss your student’s educational records or financial status with you, the parent/guardian.
   • Even if you have been designated as an authorized payer through QuikPAY, you will not have access to all of the information regarding your student’s financial aid or billing.
   • We recommend that you encourage your student to fill out a Financial Information Release form, to allow the Student Accounts staff to have a much more effective and specific conversation with you.
   • You can download the form at keene.edu/life/services/accounts/resources/documents/release/

Questions? Please feel free to contact our office:
KSC Student Accounts | 800.572.1909, option 3 | keene.edu/sao
studentaccounts@keene.edu.

Up and Coming

Here are some of the stories we are working on for the Spring KSCPA newsletter:

KSC’s Master Planning — Students, faculty, staff, and administrators are currently mid-way through a year-long research and planning process that will develop a new 10-year campus master plan. A planning committee that represents all campus constituency groups is working with space planning and architectural consultants and will be hosting workshops for campus input on the plan’s direction.

KSC Search for Provost /V.P. of Academic Affairs and V.P. for Student Affairs — Dr. Melinda Treadwell will be the next provost at Antioch NE Graduate School beginning in January, and Dr. Andy Robinson will be retiring at the end of the academic year in 2014. We will update you in the spring as to the search process for each position.

KSCPA Organizational Planning Process — In November, Executive Committee members will be meeting to consider the KSCPA’s mission, vision, and programs. We will be reviewing data, documentation, and feedback gathered the past few years from parents and gauging areas of interest and support from Parent Family Weekend. Stay tuned!

KSC Parent Website Pages — We will be working with parents to develop the Parent & Family pages of keene.edu in the next six months. We look forward to hearing your suggestions for updates and new items. We’ll share our progress on the new pages in the New Year!

Surprise Someone through the Campus Catering!

Did you know that you can send your student freshly baked cupcakes, a birthday cake with a special message, a fruit basket, or a cookie gram from the Dining Commons? A personalized gift card with your message will be included with each package. Our offerings include cookie grams, cakes, brownie surprise, cupcakes, fruitastic fruit basket, chocolate-dipped strawberries with sparkling juice, and a pizza party with soda or bottled water. Everything is baked onsite, and several gluten-free options are available. To surprise your special student, visit keenestatedining.com/surprise.html.
The catering office will contact you for payment. You can also order over the phone by calling 603-358-2676.
Parent Family Weekend

Parent Family Weekend was September 20–22, and everyone had a great time! Over 600 family members visited campus with their Keene State students. Throughout the beautiful weekend they enjoyed shows put on by the Social Activities Council, attended athletic games (both teams won!), and visited with each other on campus and in the town of Keene. The energy and excitement was positive – it was obvious parents, siblings, aunts, uncles, grandparents, and students alike were having a great time catching up with one another. We hope to see you next year at Parent Family Weekend September 19, 20, 21, 2014!
Upcoming Parent Events

KSC Connections

Please join Dr. Anne Huot along with regionally located parents and alumni as we gather for a casual reception and celebrate KSC! Heavy appetizers provided. Cash bar.

Guests welcome.

Boston, MA
Tuesday, November 19, 2013
Poe’s Kitchen at the Rattlesnake Bar & Grill
384 Boylston St., Boston MA 02116
6–8 p.m.

Portsmouth, NH
Wednesday, November 20, 2013
The Portsmouth Brewery
56 Market Street Portsmouth, NH 03801
6–8 p.m.

R.S.V.P to Patty Farmer 603-358-2370 or pfarmer@keene.edu

Meet the 2013–2014 KSCPA Executive Board:

Paul Calabria, President (Madison ’14)
Jim Orrok (Alysha ’14)
Steve Fortier ’86 (Sean ’14 and Laryssa ’16)
Peter Stivali (Peter ’17)
Nancy Cavanaugh (Caitlin ’17)
Donna Loucks (Glenn ’17)

Meet Our Office:

Patty Farmer, director
Sara Telfer, associate director
Bethany Morin, assistant director
Kirsten Camp, office coordinator