Comments on Commencement
Barbara Preston

Keene State College’s Commencement Ceremony this year is Saturday, May 11th. The KSC campus and the City of Keene will be filled to the brim that day, and navigating anywhere near campus will be very difficult, so if you can, please plan on picking up your student and their belongings for summer vacation by Friday, May 10th, or on Sunday, May 12th. Additionally, Huntress Hall and Fiske Hall will be inaccessible on Saturday, May 11th, during the hours of 9 a.m. and 4 p.m. For information about Commencement, please visit our website, www.keene.edu/commencement.

Getting a Global Education at KSC
Skye Stephenson, Director of the Global Education Office

Keene State is proud of our College’s support for studying away. Whether at a partner university in the next state or across the globe, KSC students have a wide variety of global academic programs to select from, depending on academic interest, financial resources, and geographic preferences. Every year, close to 200 KSC students pack their bags to pursue coursework at partner universities around the world. And most tell us that studying away was one of the most important experiences in their life.

KSC sophomore Alex was raised in New Hampshire. The KSC Global Education Office staff told him of the programs with the same tuition and fees as studying at the Keene campus. His options included partner universities in Canada, Ecuador, England, France, Japan, and Poland, as well as nearly 200 universities throughout the United States. Alex decided to be adventurous and go to Kansai Gaidai University in Japan.

Following local norms, Alex purchased a bicycle and did not set foot in a car (Japan has excellent public transportation) until returning home. His first image upon arrival to the States was seeing a driver blowing his horn loudly and seemingly upset. “Road rage does not exist in Japan,” Alex told us.

One of the most rewarding aspects of working in the KSC study-away office is hearing the student stories upon their return. Each student comes back enriched, more confident, and more comfortable with themselves in the world. And while each individual is unique, recent research and assessment about the impact of study away demonstrates that the study-away experience (1) increases student GPA and academic performance; (2) enhances cross-cultural and global learning; and (3) supports maturation and independence.

Some students and parents worry that study away courses will not transfer easily. Quite the opposite is true. With careful planning, KSC students with double majors and/or majors with many required courses can study away and successfully graduate on time.

Often, former study-away students learn upon graduation that it was their study-away experience that helped them secure employment. Chris B. received a tuition scholarship to study at Lorenzo de Medici in Florence, Italy. A bit nervous at first, but with the support of the Global Education Office, Chris made it to Florence and soon realized what an excellent global learner he was. Not a strong academic performer at Keene State, in Florence Chris found out he was a rapid language learner and found employment in a local Italian coffee shop. He now works in the field of study away, his life forever transformed.

Spring 2013 will see Keene State College students at universities and programs in the following countries: Australia, Austria, Czech Republic, England, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Japan, New Zealand, Poland, South Africa, Spain, and the United States. For students who prefer a shorter study-away period, summer study away is increasingly popular at Keene State College. Some students enjoy study away so much that they go on multiple programs during their time at KSC. At Keene State College, the world is truly our campus!

Dining & Food Services Updates at KSC
By Josef Quirinale, General Manager of Dining Services

New Meal Plans for the 2013–2014 Academic Year

Based on student feedback and the need for increased flexibility, two of the campus’ meal plans will change. The 19 Meal Plan (with and without additional Meal Plan Dollars) will become the Ultimate Meal Plan. This plan will allow unlimited access (entrances) to the Dining Commons during hours of operation for all resident students required to be on a meal plan. The Five Meal Plan will be replaced by the 120 Meal Block Plan. This plan will provide the student with 120 meals for use throughout the semester, or an average of eight meals each day.
meals per week. These meals can be used at any time and as many per day as needed. Should the student require more meals, additional blocks of 40 meals will be available. The 12 Meal Plan will remain the same. For questions please contact the Owl Card Office at 603-358-2673.

Allergen-Friendly Alternatives

Dining Services continues to expand the variety of options available for students with special dietary needs. In addition to indications on station signage when a potential allergen is present, the Dining team is now posting available menu options that are served throughout the Dining Commons. Dining Services has provided an informational session for all concerned students that will highlight the steps being taken to insure their needs are met. Staff has been trained and will continue to be monitored throughout the semester. Staff Dietitian Rebecca Briggs and Executive Chef Rich Ducharme have developed a program that insures that certain options are carefully prepared to avoid cross contact. They’ve also sourced new products, such as gluten-free soup bases, sauces, and marinades that will dramatically increase the variety of options available to students. For more information, please contact Rebecca at rbriggs@keene.edu.

Surprise Someone

Did you know that you can send your student freshly baked cupcakes, a birthday cake with a special message, a fruit basket, or a nutritionally balanced snack sack from the Dining Commons? A personalized gift card with your message will be given with each package. Our offerings include cookie grams, cakes, snack sacks, cupcakes, fruitastic fruit basket, chocolate-dipped strawberries with sparkling apple cider, 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 www.keenestatedining.com/surprise.html. The catering office will contact you for payment. You can also order by phone by calling 603-358-2676.

Supporting Your Student

By Dr. Joe Yazvac, Psychologist at the Counseling Center

Parents of college students often wonder what their child is going through, how he or she is handling it, and what they can (or should) do to help. These common questions can be complicated by the reluctance of some students to discuss their struggles. College is a time when societal expectations increase for students to exercise greater autonomy and independence, and consequently many feel hesitant or unsure about sharing their challenges. As a psychologist at the Keene State College Counseling Center, I have the unique opportunity to hear unfiltered perspectives from both students and parents, and I would like to share some of the struggles most students face, as well as some suggestions for supporting your students as they navigate the transitional waters of college life.

During college, students experience an almost continual time of transition. As freshmen, they begin adjusting to leaving family, friends, and familiar environments behind. They often initially feel quite lonely and may struggle with developing new connections and learning new routines and responsibilities. As sophomores, many feel the pressure of deciding on a major, which can, in their junior year, evolve into considering how to apply the major towards a career path. As seniors, many having successfully acclimated to college life, the difficulties of leaving the familiar re-emerge as they contemplate the imminent role change from student to professional that involves new responsibilities, probably moving to another city, and again making new friends.

Surrounding these transitional stressors are other demands common throughout college: homework, time-management, work schedules, finances, relationships, and uncertainty about their developing roles as a person and a member of society. This last can be quite challenging since students are often viewed not quite as children, but not quite as adults either. They are expected to show more initiative and responsibility, yet they’re often expected to fail and need care. Understandably, they often feel confused.

It may be helpful to consider college a period of “trial adulthood.” Your students will likely fail or disappoint you in some fashion as they explore, experiment, and challenge themselves. When this happens, remember that you cannot solve all their problems; try being understanding. Listen attentively to their concerns and validate their struggles. Be supportive, yet show trust and encourage them to find their own solutions. Students will appreciate your respect for their burgeoning independence, yet take comfort in knowing they can still turn to you in times of need. However, you do not need to wait for an emergency to show your love and support. An occasional call from you may brighten their day, and receiving a care package can be joyously uplifting.

Lastly, remember that you are not alone in supporting your student, and remind them that there are many staff on campus dedicated to helping them succeed, including counselors, advisors, deans, program specialists, and organizational leaders. Whatever the concern, there is likely someone who can help, and who will be glad to do so.

Safety & Emergency Preparedness

By Amanda Warman, Director of Campus Safety

It is likely the tragic school-shooting event in Newtown, CT, weighs heavily on you, as parents, as teachers, and as compassionate members of the world community. The recent shootings at Caspar College and Hazard Community College add to the heightened anxiety individuals may feel. While crime statistics reinforce that college campuses are safer than non-campus areas, it still feels like our learning communities are targets for these incidents. At least
part of this is the amount of media attention these incidents draw, reminding us of these tragedies, while singular street crimes that occur hundreds of times a day go unnoticed.

Whether the source of our concern is the number of incidents that occur or our perception because of the amount of information available through our 24-hour news cycle, the purpose of this communication is to provide information so we are better prepared as a community. I hope the information provided below and attached is helpful to you. As parents, I want you to be aware of the following. This information has been provided to KSC students, faculty, staff, and administration.

**Emergency Procedures**

- Procedures are posted in each classroom on campus near exit doors. These have been posted since 2008 and recently updated. A more complete emergency handbook is available online at: [www.keene.edu/emergency/](http://www.keene.edu/emergency/).
- We continue to work closely with the Keene Police Department to coordinate information exchange and emergency response. Campus Safety monitors and responds to all emergency responses to campus by the Keene Police and Fire Departments.
- We have informed faculty to ensure students are aware of what to do in an emergency, even if it is as simple as having them dial 9-1-1.
- We have recommended faculty reference emergency procedures in their course syllabi.

**Other important information:**

- If you have not yet signed up for the CityWatch Emergency Notification System since July 1, 2012, please go to the Campus Safety web page ([keene.edu/campussafety](http://keene.edu/campussafety)) and click the link to “Emergency Notification.”

Encourage your student to contact 9-1-1 or Campus Safety (358-2228) directly and immediately if you or your student observes any of the following:

- Any individual showing or carrying a weapon on campus
- Any direct threat to a person, place, or system
- An individual who identifies plans, tools, weapons, materials, and/or timeframe in which to carry out an attack
- An individual who has expressed specific plans of self-harm.

The most important thing you and your student can do is to be observant and contact someone if any behavior is of concern. The College has systems in place to assist and support students, faculty, and staff that may be experiencing stress.

- **Student concerns**, contact Dean of Students Gail Zimmerman at gzimmerman@keene.edu, the Counseling Center at 358-2437, or Campus Safety at 358-2228.
- **Faculty or staff concerns**, contact the department chair/supervisor, Director of Human Resources Kim Harkness at kharknes@keene.edu, or Campus Safety at 358-2228.

- **For any other concerns**, contact Campus Safety at 358-2228.
- **Examples of behaviors that indicate an individual may need support include the following (this list is not exhaustive):**
  - Difficulty connecting with others (does not include socially awkward individuals or individuals with some disabilities)
  - A preoccupation with or resentment of a specific person, object, or subject, and they can’t seem to “let it go”
  - A confused or deteriorating thought process
  - Intimidating language or behavior
  - Explosive, erratic, or excessively impulsive behavior
  - A change in academic or work performance, quality of work, class, or work attendance
  - Expression of thoughts of self-harm and/or engaged in “last act” behaviors (i.e. giving away personal property)
  - Concerns of classmates or co-workers regarding behavioral observations
  - Other behaviors that you would consider unusual for this individual, based on prior experience.

Throughout the spring semester, Campus Safety will be hosting training for faculty, staff, and students on emergency management and procedures. Class schedules and sign-up links will be distributed via the students’ MyKSC e-mail system. A message similar to this, applicable to students, faculty, and staff has been distributed on campus.

One of Keene State College’s articulated values is “the development of knowledge and skills necessary to meet the challenges of our changing world.” While we typically think about this in academic terms, we know that the world has changed in other ways. We take our responsibilities as educators seriously in all aspects of campus life, including providing safety education and services, and information so our community is prepared for emergencies. Safety is a collective effort that can create a campus more conducive to learning, living, working, and recreation. We look forward to continuing to partner with you in making Keene State College as safe as possible.

**Summer is Smart! at Keene State College**

*Office of Continuing Education*

Now is the time for your student to be looking ahead and re-assessing their path to graduation. Has your student changed their major in the last year? Spring is a great time for them to meet with faculty advisors and determine what courses remain towards completion of their degree. Summer session is frequently used by students who need to realign their course load.

It is designed to help them move their academic careers ahead by catching up on course prerequisites, taking hard-to-get classes, or letting them graduate on time or even early. Courses are offered in
all different disciplines. Eighty percent of them are taught in the classroom with 20% blended, combining in-class and online learning. Summer is now a full-campus experience at Keene State: housing and meal plans are available. Summer courses begin May 20 and run from six to 10 weeks.

Registration begins on February 24. Registration for full-semester summer classes ends on May 17, the Friday before classes start. Matriculated KSC students registering through April 15 will be billed electronically. Those registering after April 15 will require payment at the time of registration.

Networking Opportunities

With contributions from:
Kelly Graham, Associate Director of Academic and Career Advising
Alex Brown, Coordinator of Greek Life and Student Leadership
Patty Farmer, Director of Alumni & Parent Relations

Networking is a key element for successful transition from college to the professional world. It helps students explore majors and careers, get leads on job and internship opportunities, and identify industry trends. There are some ways you can help without doing the work for them! As a parent, you can help align your student for success while they are still in college.

It is never too soon to help your student start the networking process:

• Use your connections. Many people are intimidated by networking, not realizing we do it every day when we talk to friends, co-workers, even that person in line at the grocery store. Our best networks are often through people we already know.

• Conduct Informational Interviews. Informational interviews are an opportunity to gain information and advice on career fields or job search strategies through one-on-one conversations with individuals working in a particular field.

• Encourage LinkedIn accounts. LinkedIn is a social network that allows members to connect with individuals, companies, and professional groups. Through LinkedIn, a student builds a professional network, gains information on career paths, learns about job opportunities, and follows organizations.

• Help them acquire a professional wardrobe. When going into an informational interview – or a job interview – your student needs to dress to impress. Purchasing one or two key pieces of clothing can start them in the right direction.

• Join professional associations. Every industry has a professional organization that allows members to network at meetings, events, conferences, and online. Attending meetings of local, state, or regional chapters are a great opportunity for your student to develop networks that will be helpful with career exploration and job search.

• Support those joining clubs and organizations. One of the benefits of involvement on campus (student organization, Fraternity/Sorority, honor society, student employment, Res Life, Rec sports, etc.) is the ability to network with students, faculty, and staff here on campus.

• Participation is key. Encourage your student to attend events that interest them and are connected to their major or career interest. The programs will help grow and develop professional skills.

• Have them reach out to people. It may be uncomfortable, but it is necessary. When a young professional reaches out, and explains what they would like to learn, people are receptive. But remind them that this should be personal.

• Be aware of your undergraduate’s intentions.

• Practice. Building relationships can take time, but the only way to grow your network is to keep trying.

Encourage your student to start developing a professional network this summer and over school breaks. Not sure where to begin? Keene State College’s Academic and Career Advising Office is available to assist students and alumni in developing a networking strategy.

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.

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 resume reviews, mock interviews, panel discussions, and 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.

New this Spring! KSC Parents Association Executive Committee Elections – Online!

Patty Farmer, Director of Alumni & Parent Relations

At the annual meeting of the Association held last Parent Family Weekend, members of the group agreed to hold elections for the leadership committee online annually in the spring in the future to more suitably conform with the academic changes in status of parents and students.

Traditionally, the Executive Committee has consisted of five members comprised of interested parents who wish to help to lead the development of programs, events, and communications efforts for families of KSC Students. This group meets 4–5 times a year, typically by conference call, due to the regional distances between members.

If you are interested in running for a position on the Executive Committee, please contact Patty Farmer at 603-358-2370.

How will it work? Starting on April 1st, Parents Association members can go to the Parents website, www.keene.edu/parents, and link to an electronic ballot. An announcement of the new Executive Committee, which will take office June 1st, will be made via Newsline the alumni and parent’s online newsletter.

Let Your Voice Be Heard!

Patty Farmer, Director of Alumni & Parent Relations

As you may be aware, members of the University System of New Hampshire community are intensifying the outreach to NH State legislators to return the funding appropriation levels to the University System (including KSC) to the $100 million level. This effort has potentially significant positive implications for students and families related to tuition costs. Please join in the support for public higher education in NH. To learn more, go to www.advocates.keene.edu

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 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 (@kscparents or twitter.com/kscparents) account. Join in on conversations, meet other KSC parents, and hear the latest on what is happening on campus.

Join Us for the Class of 2013 Senior Dinner!

On Friday, May 13, 2013, join other families of graduating students, alumni, and members of the Keene State College community as we celebrate Commencement! The evening will begin with dinner as graduating students have the chance to gather with friends and family to reminisce about the past few years and recognize the great accomplishment of graduation!

After dinner, the group will proceed down Appian Way, through the Appian Gateway, to the Alumni Center to celebrate the transition from student to alumni! Attendees will join members of the Alumni Association for dessert, a cash bar, and the chance to learn what it means to be a member of the KSC community for life!

Keep your eye out for the invitation in April!

Dates to Remember

March:
1 Priority deadline for FAFSA
9–17 Spring Break
17 Residence halls reopen at noon
18 Classes resume at 8 a.m.

April:
3 & 4 Commencement Fair for graduating seniors
24 & 25 Spring Care Packages distribution

May:
3 Last day of classes
6 Reading Day
6–10 Final exams
10 Spring Honors Convocation
11 Commencement ceremony
12 Residence halls close for all but graduating seniors
11 Residence halls and apartments close for seniors
Updates with Financial Aid

The Financial Aid Office is excited to announce a transition to online electronic Financial Aid Award Letter notifications for the 2013–2014 academic year! In an effort to better support our students and provide the most up-to-date information in the quickest way possible, we are making this improvement to our processing. To facilitate this transition, the initial Award Letter notification for the 2013–2014 award year will still be mailed and an electronic copy will be posted to the student’s MyKSC web account. After this initial paper copy has been generated and mailed, all subsequent Revised Award Letters will only be posted to the web. To further facilitate this process, we will no longer require that Award Letters be signed and returned to our office unless the student is declining all or a portion of aid offered. Acceptance of all awards will be assumed. If the student wishes to decline all or a portion of the aid offered, a copy of the Award Letter can be printed from MyKSC, signed, and returned to our office with the requested adjustments indicated on the Letter.

Additionally, in an attempt to expedite the verification process, all requests for required verification documents will only be forwarded via email to the student’s keene.edu email address. No paper requests will be mailed. Students who have been selected for the verification process will receive an email only requesting the items required and will also be able to view the requested documents in the MyDocuments section of their MyKSC account.