Wow! The response to the recent poll on the Colorado State University Parent & Family website was terrific! We had over 250 responses to the question “Are you ready to send your student back to CSU for the spring semester?” The majority of respondents (42%) share their student’s excitement about the spring semester. Twenty six percent felt they didn’t get to see their student enough over the break. This surprised me based on the numerous emails I received about the overly-long Winter Break this year! Rest assured this 5 week break was an anomaly due to this year’s calendar. Check this month’s poll (www.parentsandfamily.colostate.edu) where we ask: How will you show your student how much you love them this month?

As I prepared this month’s newsletter, I heard an interesting comment from a staff member: “I wish parents would know that we work with them to support their students, we don’t work for them.” Before I get bombarded with emails and calls with your perspective, I’d like to share my thoughts and reflections. Click on the attached article to read more….

Included in this newsletter are the following articles:
* Greetings RAMFAM Members!
* RAMFAM Association Meeting Information for Saturday, March 1, from 10-Noon
* February Calendar of Campus Involvement Opportunities
* Parents Fund
* Student Involvement Opportunity: NASPA Undergraduate Fellows Program

Thank you for placing trust in Colorado State University and in your students. We know how important your students are to your family and appreciate our partnership in working together toward students’ success! To that end, we invite you to join the RAMFAM Association and attend our next meeting: Saturday, March 1, 2008 from 10-noon in 201 Administration Bldg. If you cannot attend physically, you can call in: 970-491-1238 and join us by phone.

Only a few more months of winter!!

Sincerely,

Jody

Jody Donovan, Ph.D.
Assistant to the Vice President for Student Affairs/
Working with Parents & Families, not For Them

By Jody Donovan, Ph.D.
Assistant to the VP for Student Affairs/Director of Parent and Family Programs

As I prepared this month’s newsletter, I heard an interesting comment from a staff member: “I wish parents would know that we work with them to support their students, we don’t work for them.” Before I get bombarded with emails and calls with your perspective, I’d like to share my thoughts and reflections.

I think I speak for most of my colleagues in the Division of Student Affairs and around campus when I share that we entered into this profession because we love working with students. We love to help students learn, grow and develop new skills, explore their interests and discover their strengths. Many of us have earned advanced degrees to develop expertise in working with students during this critical time of late adolescence and early adulthood.

What has caught many of us off-guard in recent years is the significant involvement many parents have had with their K-12 students and the expectation this will continue through higher education. As a division, we are committed to celebrating parental and familial involvement in education because we know this assists students to remain in school and ultimately graduate from college. We want to help parents and families make the adjustment from an involved K-12 parent into an appropriately involved parent of a college-aged student.

Numerous surveys have been conducted about familial involvement at the collegiate level. Most recently, the Higher Education Research Institute asked students whether they felt their parents were involved “too much,” the “right amount,” or “too little” in several college-related decisions. According to the HERI Research Brief, “Students of color were more likely than white students to indicate that their parents were involved too little in all areas… Fewer than 17 percent of White students felt that their parents were not involved enough in dealings with officials at their college, in choosing college courses and in choosing college activities” (www.gseis.ucla.edu/heri, 2008). According to studentPOLL, a joint project of the College Board and Art & Science Group, “a majority of students indicated satisfaction with parental involvement in their college search activities” (www.collegeboard.com, 2007).

I appreciate these findings, believing that every student deserves a cheerleader in their
corner or a support system back home. I also find myself reflecting on my own collegiate experience. My family was interested and encouraging, but they never intervened on my behalf. We problem-solved together, but in the end, it was my responsibility to handle the business on campus. The greatest lessons were those that came with failure, with overcoming obstacles, and through resolving problems on my own—with assistance from campus resources and encouragement from home. My family helped pay for my college education, with significant financial aid assistance and student employment, but I never remember my mother or father believing they were the “primary customers.” I was responsible for my education and together, we communicated about academic, financial, and social expectations and responsibilities.

Return to current day, and many parents and family members call or email me with questions about helping their students. I cherish these communication opportunities. I just hope parents and families pass along the information and encouragement to their students to resolve their own issues. This is the greatest gift you can give your students…the skills and confidence to problem-solve and make important decisions. This is a life skill needed for career success, navigating personal and social issues, and ultimately, life-long happiness and satisfaction. While your students may beg you to make decisions for them, to intervene on their behalf, to “fight their battles,” or to solve their problems, take a deep breath and ask yourself if this is really helping them grow as an interdependent adult in the long-term. It may help to immediately take the pressure off your student, but it just transfers the pressure to you! Growth comes from challenge. Your student will become interdependent by learning to deal with challenges. We know students will experience good times and bad times at Colorado State University. This is a fact of life. As much as my husband and I prefer our own sons to always experience success, we know this isn’t realistic. And, it isn’t healthy. We spend as much time around the dining room table celebrating achievements as reviewing disappointments to learn from those mistakes.

I believe the concern from staff members enters when parents and families ask staff to do something that is the student’s responsibility, such as printing off grade reports from RAM CT, or determining whether the student is attending class or not. I encourage you, as parents and families, to have these kinds of conversations with your student, rather than division staff. Helping your student to understand that part of the responsibility of being in college is getting good grades is a fantastic way to support your student in becoming an adult. It’s not always an easy conversation to have, but I’m happy to brainstorm ideas with you on how to have that conversation and build trust within your relationship with your student.

I close with a reminder that there are numerous resources and support systems on campus. Students have access to directories, websites, posters, advisors, staff members and faculty who can point them to the right place for help. Next time your student calls home with a problem for you to solve, engage in a conversation about the possible solutions they have already thought about or tried. Fight that urge to do something for them and instead, listen, encourage and be with them.

As always, I’m here to listen, encourage, and support you during this tumultuous time of transition!
Greetings RAMfam members!

We are making significant progress during our monthly RAMfam board meetings! So far we have developed our first RAMfam brochure, finalized our organizational structure, and we are putting the finishing touches on our Parent Fund brochure. We have around 10 parent and family members who attend our monthly meetings on a regular basis who are helping us shape the definition of our organization, committees and long term goals.

We also hosted our first welcome dinner for the new spring semester students and their families. We had over 120 participants for the dinner. This is the first in a series of dinners we will host throughout the year to welcome new students and their families to the University.

Our organizational structure consists of the Executive Council which includes the president, vice president, recording secretary, and our 4 committee chairs. The Leadership Council includes members who participate in one of four of our committees. Each member on the Leadership Council is expected to attend all monthly board meetings (in person or by phone). And of course all parents and families of current CSU students are members of the RAMfam Association. Elections for the Executive Council will take place later this spring, so get involved now!

Our goal is to build the Leadership Council upwards of 40 people strong. Please join us for our next meeting on Saturday, March 1st (typically, our meetings are held on the second Saturday of every month) at the Administration building from 10am-12pm.

I look forward to seeing you there!

Regards,

Jeff Wood
Parent of a CSU Junior

---

RAMFAM Association Meeting Agenda & Dial In

**Location:** 201 Administration Building  
**Date:** Saturday, March 1, 2008  
**Time:** 10:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.  
**Dial-In Number:** 970-491-1238  
**Dial-In Instructions:**

1) Call in just before 10:00 on the morning of Saturday, March 1.
2) The first person to call in will experience continual ringing until someone else calls in.
3) Once two people have dialed in to the system, the party line will engage and the
first two individuals will be able to speak to one another. As RAMFAM Association members call in, you will hear a click and then will be able to engage in conversation.

4) Please be aware that all members will be able to hear you at any given time and will also be able to hear when any member has ended the call.

Tentative Topics for Agenda:

- View final RAMFAM Association Brochure
- View draft Brochure for Parents Fund
- Update on Collegian
- Student Issues Discussion
- RAMFAM "flair"
- Development

If you have other agenda items, please send them to me. Finally, please find the minutes from the last meeting attached, as well as a map of campus to assist you in finding the Administration Building. http://www.map.colostate.edu/maincampus-large.pdf (the Administration Building can be found at the south end of the oval on the map. The cross streets to reach the oval are Laurel and Howes). Parking will be available in the lot behind the Administration Building.

What’s Happening at CSU?

Here are just a few of the diverse involvement opportunities available at Colorado State University for the month of February. When your student says "there's nothing to do here," you'll be ready to suggest some really interesting and fun events! For more ideas, visit What’s Up @ CSU at http://www.whatsup.colostate.edu/ to view the entire calendar.

All February Long – Join CSU in Celebrating Black History Month: http://www.bss.colostate.edu/calendar.asp
February 4, 2008 – Speaker:  David Smith, Epidemiologist http://events.colostate.edu/event_view.asp?EID=21538&ID=7&cTYPE=1&month=2&year=2008&cate=

February 5, 2008 - RecycleMania http://events.colostate.edu/event_view.asp?EID=21548&ID=7&cTYPE=1&month=2&year=2008&cate=

February 5, 2008 – CSU Women’s Club Volleyball Try-Outs
February 6, 2008 – Concert: Kelly Aspen

February 6, 2008 – Registration Closes

February 6-7, 2008 – Spring 2008 All-University Career Fair

February 9, 2008 – Ice Hockey vs. CU

February 13, 2008 – ASCSU Senate Meeting

February 16, 2008 – CSU Honor Band Concert

February 16, 2008 – Theatre: The Birthday Party, by Harold Pinter

February 21, 2008 – Lunch with a Laugh

February 23, 2008 – Men’s Basketball vs. Air Force

February 28, 2008 – Financial Aid and Study Abroad
“I’m calling on Behalf of the CSU Parents Fund”

By Camille Blue & Sarah Morgan
University Advancement and Strategic Initiatives

We have all experienced the frustration of trying to enjoy a relaxing evening at home after a long day at work, only to be interrupted by the ever growing common experience of phone solicitations. The mission and goals of each solicitation are as plentiful as the number of times per day, per week, per month, and per year that the phone rings in search of that willing person who says “yes, I will support your cause.” However, if by chance you hear that voice on the other end of the line say; “Hi, this is Jake and I’m a student at Colorado State University calling on behalf of the Parents Fund” please listen. Why? Because the Parent’s Fund is one cause that is definitely worth your (and your student’s!) while.

The Parents Fund was created by Colorado State University parents, family members, and the Division of Student Affairs staff to offer parents and families an opportunity to enrich the lives of all students at the University through private contributions. Although the average gift is a modest $70.00, four major appeals this fiscal year have resulted in over 1,500 gifts, totaling more than $100,000. These funds are used to directly enhance Student Affairs programs and services that lead to the academic and personal success of Colorado State University students. Financial assistance is given to Student Affairs’ programs that expand the sense of community at CSU while providing support to University-wide programs and projects that enrich educational opportunities. Programs such as Apartment Life, Office of Outreach and Prevention Services, and Off-Campus Student Services/Resources for Adult Learners have all benefited in the past from generous Parents Fund donors.

So, the next time you hear a voice on the other end of the line saying, “Hi, I’m a student at Colorado State University calling on behalf of the Parents Fund” please pause and listen for a moment. Your gift, joined with other generous families’ gifts, will go far to raise the quality of campus life for your student and their peers. The Parents Fund is truly an example of how a “little bit can go a long way.”

If you would like to join other parents and family members who contribute to the Parents Fund, please make your gift payable to the Colorado State University Foundation – Parents Fund, P.O. Box 1870, Fort Collins, CO 80522-9800
For more information on how you can give to the Parents Fund please contact Eveline Yang, Director of Development for Student Affairs and Scholarships, at (970) 491-5312 or email eyang@ua.colostate.edu.

Student Involvement Opportunity: NASPA Undergraduate Fellows Program

By Kacee Collard, Graduate Assistant

According to the National Association of Student Personnel Administrators (NASPA) website, the NASPA Undergraduate Fellows Program (NUFP) “is a semi-structured mentoring program for undergraduate students wishing to explore and better understand the field of student affairs and/or higher education.” In the late 1980’s, NASPA recognized the lack of diversity within the profession of student affairs and created the NUFP Program to increase the numbers of underrepresented ethnic minorities, LGBT, and disabled professionals in the fields of student affairs and higher education.

To gain access to the national program, students and mentors apply to NASPA as a pair, and if selected, are provided the foundation to establish a semi-structured mentoring relationship at their institution. Students, once selected, are known as Fellows, and are also given the opportunity to attend a national conference, participate in paid internships, and participate in the Summer Leadership Institute. Colorado State University’s NUFP Program aims to assist students and their mentors not only in the official application process, but in gaining all of the knowledge and opportunities available to them through CSU. Mentors and Fellows meet monthly as a large group to discuss opportunities for internships, hear stories of how campus leaders navigated successful careers and other items of interest, as designated by the Fellows.

Students interested in student affairs will have the opportunity to:

- Demonstrate, through written and oral presentations, that they have developed the requisite writing, research and speaking skills for entry into the graduate school.
- Demonstrate skills to make ethical decisions through case study analyses and other assessment activities.
- Examine and demonstrate the cultural competency skills important to the profession.
- Develop the professional networking skills through their interactions with mentors, faculty facilitators, and other Fellows.
- Demonstrate their abilities to identify and develop personal, academic, and career goals through written plans for action.
- Demonstrate awareness and understanding of engaged citizenship and service through a portfolio describing their experiences.
- Demonstrate an understanding about multiple relationships to power and privilege through such activities as journals, reflections papers, poetry and/or other projects.
- Demonstrate an understanding of organizations (specifically higher educational organizations) related to power and politics through presentations and/or papers.
- Demonstrate an understanding of NASPA’s organization and structure through
recorded interviews, personal journals, group presentations, and/or other venues.

For more information on the NUFP Program, visit the NASPA website at: http://www.naspa.org/programs/nufp/index.cfm or contact Kacee Collard at kacee.collard@colostate.edu or call (970) 491-5312.