Greetings KC Members!

Our Knowledge Community strives to make current research and best practices in the functional area of parent and family relations available to you, our members. As you look through the newsletter you will find areas to provide feedback so that we can continue to use our KC as a way to share resources and connect with others. If you are interested in submitting an article, or if you have any suggestions for future topics of exploration, please feel free to send your ideas to either of the editors. We look forward to your feedback!

Erica Garnett
Egarnetto8@gmail.com
Missouri State University
Co-Editor

Justin Alger
algerjm@herkimer.edu
Herkimer College
Co-Chair

Jane Tuttle
Jtuttle@ku.edu
University of Kansas
Co-Editor

Angela Watson
awatson@umassd.edu
University of Massachusetts Dartmouth
Co-Chair
Notes from your KC Co-Chairs

KC Election Results
Our KC elections process began in Fall 2013 and results were shared with the leadership team in March 2014. We now have two KC CO CHAIR elects who will begin shadowing and training with Justin and Angela throughout the year. The KC CO-CHAIR elects are Melissa Masone Ulmer from George Mason University and Vincent Bowhay from Fort Hayes State University. Both Melissa and Vince will begin their official term in March 2015. We will be sharing more information about the incoming KC CO Chair Elects in the future as well.

Note to KC Membership
If you or others are having issues receiving emails from respective KCs you have listed as of interest in your profile please revisit your profile page and make updates where needed. THEN, visit the notifications page (link on profile page) and make sure you have the right settings for receiving info for each KC or constituent group listed. Be sure to submit info by clicking on link at bottom of each page. We received feedback that members are not getting all the emails and other communications and this may be the issue.

Highlighting NASPA 2014 Conference: KC Business Meeting Report
At the KC’s business meeting we began by recognizing the work done by past co-chairs over the last 10 years. It was great to see familiar faces and we were so happy to have new members join us at the meeting. Our discussions focused on encouraging membership to remain active through our social media outlets and the newsletter.

We challenged members to go back to their regions and institutions looking for ways to assist the KC in identifying researchers and volunteers for our community. We talked about hot topics that included working with parents of students of color, students with mental and physical disabilities, Title IX regulations, orientation programs, and more. Our discussions at the conference have resulted in us making contact with several other KCs in hopes of identifying new research trends and looking for opportunities to collaborate both on the national and regional levels. It is our goal to provide our membership with more robust knowledge in this topic area while also supporting the efforts of our members who are currently doing research or planning programs and events. Another topic of discussion from our meeting was the need to become more versed in K-12 research trends associated with parent and family involvement. We hope that in connecting with other KCs we can better identify our areas of future and needed research as well as best practices to share with members.

In other news we have been working to fill leadership team positions with new volunteers and have been successful in this effort. Also, within some of the regions there are application processes underway that will soon result in announcements of new regional representatives. If you or anyone you know is interested in volunteering we encourage you to contact Angela or Justin.

Angela and Justin
awatson@umassd.edu & algerjm@herkimer.edu
KC Sponsored Programs from the National Conference

The PFRKC sponsored the following two conference sessions that were both evaluated highly. The NASPA website has the session materials for these and other presentations. We encourage you to check them out!

Orienting parents and families: How is higher education serving the parents of students of color, first-generation, and low-income students?

*Cassandra Harper, Judy Marquez Kiyama, Da’vid Aguayo, Delma Ramos, & Laura Page*

Under the direction of Casandra Harper (harpercas@missouri.edu), the presentation highlighted research about parent engagement and how colleges and universities can best work with parents as partners. Using research from Wolf, Sax & Harper participants learned that parental involvement fluctuates amongst varying levels of SES as well as nationality/ethnicity. Using this information, the presentation outlined possible obstacles for First Generation Parents, such as not feeling able to relate to their college student or being less able to provide relevant encouragement. The presentation also highlighted how higher education institutions can create orientation programs that meet First Generation Parents’ needs. The presenters raised the question of whether or not our parent orientation programs have an explicit statement of inclusion for parents.

The presenters concluded with recommendations for our efforts:

- Families Can Be Helpful and Important Sources of Support for Students’ Transition & Success
- Formal Institutional Philosophies Should Be Clearly Articulated
- Messages to Parents Might Vary According to Institutional and Student Characteristics
- Programming Should Facilitate Positive Relationships
- Parents Should Understand the Institution’s Approach to Problem Solving and Crisis
- Develop a Clear Point of Entry for Parents to Contact the Institution
- Promote Communication with Parents/Families in Culturally Responsive Ways
- Recognize that a Lack of Communication from Parents does not Equate to Lack of Interest
- Balance Student Privacy Rights with Parental Influence and Expectations
- Students Need to Understand the New Relationship Too
Using the Parent Expectations for Collegiate Teaching and Caring (PECTAC) instrument, Justin Alger and colleagues helped participants understand what parents expect of higher education institutions and the mechanics of how parents were paying—to position them as a decision maker and critical stakeholder and focus on their expectations. The data and its analysis demonstrate that parents continue to be a part of the decision making process, that they are paying a significant portion of the costs, and that they should be included in the conversation of how to engage parents appropriately on campus. Key discussion items from the site institution are included below:

**Finance:**
- The cost of attendance at this institution is not trivial. If one of the parents were to lose a job this could be detrimental to the student, since 53.1% of students received less than $10,000 in grant aid
- Parents are using the following funding sources to pay for a portion of their college costs: 43.2% loans, 70.3% current income, 56.8% Savings

**Expectations:**
To determine parents’ expectations, the presenters compared the site institute (small, private, arts college, southeast) to the sample from Alger’s dissertation (large, public, research, northeast). Some of the parent expectations that were discussed are listed below:
- Student access to technology resources
- Student acquisition of IT skills and receipt of feedback on their work
- Student access to career counseling and internship opportunities
- Faculty member (rather than Teaching Assistant) classroom instruction
- Campus community’s appreciation of the uniqueness of each student
- Relay of information (i.e. campus safety and academic success) to parents

**Implications:**
Parents continue to be a part of the decision making process, are paying a significant portion of the costs, and should be included in the conversation of how to engage them appropriately on campus.

Justin has offered to administer the PECTAC on your campus to determine what parents expect of your institution. Along with administering the PECTAC, he will also analyze the results and provide you a report of the findings and recommendations, without a need for compensation. If you or your campus is interested in exploring this offer please contact Justin Alger at algerjm@herkimer.edu.
Parents' and students' reports of parenting: Which are more reliably associated with college student drinking?

http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.addbeh.2012.09.017

College student binge drinking is of concern to many and using parents to intervene is one tool to combat such behavior. Using a research technique that measured student’s perceptions of their parents’ behavior and parent’s perception of their own behavior, the study hoped to “identify the optimal method for studying parental influences on college student drinking.” The researchers concluded that collecting parent data is expensive and often difficult to collect; however, student’s perceptions of their parent’s parenting when related to alcohol are a reliable measure. It’s an interesting study and one of the first of its kind with college students. If you are looking for references regarding parental influence on college student drinking, the bibliography is extensive.

Normative feedback for parents of college students: Piloting a parent based intervention to correct misperceptions of students' alcohol use and other parents' approval of drinking

Addictive Behaviors, Volume 39, Issue 1, January 2014, Pages 107–113
http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.addbeh.2013.08.036

This research study focuses on using data to make a difference; it’s very applicable to our efforts. It’s widely reported that most parents assume that college students drink alcohol and they grossly underestimate how much their own student drinks. Using web-based normative feedback, the researchers had students recruit their parents to participate in the survey research. The parents were then given the feedback on their collective responses. “The feedback was organized into three sections addressing: (1) perceived student alcohol use, (2) perceived other parental approval, and (3) perceived student approval.” This pilot project has great potential to help us encourage parents to actually talk to their students about alcohol in a much more realistic way. Share this study with your Wellness colleagues and see how you can implement a similar project.

College students’ perceptions of relations with parents and academic performance.

http://pubs.sciepub.com/education/2/1/3/

Much has been written about the importance of parental support when a student is transitioning to college; however, little has been studied about the parent- college student relationship regarding academic achievement. This study has practical implications for our work with parents. It confirms that we need to continue to help parents transition from doing for their student, to serving as a resource for their student. Of equal importance is the finding that if a student has a negative relationship with their parents, a more helpful resource for them would be advisors, faculty or peer mentors. This would cause one to question the wisdom of blanket parental notification policies for drug and alcohol violations as allowed under FERPA. This study also has an extensive reference list.
Program Mission Statement

The Council for the Advancement of Standards in Higher Education (CAS) suggests that every Family/Parent Services Program have a mission statement that is consistent with that of the institution and has at its core to build collaboration between parents, families, and the institution. The CAS Self-Study under mission asks how the mission statement embraces student learning and development and how do it complement the institution’s mission.

Does your program have an articulated mission statement? A collection of such statements are available on the University of Minnesota’s Parent Program website. [http://www1.umn.edu/parent/about/missions/index.html](http://www1.umn.edu/parent/about/missions/index.html) This summer when reflecting on last year’s efforts, consider the program’s mission statement too.

Parent Send-Off: Tell us what you do!

Some colleges and universities have a formal goodbye program for parents after they have unpacked their student moving onto campus. It is a way to give parents some closure about leaving their student on campus while they travel back home. The variety and scope of such send-offs is vast. We are interested in what your institution does and how much involvement your office has.

Share your story with us! Send in a short synopsis of your institution’s Parent Send-Off Program & the link where people can learn more to Erica Garnett (egarnetto8@gmail.com). We will publish a few synopses in the next newsletter.