New Student and Family Convocation on August 28

The Division of Student Affairs is hosting SDSU’s New Student and Family Convocation this fall on the Sunday before classes begin. All new students and their families are invited to attend this ceremonial tradition to kick off the school year.

What is Convocation? From the Latin root convoco, meaning calling together, Convocation brings new students and their families together with faculty and staff to mark a new beginning. Just as a graduation commencement ceremony serves as a ritual marking the completion of study, Convocation is a ritual to signal the beginning of a college career. Convocation and Commencement are bookends signifying traditional acknowledgement of milestones in the academic journey.

Students and families will be led to Cox Arena, followed by a processional of faculty, staff and students. Convocation will begin with opening remarks from the Dean of Students, followed by presentations from Provost Nancy Marlin, Vice President for Student Affairs James Kitchen, Associated Students President Chris Manigault, Aztec Parents Advisory Board Members Dan and Lori Steinberg, and a welcome message from President Stephen Weber.

Be sure to mark your calendars for this no-cost event to welcome new students and their families to SDSU. We look forward to seeing you at New Student and Family Convocation on August 28 at 10:00 a.m.

Now Parents Can Stay in Touch, Be Informed

This “mini-issue” of News for Aztec Parents is a gift to you from the Aztec Parents Association (APA). As a member of the APA, you will receive three larger issues each year, mailed directly to your home, to help you stay in touch with your student and be informed about what’s going on at SDSU.

The sharing of information is of major importance to the building of a partnership between parents and the university. By joining the Aztec Parents Association and reading News for Aztec Parents, you will learn about special programs for students, help your student stay informed, and receive needed guidance in making important decisions. Like most campus newsletters, News for Aztec Parents will keep you up-to-date on campus news and events. We hope that it will also encourage you to help your student adjust to change, find a direction, achieve his or her goals, and prepare for the future.

Visit www.sdsu.edu/aztecparents to learn more about the Aztec Parents Association.

Welcome, New Aztec Parents Association Members!

A special welcome and thank you to all new members of the Aztec Parents Association. Because you are attending Parent Orientation, you are automatically in the Aztec Parents Association. You are part of a dynamic volunteer organization dedicated to keeping parents involved in SDSU and to supporting programs and services for students.

Our goals are to provide a comprehensive “family experience” that links parents to the SDSU community; to provide communication between parents and the university; and to provide the university with additional funding through parent support and financial contributions.

In addition to receiving this newsletter, you’ll receive other benefits throughout your membership, which lasts for the entire time your student is enrolled at SDSU. These benefits include:

- A direct connection to the university when you have a question or need assistance.
- Opportunities for learning, contributing, and meeting faculty, staff, administrators, students and other SDSU parents.
- News for Aztec Parents, the newsletter for parents and families of SDSU students, mailed to your home three times a year.
- Invitations to Association-sponsored events, where you have the opportunity to enjoy social activities for families.
- Campus discounts.
- Special travel discounts on hotel and car reservations.
- Library benefits with the purchase of guest borrower cards.
- A special parents Web page through Career Services. This site is to give parents an idea of what their students should be doing to plan their careers and when to prepare for their job search. Parents can also utilize Career Services’ many options for a minimal fee.
- Satisfaction! From knowing you actively support programs and services that directly benefit students. And the Aztec Parents Association keeps you informed so your student can take advantage of these opportunities.

Our goals are to provide a comprehensive “family experience” that links parents to the SDSU community.

The Aztec Parents Annual Fund drive will begin in early fall. Your contributions are used to sustain new or established projects that are designed to create, improve or enhance programming that directly benefits SDSU students — including your own. A stronger SDSU enhances the value of the SDSU degree your student will receive. This year’s Annual Fund drive begins in October.

Family Weekend 2005 Set for September 30 - October 1

SDSU’s Family Weekend is a much-looked-forward-to annual event at the beginning of the fall semester. It’s a special occasion when families of SDSU students are invited to visit the campus and experience university life.

The Aztec Parents Association sponsors the event in collaboration with Athletics, Aztec Shops, the library, residence halls, Associated Students, and others.

According to Dan and Lori Steinberg, Aztec Parents Advisory Board members and co-chairs of Family Weekend 2005, everyone is eager to make this a memorable weekend event.

“The university staff plans this weekend to provide events and activities of interest and entertainment for everyone,” Dan said. “The opportunity to meet with other parents and family members, as well as committed SDSU staff and administrators, is invaluable in making us and our students feel at home at SDSU. It also demonstrates to faculty, administration and staff that parents are vitally concerned about and actively involved in ensuring that their students receive a high-quality education in a safe, creative environment.”

To experience your student’s college home first hand, plan to attend Family Weekend 2005. You’ll be able to dine with administrators, dance under the stars, cheer on the Aztecs at a football game, and enjoy spending time with your son or daughter.

Family Weekend 2005 registration information will be available online after July 1. Register at www.sdsu.edu/aztecparents.
**Vice President Kitchen’s Tips for Student Success**

It is part of the mission of the Division of Student Affairs to help students succeed. We offer programs and services to help students learn about their values, beliefs, strengths and limitations – who they are as persons – and to be true to themselves so that they can be productive as students and citizens in the community.

Generally, as students move from their first to their last year, they mature and go through various intellectual, educational and personal development experiences. The activities offered in the Division of Student Affairs help students develop competence through programs such as the Living Learning Communities, Career Services workshops, Freshman Leadership Connection and EOP tutoring. Students learn to manage emotions through our residential education programming and our Counseling and Psychological Services.

As part of the process of moving away from home and managing their educational expenses, students develop a sense of autonomy. Programs offered by the offices of Financial Aid and Scholarships, Career Services, the International Student and Scholar Services and Residential Education are critical to facilitating their independence.

Student leaders and student leadership programs, particularly those focused on exposing students to issues related to ethnic, cultural, gender and sexual orientation, are important avenues to helping students establish identity and develop the capacity for interpersonal relationships and for appreciation of differences.

The offices of Counseling and Psychological Services, Residential Education, Student Rights and Responsibilities, the Ombudsmen and Student Health Services support a student’s ability to address personal development and interpersonal relationship issues in a positive, healthy manner and with integrity.

Students develop purpose through the counseling and services offered through Career Services, the Center for Community Based Service-Learning, EOP, and to be true to themselves so that they can be productive as students and citizens in the community.

The programs and services within Student Affairs are designed to help students develop their full potential, enabling them to succeed in college and beyond.

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**TIPS TO PASS ALONG TO YOUR STUDENT**

- Learn from the resources available for you at SDSU and don’t shy away from them.
- Seek out your professors during their office hours and introduce yourself.
- Go over the syllabus for each course and ask for clarification of anything you don’t understand, find out your professor’s expectations for the class.
- Learn to manage your time wisely.
- Keep up with your reading on a daily basis.
- Trade phone numbers with a classmates.
- Begin assignments early and do research and writing gradually to avoid last-minute rushing.
- Get plenty of sleep.

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**SDSU Announces The 2005 Summer Reading Program**

Many universities throughout the United States offer a summer reading program as a means of introducing incoming students to the intellectual life of the university. San Diego State University launched its first summer book reading program last summer.

“The mission of the Summer Reading Program is to welcome the new students to SDSU’s learning community,” said Chris Procello, special assistant to the dean in the Division of Undergraduate Studies. “By involving all incoming students, the program comprises part of each student’s orientation to the campus and provides a common experience for them as they transition to both university life and to SDSU.”

Procello explained that one goal is to create an opportunity for students to participate in a dialogue around a book and current topics.

“There will be many opportunities throughout the fall semester for students to learn and discuss interpretations of the book,” he said. “From social activities, to course discussion in the Freshman Success Programs and study groups, and other structured events, students will develop an enhanced sense of community while strengthening their critical reading skills.”

Selected as the 2005 Summer Reading Program book is Barbara Ehrenreich’s *Nickel and Dimed: On (Not) Getting by in America.*

In early 1998 Barbara Ehrenreich, arguably our sharpest and most original social critic, posed the following questions to an editor at Harper’s Magazine: How does anyone live on the wages available to the unskilled? And how, in particular, were the 12 million women about to be booted into the labor market by welfare reform going to make it on $6 or $7 an hour? Millions of Americans work full-time, year around, for poverty-level wages; in 1998, Ehrenreich joined them.

What ensued is an unprecedented and illuminating work of immersion journalism, captured in its provocative entirety in *Nickel and Dimed: On (Not) Getting by in America,* which became a New York Times bestseller. To answer her own questions, Ehrenreich left her home, took the cheapest lodgings she could find, and accepted the lowest-paying jobs she was offered. Moving from Florida to Maine to Minnesota, she worked as a waitress, a hotel maid, a cleaning woman, a nursing-home aide, and a Wal-Mart sales clerk. She lived in trailer parks and crumbling residential motels, discovering quickly that no job is truly unskilled, that even the lowest-wage occupations take an enormous mental and physical toll, and that one job is not enough - not, that is, if you intend to live indoors.

“With all the real life assets I’ve built up in middle age - bank account, IRA, health insurance, multimillion home - waiting indulgently in the background, there was no way I was going to ‘experience poverty’ or find out how it ‘really feels’ to be a long-term low-wage worker,” Ehrenreich cautions. “My aim here was much more straightforward and objective - just to see whether I could match income to expenses, as the truly poor attempt to do every day.”

What she discovered was that, in fact, she could not. Ehrenreich’s hair-raising and darkly funny odyssey through the underside of the working world brilliantly describes low-rent America in all its tenacity, anxiety and surprising generosity. A rare view of “prosperity” from the bottom puts a human face to the lives sustaining our economy (source: www.creativewelf.com).

The Division of Student Affairs is co-sponsoring an open lecture by Ehrenreich on Thursday, November 3 at San Diego State University.

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*News for Aztec Parents,* Orientation Supplement, Summer 2005

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Parents, You Can Help Too! Contribute to the Aztec Parents Annual Fund

The Aztec Parents Annual Fund allows you to support a wide variety of programs, such as:
- New Equipment for the Rape Aggression Defense Program offered through University Police and Public Safety.
- Student Health Services’ alcohol and other drug prevention/harm reduction programs.
- Counseling & Psychological Services’ Bounce Back Program, which improves the retention rate of students on academic probation; and the expansion of the Dr. Steve Sherr Center for Well-Being.
- Residential Education’s Student Taking Academic Responsibility (STAR) Center for on-campus residents and the “Faculty Fellows” Program to increase faculty/student interaction.

Thank you, Aztec Parents, for your continued support.
Talking to Your Student – the Way to a Smooth College Transition

You and your college-bound son or daughter should have a heart-to-heart about what’s ahead.

The Aztec Parents Association recommends that you have a conversation with your student regarding academics, finances, safety and wellness. As you bring up each topic, listen to your student. Let him or her know your expectations. The key word is “realities” – students need to understand realities clearly.

Finances

At the risk of stating the obvious, your student needs to know how much money he or she will have to live on each semester in order to plan. Decisions about whether or not students need to work, and how much they need to contribute, should be made together. There are no guidelines, because every situation is different. You need to be the judge of whether or not your student needs your help about budgeting.

Computers

Use of a computer, and computer literacy are necessities; in fact, all students are required to keep a working e-mail account to access official university communications. SDSU offers a variety of computer resources. The Student Computer Lab (Love Library, Room 222) has extended hours. Free classes are offered at the library on how to conduct research on the Internet.

Students residing in the Living Learning Communities have their own computer room and many individual major departments offer computer labs. Take a look at the Aztechology Zone in the SDSU Bookstore, which offers student discounts.

Safety on Campus

SDSU is like a small town located in an urban area. Students need to take the same precautions that they would in any urban area. Here are three highly recommended safety tips:

• Use SDSU’s Escort Service. Students, especially women, should not be alone after dark. The service usually arrives within five minutes and will escort within a one-mile radius. The number is 594-4659.
• Report any suspicious person or activity to the University Police.
• Protect your valuable property by taking advantage of the university’s Operation ID program. SDSU’s crime prevention unit has property engravers available in Love Library. They may be checked out at the circulation desk.

South of the Border

Because SDSU is so close to the border, one place where most students inevitably travel is Mexico. Mexico provides important cultural experiences and the reality is that many students go there. You can regard the proximity of Mexico as a benefit if you talk to your student about being smart on their trips across the border. The key is safety. Students should always travel in groups and stay on the main roads. Remember that the laws in Mexico are different from the United States, and they must be respected as a real possibility if the rules are violated.

Vocation

Once students arrive at college, they make new friends and may want to spend time with them over vacations.

Let your students know what you’re thinking about their spending vacations. Do you expect them home? Would you be comfortable if they brought a friend or roommate home?

Parents should be aware that most residence halls close during breaks. If a student needs to stay on campus during those times, they should consider living in the specific halls designated as open during the breaks.

Help in making the transition

During this time of transition, the important thing is to listen to your student, communicate your views, and talk openly. When you need to talk to someone about issues facing your student, our parent program coordinator is available at (619) 594-1653. In addition, attending Aztec Parents Association events offers you information and an opportunity to talk with other parents.

Helping Your Student Learn Financial Responsibility

College students face a number of challenges as they leave home and head off to school for the first time. In addition to adjustments in their family and social life, they often have to contend with handling their own finances.

Fortunately for today’s students, there are a number of resources available to help finance their education and living situation. Support from family, student loans, financial aid, earnings and maybe even a well planned savings all contribute to what will ultimately fund these college years.

Initially, these resources can seem like a large sum of money to a new student. Clothes, gas, pizza, books and concert tickets don’t seem to be any trouble at first. Unfortunately, it doesn’t take long for the rosy outlook to disappear as reality sets in for a rude awakening.

At times like these, credit may appear to be the answer to the student’s problems. Students are often shocked at how quickly a daily cup of coffee and lunch will add up on their card. Unfortunately, credit only offers a temporary solution for an ongoing problem.

In 2001 Nellie Mae, a leading provider of federal student loans, found that 83 percent of undergraduates have at least one credit card with an average balance of $2,327. The study showed that students double their credit debt and triple the number of cards they own between the time they arrive on campus and the time they graduate.

U.S. Bank understands these challenges and has created a number of products and services that help raise awareness and provide the tools a student will need to manage his or her budget. During New Student Orientation, representatives from the SDSUcard Office and U.S. Bank will be on hand to introduce some of the resources that will be available to your student throughout their college experience.

The SDSUcard Office and U.S. Bank have partnered to provide students with Financial Wellness Seminars, such as:

• Banking Basics 101
• The Budget Zone
• Got Money?
• Conquering Credit

To learn more about U.S. Bank and its partnership with SDSU visit http://uco.sdsu.edu/sdsucard/