Welcome, New Aztec Parents Association Members!

A special welcome and thank you to all new members of 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 the university with additional funding through parent support and financial contributions; and to provide communication between parents and the university.

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 airfare and 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 ideas 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 which directly benefit students. And the Aztec Parents Association keeps you informed so your student can take advantage of these opportunities.

The Aztec Parents Annual Fund drive will soon begin. Your financial contributions are used to sustain new or established projects that are designed to create,

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

Improve or enhance programming that directly benefits SDSU students—including your own.

The gap between state support and the level of funding needed to sustain the quality education of SDSU is partially filled by your contributions given during the Aztec Parents Annual Fund Phonathon.

A stronger SDSU enhances the value of the SDSU degree your student will receive. This year’s Annual Fund drive begins in October.

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. 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, find a voice with the administration, and receive needed guidance in making important decisions. Like most campus newsletters, News for Aztec Parents will keep you up-to-date about 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.

Family Weekend 2004 Set for October 15-16

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 together.

The Aztec Parents Association sponsors the event in collaboration with Athletics, faculty, the library, residence halls, Greek Life, Associated Students, and others. According to Ron and Leigh Mantel, Aztec Parents Advisory Board members and co-chairs of Family Weekend 2004, 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,” he 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 2004. You’ll be able to attend workshops, 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 2004 registration information will be available online after July 1. Register at www.sdsu.edu/aztecparents.
Vice President Kitchen’s Tips for Student Success

TIPS TO PASS ALONG TO YOUR STUDENT

- Learn about the resources available for you at SDSU and don’t be shy about using them.
- Seek out your professors during his/her 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 classmate.
- Begin assignments early and do research and writing gradually to avoid last-minute rushing.
- Get plenty of sleep.

- Participate in some type of daily physical activity to revitalize your energy.
- Join a student club that interests you and build a network of friends on campus.
- Participate in study skills and other programs offered by the Residential Education staff.
- Take a library tour to familiarize yourself with everything available there.
- Enhance your emotional intelligence by participating in some of the groups and workshops offered by Counseling & Psychological Services.
- Ask for help before you are in crisis.
- Remember, we’re here to help you succeed!

Counseling & Psychological Services, and through the sum total of their experiences and conversations as members of the SDSU community.

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

SDSU Introduces The Summer Reading Program

M any colleges and universities throughout the United States offer a summer reading program as a means of introducing incoming students to the intellectual life of the university. After 107 years as an institution of higher education, it was time for San Diego State to develop a program that could engage all incoming students.

Faculty, staff and administrators from across campus collaborated this spring to create SDSU’s first Summer Reading Program. In late spring, a book was chosen.

“The mission of the Summer Reading Program is to welcome new students to SDSU’s learning community,” said Assistant Dean of Students Evette Castillo. “By involving all incoming students, the program complements 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.”

Castillo explained that one goal of the program is to create an opportunity for students, staff and faculty to participate in a dialogue around a common book and current topics.

“There will be many opportunities throughout the fall semester for students to learn and discuss interpretations of the book,” she said. “From Welcome Week 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 2004 Summer Reading Program book is Anne Fadiman’s The Spirit Catches You and You Fall Down, a true account of how cultural misunderstanding can lead to tragic consequences. Lia Lee, the three-month old Hmong child of a Hmong refugee from Laos, was brought into the emergency room of the Merced county hospital after suffering several seizures. Speaking no English, her parents believed her seizures were caused by the flight of her soul from her body and called her condition by its Hmong name: gaub dab pey (“the spirit catches you and you fall down”). The western hospital staff, speaking no Hmong, determined Lia’s condition to be a severe case of epilepsy. The cultural misunderstandings between Lia’s parents and hospital staff ultimately resulted in tragedy for Lia.

In her stunning work of cross-cultural reportage, Anne Fadiman presents Lia’s story from both perspectives. It is Fadiman’s great achievement that she manages to empathize with those on both sides, communicating their intentions with compassion and humanity and carefully weighing the consequences of their actions. Through her story of a single Hmong child, she communicates the essence of two very different worldviews, and holds out the hope that they might one day be reconciled.

Visit www.spiritcatchesyou.com for more information about the book.

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San Diego State University maintains and promotes a policy of non-discrimination and non-harassment on the basis of race, religion, color, sex, age, handicap, marital status, sexual orientation, or national origin. The California State University is committed to providing equal opportunities to men and women, SDSU students in campus programs, including intercollegiate athletics.
Parents: You Can Help Too! Contribute to the Aztec Parents Annual Fund

Calling for the Aztec Parents Annual Fund will be underway in October. SDSU students will be asking for your financial support to create and improve programs and services at SDSU that affect them. Your donations will help fill in the gap between state support and the level of funding needed to sustain the quality education for which SDSU is nationally known.

SDSU offers highly regarded academic programs, outstanding student services, and preparation for success in today’s complex world. Your gifts help provide quality programs and services that offer students the broadest possible scope of opportunity, both within and outside the classroom. Without your contributions, many of these valuable programs and services would not be available for your students.

Each year, parents establish priorities for funding campus programs; and the Aztec Parents Advisory Board, based on these priorities, makes recommendations to Dr. James Kitchen, vice president for student affairs, of where the Aztec Parents Annual Fund dollars should go. A stronger SDSU enhances the value of the degree your son or daughter will receive. We hope you’ll give generously to shape your student’s future today.

Donations from committed parents like you have enabled us to support the following programs this year:

- The Freshman Success Program that engages first-year students in the university experience and helps them to more quickly integrate into the campus culture
- Student Health Services’ alcohol and other drug prevention FRAT Manners and CHOICES programs that address the consequences of alcohol use and violence against women
- Counseling & Psychological Services’ Center for WellBeing, which is designed to be a place of self-reflection, self-exploration, information gathering and group interaction. The skills students acquire through the Center assist them with having a positive university experience
- A second student Multimedia Presentation Room in Love Library that will be accessible 24/7 when school is in session
- A Multimedia Integrity Teaching Tool (MITT) for the Center for Student Rights & Responsibilities that educates students about academic dishonesty issues such as plagiarism and cheating, and exposes them to strategies to prevent this type of conduct

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 will be busy this summer, and you may have to schedule an appointment for that heart-to-heart about what’s ahead.

The Aztec Parents Association recommends discussion of four topics in particular: finances, computers, safety, and vacations. As you bring up each topic, listen to what your student already knows. Let him or her know your expectations. The key word is “realities” – students need to understand realities clearly before they arrive at SDSU.

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 in advance. Decisions about whether or not students need to work, and how much they need to contribute, are decisions families should make together. Some parents prefer that their students not work their first semester. There are no guidelines, because every situation is different. You need to be the judge of whether or not your students need to hear from you about budgeting. Some basic words of advice might run something like, “Just because your family budget, student loans, or personal savings are running low doesn’t mean you should rush to work, and we offer programming to teach them our mission to help them attain a quality education; themselves in a mature and responsible manner. It’s our key is safety. Ask them if they want to spend time with them over vacations.

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 students go there with residency hall groups, friends, and even on class assignments. You can regard the proximity of Mexico as a benefit to your students if you talk to them about being smart on their trips across the border. The key is safety. Ask them if they know these safety tips:
• Always go with a group;
• Stay on the main streets;
• Use the buddy system;
• Don’t drink too much; some in the group should always be capable of making good, sound decisions;
• Do NOT use drugs or stay in an environment with drugs; in a foreign country, the laws are different, and jail is a real possibility.

Vacations
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 prefer regarding vacations. Do you expect them home? Would you be comfortable if they brought a friend or roommate home with them? 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. (There is no additional cost for these halls.)

Help in making the transition
During this time of transition for both your student and your family, the important thing is to listen to your student, communicate your views, and talk openly about the issues. When you need to talk to someone about something your student is going through, when you want to know if what your student is experiencing or saying is “normal,” or when you want advice about how to talk to your student on a particular issue, during the summer or next year, your Parent Programs 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 about your experiences.

SDSU Expects Responsible Community Members

Once your students arrive at SDSU, they will make daily decisions that will ripple across their first semester and impact their future academic success. We know you’ve done a good job parenting; but you’re also responsible for all the details. Here’s all something as simple as setting an alarm clock could mean your student making it to class or sleeping through a quiz.

We can never take your place. But, we can assure you that we expect our students to conduct themselves in a mature and responsible manner. It’s our mission to help them attain a quality education; and we offer programming to teach them our expectations for living together in the SDSU community.

For example, Hall Coordinators, Community Assistants and Faculty-in-Residence will all offer programs and guidance to the students about living successfully in community. Moreover, the Housing License Agreement, which lists the rules and regulations to be followed while living in the residence halls, can be read over the summer.

Whether your son or daughter lives in the residence halls or not, all SDSU students are expected to:
• Respect the rights, privileges, and property interests of other members of the academic community and campus visitors;
• Help create the best possible climate for learning at the university;
• Maintain, through responsible thought and action, the high standards of academic excellence and professional integrity that distinguish the university and its faculty;
• Furnish the university with accurate and timely information relating to health, financial need, educational progress, address, telephone number, and other pertinent directory information;
• Comply with the Code of Student Conduct and other university policies and regulations found at the Center for Student Rights and Responsibilities/ Web site www.sa.sdsu.edu/srr/index.html.
• Be a positive role model for others in the community;
• Read and follow the ideals expressed in the Statement of Student Rights and Responsibilities (available online at: www.sa.sdsu.edu/srr/statement)

SDSU is committed to helping your student reach his or her potential and goals for graduation. Best wishes for success in your student’s studies!