Dear Members of the Duquesne Community:

Welcome back to Duquesne for the spring 2006 semester. I hope you had a wonderful and relaxing Christmas break. Please enjoy this latest edition of Student Life Developments. In this issue many of the articles focus on faculty involvement in the programs and activities we offer to our students. We are grateful to those who have participated in our events and look forward to future collaborations.

Happy New Year!

Executive Vice President for Student Life

The Spirit of Giving

Benefits

Hurricane Relief

Duquesne University Volunteers (DUV) spent the early part of the fall semester supporting Hurricane Relief efforts that were organized by a wide variety of student organizations and individuals. These events included a campus-wide canning effort at the first home game of the Steelers, a concert of student bands organized by Anthony Rankin (pictured), a golf outing, and many more unique and creative events.

In the early days following the hurricane it became clear that there was a critical mass of students eager to help those in need. DUV was pleased to provide support to these groups and will continue to do so throughout the year.

P-Nut Butter Jelly Fundraiser featured “celebrity chefs” like President Charles Dougherty.
The Advantages of Involvement!

A common question that new students ask when they are starting out as freshmen is “Why should I join an organization or get involved with a student activity?” How may we attempt to answer that question?

As Student Life support staff, we encourage new students to focus on their studies, but in order for them to make the most of their college experience we help them realize that they must supplement their academics. Student organizations and activities help to bring diverse students together through a common interest, providing not only a venue for socialization, but also an atmosphere that will help foster discussion, collaboration and, hopefully, a sense of community.

Students who are actively involved with campus life are often those who seem more satisfied with their experiences and environment. They learn to appreciate differences and also to recognize the importance of individual contributions.

How do students know what is available to join? As incoming freshmen, they are asked to complete a Student Activity Interest Survey upon arrival and are then contacted by these organizations and invited to join. In addition, a large Student Activities Fair is held on campus to provide more specific information to the students about many of the 130 student organizations. During this past year, the Rev. Sean Hogan, C.S.Sp., Executive V.P. for Student Life, led a more concentrated effort to encourage new student involvement, with a follow-up to track and collate this information. Lists of organizations were distributed to students during Orientation, and follow-up meetings were held with Resident Assistants and Commuter Assistants to further identify student interests.

This past October, we learned that 83.9% of new freshmen were already involved with student activities on campus! Those organizations which had the highest level of participation were Intramurals, Residence Life Floor Programs, DU Program Council, DU Volunteers and Athletics.

Duquesne University has a long and proud tradition of encouraging students to become involved with student activities, which—integrated with their studies—helps not only to develop leadership skills but also to promote social, intellectual and spiritual growth.

From the Syllabus to the Living/Learning Center

As the trend in unique and creative Resident Assistant programming increases through Duquesne’s Living/Learning Centers, it is evident that these programs are placing an emphasis upon more than merely social interaction or community building.

Instead, this semester the RA’s are choosing to engage residents in programs that have direct reference to the topics and subject material that faculty are teaching in the classroom. These programs have had a significant response from residents who are more interested in holistic development as scholars and value the opportunity to explore topics in greater depth outside the classroom.

Subject matter has ranged in scope from forensic analysis in a recent program entitled “CSI: Brottier” to psychology, depression, and stress more endemic in men entitled “Sports Depression.”

Residents have used personality analysis and sociology in studying Halloween pumpkins and how people carve them to watching films about social justice and studying how it affects contemporary students.

By choosing topics that are engaging the RA’s in the classroom, they are providing a practical application of educational theories in their halls. More importantly, by bringing faculty to the community who have expertise in these subjects, the RA’s are making the classroom come alive for interested residents.

If you are interested in sponsoring a program related to your subject area or a personal interest, please contact Shannon Owens at X5028.
Something of Value

A Great National Program at Duquesne

The National Panhellenic Conference program “Something of Value,” was sponsored by the Office of Greek Life in conjunction with the Duquesne Panhellenic Council this semester. The effort is a values-based approach to risk management education for collegians. The day-long program was led by a traveling team of NPC representatives and an attorney with NPC affiliation. The program format included group discussions of values, a mock trial, and teaching confrontation skills. Participants identified risky behaviors such as substance abuse, eating disorders, and other issues specific to today’s campus environment. Action plans were developed for sorority chapters and our collegians were empowered to follow-through throughout the year. Pictured are the Council Leadership along with Sorority Alumni and the NPC leadership team.

Greeks Serving Campus with Book Fund

The Duquesne Greek Alumni Council recently awarded the first Book Endowment Fund scholarship at the fall Homecoming Pig Roast. Fraternity and sorority members on the Bluff have raised almost $20,000 thus far for the fund that will help students purchase text books. The on-campus service project is one small way students in Greek Life give directly to the university, via financial support to eligible students.

SPRIT Program

During the spring 2005 semester, 40 students completed the SPRIT Emerging Leaders Program. Many of these students have gone on to be elected to, or selected for, leadership positions in a variety of organizations.

As the spring 2006 semester begins, the Office of Student Activities is anticipating another successful year of the SPRIT Program. This program is designed to prepare freshmen and sophomore students to assume leadership roles, not only within Duquesne student organizations, but throughout their respective communities as well.

The SPRIT Program consists of various workshops that are structured to promote student development and provide participants with a foundation for future leadership roles. Throughout the semester, each workshop will be presented by peer educators and university administration, and will cover a variety of topics, including: Introduction to Student Life, Introduction to Leadership, Event Planning, History and Mission of Duquesne University, Managing Your Life and Leadership Responsibilities, Meeting Management, Team Building, Community Service and Leadership, Budgeting, and Diversity at Duquesne.

Students that participate in the SPRIT Program are required to attend seven workshops and complete a reflection paper. Participants were nominated during the Fall 2005 semester by University Departments, Administration and Student Organizations.

Pictured from left to right are Craig Tumas, president of the Greek Alumni Council, Jake Fait, 1st recipient of the Book Fund scholarship, Mary Ferrese, member of the Council Book Selection Committee, and Ron Shidemantle, director of Greek Life.
Student Elections

Every January finds numerous students scurrying around the campus clutching “petitions” in their hands. They approach other students in classrooms, cafeterias, residence halls and even on Academic Walk for signatures on their petitions. Most petition bearers are attempting to gather 1,000 signatures of fellow students in order to have their names placed on the ballots for Student Government Executive Board elections. Others, running for Commuter Council or Residence Halls Association President, require signatures of only 5% of their respective constituencies. According to election rules, candidates must personally approach students for signatures. They are not permitted to have friends circulate their petitions.

The third week of January, those who succeed in obtaining the required signatures are considered official candidates and are permitted to “campaign”. The campaigning consists of numerous posters around the campus, table tents in cafeterias and lounges, and “issues” discussions with other students.

On February 4, 2006, the election occurs with all registered students invited to vote online through a link on the Duquesne University home page. Later in February, the Student Government Senate election is held with students voting by school to elect senators for their school. All elected students assume their offices at the Annual Installation Ceremony during a Mass on March 19, 2006, where they pledge their support of the University Mission Statement and the constitution of their organization.

NITESPOT FORUM

The Office of Student Activities would like to invite all faculty members to participate in a new program in the Duquesne Union for the spring semester. The NiteSpot Forum program is a new initiative to provide educational and entertaining programs in the Union. The Union currently offers a variety of recreation and entertainment opportunities for Duquesne students. We would like to expand our offerings to include programs of an educational nature.

The NiteSpot Forum program will bring learning opportunities to students in the Union. The program is a series of discussion sessions or debates on hot topics currently in the news. Each of these sessions will be held in the Union NiteSpot. Faculty are invited to lead the discussion sessions. The Office of Student Activities will provide the venue, publicity and free food for participants. Currently we are planning to offer these sessions once a month at 8:00 or 9:00 p.m. on Wednesday nights.

If you are interested in leading a session please complete the form below and return it to: Doug Kukta, Union 335. Sessions should be a discussion or debate format, and should be kept to no more than two hours in duration. Examples of topics include: Bias in the Media, Corporate Ethics, the Political Environment in the Middle East, or any other current issue.

Questions should be addressed to Doug Kukta at kukta@duq.edu or 412.396.4826.

Name: ____________________________  School/Dept.: ____________________________
Phone Number: ____________________________  E-mail: ____________________________
Topic: ____________________________
Format: (circle one)  Discussion  Debate
Dates Available: (Please list Wednesday nights during the spring 2006 semester that you are available)
Orientation Receives
Third National Award
in Four Years!

The National Orientation Director’s Association (NODA) recently recognized Duquesne University’s 2005 Orientation program, Dive into Duquesne, for “Excellence in Design, Outstanding Welcome Week Publicity.” Michael Johnston, director of the 2005 program and a senior Business major, and Allison Murtha, assistant director and a fourth year Forensics major, received the award recently at the annual NODA conference in Miami, Florida.

This is the third award that our Orientation program has won in the past four years! The 2002 and 2004 Orientation programs received the “Outstanding Orientation Website Award” for exceptional design and content.

Career Services Available

Seniors graduating in May or July 2005 seeking professional positions and other students seeking internships are encouraged to use the Career Services Center for assistance with their job search. It is never too late to use the Career Services Center, but it clearly helps to start sooner rather than later.

There are four job or career fairs during the spring 2006 Semester to help students find internships, professional positions, or summer jobs:

**Duquesne Spring 2006 Job and Internship Fair**
(40-50 employers expected)
Wednesday, February 22
Duquesne Union Ballroom

**The Western Pennsylvania Career Services Association (WestPACS) Spring 2006 Job Fair**
(100-110 employers expected)
Thursday, March 9
ExpoMart, Monroeville

**The 2006 Nonprofit Career Fair**
(40 employers from the nonprofit sector expected)
Thursday, March 16
Duquesne Union Ballroom

**The Pittsburgh Education Recruiting Consortium (PERC) 2006 Job Fair**
(100 school districts expected, seeking Education, Counseling, Occupational Therapy, Physical Therapy, Athletic Trainer, and Speech-Language Pathology graduates)
Thursday, March 30
ExpoMart, Monroeville

For more information on these events go to www.careerservices.duq.edu and click on “Events.”
The Office of Multicultural Affairs (OMA) is in the midst of its fourth year as a part of the Duquesne University community. Since its inception, OMA has established several programs and activities that have become a part of the diverse fabric of the university community. However, the office is most proud of the work done to retain students of color. During the summer months the staff compiles a retention report for the administration. Each year since 2002, the freshmen to sophomore retention rate has increased and, in 2004, it passed the institutional rate. The 2005 rate continues this upward trend, with 94% of self-identified minority freshmen continuing to their sophomore year. This summer, the Office of Multicultural Affairs will be able to assess the four year graduation rate of minority students, as well as the freshmen to sophomore retention rate.

OMA Helps Attract and Retain Minority Students

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HEALTH PREVENTION TIPS:

- ALWAYS wash your hands with warm soap and water.
- Properly wash the wound with soap and water.
- Do not share personal items such as towels, wash clothes or razors.
- Maintain clean athletic equipment.
- Wash clothes in hot water and dry in dryer with hot air.
- Practice proper hygiene.
Students entering college in the 21st century—students labeled generation Y, baby boomers II and millennials—are a rapidly changing mosaic unlike any previous generation, according to an article, “The Millennial Student,” by Fred B. Newton, published in a recent issue of the journal About Campus. The article claims that the information and technology revolution of the past decade had dramatic effects on the way today’s college students behave, think and interact.

The first step in addressing the new generation of students is awareness. Below are characteristics of this generation which you may find helpful when working with this group of students.

Born in or after 1982, there are approximately 80 million millennials. The defining characteristics of the millennials include: confident, team-oriented, savvy with technology, achieving, stressed, racially diverse, and extremely close with parents.

In his research, Newton found that although this is the most informed generation ever, it is a generation with less ability to exercise discipline, less commitment to studying, and a higher propensity to avoid laws and rules. The millennial students tend to have poorer class participation than previous generations, are under-prepared, and require specific direction and guidance. Today’s students have surpassed older generations in technological proficiency, but they don’t have the capacity to handle all aspects of personal life management.

The rapid changes have taken a toll on students, Newton warns. This generation of college students is enduring increasingly high levels of stress. They develop ambitious career expectations that are unrealistic, and they feel pressure to achieve high levels of success.

Although these traits are generalities, it helps to put the group’s characteristics, learning styles, and developmental issues in perspective to assist faculty and administrators in their work with students.

From About Campus, 2001.