



Office of Retention Services

Luke Heffley,
Parent Relations Coordinator

Doc Bryan Student Services
Center, Room 233
1605 Coliseum Dr.
Russellville, AR 72801

Email: lheffley@atu.edu

Phone: (479) 964-3281

Fax: (479) 968-0208

Parent Newsletter

To read past issues of the TECH Parent Newsletter, visit our website at...

www.atu.edu/parents

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May 2009

FIRST MEETING

TECH PARENT COUNCIL CONVENES

The first meeting of the Arkansas Tech University Parent Council on May 12, 2009, proved to be a very productive meeting seasoned with a number of great comments and suggestions. For those of you who signed up for the Parent Council but missed the May meeting, a second meeting will occur in early fall. For those of you who may be receiving this newsletter for the first time, the Parent Council is a group of parents from the Parent Association who want to become more actively involved. The Parent Council will assist Arkansas Tech University and the Parent Relations office as we strive to meet the needs of our students AND address the parents' needs for information, involvement, and support. We are excited to report that over twenty families have joined the Parent Council, if you would like to also join, please email lheffley@atu.edu.

HOW DID WE DO?

The office of Parent Relations truly hopes that you and your student enjoyed their freshmen year. We have created a survey to find out how we did during the previous year. How was the newsletter? What did you think about the website, as well as other services on campus? Did you attend many Tech activities or any at all? Were you satisfied? These questions along with a few others will help our office be the best it can be. Please take a few minutes to complete the following survey:

<http://www.questionpro.com/akira/TakeSurvey?id=1240829>

Your time and participation is greatly appreciated!

Keeping your family connected!



SUMMER ISSUES

It is a time of mixed emotions when college students return home for the summer. Here are a few things that some families may be experiencing this summer:

- Your student discovers changes to his or her room while they were gone.
- Your student wants to invite their roommate and friends for a visit.
- Your student has made big changes to their appearance .
- You and your student need to discuss long-term plans.
- Your student feels split between their family commitments and personal schedule.
- Your student's summer job might not have worked out.

Please have an open discussion with your student about these and other topics: hopefully, it will make your summer one to remember! For some answers to the above situations and other great tips for parents, read "Tips on Surviving Your College Student's Visit" at http://parentingteens.about.com/od/collegeinfo/a/college_student.htm.

ARKANSASTECHNEWS.COM

As a parent of an Arkansas Tech student, it can be tough to not see your child every day and to miss out on all the activities your student is involved in at Arkansas Tech. While it is difficult to embrace their new-found independence, Arkansas Tech has created a website to make it easier.

Logging on to www.arkansastechnews.com is one way to stay in the know about what is happening on campus. The website is updated daily with video, photos, and stories about all things Arkansas Tech.

From freshmen orientation to spirit squads, guest speakers to band concerts, arkansastechnews.com is an excellent place to truly get to know about Arkansas Tech. While being away from that child is tough, arkansastechnews.com is making it easier for parents by keeping them informed.

Remember, get inside @ www.arkansastechnews.com.

For the latest news and information about Arkansas Tech University, visit www.arkansastechnews.com.

AGREE TO DISAGREE

You and your student may not always see eye-to-eye on certain things. Politics, diversity, religion...there are any number of hot-button topics that can start a verbal tussle. Yet disagreements can actually be good for your parent/student relationship. The key is agreeing to disagree in a respectful, open-minded manner.

You can do that by:

Not taking differences in opinion personally. If your student takes a different stance than you do, it's not because she hates you or disrespects you. It's likely because she has had experiences that have led her to form a different opinion. It's really not about you.

Sharing your pride. The fact that your student is an independent, critical thinker, no matter his opinion, can be a source of great pride. Don't forget to praise your student for his abilities and his curiosity. Having an intentional discussion about agreeing to disagree is an important step in developing an adult relationship with your student. Let the conversations begin!

Engaging. Let your student know that, just because you have had differences in opinion before, you're still very interested in hearing what she has to say about things. Don't avoid the tough topics. You can both learn a great deal from one another by engaging in meaty conversations.

Listening. Allow your student to say his piece, without interrupting to inject your opinion. Show that you're listening by maintaining eye contact, keeping an open posture, and reflecting back some of the things he is saying. Sometimes just knowing that you're being *listened to* makes all the difference in the world.

Keeping an open mind. We can all change our minds once we hear the facts – or those facts can clarify a pre-existing opinion. Stay open to that possibility as you and your student exchange opinions and perspectives. It's all part of being a growing, engaged human being.

Face-to-face Disagreements

Sometimes the intense conversations happen when you and your student are face to face, especially during the extended summer break. Your initial tendency may be to "keep the peace" during your limited face time with your student. Yet, avoiding topics that could lead to disagreements can cause important things to go unsaid, so encourage your student to express his or her opinions, whether you agree or not. Ask that he listen to yours. That face time may result in your communication pattern opening wider as you and your student learn to talk about the tough stuff, disagreements and all.

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CONGRATULATIONS

Your child has made it through their freshmen year of college! Both you and your student should be commended! The freshmen year can be a very difficult one. The changes that occur from high school to now can be overwhelming. Now, let's get ready for the second year! Your student's sophomore year should be a very exciting and rewarding experience. Be aware that sometimes sophomores feel they are "stuck in the middle" because they have left the "starting gate," but since they are too far away to see the "finish line," they can get very frustrated. Many programs are geared towards that first-year experience and, therefore sophomores feel left out. Sometimes you will hear this called the "Sophomore Slump." It is normal and expected. In the upcoming July parent newsletter, you will find some wonderful tips on how to handle this all too common situation.

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Updating Contact Information

If you are already a member of the TECH PARENT ASSOCIATION, but need to update your information, please click on ...

[UPDATE INFORMATION](#)

Thank You.

For more parent information, please visit our website at ...

www.atu.edu/parents

UPCOMING EVENTS

<i>June 1st</i>	<i>First Summer Term Starts</i>
<i>July 6th</i>	<i>Second Summer Term Starts</i>
<i>August 15th</i>	<i>Entering Freshmen Move-in</i>
<i>August 17th</i>	<i>Returning Students Move-in</i>
<i>August 19th</i>	<i>First day of classes</i>
<i>September 26th 2009</i>	<i>Family Day</i>
<i>October 17th</i>	<i>2009 Homecoming</i>

UNDECIDED? NO PROBLEM!

Is your student unsure about his/her major and career? Consider suggesting career development. Career Development Specialist Brian Henderson provides a series of personality assessment tools that will be used to help your student find his/her ideal major or career based upon interests, motivational traits, personality, values, abilities, aptitudes, personal work style, and work environment preferences. Have your student contact our Career Development office at (479) 968-0278 or email bhenderson3@atu.edu for more information.

TECH
Parent Association