Residents having fun and winning prizes at our Welcome Week School Supply Bingo Program

CONTENTS

3 WHAT DO I DO IF MY COLLEGE STUDENT IS HOMESICK?
9 RHA
13 CAREER DAY PREP
15 FALL BREAK 2015
WHAT DO I DO IF MY COLLEGE STUDENT IS HOMESICK?

Source: College Parents of America

It is helpful for parents, and students, to understand that a certain amount of homesickness is completely normal. Students are dealing with unfamiliar situations, possible lack of routine and structure, loss of close friends, and readjustments of expectations. Some factors may increase the likelihood that your child may experience some degree of homesickness: no previous experiences away from home, difficulty making transitions to new situations, roommate issues, leaving a boyfriend or girlfriend at home, possible concerns about family members at home, or academic difficulties. One Dutch study, conducted in 2007, suggested that students with more involved parents tend to experience more homesickness; however, they may also have more effective coping strategies.

While recognizing that your college student may not be experiencing homesickness, parents may want to watch for signs. Your college student may tell you outright that she is homesick (girls are more apt to articulate these feelings than boys). Your student may call home more often or ask to visit home more than you expected. Your student may express dissatisfaction with everything and everyone at the school. Students may be especially worried about classes, especially anxious, have difficulty making decisions, or withdraw from social activities. Parents need to

Of course, not all college students will get homesick when they go away to college. Many students adjust well, settle in, and have a wonderful experience. Some students may experience some homesickness, but their parents will never know about it. It may last a few days or a few weeks, the student will adjust and move on. But for some parents, the fear becomes reality. Their college student is homesick, miserable, and perhaps asking to come home. What is a parent to do?

Students may experience homesickness to varying degrees, although most probably have at least some of those feelings of longing for home. It is helpful for parents, and students, to understand that a certain amount of homesickness is completely normal. Students are dealing with unfamiliar situations, possible lack of routine and structure, loss of close friends, and readjustments of expectations. Some factors may increase the likelihood that your child may experience some degree of homesickness: no previous experiences away from home, difficulty making transitions to new situations, roommate issues, leaving a boyfriend or girlfriend at home, possible concerns about family members at home, or academic difficulties. One Dutch study, conducted in 2007, suggested that students with more involved parents tend to experience more homesickness; however, they may also have more effective coping strategies.

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watch closely for any signs of serious adjustment difficulties or depression: excessive use of alcohol or food, excessive TV, internet or video game use. (Remember that all of these activities are normal, it is excessive use that may be concerning.)

Although homesickness may occur immediately, during the first few days or weeks of college; it may also occur around mid-semester. Don’t assume that your student won’t ever be homesick just because he does not experience it at the beginning of the semester. For some students, it may take until several weeks into the term before the novelty of the college experience begins to wear off, and the reality of studying and trying to find balance, begins to sink in. Midterm exams may exacerbate underlying feelings. In some areas of the country, the coming cold and gray of November weather may be a factor.

So if your college student does experience some degree of homesickness, at some point in the semester, is there anything that you, as a parent can do? Absolutely. Although you may feel helpless at times, here are a few suggestions to help you help your college student through this time.

• Be willing to listen to your student’s feelings and validate that they are real. Sometimes just being able to express her feelings may be what your student needs. She may not need your suggestions, just your understanding ear. Don’t trivialize or dismiss her feelings.

• Recognize that colleges work at, and are often quite good at, identifying and dealing with students who are experiencing homesickness. Orientation Leaders, Resident Assistants, counselors, and other college personnel are trained to help students adjust to college. Suggest to your student that he talk with someone on campus about his feelings.

• Remind yourself that increased independence is one of the goals for your college student. Going through this difficult phase may be part of the necessary process of emerging adulthood. Give her support, but know that she needs to deal with this situation.

• Although you want to let your child know that you miss him, don’t dwell on how empty the house seems without him. Let him know that you are also adjusting to changes.

• Encourage your student to stay on campus rather than making frequent visits home. It is difficult to adjust to college if you are not there – especially on the weekends, when more of the social activity may occur.

• Continue to make positive comments about the college and the college experience. Don’t buy into negativity expressed by your student.

• Let your student know that you believe that she can handle this situation and make adjustments. You believe in her abilities.

• Suggest that your student take some time to make herself more familiar with the campus. Study a campus map, take some walks around campus, find some new and interesting places. The more familiar she becomes with her new home the more quickly she will feel comfortable.
• Suggest that your student pick some small goals – for the next day or week – to do something to take action and not be a victim of her feelings. Doing some small thing – attending a club meeting, having dinner with a new friend from class, talking to a professor, attending an athletic event – will help her to feel in control.

• Suggest that your student get involved on campus: attend a club meeting, join an intramural sport, volunteer to help somewhere. Students who are more involved are happier – and better – students.

• Help him think about whether some extra academic support may help with classes and schoolwork. Perhaps he is feeling overwhelmed and could use some help studying. Perhaps a study group would help – not only academically, but also socially.

As parents, we want our children to be healthy and happy – or at least well adjusted. When we sense that they are homesick or unhappy, our first tendency may be to rush to their aid and help them. As they work to adjust to college – and to a new form of adulthood – we may need to rethink how we support them. They still need us to be parents, to be there for them, but the form of that parenting may change. Homesickness usually gets better with time. Help your college student know that you are there, that you believe that she can and will adjust, and that she can take action to make things better.
CASA will be holding a Lunch and Learn Workshop Series this semester, it is an hourly event that will happen once a month at lunch time in the CASA study hall. This casual event will connect students in an open dialog with staff and faculty members at CSM, while providing tools that will help them succeed in their academic and professional lives. These workshops are open to all Colorado School of Mines students and we will be providing lunch for those who attend. More information in regard to the workshops can be found on our CASA website http://casa.mines.edu/CASAtips.

CASA Tutoring is an invaluable experience for first-year and upper-class students. General free tutoring is offered at Arthur Lakes Library and the CASA Study Hall (Sunday-Thursday 6:00pm-11:00pm). Our tutors are nice & approachable sophomore, junior, and senior level students who are happy to assist! For more information please visit our CASA website http://casa.mines.edu/CASAtutoring

Core Supplemental Instruction (CSI) runs concurrent to a respective first-year course. One-hour, evening sessions are led by a proven student facilitator with guidance from respective faculty. Additionally, facilitators are available for 4 hours per week during their Office Hours and produce quick instructional videos. We offer a wider array of subjects, no matter where you are in the Mines curriculum! For more information please visit our CASA website http://casa.mines.edu/CASAworkshops
Students living in the Traditional Halls had an exciting and eventful first two weeks being here on campus. The Trads staff planned a series of events called First Two Weeks, or FTW. As a part if this, residents had the opportunity to attend an event with their community every single night for the first two weeks of living here at Mines. There were activities such as bingo for school supplies, pancake study night, spike ball, movie nights, a Luau, board games and Just Dance night, hikes, sports nights, and the M-Climb. The Res Life staff tried to organize and promote events that would foster a healthy community, because the best way to meet a new friend is by showing off your awesome dance moves in Just Dance! This is the first time that the FTW initiative was done, and according to both residents and staff, it has been a huge success!

It has been very exciting to see the transition the residents have made from the first few days of moving into the building, where many didn’t know anyone else in their entire building, to now where there are sometimes eight students all cramped into one room to work on homework or to play a game. There have also been a few activities that the students have organized by themselves like 10 o’clock abs in the hallway and Sunday BBQ in the parking lot. We hope that your students are enjoying their time here at Mines as much as we are enjoying getting to interact with them!
On September 19, Harry Potter and the Social Change Model of Leadership was a program put on by the Oredigger Leadership Community. During this event, we explored the different steps needed to create social change and the ways in which they can be enacted. One great example of this appears in the 5th book of the Harry Potter series, the Order of the Phoenix. After outlining the process for creating change, students were challenged to group up and discuss social changes they wished to see in their communities and how they would go about starting that change. Once the brain storm had ended, each group was asked to share with the rest with topics that included environmental awareness, inclusion for the GLBTQ+ community, and positive pass-it-ons for the building to lighten someone’s day. All the wanted changes were typed up and will be posted in the building to serve as a constant reminder and as goals for our community. Following the discussion, everyone headed to the kitchen were Slytherin noodles, butterbeer, Monster Book of Monsters sandwiches, and other HP treats were made and served while watching Order of the Phoenix.
The Mines’ RHA is off to a great start this year!

What is RHA you ask? RHA stands for the Residence Hall Association, an organization for all students currently living in any of our Residence Halls or Mines Park. We put on engaging, multi-dynamic programs aimed at building a community across campus and at meeting the needs of our residents and campus. Everyone is welcome and encouraged to attend our meetings (Mondays at 6 pm in the Maple Community Room), where we develop these programs from brainstorming ideas all the way through to implementation. About once a month, our meetings host guest speakers, such as Mines Dining by Sodexo or Director of Housing, Brent Waller, to develop a partnership with our campus and to provide direct resident feedback. Mines RHA also works outward with our regional organization, the Intermountain Affiliate of College and University Residence Halls (IACURH), and national organization, the National Association of College and University Residence Halls (NACURH). We work with these organizations to continue to grow our own RHA with resources of RHAs at other schools and to provide recognition for the amazing people and programs our school is putting on through Of The Months (OTMs) and Award Bids.
So far, RHA has enjoyed partnering with our larger Residence Life to welcome incoming students and cheer them during our annual M-Climb tradition. We have also put on School Supply Bingo, a chance for residents to get to know other residents from across campus while playing bingo to win free school supplies. This event was extremely successful with over 100 residents in attendance and lots of excited faces as each new number was called. Recently, RHA took a small group to volunteer at a local elementary school’s Math and Science Night where we showed students how to make simple lava lamps. We have also had fantastic turn-out at our weekly meetings. Every meeting we start with an icebreaker to build community among our RHA team – it’s always a blast! We have also started to brainstorm some of the programs we want to put on this semester and cannot wait to see how these programs evolve.

Right now we are preparing for our annual Homecoming Tie-Dye event as part of the week-long celebration leading up to Homecoming. We are also excited to partner with the Oredigger Leadership Theme Learning Community to bring back Walk-to-Aware, an advocacy program where students get to choose what cause or organization they are walking for, on Saturday, October 3rd. We have also recently selected a delegation of 9, one of our biggest yet, to attend the IACURH Regional Conference.

To find out more about what Mines RHA is up to, visit our Facebook Group: Mines RHA or follow us on Twitter @MinesRHA. You can also check out our website at http://inside.mines.edu/RSL-Residence-Hall-Association.
Students from across campus joined one of the RLCs to learn how to knit during a Broncos game! (Gathering of people who know how to knit and crochet - Brice Bleem (RLC) over at Maple Hall LOUNGE)
Dear Parent or Guardian,

The Department of Residence Life is sponsoring and distributing Halloween Packages for our incoming students on a limited availability basis. These packages come filled to the brim with Halloween and Seasonally themed goodies and will serve as a welcome check-in from home as the newness of the start of school has worn off and gearing up for finals is still weeks away. The deadline to order is October 20th, but ordering early is highly encouraged. Orders can be placed at: https://www.swaku.com/mines

On our store you can also order one of our multi-package plans and set them up with great care packages for the entire school year.

*If a package is visible on the website at the time of ordering, the package is still available to be ordered.*
As mid-September approached and the Fall 2015 Career Day event at Mines began to loom over the heads of students all across campus, Resident Assistants Brittany Schreiner, Courtney Widhalm, Simona Smith, Ashlyn Wenger, and Ryan Czarny hosted a large Career Day Prep program in the Maple Hall Community Room on the evening of Tuesday, September 8th to give residents an opportunity to get resources to help them succeed. At the program, residents had the opportunity to visit several career preparation-focused stations throughout the night to get a wide range of advice and services provided by Residence Life professional staff, Career Center professionals, and their Resident Assistants.

First, residents had to opportunity to have their resumes reviewed by professional staff members and were able to get specific and tailored advice on how to stand out and effectively communicate their skills on their resumes. At this station, residents were also able to pick up useful materials provided by the Mines Career Center such as those Fall Career Day Guides and Mines Career Prep Strategy Manuals. Second, residents were able to talk in a casual, open environment with professional staff about helpful interview tips and tricks. Some were also able to practice preparing and delivering
answers for common interview questions and were able to get feedback from others on how to tweak and improve their answers. Third, residents were able to set up their computers and learn from some of their peers, who are seniors serving in Resident Assistant roles, about how to set up a LinkedIn profile and how to fill information into the profile in a way that will best market their skills, experiences, and personality traits while also taking full advantage of the services provided by the LinkedIn website. Lastly, residents were able to move directly outside of the Community Room space to have a professional profile photo taken of them that they could later use, after receiving the photo via email, as their LinkedIn profile photo.

The program turned out to be a huge success! It saw around 50 residents from a wide-range of communities across campus attend and walk away with helpful tips and personalized feedback to guide them in their preparation for the upcoming Career Day. The program successfully brought together upperclassmen residents in Maple Hall and Themed Learning Community residents – both from Nucleus in Aspen Hall and Oredigger Leadership in Elm Hall – and everyone who attended the program expressed to their Resident Assistants how much they appreciated the event for what they were able to gain out of it (as well as for the delicious free desserts they were able to snack on throughout the program). Because of the program’s success, many Resident Assistants hope to put together another similar program next semester in advance of Spring Career Day.
FALL BREAK 2015

10/17-20 No Tutoring (Fall Break); limited food service; limited staff; 24/7 Public Safety

Mines Market and The Periodic Table will be open for fall break – October 19th and 20th. For up to date information, please visit the Mines Dining website at: https://minesdining.sodexomyway.com

IMPORTANT DATES FOR 2015-2016

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date Range</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>October 1st – 3rd</td>
<td>Homecoming Weekend</td>
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<td>October 17th – 20th</td>
<td>Fall Break</td>
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<td>November 25th – 27th</td>
<td>Thanksgiving Break</td>
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<td>December 12th, 14th – 17th</td>
<td>Final Exams</td>
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<td>December 18th</td>
<td>Residence Halls Close at Noon (Residents are required to leave 24 hours after final exam and may return after Winter Break)</td>
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<tr>
<td>January 11th</td>
<td>Residence Halls Re-Open at 8 am</td>
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<tr>
<td>January 13th</td>
<td>Classes start</td>
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<td>March 14th – 18th</td>
<td>Spring Break (Residence Halls Remain Open)</td>
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<tr>
<td>May 7th, 9th – 12th</td>
<td>Final Exams</td>
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<tr>
<td>May 13th</td>
<td>COMMENCEMENT (Residence Halls Close at Noon)</td>
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For additional dates, see the Academic Calendar, Important Housing Dates | [http://inside.mines.edu/Important-Housing-Dates](http://inside.mines.edu/Important-Housing-Dates).
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