MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR

On Sunday, August 19th over eight hundred new first year and transfer students arrived for New Student Orientation. As we’re aware, move-in day can certainly be both a stressful day and an emotional day for our new students and their family members. It is a day when new students and their families need and value support and assistance. In keeping with our WPI tradition, hundreds of our student leaders, particularly our students in Greek student organizations, our Resident Assistants and our Community Advisors demonstrated excellent leadership to help our new students and their families upon their arrival at WPI.

My office received numerous comments from parents expressing their appreciation for the help they received. One parent said, “My husband and I just dropped our son off. Wow! What a professional experience! Our van was unloaded by men and women from the fraternities and sororities and the van was emptied in thirty seconds including the refrigerator and computer! Other students removed our trash boxes. The IT students were very helpful and my son and his two other roommates had their computers hooked up by 2:00 pm. We left knowing our son was in very good hands.”

We’ve heard the expression, “first impressions make a lasting impact.” Our student leaders were the students who provided the warm and friendly welcome upon arrival to our new students and their families, setting the tone and making a great first impression of WPI to the newest members of our community. Our CA’s (formerly called Orientation Leaders) and RA’s also did their jobs on move-in day and throughout NSO with great enthusiasm, professionalism and competence. They exemplified excellent leadership and are positive role models for our new students.

WPI is well known for stressing the value of the importance of working effectively as a member of a team in the academic projects our students complete during their undergraduate experience. Effective teamwork is also critical to the success of all organizations. Our student leaders, faculty and administrators all worked in partnership and in a team approach to contribute to a smooth and successful move-in of over 800 students. Numerous Student Life Departments, Administrative Services, Campus Police, Facilities Services, IT and Food Service staff all did an excellent job assisting our new students and their families.

Throughout the upcoming academic year our student leaders will continue to develop and demonstrate their leadership skills. Our hats are off to our student leaders! You should be proud of yourselves, and WPI is proud of you. A special thank you to our student leaders and my best to you for continued success in this new academic year.

Sincerely,
Jim McLaughlin, Director of the Campus Center and Student Activities

MEET THE STAFF

The Campus Center and Student Activities Office are excited to assist and support you and the members of student organizations throughout the year to come!

Jim McLaughlin, Director of the Campus Center and Student Activities: Jim has overall responsibility for the Campus Center, student orientation programs and student activities at WPI, and is responsible for supervision of the office staff.

Emily Perlow, Associate Director of Student Activities and Greek Life: Emily serves as the advisor for Greek Life on campus, coordinates Parent’s Weekend, assists with the new Student Orientation Program, coordinates Orientation Leader training, is one of the resources to all student organizations on campus, supervises the community service program.

Christine Girouard, Assistant Director of Student Activities: Christine serves as the advisor to SocComm, serves as one of the resources to all student organizations, advises the Senior Board and Senior Week Committees, and serves as chairperson of the Leadership Development Committee, while coordinating all of the Leadership programs sponsored by the department.

Jay Sparling, Graduate Assistant for Community Service and Student Government: Jay serves as advisor to Student Government and coordinates the Community Service Program. Jay also assists with supervision at some student activities, coordinates that Crimson and Gray Awards program and assists with other Campus Center and Student Activities programs.

Kim Wykes, Administrative Assistant for the Campus Center: Kim assists the Director of the Campus Center and Student Activities with accounts payable and financial management of the Campus Center budgets, serves as a receptionist for the Campus Center and Events Departments, reserves tables in the Campus Center lobby, and coordinates the Campus Center trips program. Kim also assists with the New Student Orientation program, Commencement planning and a variety of other aspects of the Campus Center.

Louise Campbell, Administrative Assistant for the Student Activities Office: Louise is well known for assisting student organizations with a variety of issues. Louise is a resource to all student organizations and provides answers to any questions related to all clubs and organizations financial matters. Louise is responsible for office card access, organization lockers, the student organization copy machine and student mail. She assists both the Associate and Assistant Director with a wide variety of projects and programs and assists the Director of the Campus Center and Student Activities with many aspects of Commencement.

Inside this issue of Xcel Newsletter:
• Training Opportunities
• Community Service
• Building Membership
• The Leadership Corner and much, much more!
Why participate in a community service?
- Increases academic development
- Builds self-esteem
- Enhances leadership skills
- Develops life skills
- Improves the community
- Looks great on your resume!

Organizations cannot exist without members who are deeply committed to the goals and growth of the organization each year. It is important to not only recruit, but retain members throughout the academic year so that your organization can have a successful and productive year at WPI!

The first step in building membership is recruiting, which can happen in several different ways whether it be by word of mouth, one on one interaction, or the use of creative publicizing! Before you begin this step, you need to make sure that you are confident and well versed in the goals and objectives of the organization yourself, as you will be more comfortable and able to answer questions of your prospective members. Recruiting, however, does have to be organized and done on a regular basis to make sure that you are including the campus community and allowing for a revitalization to your organization with new ideas, thoughts and talents! The best way to increase your membership is to ask people individually to be a part of your organization, as they want to feel as if they belong in a group and that their contributions to the group would be appreciated.

Once you have established your membership or made additions to your organization, it is important that you also focus on retention. Many organizations have set up a special committee to focus on membership throughout the academic year. When an organization is looking to retain their members, they must remember that each member should be invested in the organization, by being able to share in goal setting, contribute to the group, have clear expectations and be informed about what is happening in the overall organization as well. Members should be recognized for what they do, both inside and outside the organization, as this will not only provide motivation for that individual to continue to work hard, but will also validate them as an important part of the organization and make them feel that they are part of a community.

Adapted from Leader sheets, University of Alabama and the Bowling Green State University Office of Campus Activities website
Leadership Library:

We have added new titles to the Leadership Library, which are available for students to check out from the Campus Center and Student Activities Office on the third floor of the Campus Center. The titles include books on management leadership, achieving buy-in, leadership theory, diversity and leadership, as well as team builders and icebreakers. The library also includes archives of Programming Magazine, a publication of the National Association of Campus Activities. Check out the full list of publications at http://www.wpi.edu/Admin/SAO/library.html.

The Leading Edge Series for the Emerging Leader

The Leading Edge Series for the Emerging Leader is a seven-part series held during B-Term that is open to all students. You'll learn about a number of different topics through the program including: Leadership Styles, Group Dynamics, Role Modeling and Ethical Decision Making, Goal Setting, Vision, Delegation, Motivation, Problem Solving, Conflict Resolution, Diversity Awareness, and Time Management and Wellness. Students who attend six of the seven workshops receive a leadership certificate of completion.

To register for this series go to: http://wpi.edu/Regi/SAO

For more information contact the Student Activities Office at 508-831-5291 or contact Christine Girouard at cgirouard@wpi.edu.

“Snack” on Leadership Series

Come snack on leadership with the Student Activities Office!! On the following dates the Student Activities Office invites you to learn about various topics regarding leadership and involvement on a college campus. This series is for everyone spanning from advanced student leaders to students who just want to learn more about getting involved. Snacks will be provided! To register for this event go to http://wpi.edu/Regi/SAO or sign up in the Student Activities Office.

9/12 Webinar: Intentional and Inclusive Community Building: From Awareness to Collaboration
Time: 3pm-4pm
Place: Mid Century Room, Campus Center

9/26 Book Discussion: FISH Philosophy—Making a Difference in Your Organization! (no reading required)
Time: 3pm-4pm
Place: Hagglund Room, Campus Center

10/10 Facebook: Friend or Foe?
Time: 3pm-4pm
Place: Hagglund Room, Campus Center

Leaders of the Term

Todd Prokop 07’
Todd served as a Senior Community Advisor over the past spring and summer helping to plan New Student Orientation. He is also an active member in Varsity Crew, Crimson Key, Tau Kappa Epsilon and has held an executive office in the Interfraternity Council. Todd is currently pursuing his Masters Degree at WPI.

Penny Gikas 08’
Penny served as a Senior Community Advisor over the past spring and summer helping to plan New Student Orientation. She is actively involved in Alpha Gamma Delta, the WPI Panhellenic Council, Women’s Varsity Crew, in addition to serving as a volunteer in the Worcester area. Penny is currently pursuing a Bachelors Degree in Biology and Biotechnology with a concentration in Organismal Biology.
Rolling Leadership, Academics and Athletics into One….

By: Amanda Gurnon, Chemical Engineering Class of ‘09

Upon arriving at WPI, I became involved in a number of different organizations on campus. In addition to my chemical engineering curriculum, I participate in a variety of activities ranging from varsity sports to academic societies and Greek organizations. In all of these different entities, I had to use the same set of personal skills in order to develop and fill a different role for each organization. Here on campus I am a member of the Women’s Varsity Track and Field Team. I also serve as the Vice President of the WPI chapter of the American Institute of Chemical Engineers (AIChe). I am an active sister of Phi Sigma Sigma, a trained member of the Student Support Network and a tour guide for Crimson Key. I enjoy my participation in all of these groups and have successfully found a unique and active role in each of them.

As a member of the Women’s Varsity Track and Field Team, I have found that I need to draw from my experience in all of these different organizations in order to be a successful leader both in the classroom and on the track. Track and Field is a unique sport in that it has a very individual component as well as a team concept. To promote the team aspect I use my organizational skills to coordinate fun team gatherings such as a tee-shirt decorating activity or a game of Ultimate Frisbee. Although neither of these activities is specific to our sport it is a good way to get to know our teammates. I have also found that a positive attitude is a great way to motivate my team. One of my personal goals is to come to each practice focused and with a positive attitude. Although this is sometimes a challenge for me as well as my teammates, I encourage them to do one thing at a time, to focus on the task at hand.

Being a member of these organizations has taught me that the concepts of leadership and team can be defined a number of ways, as well as applied to a number of different situations. From the classroom where there are group projects to the track where we are striving towards a common goal, we are working as a team. A team needs a leader for it to function at its highest potential. Each member of these teams is a leader in their own way, whether they lead by example or through a more outspoken approach. Either way, each member of the group is vital to the success of the team.

TEST YOUR KNOWLEDGE

Have you read the entire Xcel Newsletter? Fill out this quiz and answer the questions that cover everything from topics in this publication to recent pop culture knowledge and return it to the Office of Student Activities located on the 3rd floor of the Campus Center by September 28th! People who answer all the questions correctly or the most correctly, will be entered into a drawing for a prize!

1. List at least three topics that the Student Activities Office can help an organization with in their training
2. Which teacher at Hogwarts was a dueling champion when he was young?
3. What is the first step in building membership in an organization?
4. What is the lifespan of a taste bud?
5. Where is the Leadership Library located?
6. What is the first Snack on Leadership series topic?
7. What contains more Vitamin C, strawberries or oranges?
8. What is the world’s largest lake?
9. What is the date of the Leadership Conference?
10. If you doubled one penny every day for 30 days, how much money would you have?

LOOKING AHEAD...

9/6 Registration for the Leading Edge Series: Emerging Leaders track begins
9/6 Student Organization Meeting for Club Presidents and Treasurers
9/10 Resume Critiques
9/12 Snack on Leadership Series: “Intentional and Inclusive Community Building: From Awareness to Collaboration”
9/19 Career Fair
9/22 Leadership Conference: “Learning the Mechanics”
9/24-9/28 Greek Week
9/26 Snack on Leadership Series: Book Discussion about the FISH Philosophy (No reading required)
9/28 SGA Pep Rally
9/29 Homecoming
9/30 Ropes Course for students enrolled in Emerging Leaders
10/10 Snack on Leadership Series: Friend or Foe?