

# Parent Newsletter

Connecting Parents & Families to UMBC



UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND BALTIMORE COUNTY • HOLIDAY 2012 EDITION

## Staying Connected

Fritzie Charné-Merriwether – Special Assistant to VP for Student Affairs

The UMBC community recently braced itself for Hurricane Sandy. As we return to normal business operations, I felt this was the appropriate time to remind parents of the many ways you can stay connected to what is happening here on campus.

As a parent it is natural to have concerns about your student's safety especially during a state of emergency. So here are a few resources that can be helpful during those situations:

- *The UMBC Crisis Management Team continuously monitor any potentially serious weather conditions to make determinations about any closings and cancellations, so please check [www.umbc.edu](http://www.umbc.edu), or [my.umbc.edu](http://my.umbc.edu) for the latest information. You can also call 410.455.6789 for updates.*
- *E2Campus Text Alerts – Students are strongly encouraged to sign up for our E2Campus text alert service by going to [my.umbc.edu/go/alerts](http://my.umbc.edu/go/alerts). Parents cannot sign up for this service themselves, however students have the option to add a secondary phone number to their account.*
- *For students living on campus, the Residential Life Website typically will have detailed information ([www.umbc.edu/reslife](http://www.umbc.edu/reslife)) about how best to prepare for potentially severe weather, as well as what to do in the case of a possible power outage.*
- *Parents Connection Groups Page – New this year, Parents Connection has a space on myUMBC. There you can find up to date information about any campus news and events <http://my.umbc.edu/groups/parents>.*
- *Parents Connection Listserv – Any important campus news or information that is sent out to the UMBC community will typically be forwarded to the Parents Connection Listserv as an FYI. Parents can request to be added to the listserv by simply emailing their request to [parents@umbc.edu](mailto:parents@umbc.edu).*
- *UMBC Police – In case of a campus emergency you also can contact the UMBC Police Department at 410-455-5555 for assistance.*

## IN THIS ISSUE:

- 2** Commuter Week and Beyond
  - 3** Stress Relief  
Bookstore Announcements
  - 4** Career Services
  - 5** Test Your RX Knowledge
  - 6** Undergraduate  
Commencement Info
  - 7** ResLife Updates
  - 8** Think Spring!
  - 9** Homecoming 2012 Pictures
  - 10** Important Dates
- \*** *If there's something you'd like to see in an upcoming issue, let us know at [parents@umbc.edu](mailto:parents@umbc.edu)*

## WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU!

As we continue to develop our Parents Connection program we are interested in hearing about your experiences thus far as a UMBC Parent or Family Member. Please take a moment to fill out this short survey <https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/Q6TLXRG>. We are looking for feedback about not only your experiences but also, what we can do to make that experience even better. Your feedback is greatly appreciated.

You can check out the new myUMBC Parents Connection page at:

<http://my.umbc.edu/groups/parents>.

# Commuter Week and Beyond!

*The college experience isn't just for students living on campus.*

Jessica Sadler - Graduate Assistant, Off Campus Student Services

Off-Campus Student Service's Commuter Week 2012, a week of events celebrating UMBC's commuters, was held from October 22th to October 26th. The Commuter Week Kick-off, easily the largest event of the week, was packed with fun, games, and housing information—we even had a temporary tattoo artist, a balloon artist, a caramel-apple making table, a pumpkin patch, and other activities that welcomed the fall season. Other events included a Street Smarts Workshop and Pumpkin Baseball—students relieved stress by literally smashing pumpkins in the afternoon over hot apple cider and cocoa.

Even though students have already finished this semester's midterms, it's not too late for commuters to get involved. OCSS holds several recurring events such as Good Morning Commuters' (GMC) weekly breakfast in The Commons every Tuesday morning from 8:30AM – 10:30AM. Other recurring events include Transfer Student Network, Vets2Vets, and Commuter Connection. All of our events are updated on our website, [www.umbc.edu/ocss](http://www.umbc.edu/ocss), and on OCSS's myUMBC group page <http://my.umbc.edu/groups/ocss>. Students can join the group page to receive updates about commuter-related news, discussions, and events, as well as connect with other commuter students. Commuters can also join the UMBC Commuter Connection facebook page: <http://www.facebook.com/groups/UMBC.CommuterConnection/>.

The office of Off-Campus Student Services (OCSS), now in a new location next to the bookstore in The Commons, is here to help new and returning commuter students get connected, and stay connected. In addition to organizing events to promote networking within the UMBC community, OCSS also offers advice and resources about MTA's public transportation, UMBC Transit, and off-campus housing. We recognize that some commuter students may arrive just in time for their classes and leave immediately afterwards, however, they may be missing out on many opportunities to get involved and get connected on campus. OCSS strives to connect commuter students to the many exciting experiences and opportunities UMBC has to offer. Encourage your student to visit us to learn more about these exciting opportunities.



# Stress Relief Tips from the Office of Student Life

Kathryn C. Peria and Kayla Keelan

During midterms and finals, UMBC faculty and staff always remind our students to be mindful of their health. Students are encouraged to manage their stress by eating healthy, getting plenty of rest, and engaging in relaxing activities. One way to relieve stress is by attending the various events that are available on campus. Students can find out about campus events through [myumbc.edu/events](http://myumbc.edu/events).

Another way to relieve stress is to get involved in service trips in our local and global communities. Service and volunteerism here at UMBC offers unique and meaningful ways to get involved, learn about social issues and how to make a difference in your local and global communities. There are many ways for students to get involved in Service. An excellent way to start is getting involved with our Alternative School Break Program! These are student-run, week long service engagement trips designed to combat civic issues and underlying larger societal concerns through volunteerism, education and community. The ASB Trips are held during Spring Break and are an opportunity to engage in service, learning, making new friends and have fun! For additional information about the ASB Program, check out the UMBC Serves group page at [www.umbc.edu/umbcserves](http://www.umbc.edu/umbcserves). You can also reach out to the Graduate Coordinator for Service and Volunteerism or the Service Peer at [bealternativeUMBC@gmail.com](mailto:bealternativeUMBC@gmail.com). Learn. Take action. Get involved!

## Bookstore Announcements

### **Holiday Countdown Sale:**

*November 26 - December 21*

The earlier you shop, the higher the discount (30% off Nov. 26, 29% off Nov. 27 etc.) Sale valid on UMBC clothing and insignia items. Minimum 20% off.

### **Children's Book Month Sale**

30% off all children's books in November and December in celebration of Children's Book Month.

### **Graduation Center:**

*Monday, December 3, and Tuesday, December 4, 11 a.m. - 6 p.m., and Wednesday, December 5, 11 a.m. - 3 p.m.*

In addition to regalia and ticket pick-up, Graduation Center is the place to purchase UMBC diploma frames, announcements, memorabilia, and class rings. Free photo sitting.

### **Textbook Buyback:**

Be sure your students don't miss this opportunity to get cash for their books December 10-20. We pay up to 50% of the new price. See website for times and details <http://bookstore.umbc.edu/>.

### **Buyback Bonus Sale:**

Sell your books to the UMBC Bookstore during buyback December 10-20 and get a coupon for an extra 10% off UMBC merchandise during the countdown sale.

### **Winter and Spring semester Textbook Reservations are now being accepted.**

It's the easiest way to ensure your students receive all of the correct materials in time for class.

For more information, visit the bookstore online at [umbc.edu/bookstore](http://umbc.edu/bookstore).

# Time Well Spent

Sue Plitt - Associate Director, Career Services

Time once again for finals, gearing up for ski season, plotting out New Year's resolutions, and winter break, a time when students often find themselves with a bit more unstructured, free time. Being ever focused on the career development of UMBC's students, the Career Services Center (CSC) has some suggestions on how students can really maximize this gift of extra time:

- Fine tune that resume. It's not a class assignment, but the resume may be one of the most important papers your student will ever write. Any job or internship search will require a resume and there's no time like the present to make sure it is effective at communicating what one has to offer in a brief, focused, and organized document. If you're not near campus over break, help with developing and/or fine tuning the document is just a click away.
- Start the summer job search now. June seems like it is far off; but it will be here before you know it. In a tight economy, students want to be ahead of the game. Many employers hire for summer positions starting in January, so don't miss the boat. UMBC students can check out current job and internship listings in UMBCworks; and to really get a leg up, they can set up a saved search (under the Jobs-Advanced Search tab) and be automatically emailed newly posted, relevant jobs.
- Plan ahead for spring. Here's a holiday gift idea for your student: a nice, new shiny calendar with all the spring semester career events penciled in! From the Summer & Part-Time Job/Internship Fair (2/6/13), to the Corporate Visibility Days held on select Wednesdays throughout the semester, to all the activities taking place during Career Week (4/1-4/5/13), there's no excuse to be bored this spring. Check out our complete calendar of events at [http://careers.umbc.edu/news\\_events/calendar.php](http://careers.umbc.edu/news_events/calendar.php).
- Stop by the Career Services Center. Your student may be on break, but we're not! CSC is open in January and traffic is a bit lighter; so it's the perfect time to schedule an appointment (call 410.455.2216) or stop by during walk-in hours (Math/Psych 212, Monday-Friday, 2-4pm).
- Discover your Dependable Strengths. The perfect way to spend part of winter break is for your student to uncover what they do well and enjoy doing. Knowing their inner-motivated strengths will allow them to make on-target career and major decisions, network like a pro, and market themselves effectively to potential employers. Sign your student up today for the "Dependable Strengths: Job Search and Networking" workshop scheduled for January 11-12, 2013.
- Talk it up. The best way to learn about career options and actually find a job is to talk to people. Maybe your student will discover that their best friend's aunt is a psychologist at Kennedy Krieger Institute, that your cousin's girlfriend works at the NSA, or that the person who cuts their hair has a client who does accounting work at Morgan Stanley. Encourage your student to take advantage of the people they'll be seeing during break to conduct informational interviews and find out who might have information on jobs and/or internships.

Whether your student is working on career decisions or actively looking for work, winter break is the perfect time to focus on their professional development. Share these tips and turn their free time into time well spent!



# Test your RX knowledge

Jennifer Treger - Community Health and Safety Specialist, Student Affairs Office

According to the Office of National Drug Control Policy, prescription drug abuse is the “Nation’s fastest-growing drug problem, and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has classified prescription drug abuse as an epidemic”. Educating students and parents about the potential dangers of abusing prescription drugs is critical to prevention and intervention strategies. Below please find a few facts and commons myths about prescription drug abuse. For more information please visit <http://www.drugabuse.gov/publications/research-reports/prescription-drugs>.

Take the following quiz to test your knowledge about Prescription Drugs:

## Fact or Fiction:

1. Prescription medication is among the most abused substances in the US.
2. College students are often at high risk for drug abuse.
3. Abusing prescription medications is a safer and legal alternative to using illicit “street” drugs.
4. More people die in the US from unintentional drug overdoses than from motor vehicle accidents.
5. Most people who abuse prescription medications get them from a drug dealer.
6. It is ok to share your prescription medications with others if they have a similar medical condition.

## Answers:

1. Fact: The most commonly abused prescription drugs are painkillers (oxycontin, vicodin), sedatives (Xanax, Ativan) and stimulants (Adderall, Ritalin).
2. Fact: The average age when prescription drug abuse starts is around 21.
3. Fiction: Using medications that are not prescribed to you is against the law and can have serious health consequences and can be addicting.
4. Fact: On average, about 100 people die every day from drug overdoses.
5. Fiction: More than 70% of those who abuse prescription medications get them from family or friends.
6. Fiction: It is important to only use prescription medications as prescribed for you by a health professional.

Prescription drugs can help us live longer and healthier lives-but only if they are used properly under medical supervision.

Source: <http://pharmacy.osu.edu/outreach/rxabuseresources/?subsec=freshman15>



## WINTER UNDERGRADUATE COMMENCEMENT CEREMONY 2012

With this year's Winter Undergraduate Commencement ceremony approaching, we wanted to share some additional information with the parents of undergraduate students who will be participating in the ceremony.

Undergraduate Commencement is scheduled for **Friday, December 21 in the Retriever Activities Center (RAC). The doors to the RAC will open for ticketed guests at 9 a.m.** The procession of students, faculty and staff will begin at 9:40 a.m. and the ceremony itself will begin at 10 a.m.

Each student will receive four guest tickets for seating in the RAC. Please keep in mind that there will be unlimited overflow seating for additional guests in Lecture Hall III of the Administration Building.

Your student will be able to pick up his/her regalia and guest tickets from the UMBC Bookstore Graduation Center between Monday, December 3 and Wednesday, December 5. On these days, a professional photographer from Graduation Images will be available to take formal portraits of graduation candidates in their regalia. There is no purchase obligation. Graduation Images will also photograph each graduate during the ceremony.

If your student plans to participate in the ceremony but has not yet ordered regalia, he/she should contact the Bookstore at 410-455-3807 as soon as possible. At this time, your student will be charged a \$25 late fee for ordering regalia.

For more details, please visit [www.umbc.edu/commencement](http://www.umbc.edu/commencement).

Please note that the above information pertains to Undergraduate Commencement. Graduate School Commencement is scheduled for Thursday, December 20 at 10 a.m. in the RAC.

Thank you,  
UMBC's Commencement Committee



## Residential Life Upcoming Closings and Announcements

### Thanksgiving Break Closing – Wednesday, November 21st at 8PM

### Winter Break Closing – Wednesday, December 19th at 8PM

Chesapeake, Erickson, Harbor (excluding 1st North, 1st West, 2nd South, 2nd West, 3rd South & 3rd West), Patapsco and Susquehanna Halls will close for Thanksgiving Break and Winter Break. Residents of these buildings must vacate by 8PM on the dates listed above.

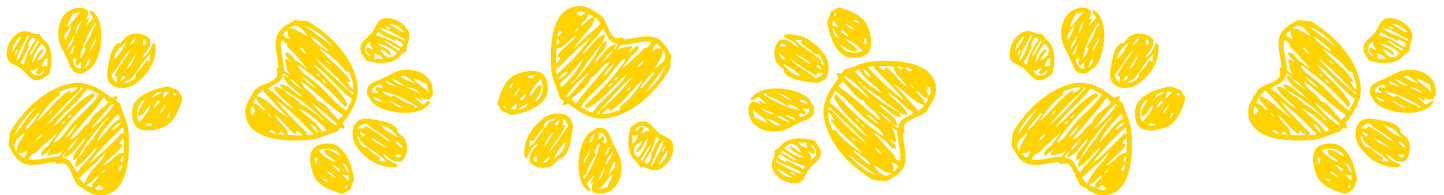
The above mentioned halls will reopen after

Thanksgiving Break at 12:00 noon on Sunday, November 25th AND

Will reopen for the Spring Semester at 9:00 AM on Sunday, January 27, 2013.

#### Check Out Procedures for Residential Students:

- Unplug all electrical appliances and extension cords from electrical wall sockets.
- Turn off room lights and make sure that the bathroom light and fan are off.
- Turn off all water completely.
- Remove all trash from room/apartment and dispose of it properly.
- Ensure windows should be securely locked.
- Leave window blinds and shades open except for first floor – first floor rooms should fully close blinds and shades
- Clean out refrigerators and prop the door open to avoid odor build up.
- Set heat at 72 degrees (if applicable).
- Turn off alarm clocks and make sure that the common phone for the room/apartment is left in the common area (not locked in someone's bedroom).
- Clean suite bathrooms well. Leave bathroom door open to allow for better air circulation. (Be sure to check with suitemates to see if it's okay to leave the bathroom door open).
- Students are not required to remove all of their belongings from their room, but are encouraged take all valuables like laptop and jewelry home.
- Remember to pack any medications or other necessities that might be needed during break.
- Lock room door and take key, UMBC ID and Resident ID home.



#### Just a few more things . . .

RA's will conduct a closing inspection of each room. Students can save time by following all check-out procedures.

Not returning to UMBC or UMBC Campus Housing for Spring?

If your student will not be returning to UMBC for the Spring Semester and/or will not be returning to UMBC campus housing please contact Residential Life as soon as possible to discuss their housing license. A petition process is required to request release from the Spring portion of the annual housing license. Questions can be directed to Wendy Crowe (Residential Operations) at 410-455-8832 or crowe@umbc.edu.

## Think Spring!

*Janet McGlynn - Office of Undergraduate Education*

Congratulations on making it through another semester with your student. I hope your son or daughter gained new knowledge, experience, and confidence through coursework and other college activities. If your student has not completed pre-registration for the spring semester, important courses are filling up. Ask your son or daughter to register at once. Students still in their first year at UMBC, whether as freshmen or transfer students, would benefit from taking the one-credit course Introduction to an Honors University or a three-credit First-Year Seminar.

Before the break, students will need to get through final exams. New students may need to be reminded that the schedule for finals is not exactly the same as the class schedule. Finals will be held from December 13 to December 19, 2012.

The semester break is a good time for families to talk about education goals and progress. Is your student committed to his or her choice of majors or thinking about changing? Most college students change their major at least once. For insights about future careers for students in various majors, visit What Can I Do With My Major on the Career Services web site.

This is also a good time for students and families to discuss summer jobs or research experiences that will help students to learn more about potential careers. Those in the sciences, including social sciences, should consider the Summer Undergraduate Research Fellowship and Research Experiences for Undergraduates (REU) opportunities offered by the National Science Foundation. Hundreds of such programs at universities and national laboratories around the country provide undergraduate research fellowships as well as stipends for living expenses and housing. Application deadlines vary, with many in early February. Students interested in research can also explore opportunities in their academic departments.

Students and parents are invited to attend Undergraduate Research and Creative Achievement Day (URCAD) on Wednesday, April 24, 2013, from 9 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. in the University Center Ballroom and other locations on campus. More than 200 undergraduates will share results of their research and creative work in areas ranging from Dance to Philosophy and Chemistry to Physics. Watch the URCAD web page for more information.

Best wishes for a wonderful winter break.





# HOMECOMING 2012



Comedian BJ Novak from *The Office* Performs



Former students enjoy the annual Alumni Crab Feast



SEB jumps with joy at the UMBC logo painted on Erikson Field



Students gather to watch the bonfire on Erikson Field



The first ever Homecoming Paint Fight



Students show their pride at the Homecoming Pep Rally

**For more photos from Homecoming 2012 , visit the alumni flickr page at [flickr.com/photos/umbcalumni/](http://flickr.com/photos/umbcalumni/)**



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## Important Dates For The 2012 - 2013 School Year

### Fall Semester

Aug 28 ----- Classes Begin  
 Sept 3 ----- Labor Day Holiday  
 Oct 12 - 15 ----- Homecoming  
 Nov 22 - 25 ----- Thanksgiving Break  
 Dec 11 ----- Last Day of Classes  
 Dec 12 ----- Study Day  
 Dec 13 - 19 ----- Final Exams  
 Dec 21 ----- Undergraduate  
 Commencement

### Spring Semester

Jan 28 ----- Classes Begin  
 March 17 - 24 ----- Spring Break  
 April (dates TBA) ----- Quadmania  
 May 14 ----- Last Day of Classes  
 May 15 ----- Study Day  
 May 17 - 22 ----- Final Exams  
 May 23 ----- Undergraduate  
 Commencement

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