A unique student housing property with a “No Party policy”
And innovative amenities and services thrives in Tucson

Sahara apartments is in its 10th year of operation as a student housing project in Tucson. Ted Mehr, the owner of Sahara Apartments, has introduced a lot of innovations to the Tucson student housing market.

Ted, who still manages the building on a day to day basis, developed this project as the “paranoid” father of a college age daughter, who was concerned about his own daughter’s safety and comfort when she had gone to live on her own while attending college.

Some of Ted’s ideas have been duplicated by others, and some are still unique to Sahara.

For example, Sahara is still the only building that does not allow parties on site. Our motto is “The oasis for QUIET student living”. At Sahara you are guaranteed a quiet environment. If anyone violates the rules, the residents can call the owner, Ted, no matter what time of day or night. And he will drive down to the building to make sure the violators understand that the policy is really enforced. When students move into Sahara, they get Ted’s cell phone AND home phone numbers, you know, just in case the cell phone runs out of battery right when someone needs to call. All residents are encouraged to call Ted if they feel uncomfortable about anything. That sort of attitude is not something that you will get from the corporate owned high rise competition.

In case you think our no party policy means no fun, you should know that Sahara has an activity director who organizes many group activities sponsored by Sahara where the residents get an opportunity to get together and do fun things as a group. For instance at the time of this writing, for the month of October, we took our residents to Mount Lemmon for the October Fest, Sabino Canyon for a 13 mile hike, “Tucson Meet Yourself” event downtown, had a game night on site with free food and refreshments, and a movie night. We are also going to the Corn Maze for Halloween and to the “International Festival of Tucson”. And that is just for October!

Sahara is still the only student building in Tucson, that will give every resident a FREE bicycle to ride while living at Sahara. We even maintain and repair the bikes for free. Sahara is also the only student building that takes its residents grocery and mall shopping every weekend.

Sahara is the only student building that also operates a private hotel on its site, where visiting family and friends can stay when they come to visit our residents. The hotel also accommodates professors, researchers, workshop attendees and many groups of international students that come to us through the University.

We treat our residents like they are expensive works of art in a museum. Our gated community is protected with an infra red beam system that alerts the owner with an automatic cell phone call if someone trespasses by climbing over the walls, and our 80 security cameras record all events at the perimeter of the building and in the public areas, and our staff who live on site are ready to respond if required. These are some of the reasons why in our 10 year history we have never received a “Red Tag” from the police department.

Offering shuttle service to and from the campus is now standard practice for a lot of buildings, but we do it every half hour from 7 AM to 7 PM, on every school day. And, Sahara is the only building that takes its residents grocery and mall shopping every weekend, at 7 PM and 7:45 PM.

At Sahara, you can enjoy the privacy of having your own studio apartment for a lot less than a single occupancy room at the Residence Halls, or to share an apartment at one of the high rise buildings with people whose lifestyles may not be compatible with yours.

While we admit we are not for everybody, nor do we want to be, there is a lot more that you should know about Sahara before you decide what your choice of student housing should be.

Check out our website and find out why Sahara has become more popular each year as the word has spread that you can have a safe and quiet environment and still have fun.

Sahara Apartments
919 N. Stone Ave.
Tucson, AZ 85701
520-622-4102

Ted Mehr, Owner
Ted@saharaapartments.com
IMPORTANT CONTACTS

- Advising Resource Center Academic advising & advisor contact information (520) 626-8667 http://advising.arizona.edu/
- BookStores books, supplies, computer hardware & software purchases (520) 621-2426 http://www.uofabookstores.com/
- Bursar’s Office Billing questions, paying tuition and fees (520) 621-3232 http://www.bursar.arizona.edu/
- Campus Health Service Health care, psychological care, student health insurance (520) 621-6490 http://www.health.arizona.edu/
- Career Services Part-time jobs on and off campus, internships & co-ops, full-time post-graduation employment and career exploration (520) 621-2588 http://www.career.arizona.edu/
- Dean of Students Office Advocacy, academic integrity, code of conduct, complete withdrawals (520) 621-7057 http://deanofstudents.arizona.edu
- Disability Resource Center (520) 621-3268 http://drc.arizona.edu/ut
- Graduate College (520) 621-3471 http://grad.arizona.edu
- Meal Plan Office Purchasing and updating student meal plans (800) 374-7379 http://www.union.arizona.edu/mealplans
- Off Campus Housing: Student computer labs (520) 621-5859 http://offcampus.arizona.edu
- Office of Student Computing Resources: Student computer labs (520) 621-OSCR www.uits.arizona.edu/departments/oscr
- Police (University of Arizona) Emergency response, crime prevention 911 or (520) 621-UAPD http://www.uapd.arizona.edu/
- Registrar’s Office Verification of enrollment, change of schedule, grade replacement opportunity (520) 621-3113 http://www.registrar.arizona.edu/
- Residence Life On-campus housing (520) 621-6501 http://www.life.arizona.edu/
- Residency Classification Determination of in-state or out-of-state residency for tuition purposes (520) 621-3636 http://www.registrar.arizona.edu/residency/residenc.htm
- 24/7 IT Support Ctr. Student computer support (520) 626-TECH http://247.arizona.edu
- Tutoring at the Think Tank Drop-in, by appointment, course reviews and more (520) 626-0530 http://thinktank.arizona.edu
- UA Parents & Family Association (520) 621-0884 http://www.uafamily.arizona.edu/

FOLLOW UA PARENT & FAMILY PROGRAMS ON FACEBOOK, INSTAGRAM, PINTEREST & TWITTER
facebook.com/uafamily @uafamily pinterest.com/uafamily @uafamily
LOOKING FOR OFF-CAMPUS HOUSING?
LET US HELP!

Wildcats love our free service! The University of Arizona Off-Campus Housing (OCH) office offers students help with their off-campus housing needs.

► OCH FAIRS
Twice a year, in November and February, OCH hosts a housing fair on the UA Mall with apartment representatives ready to answer questions and offer tours.

► WEBSITE
Students can search for properties by specific features and proximity to campus. The site also has a list of roommates and a roommate matching service just for UA students. offcampus.arizona.edu

► STAFF OFFICE
We’re located on the 2nd floor of the El Portal building. Staff is available to answer questions during business hours.

► OCH HOUSING GUIDEBOOK
It’s a free resource guide that includes property listings, step-by-step processes, helpful hints, and much more. It can be found in the Unions, locations throughout campus, and even online for parents and family.

offcampus.arizona.edu
El Portal, 2nd Floor, 501 N. Highland Ave.
offcampushousing@life.arizona.edu
520.621.5859
Greetings Wildcat Parents & Families,

Welcome to our sixteenth issue of the Parents & Family Magazine! You’re receiving this magazine because you have made a generous donation to support the goals of the UA Parents & Family Association. I thank you for your support! We are also sending copies of the Fall Edition to parents of current freshman and new transfer students hoping that you choose to support the Parent & Family Association by making a donation. See details on page 16 on how you can do this. I am pleased that Parent & Family Programs is welcoming a new Red and Blue Corporate Partner, Geico. We are thrilled to have their sponsorship and support!

Fall at the University of Arizona is such a wonderful time filled with lots of traditional activities and events. From welcoming new freshman, transfer students and their parents in August during Wildcat Welcome to a fun filled Family Weekend in October to the 100th Anniversary of Homecoming in November, Wildcat tradition is everywhere! If you aren’t able to be on campus for these events, you can still join in the fun by following Parent & Family Programs on social media; see more details at the end of the letter. I want to thank all the parents and family members who were on campus for Family Weekend, October 10 -12. It was wonderful seeing so many of you at various events!

We had a record setting 5th Annual Family Weekend Golf Tournament at The Hilton El Conquistador Country Club Golf Course. Parents, students and sponsors had a great time and raised more than $21,500 for the Think Tank (see page 5 for the winning team details)! Thanks to all 95 golfers who participated! The date for Family Weekend 2015 is October 9-11, 2015 so mark your calendars and plan to join us.

In this edition of the Parents & Family Magazine we have a special feature on Dr. Vincent Del Casino, Vice Provost, Digital Learning and Student Engagement and Associate Vice President, Student Affairs and Enrollment Management, who is coordinating efforts to improve digital learning and engagement for UA students. See the exciting details on page 29. The Parents & Family Association has launched a new Leadership Circle which you can read about on page 5. We invite you to join our founding members in this special opportunity. We also want to recognize the parents and family members who have contributed $100 or more to the UA Parents & Family Association during the past year. On behalf of the PFA Board, our students, and the Parent & Family Programs staff — thank you to everyone who made a contribution! I hope that you will do so again this year – every bit counts and makes a difference in supporting UA students’ success.

We want our parents to GET INVOLVED! We are looking for some good volunteers who have a little bit of time and talent to give! You don’t have to live in Arizona to join us. For more information on our Committees and special events see the Fall Update on Page 5. Be sure to bookmark our website: www.uafamily.arizona.edu. It is an excellent source of information and support!

I want to express my heartfelt thanks to all the wonderful parent volunteers who have served the association over the past year – I really appreciate your dedication and support – and so do our students!

As always, don’t hesitate to give the Parents & Family Association a call or send us an email if you have a question or concern. Lee O’Rourke, Serena Valle and I are happy to be of assistance. We can be reached at (520) 621-0884 or via email at uafamily@email.arizona.edu. Don’t forget to follow us on Facebook: facebook.com/uafamily, Twitter:@uafamily, Instagram: @_uafamily and Pinterest: _uafamily

With Wildcat Pride,
Commuter options to meet everyone’s needs.

CatShare*
A program designed to provide hourly car rentals to students and staff. This is a great program for our alternative transportation users that may have an off-campus appointment.

Bike Share*
Students and employees may enjoy the use of a free loaner bike by checking one out from one of our on-campus bike share stations.

Biking
Take advantage of the over 11,000 free bicycle parking spaces or park your bike with added security at one of our secure lockers or enclosures. Biking is a joy for the mind and body – the perfect infusion of healthy energy to get you where you need to be.

CatTran GPS tracking app*
The GPS tracking app will allow you to track the shuttle and determine the estimated time of arrival, allowing for a more convenient and efficient form of transportation.

http://arizona.transloc.com/

Disability Cart Service*
A free service provided to all UA faculty, staff, and students who have a temporary or permanent impairment. Carts operate M-F 7:30 a.m. to 5 P.M.

CatTran*
Getting around campus is easier than ever with the Free CatTran Shuttle. Six routes serve the campus with over 45 stops. Three routes also serve off-campus Park and Ride Lots. Shuttles operate M-F 6:30 am to 6:30 pm. NightCat operates M-F 6pm to 12:30 am. There’s a shuttle sure to suit your needs.

Sun Link Streetcar*
The Streetcars are expected to open in the Summer of 2014 and will link The University of Arizona to downtown Tucson. The 3.9 mile route will consist of 17 stops and transport an average of 190 people in each trip.

Secure, free, valet parking in front of the Nugent Building. Open M-F 8am-6pm. Call 626.PARK for more info.

Sun Link Streetcar:
- The Streetscars are expected to open in the Summer of 2014 and will link The University of Arizona in downtown Tucson. The 3.9 mile route will consist of 17 stops and transport an average of 190 people in each trip.

UA Zimride*
A private ridesharing network for the UA that allows members to interact online and form carpools based on shared routes, schedules and interests. www.zimride.arizona.edu

Sun Tran U-Pass*
All UA students, faculty and staff are eligible. The U-pass gives you unlimited use of Sun Tran. Parking & Transportation pays for up to 50% of the cost of the full fare rate. Sun Tran provides maps, schedules to help plan your route! No worries... just time to enjoy your journey.

Bike Valet Program*
There are 6 locations on campus to self-repair your bicycle, available 24/7 with tools and a bike pump.

Bike Fix-it Stations*
There are 6 locations on campus to self-repair your bicycle, available 24/7 with tools and a bike pump.

More Information:
- Parking & Transportation Services
- 1117 E Sixth St. Tucson, AZ 85721-0181
- 520.626.PARK (7275)
- ParkingInformation@email.arizona.edu
- www.parking.arizona.edu

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- 520.626.PARK (7275)
- ParkingInformation@email.arizona.edu
- www.parking.arizona.edu

Prices subject to change without notice and based on availability. 3-day advance reservation is required. Blackout dates and other restrictions may apply. Student must present a valid photo ID and valid Student Advantage Card at time of ticket purchase and onboard trains. Amtrak, Sunset Limited and Enjoy the journey are registered service marks of the National Railroad Passenger Corporation. Student Advantage discount card is a registered trademark of Student Advantage, LLC.
OFF TO A GREAT YEAR!

BY LEE O’ROURKE
COORDINATOR PARENT & FAMILY PROGRAMS

The UA Parents & Family Association (PFA) had a busy summer and fall semester. Throughout the summer we participated in 15 New Student Orientations, meeting over 6,000 new Wildcat parents and family members, and co-hosted 24 Summer Send-Offs. The enthusiasm and excitement among our new families was tangible and carried over into our PFA Wildcat Welcome events. Proud Parent Pride was especially evident at the Bon Voyage Brunch where PFA Advisory Board member Joel Lewis addressed the guests with stories that had everyone laughing and crying.

Thank you to our PFA Family Weekend Golf Tournament players and sponsors for supporting our most successful tournament to date! Ninety-five players enjoyed a beautiful day on the course and helped us raise over $21,500 for The THINK TANK. Congratulations to our winning foursomes:

First Place — Will & Travis Parker, David & Tyler Crockett
Second Place — Jarrett Reidhead,

Third Place — Jason Tolliver, Todd Millay, Larry Stemerman, Dave Mitchell

PFA is excited to announce our founding members of the UA Parents & Family Leadership Circle: Larry Travis Bailey, Brent Nelsen, Dennis Larsen

THANKS TO OUR WONDERFUL ADVISORY BOARD MEMBERS!

Bill & Polly Morehouse, Co-Chairs, Darien, CT
Alan & Janet Stein, Past Co-Chairs, Fairfax Station, VA
Joel & Katherine Lewis, Co-Chairs Student Recruitment & Retention, Moreno Valley, CA
Natalie Morrison, Campaign Co-Chair, Scottsdale, AZ
Rick Voth, Campaign Co-Chair, Scottsdale, AZ
Christine McNeal, Phoenix Summer Send-Off Co-Chair, Phoenix, AZ
Jennifer Sampson, Phoenix Summer Send-Off Co-Chair, Phoenix, AZ
Bonnie Klahr, Legislative Affairs Liaison, Green Valley, AZ
Matt Noble, Oracle Board Liaison, Tucson, AZ
John & Sandy Vasseur, SALT Center Liaisons, Scottsdale, AZ
Dan & Andrea Pion, At Large Appointees, Lexington, MA
Andrew and Lee Comrie, At Large Appointees, Tucson, AZ
Ford Braun, Sr., At Large Appointee, Vancouver, WA

CONTINUED ON PAGE 7
Disability Resources leads the campus in the creation of inclusive learning and working environments and facilitates access, discourse, and involvement through innovative services, programs and partnerships.

- Competitive Wheelchair and Adaptive Athletics Program
- Academic and Workplace Accommodations
- Assistive Technology Lab
- Consultation on Universal Design

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- Academic and Workplace Accommodations
- Assistive Technology Lab
- Consultation on Universal Design

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SAVE THE DATE!

PARENTS & FAMILY ASSOCIATION COFFEE CHAT

Saturday, February 7, 2015

The Parents & Family Association (PFA) will be hosting Coffee Chats across the country on Saturday, February 7, 2015.

Coffee Chats are informal gatherings where parents and family members will have the opportunity to share experiences, ask questions and create their own Wildcat communities in their cities.

You can either attend as a guest or volunteer to host a Coffee Chat. Hosts will help coordinate by selecting a venue and communicating with guests.

The Coffee Chats are no-host events to be held at local coffee houses. Please see our website at uafamily.arizona.edu for additional information and for the list of cities that need hosts.
OFF TO A GREAT YEAR!
CONTINUED FROM PAGE 5

Stemeran, Bill & Polly Morehouse, Alan & Janet Stein, Earl & Claire Mendenhall, Andrew & Lee Comrie. These members have committed to donating $1000 or more for the duration of their students’ time at the UA. The Leadership Circle was created to elevate the University of Arizona culture of caring and enables PFA to continue to support student services on campus. Our goal is to create a safe, supportive environment for students so that they become real world ready graduates.

In addition to philanthropic endeavors, PFA offers many programs and events for you to become involved with. We are currently looking for hosts for our spring Coffee Chats as well as parents who would like to help recruit new Wildcats through PAWS (Parents and Alumni Working with Students).

Please contact us at PFA to get involved or let us know if you have a great new idea for PFA involvement!

Our email: Dos-uafamily@email.arizona.edu  Our phone number: 520-621-0884 Our website: uafamily.arizona.edu

The Parents & Family Association would like to thank our generous Corporate Sponsors:  

*GEICO*
http://www.geico.jobs/tucson

*USS*
http://www.universityandstudentservices.com/ua.html

*Radisson Suites Tucson*
http://www.radisson.com/suites_Tucson

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Walking distance to campus and 4th Avenue, The District has everything you need and more—ALL RIGHT HERE. Visit us online to see all our amenities, view our spacious floor plans and schedule your tour today!

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877.309.8099  |  550 N. 5th Avenue  |  Tucson, AZ 85705
If these sound like familiar questions, the University of Arizona has created tools for students, staff, families, advisors, and faculty to help in the Smart Planner and Degree Search!

**DEGREE SEARCH**

In an effort to help students find the major which best fits their strengths and interests, the University of Arizona developed Degree Search (http://degreesearch.arizona.edu/). From this site, students have an opportunity to review different majors on campus and narrow the selections based on a variety of options. For example, if a student knows they want to look at majors which are more artistic, they can select a filter to only show undergraduate majors that fit their interest. Curious about pursuing life science majors? Use the search for biology and see how many different options are available on campus.

The site offers additional information about each plan along with tools to help them compare the degrees. For instance, each major on the site includes a standard 4-year plan laid out semester by semester. Potential career information is also available including job titles and possible salary ranges. If you find a few plans of interest, you can save and compare them side by side using the tools on the site to narrow the choice. Once the right options are found, we’ve made it easy to contact the departments by providing the information on Degree Search.

**SMART PLANNER**

The University of Arizona takes the 4-year plan on Degree Search one step further in Smart Planner by providing each student with their own individualized plan. Students can log...
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2200 East Elm Street | Tucson, Arizona 85719 | www.arizonainn.com
The Overview Page in the Smart Planner gives students a visual representation of their completed/needed/in progress units.

into their UAccess account to view it, and families may also have access in the Guest Center of UAccess.

The Smart Planner looks at each student's progress and recommends the upcoming coursework for each semester through graduation. The information is updated depending on how the student progresses.

Taking a few more classes this semester to get ahead? Smart Planner recognizes it and presents the changes based on a student's choices. The tool empowers students by providing information on how they can progress towards a degree.

Students will still work closely with an advisor to customize their plan and make sure other goals such as internships and research can be planned within their time at the University of Arizona. With Guest Center access, families can also see the progress to help facilitate discussions between families and students about educational goals and the future.

We encourage you to review both Degree Search and Smart Planner with your students!
Your kids are precious cargo

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99% of UA students who use Campus Health would recommend us to a friend. Seriously.
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Arizona Board of Regents (ABOR) Aetna Student Health Insurance Plan also offered by UA.

(520) 621-9202 • www.health.arizona.edu
Attending college across the country can be an intimidating experience, both for the student and the family. Students must learn a whole new culture and environment while keeping up with their classes, while parents adjust to communication from a distance. This was the challenge faced by Larry Stemerman and his son, Tyler, now in his second year at the University of Arizona. Fortunately, through the Parents & Family Association, Larry found unique ways to be involved on campus and was able to make that strong connection to his son’s new environment.

The relationship started when Larry attended Freshman Orientation. He took an interest in the annual PFA golf tournament as well as a partnership with the UA Bookstore. Mr. Stemerman is the CEO of clothing company, TailorByrd, which specializes in men’s fashion. Larry donated hats and played in the golf tournament.

Near his hometown of New Canaan, Connecticut, Larry became an active parent. He attended UA events in Connecticut and New York and assisted the university in recruiting high school students. Larry also became a valuable business partner to the UA Bookstore, where you will now find TailorByrd clothing custom made for the University of Arizona.

As a founding member of the PFA Leadership Circle, Larry has financially helped PFA to support academic services through the THINK TANK, a campus-wide program providing free and fee-based support services for all UA students.

Just as Larry had found, there are a number of ways that out of state parents can be very involved in the Wildcat campus. From helping with recruitment events, to hosting coffee chats, parents can be wonderful supporters for the university across the country.

We thank Larry Stemerman for being a fantastic supporter and advocate for the University of Arizona and we look forward to showing off our TailorByrd shirts during the annual PFA golf tournament this year!

EAST COAST PARENT
BRINGS SUPPORT & CLOTHING TO UA

BY LAUREN PARRISH, ASSISTANT DIRECTOR OF DEVELOPMENT, SAEM/AISS

Larry and Tyler Stemerman cheering on the Wildcats from the SAEM/AISS Skybox.

Relax... in one of our luxuriously spacious suites including a fridge, microwave, and separate vanity area.

Refresh... in our beautiful oversized pool and Jacuzzi set amongst a lushly landscaped courtyard.

Rejuvenate... after a long day of sightseeing with dinner and a glass of wine at the Breeze Patio Bar and Grill.

We also offer complimentary UA Campus shuttle upon availability.

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For more information, visit goarmy.com/rotc

You may enroll in ROTC with no contract or obligation by taking MLS courses through your normal registration process. For more information, email armyrotc@email.arizona.edu or visit goarmy.com/rotc
SEND-OFFS
CELEBRATING NEW FRESHMEN AND TRANSFERS AS WILDCATS FOR LIFE!

By Lee O’Rourke, Coordinator, Parent & Family Programs

This summer featured another successful series of 24 Summer Send-Offs across the country where we welcomed new freshmen and transfer students as well as their families. The Send-Offs are sponsored by the Parents & Family Association along with the Alumni Association and provide an opportunity for our local Alumni Chapters to officially “send-off” our new Wildcats and welcome them to campus. The Send-Offs vary in size from small groups to our largest in Phoenix with 1200 attendees.

The Phoenix Summer Send-Off would not be possible without help from many volunteers and sponsors. A big thank you goes to this year’s Phoenix Summer Send-Off chairperson Christine McNeal, a UA parent, alumni and PFA Board member. We would also like to thank our sponsors who made the Phoenix Summer Send-Off possible including our Title Sponsors the Marshall Foundation and Main Gate Square.

WELCOME CLASS OF 2018!

Thank you to our sponsors!

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We also know that some parents want access to more information and resources. Parents and family members who make a contribution of $100 ($50 if Pell eligible) or more will receive regular communication from the Parent & Family Programs staff during your student’s academic career at the UA. These communications include:

- A semesterly print magazine mailed to your home address
- 9 E-Newsletters with timely information and resources for your Wildcat
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- A direct link to the Parent & Family Programs staff who will help you navigate the resources in support of your student’s success

Your donation will help support outreach and communication to parents and family members as well as vital programs that benefit all students’ success on campus through special programs and the PFA Annual Grants Program. We hope you can show your Wildcat pride and make a difference by supporting the UA Parents & Family Association today!

How Does My Contribution Make an Impact?

Your contribution helps The University of Arizona in the following ways:

1. **Student Support** In the past 30 years the Parents & Family Association has given more than $2 million to campus programs and services that directly improve the quality of UA student life. We give where students and parents tell us it is important. In the past our support has gone to Safe Ride, Career Services, campus safety, and leadership programs. This year parent donations are supporting the Think Tank which provides free, centralized tutoring and supplemental instruction for students.

2. **Parent & Family Communications** The Parents & Family Association provides a number of ongoing communications to parents and family members including two yearly print magazines, and our monthly newsletter, “The Paw Print,” and regular Parent email communication.

UA Parents & Family Association Donation Form

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Send check payable to The University of Arizona Foundation with this form to: UA Parents & Family Association, PO Box 210040, Tucson AZ 85721
For credit card payment please visit PFA website: http://uafamily.arizona.edu/
THANK YOU

FOR YOUR GENEROUS DONATIONS!

The Parents & Family Association wants to sincerely thank all the parents and family members who made a contribution of $100 or more to the Parents & Family Association between March 1, 2014-Sept. 1, 2014.

*Every care was taken to ensure the accuracy of this list. We would appreciate you sharing with us any omissions. Please contact Kathy Adams Riester, Director of the UA Parents & Family Association at (520) 621-0884 or dos-uafamily@email.arizona.edu.
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I’ll never forget how accomplished I felt after reaching the top of the pyramids in Teotihuacán. As a child of Mexican immigrants, I had made it one of my life’s goals to visit my mother’s homeland. Years later as a college student, I received the opportunity to study abroad in Mexico through the University of Arizona Cultural Center’s “Vivir México” study abroad program.

As a Mexican American Studies major, I had been exposed to the rich history and culture behind México, however going abroad made everything I learned in class come to life. My first stop in this program took place in Mexico City, the country’s capital, but also one of the largest cities in the world. I was fascinated by how bustling and modern this city was, but also by how its indigenous culture is still so present. I was able to cheer the country on during the World Cup tournament on a giant screen, and then experience indigenous ceremonies just blocks down the street. This experience also reflected so many aspects of my own identity. Being both Mexican and American, while living in the United States,
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has led me to live in two completely different worlds. Even though my mother has proudly instilled in me my family’s traditions, being immersed in them has brought me a deeper appreciation for them. The art, food, dances, music and language all fully present on its streets filled this void in my identity I yearned to fill.

I also found a more profound purpose for my college education during a service-learning project in the state of Guanajuato. My peers and I taught workshops for a summer program in the community center, Resplandor International, which looks to provide educational opportunities to children of working class families. Every morning, the kids walked or rode a bus for miles with their mothers or siblings to make it to their workshops for the day. Within these families, I saw the stories of my own family, such as seeing the pride of parents having their children participate in the program. These mothers reminded me of my own mother, women who went beyond great lengths to provide the best for their children. Despite the fact that they did not have the opportunity of a higher education, they realized the importance of it and showed continuous support. Being able to serve this community helped me feel connected to Guanajuato, much further past its surface. I met its people and felt a glimpse of their joys, but also struggles of their daily lives. These are my neighbors, a reflection of my life growing up in the immigrant, working class community of Phoenix, who take such pride in their work, no matter the circumstances.

“Vivir México” has shaped my undergraduate experience and most importantly helped me put my knowledge into perspective. I felt a deeper connection to what I was learning. It offers a unique perspective on Mexico, one that often gets lost in the midst of stereotypes and issues like immigration. College is a time to explore and I encourage all students to take advantage of opportunities the UA has to offer.
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**Advantages include:**
**More Safety and Comfort, Less Cost!**
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- Sahara sponsors social events on-and off-site, and has recreational facilities to encourage exercise, games, and fun
- Sahara studios: 2 to 2.5 times larger than a dorm room, all with full kitchen and bath
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- FREE shuttle to and from campus plus FREE nightly shopping shuttles
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Alternative Breaks (AB) is a national program where a group of college students commit to engaging in direct service over an academic break, typically for one week. The trips are meant to challenge students, and encourage them to think critically about societal issues that affect our world, and how they can be part of the change process. Students are educated on where they will be going, facts and information on the issue they will be addressing, and what to expect on the trip. Many students return empowered to address the issues they worked with on the trips in their own community. Additionally, they create new friendships with those whom they have shared an amazingly, powerful experience.

Through the ASUA office, we host five trips over spring break, and this year, we will be hosting our first winter break trip ever in January. We begin applications for Alternative Breaks in September, and accept them on a rolling basis throughout the year. The trips typically include 4 days of service, and at least one free day. The trips are alcohol and drug-free, low-cost, and include fundraising opportunities in order to reduce the initial cost of the trip. The cost includes transportation, food during service days, a t-shirt, housing, and service project costs. For an overview of our trips and topic issues, please see below.

I will admit that it is sometimes hard to recognize why a student would need to go to a different city to understand what is happening in their own community. Additionally, they create new friendships with those whom they have shared an amazing, powerful experience.

My experience with Alternative Breaks was nothing short of amazing. Last Spring Break I went to Sacramento, CA to volunteer with Habitat for Humanity and I learned so much about the social issues existing in our communities as well as about myself. The service component of my trip was life changing, and the people I got to share the experience were inspirational. I would recommend this program to all Wildcats!

– Bryan Namba, Class of 2015

CONTINUED ON PAGE 27

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Travel throughout UA campus to Downtown Tucson, 4th Avenue and Main Gate Square on Sun Link

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ALTERNATIVE SPRING BREAK
CONTINUED FROM PAGE 25

Winter Break: January 3–10, 2015
› New Orleans, LA – Camp Restore
   Cost: $700 (flying trip)
   Issue: Poverty and Homelessness

Spring Break: March 14 – 21, 2015
› Denver, CO – Project CURE
   Cost: $200 (driving trip)
   Issue: Access to Medical Supplies
› Kendalia, TX – Wildlife Rescue and Rehabilitation
   Cost: $200 (driving trip)
   Issue: Wildlife Conservation
› Las Vegas, NV – Teach for America
   Cost: $200 (driving trip)
   Issue: Equity in Education
› San Francisco, CA – GLIDE
   Cost: $200 (driving trip)
   Issue: Poverty and Marginalization
› New York City, NY – Youth Service Opportunities Project
   Cost: $700 (flying trip)
   Issue: Poverty and Homelessness

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Providing the finest quality and best selection of exclusive styles in officially licensed clothing and giftware to the students, faculty, alumni, sports fans and visitors at The University of Arizona for more than 30 years in our Main Gate Square location.
Dr. Vincent Del Casino stepped into his new position at the University of Arizona this past July. The goal of the new job is to help reimagine teaching learning at the university so that students have more opportunities in both online and face-to-face classes to think about the application of their ideas beyond the walls of the university. Indeed, one of the main goals of his job is to help frame a new way of thinking about student learning, one that takes seriously the different ways students gain the skills they need to build a career outside the institution. The job is big and so is his title, which is probably one of the longest on campus: Vice Provost for Digital Learning and Student Engagement and Associate Vice President for Student Affairs and Enrollment Management. Digital learning and student engagement are both priorities in the University of Arizona Strategic Plan which UA President, Dr. Ann Weaver Hart shared with the Arizona Board of Regents in November of 2013.

When asked how he would explain his role on campus to parents, Del Casino responded, “My role is to facilitate a larger conversation on campus around digital and online learning as well as student engagement and then push these initiatives forward through organized planning. What that means, in practice, is that I spend a lot time bringing faculty, staff, and students together to build high quality experiences for students who are thinking about an online course or a fully-online degree program. I am also helping build support structures so that students can expand their understanding of how to connect their classroom education to their personal and professional goals.”

– Dr. Vincent Del Casino

I had the opportunity to work with Dr. Del Casino as part of a steering committee to develop the concept of student engagement at the University of Arizona. Guiding this diverse group through this process was a challenging task. What I learned in the process is that Dr. Del Casino is an excellent leader who has a quick wit, and a gift for consensus building. He also loves movie quotes. I often thought to myself during our meetings, that I would love to take my class if I were an undergraduate because his excitement as an educator was so evident. It was also very clear that Dr. Del Casino has a passion for teaching and learning as well as how students experience both at the University of Arizona.

In talking about student engagement Del Casino said that he is “most excited to see how the development of a program that allows students to better identify their engaged learning experiences and integrate that learning into their college experience will help further transform the University of Arizona as one of the best public research universities in North America. Put another way, I am very excited to walk across this campus in three years and listen in as students discuss how their education has transformed their lives because they now better understand about how their everyday classroom life connects to the experiences they have in their co-curricular (or non-credit bearing) experiences.”

Dr. Del Casino began college as a Chemistry major at Bucknell University. He also had an interest in social science and humanities classes, such as International Relations, Asian Studies, and Development Studies. For Del Casino “the most transformative experience I had in university was my political geography of Africa course, a course I took on a whim when my friends said I would like the professor. As I watched the professor teach and I began to interact with him, I began to imagine myself as a college professor. I was 19 years old at the time. I never really looked back. All of
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my life experiences since that time –
my decision to quit the cross country
team and study abroad, my decision to
apply and then join Teach for America,
my commitment to moving to
Wisconsin and then Kentucky for my
master’s and then doctoral studies –
were tied to the goal I set for myself in
that class at 19.” Del Casino graduated
from Bucknell with a Bachelor of
Arts in International Relations and
East Asian Studies. He also earned a
Master of Science Degree in Geography
from the University of Wisconsin and
a Ph.D. in Geography in the University
of Kentucky.

In discussing what distinguishes
the University of Arizona in the area
of student-professor relationships,
Dr. Del Casino said: “Because UA is
a top-20 NSF-funded public land
grant institution, students have the
opportunity to learn from some of
the best faculty in the world. And,
resting at the heart of that education,
is teaching founded in cutting edge
research, scholarly, and creative
activity. This provides students with
a very unique experience, which is
hard to duplicate anywhere else in
the United States.” When asked for
advice on how students can get the
most out of classes, his response was,
“I have six words for students – office
hours, office hours, office hours.
Well, two sets of two words, repeated
three times! In all seriousness, every
study shows that students that seek
out interactions with faculty in office
hours be those virtual or face-to-face,
do better in classes. And, we, as an
institution, have to be responsive to
students in the process.”

It is very apparent that Dr. Del
Casino is well suited for his new
role. He is a vibrant leader with a
passion for student learning and
a commitment to ensuring that
decision making is an iterative
process that creates a dialogue among
faculty, staff and students. The
University of Arizona is fortunate to
have his leadership with these new
initiatives, which will transform
student learning and engagement!
You have just gotten use to your student being gone and it's already time for them to come back home. In preparing to welcome them back, here are some tips to consider for a smooth transition. Not only has your household found a new rhythm, so has your student who has lived on their own for three and half months. Let your student know that this is a time to relax and become refreshed for their new semester.

First consider curfew. Your student is a young adult now and while it is tempting to keep that curfew for your student they are used to managing their own time and keeping a very different schedule than they did in high school. It is perfectly acceptable to ask them to be respectful of your home and your sleep. Establish those boundaries early on so that you both have an understanding and can come to an agreement.

Second, allow your student their space when they return. They will want a mixture of time to catch up with you and their friends. Let them enjoy their time being home and be careful to not overschedule them with events and family obligations. Ask them what they would like to do, i.e. is there a favorite restaurant they would like to go to with the family, a favorite family activity they have missed doing, a home cooked meal they would like, etc.

Third, expect your student to be tired and maybe even a bit irritable. They have been keeping a very hectic schedule, most likely sleep deprived and recovering from the stress of finals week. Don’t be surprised if they seem to be sleeping a lot during their first few days at home.

While your student is home it is also important to continue to support their academic endeavors. Check in and see how their fall semester went and how they are preparing for the spring semester. Don’t be surprised if they seem a bit homesick as they head back to campus at the end of the break. Keep encouraging them and remind them you will be seeing them again soon in just a few months.

This time can be challenging for you and your student; however by setting some new rules and using this time to re-connect with your student you can assure a relaxing and peaceful winter break for all!

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Gregor Orbino photo
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