STUDENT ENGAGEMENT

Kent Student Center and Center for Student Involvement Staffs Collaborate for Student Success

On behalf of the Kent Student Center/Center for Student Involvement ‘team’ of professionals, welcome back to another great academic year at Kent State University!

We have a number of exciting changes occurring in both the Kent Student Center (KSC) and the Center for Student Involvement (CSI). One key change involves a re-organization that brings both of these valuable areas together as partners in helping to enrich the lives of our Kent State students through quality services, resources, and purposeful co-curricular programming. We are excited to share with you in the pages of this newsletter a few examples of our collaborative efforts. It is our hope that after reading the newsletter, you will have a greater appreciation of the role of the student center and its impact on student life as the ‘living room’ of the campus. We also hope that you gain a better understanding of our diverse student organizations, including the important role they and their advisors play in student development. This component of student life provides an important resource for enhanced out-of-the-classroom experiences.

This edition highlights an exciting new peer-to-peer mentoring program, entitled Peer Involvement Advising (PIA). This innovative, retention-focused program is aimed at connecting students in an effort to help them create their own unique plans for campus involvement. It is just one of many programs we hope will aid in enhancing the quality of our students’ experience at Kent State University.

We hope you enjoy this edition of the EMSA Newsletter. Please feel free to send me any questions or feedback for either KSC or CSI. We continue to seek to enhance the quality of our services and programs and we cannot do that without you!

Respectfully,

Timeka Rashid, Ph.D.
Associate Dean of Students

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RECENT ACHIEVEMENTS OF THE CENTER FOR STUDENT INVOLVEMENT AND KENT STUDENT CENTER:

Received International Town and Gown Association’s ‘Larry Abernathy Award’ in recognition of Kent State University and the City of Kent’s outstanding town/gown collaborations.

Kent Student Center staff provides logistical support for more than 10,000 events each year.

Kent State Greek Life received two awards from the Association of Fraternal Leadership and Values in the areas of philanthropy and academic achievement.

Greek philanthropies raised more than $150,000 during the 2012-13 academic year.

KSU’s sorority community expanded and will welcome Phi Mu this academic year.

The Educational Benchmarking, Inc. assessment of the Kent Student Center indicated high marks for the cleanliness of the facility and for a student-oriented staff.

The popular ‘What’s Up’ calendar, introduced in 2011 in print and online versions, is now accessible through the Kent State app.

UCommute reached more than 1,400 off-campus and commuter students during its 2012-13 Commuter Conversations, held four times per semester.

FLASHperks secured both monetary and in-kind sponsorships totaling more than $36,000.
The current mission of the Kent Student Center (KSC) is to support the overall University mission by enhancing the out-of-classroom education of students through programs, services, and recreation; to be the community center of the University -- the ‘living room’ or ‘hearthstone.’ KSC staff provide opportunities for both formal and informal association and the development of social leadership skills.

The Kent Student Center provides a variety of meaningful services to the student population including event planning assistance, university scheduling services and audio/visual technical support. The KSC also houses multiple food venues, the University Bookstore, the Student Multicultural Center (SMC), a post office, and both university and student organization offices.

According to a statement adopted by the Association of College Unions International (ACUI), the union is the community center of a college or university, serving students, faculty, staff, alumni, and guests. By whatever form or name, a student union is an organization offering a variety of programs, activities, services, and facilities that, when taken together, represent a well-considered plan for the community life of the campus.

The union is an integral part of the educational mission of a college or university.

- As the center of college community life, the union complements the academic experience through an extensive variety of cultural, educational, social, and recreational programs. Such programs provide opportunities for students to balance coursework and free time as cooperative factors in their overall educational experience.
- The union is a student-centered organization that values participatory decision-making. Through volunteerism, its boards, committees, and student employment, the union offers first-hand experience in citizenship and educates students in leadership, social responsibility, and values.
- In its policies and processes, the union encourages self-directed activity, giving maximum opportunity for self-realization and for growth in individual social competency and group effectiveness.

The union’s goal is the development of persons as well as intellects. The union can serve as a unifying force that honors each individual, values diversity, and fosters a sense of community that cultivates enduring loyalty to a college or university.

The Kent Student Center undertook a multi-faceted assessment during 2012-13 to examine: 1) operations and policies; 2) interior layout/facilities; and 3) communications and marketing. A small committee of KSC and CSI staff members visited three comparable Ohio university student unions to gain a perspective on more current ‘state-of-the-art’ facilities.

In addition to the committee’s site visits, information was collected from the national Educational Benchmarking, Inc. (EBI) survey as well as focus groups conducted by University Communications and Marketing. Results generally indicated high marks for cleanliness of the building and a student-oriented staff. Areas that indicated ‘need for improvement’ were primarily related to building aesthetics including updates in furnishings and signage as well as more of a “Kent State”-themed feel within the student center.

Looking ahead, an interior decorating firm and architects have been hired and a comprehensive building study of the Kent Student Center will be conducted. Work has already begun in some areas including the remodeling of Room 204 for use as a permanent admissions welcome center. Also, efforts will continue to capitalize on recent space improvements such as The Nest, where “blue and gold” pride and the spirit of the University are more apparent. Once a full Kent Student Center enhancement plan is in place, a timeline will be developed to determine priorities throughout the next several years.
Kent State University is committed to the principle that students have a right to organize and participate in groups whose purposes center on the interests and goals of the individuals involved. The University encourages students to form student organizations in accordance with applicable administrative policies and procedures. To that end, Center for Student Involvement staff members serve as liaisons to the nearly 300 student organizations currently on campus by guiding them in registration and event planning processes as well as assisting them with organizational matters.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organization Category</th>
<th>No. of Student Organizations</th>
<th>Approximate Member Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Academic</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>1,805</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Awareness/Educational</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>474</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cultural</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>483</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graduate</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>422</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greek Life</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>1,397</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Honorary</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>1,615</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>International</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>605</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Media</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>107</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Military</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>134</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Political</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recreational</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>354</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Religious</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>793</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Service</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>1,219</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Special Interest</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>1,259</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Government</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>110</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Totals</td>
<td>292</td>
<td>10,872</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Center for Student Involvement relies on the help of faculty and staff to serve as advisors to the growing number of student organizations on campus. This role can be very rewarding for advisors, and CSI is always looking for new faculty/staff to serve in this capacity.

Carrie Circosta, Assistant Director for Student and Recent Graduate Programs in Alumni Relations and advisor to Kent Student Ambassadors and Kent State International Mentors said, “Being an advisor is such a rewarding experience! Being able to mentor, guide, and support our students as they develop into leaders is such an honor. The role of an advisor plays a crucial part in what kind of leaders our students become not only today, but as future alumni representing our university. Plus, as an advisor, I am always learning something new from students. That helps me fulfill my role in alumni relations and stay up-to-date on what’s trending!” #FlashesForever #WeAreKentState

Carrie’s work and that of many others represent the strong spirit of Kent State faculty and staff. Being an advisor not only connects you to students in a different way, but it allows you to help develop future leaders and learn about different aspects of campus life.

Students at Kent State have great pride in their groups, whose missions range from awareness and academic to social and recreational. Involvement in a student organization has many benefits including networking opportunities, leadership development and building connections to the campus outside of the academic setting. Also, research has shown that the engaged student is more likely to persist to graduation and be satisfied with his/her college experience.

Student organizations hosted 448 events during 2012-13.
CSI Introduces Retention-Focused Peer Involvement Advising

The Center for Student Involvement is pleased to announce a new initiative, Peer Involvement Advising (PIA). The peer involvement advising resource center is set to open in the fall and will be housed in Room 120K, Kent Student Center. The center will serve as a resource to all students on campus, in an effort to help connect students to activities and organizations. This new departmental initiative is a part of the University’s commitment to provide quality resources that aid in the overall retention of students.

Students seeking this type of mentoring will be able to drop-in during office hours, schedule an appointment, or call for information. Peer-to-peer interaction will serve as a connection for first-year students and a valuable opportunity for growth for the peer advisors. From the peer-to-peer meetings, each student will be given an individualized “involvement plan” with the goal of maintaining consistent extracurricular involvement throughout the student’s college years.

Seven highly involved, upperclass students were selected to serve as peer involvement advisors for the 2013-14 academic year. Junior Nick Elder on why he wanted to serve in this capacity: “These students here at Kent State are going to be the future leaders of this world. The first step in that process involves understanding the importance of developing leadership skills, and there is no better way to do so than through becoming heavily involved with organizations on campus. I want future freshmen to share a similar experience as me. This is why I became a peer involvement advisor.”

Krandall Brantley, Journalism, remarked, “As a junior at Kent State University, I know how hectic adapting to campus life can be for freshmen. My goal is to help students have a smooth transition into college and give them advice on how to overcome adversity.”

While targeted mostly to new students on campus, PIA advisors encourage faculty and staff to refer any student who may be struggling to find his/her niche. With the plethora of organizations and activities available to Kent State students, PIA aims to serve as an important new resource for promoting meaningful and ongoing involvements and connections for students.

Meet the KSC/CSI Team

Joyce Baker | Custodial Worker
Ralph Baker | Custodial Worker
Meredith Bielaska | Assistant Director, CSI
Linda Brogan | Custodial Worker
Caleb Claridy | Custodial Worker
Dave Collen | Maintenance Repair Worker
Scott Crawford | Assistant Director, KSC
Linda Curfman | Scheduler
Bob Daerr | Building Maintenance Supervisor
Ann Day | Assistant Director, KSC
Sabrina Deal | Account Clerk II
Teresa Eicher | Custodial Worker
Thomas Farmer | Maintenance Repair Worker
Nan Garrison | Account Clerk I
Katie Goldring | Student Activities Coordinator
Jennifer Gunnoe | Associate Director, CSI
Pam Hejduk | Account Clerk II
Sydney Jordan | Coord, E Comm & Web Content
Rebecca Kapler | Commuter Services Coordinator
Kelly Kribel | Graduate Assistant, CSI
Rhonda Lindsay | Receptionist
Pete Mahoney | Special Coordinator, CSI
Della Marie Marshall | Sr. Associate Director, CSI
Tim McGarry | Custodial Crew Leader
Tina McLeary | Custodial Crew Leader
Yvette Mendoza | Administrative Assistant, KSC
Susan O’Karma | Associate Director, KSC
Jim Parsons | Custodial Worker
Dee Parsons | Receptionist
Joseph Polack | Sr. Business Manager
Timeka Rashid | Associate Dean of Students
Jason Simon | Custodial Worker
Melissa Sink | Asst. Housekeeping Manager
Catherine Spisak | Graduate Assistant, CSI
Andrew Thrush | Audio Visual Assistant, KSC
John Victoria | Custodial Worker
Frederick Williams | Custodial Worker
Sariya Winters | Graduate Assistant, CSI
Matt Young | Maintenance Repair Worker
Steve Zeller | Custodial Worker

~Content and design of this publication by the Office of the Vice President for Enrollment Management and Student Affairs; Additional contributions from the Center for Student Involvement. ~

The building ‘footprint’ of the Kent Student Center covers 288,388 square feet.