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Contact

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TEXT A |

August 2010

Connecting Parents to WPI



Welcome

It is pleasure to greet all of our readers as we prepare to begin another academic year at WPI. "Moving and shaking" may be an aspect of some leadership styles, but lately it has also been a feature of construction on campus. Excavation for our new Sports and Recreation Center, being built into the sloping terrain at the west end of the quad, began several weeks ago. In addition to "moving" seemingly endless quantities of earth, the excavation crew has had to blast through some serious ledge formations, hence the "shaking."

When completed about two years from now, this 140,000-square-foot facility will provide a new swimming pool, numerous basketball and handball courts, a large fitness center, dance and multipurpose rooms, and offices for our coaches and other athletics staff. And it will also have a large support (golf) space for robotics events, enabling WPI to host regional and national robotics competitions in the adjacent Harrington Auditorium (accessed via an underground connection). The activities supported by this facility will thus reflect the "holistic" nature of the WPI experience—embracing the academic, physical, and social elements of a complete education and a campus fully supportive of the needs of all members of the community, including faculty and staff.

Other elements of our "holistic" program continue to thrive, including our bioengineering and life sciences programs at Gateway Park where regenerative biology, now much in the news, is one of several strong research areas, and technological innovation is bringing significant advances in applications as direct as prosthetic devices and diagnostic imaging. Our relatively new and interdisciplinary programs in robotics engineering, interactive media and game development, and environmental studies continue to attract large numbers of students; and there is, as always, much outstanding work in our theatre, music, and other arts-related programs. The strong participation in the President's Task Force on Sustainability and the increasing popularity of overseas study and project work in our Global Perspective Program signal a campus community deeply engaged in the major forces shaping our world.

We look forward to welcoming the class of 2014 with its record-high percentages of women and international students, and students from outside the Northeast region. We also continue to appreciate the strong support that WPI enjoys for its students and its academic programs by a wonderfully dedicated community of staff, parents, and alumni. We look forward to seeing many of you at our special events and ordinary activities throughout the coming year.

Sincerely,

Dennis Berkey

President and CEO

Visit the WPI Parents Facebook Page

The Dean of Students Office is pleased to announce the creation of a WPI Parents Facebook page as another strategy to stay in contact with family and friends. You can connect to this page through the [WPI Parents web](#), or directly through Facebook. We'll post regularly, and answer questions as they arise.

Beloit College Mindset List

This is the 12th year that Beloit College has assembled observations that help to identify the experiences that have shaped the lives—and formed the mindset—of students starting their post-secondary education this fall.

The Mindset List is not a chronological listing of things that happened in 1992, the year most entering college students were born. It is instead an effort to identify the worldview of 18-year-olds in the fall of 2010. WPI students come from many backgrounds and different traditions and these generalizations may not apply to all; still, the list identifies the experiences and event horizons of many of our students.

It is also not deliberately designed to make readers feel really old! View the 2014 Mindset List [here](#).

Campus Police

LAPTOP THEFT DETERRENCE

According to FBI statistics 97 percent of laptops stolen are never recovered by their owners. WPI recommends that you *never* leave your laptop unattended.

While laptops are generally stolen in such high-traffic areas as libraries, dining halls and campus centers, they are also taken from residential halls, parked cars, and coffee shops. *Prevention is the key to keeping your laptop from being stolen. If you need to leave it unattended, ask someone else to watch it.* WPI also recommends that you register your laptop—we participate in the STOP Program (Security Tracking of Office Property), which has proven to be an effective deterrent and recovery device. *STOP* plates are only \$10 and require no further fees of any kind. The plates continue to work if a computer is sold. *STOP* plates are distributed by the WPI Police Department and can be obtained by contacting Officer Chris Carpenter at ccarpent@wpi.edu. There will be tables in the Campus Center during A-Term as part of the STOP Theft Prevention Program.

e-Billing and e-Payment: Account Management

WPI sends out student bills electronically rather than through the traditional U.S. Postal Service. Students receive their tuition e-Bill in a message in their WPI e-mailbox. Students may authorize parents or other individuals to receive these e-mails also. With a few clicks of the mouse, one can view the student account detail and make electronic payments. Additional information can be found on the [e-Billing & e-Payment site](#).

Financial Aid

As we get into the month of August, we hope everyone is having a fun and relaxing summer. Your daughters and sons will soon be arriving at WPI for New Student Orientation or they will be returning for another school year.

For the 2010-11 academic year, the Federal Loan program—specifically the Stafford Loan and the PLUS loan program—have gone through some changes that will require all new and previous borrowers to complete new loan documents. The U. S. Department of Education is now requiring the Stafford and PLUS loans to be borrowed through the Federal Direct Loan program.

Parents, if you are applying for a Federal PLUS loan, go to www.studentloans.gov to apply for the Federal Direct PLUS loan and complete the Master Promissory Note. You will need your FAFSA PIN to complete this process. For previous borrowers who may have borrowed a PLUS loan through a bank or other lending institution, you will now need to apply through the Direct Loan process.

First year students who have been awarded a Subsidized or Unsubsidized Direct Stafford Loan in their financial aid award should have received a mailing from our office in early June instructing them on the steps necessary to complete their Master Promissory Note and the required Entrance Counseling online.

For returning WPI students, an informational postcard providing information on the change in Direct Lending and the steps students needed to take with this new program was inserted in their 2010-11 financial aid award letters. Additionally, reminder postcards were mailed the week of July 19 informing students to visit the Direct Lending website to ensure they had completed all the necessary requirements for their Federal Stafford (and PLUS) Loans for the 2010-11 academic year.

Students who have not completed these requirements but still plan to borrow these funds, need to go to the same website, www.studentloans.gov, to complete the appropriate forms.

Further information about the Federal Direct Loan program and detailed instructions for completing all of these forms can be found on our [website](#).

We hope you have an enjoyable remainder of the summer and we look forward to seeing you all at the end of August.

WPI Office of Financial Aid

Alcohol Education, Prevention, and Intervention

Worcester Polytechnic Institute is committed to creating a safe and healthy community for students by educating them about the dangers of alcohol and drug abuse. The Alcohol and Drug Program incorporates education, assessment, and intervention in hopes of reducing the negative consequences associated with substance abuse that some students may experience. For more

information see the new Alcohol and Drug Education website, located [here](#). **Attention Parents of Incoming students:** please remind your son or daughter to complete part one of AlcoholWise before move-in day, August 22.

Student Involvement@WPI - We recommend it!

Students at WPI are the heartbeat of our campus. Through involvement in clubs, intramurals, community service, and various programs, students are exposed to opportunities that enhance their personal development. Engagement in a campus community allows for the exploration of new or existing personal interests, engages students in networking, enhances leadership and personal skill sets, and provides memories that last a lifetime.

The research of Alexander Astin, the founding director of the Higher Education Research Institute, has shown that students who are involved are more satisfied with their college experience have higher retention rates, better time management skills, and enhanced personal growth. At WPI we have over [150 clubs and organizations](#), a [community service center](#), an award-winning [Greek Life](#) system, [leadership development](#) programs, and so much more.

I encourage you to ask your students to tell you more about what they do outside of the classroom. I would not be surprised if the answers are just as amazing as when they share with you at they are learning within their disciplines. If you have any questions or concerns about involvement, please feel free to contact the Student Activities Office at 508-831-5291. Our staff would be happy to speak with you about our programs.

Astin, A.W. (1984). Student Involvement: A developmental theory for higher education. *Journal of College Student Personnel*, 25, 297-308.

Federal Work Study and Community Service

Do your sons and daughters receive federal work study funds? If so, it is important for them to start looking into community service. The federal government has required that all students receiving work study funds complete a minimum of fifteen hours in a community service setting. To help out, the Office of Financial Aid has developed a [website](#) that outlines how community services are defined.

WHAT IF YOUR STUDENTS DON'T FIND ANYTHING ON THE PRE-APPROVED LIST?

Not a problem! If they think they've found a site that is not pre-approved by the Office of Student Activities, they can fill out a [Community Service Work Study Pre-Approval Form](#) (PDF) and turn it in to the Office of Financial Aid. Please note that pre-approval forms must be turned in at least two weeks prior to the completion of community service. Once the site is approved, students can follow the same process of reporting hours.

SUBMITTING THE REQUIRED HOURS

Once the hours are complete, students must fill out a [Community Service Work Study Completion Form](#) (PDF) and turn it into the Office of Financial Aid. This form keeps track of complete hours and provides a record for WPI.

EARNING AWARD MONEY IN FULL THROUGH COMMUNITY SERVICE WORK-STUDY

Every student who has received a federal work study award has the option of earning the full portion of funding through community service work-study. Upon enrollment in this program, the 15-hour community service requirement is waived and students work weekly at a community service site. Students who participate in this program earn \$10 an hour (versus \$9 an hour they would receive working on-campus). [Job listings](#) can be found on the WPI Community Service Center website.

WPI COMMUNITY SERVICE CENTER

The [WPI Community Service Center](#) is a key resource for students looking to complete community service hours. For more information regarding any volunteer site, students may stop by the Community Service Center located on the top level of the Campus Center.

TRANSPORTATION THROUGH THE COMMUNITY SERVICE VAN

Transportation to off-campus community service sites is available through the Community Service Van. To submit a van request, simply fill out the [online form](#).

QUESTIONS?

Please do not hesitate to contact Andrew Goss, Graduate Assistant for Community Service, at community-service@wpi.edu or 508-831-6436.

Upcoming Important Dates

PARENTS WEEKEND

September 10-12, 2010

The WPI community invites you and your family to Parents Weekend—a unique opportunity to experience a taste of life on the WPI campus. Spend time with your students while participating in some exciting campus activities, ranging from faculty presentations, to musical and theater performances, to sporting events. There's sure to be something to delight everyone. Learn more at the [Parents Weekend](#) site.

HOME COMING

October 1 - 2, 2010

Alumni are invited back to campus for [Homecoming 2010](#), Friday and Saturday, Oct. 1 and 2. Homecoming activities are for all ages, so bring your family and friends to enjoy the athletic games, Parade of Floats, and a wide variety of other events. Homecoming highlights include the Alumni Recognition Ceremony; the GOLD (Graduates of the Last Decade) Reception; and reunion gatherings for the classes of 1985, 1990, 1995, 2000, 2005, and 2010. We hope you will join us to see all the fun that occurs this weekend on campus!

COMMENCEMENT WEEKEND 2011

May 13 - 14, 2011

It's not too early to be planning for Commencement Weekend 2011. To gain a better understanding of the weekend's events, it may be valuable to visit the [2010 Commencement website](#).

WPI Bookstore

RECOMMENDED READ

When Your Kid Goes to College: A Parents Survival Guide by Carol Barkin. April 1999. 192 pages.

You've taught them how to do their laundry, brought them a year's supply of toothpaste and shampoo, and lectured them on the do's and don'ts of life beyond your home. The time has come for your students to leave for college -- but are you prepared to say goodbye?

Written by a mother who survived the perils of packing her own child off to school, *When Your Kid Goes to College* provides supportive, reassuring, and helpful tips for handling this inevitable but difficult separation.

Comprehensive and accessible, this practical guide includes info on:

- teaching your child how to live on his own, from balancing a checkbook to dealing with a roommate.
- the difference between financial and emotional dependence -- and how to keep them separate.
- helping your spouse, younger children, and even pets deal with the transition when your child leaves -- and when she returns.
- how to fill -- and even enjoy -- the hole that your child's absence leaves.

Saying goodbye isn't the end of the world; it's the beginning of an exciting new one for your students --and you!

Athletics and Recreation Center Update

Is your student interested in trying out for a varsity team? Has your student visited our [website](#) and contacted the coach directly to learn more about what is involved in trying out for a team? These topics and important medical information from our athletic trainers that can be found on the left side of the main page under Sports Medicine. All medical requirements are listed there.

The construction of the new Athletics and Recreation Center began as scheduled after Commencement 2010. To follow the progress, visit the [Sports and Recreation Center site](#) or watch the construction on the live [webcams](#).

2010 ATHLETIC SEASON OPENERS	
WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 1	
Field Hockey at Fitchburg State	4 p.m.
Worcester State at Men's Soccer	7 p.m.
Simmons at Volleyball	7 p.m.
Women's Soccer at Salve Regina	TBA
SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 4	
Football at Salve Regina	12 p.m.
SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 11	
Cross Country hosts Engineers Cup	TBA

Academic Advising Office

The Academic Advising Office, composed of three functions (Academic Advising, Student Disability Services, and Academic Resources), is an excellent resource for students who are struggling with their academics. If your student is struggling, please encourage him or her to come in and see us so we can help get back on track.

For details on the resources we offer, visit the [Academic Resource Center](#) for helpful information on our MASH (Math and Science Help) program, our tutoring program, and our new Peer Academic Coaching program, along with various programs and workshops to help support students in their academic endeavors.

If your students are just beginning their first year, we welcome them to our community. They will be part of Insight, our First Year Experience program outside the classroom. Each first year student will be paired up with a Faculty Advisor, a Community Advisor (upperclass student mentor), and a Resident Advisor. This group will help them transition from high school to WPI, and will help mentor and guide them through any challenge they may have, academic or nonacademic. They also have advice on time management, stress management, resources on campus, and course and major selection, just to name a few.

If at any point you have any questions, please feel free to contact us at academic-advising@wpi.edu or 508-831-5381. Our AOL IM address is FirstYRAdvising. We look forward to working with your students.

Bookstore Savings

Students may order their [books online](#) from the WPI Bookstore. This early, it's very possible to buy used books, which save you about 25%. The WPI Bookstore will box up your son's or daughter's books and have them ready for pick-up. -- No Lines, No Waiting!

Top Ten Reasons to Have a Meal Plan

Should you and your student invest in a meal plan? Read about [meal plan benefits](#).



PARENTS
Did you know your student has textbook options?
YOUR CHOICE { NEW USED & TEXTBOOKS
UP TO 25% OFF
everything you need. in one place. **SHOP NOW**



GET 10% OFF
ONE COLLEGIATE APPAREL ITEM
SIGN UP FOR EMAILS NOW!
(we'll keep your kid on budget with exclusive offers!)
OPT IN AND GET CONNECTED
Four 10% coupon code EMLP78 gets activated when you opt in. Don't miss out! Coupon code is valid through 12/31/16.