Dear Parents,

Students will find many choices, new ideas and opportunities for personal growth here on campus. Your support is an essential part of their success. This newsletter highlights many of the exciting programs that enhance the student experience—many of which are made possible with gifts to the Parents Fund.

During the 2011–2012 academic year, over 1,800 UD families contributed more than $221,000 to the Parents Fund, supporting Career Services, Leadership Development, New Student Orientation, and UDSpeaks, to name just a few. This year, we aim to raise $250,000 from 2,000 families, expanding out-of-classroom programming—those not covered by tuition—even more.

If there is ever anything that I can do to help you or your student, please don’t hesitate to contact me at kalewis@udel.edu. I also encourage you to visit and bookmark the new Parents Portal, www.udel.edu/parents, which contains useful information for Blue Hen families.

Best wishes for a fantastic school year!

Kate Lewis
Parents Fund Director

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Students participating in QUEST (above) are challenged to take on leadership roles and set realistic goals.

Students on a QUEST to lead

While most incoming freshmen spend the week before the fall semester concerned about the transition to college, freshmen who participate in the QUEST program are busy navigaing ropes courses, exploring campus, speaking with student and faculty mentors, and connecting with each other—all in a QUEST for self-discovery and leadership development.

In its second year, the University of Delaware's Blue Hen Leadership program, QUEST, conducted by Susan Luchey, Associate Director of the University Centers for Leadership Development, gives incoming students the opportunity to jump-start their personal leadership development on campus. The 70 freshmen who took part in QUEST 2012 arrived on campus several days early to take part in various activities and workshops associated with leadership development.

The early arrival on campus had a significant impact on the QUEST participants during their critical first few weeks as freshmen. As a leadership program, QUEST first and foremost gives students ways to improve their leadership skills.

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Those who participated in QUEST commented on how well they got to know UD’s campus prior to the start of the semester. The students were sent on a scavenger hunt to learn about different departments, academic resources and student life programs.

“We know so much about campus: career services, student health, and even maintenance,” said White. “We made so many connections to places on campus before the semester had even started.”

“I’ve lived here [in Newark] for 14 years, but now I feel like I actually know the campus,” said another participant, Matthew Conrad. “I fell in love with UD.”

The knowledge of campus and personal connections made between students as a result of QUEST can be just as valuable to a new student as the leadership skills they learned.

“QUEST gave me relationships with 80 new people,” said William Baker. “It was a blessing. It gave me the opportunity to meet people I wouldn’t have met otherwise.”

“I have such strong bonds to the other students,” said Kellie Forbes. “We became a family really quickly and that really helped in the transition from high school to college.”

One of the upperclassmen peer mentors, sophomore Tommy Mandala, is a QUEST alumnus. He participated in the program as an incoming freshman in 2011 and chose to come back for a second year as a mentor. Nine of the eleven peer mentors were returning QUEST participants.

“As a freshman, QUEST helped me adjust to college, and it benefitted me both academically and socially,” said Mandala. “I wanted to help other students in the same way that QUEST helped me.”

The leadership skills, knowledge of campus and personal connections made as a result of QUEST instill a confidence that many freshmen don’t have walking onto campus the first day.

“QUEST made for a much easier transition to college,” said Tuhacek. “I have more confidence walking around campus.”

A one month post-QUEST evaluation has revealed that all 70 participants have registered for the Blue Hen Leadership Program and have become engaged in other campus activities like Greek Life, athletics, Residence Life or Registered Student Organizations, according to Luchey.

“I always hope students will move forward with excitement and confidence in themselves,” said Luchey. “To have all the students report they have stepped up to involvement [on campus] just confirms that QUEST is getting these students started on the right path for a successful UD experience.”

**QUEST** is an opportunity for UD freshmen to get an early start on a journey of self-discovery and personal leadership development and to gain the confidence that will support a successful student experience. This selective program is open to 70 freshmen. Gifts to the Parents Fund will allow us to continue to expand leadership development programs like QUEST and allow more students to participate. Visit www.udel.edu/giving/parents for more information about the Parents Fund.
Special weekend reconnects parents with their students

Parents and Family Weekend, sponsored by the University of Delaware Division of Student Life, took place during the weekend of Oct. 5-7. Parents, siblings, grandparents and friends flocked to UD to experience all that campus has to offer.

The weekend was packed with special events that students could attend with their families. José-Luis Riera, associate dean of students, said he was pleased with how many families participated in the weekend.

“We had nearly 1,500 families that registered for events,” he said. “Our parents are a large part of what makes UD so great. They are Blue Hens, too, so we enjoy celebrating their contributions to the community.”

Among the most attended events, were a sold-out comedy show with comedian Martin Short and a Parents and Family Weekend tailgate before the football game.

Short dressed up as one of his characters, Jiminy Glick, to interview UD women’s basketball star Elena Delle Donne. The video can be viewed on the UD Athletics page.

At Saturday’s Parents and Family Weekend tailgate, families enjoyed a buffet, got their faces painted and cultivated school spirit with the help of cheerleaders, the marching band, the dance team and mascot YoUDee.

Families also got the chance to attend the football game on Saturday, with the Blue Hens suffering an upset loss to the University of Maine.

There were many other events over the course of the weekend that proved to be a hit with Blue Hen families.

“Saturday morning, we had the President’s Welcome Social, and that was a success,” said Riera about the event at which parents got the chance to meet UD President Patrick Harker as well as deans and vice presidents. The President’s Welcome Social was also a great opportunity for parents with students in the same college to mingle with one another.

New online portal provides useful resources for parents

The UD Parents portal is a dedicated doorway into your student’s college experience online. Visit www.udel.edu/parents for information on academics, housing, dining, finances, policies, safety, wellness, news, special events and more.

“In addition, all the colleges held open houses so parents could learn more about the unique identities of specific colleges and meet faculty and staff,” said Riera.

Neither the football loss nor the chilly weather on Sunday could dampen the excitement of Parents and Family Weekend.

“It was a good weekend and there was a lot of good energy on campus, so that was great to see,” said Riera.

We hope that all of our UD parents and family members in attendance had a great time and are looking forward to next year’s Parents and Family Weekend!
Young alumni offer words of wisdom to incoming freshmen

Three young alumni took part in a panel discussion for incoming UD freshmen—all participants in the Quest program, which is part of the Blue Hen Leadership program run by Susan Luchey—during the First Year Experience. Hosted by Director of Career Services, Matthew Brink and his colleague Jen Laird, Career Counselor, the workshop, just one component of the three-day program, allowed young alumni, Courtney Crain, Michael Brophy and Michael Rowley, to discuss their transitions into UD, as well as how they discovered their interests, found majors and began careers. The young alumni specifically addressed how experiences outside the classroom helped to refine their interests and shape them into the people they are today. They discussed what it was like to be a professional and offered words of wisdom to the new students.

Crain, finance major and ’12 graduate who works in a client services role at JP Morgan Chase, advised the incoming students to evaluate their first few experiences—classes, internships and extracurricular activities—to see what they like the best. She emphasized the importance of getting involved in activities on campus, meeting lots of new people and becoming well-acquainted with everything the University offers.

Rowley was interested in dance and science when he started at UD but did not believe that those two interests could ever combine into one career—until he spoke with a UD professor who told him about field of dance medicine and science. Rowley became involved in the International Association for Dance Medicine & Science (IADMS), where he met researchers in the field and explored career options. This fall, the organization is sponsoring his attendance at the 22nd Annual IADMS in Singapore. Rowley urged incoming students to keep an open mind about careers, even if they do not believe that their passions are related. He also reiterated Crain’s advice about meeting as many people as possible: “Connections and meeting people here and outside of UD are really important,” he said.

The panel

At a QUEST event sponsored by Career Services, young alumni Courtney Crain, Michael Brophy, Michael Rowley shared how their experiences as interns and in extracurricular activities helped shape what they chose for their careers.
Michael Brophy had numerous internships throughout his college career, which led him to where he is today: Special Assistant to the Chairman for the New Jersey Republican Party. He encouraged incoming students to utilize Career Services and seek out internships throughout their college experience. For him, “one internship led to another,” helping him to discover his passions, and eventually leading him to where he is today. “Making and maintaining connections is key,” he said.

Following the alumni panel discussion, Brink spoke with the incoming students about exploring career options early, and he provided an overview of CareerMAP, the roadmap designed by UD’s Career Services to help meet students’ individual needs as they prepare to enter the workforce. By working through the “roadmap”—which begins with self-awareness and career exploration and ends with the implementation of career goals—UD students can build a resume, determine a career direction, find internships, apply to graduate school, build a network, and apply for internships or job opportunities.

Brink advised students to log on to Blue Hen Careers (www.udel.edu/CSC/jobs/jobs_portal) and make an appointment with a career counselor. He emphasized how beneficial it is for students to take advantage of the myriad offerings that Career Services provides.

Whether your student is a freshman starting out on his or her college journey or a senior beginning his or her final year on campus, it is never too late to take advantage of the services, programs and activities that the University offers, many of which are supported by gifts to the Parents Fund (www.udel.edu/giving/parents). Be sure to encourage your sons or daughters to network, get involved, discover their passions and begin thinking about career options. The four years go quickly!

For more information about Career Services, visit www.udel.edu/CSC.
Blue Hens have a new place to relax in the Trabant University Center, in the form of a brand new 50-plus seat lounge that occupies the former YoUDee Shop space on the first floor.

The space is comfortably appointed in vibrant colors for students to enjoy while relaxing between classes or gathering with friends to socialize or watch television. Though the lounge will be reserved periodically for small events, it will overwhelmingly serve as a student hangout.