From the Desk of the Dean

“U.S. public higher education faces increasing challenges . . . we should proactively work on how we might rethink PSU to address these challenges.”
— Provost Dr. Sona Andrews

Earlier this year, Provost Dr. Sona Andrews launched an initiative titled, “reTHINK PSU”. Outlined below, this initiative allowed faculty, staff, and students an opportunity to rethink Portland State’s use of technology, curriculum and partnerships to enhance the learning experience.

U.S. public higher education faces increasing challenges, including: changing models of educational delivery, declining state funding, alternate credentialing, demographic shifts in student populations, questions concerning the relevancy of the curriculum, increased cost, and increasing legislative security. Portland State is not immune to these challenges. We should proactively work on how we might rethink PSU to address these challenges. Additional information can be found at http://rethink.pdx.edu/.

Provost Andrews’ challenge sparked fantastic discussion around campus, where faculty, staff and students are engaging in deliberate conversation about how to make the educational experience we offer at Portland State optimally salient, vibrant and accessible for the entire community of learners.

This edition of the Family Newsletter invites you to also experience rethink PSU as we head into the spring term, a season of renewal and awakening. You’ll read about some folks who are rethinking arts education with the naming of the College of the Arts, or COTA, accompanied by renovation of Lincoln Hall — a renovation that will significantly enhance the Broadway exposure of this building with the addition of a glass tower gallery and performance space. In the Employee Spotlight feature, you can find out how PSU is rethinking how to best prepare students for careers by hiring Ann Mestrovich, Employer Relations Coordinator. You’ll find out that even PSU students are in the rethink spirit by re-purposing spring break as an opportunity to serve their communities.

You are encouraged to contact the Office of the Dean of Student Life with your own ideas about rethinking PSU or if you have questions on something mentioned in the Family Newsletter. You can reach the office by calling 503.725.4422 or emailingaskdos@pdx.edu.

Best,

Michele Toppe, Dean of Student Life

Student Spotlight:

Student Leaders For Service — ‘Rethinking Spring Break’

While many college students enjoy spring break by relaxing in Portland or in a warmer climate, 28 unique PSU students are choosing to volunteer in various communities throughout the Northwest and Southern United States on an Alternative Spring Break trip.

Alternative Spring Break is a week-long service opportunity in which PSU students travel to help meet needs in various communities. This service opportunity is organized by Student Leaders for Service with the mission to promote critical thinking, social action, continued community involvement, and civic engagement in the global community.

The three ASB trips being offered this spring include a focus on local and sustainable farming practices in northern California, a partnership with Habitat for Humanity to take action in the construction of affordable housing in Houston, Texas, and a focus on food and health equity disparities and solutions in Eastern Oregon, a trip which is being co-led by the Campus Rec department on PSU. Students participating on each ASB trip will carry out service projects related to the trips’ theme, and will be volunteering roughly 8 hours a day or a total of 40 hours during the week of spring break. This year’s program is the first time there has been a trip outside of the West Coast, something Student Leaders for Service is very excited about.

Many universities have similar programs, but one thing that makes PSU’s program unique is that each trip is planned and led by students in collaboration with the SLS staff. This provides an amazing opportunity to not only learn the administrative needs of a trip of this scope, but also develop their peer leadership skills. Erika Nielsen, an English major at PSU, is the lead for this year’s Houston ASB trip. This will be her third year participating in the ASB program and her second year being a trip lead. When asked why she got involved in the program, she answered, “First, I was looking for something different from the norm, something challenging. The second reason is that I want to work with my community, not just exist in it. The thing that most excites me about ASB is getting to know new people while doing the service I am passionate about. I have made some really good friends through ASB and I want to keep that community going.”

Alternative Spring Break is a powerful community builder, with other diverse communities and within Portland State. After the trip, many people make further commitments to their community by becoming a Student Leader for Service member or volunteering more frequently.
Resource Spotlight:
Why Would My Student Need a Lawyer?

It is important to realize that students may need legal assistance through no fault of their own. Consumer fraud, identity theft, bad landlords, or motor vehicle collisions can happen to anyone. We are here to help your student if that happens. Of course, there are also ample opportunities for problems relating to the students’ behavior. Campus and off-campus life can bring with it numerous situations that can give rise to legal hassles — traffic tickets, underage alcohol use, and even criminal charges. Either way, such matters can be overwhelming to a student. On-campus legal advice and representation can help keep an academic career from being derailed.

Student Legal Services (SLS) is here to assist your student in preventing, identifying, and resolving legal problems that disrupt their education. We can inform them about their legal rights and responsibilities while they pursue their educational goals. By assisting students to identify and resolve legal problems that threaten to disrupt their education, we allow them to concentrate on school and make the most of their college experience.

Your Role as a Parent
Your primary role is to guide your student to our services. It is important for parents to understand that their students have a confidential relationship with their lawyers. This means that a lawyer is absolutely prohibited from discussing what transpires between them with anyone. In fact, the lawyers cannot even disclose that a particular student is a client or has come to see us.

This confidentiality can be waived, allowing the lawyer to discuss the matter with third parties, but only after a full discussion with the student client, and obtaining such a waiver in writing.

Parents cannot schedule appointments for their student. The student must fill out the intake sheet in the office or on our web site and take the initiative of actually scheduling the appointment. The name of a student who uses the office is not disclosed to Portland State University.

Costs
SLS is funded by student service fees. Consultation is available to students enrolled in at least four undergraduate or three graduate credits. In some cases, client costs (e.g. filing fees to the courts, or expert witnesses for example) must be paid by the student, but only after the student has approved these costs. In some cases, the student’s legal issue cannot be resolved within the scope of our practice. In that case, we meet with the student to discuss their needs and if we are not able to assist, we provide referrals to other area resources and attorneys.

If your student needs legal help, have them call us at 503.725.4556. You and your student can also find out more about us by going to our website, pdx.edu/sls.

University Housing & Residence:
Spring is almost here! Look forward to these exciting events:

Blumel Reopening
It’s true! After months of renovations, Blumel is reopening in Spring 2013. With new cabinets, counter tops, lights, and appliances, students will find Blumel to be the optimal modern one-bedroom apartments in Portland. Current non-first year students are eligible to transfer to Blumel for Spring Term when they sign a Summer 2013 contract as well. Students can submit a transfer request in the University Housing and Residence Life office in Broadway 210. First year students are eligible to move into Blumel for Summer 2013 when they sign a contract for 2013-2014 as well.

Room Renewal for 2013-2014
It’s time for students to start thinking about their next year as a University Housing Resident. Students can explore options for renewing their current room or picking a new room this spring! Current on-campus students have top preference when it comes to selecting housing for next year. The Room Renewal process will begin April 8, 2013 where students will be able to save their room for the next year or pick a new one online. We encourage students to research options before filling out a Housing contract. Virtual tours of all the buildings are available online.

You can also attend our Open House on Saturday, April 6, 2013.

This event allows students and families to tour every building and room type on campus to help students choose where they want to live next academic year. Check in at the Montgomery Services Desk and go on a self-directed tour to the buildings and room types you’re interested in. All are welcome. Please stop by anytime between 11 am – 4 pm.

Summer 2013
Now is the time for students to start thinking about what you want to do for Summer 2013. Summer housing is offered to current residents with no academic requirement. This means that students can receive all of the benefits of living on campus, while working or interning in downtown Portland! For students looking to live on campus over the summer, the Summer Contract can be found on the Housing website.

Questions?
Visit our Office — The Housing and Residence Life friendly staff is happy to answer questions for you or your student. Email us at housing@pdx.edu, give us a call at 503.725.4375, or visit us online at pdx.edu/housing. We look forward to hearing from you soon!
Employee Spotlight: Ann Mestrovich

Ann Mestrovich is the new Employer Relations Coordinator at PSU. Her role focuses on developing relationships with employers to identify career opportunities for PSU students. Ann works closely with each employer to understand and customize their recruiting needs in order to make the best connections between them and PSU students. Employer relations activities that Ann oversees include inviting employers onto campus to participate in Career Fairs, to conduct on-campus interviews, host informational tables in the Student Union, and present at info sessions where students can get to know employers directly.

Ann began working at PSU in November 2012 and is excited to expand employer relations efforts to include networking events and company tours for students. She also plans to bring more employers to campus for mock interviews and panel discussions on what it’s like to work in a particular field and best practices for searching and applying for jobs.

Part of the Advising & Career Services staff, Ann is excited to collaborate with other resources on campus such as Diversity and Multicultural Student Services, Student Activity and Leadership Programs, and colleagues within specific Schools and Colleges to create the greatest opportunities for career success for PSU students.

Money Matters:
Summer Financial Aid: Questions and Concerns

A common issue facing students this time of year is planning for summer term. Students who wish to take classes during the summer term and have them paid with financial aid must complete a revision request in order to secure funding.

The most common misconception regarding summer aid is that a student’s aid eligibility automatically increases by attending summer courses. It does not. Students are generally awarded their maximum eligibility for fall, winter and spring terms at the beginning of the year. If they want to have their aid eligibility determined for the summer term, the student needs to submit a revision request indicating the number of credits they plan to take. The revision request can be submitted online through banweb and allows students to make adjustments to both their enrollment level and loan amounts.

Loan funds can be moved from term to term (or accepted if they were previously declined), but Pell grant can only be used in summer term if a student has not already had their full annual Pell grant in fall, winter and spring terms.

We understand that summer funding can be a difficult determination and we are happy to help you plan. If you have any questions regarding summer term financial aid, please contact the Office of Student Financial Aid & Scholarships via: email (askfa@pdx.edu), phone (503-725-3461), or coming to our office in Neuberger Hall.

PSU Dining:
Eating made easy with PSU Dining

Looking for gift ideas for your PSU student? PSU Dining has an idea! Choose from a variety of meal plans or add Dining Dollars for the spring quarter.

Dining Dollars are cash value added onto your students PSU ID card to purchase food on campus, without having to carry cash.

Meal plans offer students the flexibility to get a great value for meals on campus. Victor’s offers all-you-care-to-eat meals made from scratch with vegetarian, vegan and gluten-free options every day.

Meal Plans and Dining Dollars can be purchased online at PSU-Dining.com, in the Smith Union Building Rm 260 or by calling 503.725.8990. Get to know PSU Dining at facebook.com/PSUDining.

Focus on Internships:
By Denise Dallmann

PSU Graduate Assistant & Honors Internship Coordinator

“About 1.5 million, or 53.6 percent, of bachelor’s degree-holders under the age of 25 last year were jobless or underemployed, the highest share in at least 11 years.”

The Atlantic, April 2012

As the new internship coordinator for PSU honors students, I’ve had the pleasure of meeting some very ambitious and hard-working PSU students. Soon, each of these students will be faced with the challenge of finding work upon graduation. Given the high unemployment rate for college graduates, students need to do everything they can to stand out above the rest. One of the most effective means of enhancing a student’s resume is completing an internship in his/her career field. An internship can be an invaluable experience where students have the unique opportunity to apply their classroom learning to a real-work environment.

There are many other benefits to an internship, such as:
• Exploring career options
• Developing professional skills
• Networking with other professionals
• Reinforcing classroom learning
• Building work experience

As family and friends, you are the primary source of support, encouragement, and mentorship to your students. Finding an internship can be a challenging experience and many students benefit from direct support from their family and friends.

How can you help?
• Brainstorm career options with your student
• Introduce him/her to professionals you know who work in the student’s career field
• Assist him/her in finding an internship
• Do a mock interview with your student
• Assist your student in arranging an informational interview to learn about career options
• Take him/her to work with you for a day or a week
• Develop an internship program at your work

Internships are a win-win for both the student and organization or business. Organizations are able to get additional help and students get valuable work experience and training.

For more information about internships for PSU students, please visit the PSU Career Center Internship webpage at pdx.edu/advising-career-services/internships or contact Jeanne Ellis at jmellis@pdx.edu. Honors family and friends can visit the PSU Honors Internship webpage at pdx.edu/honors/internships-research or contact Denise Dallmann at d dallman@pdx.edu
Campus Spotlight:
Lincoln Hall Glass Tower

Imagine letting the world see the arts in action, always.

Historic Lincoln Hall has been a fixture of Portland’s educational scene for more than 100 years. From 1912 until 1952 it was the site of Lincoln High School, before becoming the university’s first home on the Park Blocks in 1953. In 2008, state deferred maintenance funds supported with private dollars saved Lincoln Hall, correcting serious structural deficiencies and completely re-imaging its interior space. Now, fully restored, the iconic building is alive with the performing arts – serving students and the community alike with superior performance venues.

With gratitude to a generous lead gift from Arlene Schnitzer, plans are moving forward to construct the Lincoln Hall Glass Tower, a three-story beacon for the arts, where student gallery space and acting and dance courses will be visible to the public from the building’s exterior on Broadway.

“The Glass Tower provides a missing link – a bold and distinctive entrance for a university on the rise. It calls attention to the importance of the University in our city and serves as a living billboard for the arts along the city’s most vibrant performing arts corridor.”

Mark Rosenbaum
Board Member, PSU Foundation; former chair Portland Development Commission

We invite you to be a part of this vision by helping raise the $1.1 million necessary to complete the glass tower. We have come so far...but don’t take our word for it! Join us for a building tour or attend one of our many College of the Arts events. View our Calendar of Events here.

Celebrate the rich history of Lincoln Hall and be a permanent part of its exciting future!

For more information contact Ann Prater, Director of Development, at 503.477.7141 or aprater@pdx.edu.

Campus Spotlight:
reTHINK the Arts

Portland State University’s former School of Fine and Performing Arts recently received a makeover into the new College of the Arts. The College of the Arts is the new home for the schools of Architecture, Art & Design, Music, and Theatre & Film. The College has some of the fastest growing programs at PSU and serves more than 2,200 students who are majoring in Arts programs.

Barbara Sestak, Dean of the College of the Arts, states that, “this new name reflects the greater stature of our programs locally and nationally, recognition of the impact of the wonderful work that our faculty do, the increase in our professional and liberal art degree programs, the large growth in the numbers of our majors, the multiple and varied partnerships that each and every School has, the various accreditations of our different programs, and the funded research that our faculty conduct. We are reaffirming our commitment to a broad range of the arts and the direction we are heading.”

To view a video premiering the new College of the Arts, click here: pdx.edu/insidepsu/college-of-the-arts-premieres-at-psu.