



**March 16, 2007**

**Dear Parents:**

I am pleased to provide the introductory remarks for this month's edition of the Scholars Family Link eNewsletter. I hope this finds you and your families well.

The year 2007 marks a special anniversary for parents at the University of Maryland: it is the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Maryland Parents Association. Originally launched as the College Park Association of Parents, the Association has been both a resource for parents and an asset to the university since the fall semester of 1977. The Maryland Parents Association stands as a testament to the value we place on the role of parents as well as our commitment to establishing and maintaining a connection with you.

Help celebrate the Maryland Parents Association by activating your free membership in the organization. If you are not already a member, I encourage you to complete the online activation form located on the Terp Parent Web site at [www.terpparent.umd.edu](http://www.terpparent.umd.edu). There is no membership fee and there are no requirements or elaborate expectations. Once you activate your membership, you can look forward to receiving the university's monthly electronic newsletter for parents called *eConnection*. (Note: If you already receive *eConnection*, there is no need to go online and complete the form; your membership has already been activated.)

I also want to take this opportunity to inform you of the dates for Family Weekend 2007 and to extend a personal invitation to each of you to attend this extraordinary weekend of events. Family Weekend will take place on Friday, October 12 through Sunday, October 14, 2007. Now in its 27<sup>th</sup> year, Family Weekend is the largest university sponsored program for the parents and family members of our undergraduate students. The Family Weekend Planning Committee is already hard at work and we are very excited about what's in store. The weekend will feature special Family Weekend traditions along with an impressive array of social and academic programs, lectures, sporting events, musical entertainment, performances, and much more. I hope you will join us. Complete details regarding Family Weekend will be posted on the Family Weekend Web site in July (go to [www.familyweekend.umd.edu](http://www.familyweekend.umd.edu)), and a brochure will be sent to you via postal mail in August.

You are welcome to contact the Office of Parent and Family Affairs should you have any questions or need assistance. We can be reached by phone at 301.314.8429 (Parent Helpline) or via email at [parents@umd.edu](mailto:parents@umd.edu).

Happy Spring!

Sincerely,

[Brian L. Watkins](#)

Director

Office of Parent and Family Affairs

### ***4th Annual Scholars in New York***

Our annual trip to New York City is rapidly approaching and we would like to take this opportunity to provide you with a few announcements should you wish to connect with our group in the Big Apple. More than 375 students, 50 faculty, and 50 alumni and parents are making this weekend excursion with the program on April 20 - 22, 2007. Beyond this traveling party, we expect alumni, parents and friends to connect with the group throughout the weekend.

The first opportunity for alumni and parents in the tri-state area to reconnect will be at our Friday evening Happy Hour on April 20th. Please consider joining faculty, staff, alumni and parents from the DC area as we descend upon "The Mean Fiddler" for a few hours of conversation and fun. Your hosts will be representatives of College Park Scholars Alumni Association and the fun will last from 6:00 - 8:00 p.m. "The Mean Fiddler," provides live music of all genres, and is known for its fusion of Irish and American fare. Please consider spending an evening with friends and administrators from College Park Scholars at 266 W 47th Street in the heart of Manhattan. No advance registration is required; simply stop by and look for the Scholars banners!

A second opportunity to connect with College Park Scholars will occur on Saturday evening, April 21st, at 5:30 p.m.. Join Scholars faculty, staff, alumni and parents from the DC area as we break bread at Simply Pasta. Many of our event participants will be attending a performance on Broadway that evening, and this pre-theatre prix fixe meal will provide a wonderful (and affordable) opportunity to spend some more time among friends. >From the Italian-American cuisine to the urban atmosphere, this experience will tastefully accompany an evening in the city. The menu will include mouth-watering creations like Lasagna della Casa (a Tuscan-style meat lasagna), Pasta di Mare (linguini pasta with shrimp, scallops, clams, calamari and muscles in garlic marinara sauce) and Conchiglie Primavera (shell pasta and mixed vegetables with garlic and olive oil). The meal will also include an authentic Italian salad and choice of dessert (drinks are extra). There will be a flat price of \$24.00 plus a tax of 8.375% and 20% gratuity. If you wish to join the group, please RSVP with your name, the number in your party, and a cell phone number to [nyc@collegetparksscholars.com](mailto:nyc@collegetparksscholars.com) no later than Tuesday, April 3, 2007.

## ***Residence Hall Closing Information for Spring Break***

The North Campus Residence Halls will close on Friday, March 16, 2007, at 7:00 p.m. South Campus Residence Halls will remain open. North Campus Halls will reopen Sunday, March 25, 2007 at 10:00 a.m. Students who live in North Campus Halls will not be permitted to stay in their halls over this period of time, so please make the appropriate arrangements. For further information, please visit <http://www.resnet.umd.edu/Calendar/> or contact the Department of Resident Life at (301) 314-2100.

## ***Living It Up!***

Resident life has become a foundational part of the college experience and serves many in the student body by creating communities, especially through living-learning programs that foster camaraderie in specialized interests. On behalf of the Scholars Office, we would like to take this chance to introduce a new component of the parent newsletter that will be featured in our upcoming publications to provide a glimpse of what your Scholars are doing within their communities. Not only are the activities that students take part in important for collective development, but there are various sources that attribute individual success in college to participation or membership in a healthy and active community.

According to the Department of Resident Life's website, "Students who participate as members of these communities have higher retention and graduation rates and report higher satisfaction with their undergraduate experience at Maryland. These positive outcomes result from: the connections that are made with students who share similar interests, the substantial contact that occurs with individual faculty members outside the classroom, enhanced programmatic opportunities, specialized guidance on academic and career planning, frequent service learning opportunities, and Creative utilization of the research, cultural, natural and political resources of the Baltimore-Washington, DC-Annapolis area," (<http://www.resnet.umd.edu/acadhall.html>).

In an article published in The Denver Post in 1994 entitled "Dorms with a Difference: College residence halls offer environments for every interest", staff writer Michelle Mahoney wrote, "Colleges' special residential programs can take some of the fear out of the college experience by helping to balance student diversity with common interests." As seen through the nature of the Scholars Program and the efforts by Resident Life, the enhancement of the community has served Scholars well. These are all facets of the mission of the College Park Scholars Program, and we will now make an effort to highlight some special events—large or small—that have in some way worked to impact those involved.

On Thursday, March 8, 2007 from 8:00 p.m. to 11:00 p.m., the Cumberland Resident Assistant (RA) staff hosted an evening at Stamp Student Union's Terp Zone. Students from all of Cambridge Community were invited. As a brief recap, various groups of residents attended and added to the success of this community building event.

"It gave people a positive alternative to going out somewhere and doing some other negative behavior on a Thursday night," said Sarah Todd, a Cumberland RA who helped to plan the festivities. Whether they came to support the efforts of their RAs or solely to get a free night of bowling and billiards, the students that walked away from the night experienced a sense of community because of the vision and hard work of the Resident staff. "It was nice to see that support," Todd said of the turnout, "They came to support our efforts." Fellow RA Jaimie Miller of Cumberland conveyed that the main goals of events such as these are to acquaint the residents with one another and to curb unconstructive actions on nights that tend to evoke such behavior.

The importance of these types of activities echoes throughout the lives of college students, as they reflect back on their time at the university and smile at the moments that they shared with those who helped to build their vision of college life and the experiences that helped to mold them into who they are today.

**Scholars Newsdesk** (<http://www.scholars.umd.edu/news/>)

Catch up on students, faculty, and administrators connected with College Park Scholars, as their most recent press clippings can be found at our newsdesk online.

From all of us at College Park Scholars, thank you for your continued support of the program, and please [be in touch](#) with our faculty and staff if we can be supportive or respond to any questions or concerns.