Parent Connection

Staff Spotlight - Academic Resource Center Director
Shelley Sawalich

Often in the wee hours of the morning, while cramming for finals or putting the finishing touches on a paper due the next day, students will realize the need for academic assistance. Though by this point it might be too late for a particular assignment, Academic Resource Director Shelley Sawalich wants students to know where to look when they need help.

The Academic Resource Center, located on the ground floor of Maria Hall near Marletto’s Marketplace, is the premiere destination for any student seeking help with his or her writing, a particular academic subject, or assistance with transitioning to college-level courses. Parents can also refer a student to the center if they see their child struggling, Sawalich said.

“Parents are an integral part of undergraduate student success,” Sawalich said.

The Center provides academic support for all students worldwide. Walk-ins are welcome, but appointments are recommended for the Writing Center, which provides peer-to-peer assistance with writing and editing papers. Many faculty who see a student might need help in a particular area, often with Math or Computer Science courses, are encouraged to refer students to the Center to schedule appointments. Sawalich and other staff also offer academic counseling to any student, which includes goal-setting, time management and study strategies for success.

Often, a faculty member will suggest a student take advantage of peer-to-peer tutoring to catch up on missed assignments, test preparation, and study habits. German professor Christiane Carlsson often recommends students to the ARC if they miss class for an extra-curricular activity such as a singing competition or an athletic event. She said students can easily fall behind in foreign languages after missing classes and she suggests they meet with advanced students who tutor through the ARC.

“It’s hard for students to catch up on their own,” Carlsson said. “It makes a great difference if they use the resources we have.”

The ARC offers resources to help students with disabilities. In one case, a blind student taking German courses needed assistance from the ARC. The ARC found German texts in Braille as well as other media to assist. Carlson said the student excelled at the subject and was very grateful to the ARC for the assistance.

If a student is in need of academic assistance, the Academic Resource Center has the resources and tools to help every student succeed.

Webster Chess Team Captures Final Four Championship

Webster University made history on April 7 when it became the first St. Louis team ever to win a Final Four collegiate chess championship. Webster’s top-ranked chess team emerged victorious in the President’s Cup – also known as the Final Four of Collegiate Chess – a two-day throw-down that determines the national champion of college chess teams. The tournament was held in Rockville, Md. This is the first time in history a team made it to the Final Four of Collegiate Chess – in its first year at a school and also the first time that a first-year team has been ranked as the No. 1 seed in the Final Four. Webster’s chess team has ranked No. 1 since August 2012, when the team was officially formed.

“Congratulations to all the members of our team and all who support them, as I know that they have worked hard to prepare for this moment,” said President Beth Stroble, who was in the Washington, D.C. area this weekend to watch the Final Four. “Their competitors were smart, tough, and skilled and there were many tense moments this weekend, which makes this championship particularly significant for Webster University. I couldn’t be prouder.”

The Final Four is the most prestigious team tournament in collegiate chess; the winner is known as the national champion of college chess. To get to the Final Four, teams must first compete in the Pan American Intercollegiate Team Chess Championship, held each year during the last week of December. Only the top four teams in this event qualify for the Final Four. This year, in addition to Webster, other schools competing in the Final Four were the University of Maryland-Baltimore County, University of Texas-Dallas, and University of Illinois.

The Webster University Chess team falls under the Susan Polgar Institute or Chess Excellence (SPICE). The goal of SPICE is to enhance chess, education, technology, and research. Some of Ms. Polgar’s chess accomplishments include: Winner of 4 Women’s World Championships (Under 16, Blitz, Rapid, and Classical), The only World Champion in history to win the Triple-Crown (Rapid, Blitz, and Classical World Championships), Five-time Olympic Champion with 10 overall medals (5 Gold, 4 Silver and 1 Bronze), 2006 Women’s Chess Cup Champion.

For more information on SPICE, please visit webster.edu/spice.
Greetings, Fellow Webster Parents

Dear Parents,

It seems like just yesterday we were sitting with our son Jack at his Webster freshman orientation. A few weeks ago he walked across the Muny stage and received his diploma. Where did the time go? We are very proud of him and thrilled that he has a Webster degree and contacts as he enters the work force. Sadly, however, this also means that our time as the co-chairs of the Parents Council has come to an end and we too must say farewell to the Parents Council, but not to Webster University.

Even though Jack is moving on to the next stage of his life, we and Jack will forever be connected to this great institution. Jack has made lifelong friends and mentors and we too have made connections with other parents and staff that will last for years to come. We truly believe in Webster’s mission of preparing our children to be global citizens. Jack has been given the tools to enter the global market and make the best of what he was taught at Webster. Webster has made an impact on Jack and Jack has made an impact on Webster.

The Parents Program and Council continue to grow and prosper. The Parents Council is dedicated to assisting the university in recruitment and retention efforts as well as seeking a larger presence for parents at various university functions. Parents are now strongly represented during New Student Orientation, Homecoming and Parents Weekend, Admitted Students Day, and Freshmen Registration Days. We want to thank the parents that volunteer their time to the university and hope that many more of you will take the time to become a more active part of the Webster family.

We would also like to take this opportunity to announce Wally and Bev Pfeffer as the new co-chairs of the Webster University Parents Council. Wally and Bev have been valuable members of the Parents Council for the last year. Their daughters, Hillary, just finished her freshman year as a Stage Management major in the Conservatory. We know that Wally and Bev will continue to grow the Parents Council and be a strong voice for parents at Webster. We wish both of them luck and good fortune as they take the Parents Council to the next level.

Farewell and we urge you to continue supporting Webster University in time, talent, and treasure. If you would like to be more active, please contact Billy Ratz at 314-968-7007 or parents@webster.edu.

Sincerely,

Mark & Carolyn Hentschell Parents of Jack, class of 2013

Parents Weekend at a Glance

Webster University’s annual Homecoming Weekend will take place Sept. 27 and 28, 2013. All parents and family members are welcome back to campus for Parents Weekend as alums come back for reunion. The tentative schedule of events includes:

Friday, Sept. 27
Registration, 4-7pm
UC Presentation Room
Campus Tours, 4-5pm
UC Presentation Room
Homecoming Carnival, 4-11pm, Lot H

Parent Information Bazaar, 5-6pm
Library Conference Room

Alumni & Faculty Authors Meet & Greet
5-7pm, Sunnen Lounge
May Gallery Exhibit & Reception, 5-7pm
May Gallery
Dance Department Performance, 5-5:30pm
Quad
President’s Reception, 5:30-7:30pm
UC Commons
Hunt Gallery Exhibit & Reception, 5:30-6:30pm, Hunt Gallery

Saturday, Sept. 28
Webster Wellness 5K, 8am
Eden Field
Registration, 9am-3:30pm
UC Presentation Room
Parent’s Pancake Breakfast, 9-11am
Crossroads
Parent Council Meeting, 9am-12pm
Sunnen Lounge
Homecoming Carnival, 12-5pm
Lot H

Ninth Annual Student vs. Alumni Flag Football Game, 12-1pm, Quad

Food Truck Food Court, 12-3pm
Quad
Illphonics Concert, 1:30-3:30pm
Sunnen Lounge
Lighting Talks, 2-4pm
East Academic Building
Alumni Celebration Gala, 6-10pm
Sunset Country Club

Registration information will be sent in July with a full schedule of events. Contact the Alumni & Parent Programs Office for more information at 314-968-7007 or parents@webster.edu. We hope to see you here on campus!

We Want to Hear from You

What do all Webster parents have in common? There are probably many links, but the most common link between all parents is their vested interest in the dreams and expectations of their sons or daughters. As a result, there are undoubtedly questions, ideas, concerns, stories, and viewpoints that parents share. That said, we want to hear from you! Submit your questions, comments, and suggestions. Maybe it’s a question about student life or our athletic programs. Maybe it’s a comment about an event you recently attended on campus. Whatever the subject, send us your feedback. You might see it appear in a future issue of Parent Connection. This is your newsletter. We know you are out there reading…so please, start sharing!

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Carolyn and Mark Hentschell, co-chairs of the Parents Council
Webster News Briefs

Tony Award Winner Norbert Leo Butz

Webster’s 2013 Commencement Speaker

Tony Award Winner and Webster University alumnus Norbert Leo Butz delivered the commencement address and received an honorary Doctor of Humane Letters degree at Webster University’s 2013 commencement ceremony, held at 10 a.m. on Saturday, May 11, at The Muny in Forest Park.

Butz was born and raised in St. Louis and received a bachelor’s of fine arts from Webster’s Conservatory of Theatre Arts program in the Leigh Gerdine College of Fine Arts in 1990. He received the Outstanding Alumnus Award from the Leigh Gerdine College of Fine Arts in 2000.

Butz made his Broadway debut as Roger Davis in the musical “Rent” in 1996. Since then he has gone on to star in numerous Broadway shows including “Dead Accounts,” “Enron,” “Spider the Fly,” “Wicked” and “Thou Shalt Not.” He won a Tony Award for Best Performance by a Leading Actor in a Musical for his work in “Dirty Rotten Scoundrels” in 2005 and for “Catch Me If You Can” in 2011. He is currently starring in the new musical “Big Fish,” which began a pre-Broadway engagement in Chicago in early April and will head to Broadway in October 2013.

In particular, Webster scored very high (3-1/2 stars out of four) for the staff members dedicated to veterans’ issues in the business school and the full university, including how much time they spend on veteran-specific work and other factors.

Overall, 32 percent of Walker School students were either active military or on military benefits during the fall 2012 semester.

Set to Lead CENTCOM, Webster Alumnus Gen. Lloyd Austin ’89

The Vice Chief of Staff of the United States Army, who was nominated in December by President Barack Obama to lead United States Central Command (CENTCOM), testified Feb. 14 before the Senate on Capitol Hill as part of the confirmation process to assume this leadership position.

Gen. Austin graduated from Webster’s Kansas City campus location with a master's degree in management in 1989, while he was attending the United States Army Command and General Staff College in Fort Leavenworth, Kan.

In addition to wishing him well heading into his confirmation hearing, the Webster leaders had another reason for paying Gen. Austin a visit. He was the recipient of the Webster University 2012 Distinguished Alumnus Award. The general originally planned to receive the award on campus at Webster’s annual Alumni Awards Gala in St. Louis last September, but responsibilities as Vice Chief of Staff of the U.S. Army prevented him from attending.

Gen. Austin will head CENTCOM and oversee the drawdown of troops in Afghanistan. He will be the first African-American general to lead U.S. Central Command. His previous assignment before becoming the Vice Chief of Staff was as the last Commanding General of the United States Forces – Iraq, Operation New Dawn, which lasted until Dec. 15, 2011.

Webster Receives ‘Confucius Institute of the Year’ Honor

Thanks to a long list of outreach activities – ranging from teaching Chinese language and culture classes in 42 St. Louis-area K-12 schools, to hosting two-week Chinese immersion trips each summer for local high school students, to conducting workshops for employers of St. Louis companies that do business in China, just to name a few – the Confucius Institute at Webster University was recently named “Confucius Institute of the Year” by HANBAN, an affiliate of the Chinese Ministry of Education.

School of Education Graduate Programs Earn National Recognition

The Webster University School of Education announced that six graduate degree programs have recently been awarded national recognition, making a total of seven degree programs that now hold this distinction.

This recognition involves an intensive evaluation of each of these programs by their respective Specialized Professional Associations (SPA) under the umbrella of the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE).

The six newly recognized programs are:

- Education Specialist (Ed. S.) in Educational Leadership (online)
- Ed. S. in Educational Leadership (face-to-face)
- Ed. S. in School Systems, Superintendency and Leadership
- MA in Teaching English as a Second Language
- MA Early Childhood Education
- MAT Early Childhood Education

The MA in Reading has been nationally recognized since 2006.

Students Get It! Student Philanthropy Day 2013

Webster University participated in the first international Student Engagement and Philanthropy Day on Thursday, Feb. 28, 2013. More than 120 universities and colleges participated in this day of philanthropic education in the United States, Australia, Europe, Asia, and Mexico. The event was the brainchild of the Council for Advancement and Support of Education Associated Student Advancement Programs (CASE ASAP).

Webster’s Student Ambassadors are members of this organization and assisted in organizing the events on Webster’s campus in conjunction with the office of Alumni & Development Programs.

Webster University Student Ambassadors offered three activities that would engage Webster students and inform them about the importance of giving back to Webster with their time, talent, and treasure.

The “GoLook Walk” – Ambassadors videotaped students while quizzes their knowledge of the university and philanthropy.

“Button Day,” – Faculty and staff who had donated during the current fiscal year were given a button that says “I gave it, I got it, Philanthropy @ Webster.” This made students aware of giving to the university, and showed that the faculty and staff give back in time, talent, and treasure.

A thank-a-thon, during which students signed thank-you postcards to alumni donors. More than 1,200 postcards were signed by students throughout the day.

The day was a huge success and the campus is getting excited for Student Engagement and Philanthropy Day 2014 on Feb. 27!

Career & Internship Fair Oct. 9, 2013

The Career & Internship Fair is not just for seniors. Parents should encourage their student to attend, whether freshman, sophomore, junior, or senior, because there’s something for every student. Freshmen and sophomores can take this opportunity to explore careers, find out what skills employers seek, and prepare for life after Webster. Juniors can learn more about internships which yield experience and can help them make decisions about their future careers. Lastly, in a technology driven society, seniors get the rare opportunity to communicate face to face with recruiters about career opportunities.

For more information, contact Terezette Dixon, Assistant Director, Employment Services at dixonet@webster.edu or 314-246-7967.
Spring 2013 Sports Wrap Up

Webster University Athletics saw record-breaking performances, by teams and individually, in a successful Spring 2013 season. The men's tennis team had its best season ever; women's tennis had its highest winning percentage and just missed the NCAA tournament, track and field set programs records by the week, and men's baseball is on track to, hopefully, make it back to the NCAA III World Series.

Twenty-five Webster student-athletes were named to the SLIAC Fall All-Academic Team.

Men's Baseball
The Webster University men's baseball team, coming off an NCAA World Series appearance in 2012, is off to another great season. The team is 20-1 in the St. Louis Intercollegiate Athletic Conference, having clinched the league title for a seventh straight year, and earning the #1 seed in the conference tournament. Webster is currently ranked 10th nationally in the NCAA III with a 29-8 overall record. After starting the season 2-4, the team travelled to Florida where it went 5-1, knocking off the #1, #2, #9, and #25 ranked teams. The team won 13 straight, finishing first three times in both events.

Men's Golf
The Webster University men's golf team finished second in the St. Louis Intercollegiate Athletic Conference Championship, shooting a very respectable 891. Unfortunately, they ran into a very hot competitor and had to settle for second, after winning the title the previous two years.

The Gorloks were led by senior Tyler Scott's team low 218. Scott wound up fifth on the leader board with teammate Andrew Noble four strokes behind at 222 and in sixth place.

Scott finished his distinguished career at Webster. His fifth place finish earned Scott a place on the SLIAC All-Conference First Team. For Scott, it was his fourth time landing on the All-Conference Second Team. For Scott, it was his fourth time landing on the All-Conference Team and Kinsman was All-Conference Second Team. For Scott, it was his fourth time landing on the All-Conference Team and Kinsman was All-Conference three years.

Women's Softball
The Webster University women's softball team finished the season at 19-16 overall and 8-8 in the St. Louis Intercollegiate Athletic Conference. Several players ended record-breaking careers while several other returners gave the Gorloks hope for 2014.

Pitcher Trisha Thompson, whose career ends after just three seasons, wound up in Webster's all-time career top ten in seven pitching categories. She finished first (tied) with 15 shutouts, first in strikeouts (152), 10th in ERA (3.01), and 6th in wins (29). She set a single season strikeout record with 175 in 2013.

Senior catcher Aly Watson was a SLIAC First Team All-Conference selection after setting 354, with 11 doubles and 16 RBIs, and a solid .989 fielding percentage. Outfield/pitcher Rachel Frank had an outstanding freshman campaign, garnering Second Team SLIAC All-Conference honors. She batted a team-high .420 for the season with 16 stolen bases and on the mound, Franck was 6-1 and led the SLIAC with a 0.66 ERA.

Senior shortstop Jessica Arpang wound up in the top ten on the Webster career list in a number of offensive categories. She finished 10th in RBIs (96), home runs (10), and runs (92), and 8th in hits (142), Sophomore Taylor Gibbs led Webster in home runs (8) and RBIs (25).

Men's and Women's Track and Field
The Gorloks had an outstanding year, finishing 14-2 overall and second in the St. Louis Intercollegiate Athletic Conference at 5-1. The team had the highest winning percentage in program history at .875, starting the season 11-0.

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