Panther Parent is UNI's e-newsletter for parents and guardians. Panther Parent is sent three times per semester and features university events, deadlines and tips from the UNI Parents Association.

EDITOR'S NOTES
We want to hear from you! Please let us know if there's information you need or topics you'd like to see addressed.

NEWS

UNI jumps in top 100 'Best Value in Public Colleges'
For the fourth year in a row, the University of Northern Iowa is ranked in the top 100 "Best Values in Public Colleges" by Kiplinger's Personal Finance for 2016. The ranking cites four-year schools that combine outstanding education with economic value. UNI jumped from No. 86 last year to No. 58 on the 2016 list thanks to its high four-year graduation rate, low average student debt at graduation, abundant financial aid, low sticker price and overall great value.

Time to reapply for aid
Now is the time to reapply for financial aid. The Free Application for Federal Student Aid must be completed each academic year. To reapply, visit the FAFSA website. Contact the Office of Financial Aid and Scholarships at 319-273-2700 with any questions or to schedule an appointment.

Graduation and dean's lists
The list of fall 2015 graduates and dean's list members has been released. University Relations will send a notice to area newspapers with a link to a website where they can find the names of students from their coverage area. Note: if students have restricted their directory information, the university can't make this information public.

Spring Commencement details
Dates, times and locations for spring commencement have been finalized. Visit the registrar's website for commencement details.

We Are One UNI
UNI is hosting a week of philanthropy, We Are One UNI, from Feb. 22-26. The entire Panther family – students, faculty, staff, alumni and friends – will join forces to make a difference at the University of Northern Iowa. You can get involved today and stay informed about what's happening during the week by following the We Are One UNI Facebook page and Twitter account. Learn more about what the week entails.

Severe weather announcements
Announcements regarding cancellation of classes and/or reduced university operations are made via
UNI Alert, local radio and TV stations, the UNI home page and social media. The local TV stations also list closings and delays on their websites. For more information, visit the weather resources page.

Want more UNI news?
Visit the UNI Newsroom. Follow UNI on Twitter at @uninews, become a fan of UNI's Facebook page, or visit the YouTube site.

EVENTS

Feb. 22  UNI Day at the Capitol
Feb. 24  We Are One UNI Day of Giving
March 14-18  Spring break
May 2-6  Finals week
May 7  Spring Commencement

For a complete list of events, visit UNI's Calendar of Events.

RESOURCES FOR STUDENTS

It's recontracting time!
Has your student selected which hall and room they wish to live in next year? Room selection is currently underway for the 2016-17 academic year. Students may reserve their room and select a meal plan by logging in to the housing and dining contract. Living on campus gives students easy access to the events and activities happening around campus, surrounds them with friends, offers learning beyond the classroom and of course makes the walk to class that much shorter. Plus, they're never far from getting something great to eat at one of our award-winning dining facilities.

Career Services Job & Internship Fair
Did you know many internships can be found at the Job & Internship Fair from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m., Wednesday, Feb. 17? More than 120 organizations will be on hand in the McLeod Center to visit with students about career opportunities, internships and campus employment. All majors, freshmen through graduate students and alumni are welcome. View the participants on the Career Services website.

Student employment
Around 4,000 students work on-campus in a variety of positions! Remember if your student is going to work on-campus they will have to complete hiring paperwork before they start working which will require them to bring identification documents. Many position for the fall semester are hired around spring break. Encourage your student begin looking on the Job Board.
Summer aid estimates
If your student is considering taking summer classes, they can get information about summer aid opportunities from the financial aid office.

Summer housing
Students may reside on campus over the summer regardless of whether or not they are enrolled in summer courses. Summer housing is available in Panther Village, ROTH and Shull, each of which are fully air conditioned. Keep this information in mind as your student is figuring out their plans for the summer.

Students can learn to manage their money
The Office of Financial Aid and Scholarships offers the course ‘Live Like a Student’ each semester. This free, non-credit, financial literacy course meets several times per semester and covers topics including budgeting, credit, student loans and identity protection. Its success is a major contributor to the 13 percent decrease in student loan indebtedness over the past six years. Learn more or register for programs. Individual budgeting appointments are also available by contacting the office at 319-273-2700.

Tutoring can help get students up to speed
Not everyone masters every subject right away. If your son or daughter needs help with a class, suggest UNI’s ASK-A-TUTOR service. UNI has free tutors (peer instructors) for many Liberal Arts Core and major courses. Students can call Academic Services at 319-273-6023 or visit the AS website.

Mental health resources
Please make sure your student is aware of the many mental health resources on campus to support their success:

- The Counseling Center offers same day crisis counseling appointments for students in an emergency. Students should call 319-273-2676 to arrange to be seen for an emergency appointment. After office hours (including weekends and breaks), they can call the Counseling Center at 319-273-2676 and press 2 at the prompt to speak to a crisis counselor.

- Residence hall staff is available to talk with students; Resident Assistants (students) and Residence Life Coordinators (professional staff) are available 24-hours-a-day. Students can call, email or visit to talk with either. The Dean of Students Office also is available to assist with and discuss individual situations. Please call Leslie Williams or Allyson Rafanello at 319-273-2332.

- There also are more than a dozen campus ministries in the Cedar Valley community that offer support to students. Information on the various faith-specific communities may be found at Campus Ministries.

RESOURCES FOR PARENTS

8 steps to filing your FAFSA
Check out this article from College Parents of America for eight helpful steps to filling out the FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid).

Valentine’s Hugs from Home
Give your beloved student a Valentine’s Day surprise with a limited time Valentine’s Hugs from Home. This package includes chocolate, candy, popcorn and more for only $25.95. Let your student know you’re thinking of them on Valentine’s Day with a Hug from Home!
UNI PARENTS ASSOCIATION
All parents/guardians of UNI students are automatically members of the UNI Parents Association, which works as an advocacy group. Benefits include e-newsletters each semester and a parents' booth at orientation. Contact Leslie Williams, UNIPA liaison at 319-273-2332 with questions.

Get Involved -- Join UNIPA Advisory Board
The UNI Parents Association Advisory Board members get the opportunity to share their opinions and insights with UNI staff and faculty. It's a great opportunity to hear and be heard. Learn more on the UNIPA website. If you know of other parents of UNI students who would be interested in this newsletter, please forward! We'd like to share this information with as many parents as possible.

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