

The Link

Bringing the Division of Student Affairs Home



Fall 2011

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Student Affairs and You!

Lisa Desautels-Poliquin, Vice President For Student Affairs

The campus is busy; and busy students give back.

To say that the fall semester has been busy on the Thomas campus may be an understatement. There is much going on. In regards to facilities, students returned to find a newly designed dining center ready to greet them and a new function room scheduled to open in November. This will complete Phase I on the Student Commons project; designs are underway for Phase II scheduled for completion in summer 2012. While work continues indoors, heavy equipment moves dirt outside as we maneuver through construction and build a new main entrance on the campus. This will create the space needed for a future residence hall.

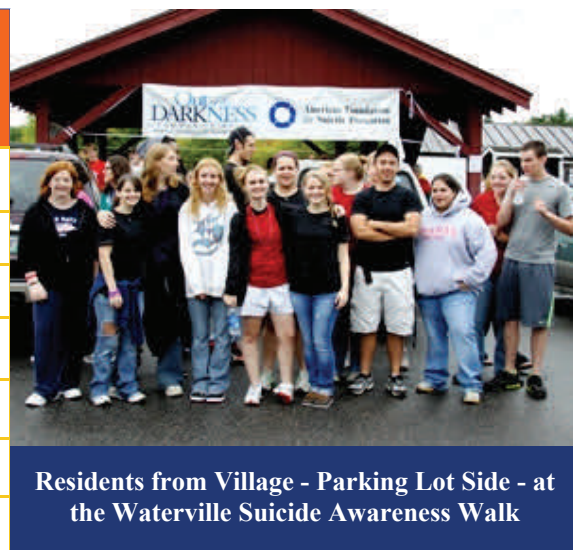
For those of us who work in Student Affairs, while we enjoy the momentum and opportunities that come with new facilities, our focus during the fall has been on the students' experience. In late August, we welcomed the largest entering class to the Thomas "Terrier" family. We've had a successful Homecoming and Family Weekend, and as a division, sponsored fifteen programs for National Alcohol Awareness Week (Oct. 16-22). The theater group entertained us with a very professional (and humorous!) fall production, and the Education Club brought a wildlife exhibit to campus. We've passed through mid-terms and many students are now engaged in class projects, mapping out their coursework for spring registration (scheduled for mid-November), and are planning for finals. Fall athletic and intramural teams have wrapped up successful seasons and winter teams have started. And, yes, we've even seen our first snowfall!

With so much going on, one would imagine that there is little time left for much more. Yet, in the midst of all that our students juggle on a daily basis, several student groups and organizations participated this fall in meaningful service projects. In August, before the start of classes, our Resident Assistant staff volunteered at the Mid-Maine Homeless Shelter as part of their leadership training experience while our first year students in the EDGE program spent a day helping out at the Atwood and Williams Elementary Schools. In September, the men's basketball team took part in the Walk to Cure Juvenile Diabetes held at the Back Bay in Portland, ME. In October, the residents of Village-parking lot side participated in the "Out of the Darkness" Suicide Awareness Walk, members of A.S.S.I.S.T. (A Society of Students in Service Together) sponsored a drive to collect birthday gifts for children at the homeless shelter, and Thomas' Student Senate joined with many other students, staff and community members in the American Cancer Society's 3rd Annual Relay for Life held on the Thomas College campus.

These are just a few examples of how busy students find time in their schedules to raise both money and awareness for important community agencies. They are examples of how our students live the Thomas mission, which states, "Thomas College prepares students for success in their personal and professional lives, and for leadership and service in their communities".

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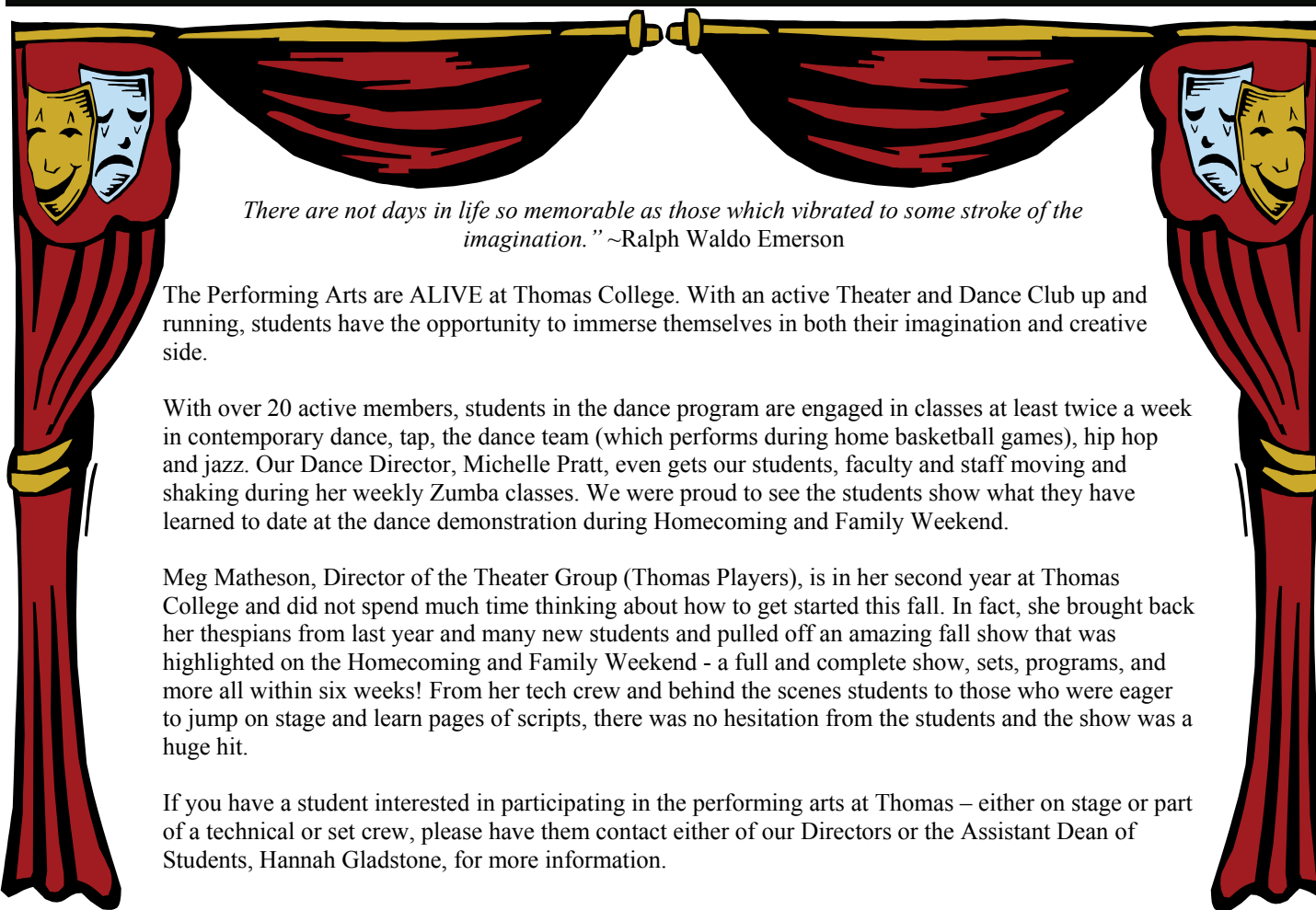


Residents from Village - Parking Lot Side - at the Waterville Suicide Awareness Walk

Team Senate at Relay for Life, October, 2011



Performing Arts



There are not days in life so memorable as those which vibrated to some stroke of the imagination. ~Ralph Waldo Emerson

The Performing Arts are ALIVE at Thomas College. With an active Theater and Dance Club up and running, students have the opportunity to immerse themselves in both their imagination and creative side.

With over 20 active members, students in the dance program are engaged in classes at least twice a week in contemporary dance, tap, the dance team (which performs during home basketball games), hip hop and jazz. Our Dance Director, Michelle Pratt, even gets our students, faculty and staff moving and shaking during her weekly Zumba classes. We were proud to see the students show what they have learned to date at the dance demonstration during Homecoming and Family Weekend.

Meg Matheson, Director of the Theater Group (Thomas Players), is in her second year at Thomas College and did not spend much time thinking about how to get started this fall. In fact, she brought back her thespians from last year and many new students and pulled off an amazing fall show that was highlighted on the Homecoming and Family Weekend - a full and complete show, sets, programs, and more all within six weeks! From her tech crew and behind the scenes students to those who were eager to jump on stage and learn pages of scripts, there was no hesitation from the students and the show was a huge hit.

If you have a student interested in participating in the performing arts at Thomas – either on stage or part of a technical or set crew, please have them contact either of our Directors or the Assistant Dean of Students, Hannah Gladstone, for more information.



Theater Presentation with Kristen McLean and Jason Badeau



Dance Presentation

Student Life—Hannah Gladstone, Assistant Dean of Students

Me. Wrong? Never!

It's a given that no one likes to make mistakes and it often takes many years into adulthood before one realizes that mistakes are okay and are learning opportunities. Our college students are not much different, but we know they will probably make some – perhaps many – mistakes throughout their college career. It is difficult, as a family member, to watch your college student make what you might consider avoidable mistakes. The problem may not be the mistakes themselves, but the attitude that both families and students have toward their mistakes.

important that family members consider carefully when to intervene. (Hint: it may not be as soon as you would think). Family members need to continue to find the balance between letting go and allowing their student to make a mistake and bear the consequences, and intervening when the student's health or safety may be at stake.

Although we want to protect them from mistakes, the process of learning from mistakes is a transforming life skill which will help students establish an attitude for life. If they are afraid of making mistakes, or have

- Help your student evaluate the experience. Making a mistake can be helpful if it means that your next decision will be different. What have they learned from this experience? What will they do differently next time?
- Help your student remember that learning is a process of constantly making and correcting mistakes, and that they have done it all of their life. How did they learn to walk, to ride a bike, to add 2+2?
- Avoid dwelling on the mistake, and help your student avoid dwelling as they do right? Did they handle the situation well? Did they show integrity and honesty in admitting to the mistake? Look at the positives.
- Help your student try to determine what caused the mistake. Was it caused by a lack of knowledge? Poor judgment? Carelessness?
- Help your student put this situation in perspective. Is it a large, serious mistake, or something easily rectified? It may not be as serious as it seems.
- Help your student use

Sometimes the mistakes that students make in college may be very serious, and have serious consequences. It is important that family members consider carefully when to intervene. (Hint: it may not be as soon as you would think).

Making mistakes is a way of learning. It doesn't matter what others have told us; we need to have the experience ourselves. College is, in many ways, practice for life. College students may stumble and fall at times – sometimes in small ways and sometimes in more serious ways – but, hopefully, they will learn from their mistakes and become wiser. As college family members and administrators, we can help our students make sense of these experiences.

Sometimes the mistakes that students make in college may be very serious, and have serious consequences. It is

been protected from ever making (sometimes serious) mistakes, they may not learn how to make decisions because they become paralyzed by the fear of making a mistake. They may be reluctant to try new things – one of the key experiences in college – which is a relatively protected environment compared to “the real world”.

So, what can you do to help?

- Don't jump in to rescue your student. Let them make the mistake – even though you may see it coming. Remember that this can be a positive experience.
- Try to find some successes in the experience. What did

well. View this as a new start with a new understanding and move forward.

Help your student understand that one key to learning from being wrong is admitting that you are wrong. Help them bear the consequences of their choice and decision. Help them take responsibility for their action. Don't allow them to blame the college, the instructor, friends, roommates, the situation, etc.

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this as an opportunity to reevaluate their actions and choices. In the long run, the problem will not be the mistake itself, but not learning from the mistake and evolving.

As college family members, it is important that we recognize that our students will make mistakes. It is difficult to watch, but it is through many of these mistakes that our college students will grow and mature. We can help our students keep these experiences in perspective and see mistakes as an opportunity rather than a failure.

The Wellness Connection—Cheryl Daggett, ARNP, Director of Health Services

Walking For Wellness

Fall is here! The air is refreshing and the colors are inspiring! It is time to take advantage of the days we have left to be active and to find ways to unwind and clear the mind. Whether you are a relative or a friend to our students, we all need to inspire each other to just simply get outside and increase our activity level.

Walking is one of the simplest activities to do and the first step is one of the most challenging. I tell the students as Yoda says “Do or do not. There is no try.” Just do it! Walking gives us a chance to get outside of ourselves, literally, to smell the fresh air, change the scenery, clear out the cobwebs - and it doesn't cost a thing! Walking further than usual from your car to the store, walking around the campus, or taking your pets for a walk rather than just putting them outside to walk themselves, are all ways we can take more steps during the day.

In Colorado, a state considered to be one of the healthiest in the nation, there is a program that is rewarding residents for increasing the steps they take to 10,000 a day. Many of the pedometers now measure the steps you take rather than miles. Wear a pedometer at work or invite your student to wear one on campus to see how many steps are taken. Also you may consider simply increasing the amount of time that you walk - the increased steps and distance will come naturally.

We are fortunate on the Thomas Campus to have a walking trail available. There are many in the area and you can find the trail maps on the Kennebec Messalonskee Trail website as well as Inland Hospital's website - look for Inland Woods and Pine Ridge Trails. So when you are here next, take the time to walk with your student and family. Most importantly, just enjoy your time and activity with them. Remember Yoda's words: “Do or do not. There is no try”, and if walking doesn't fit, just find something else to do.

Enjoy! Be well!

HOMECOMING/FAMILY WEEKEND OCTOBER, 2011



Above: Men's Soccer, **Right:** Carlos Newsome '14 and his family at Mini-Golf



Below, Left to Right: Hannah Holmbom '12 and mom, Roxanne, at Wax Hands Novelty Event; Baking with Janet; and Ventriloquist Show with Lynn Trefzger



Counseling Services— Carol Jollotta, LCSW, Counselor

Soon your college student will be returning home for holiday breaks. While these are much anticipated times for the family, they can also pose stressors. Your student is returning home after living independently for at least a couple of months. The thought of returning to parental “nagging” and imposed curfews can be fodder for arguments. The challenge for the family is to strike a balance between your young adult’s new found independence and the family desire for maintaining daily rhythms of lifestyle and schedules. Here are some tips for easing the transition and setting the stage for an enjoyable holiday season for all:

- Talk with your student about your expectations for the visit *in advance* so there are no surprises.
- Discuss the house rules and how they might differ from what the student has experienced the past few months while at school.
- Expect some disruption to your daily rhythm.
- Show your student that you are happy to see him/her.
- It is fair to ask about your student’s schedule and expect to know his/her whereabouts.
- Give your student time to catch up with high school friends, and establish family time.
- Students also may need time to be alone, take walks or go to another room to listen to music.
- Give yourself and your student space.
- Ask your student to save some time to do some things with you.
- Keep a sense of humor while your student is at home. Try to laugh off the small conflicts.
- Having a good visit home involves planning and a willingness to adapt behaviors to the situation.
- While your student has been changing, you and other family members have, too. Share what has changed and enjoy what is new.
- Remember to be thankful that your student wants to come home!

Soon enough your student will be returning to his/her independent life at school...make the most of the break by being flexible and discussing potential areas of conflict ahead of time.



Left:
Candlelight Vigil on the anniversary of 9/11.

Right:
Members of Club CRU hosted the band Exit 244 on campus.

Congratulations Thomas College Student Athletes

Conference recognitions (to date):

Player of the Week Recognitions:

*Men’s Soccer:

Mikhail Crockwell (So);
Matthew Ford (So);
Michael Hand (So)

*Field Hockey:

Alei Collier (FY)

Rookie of the Week Recognitions:

*Men’s Soccer:

Blake Boswell (FY);
Khamisi Lightbourne (FY)

Rookie of the Year:

*Women’s Tennis:

Jessica Bowen (FY)



Above: Mikhail Crockwell (Men’s Soccer)



Career Services — Rich Grant, Director of Career Services

New Programs in Career Services

Career Services is pleased to announce three new programs beginning this academic year. These programs will help students manage their career planning, and get them on the Career Services “radar screen” so we can make sure to help them in their career pursuits. We encourage all students to initiate a working relationship with Career Services in their first year of school and continue to work with Career Services to ensure that they become eligible for the Guaranteed Job program.

Career Passport Program

With the Career Passport program, students who sign up get a small booklet that looks like a real passport. Just like a real passport, which is stamped at each destination on a journey, students will get their booklets stamped when they complete a step in their career planning and development journey. There are 16 steps spread out over a four-year period, including attending a resume workshop, registering with Career Services, completing an internship, and going to a networking event. Students participating in the program will accumulate career knowledge and job seeking skills over their time at Thomas and have a little fun along the way.

FOCUS 2

FOCUS 2 is a career and educational planning program designed to help students explore two important areas of career planning: knowing themselves and finding out what careers match their interests, personality, values and more. This internet-based program contains five sections for students to explore: Career Readiness, Self-Assessment, Explore the Possibilities, Career Planning Portfolio, and Recommended Tools and Websites. Use of FOCUS 2 can assist students in deciding on a major, researching careers related to their major, researching a specific career they are already interested in, and allowing them to compare careers side by side. The program is introduced to and used by students in their first-year seminar course, and Career Services also offers FOCUS 2 workshops throughout the year to assist students in using the program and to develop individual career plans. The FOCUS 2 program is available to all Thomas students and alumni and may be accessed via the Career Services website.

Optimal Resume

Optimal Resume is an online resume builder, but it also has some other neat features, such as a practice interview module that can be used with a webcam. To create a resume, students access Thomas College’s unique Optimal Resume portal, and enter work history and educational information in an easy to use online format. In the end, when all the resume information is entered, the Optimal Resume online tool automatically compiles the student’s information into a nicely structured, good looking resume. The advantage of using Optimal is that it eliminates the pressure of trying to create a professional design. The student can then focus solely on writing the content, aided by a “Help” function on Optimal, and leave the formatting challenges to the Optimal Resume tool.

We have already received a wonderful response to the Career Passport program and the FOCUS 2 system, and we are slowly rolling Optimal Resume out to smaller groups. A full launch of Optimal Resume will take place in January. Between the Passport and Focus 2, more than 200 students are currently engaged with Career Services, and we are excited about the opportunity to provide career planning assistance through our programs.

**Looking Ahead:
Career Fair
March 14, 2012**

Residence Life — Hannah Gladstone, Assistant Dean of Students

Residence Closings for Semester Breaks:

November: Residence Halls close at 7:00 p.m. on Tuesday, November 22 and reopen at noon on Sunday, November 27.

December-January: Residences Halls close 24 hours after last final exam or by 7:00 p.m. on Friday, Dec. 16th (whichever comes first) and reopen at noon on Sunday, January 8.

February: Residences Halls close at 7:00 p.m. on Friday, February 17 and reopen at noon on Sunday, February 26.

March: Residences Halls close at 7:00 p.m. on Friday, March 23 and reopen at noon on Sunday, April 1.

April: Residences Halls close 24 hours after last final exam or 7:00 p.m. on Friday, May 4th, (whichever comes first) for all undergraduates.

May: Residence Halls close for all graduating seniors by 5 p.m. on Saturday, May 12.

During official college breaks, the Residence Halls close and residents are expected to vacate their rooms by 7:00 p.m. on the indicated day. Once housing is officially closed, students are not permitted in housing for any reason. Information on break housing is sent to all residents students at least two weeks in advance of the break at which time, they can request an exception for housing over break (at a designated fee). Exceptions for break housing will be considered for reasons such as academics, athletics, work, and travel. Students wishing to be considered for break housing must complete the break housing request form online. The form and more information regarding break housing can be found at the following website:

<http://www3.thomas.edu/stuaff/breakhousing.asp>

What's Happening in Dining Services—Jody Pelotte, Director of Dining



What a difference a year makes! In the spring of 2011 Dining Services prepared its last meal in the former dining hall. Our graduating class presented us with a plaque (aka: tray) celebrating over 2 million meals served over the past seven years.

When students arrived in August, they were greeted to a completely renovated dining hall that rivals many area restaurants. The old serving line is gone; replaced by a new dining format that encourages students to visit themed stations for their favorite offerings. We feature pre-plated meals at the comfort food station and custom-built or ready-made sandwiches in the deli area. Salads are still offered in a self-serve area. We have also maintained some of the favorites from the past, including burgers which are now flame broiled and served with fries made to order at the grill location.

The biggest area in the new venue is our pizza area, which also houses our international offerings and homemade desserts, made daily. International offerings are prepared right in front of our guests with fresh ingredients and plated to order. On select days we offer desserts prepared in our new pizza oven, which is ten feet wide and reaches temps of 750 degrees. The menus have also evolved to feature new concepts with a touch of high end dining. The beverage station has been updated as well.

The entire dining room is now air conditioned. We now have a conveyor that takes your dishware away with no fuss. The whole decor in the room is something you have to see to believe. All new seating is available, offering accommodations for two to ten. The receptionist is located in a newly designed facility prior to entering the dining hall. When students first saw the new dining hall, many said they could not believe it was the same place.

We still continue to offer many of the great programs we did in the past, such as baked apples with Sodexo baker, Janet, to our El Toro Mexican theme meal. We will soon feature a new web page that will include menus and dining information, as well as Sodexo links featuring nutritional information and upcoming events. We have a lot of exciting things on the horizon. The opening of the new function room will open the door for better and larger student and function events. This has truly been an exciting start to the year. Here's to another 2 million more meals served and then some!



Recreation and Intramurals

—Jim Delorie, Director of Recreation and Intramurals

Over the summer one of the goals I had for Recreation and Intramurals was to find new ways to engage students on campus that could also build on past successes. A few areas came to mind that could be improved upon: our first campus game of Humans vs. Zombies (HVZ), our outdoor trips, and the registration process for intramurals.

Our first HVZ game (campus-wide tag that takes place outside over a five-day period, and involves missions and more) was a great success, linking together students from different residence halls, classes, and groups of friends. Once a tagged player became a zombie they were constantly in touch with each other to plan and organize how to tag the other players. My goal is to increase participation on campus and have more in-depth missions that further bring students from across campus together. I would love to delve deeper into them here but for now will keep my plans a surprise.



Second, last year recreation ran a white water rafting trip with some success and I hope to build on that. So I have brought together a group of students to help plan more outdoor trips. We had a rafting trip again this fall and hope to go on day hikes in November and a tubing trip this winter.

Whitewater Rafting Trip

The last improvement I wanted to make was to move away from paper and pencil registration and scheduling for intramurals and bring them online. IMLeagues is a site that allows students to create a user card and register for teams and leagues. It also tracks more statistics and standings than we previously were able to, on a year to year basis. Also the auto scheduler allows for more flexibility to accommodate our very busy student population. So far this semester, there have been some hurdles to implementing IMLeagues; however, for the most part I feel students are on board with it. I know they like the increased stats that are kept and easily viewed on the website (parents can view them as well at www.imleauge.com/thomas).



Bottom Right and Middle: Beer Goggle Challenge with Somerset Sheriffs.

Bottom Left: National speaker Wendi Fox's "Trashed" presentation on high risk drinking.

Top Left: Three of the 30 "ghosts" to represent national statistics for alcohol-related deaths.

Top Right: An Inland Hospital nurse demonstrates what happens when someone is admitted to the hospital with alcohol poisoning..



October, 2011

National Alcohol Awareness Week

Thomas College
Office of Student Affairs
180 West River Road
Waterville, ME 04901

