

OSWEGO Parents

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Office of Alumni and
Parent Relations

SPRING 2009

Online Community Keeps Parents On Point

Need some advice on your student's first trip home for a long break? Curious about how or where to order a surprise for your child?

Oswego is offering answers to those kinds of questions and posting information on <http://lakerfamily.oswego.edu>, a Web community launched this summer. It's already catching on with parents of new students.

About 700 parents provided e-mail addresses during this year's orientation and, of those, 500 registered for Laker Family and Friends.

The site provides parents with an exclusive wealth of information as well as a direct link to staff.

"It's an opportunity to be connected to the same kind of community their students are involved in," said Nate Emmons, assistant dean of students and orientation coordinator.

The Web site provides informative articles and links about student services as well as advice for everything from helping your student manage money to helping manage his or her stress. Student reviews of local shops, eateries and other businesses are also available.

For other information, parents can casually drop a line to orientation staff and get an answer by e-mail or phone within a day or two.



John McLoughlin '75 sits with his daughter, Caitlin '12. A new online community, Laker Family and Friends, aims to provide useful information about college life to parents.

On the Web:

- Laker Family and Friends:
<http://lakerfamily.oswego.edu>
- The Laker for first-year students:
<http://thelaker.oswego.edu>

Recent articles posted on Laker Family and Friends:

- First-Year Case Studies: 'Dear Mom and Dad ...'
- Supporting Your SUNY Oswego Student
- Going Greek
- Financial Aid 101
- Home for the Holidays

"Instead of having to pick up the phone, they can just come to the Web site," Emmons said.

Laker Family and Friends will add more interactive features like the message board discussions in the future. The discussions are a key feature of The Laker, a Web counterpart for first-year students.

More than 2,400 freshman and transfer students have registered, according to Emmons. The Laker allows its members to post notes and upload pictures of themselves.

Like Laker Family and Friends, the student community offers articles on a variety of topics. — *Shane M. Liebler*

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OSWEGO Parents

Education, Giving Both Good Experiences for Oswego Family

For the Czajaks, Oswego was love at first bite ... of ice cream.

By the time Wendy and Tom Czajak ended their first campus tour with an ice cream social, their daughter **Colleen '10**



Tom, Colleen '10 and Wendy Czajak

knew where she was going to college. The family had looked at a number of private and public colleges before coming to an Oswego tour in the summer.

As graduates of SUNY Binghamton, Wendy and Tom were hopeful their daughter would consider a state campus. This year they are co-chairs of the Parent Fund.

“Colleen had said, ‘Let’s go on a Friday so even if we don’t like the school, at least we’ll get ice cream out of the deal,’ Wendy Czajak remembered of the visit to Oswego. “As parents, we were extremely impressed with the reception we got from the admissions folks.”

Colleen is majoring in education with plans to become a high

school teacher. The Czajaks are not only proud parents of an Oswego student, but also donors to the Parent Fund.

They initially chose to give because of the savings Colleen’s Presidential Scholarship offered them. There are plenty of other reasons to be a donor, Wendy said.

“The state system does not have the same fundraising (capabilities) that some private universities do,” she said. “The money can go to numerous things.”

In tough economic times like today’s, education is often one of the first areas for government to cut back on, she said.

“If we can give something, we can keep what we’ve got going.”
— *Shane M. Liebler*

Photo provided

Attention to Retention

The Retention Task Force at SUNY Oswego recently completed a year of research which identified students who are unlikely to continue studies into their sophomore years. A report outlines at-risk groups of students and sheds light on possible reasons which may discourage their return to campus.

The Retention Task Force set out to boost the current retention rate of about 75 percent to 80 percent.

“There isn’t a faculty member that doesn’t want a student to succeed,” said Jody Fiorini, co-chair of the task force. About 15 other task force members worked for the past year to identify those at risk in terms of retention.

Fiorini believes that there is a lack of connectivity between at-risk students and the campus community. “Students that feel comfortable stay,” she said.

Currently residence halls conduct “community builders” to create communities in the dorms. This has proven effective in Johnson Hall, which has the highest retention rate, and Hart Hall. Both halls have established requirements that aid in community development.

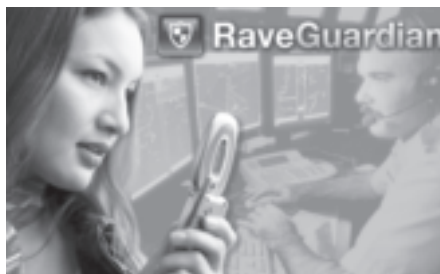
The research was the first phase of Oswego’s efforts to increase retention. Some members of the task force have shifted their focus to a standing committee. Beginning in the spring semester the committee will meet and later conduct focus groups to pinpoint the underlying issues of retention. From this second phase, the committee will develop a course of action to improve retention rates. Fiorini noted efforts already under way on campus. “A lot of things don’t cost money, like student-faculty relations,” she said.

— *Arlee J. Logan '09*

On Guard

Cell Phones Offer Added Protection

Add peace of mind to the growing list of functions cell phones provide. The cutting-edge Rave Guardian System began accepting subscribers at Oswego in 2008 and began operation Nov. 3.



If a user feels threatened, he or she can trigger the Rave Guardian application on a cell phone. It automatically sends the user’s picture, mobile number and personal information to police.

“There is a lot of validity in the perception of safety,” University Police Chief Cynthia Adam said. “It will not only make campus safer in reality but also help in the perception of safety to make students, faculty and staff feel safer while walking through campus.”

Nick Lyons, vice president for administration and finance, said that the campus needed something that was state-of-the-art. Since most of the campus carries cell phones, it seemed like a good idea.

“We wanted a natural type of device to go with a much wider range,” he said. “It will be operational in four counties.”

This opt-in system is free for subscription to members of the SUNY Oswego community by visiting the secure site <https://www.getrave.com/login/oswego>.

— *Ashley White '10*

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AIR Parent

Student's Father, CBS-TV Technical Director Visits Campus

He had to see it to believe it. And while Fountain Jones was looking at his son's campus, he visited a few classes as well.

Typically graduates return to Oswego to take part in the Alumni-in-Residence, or AIR, program that places them in a day of classes. A senior technical director for CBS-TV, Jones wanted to see all the great things his son, **Winthrop '10**, was talking about.

Fountain Jones is comfortable visiting young people to talk about his career in television, music and multimedia. He tries to visit a high school or college once every other month.

"I am where I am today because some other people came to my classes and spoke about their careers," said Jones, a graduate of CUNY Queens College mass communications program. "I feel this is the least I can do, because I've seen the benefit."

Jones' initial interests included philosophy or on-air announcing, but he gradually made his way to the technical side of the music and television industry.

"I started out with one concept and the concept kind of morphed and spun around," said Jones, who has been a recording engineer for the likes of Stevie Wonder, television producer, broadcaster and co-founder of Perigee Corp., a multimedia firm. "I think if you just pursue a dream, you're going to get there."

He currently works on several CBS programs, including "The Early Show," and many live events.

In the classroom, Jones tries to help students better understand the makeup of the television industry and how to find available opportunities.

"It's more than that camera person or director," Jones said, pointing out that hair and makeup work has become a big job with the advent of high-definition television.

"The tools are there for young people to get involved," he said. "I like to share the concept that young folks are in a direct path into creating content in the media."

As for his campus visit, Jones was really impressed with the state-of-the-art WTOP-TV studio, which was donated by **Al Roker '76**.

"What I saw up there was actually better than some of the smaller CBS studios I've seen," he said, adding his positive experience with the faculty while he was here in December. — *Shane M. Liebler*



Fountain Jones speaks with communications studies students.

Oswego Reading Initiative Ponders Environmental 'Catastrophe'

SUNY Oswego students, faculty and staff are perusing and pondering Elizabeth Kolbert's *Field Notes from a Catastrophe: Man, Nature and Climate Change*, this year's Oswego Reading Initiative selection.

The annual ORI selection ties in with campus-wide discussions and related programming, which this year addresses one of the most pressing issues of the day.

"The level of interest among faculty in applicability to their courses was one of the parameters that made it a better choice," Associate Provost Rameen Mohammadi said. "A second reason is that we have a sustainability initiative on our campus."

College President Deborah F. Stanley signed the American College and University Presidents Climate Commitment in spring 2007, committing the college to a leadership role in addressing the challenge of climate change.

The book's readability and engaging nature helped its early standing as one of the dozens of suggested books vetted by members of the ORI committee, Mohammadi explained.

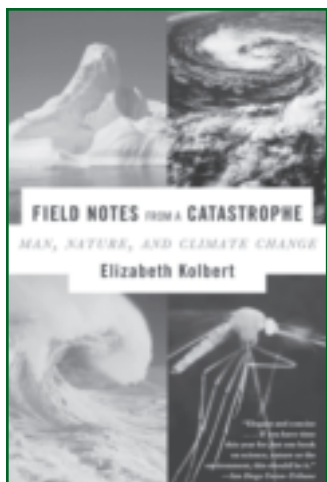
"There is very good scientific information, and she does a good job of keeping it plain so someone who is 18 or 19 can easily read it," he said.

"It's at the right level for incoming students to read it and digest it."

The book includes areas other than science and ecology, such as economics and political reasons climate agreements fail. The book also brings many critical raves.

Kolbert will visit campus March 17 to speak in classes and give an evening talk as part of a program series related to the book.

— *Tim Nekritz M '05*



Choral Work on Charles Darwin to Premiere at Oswego

Crowded around a computer in the Tyler Hall offices of ARTSwego, a group of musicians, technicians and administrators peer at the strangely beautiful images. Tiny white moths flutter across the darkened screen, followed by scurrying red beetles.

Then, out of worn and grainy movie footage, an unmistakable figure emerges: Charles Darwin as an old man, examining the flowers in his greenhouse.

The video images were created by New York filmmaker Bill Morrison to complement Richard Einhorn's score for his new opera/oratorio titled *The Origin*, which will premiere in Waterman Theatre at SUNY Oswego Feb. 6 and 7.

This ambitious multimedia choral work was commissioned by the college for the worldwide Darwin Bicentennial. The scientist was born Feb. 12, 1809, and his precedent-shattering *On the Origin of Species* appeared 50 years later.

Texts for *The Origin* are drawn almost entirely from Darwin's writings — with a brief appearance by his wife, Emma. They were compiled and arranged by poet Catherine Barnett and the composer.

"I can't remember a time I was not aware of Darwin's theory. My father, a doctor, had probably explained evolution by natural selection to me by the time I was 7 or 8," said Einhorn, an Emmy-winning composer. "Since then, I've remained interested in the science of evolution, reading both popular books like *The Beak of the Finch* and, occasionally, a scientific text, such as *Patterns and Processes of Vertebrate Evolution*."

California-based women's ensemble Kitka, soprano Jacqueline Horner and bassist Eric Johnson are performing. Morrison's films will be projected on-stage during portions of the performance.

— *John Shaffer*



The renowned ensemble Kitka prepares Richard Einhorn's *The Origin*.

Campus Clips



Apply for Scholarships

Alumni Legacy Scholarships are available to students who are children, stepchildren or parents of Oswego alumni. Candidates for the award must be current full-time students at SUNY Oswego and demonstrate a commitment to the excellence of the college and the community through academic achievements, leadership and involvement in campus clubs and organizations. The deadline for 2009-10 Legacy Scholarships is April 11.

This fall, six students received scholarships of \$500 to \$1,000. The legacy awards are just some of the 150 scholarships available by visiting <http://www.oswego.edu/giving/scholarships> or by calling 315-312-3003. There are various deadlines for 2009-10 awards, beginning Feb. 2.



File to Graduate

Students must file to graduate by Feb. 15 if they plan to participate in May or August Commencement. Students are not automatically placed on a graduation list. It is the student's responsibility to make sure he or she initially applies to graduate

online by the appropriate deadline date or contacts the Registrar's Graduation Office for help in doing so. Students must file by the deadline date listed above to ensure that their name will be printed in the commencement program. Information regarding the graduation process and all deadlines are also available and linked from the Registrar's Web site at <http://www.oswego.edu/registrar>.



Plan to Celebrate

Future graduates can start planning for May 16 Commencement by making early reservations for the Torchlight Ceremony and Dinner May 15. The ceremony allows the graduating class to come together one last time as they are welcomed into the

Oswego Alumni Association. The event includes a reception and dinner, along with passing on the light of knowledge to the new alumni. For more information or to make dinner reservations, call 315-312-2258 or e-mail seniors@oswego.edu.



Spend a Summer with SUNY

It's not too early to start thinking about Summer Sessions 2009. Take advantage of the opportunity to catch up, stay on schedule, or move forward by taking classes beginning May 26 at SUNY Oswego.

Beginning March 18, students may enroll in classes to earn quick credits that will transfer to other universities. Hundreds of courses will be available. Visit <http://myoswego.oswego.edu>.



PriceWaterhouseCoopers Computer Security Consultant and Partner **Mark Lobel '85**, visited Professor Christine Hirsch's communications class Dec. 4. The Oswego Alumni Association's Alumni-in-Residence program, or AIR, brings several graduates back to campus each semester for presentations and interaction with students.

Calendar

SPRING 2009

Jan. 22	Spring semester begins
Jan. 30- March 6	Contradicting Realities: Recent Work by Sara Rahbar
Feb. 6-7	World premiere of "The Origin," Waterman Theatre, Tyler Hall, 7:30 p.m.
Feb. 18	"Chamber Music a la Mode," Sheldon Hall Ballroom, 7:30 p.m.
Feb. 24-28 & March 1	"Pera Pelas," Waterman Theatre, Tyler Hall
March 4	Aaron Jay Kernis, Sheldon Hall Ballroom, 7:30 p.m.
March 9-13	Spring recess
March 17	"Field Notes from a Catastrophe" Author Elizabeth Kolbert, Hewitt Union Ballroom, 7 p.m.
March 20- April 19	46th Annual Juried Student Art Exhibition and Spring Master of Arts Thesis Exhibition, Tyler Art Gallery
March 21	Hudson River Quadricentennial Concert, Waterman Theatre, Tyler Hall, 7:30 p.m.
March 27	"Collage," music scholarship concert, Waterman Theatre, Tyler Hall, 8 p.m.
April 6	College admissions open house
April 9-10	Spring Break Day and Good Friday, no classes
April 22	Quest, daylong symposium of research and creative activity, no classes
April 23-25, May 2-3	"Into the Woods," Waterman Theatre, Tyler Hall
April 24- May 16	Spring Bachelor of Arts Thesis Exhibition, Tyler Art Gallery
April 24	Honors Convocation, 3 p.m.
April 29	Matt Wilson's "Arts & Crafts," Sheldon Hall Ballroom, 7:30 p.m.
May 8	Last day of classes
May 11-15	Final exams
May 15	Torchlight Ceremony and Dinner
May 16	Commencement