The beginning of the semester is always an exciting time! With the students returning, there is always excitement in the air. This semester, in particular, there is much to be excited about. Fall enrollment is up to 24,100, the highest enrollment at UNL since 1996. We also have the best academically prepared class ever and it includes seven students with perfect ACT or SAT scores, 52 National Merit Scholars, and 30 National Hispanic Scholars.

The beginning of the year also marked the opening of the Child Care Center, something students and staff have been asking for the last several years. The Center opened with almost 100 children and has the capacity to go to about 180 children. There is also much excitement about the opening of two new buildings on campus: the Jackie Gaugha Multicultural Center and the new Robert Knoll Residential Center. The Multicultural Center is scheduled to open in January 2010 and the Knoll Residence Center will open for Fall, 2010.

The Student Affairs Celebration (formerly known as Fall Welcome) was held on September 25 at the Nebraska City Union. With the help of the Student Affairs Staff Council, the event turned out to be quite festive and a real celebration and not just a welcome.

The Chancellor’s State of the University Address helped to re-energize the campus and focused on projects the campus will be pursuing this year. A major project will be the acquisition of the State Fair grounds. The land will be transformed into the Innovation Campus. The Chancellor also announced the formation of two task forces, one on “entrepreneurship” and one on “efficiency”. The former will identify methods of raising additional funds for the University and the latter will focus on savings through efficiencies.

Work continues on the implementation of the new student information system. UNL’s admissions module went live on September 1, 2009. Since then more than 1,500 applications have been loaded into the new system for freshmen beginning school in Fall, 2010. Users of the new system will see many changes, including a new portal. WAM will be known by another name. The plan is to have the system fully implemented by August 2010 although certain modules will be used before then.

I hope you share in the excitement for the new year. I hope everyone has an enjoyable and productive year.

Find calendar information at:

UNL Calendar: http://events.unl.edu/
Student Affairs Calendar: http://stuafs.unl.edu/
Student Involvement: http://www.unllife.com/

“At UNL we look for ways to help students, not reasons why we can’t.”
A CELEBRATION IN GRAND STYLE!

The Division of Student Affairs celebrated the beginning of the new school year in grand style on September 25, 2009. With the help of the newly established Student Affairs Staff Council, the event has evolved from an event used primarily to introduce new staff members to one where we celebrate the many good things that are occurring in the Division and University-wide.

We still want to continue introducing new staff members, but we also want to pause and reflect on the many accomplishments we have experienced. For the first time, the Division had an orientation program for the new members of the Division. Participants went to the orientation and then walked to the celebration.

We hope to build on the success of this year’s event. So please forward suggestions for improvement to me or to a member of the Student Affairs Staff Council.
Featured Student ........................ Megan Collins

As a prospective UNL student I went to more than my fair share of Junior Preview Days, Red Letter Days and Nebraska recruiting events. Of all the tours I took and all the videos I watched in the Union Auditorium, one speech by a current student continues to stand out even today. When Omaid Zabih, then-ASUN President, addressed the auditorium I was struck by how a single student at such a large university could possibly be able to distinguish himself among his peers as a leader.

Even as a fairly involved and successful senior in high school, I was nervous about the collegiate life ahead of me—keeping up with the academic rigors, making new friends and finding some sort of extracurricular (singular) with which to get involved. I’m sure Omaid’s message was one of engaging, connecting and balancing; but more than that, what I took from his address that day was that at Nebraska it was possible to distinguish yourself and have both a positive and unique collegiate experience. Knowing this, I entered the University in the fall of 2006 terrified, but also excited by the knowledge that even on UNL’s big campus great possibilities awaited me.

My name is Megan Collins and I currently have the privilege of serving as the President of the Association of Students of the University of Nebraska (ASUN) as well as the UNL Student Regent. I’m a Senior Business Administration major with minors in Political Science and Economics and look forward to graduating this coming May. I’m a proud graduate of Omaha Burke High School where I enjoyed participating in everything from Student Government to Academic Decathlon.

Contrary to my pre-college notions that I’d only be able to balance one extracurricular activity in college with my course work, I’ve been fortunate to have found a number of organizations and activities on campus that I’m passionate about. I’m a member of Chi Omega Sorority, the Honors Program and the Innocents Society. In the summer of 2008 I was lucky enough to travel abroad and study economics at Oxford University through the College of Business Administration’s Nebraska at Oxford program. Also during that same summer I helped to welcome new students to our campus as a New Student Enrollment Orientation Leader.

In my spare time I enjoy traveling, watching movies and spending time with friends and my younger sister who is a freshman at UNL this fall. After graduation I’d like to attend law school and ultimately see myself staying in Nebraska, raising a family and hopefully finding a job.

My over-attendance at recruiting events early on should have served as UNL’s warning of my tendency to over prepare and seek to know all information before making any important decisions. These themes have continued to today as I sit behind my desk writing several drafts of this very article and constantly work to better understand the issues and problems that come before me.

In March, I had the privilege of running alongside my dear friends Amanda Crook and Brian Coburn for the ASUN executive positions with the CONNECT Party. Together, along with a full slate of passionate and driven leaders, we pledged to students across campus that we would spend the next year working to improve campus night life, make our campus more sustainable and improve students’ knowledge of campus traditions—campaign promises we’re working to achieve each day.

In addition to these platforms, we’ve been busy with other projects in ASUN. This semester we’re getting ready to open the doors to our Peer Financial Education Center (PFEC). Working with both Dr. Franco and Dr. Kathy Prochaska-Cue, the goal of PFEC will be to train student volunteers to educate other students on basic ideas of personal finance. We’re also working to improve 475-RIDE for students, continue to expand The Big Event and better communicate with students across campus in order to address student needs.

As our ASUN campaign party name suggests, the theme for this year is connecting. Connecting with students, faculty, staff and the administration in order to make the most of the opportunity I’ve been given to represent students and make our campus a better place. As representatives of areas all over campus, please let me or anyone in ASUN know if there’s something we can partner together on to achieve for students.

As I learned four years ago, UNL is a place where anything is possible.

Megan Collins
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