Greetings from the Office of First-Year Experience!

It's hard to believe we are one-third of the way through the spring semester! Returning to college for the second semester is a very different experience from heading off to college for the first time. Your continued interest and support are crucial to your student's success. Please check in with your son or daughter over this break to discuss their January and February progress. Remind your student that the spring semester marks a fresh start.

This is also the time of year when first-year students begin to think about sophomore year. (See Spring Semester Re-Boot below.) They are right on track when they ask questions such as: How will next year be different than the current year? Am I in the right major? What direction do I want to take with my education (my life)? Please encourage your student to visit his or her advisor or come to Dewey Hall where the staff in the offices of First-Year Experience, Academic Advising and Career Services, and Academic Support Services are available and able to listen, question, and guide.

I am always eager to meet with students, discuss their progress, and help them make the connections to access support and achieve success. I hope that you find the information in this newsletter informative and helpful as we look forward to the remaining 2/3 of the semester.

I invite your feedback and comments as we continue moving through this important first year.

Please feel free to email me at margo.warden@jsc.edu or call at (802) 635-1256.

Respectfully, Margo Warden, Director of First-Year Experience

**Campus Life**

**SPRING SEMESTER ‘RE-BOOT’**

Behavioral Sciences Professor Gina Mireault had some words of advice for returning Johnson State students at an "academic/orientation re-boot" on January 22nd. She acknowledged that the students — many of them from the Class of 2017 and in their first year of college — are at a "point between," moving away from home and life as they once knew it and toward something entirely new: the independence of adulthood.

"Psychologists have found that early adulthood — the ages of about 18 to 35, right where you are now — is the most stressful part of life. There is so much pressure to know who you are, who you want to be and how to get there," Dr. Mireault told a full house gathered on a below-zero night in Bentley Hall. Her humorous and insightful talk, titled "Where Are You Now? and Other (Dis)orienting Questions," was aimed at students as they move into the second semester of the 2013-14 academic year. She encouraged them to "stay present" with who they are now — and not to become anxious about where they are going, even if a well-meaning relative wants to know their future plans.

"The future is yet to occur and cannot be known. You can only answer for who you are, what you like, and what you want right now," she said. "Being oriented has almost nothing to do with the future. It can only be accomplished in the present."

RESIDENCE HALLS

Life in the residence halls is bursting with positive energy! Students are happy to be back on campus and we are happy to have them back as well. The Residence Life staff is very pleased with the level of respect and kindness that our students show toward one another. The students have done a nice job creating a warm, welcoming living and learning environment in their residence halls.

101 residence life floor programs were offered in the fall. A highlight of programs offered included a Culture Cook-off, which had residents bring in food from their own heritage and share their stories about their background and those meals. Other programs invited residents to consider cultural context about social taboos and body image. Also offered, there were several programs that focused on building a strong academic foundation. This included recognizing the student's academic responsibility, tips on organization, time management, and study skills. Kudos to our residents for taking time to participate in these programs and to contributing to their residential community!

Our campus-wide programming topic in February was healthy relationships. During the week of February 10-15, several programs and information tables offered outreach and education on topics such as: respect in relationships, self-advocacy and recognition of harmful communication. Students were encouraged to participate by writing letters to those they value, making “worth it” banners, and attending a diversity in relationships presentation.

J.U.M.P

In its second year, VSAC/Gear Up and Johnson State College have partnered to create J.U.M.P. - a residence hall based peer mentoring program. Peer Mentors are highly motivated sophomores and juniors with practical insights gained from their own JSC experiences, who are committed to student success and being responsive to students’ needs. Mentors can connect students to: academic coaching (tutoring), academic and personal support, career development and exploration, study and problem solving skills, intramurals, clubs, leadership opportunities, and more.

The goal of this program is to increase student success and satisfaction. Encourage your student to connect with his/her mentor and take full advantage of the advice, support, and friendship they offer. Peer Mentors hold lobby hours in each of our four residence halls.

IMPORTANT INFORMATION

• Residence Life is seeking Resident Assistants for the 2014-2015 academic year. Details about this amazing leadership opportunity are being shared via information sessions, JSC email, the JSC portal, poster ing throughout campus and at floor meetings. This is a wonderful opportunity for students to make a difference in the life of their peers to develop leadership skills.

• Room Selection will begin in April. Students who wish to live on campus for the 2014-2015 academic year must pay a $100 non-refundable housing deposit to the JSC Business Office, and complete the on-line housing contract prior to choosing a room for the upcoming academic year. More information on room selection will be sent to students via JSC email and will be discussed at upcoming floor meetings.

Any questions regarding residence life can be directed to the Residence Life department at 802-635-1200 or via email at jscresidencelife@jsc.edu.

Academic Support Services

ACADEMIC COACHING SERVICES

It’s never too late for academic coaching. Did you know that academic coaching is a free service provided to all JSC undergraduate students? Academic Support Services is partially funded through a federal TRIO grant and Johnson State College to provide services for all students who are interested in improving their academic work. Skilled professional and peer coaches are available in writing, math, and content specific subjects. Academic Support Services also hosts drop-in academic coaching hours in Governor’s Hall on Sunday and Monday evenings from 6-9pm, Arthur Hall each Wednesday from 7-9pm, and Senators Hall each Tuesday from 7-9pm. If you think your student could benefit from these offerings, encourage them to stop by Dewey Hall, Rm 114 or call 635-1464 and we'll help him/her succeed academically.
20Q: Students Speak Their Mind

20Q is a twenty question survey that gives our first-year students an opportunity to share their experiences and observations of their first year at Johnson State College. Our 20Q interview team is comprised of 10 college staff members from various parts of the campus. Interviewers will be contacting students to schedule a one-on-one conversation. The average time of a 20Q conversation is 30 minutes. Students who participated in past 20Q initiatives found the experience to be important AND fun! Encourage your student to take advantage of this opportunity to speak his/her mind and share his/her thoughts about where we are getting it right and where we can improve. As a special thanks, students will receive a $10 gift certificate to the Common Grounds Coffee Shop or The Mountaintop Market.

If you have any questions or comments about the survey you may reach me by email at margo.warden@jsc.edu or by phone at 802-635-1256.

OFFICE OF CAREER DEVELOPMENT

We are very excited to announce that on January 6th Beth Walsh became our new Coordinator of Career Development at JSC. In her very short time here so far, Beth has been busy reaching out to students, conducting workshops on résumé building, job and internship searches, LinkedIn, and transferable skills, as well as holding drop-in hours on Wednesday and Thursday afternoons. She is interested in talking to students about their career development, choice of major, résumés, cover letters, graduate school searches, and career goals.

Two important upcoming career development events are on Monday, March 17th and Tuesday, March 18th. On the 17th, Beth is offering a workshop called “How to Get the Most Out of the Career Fair,” and on the 18th, the JSC Spring Career Fair and Exposition will be held from 1:30 to 4:00 in the SHAPE Center. Beth is working hard to attract employers and internship providers to this event, which is open for students and community members.

To be kept up to date with workshops and events please “like” Beth’s new Facebook Page at https://www.facebook.com/JSCCareerDevelopment. Please feel free to contact her at beth.walsh@jsc.edu or at 802-635-1377 with any comments or questions.

FALL 2014 REGISTRATION

It may be hard to believe, but it is almost time to begin registering for Fall 2014 courses! Registration Week for Fall 2014 begins March 31st. Encourage your student to make an appointment with his or her advisor during the weeks prior to registration to discuss plans for next year. Advisor approval is required prior to registration. First year students are encouraged to meet with a Peer Advisor in the Advising and Career Center prior to meeting with an academic advisor. Peer Advisors are available Monday-Friday in the Advising & Career Center, Dewey 164. Students may drop in (no appointment needed) for assistance with making a tentative fall course schedule, understanding degree requirements, using Web Services to search and register for classes, etc.

Questions?? Contact the Advising & Career Center at 635-1257 or email the Director of Advising, Sara Kinerson, at sara.kinerson@jsc.edu.

Beyond the First Year

Although our office is called the Office of First-Year Experience, a better name might be the Office of Student Success. Our support for your student does not end with his/her first year. We will be here to welcome him/her back next year and continue to be a resource throughout his/her time at JSC.

Please contact us with question, comments, and concerns: **Margo Warden**, Director of First-Year Experience - margo.warden@jsc.edu or 635-1256; **Emily Neilsen**, Coordinator of First-Year Events - emily.neilsen@jsc.edu or 635-1408; **Jennifer Stefanski**, Coordinator of First-Year Support - jennifer.stefanski@jsc.edu or 635-1474.