MAY 2010

What I’m Doing on my Summer Vacation
page 2

“Health”-ful Tips for the Journey Ahead
page 3

Residence Hall Closing Information
page 4

Avoid or Confront? Dealing with Difficult Conversations
pages 5-6
What I’m Doing on my Summer Vacation

Got big plans for the summer? That great job? The cool internship? Hanging with old friends? Getting out of town?

Hopefully, your summer will be more than a break from the routine of classes. Have fun, take care of yourself, do lots of reading – for pleasure, escape from your humdrum life, or to learn something new – and earn cash to keep yourself financially afloat.

With the tight job market, though, you may not have a job lined up. If you don’t have a job, why not go into business for yourself? What are your skills? Define some specific things you’re really good at, create a package of services for a price, then get the word out with some creative advertising. Here are some ideas:

**Paint rooms** – The housing market is still in the dumper, so more people are staying put and renovating. Sell your skills to a contractor or directly to people in homes or businesses. Offer to do interior painting to freshen a room, or strip wood surfaces, move furniture, wash windows, or any other renovation tasks.

**Babysit** – Traditional childcare is always needed, but how about this? Create your own “camp” at a local park. You can spend a couple hours a day with a paying group of children, teaching them arts or crafts, music, soccer, baseball or any other fun skill you are good at. Moms will appreciate the free time, so be sure to advertise it as a “Mom’s Day Out.”

**Chores** – Running errands or driving the kids to activities can be a welcome assistance to busy parents. Also grass mowing, garden maintenance, walking the dog or caring for pets while the family’s on vacation, car washing or detailing, etc., etc. If you do a GREAT job, word will spread for more and more business.

**Party planning** – Finding unique ideas for kids’ parties can be a welcome resource for parents. Not to be sexist, but here are a couple of ideas. How about a “spa day” for little girls, with manicures and fun with makeup, where they try products out on each other. And how about a “what’s inside” discovery experience for boys, with all kinds of old TVs, stereos and other electronics (you can pick up at garage sales) for the kids to take apart, examine, and destroy?

**Tutoring** – School’s out in June and kids will have too much time on their hands. Some will need to catch up in reading, spelling or math, while others need to keep building more advanced skills. Define what you can do, be willing to go to their homes or meet the child at the public library, and decide on a price.

**Computer and cell phone skills** – Who knows better than you how to navigate the web, Facebook, Twitter, PowerPoint, texting and setting up all the features on your phone or computer. Your market? “Older adults,” who don’t have half of the knowledge you do about how their electronics work. They may be too embarrassed to admit it, but you can provide private tutoring to help them enter the 21st century’s technology.

**Building websites** – Approach small businesses or non-profit groups. They may want a web presence, but don’t have a clue as to how to do it. You can charge a more reasonable price than a large web marketing company, give the small customer what they want, and still walk away with a good income.

A tough economy calls for creativity, so think carefully about what you have to offer the world. You may put together a plan that will result in tremendous profits, which would be great! And, you’ll spend the summer learning about business, markets, advertising, and interpersonal skills, as well as your own persistence, strengths and weaknesses, and a work ethic that will serve you well after graduation. Believe in yourself, and go get ‘em!
Healthful Tips for the Journey Ahead

Ah...just wrapping up senior year, feels good, no more registering for classes, filing FAFSA forms, turning in immunization records. Now, to break out of college and into the working world, there are a few things you may want to remember to take with you and some things you will quickly want to figure out as you embark on that journey.

Those immunization forms...ugh. While it may have taken a few e-mails, letters, and possibly account holds to get those into the Wellness Center and Res Life most students have them on file. Aurora University keeps those records for 7 years. After 7 years they are destroyed. Every adult should have a copy of their immunization records or titers proving immunity in their possession. This will possibly save you several phone calls, possibly money, needlesticks, and much frustration.

What healthcare insurance do you have? Are you on your parents’ insurance plan? Will you be eligible to continue that coverage? Do you have the “school health insurance plan”? Where will you be getting your health insurance coverage? This believe it or not is something you need to stay on top of. The cost of healthcare is a serious concern for healthcare consumers especially those of us on a budget. One visit to an ER can easily put a strain on most budgets, and a recent study published in the August 2009 American Journal of Medicine found that over 60% of bankruptcy in the US in 2007 was healthcare expense related.

When you do land that job check out benefits package, and enroll in the health plan that is right for you. Ask questions. Most employers have a Benefits Administrator that is well versed in the plans offered and can offer valuable insight. Read the information given regarding the health, dental and vision plan, and sign up right away. When you begin employment most plans only allow a 3 month window from your start date to join the plan unless you have a “qualifying event”. If you fail to sign up during that time you may have to wait until the beginning of the next plan year. Be an educated consumer, you are paying for it!

Establish a primary doctor that participates in your health plan. This will definitely save you time and money (insurance co-pays are usually less at an office visit vs. ER) as well as improve your overall health. While you are at it find a dentist. It is never easy to try to find and get an appointment with a good dentist when you are in the midst of a dental problem. There has also been a potential link identified between inflammatory gum disease and an increased risk cardiovascular disease. So be proactive and maintain your dental health!

Be sure to know your health history. This includes information like any chronic health problems (asthma, hypertension, diabetes), any past surgical history, allergies, medications being taken over the counter as well as prescription, and any significant family health history. This information is crucial to receiving safe quality healthcare.

When you set up a place of your own you will want to have some important Items on hand. No one likes to drag themselves out of bed when they’re sick to go to the store for cold medicines or fever reducers, be prepared. Some things that belong in every household are: a thermometer, refreezable ice pack, fever/pain reducers, antihistamine (like Benadryl for allergic reactions), topical antibiotic ointment, and bandages.

We hope this information will provide you with some helpful reminders. We wish you all health and wellness. Congratulations 2010 grads and good luck!
RESIDENCE HALL CLOSING INFORMATION

Believe it or not, it’s the end of the year and it’s time to think about moving out of the residence halls. The halls close at 5:00 PM on Friday, May 7, 2010. Please make sure that you are familiar with all residence hall closing procedures.

ROOM CLEANING/BILLING:

Your RA will use the Room Condition Report (RCR) form that was completed when you checked in. Any damages that have occurred, other than normal wear and tear, that were not recorded on the RCR at check in at the beginning of the year will be charged to you. Final billing authority rests with Res Life and Physical Properties. Room inspections will be conducted by the RHD and Phys Props, and additional charges may be assessed.

If it cannot be resolved which resident is responsible for damage, Res Life will charge all roommates equally. In cases where residents did not return or complete the room condition form upon check-in, damages will be assessed against the condition of the room based on Spring 2009.

Rooms must be completely empty and clean when you check out in order for the RA staff to assess condition. Any excessive cleaning charges will be billed to you. Please vacuum the floor, wipe off all dresser tops and dresser drawers, remove all trash, reassemble the beds, remove adhesive from walls or doors, etc. Cleaning supplies will be available from Res Life M-F 10-4:30.

The RA will tell you what damages may be billed, but are not able to provide costs.

CURRENT RESIDENT NOT LIVING IN THE RESIDENCE HALLS NEXT YEAR?

In addition to following all outlined check-out procedures, students not returning to the halls for 2010-2011 must complete the following steps:

1. Provide written notice to the Office of Residence Life by 4/30/10 that you will not be living on campus for Fall 2010. Please see Dana Ginnett in lower level Wilkinson to complete this process.
3. As a reminder, if you are contracted for Fall 2010 housing, your $150 returning resident deposit is non-refundable, even if you cancel your housing contract. This deposit is transferrable to your Fall 2010 tuition charges, if you cancel by June 1, 2010.

Please note that even graduating seniors must complete this process. Thank you for your assistance. Failure to adhere to these policies & procedures will result in the forfeiture of your $100 housing deposit and may cost you fines for damage and/or improper check-out.

MAY TERM/SUMMER TERM HOUSING

For students requesting May term or summer housing, a separate contract must be completed! May term contracts are due by 4:30 PM on Mon 4/26/2010. Summer contracts are due by 4:30 PM on Friday, 4/30/2010. Only students enrolled in summer classes, in-season, participating athletes, educational commitments (i.e. internship), or working directly for AU a minimum of 20 hours per week will be allowed to live on campus during May and summer terms. May term housing is available at no cost for those eligible to reside on campus. Summer rates ($543/term for singles, $466/term for doubles) will be billed on a per-term basis, not a weekly rate. The Office of Residence Life will make every effort to accommodate a room type request; however, this cannot be guaranteed. No meal plans are not offered during May & summer terms.

CHECKOUT PROCEDURES:

- You must schedule a check-out appointment with your RA (on sign up sheet on their door) at least 24 hours before you want to check out. If your RA does not have a convenient available time, you must contact another RA to set up a time.
- You must check out of your room no later than 24 hours after your last final, or by 5 PM on Friday, 5/7/10.
- If you have a valid reason to remain in the halls past 5 on Fri (i.e. approved participation in or volunteering at a graduation ceremony, conflicts in travel arrangements, residing in May Term, etc), you must obtain approval by e-mailing reslife@aurora.edu.
- No checkouts are allowed and no moving out of items is permitted during commencement (8 AM-5:30 PM on Sun 5/9/10). Doing so will result in a monetary fine.
- Move all belongings out of your room and clean thoroughly.
- Complete the Room Condition Report with your RA and turn it in your residence hall key.
- Go to the Mailroom to return your mailbox key and fill out a forwarding address card.

REMINDEERS:

- Keep an eye on your items as you move out-thefts occasionally can occur!
- Take all personal property with you. AU does not provide storage.
- AU does NOT assume responsibility for lost or stolen items. Any items left in the halls will be disposed of as necessary.
- Items may not be left in hallways/stairwells, as this is a fire/safety hazard.
- Please don’t drag furniture-it will cause burn marks in the carpet and residents will be charged for this damage.
Difficult conversations are topics that are uncomfortable. They do not have to be limited to relationships, religion, and politics. If emotions can be removed, why would the conversation be a difficult conversation? Only when something is at stake is a conversation difficult. Difficult conversations are rough on our emotions and challenge our self-identity. For example, a supervisor needing to downsize, asking your partner if we are ready for sex, an aging parent with health concerns, or a friend making racist jokes.

So, why do we avoid?

**Three Assumptions:**
- Assuming the other person is acting with bad motives.
- Assuming the problem will go away.
- Assuming there is no good resolution.

**THEIR MOTIVES:** We can be more forgiving and understanding of our individual behavior and mistakes than we are on others. We sometimes make assumptions about THEIR motivates. Think about it:
- When a friend does not return a message, it is because they are unreliable; when you forget to drop off a letter, it is because work has overwhelmed you.
- When a colleague arrives late for a group project, it is because they are lazy and disrespectful; when you arrive late to a doctor’s appointment, it is because you lost track of the time.
- When a neighbor plays their music loud, it is because they are trying to annoy you; when you screamed at the TV during the big game, it is because you got excited.

It is inconceivable that a person would want to upset us unless they want to provoke us. THEY are doing it on purpose... Is this the correct assumption? No, but we make the assumption consciously or unconsciously. Bad intentions do exist in this world. While there are bullies on campus and in the work force, assumptions make more enemies then reality. Remember when you were short with a friend because you were sick, stayed away from a group outing because you had other obligations and did not tell the group why, or even that time you raised your voice to make a point. How did your friends react? Do you want them to assume that you had bad intentions?

**IT WILL GO AWAY:** Do we forget the times we feel embarrassed, hurt, or degraded? Have you told a friend to grow up and get over it? After all, time heals all. Since some problems do not go away, what happens when you continue to ignore difficult conversations?
Is it better to keep these events in mind as ammunition in the future? “I am ready for my roommate to yell at me for my TV being on because I am going to let him have it for typing loudly on his computer at 3 AM. I want him to bring it on.”

These curve balls enter the relationship at irrelevant times to add even more stress to future conversations and hinder the possibility for solutions. After all, if the past problem was not resolved, how is the future problem going to be resolved?

**NO SOLUTIONS**: If the other person knows that I have a problem with what they are doing without me telling them, and they are continuing to cause problems because they want to annoy me, then what good is talking to them to develop a solution? Obviously, they do not want to work with me.

Do solutions have to be either/or problems? Either the lights are off at 10 PM or they are not. Either your colleague does their job or they do not. Either they get the money or I do. Solutions have to be theirs or mine. There is no middle ground. As a result, we add to the frustration because we tell them to shut up, leave or I leave the room, or pay me more or I quit.

So let us focus on NEEDS instead of WANTS. Focusing on wants can hinder open negotiations. We begin to think that we are bartering with a sales clerk and not talking to a colleague. Our wants are always bigger than our needs.

I WANT you to shut off the light now. I NEED to sleep 8 hours before getting up because of early classes.

I WANT a raise. I NEED recognition for my contributions for my professional development.

I WANT my own car. I NEED transportation to school.

I WANT __________. I NEED __________. (Fill in the blank with your own example.)

**What are we to do?**

- Describe the situation using **“I” STATEMENTS**: “I” statements focus the discussion and allow us to be aware that we are not blaming the other person. Blaming puts us on the defensive and makes us hostile to multiple solutions.
  
  ⇒ “When I see a lack of participation, I feel disrespected.”

- Compare it to what they say by **LISTENING**: Use listening skills like rephrasing what they told you, asking follow up questions, and learning about their perspective. Let them speak.

- Inform your need by making an **OPENING** solution:
  
  ⇒ “Are you able to reschedule your events to attend the meeting on time?”

- Be open to **OTHER SOLUTIONS**:
  
  ⇒ “You propose that you leave the TV on but use headphones. However, it is the light that is bothering me. Do you have an alternate solution?”

Being aware of our behavior and assumptions will not turn a difficult conversation to an easy one. The awareness only makes resolutions to difficult conversations possible.