Student Sendoff Information
Alumni groups offer valuable support to current and incoming Penn State students through Student Sendoffs, which give new students a chance to meet other Penn Staters in a casual setting. The online student information request form will be available soon.

Inside:

Student Sendoff Guidelines and Suggestions

We are continually reviewing and streamlining the process for organizing Student Sendoff events. Part of that is moving to more electronic communication—both between the Alumni Association and chapters and between chapters and students invited to sendoff events. The following information includes helpful hints from chapter leaders who have organized successful sendoff events.

Data Request

1. Chapters request student data online through the volunteer toolkit. We encourage submitting your request as early as possible. We will fill requests based on the date of the request and date of the event.

2. Data will be sent to chapters via e-mail in an Excel spreadsheet to expedite requests. (Note: The Alumni Association no longer provides hard copies of data and mailing labels.)

3. Student e-mail addresses will be included on the spreadsheet.

4. Chapters must select either a May 15 or June 15 release date. Selecting the later date allows for a more comprehensive list of incoming students from the area. The Alumni Association cannot process requests for data from both dates.

Invitation List

1. Because new students enjoy meeting current Penn State students, we provide chapters with information for contacting current students in the area who can be invited to any sendoff event.
2. Inviting chapter members’ children—particularly high school and college-age children—will add more young people to the event.

3. Invite new students to bring their parents and a friend. They’ll feel more comfortable arriving with people they know.

4. Sendoff events are perfect events to attract new alumni and members to a chapter. Asking young alumni, who are fresh out of school and enthusiastic, to help in some way gives added meaning to their time at the event.

5. Encourage members of all ages to attend in order to show incoming students that joining the Penn State family will last a lifetime.

**Invitation**

1. E-mailed invitations are the most inexpensive and effective means for reaching the different groups invited to the sendoff event: incoming students and their parents, other Penn State students in the area, chapter members and their families, and other area alumni.

2. Follow up after sending e-invitations with a phone call to add a personal touch.

**Chapter Involvement**

1. A sendoff event is a great opportunity for chapter members to get involved. An ad hoc committee can make the follow-up phone calls encouraging people to attend. Station volunteers near the entrance to your event to greet students and their parents. Assign chapter members to circulate, ensuring everyone feels included.

2. Remember to hang the chapter’s banner and wear blue and white.

3. If possible, plan the event in a way that parents and students are split up for a while—new students are likely to feel more comfortable asking questions of current Penn State students if their parents aren’t hovering nearby.

4. Pitch (briefly) the benefits of chapter membership while a captive audience is present. Some chapters have found Penn State parents are interested in chapter activities.

5. If time permits, make and distribute a list of the local new students attending so that they can later network with each other.

6. Consider passing out “Penn State MOM” and “Penn State DAD” brass pins available through the Student Bookstore at 800-373-4SBS or online at www.thestudentbookstore.com.
7. Distribute other Penn State gifts to new students. Some businesses that are good sources include:

- The Alumni Store at 877-PSU-SHOP or alumnistore.psu.edu
- Penn State Bookstore at 800-543-5659
- Lion’s Pride at 800-462-0068
- Student Bookstore at 800-373-4SBS
- McLanahan’s at 800-367-8081

**Alumni Association Involvement**

1. The Alumni Association will send a Student Sendoff package of “goodies” within two weeks of the event. The package typically includes blue-and-white balloons, “We are...Penn State” decals, Lion Shrine postcards, football schedules, and more.
2. Alumni Association staff work with the Undergraduate Admissions Office to provide data and invitation lists.
3. The Volunteer Services Team can help coach chapters on strategies to ensure the student sendoff is a success.
4. Encourage current students such as Lion Ambassadors and Blue & White Society members to participate and help out with Student Sendoffs.
5. Assist with promotion and marketing of sendoffs.
6. Alumni Association staff often attend sendoff events (if possible), providing support and a direct connection to the University.