Greetings from the Office of Parent Services!
We’re in the middle of one of the busiest months in the academic year. As we get closer to the end of the semester, students are working hard on completing assignments, writing papers, and hopefully planning for summer. This email includes information on hall closing, May graduation, the Paws Program, and as always, important deadlines.

Reminders from Financial Aid Services
Financial Aid Services will begin emailing award notifications to continuing students in mid-June. Remind your student to check the SPIRE Student Center to be sure all required documentation has been submitted to complete their financial aid file. Financial Aid Services must receive and review all requested documents before awarding any funding. Incomplete and late documents may delay or jeopardize your student’s eligibility for financial aid. For more information, your student should contact Financial Aid Services at (413) 545-0801.

Hall closing information
Start bringing belongings home!
Help make your student’s move-out as smooth as possible by urging them to plan ahead! If your student is planning a trip home over the upcoming weekends, encourage them to bring home any clothes or items they will not need for the final weeks of the semester. They can also donate furniture and clothing in good condition in their residential area beginning May 5.

Closing Information
Residence halls will close for the summer on Thursday, May 11 at 8 p.m. Please plan to coordinate any rides, flights, and/or bus trips to leave campus by this date. Graduating seniors and Commencement volunteers will automatically receive permission to stay in the residence halls through May 14 at 10 a.m. to attend and support Commencement. Students with a need to stay beyond May 11 at 8 p.m. can request permission to stay through the Living at UMass website, as of April 24. The site includes a list of commonly approved circumstances.

Mail delivery
The last day that packages and mail will be delivered on campus is May 11. Remind your student to update their summer mailing information in SPIRE before the end of the semester. You’ll find information about processing mail sent after May 11 on the Living at UMass website.

Final Commencement announcements
We look forward to seeing our senior graduate families and friends at Commencement Weekend 2017.

U.S. Senator Elizabeth Warren, advocate for higher education reform, consumer protection, and an expert on the financial industry, is the featured speaker at this year’s Commencement. Learn more on the Commencement website.

International students can sign up to carry their country’s flag during the Commencement processional parade. They should email commencement@umass.edu by Friday, April 21. Encourage your graduating senior to attend the Commencement Fair (Tuesday, May 2, noon. – 4 p.m., Student Union Ballroom) to get a cap and gown, purchase grad gear, have a portrait taken, and more.

Graduates can pick up caps, gowns, and tassels in the Campus Center, room 165-69 on the following dates and times: May 8, 11 a.m. – 4 p.m. and May 9 – 11, 10 a.m. – 4 p.m. Students can arrange to have regalia shipped to them by visiting www.buildagrad.com/umassamherst; delivery charges apply and orders must be placed before April 21.
On Commencement day, Friday, May 12, graduates should arrive in lot 11 at McGuirk Stadium by 3:30 p.m. Ceremonies begin at 4:30 p.m. and end at approximately 6 p.m. On Saturday, May 13, schools and colleges host individual celebrations; students should contact their school/college for specific information.

**Paws Program**
The therapy dogs will be back on campus on April 26, 11:30 a.m. – 1:30 p.m., in the Student Union Ballroom and W.E.B. Du Bois Library to help students reduce stress before finals and improve their overall well-being. Encourage your student to attend if they can. It's a great opportunity for students to lower their stress level and learn about wellness-related resources and self-care.

**Fall 2017 course registration reminder**
Your student should have already registered for Fall 2017 courses if they plan to return to campus for the fall semester. Students can make changes to their fall schedules during the summer months and through the end of the Add/Drop period on September 18. To be a full-time student, your student must register for at least 12 credit hours per semester.

**Summer internships and community service**
Your student may be looking forward to a well-deserved break from school and routine come May 11. While you should encourage them to take a break over the summer, they also need to stay active by having a summer job, internship, or volunteer opportunity. Summer is the perfect time for them to test the waters, advance their future goals, explore options for possible careers, and distinguish themselves from their peers. If they don't have a summer job or internship lined up, it’s not too late for them to contact Career Services and attend one of the many events they hold each month. Students can also learn more about finding, applying for, and earning credit for internships through the Career Services website. One-on-one appointments are also available to aid in their search.

**Be part of UMass Dining’s 10th edition Taste of Home cookbook**
UMass Dining is ranked #1 Best Campus Food by the Princeton Review and would love to include your family’s favorite recipe in the “Taste of Home” special next fall. Your recipe will be featured in all dining commons for a particular meal and will be published in the 10th edition Taste of Home cookbook. UMass Dining will send you a UMass baseball cap or tee shirt (limited to two caps or tee shirts per family, per year) when they receive your recipe. You may submit your recipe on the UMass Dining website. Deadline for submissions is September 11, 2017.

**Important dates**
April 26: Paws Program, 11:30 a.m. – 1:30 p.m., Student Union Ballroom and W.E.B. Du Bois Library
May 2: Commencement Fair, noon – 4 p.m., Student Union Ballroom
May 2: Last day of classes
May 4: Final examinations begin
May 11: Last day of final examinations
May 11: Residence halls close at 8 p.m.
May 12-13: Commencement Weekend
May 22: Summer Session I begins

**Helpful links**
Commencement 2017
Financial Aid Services
Residential Life Student Services

As always, if you have any questions or concerns, feel free to contact the Office of Parent Services. Our office is open Monday through Friday from 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. We are more than happy to assist you.

In case of a campus emergency, always follow the university’s main web page at www.umass.edu. The website will display a distinctly colored stripe at the top containing pertinent status updates and information related to ongoing emergencies.

Sincerely,
Jeanne Horrigan, Director
Office of Parent Services