



Our December Newsletter is full of information about events and resources for student parents - including our End of Semester Family Gathering, opportunities to share your feedback on new programs and services, deadlines for submitting Fall child care receipts, free holiday resources, as well as this month's Student Parent Spotlight featuring Bagdat Koilybayev.

Wishing you and your family peace and good health.

SPP NEWS AND EVENTS

[Survey: Student Parent Programs Support Groups - click here!](#)

Please take a few minutes to complete a short survey to help us gather student parent input on developing targeted support groups set to begin next semester. Your feedback is important to us!

[Student Parent Programs Study Lounge - click here for more details](#)

Note: There is no Study Lounge the week of 11/24-11/30.

Join us in Bartlett Hall for a meal and some study time while our student staff watch your kids! Register your household once, then you'll receive a weekly sign-up link for the following week's Study Lounge sessions.

The last Study Lounge of Fall Semester is on Saturday, 12/14/24.

[End of Semester Gathering: 12/20, 4:30pm-6:30pm - click here to register](#)

Join us in the Cape Cod Lounge at the Student Union for an end of semester gathering with food, friends, and celebration of all of the hard work you've put in this semester. Registration required. Space is limited.

[Student Parent Programs Fall Child Care Receipts due by 12/15/24](#)

If you were awarded a Fall 2024 child care subsidy from Student Parent Programs for reimbursement of documented expenses, be sure to submit your receipts to studentparent@umass.edu by Sunday, December 15th 2024

OTHER NEWS, RESOURCES & EVENTS

Resources for Standing Against Bias & Hateful Acts

UMass welcomes all people and unequivocally rejects all forms of bigotry and hatred. We're including links to resources on building community and responding to hate from both [OEI](#) and [UMatter](#). Please feel free to reach out to us at any time for support - studentparent@umass.edu

Free Holiday Resources in Western MA - click link for details

Find some free holiday resources in Western MA, such as turkey giveaways, meals, and toys during the Thanksgiving and winter holiday season..

Holiday Break Travel Advisory for International Students - click for details

The Office of Global Affairs recommends that all international students under UMass immigration sponsorship strongly consider returning to the US from holiday travel prior to the presidential inauguration day of January 20, 2025.

Your feedback is needed for the new UMass Food Pantry - click here

UMass will be opening a campus food pantry and Basic Needs Center in Fall 2025, and they want to hear from potential beneficiaries of this resource!

Thank you for lending your voice!

Last Chance - Winter Gear from The Amherst Survival Center 11/21 & 11/22

The Amherst Survival Center's final days of their Winter Coat Pop Up are this week. Shop for new and used winter coats, scarves, gloves, and other accessories for free while donations last. One shop per a person. Thursday 11/21 12-7pm and Friday 11/22 12-3pm. 138 Sunderland Road, Amherst MA

GEO Members - Submit your Fall child care receipts to GEO by 12/31/24

If you are a graduate employee in a GEO eligible position, you may qualify for child care expense reimbursement through GEO's Family Benefits Program.

See the link above for details and [reach out to their program coordinator, Leslie Edwards Davis](#) with questions or for help with eligibility or submission.

STUDENT PARENT SPOTLIGHT!



Bagdat (he/him) is a graduate student in Engineering Management who lives in Amherst with his wife Gulzira, and two young daughters, Aziza and Nurai. They are expecting their 3rd child in January! Bagdat speaks Kazakh and English.

Engineering Management

“Engineering Management is the perfect blend of my technical background and my desire to develop leadership and business skills. Ultimately, I saw it as a way to advance my career and make a bigger impact, both in my field and for my family.

I’m eager to put these skills into practice and make a meaningful impact in my future work! I’m also proud of the group projects I’ve led, where I’ve worked with international teams to create strategic marketing and technical solutions.”

What can you share with other student-parents about how to do your best?

“I’d say that a combination of personal habits, perspective, and support is key to doing your best as both a parent and a student.

- **Personal Habits:** I wake up early to start my day with Tahajjud prayer, reading the Quran, and my morning exercises. This quiet time helps me center myself before the family wakes up.
- **Time Management:** Managing your time wisely is critical. I use tools like a family calendar to organize everyone’s schedules, and I break my study time into focused blocks so I can fully dedicate time to my kids when needed.
- **Support System:** The support of my wife is incredibly important. We work as a team to manage family responsibilities, and her understanding of my academic commitments makes it easier to balance everything.
- **Campus Resources:** Take full advantage of campus resources (Like SPP!)
- **Perspective:** It’s important to keep perspective and remind yourself why you’re doing this. For me, it’s about building a better future for my family, and that motivates me to push through challenges.”

“I’d just like to emphasize that being a student-parent, while challenging, is also an incredible journey. It teaches you resilience, time management, and how to focus on what truly matters. It’s easy to get overwhelmed, but staying grounded in your goals and relying on your support system can make all the difference. Every small step forward is progress, and it’s important to celebrate both your academic and parenting wins, no matter how small they seem. Stay motivated, and remember that you’re setting an inspiring example for your children!”

RESOURCE HIGHLIGHTS



ON CAMPUS

Office of Global Affairs

Formerly the International Programs Office, OGA provides tons of information and support to manage life at UMass Amherst as an international student. [Click here for more information.](#)

Free Meals To-Go!

Free to-go meals every Wednesday from 5pm - 6pm! Present your Campus ID or provide your name to claim your meal - **472 North Pleasant Street in Amherst.**



IN THE COMMUNITY

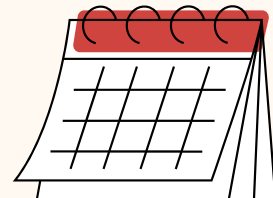
Making a Writing Group that Works

This article is designed to help you create and sustain effective dissertation writing groups - [Click here to read it!](#)

ASC November Community Meal

November 27th from 12pm - 2:30pm, Amherst Survival Center is hosting a community meal at their dining room. They are located at 138 Sunderland Road in North Amherst.

Click calendar for UMass Fall 2024 Academic Calendar



[Click for UMass EVENTS Calendar](#)

[Click for Family-Friendly Events](#)

Family Friendly Activities

Seasonal Family Fun

- [Magic Wings Butterfly Gardens](#) (South Deerfield, MA)
- [Jones Library Kids Room](#) (Amherst, MA)
- [Smith College Museum of Art](#) (Northampton, MA)
- [Solutia Live Animal Center](#) (Springfield, MA)
- [Yankee Candle Village](#) (South Deerfield, MA)

Museums & Educational Activities

- [Eric Carle Museum](#) (Amherst, MA)
- [Emily Dickinson Museum](#) (Amherst, MA)
- [The Botanic Garden of Smith College](#) (Northampton, MA)
- [The New England Peace Pagoda](#) (Leverett, MA)
- [The Amazing World of Dr. Seuss](#) (Springfield, MA)
- [Springfield Science Museum](#) (Springfield, MA)
- [Energy Park](#) (Greenfield, MA)

For more information
about family
resources in your
area, please send us
an email!



Call or email any time
you need support or
have questions.

We're here for you!

studentparent@umass.edu

(413) 545-9319

UMass Amherst

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