Greetings from Erin

Howdy Ags!

The New Year is upon us, meaning that it is time to once again look ahead to the coming year (and semester). Many of you have made resolutions related to your academics, diet, or exercise routine. Resolutions are a good way of reflecting upon the previous year and looking to make the future a little brighter. My challenge to you is this: Make a resolution to pay forward any good will bestowed upon you this year. Keep the Aggie Spirit alive and well! The Regents’ Scholars staff hopes that you enjoy the remainder of your break and we look forward to seeing you once spring classes have begun.

Thanks and Gig ‘em!
Erin Fisk
Regents’ Scholars Assistant Coordinator

FAFSA/TASFA Renewal Workshops

In order to continue receiving financial aid, including the Regents’ Scholarship, during the 2014-2015 academic year, students must complete the Renewal Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). The FAFSA becomes available on January 1, 2014. The Scholarships & Financial Aid Office encourages students to submit the FAFSA form by March 1, 2014 to receive priority in awarding. To expedite the process, students are encouraged to file their tax returns as early as possible.

In order to complete the FAFSA, students will need:

- Student and parent social security numbers
- 2013 W-2 Forms & any other records of money earned for both the student and parents
- Student’s 2013 federal income tax return
- Parents’ 2013 federal income tax return
- If filing electronically, PIN for both the student and the parents

In order to expedite this process for the student, Scholarships & Financial Aid will be hosting several Renewal FAFSA/TASFA workshops for Regents’ Scholars during the spring semester. Students are encouraged to attend these workshops if they need assistance filing their FAFSA. These events are scheduled for:

- February 17th 11:00am-12:00pm Pavilion 106
- February 18th 3:00-4:00pm Pavilion 106
- February 19th 9:30-10:30pm Pavilion 106
- February 20th 4:00-5:00pm Pavilion 106

Registration is required. To register, students should visit https://sfaid.tamu.edu/workshops/. Information retrieved from: http://studentaid.ed.gov.

Regents’ Scholars Organization

Jan. 21 Social (7pm - midnight)
Jan. 24 Profit Share at Spoons (all day)
Jan. 25 Nursing Home Visit (2 - 4pm)
Jan. 30 RSO Family Reunion at Grand Station (5:30 - 9:30pm) - $10 fee

For additional information regarding RSO activities, students may email the RSO Board at rso@rso.tamu.edu.

More Important Dates

Jan. 1 FAFSA opens for 2014-2015 academic year
Jan. 2 - 17 Open registration for spring classes
Jan. 9 Residence halls open
Jan. 13 First day of spring classes
Jan. 17 Add/Drop deadline
Jan. 19 MSC Open House
Jan. 20 Martin Luther King Jr. Day - University Holiday
Jan. 24 Spring bills due

MSC Spring Open House

Sunday, January 19, 2014
2-5pm
Memorial Student Center

Now that you have a semester under your belt, do you feel like you want get more involved on campus? The MSC Open House is “a chance to see the best student involvement opportunities the Division of Student Affairs and Texas A&M have to offer.” Texas A&M University has over 800 organizations so there is something for everyone. Most of the organizations will set up a table in the MSC for MSC Open House to help you learn more about their organization with flyers, representatives, demonstrations, or giveaways. Come out to make new friends and find your niche in Aggieland!
The University Scholarship Application is now open for current students. By completing the application, students will be considered for the continuing student scholarships and the Southerland Aggie Leader Scholarship through Scholarships & Financial Aid as well as scholarships within participating colleges and departments (see below).

The application deadline is February 1, 2014.

Students can access the application through scholarships.tamu.edu.

Please note that there is no “submit” button on the application. The student should save as they go and can access their application at any time from now until the February 1 deadline. This way, they can edit and update as needed.

List of participating colleges and departments:
- Scholarships & Financial Aid
- College of Agriculture & Life Sciences
  - Department of Agricultural Economics
  - Department of Entomology
  - Department of Nutrition and Food Science
  - Department of Wildlife and Fisheries Sciences
- College of Engineering
  - Department of Aerospace Engineering
  - Department of Chemical Engineering
  - Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering
  - Department of Engineering Technology & Industrial Distribution
- College of Education & Human Development
- College of Geosciences
- College of Science
  - Department of Chemistry
- Mays Business School
- College of Veterinary Medicine & Biomedical Sciences
  - Department of Biomedical Sciences
- College of Engineering
- Department of English
- Department of Construction Science
- International Student Services
- Study Abroad Programs Office
- Texas A&M Foundation
  - Foundation Excellence Awards

By now many of you are heading back to school, settling into your college homes, and if you’re like many students you’re feeling a little post-winter break slump. Sure it’s great to be back (well, minus the homework bit), but all that bonding with family and friends you did over the holidays might leave you feeling a little lonely.

**Make a Skype Date**

I have just gotten on the video-chatting bandwagon and it is so much better than talking on the phone. What is the coolest part? While many video phones cost upwards of $800, you can get a pretty good webcam for only $30. Then just hook up to a free service like Skype or Google Hangout and start talking face-to-face. (Don’t forget to make sure you get some face time with Rover if you’re missing your pup.) Moms and dads tend to be pretty excited about video chat too.

**Mail an Old Fashioned Snail Mail Letter**

I am a firm believer that a good piece of mail can turn a bad day into a good one, so give someone’s day a lift by sending off a bit of snail mail. Send mom a postcard, write a letter to your BFF, or pen a note to your grandparents. Then stamp it and send it off!

**Have a Long-Distance TV Party**

Lots of shows are just starting up after the holiday break, but being away from your friends and family doesn’t mean you can’t watch Grey’s Anatomy with your kid sister anymore. Make a phone date and watch together, or if you’re in a different time zone wait until the next day and log on to the web to watch the latest episodes together. Most TV stations air full episodes on their websites. Another option is to DVR your favorite shows.

Email may be a quick way to communicate, but don’t forget your etiquette when emailing professors, instructors, scholarship and financial aid advisors, or other campus staff. Make a good impression with these tips:

**Always identify yourself**

Do not assume that your name will appear on the delivered message next to your email address. You need to identify yourself to the person you are emailing. That person cannot discern who you are based on your email address alone. Additionally, if you are attempting to contact campus staff, including the Regents’ Scholars staff, you need to utilize your TAMU Neo email.

**Do not type in all caps**

Writing in caps makes it seem like you are shouting, and some readers find it more difficult to read. If you want to stress a point, opt for underlining or putting it in bold font.

**Avoid abbreviations and emoticons**

Including an abbreviation like “FYI” or “LOL” or an emoticon like “:)” may be okay in an email to a friend, but they are inappropriate in formal emails. You wouldn’t include smiley faces in an important letter, so don’t put them in your important emails.

**Always fill in the subject line**

Your email’s subject line is the first impression your recipient has of your email. Make your subject line a clear and meaningful reflection of your email.

**Use a professional format**

You may think using a colored or unusual font, or a formatted background design in your emails makes them stand out, but don’t use them with official emails. They’re not professional and they make your message hard to read.

**Avoid sarcasm**

It’s difficult to judge tone in an email. Don’t use ironic or sarcastic language that may not come across as you intended in writing.

**Don’t use a “cute” or “inappropriate” email address for important emails**

An email sent from sweetiepie07@aol.com or thuglife14@yahoo.com will come across as unprofessional. Even if you have to create a new email account, use a more business-like address, like janesmith@aol.com, to be taken more seriously.

**Make your email clear**

Professors and campus staff receive a lot of emails. Make it easier for them to get your message by keeping a clear, concise format. Write short paragraphs and include a space between them so your reader can find the information they’re looking for quickly. Put your most important information in the first or second paragraph so your reader doesn’t have to scroll down to find it. Make your email as short and concise and possible; anything longer than half a page is too long.

**Know when to pick up the phone or schedule a meeting**

Email is convenient, but it shouldn’t completely replace phone calls or meetings. For important or complicated matters, pick up the phone.

**Ask before sending a large attachment**

Not only do attachments take up a lot of storage space in your recipient’s inbox, but many people won’t open attachments for fear of viruses. When possible, include all information in the body of your email. If you do need to send an attachment, ask the recipient if it’s okay.

**Double check before hitting “send”**

It only takes a few minutes to take another careful look at your email before you hit send but it could improve the impression your email makes. Use your computer’s spelling and grammar checks, but be aware that these don’t catch all mistakes.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td><strong>University Holiday (University closed)</strong>&lt;br&gt;FAFSA opens for 2014-2015</td>
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<td>Open registration begins for spring classes&lt;br&gt;Aggie Women’s Basketball vs. UTEP</td>
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<td>Aggie Men’s Basketball vs. UTPA</td>
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<td>Aggie Men’s Basketball at Tennessee</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>Aggie Women’s Basketball vs. Alabama</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>First day of spring classes&lt;br&gt;Texas A&amp;M Singing Cadet Auditions begin</td>
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<td>Aggie Men’s Basketball vs. Arkansas</td>
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<td>Spring bills due&lt;br&gt;Residence Halls open&lt;br&gt;Aggie Women’s Basketball at LSU</td>
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<td>10</td>
<td>Aggie Men’s &amp; Women’s Swimming vs. Georgia</td>
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<td>Aggie Women’s Swimming vs. SMU</td>
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<td>Aggie Women’s Basketball at Georgia</td>
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<td>Southwestern Black Student Leadership Conference&lt;br&gt;Texas A&amp;M Singing Cadet Auditions end</td>
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**Words of Wisdom**

“Commitment leads to action. Action brings your dream closer.”

- Marcia Wieder