

Welcome, Class of 2015, to Xavier University! I cannot wait for your arrival on August, 19! My name is Theresa Hennard. I am the Public Relations Coordinator for **Manresa: Xavier's New Student Orientation Program**. At Xavier, I am a junior majoring in Middle Childhood Education, with a focus on math and science. Part of the territory of being a junior (one year away from senior) is a compulsive need to look back and reflect on the years prior. I remember the summer before Xavier and the feelings of collegiate dread and nervousness about starting a new chapter in my life. I was worried about being away from home and my family, taking harder classes, making friends, and finding my place in a completely new environment. These are the common worries with coming to college, which means that it is a road many of us have walked before. At Xavier, all of us have gone through this or are still going through this. Hopefully, this letter will give you some helpful tools to help you make your transition to Xavier a smooth and stress free one. I know that these helped me.

Talk with Your Family:

Sitting down and having a conversation with your family before you start classes is a great way to determine the amount of contact you will have with them once school begins. Perhaps you plan on talking once a day or once a week. Maybe you should initiate the phone calls rather than them calling you. Talking about these kinds of things ahead of time may seem unnecessary, but it can most definitely alleviate stress from your family. The last thing you will want to worry about once classes begin is your family worrying about you, or worse, having them calling 7 times a day.

Set aside "ME" Time:

Cliché? Yes. Helpful? Absolutely. Making sure that you take time out of every day to do something for yourself. By doing something that simple, you can really help lower your stress level. You can take a walk, play some games in Gallagher, hang out on the green space, wander down your hall, or maybe even trying heading over to O'Connor Sports Center to try out a fitness class. All of these activities can provide a nice break from your day. Something as small as hanging out on the green space or just relaxing after a long day of classes could do wonders! Taking this time will help you focus on your school work and help your productivity.

Get Involved Right Off the Bat:

The most amazing aspect of Xavier is the overwhelming sense of community. Do not be afraid to dip your feet into the pool of endless potential. There are hundreds of opportunities to get involved at Xavier. Getting involved with something gives you a sense of purpose and can keep you busy, which helps keep your mind off of being homesick. Club Day on the Mall is August 30 and offers a great opportunity to explore Xavier's student organizations. Take time to walk around all of the tables and find a few things that may interest you. You can attend the club's first open meeting to get a better idea about the club's purpose. Clubs in college may be different from what you have experienced in the past. They require more time and dedication. I recommend picking three: one involving something you have done in the past, another to deal with your major, and finally something new that you have never participated in before. This will help you step out of your comfort zone a bit and give you the chance to meet a wide variety of people.

Know Your Resources:

If you find yourself completely in over your head with class work, having roommate issues, or just swimming in stress, there are plenty of resources on campus to help. The **Learning Assistance Center** can provide you with an individual tutor for a tough class, the Writing Center can help you when you're stuck writing a difficult paper, and your **Resident Assistant (RA)** is always willing to help settle any issues you may be having with your roommate. Perhaps you find yourself in a situation where you need to talk to someone completely removed from the situation. The **McGrath Health and Counseling Center** has professionals who are always available to provide free and confidential help and advice.

I hope that these suggestions help you prepare to take the leap into college life. College is definitely one of the most exciting and fun times of your life. We can't wait to see you for the Manresa Program. Until then, enjoy the rest of your summer! If you have any questions please feel free to call the Office of Student Involvement at (513) 745-3662 or email manresa@xavier.edu.

Sincerely,
Theresa Hennard
Public Relations Coordinator
Manresa 2011