WAYS IN WHICH FAMILIES CAN HELP THEIR STUDENTS THRIVE AT THE UNIVERSITY OF RICHMOND
2012-2013

HELP THEM ALONG AS THEY DEVELOP INTO ADULTHOOD:

It is your role to encourage your student to develop lifelong learning skills. Urge her or him to become familiar with and reach out to the campus resources.

Trust your daughter or son to make her/his own decisions. Students rely on parents and on the values on which they were raised for guidance. In the meantime, it is essential to their growth that they make their own decisions. They must learn to solve their own problems rather to rely on you or others to solve problems for them.

They will make mistakes along the way. We all do! And we all learn from them. Your student may take a different approach from you to deal with mistakes, and that is okay.

ENCOURAGE THEM TO HAVE THE BEST ACADEMIC EXPERIENCE POSSIBLE AT UR:

Encourage your student to get to know one faculty or staff member well each semester or annually. These relationships contribute to a better college experience for students; in addition, they lead to strong ties that benefit students in post-graduation letters and recommendations from such teachers and mentors. The student must make the effort to establish and maintain these connections through visits to office hours, emails, and other correspondence. Faculty and staff members are typically thrilled to be approached for advice and mentoring and enjoy these relationships immensely.

Help your student find her/his academic passion. The major that students choose does not dictate their career path. Years of experience and abundant research show us that students will have the best educational experience and will most benefit in terms of a strong academic record by finding the area of study that is most interesting to them. Maybe it’s history, maybe it’s leadership studies. The best way students can work toward post-graduation success is in finding their academic passion. Please go the Alumni & Career Services website for more information: http://oacs.richmond.edu/
COMMUNICATE YOUR LOVE AND SUPPORT TO THEM; ALSO RELY ON CAMPUS RESOURCES TO HELP THEM THROUGH ADJUSTMENT ISSUES:

Students typically go through immense changes as they learn new things and make new friends, inside and outside the classroom. While this may feel uncomfortable at first, it is part of their essential development into adulthood.

Be prepared to listen to your student. They may want to share their frustrations, joy, and anxiety with you; let them “vent” and then come up with their own solutions. It helps them just to talk it out with somebody. A way to encourage this is to ask open-ended questions such as, “What has it been like sharing a bathroom with fifteen other people?”

Communicate on a regular (though not overwhelming!) basis with them to show them your love and that you believe in them. While students may sometimes seem indifferent to such sentiments, consistent words of support have a huge impact.

If your instincts tell you something is wrong, please notify the Richmond College Dean’s Office (men) or the Westhampton College Dean’s Office (women), and we can check it out, no matter what the concern, and get back to you. You know your son or daughter, and you should listen to warning signals about anything from depression to academic turmoil to eating disorders to unhealthy relationships.

Enjoy and celebrate your student’s transition to this new stage in life. And enjoy your own transition to a home with one less (or no) child/children! Most of all, remember that they are not leaving you; they will always be a part of the family.

Some resources:

Richmond College Dean’s Office (804) 289-8061
Westhampton College Dean’s Office (804) 289-8468
University of Richmond
http://rc.richmond.edu/
http://wc.richmond.edu/


You’re On Your Own (But I’m Here if You Need Me): Mentoring Your Child During the College Years by Marjorie Savage. New York: Fireside, 2003.