

**April 2012 RAMFAM Association Meeting
Reflections on the Year**

First Year Families:

- Positive comments around Ram Ride and Alternative Break experiences.
- Students need help with assertive communication around employment, talking with faculty members, and roommate relationships.
- Parent and Family Programs needs to ensure all families know the office exists and is there to help if there is an issue. One family struggled with resources concerning a roommate issue.
- Many families experienced changing relationships with their students, specifically students wanting to have more independence in their choices and decision-making.
- Thankful for Preview sessions for Parents and Families, particularly:
 - The bicycle analogy to help with a mental shift from “doer” to “coach”
 - Focus on safety – lots of kudos to Adam Smith for “telling it like it is”
 - Messaging around letting students make mistakes. As hard as it can be for families to sit back and watch things play out, it is important to let them fall. It’s part of the transition.
- Talked about the importance of care packages and sending encouraging messages to students.
 - Ginny Fanning offered to help create a Denver Hometown RAMFAM Club gathering to make care packages as a group.
 - One family shared a [student-made film](#) about the importance of receiving mail.
- One family struggled with their student getting involved, as she was in a serious relationship. It wasn’t until they broke up that their student began to get involved in the Residence Halls and on campus. They hoped for more of a push in the halls to get students involved.
- Be sure families (and students!) know about FAMweb as a resource for students to share some of their academic record with trusted individuals.
- Families shared ways of checking on their student without “checking in” if they hadn’t heard from their student in a few days. Items shared:
 - Checking the Ram Card balance to be sure their students are eating
 - Checking bank charges, if the accounts are linked, to ensure activity

Second Year Families:

- Sophomores had a better handle on time management and seemed “less scattered.” They were balancing more demands but doing a better job of it.
- Sophomores are learning from their mistakes and making significant changes while also learning how to solve their own problems rather than going to their parents for the solution.
- Thankful for Parent & Family Programs as a resource when parents/families had questions or concerns individually.
- Raised questions about resources for assisting students in getting either an on-campus job and/or an internship related to the student’s major.
- One set of parents had questions about the level of “school pride” and the isolation their student felt once he moved off campus. They wished CSU emphasized living on campus after the first year. Felt like there wasn’t a “hang out” place like “The Hill” in Boulder for students to go to at night. (Jody remarked that she was glad there wasn’t a place like this!)
- Discussed the importance of students learning how to self-initiate and self-advocate and how parents and families can support learning this important skill.

Juniors & Seniors (combined due to numbers in attendance):

- One family shared their student was able to figure out how to pay for Study Abroad on her own. They were very proud that she had taken this initiative on her own.
- One family expressed concerns about the difficulty in finding a community college at which his student could study his area of interest, as he could not get into CSU with his high school grades. He is now at CSU and doing very well.
- Concern regarding advising in that a Junior student was told he could not be a music major (his passion) so is now a history major with music minor. His family felt his advisor didn't help him figure out what other options there are for him. Group suggested he look into Music Therapy as a major.
- Discussion around what happens after college, i.e., How do they find what to do next. The Group discussed resources, namely the Career Center.
- Families shared their concerns that there is less support for students in their junior and senior years. There is lots of support for freshmen and sophomores and not much for juniors. Families shared their students don't know where to get their questions answered.
- Families expressed concerns around financing for college in the later years.
- Several families were very happy with their student's experiences at CSU and very appreciative of the support their students (and themselves) have received.