



CHANGE THE WORLD FROM HERE

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Dear Parents and Family:

As a parent of a first-generation college student, I am happy to share with you an invitation we recently sent to your student. Your student received an email inviting them to apply for the Muscat Scholars Program. The Muscat Scholars Program (MSP) is designed to provide a challenging and rewarding experience that will help prepare him or her to succeed as a first-generation college student. Bringing students to USF two weeks prior to school starting, our goal is to enable each MSP graduate to have a successful transition through their first year at USF.

Some students graduating from high school may not feel fully prepared for the rigorous academic work required for success at USF – that’s where MSP comes in. Each MSP participant will have the opportunity to develop his or her skills in critical thinking, writing, math, problem solving and effective study methods and thereby gain the proficiency and confidence needed to be successful at USF.

College life can also be challenging outside the classroom. Adjusting to life as an independent adult in a strange environment full of new demands and opportunities can be overwhelming. MSP participants become acquainted with the campus – this provides them with the strong foothold needed to avoid some of the first semester problems first year students often face. MSP participants also have a head start on learning about how to become leaders in their USF campus community.

The academic component of the Muscat Scholars Program includes coursework in writing, math, contemporary issues in multiculturalism, information literacy and college success skills development. Current USF faculty members, librarians, and staff from Student Life teach these classes. Participants receive 2 units of elective course credit for successful completion of MSP. Each student is assigned a peer mentor, a former MSP student who has upper class standing; the peer mentors lead the cultural, social and recreational portion of the program, provide tutoring and mentoring for the duration of the program. Each student will also be assigned a Staff Mentor. If your student becomes a Muscat Scholar, I will be serving as their University Advisor for the next four years at USF.

MSP begins on Sunday, August 3, 2014 and ends after graduation on Friday, August 15, 2014. Participants must completely commit to the Muscat Scholars Program during this time – the program in effect will be their “full-time” job for these two weeks including weekends. The daily schedule begins in the early morning and, on most days, extends through the evening hours. Required activities are also scheduled over the weekend (August 9-10). We

have arranged for all students to live on-campus and provide them with food during the program at no additional cost. Students who will be living on campus in the Fall can remain in their assigned MSP rooms.

The Program continues during the school year with students taking two courses: Psychology of Success in the Fall and Career Exploration in the Spring. These two classes, along with a retreat held in October February, will give students the opportunity to develop a plan and a program for the transition from college to career. Throughout the year, MSP will have socials and gatherings to help continue to build community and foster connections.

An invitation to apply for MSP was e-mailed to your son or daughter and is also available online at www.usfca.edu/Muscat. You can also find out more information via our Brochure posted on the site. To apply, students need to submit the completed online application; you will also need to fill out the online parent/family feedback form and return it to us electronically. These two items are due by May 31st, 2014 (applications are considered on a space available basis). We have a limited amount of spaces to offer, and we don't want your student to miss out! Upon confirmation, participants are asked to pay a \$100 program fee.

Please note – if your student is interested in MSP, please remind them to complete the USF Rooms application. Once completed, they will see Roommate Selection. Please advise them to not participate in Roommate Selection process. Your student will be paired with a fellow Muscat Scholar by the MSP staff. This individual will be his/her roommate for the remainder of the school year.

If you have any questions or would like more information about the Muscat Scholars Program, please contact me at 415-422-6841 or via email: lobo@usfca.edu.

Sincerely,



Charlene P. Lobo Soriano, Ed.D., NCC
Director, Muscat Scholars Program
University Advisor, Director of Academic Development and Technological Innovation in Advising