

# The Parking Professional

THE INTERNATIONAL PARKING INSTITUTE

MARCH 2017

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## WELCOME BACK... TO PARKING

Creative ways to  
welcome students  
back to parking.



# WELCOME BACK .

**STUDENT**  
**RESTRICTED  
PARKING**  
7:00 A.M. *to* 5:00 P.M.  
MONDAY *thru* FRIDAY  
**TOW ZONE**  
**LOT 55**  
← →

**NO PARKING**  
**MIDNIGHT TO  
5:00 A.M.**

**NOTICE**  
OF VIOLATION



# TO PARKING!

**College and university parking organizations dream up creative ways to welcome students back to school and find it's well worth the effort.**

**R**emember when you went to college? After moving into the dorm and spending a small fortune on books, you probably had the not-so-pleasant experience of waiting in a long line for a parking permit. Later in the semester, you may have even received a citation or two, and in many cases, that might have happened because you didn't really understand the rules about campus parking. Suffice it to say, parking is probably not in your top 10 warm-and-fuzzy college memories.

Parking professionals had the same experiences on the lot as the rest of their classmates back in the day, and that's why many of them are determined to change the way students think about parking now—it's all about ensuring everybody understands the rules, making the experience as painless as possible, and interjecting a little fun every so often.

Welcoming students back to campus in the fall isn't the exclusive domain of the student life department anymore. Parking's in on the action, hosting

events, distributing information, and spreading smiles for miles so students kick off the year with a great impression of those managing their cars' homes for the semester. We asked IPI members to share some of the ways they're embracing this trend, and their answers blew us away—we wish we were back in school!

How are college and university parking professionals turning back-to-school into a great experience? Read on!

The Ohio State University's Transportation and Traffic Management welcomes students and their families to campus each year at freshman sessions, student move-in day, the student involvement fair, and through social media. At each event, we have both full-time staff employees available to answer parents' concerns about safety and reliability, as well as student employees to give incoming freshmen an overview of our services from their perspective and to talk to them about part-time driving opportunities.

Our outreach efforts extend to more than 7,000 incoming freshmen and thousands of returning Ohio State students each year, providing them with maps, information on accessing real-time bus information on the Transportation Route Information Program, bus-riding tips, and souvenirs with campus safety reminders. Everyone we interact with is able to ask detailed questions about moving in and around Ohio State's Columbus campus via the Campus Area Bus Service, our on-demand paratransit service, and on-campus bike share; additionally, the Central Ohio Transit Authority is our close partner and a valuable resource for students to move around central Ohio.

**Beth Snoke, CAPP**  
Director, Transportation and Traffic Management  
The Ohio State University



At Tulane University, we extend our office hours to include the Saturday and Sunday of move-in weekend. This gives students an opportunity to purchase permits during the weekend and have that taken care of before classes start on Monday.

We have greeters out to help welcome students to campus and direct traffic on Friday for freshman move-in and Saturday for upper-class move-in. At our health science center campus, we set up a meet-and-greet area to sign new medical students up for parking contracts during their orientation days.

**Heather Hargrave**

Assistant Vice President, Facilities Services  
Tulane University in New Orleans, Louisiana



Our admissions department hosts a welcome-back event the Sunday before classes begin. Parking and Transit Services is one of many departments that sponsors a booth and provides promotional materials and information to students.

**Dan Carpenter**

Director, Parking and Transit Services  
University of Nebraska

We populate the campus lots and entrances with parking staff to provide additional wayfinding for students (first-timers with parents on Friday and upperclassmen on Sunday). We work both days and bring on temporary employees and former students if available to help.

We also bring bike and commuter vendors up to offer local options. Our residence life staff solicits all campus staff and faculty to volunteer and help make the weekend enjoyable for returning students. There are vendors across the campus for food and other amenities available such as lofts and small refrigerators.

**Jim Barr**

Director, Transportation and Parking Services  
University of Vermont



We do a lot, and it certainly helps alleviate the stresses involved at that busy timeframe, both for students and staff:

- **Informational parking and mass transit resource tables.** Multiple opening events are held that showcase information.



- **Online decal order drive-thru.**

Although we strongly suggest—not require—that vehicle parking decal registration be entered online, many campus community members still fill in the hard-copy forms, leading to long lines in the parking office. We created a special parking decal drive-thru. Those who order decals online travel through set-up driving lanes that allow them to pull up, show ID to the parking attendant, receive a parking decal, and drive away without ever leaving their vehicle or waiting more than two minutes.

- **In-line messaging.** We post informational messages along the support poles prior to entering the parking management building. These messages state the current wait time to see a representative and offer quick facts: Did you know you can order online?

- **Water stations.** We work with the office of environmental sustainability to set up complimentary water stations outside of our office for two weeks.

- **Bike demos.** We demonstrate how to properly load and unload a bike on a bus that has a front-mounted bicycle rack.

**Jason M. Jones**

Director, Parking & Mass Transit Services  
University at Albany, New York



When I worked at Miami University a few years back when lines were frequent, we had cookies and water in the hallway for waiting students, and I would rent videos of shows by clean comedians such as Sinbad. We had the comedy playing, and often people were enjoying it so much that they would lean back out of the office door to watch it until they were called to the counter. It helped to have them laughing before they came in the office after waiting. We tried lemonade the first year, but it stripped the wax off the floors and tracked stickiness when people spilled it, so we switched to water!

**Vanessa R. Cummings, CAPP**

Supervisor,  
Parking Operations  
Columbus State  
Community  
College, Ohio



Last fall, we had parking lot ambassadors in the lots to explain to students where available parking was in the lots. Additionally, we created a temporary app through the university that uploaded real-time data on the lots that had available parking.

We added additional transit services for the perimeter parking areas on campus. We did this for approximately four weeks until students found their way around. We'll do this again this fall with some small improvements.

**Geary Robinson, CAPP, PhD**

Director, Transportation Services  
University of North Texas



We use a variety of communication techniques to disseminate parking information to all our students with the goal of creating a smooth transition into life at Chapman University. It starts with the admissions packet, where parking information is highlighted, and continues through orientation and the first week of the fall semester.

During the summer, we start an email campaign to all students with information on parking and how to obtain a parking permit. I speak at orientation sessions, and our staff hosts an information table at the student services fair. Orientation assistants go over the parking policy in their break-out sessions, and there is a video link available on the orientation website.

Parking services also staffs a parking fair outside our office the week of orientation and the first week of classes. The public safety department has officers on hand at the fair to issue bike licenses, sell bike locks, and sign students up for our self-defense training classes. Not only is this a good way for us to advertise our services, but it personalizes the experience for the students and puts a face to our department.

I make sure to have some cute and cool swag to give out—backpacks, rally towels, smartphone speakers, USB car chargers—along with treats such as ice cream, chips, popcorn, drinks, cookies, and various snacks.

Lastly, parking officers spend a majority of their shifts the first two weeks of class stationed in the main commuter parking garages, handing out parking maps and educating new students on all the parking options and where parking is available. It is definitely a multi-pronged approach.

**Sheryl Boyd**

Assistant Director of Parking  
and Transportation Services  
Chapman University



We do a couple of things:

- **Freshman registration.** We run a booth at the events every June. Information is provided about parking and transportation (bus, car share, etc.). We're mostly asked about the probability of obtaining a permit, and I spend a lot of time talking about when sales begin and how to buy a permit.

- **Orientation session for international students.** I do a three- to five-minute presentation about parking and transportation so students know how to get around using their IDs (student fees pay for the bus).

We also have videos about how to use our pay stations and app at our website.

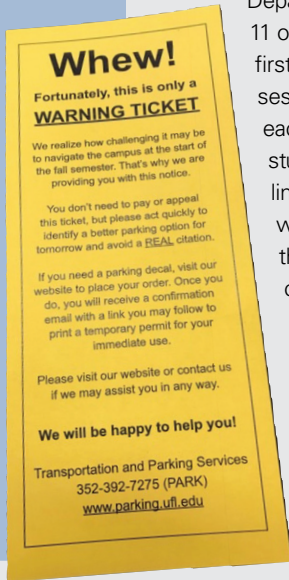
**Victor A. Hill, MPA, CAPP**

Director, Parking and  
Transportation Services  
University of Wisconsin-La Crosse

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP: LEFT: ISTOCK/PHOTOEVENT, SHUTTERSTOCK/MARIYANAMI/ SHUTTERSTOCK, SHUTTERSTOCK/FEYGINFOTO

During the first several days of the new academic year, we place fliers on cars in lieu of parking citations for most violations. The fliers are yellow and at first glance look very much like our citation envelopes. They explain that we know it's confusing to learn parking regulations but that the student's car is not parked in a great place or is missing a decal and explains how to rectify the situation before receiving a real citation. It also tells them how to reach us and that we're happy to help.

**Scott Fox, CAPP**  
 Director, Parking and Transportation Services  
 University of Florida



UCLA Transportation's approach to welcoming UCLA students back to campus in the fall actually begins in the summer, with a focus on outreach and communicating (via targeted emails, social media, and conducting orientation sessions) the many commuting and parking options available to students.

Departmental staff conduct 11 orientation sessions for first-year students and nine sessions for transfer students each summer. Because student parking permits are limited and not all students who apply receive one, all of the university's alternative commuting options are featured.

**Charles Carter**  
 University of California, Los Angeles  
 Transportation

For the last three years, we have performed a service called the Peay Parking Assist. We place volunteers (faculty and staff who sign up for an hour or two) and our officers at the entrances to the most popular parking lots for commuters. The volunteers/officers provide information to the students about where they can find parking once that lot is full. We hand out campus parking maps to the students at this time.

We also have officers who drive around and inform the volunteers/officers of lots that have parking available during prime hours the first week of the new semester.

**Michael J. Kasitz**  
 Director of Public Safety/Chief of Police  
 Austin Peay State University, Clarksville, Tennessee

Our campus hosts a campus kick-off event and invites student clubs, departments, and community organizations to attend with the intent of orienting new students and welcoming back returning students and professionals. It is set up in a carnival-type setting with food, entertainment, games, and attractions.

The day begins with a convocation event, followed by a fair, then a comedy show, sometimes a volleyball alumni game, an outdoor movie, and culminates in a late-night exclusive shopping night at Fred Meyer (our Kroger store) that offers discounts on items students need. Shuttles run between campus and these events, and it wraps up about 2 a.m.

The parking department reaches out to students at our booth, has transportation-themed swag to give away, answers questions, encourages permit purchase, and promotes alternative transportation and use of the Seawolf Shuttle (campus shuttle).

**Glenna Muncy**  
 Parking Services Director  
 University of Alaska



Here in the Ana G. Mendez University System in Puerto Rico, we do orientation in our campuses in different ways. For example, we place a table with information material and one of our associates to bring information to students during the first week of class. Also, we directly orient students with question-and-answer sessions that include a video explaining the process to obtain parking permits.

We conduct welcome activities twice a year to orient students to the services we offer, including obtaining a parking access card. Students are given our phone numbers and email addresses to reach out with questions or for help later.

**Walid El Hage Orocho and Francisco Pabon Febus**  
 Ana G. Mendez University System, Puerto Rico

We're out and about anywhere we can be, including at garage entrances and parking lots when students move in, where they're often directing traffic to the next available lot. We have greeters at our main shuttle hub the first week or two to help students with any schedule questions and to make sure they get on the correct bus. We also send out an email right before the start of the semester with an update on parking, shuttle, and construction changes. And we're at all the freshman orientations during the summer.

**Josh Cantor**  
 Director, Parking & Transportation  
 George Mason University, Fairfax, Virginia