



Student-Led Best Practices

Submitted by Bonner Congress Representatives

Name of Best Practice:

Concord Bonner Social

College/University Name and Contact Information:

Concord University
D-131 Concord University
P.O. Box 1000
Athens, WV 24712-1000

Name of Congress Representative(s) Preparing Report:

Lauren M. Heysek

Background:

When Bonners feel a need to relax and have a get together with their fellow Bonners, a Bonner Social is requested. This fun, easygoing time provides Bonners with a chance to bond.

What Makes This Unique:

Bonner socials are a great way for fellow Bonners to strengthen the Bonner bond with one another...it is a great "hang out" time! Having the structure of a "Social" helps facilitate students initiating social gatherings with each other, and these gatherings help build morale and commitment within the Bonner community.

How it Works: Coordinating Bonner socials

1. **Initiation/Organization:** One scholar must first take charge and contact our coordinator; Kathy Ball, and ask for permission to have a Bonner social. If permission is granted the Bonner House is used to house the event.
2. **Setting a Date:** You all know scheduling an event for so many people is challenging. However, it often works best to pick a date and see who can come.
3. **Selecting a "Social":** Keeping a budget in mind the students plan an event and run it by the Coordinator for final approval. Ideas can

include game nights, specific food (Curry, Pizza, or Burritos), movies, or a free form time to gather. Typically a time limit is set for the event, and students volunteer to come early for set-up/decorating and clean up.

4. **The Social:** On the date of the social, we wait for fellow Bonners to show up, socialize among one another, listen to music, watch movies, play games, and enjoy each other's company! This is really a great idea to use to give students the opportunity to communicate with fellow Bonner scholars and get help and ideas from them, not only when it comes to the life of a Bonner scholar, but when it comes to being a student as well!

Recommendations:

- **Timing:** Have a Bonner Social at the beginning, middle, and end of the year. Having a Social toward the beginning of the year allows new students to meet the upper-class students and visa-versa. Having a social towards the middle of the year allows the middle of the year allows newer students to get help and advice from more experienced students about the Bonner scholar program and about regular college life in general. By this time, scholars have some college time behind them, and can get help adjusting to college and to the Bonner program in the way that they would like. If they do not like their placement during the first semester, students can get other ideas for the next semester. Having a social towards the end of the year allows students to celebrate another year of college closing-in and helps them to get excited about summer! This also gives the Bonners a time to say goodbye to one another for the summer, and wish each other luck on finals...
- **Clear Boundaries:** Collaborate with the Bonner Coordinator to set boundaries. Set specific beginning and ending times, and make sure it is a BONNER ONLY event. Clear boundaries promote community building among Bonners and keeps the Social to a manageable size.