

Dear Freshman Parents,

As the proud parent of one of the first REACH Program graduates, I am writing this letter to let you know there is light at the end of the tunnel. On August 9<sup>th</sup> 2009, my family and I drove my son to the College of Charleston and I, too, shared all the fears and anxieties Karen shared with you in her letter, with one exception: we were the inaugural class and everything was new to everyone – faculty, staff and students alike. There was no one to share with us what to expect or not to expect. At that time, I only knew one thing: my son wanted to attend College more than anything and the REACH Program was going to make that happen.

It did not take me very long to realize that the REACH staff was a group of amazing individuals that had a genuine concern for the students which was quite comforting and reduced a lot of my anxiety. However, over the last four years we have had some bumps in the road, but I am pleased to report the bumps were few and far between. Given the Program was new, I think the staff did a fantastic job anticipating the needs of the students and introducing the College of Charleston faculty to a new educational concept and student population.

My son absolutely loved the faculty and staff and truly appreciated all the support he received from everyone. It is my heartfelt belief, the decision to send him to the College of Charleston was the best decision he and I could have ever made. His experience was rich and rewarding and one he will treasure for the rest of his life.

So, parents, as you embark upon this adventure – relax; the anxiety does decrease as time goes by. I encourage you to sit back and enjoy the journey, you will see your youngster blossom right before your very eyes, and believe me the transformation will be amazing and life changing.

Congratulations!

With warmest regards,

Gail