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Top News

Students Move In

Colleges help new arrivals

August 22, 2003

By **Nancy Buczek**
Staff writer

The bulk of students for Syracuse University and the State University College of Environmental Science and Forestry arrived on campus Thursday, bringing with them everything they could cram into a vehicle or two.

Vehicles lined many campus streets, as parents waited to unload their children's possessions. The volunteer Goon Squad - upperclassmen dressed in orange shirts - descended on vehicles and helped new students load their belongings into gray bins and find their new homes.

"This is one of the smoothest processes I've ever seen," said Mary Lou Benedetti, of Pittsburgh, whose son, Michael, is an SU freshman. She said it took less than 20 minutes to unload, with the Goon Squad's help.

The fall semester officially begins Monday for the 21,500 students expected at the four four-year schools in Onondaga County. Le Moyne

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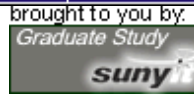
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College, SU, SUNY ESF and SUNY Upstate Medical University each have events planned this weekend to welcome students.

SU has spent the past year creating a new office, which is now open, devoted to acclimating students to campus and the Syracuse area. Staff members will work with students throughout their first year of college to help them adjust.

The program will be expanded in the future to include sophomores, juniors and seniors, said Anastasia Urtz, SU's dean of students.

The office is running a new 18-day orientation program called "A Slice of SU Life" through Sept. 5. In addition to traditional orientation activities such as a new student convocation Friday at the Carrier Dome, new students can hike in Highland Forest in Fabius or skate at the university's south campus ice rink.

"The initial transition that a student makes is critical to their ultimate success, and so we want to make sure the first several days on campus are solid and welcoming for our students and their families, but also that that continues as we move into the rest of the fall semester, in particular, but really throughout that first year," Urtz said. "Many students take longer than a few weeks to really get adjusted to college."

Also new this year is Orangefest 2003, designed to boost school spirit and class unity, Urtz said. The approximately 3,000 new SU and SUNY ESF students will be invited to the Carrier Dome for a Saturday night pep rally.

SUNY ESF students had a convocation Thursday. Saturday, they can take part in orientation olympics, and on Sunday a picnic on the quad is planned.

New students arrive at Le Moyne on Saturday, when a new student convocation and barbecue is planned. Sunday afternoon a carnival with a rodeo theme will take place on the quad, and fireworks will cap the weekend.

"With first-year students we want to keep them busy, so they won't get homesick," said Barbara Karper, assistant vice president for campus activities and multicultural programs.

Saturday, first-year Le Moyne students can participate in DIVE 2003 - Dolphins In Volunteer Efforts. The college, whose mascot is a dolphin, will provide transportation for students for service work at places such as the Chadwick Residence and the Rescue Mission.

Most of Upstate's 1,170 students arrived Tuesday. College of Medicine students received their white doctor coats Wednesday, and students enrolled in the College of Health Professions will receive theirs during a ceremony next week.

Upstate students have a dinner dance tonight at Drumlins Country Club and a trip to the state fair Saturday.

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