

## Hanton: Freshmen should give Destination Iowa State a chance

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Posted: Wednesday, August 17, 2011 1:25 pm | Updated: 4:44 pm, Thu Oct 6, 2011.

By Rick Hanton, rick.hanton@iowastatedaily.com |

All around us here at Iowa State, the city of Ames is abuzz. Streets are crowded, parking lots more so, and students are beginning to get their belongings settled in their dorms, apartments and houses. For freshmen the entire environment is new and different and they're struggling to start to understand the ins and outs of college life.

To help freshmen make that transition, the admissions department created "Destination Iowa State" years ago to introduce students to each other and the university. From the perspective of many older students, Destination Iowa State didn't hold much value and many upperclassmen recall skipping all but the free food events. But I want to give you my perspective on Destination Iowa State and how it affected the beginning of my college career back in 2006 (yeah, I'm old).

I was lucky enough to start out at Iowa State in an interesting living community a half-decade ago. At the time, I was accepted to the University Honors Program and decided to try living on an honors floor. Looking back years later, this was both a good and bad thing for me, but for our purposes, it served as the start of my Destination Iowa State adventure.

After some tentative conversations with the other freshmen on my floor over the first days of the week during move-in, we decided to go together to get food at Destination Iowa State. We got food and ended up grouped into two different DIS groups. We attended the kickoff in Hilton where I, a former drummer, really enjoyed the drumline and marching band tunes.

Then on Friday, the question was "do we go back?" — "is it worth it?" We eventually decided to go check out the Friday activities because we didn't have tons of things better to do all day. So we went back, combined our two groups into one large group because one leader didn't show up, and had a pretty good time around campus all day and into the late night events.

Obviously because we lived together, we would have eventually met and probably become friends, but because of Destination Iowa State this process got expedited and was a lot more fun. Now, five years later, most of the students from my Destination Iowa State group have become some of my closest friends. One is now in law school, another is a teacher, a few more are engineers, but we started hanging out together back at Destination Iowa State.

So if you're a freshman student — if you're not, why have you read this far? — you should definitely give Destination Iowa State a try. If you find you don't like your DIS group, try joining or tagging along with another one. Maybe you'll meet your closest college friends like me, maybe not, but you still have the benefit of free food, prizes and a lot of great information to digest. If you hate it, there are tons of other things in Ames to do, so have a good week before the tough part of college starts on Monday.

### More about Destination Iowa State

- IMAGE: Buses line the parking lot in front of Target for DIS 2011
- IMAGE: After hours shopping at Target Destination Iowa State DIS 2011
- IMAGE: After hours shopping at Target Destination Iowa State DIS 2011
- IMAGE: Afterhours shopping at Target DIS 2011
- IMAGE: Comedian Tommy Johnagin entertains capacity crowd at CY Stephens

### More about Iowa State

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- IMAGE: Occupy ISU - P.H.D. Protest
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- IMAGE: Occupy ISU - College student pays more taxes than U.S. Bank

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