In order to even begin to state a case as to why I believe the Lawing family sufficiently qualifies as NC State's “Family of The Year” for 2014, I must first begin with basic introductions.

Our immediate household consists of my Mom, my Dad, and myself. Two working parents and their child. So simple! As deduced, I am what society would call an only child. Now, I am not blind to the stereotype that 'only children' are simply spoiled rotten. And I suppose though this can be true in society, in my case, it simply is not; it wrongly undermines the relationship which I share with my parents and impairs the actuality of our experience together. In my growing up, I was disciplined as much as other children, but I was also loved on as much as, or even greater than, other children were. I was respected instead of coddled, and encouraged rather than looked down upon. My parents pushed me when I needed pushing, and held me when I needed holding, yet they also provided, in experiences and opportunities, the best that they could. I was spoiled, in my own definition, in the good way because I was loved. And my parents made sure that I was grateful, thankful, respectful, humble, and willing to give rather than simply receive. I was 'spoiled' because I was blessed, when many children around me were not in the same ways. The approach by which my parents raised me, built a foundation so that while I grew and changed, I was always (and still am) standing strong in how I approach and experience life.
Those formative years I experienced at our quiet home in Charlotte, NC were enjoyable and invaluable, and provided a catalyst for the student I have emerged into being while here at NC State. Throughout my time here, whether I was scurrying around Harrelson Hall as Student Government's Tradition Commission Member turned Vice-Chairman turned Chairman, or at Centennial Campus' Park Alumni Center as the Alumni Association's Student Ambassador Program's Homecoming 2012 and 2013 Service Chairman turned Vice-President, my parents have been a boundless resource in aiding in decision making and discussions. They repeatedly remind me to call them whenever I need to, and I have witnessed their cellphones turned on at their bedsides, ready to receive a call from when whenever it might come in, whenever it might be needed.

My Dad often tells me to “sleep well my child,” or “that trust means believing that the Lord is in control, has our best interests in mind, and will arrange things for our good and His glory.” Little quips of wisdom like these from my Mom and Dad in a variety of situations, help tie us together in a language that only a family can understand and speak. The sentiment and emotional ties we share and foster go way beyond any other relationships with other people whom I encounter on a daily basis. And whether its a good laugh from an inside joke like “I love technology” or having to go “warsh” my hands, the Lawing household makes sure to get a laugh in daily!

My parents and I regularly exchange texts and emails and letters and phone calls, and though separated by distance, I can feel their enthusiasm; the least communication my parents and I have consist of daily texts and emails, which if you ask me is pretty good. Usually, the week will also consists of letters, postcards and most definitely phone calls! My parents and I simply communicate
enough naturally, and therefore don't have to spend time worrying about me.

As a senior, now in the waning of my undergraduate career here at NC State, it is easy – and very powerful – to see what my parents have consistently done for me over the last few years. In addition to moving me in and out each year (some years consisting of multiple trips) my parents have made it very easy to settle into this environment. Whether it be a dorm room closet curtain personally measured, tailored and sew by my Mom's hands, or whether it be a headboard (complete with a towel rack and shelf) designed, assembled, built and finished for my dorm room's lofted bed by my Dad's hands, the touch of their influence on my everyday life is gentle but ever-present. The NCSU-themed fabric my Mom used in the curtain as well as the brilliant red paint my Dad painted that headboard with, vibrantly show that NC State is a cornerstone in my family.

My Dad attended school here and because he graduated in 1976, he fondly remembers the hype of the 1974 National Championship win, and often tells stories! One of my favorite instances relates to how he was able to acquire part of the Reynold's Coliseum net from a playoff game, and does he enjoy telling that one. (Now, don't worry, his cousin was good buddies with the guys on the basketball team!). And, despite the fact that over 15 members of the Lawing family have attended NC State over the years, I can wholeheartedly say that the chief reasoning behind my attendance to this fine institution, is
due to my Dad's legacy and experience here, especially since he passed it on to me. And I know he enjoys hearing of my goings-ons; a modern day comparison of experiences to his memories from his glory days here.

Now, one of my fondest memories here involved Homecoming 2012. Because I was a member on the Homecoming Planning Committee, I was able to ride in the back of a truck bringing up the rear of the parade. When the truck rounded the turn at Cates Avenue going towards Talley Student Center, I saw the dark silhouette of my parents watching the parade from Talley's steps. I recognized them immediately and what a surprise! I stood up a whooping and a hollering and they were excited to see me too! My parents had come all the way from Charlotte to support me. What dedication!

In closing, it could be argued that my parents are my favorite pair of friends! We three are a pack; one which unites together to watch our favorite movie “October Sky” or to play our favorite board game “Trouble.” We spend time on family walks in the summer evenings together, and during the school year when we talk, my parents are always excited to hear about my week and adventures, as am I about theirs. The remaining reason as to why my parents and I share this connection, this bond, this history of experiences, is because they love me, care for me, and are there for me when I need them to be there for me. They are reliable and loyal and have built my foundation so strong, that they allowed me to stand on my own to grow from a freshman new at college to a senior who knows where he wants to head in life.
I think it relevant to know that I have applied for this award for the third consecutive year in a row, because I truly believe that my family is more than average. I truly believe that my family is the family of the year. Thank you, thank you for your time.