

NASPA IV-WEST

As I contemplated writing my first article as the Regional Director, I was struck by how much information I had received during orientation at the national conference in Phoenix. It made me realize how much I don't know and about the things I thought I knew.

Things I think I know: I think our region is quite unique, as compared to the other regions. One of the regions has only three states, while one has eleven. Two of the regions alternate the regional conference between them. One of the regions can actually hold frequent face-to-face board meetings because they are within driving distance. We have been amazing stewards of regional resources and have maintained and increased our available funding. Not all regions can boast that type of frugality, parsimony you might say. But that is not what makes us unique.

Things I know: What makes us unique? The people! Our members have the ol' Midwest work ethic, the willingness and know-how to make things happen. This I know. And I am truly grateful and honored to have the opportunity to lead you.

Things I think I know: We are free from the discourse about consolidation and the chains that constrained us from making progress the past year. We were nearly paralyzed and severely hindering our ability to progress.

Things I know: I think we are on the verge of something great! We could and should expend our energy on improving the experiences and lives of our students.

Things I think I know: Some of us are apprehensive, afraid of the unknown, and not sure what to make of the new road our organization is on, nor do we know where we might end up. But I can tell you this - we will probably take the road less travelled.

Things I know: As a national entity, we are at an unprecedented time in the history of our organization. With the reorganization and new structure, it is an exciting time. While we also bid adieu to our longtime colleague, Gwen Dungy, we will miss her dedication, her authenticity, and more importantly, her spirit.

Things I think I know: I think we should not be restricted or afraid of this journey of self-discovery, while

fully realizing we might experience challenges that force us to rethink how we do business.

Things I know: We have an amazing leader. Kevin Kruger possesses the institutional history, knowledge and skills necessary to provide the leadership that will allow us to build on our previous success.

Things I think I know: Some members may perceive the cost to travel to regional conference this fall in Rapid City to be prohibitive.

Things I know: The overall cost to attend the conference should be reasonable. Participants will have an amazing experience in Rapid City this fall. I know the committee is making an assiduous effort to take advantage of the local surroundings, such as Mount Rushmore and the Crazy Horse Monument. If you have never been to "Rapid" or if it has been awhile, won't you join us?

Things I think I know: As the new Regional Director (being called an RD seems to be reminiscent of times gone by) is an awesome responsibility, and at times I wonder what expectations our membership will have for me. Will you expect the status quo?

Things I know: I am a work in progress. I am not on this journey alone. I have 1200 of my best friends with me and I look forward to working with you. Shall we take the road less travelled?

In closing, I am reminded of a quote by Nelson Henderson, "The true meaning of life is to plant trees, under whose shade you do not expect to sit." We may never know, nor fully realize the influence our programs and decisions have on students, but we must never forget that every conversation, every interaction, no matter how ephemeral, is the opportunity to shape our future for generations. Are you ready to start (continue) digging?



Tim Alvarez
Regional VP NASPA IV-W
University of Nebraska - Lincoln

DISCOVERING TREASURES: PEOPLE, PURPOSE & PASSION

NASPA IV-WEST REGIONAL CONFERENCE
RAPID CITY, SOUTH DAKOTA
NOVEMBER 6-8, 2012

Plans are underway for the 2012 NASPA IV-West Regional Conference! You will be delighted with the conference location, the rich cultural experiences, and the opportunity to network with dedicated student affairs professionals.

To make this a truly outstanding conference, we need your assistance in bringing the theme “Discovering Treasures: People, Purpose & Passion” to life. The theme of this conference is built on the premise that the cornerstones of our profession - the people, our purpose and passion - make us invaluable partners in the teaching/learning experience.

As you develop your program for this conference, think about the opportunities you have had to collaborate with others (our partners range from other student affairs units to academic units; to form our local communities to our colleagues in the K-12 arena; to government agencies to...the possibilities are endless!) How have people, purpose and passion strengthened these opportunities and interactions? What innovative programs or research have you developed that will shape the future of our profession? Are we evolving with our students - how is our purpose and passion for our students impacting our programs and services? How do we impact passion to our students?

It is our hope that this conference will give us the opportunity to reflect upon the great spirit and rich traditions that make student affairs the profession that it is and how we hold true to our purpose and passion as we grow to meet the ever-changing needs of the diverse students we serve and environments within which we work.

We encourage you to be an active participant at this conference by submitting your program proposal(s), which must be submitted by **July 31, 2012**. By working together, we'll make our 2012 conference an unforgettable NASPA IV-West adventure!

See you in Rapid City!
The 2012 Conference Planning Committee



Remember to register for an absentee ballot now. Election day is November 6, and you will be at the regional conference.

So Click here for details and information on your state's absentee ballots
www.longdistancevoter.org

NEW FACES ON THE REGIONAL BOARD



My name is Molly Pierson, and I serve as the Missouri State Membership Coordinator for NASPA IV-West. This is my third year working full-time in St. Louis, MO. Prior to moving to St. Louis, I did my graduate work at Bowling Green State University in Bowling Green, OH in College Student Personnel. Upon moving to the area, I served as the Honors Program Coordinator at Saint Louis University for one year and then returned to my true love—working in residential life. I am now finishing my second year as a Residential College Director at Washington University in St. Louis, and I am entering my second year of implementing a restorative practices pilot program in my residential area that involves the creation of community standards and restorative resolution. I am personally committed to community development, conflict resolution, restorative practices, and student learning within the residential setting. I am passionate about connecting with colleagues in all areas of campus life and value learning from those relationships.

My name is Joshua Alvarez, and I am the New Mexico Membership Coordinator for NASPA Region IV-West. I currently act as a Resident Director at New Mexico State University. I look forward to encouraging students, graduate students, faculty, and staff to become a part of NASPA because of the wonderful opportunities available and the inspiring people that make up NASPA. This year I will be involved as a volunteer for the Programs Committee for the NASPA 2013 Annual Conference in Orlando, Florida. I know NASPA has stayed with me as I graduated from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln to the University of Maryland to New Mexico State University, and I hope to bring NASPA to more people and institutions in New Mexico. When I'm not challenging students and promoting NASPA, I enjoy playing guitar or staying active through basketball and golf. I love trying new foods whether I'm in Costa Rica, Spain, Morocco, Dominican Republic, or the States. Again, I am excited to get to know more student affairs professionals in New Mexico and encouraging those NASPA members to take advantage of all that NASPA has to offer.



My name is Juan Carlos Guzman, I am the Nebraska Membership Coordinator for NASPA Region IV-West. I was born in Tepic Nayarit, Mexico and came to the United States at the age of 14 years old. I graduated from Grand Island senior High School in 1993, and was one of the three English as second language students who graduated that year. After high school, I was employed by the Grand Island school district as a Para-educator for the high school. A year later I enrolled at the Central Community College, Columbus, Nebraska, where I finished my Associate Degree. I continued my college education at the University of Nebraska at Kearney, where I received my BS in Education in May of 2002. After graduating from UNK, I was employed by the University to work as an Assistant Director for the “Enhancing Access to Higher Education” project, a grant-funded project that targets unrepresented minority groups in developing the skills necessary to successfully attend higher education.



In December 2005, I graduated with a Master's Degree in Counseling and School Psychology, in student affairs from UNK. At that time, I became the Assistant Director to the Office of Multicultural Affairs at the University of Nebraska at Kearney. Currently I am serving as the Director for the same office currently completing my second master program in Spanish literature to transfer into a Doctoral Degree from the University of Nebraska at Lincoln in Modern

Languages. My passion is to serve this community and to help students achieve a college education. For my future plans, I would also like to pursue a political career and serve as a Congressman or Senator for the state of Nebraska.

CHALLENGE AND SUPPORT... COMPLETE!

Nathan Roberts

Assistant Director, Residential Life
Oklahoma State University

Dr. Matt Brown, Director of Housing and Residential Life at Oklahoma State University issued the challenge. "I've signed up for the Warrior Dash, come and try to beat me." This simple statement started a wave of physical activities to come.

Accepting this challenge, seven staff members competed in the Warrior Dash race in Tulsa, OK, last September. But the momentum did not stop there. Since early fall, various members of the Residential Life department have participated in a Staff Dodge Ball Challenge during winter RA training, a volleyball tournament through the recreation center, and lunch time yoga sessions throughout the work week. Tanya Massey, Assistant Director for Programs and Development leads the group to the lunchtime yoga on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays. Massey encourages yoga because it's an excellent low impact way to stretch, strengthen core muscles, and relieve the stress you build up during the day.

"Yoga is a phenomenal activity for those who don't want to participate in active sports, and it's important to support all needs for physical fitness", says Massey.

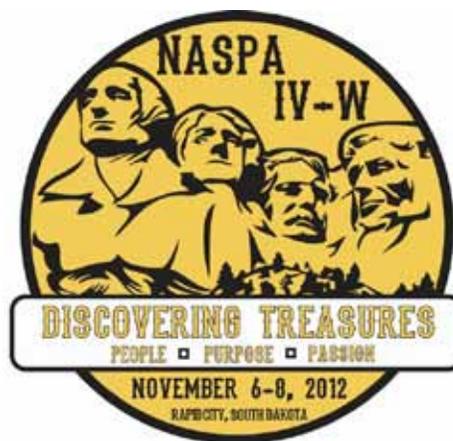
For the more active and aggressive of staff Sara Heiman, Housing Coordinator, has organized softball teams for both intramurals and an upcoming city league team. Ray Timson, also a Housing Coordinator, is an avid biker and has coordinated a group to participate in the annual summer Bike Across Oklahoma challenge.

This atmosphere of health and wellness has also permeated the staff's programming efforts. Graduate Residence Director Kali Bell has organized a program to encourage first time runners to train and compete in a 5k or 10k race this April on the OSU campus. This program will help new runners with diet, running plans, and scheduled group run times to help motivate students to keep on track until the race.

In creating a healthy environment for faculty, staff, and students Oklahoma State University Housing and Residential Life was recently named as one of the Certified Healthy Departments by OSU first lady Ann Hargis. The positive changes started with a challenge from Dr. Matt Brown, but

Yoga is a phenomenal activity for those who don't want to participate in active sports, and it's important to support all needs for physical fitness

the overall effect has been a dynamic camaraderie leading to increases in health, wellness, and productivity. Dr. Brown continues this positive example as he leads the charge on March 31st during the Tough Mudder in Dallas, Texas. What examples are you setting for your staff and students?



Save the Date
November 6-8, 2012

The Case Study is Back!

Would you like to ‘uncover your own treasure’ and help others do the same? We encourage you to participate in this year’s NASPA IV-West Case Study Competition at our annual conference in Rapid City, South Dakota. Each participant must register for the conference and team information must be submitted by November 6th. There will be a brief orientation on the evening of Tuesday, November 6th to distribute the case study and give a general overview of the competition. The case study competition will occur on Wednesday, November 7th. Teams will make a 15-minute presentation, followed by a 10-minute question and answer period with the judges. After a 5-minute break, teams will have 10-minutes to address any of the feedback provided by the judges.

Case study teams must have between 2-4 participants, and may contain a mix of graduate students and new professionals (new professionals are considered to have no more than 3 years in a full-time student affairs position). Judging of the presentation is based on the teams conceptualization the problem, scope and articulation of recommendations, ability to defend strategies and reference pertinent knowledge and literature in the field, and overall team effort.

After presenting, teams are free to attend the conference or are welcome to stay and watch the remaining presentations. We will provide a projector and projector screen. The intent is for all teams to be on a level playing field in terms of presentation resources. There are no specific expectations as to how presentations should be made, and creativity is encouraged. The case study awards will be presented to the winning team during the Closing luncheon on Thursday, November 8, 2012. We hope you will strongly consider participating to make the conference an even greater fun and interactive learning experience!

Jerrid Freeman
Strategic Planning Consultant,
Northeastern State University, and
Interim Director of the Memorial
Union, Fort Hays State University

Call for Volunteers

Looking for a way to get involved? Volunteer to serve on the Region IV-West Awards committee and get a chance to read about best practices, rising stars, and fabulous mentors!

Questions? Contact:

Tisa Mason

Fort Hays State University IV-West
Awards Chair

tamason@fhsu.edu

(785) 628-4277

Call for Programs

As the 2012 Co-Chairs for Programming for the South Dakota Conference, we invite you to be a part of this year’s conference theme: Discovering Treasures: People. Purpose. Passion. This November, we hope that you will join us in celebrating the history, culture, and breathtaking scenery Rapid City has to offer. In the theme of discovering treasures, we know the members of Region IV-W have a tremendous amount of talent and resources to contribute to others in the profession and ultimately our students. Please don’t miss the opportunity to share in this purpose and promote the passion of student affairs!

Program submission information can be found on the IV-West 2012 Regional Conference page (<http://naspa.org/regions/regioniv-w/2012conference.cfm>) and program **submissions deadline is July 31.**

Open-Source Oasis (#openoasis)

The featured open source technology for this quarter is VolunteerSpot (@VolunteerSpot). I was preparing to recruit a large number of volunteers for our annual homecoming week festivities and was killing myself working on developing a shared Google spreadsheet that had all of the positions I needed to fill and then an accompanying email listing those opportunities to be sent to campus. I told myself there had to be a better way. I typed “free volunteer management” into a Google search and the first result was VolunteerSpot. And from there, the rest is history. This is one of my top five favorite finds so far in 2012 and I wanted to find out more about what makes the online product so great. So I reached out to Founder and CEO Karen Bantuveris (@VSpotMom) to get the scoop.

Matt Brinton (MB): What is your vision for how VolunteerSpot can best be utilized?

Karen Bantuveris (KB): With more than 1.4 million volunteers and growing, VolunteerSpot is a simple online coordination tool that makes it easy for ANYONE to quickly organize service. We save teachers, administrators and grass roots volunteer leaders valuable time in scheduling, signing up and reminding volunteers – while doing away with frustrating ‘reply-all’ email chains, Excel spreadsheets and paper sign up sheets. By making it easier to sign up to help, more people show up – up to 20% more!

The information and ideas we work with come alive - making research and writing a much more dynamic, engaging process

MB: Have you worked with any higher education institutions so far?

KB: We’ve proudly supported groups at higher education institutions across the country – from Campus Kitchen – an anti-hunger program at U Mass in Boston, to organizing exam proctors at the University of Texas in Austin, to sports concessions and tournament support at Fresno State in Ca., to hack-a-thon invitational conferences for computer science students at Kennesaw State in Atlanta.

MB: What type of feedback have you received?

KB: Recently we surveyed our VolunteerSpot organizers and learned that 99% would refer VolunteerSpot to a friend or colleague! We’re very proud and humbled by their feedback. When you save someone valuable time AND help them do good, it’s a win/win! Our users are also very helpful with suggestions for improvement about what would make their experience even better; we’ve got some great new features planned in the coming year.

MB: What is the best way for a new user to get to know your product/service?

KB: VolunteerSpot was designed with tech-timid users in mind. If you can shop online, you can successfully plan activities and sign up to volunteer. Please try it out first as a volunteer would experience the website – Go to www.VolunteerSpot.com and click “Try Our Demo” and choose a sample sign up. Like what you see? Create an account and get planning!

MB: Do you have any best practices from other users that you can share?

KB: When you ask for help, give people specific jobs and tasks to sign up for. Also include a few things to bring like food or supplies, so those who can’t show up can still participate. Invite volunteers to participate

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across multiple channels – directly via email, in an eNews blast, your website, facebook or Twitter. Ask for only the number of volunteers you need and be ready for them when they show up (they WILL show up, VolunteerSpot's automated reminders help people keep their commitments.) Make sure participants have a parking place and name tag on volunteer day! When you send a thank you note, include a few quick statistics about the impact of the volunteer's work – e.g. the number of people fed, money raised or kids helped. Send the notes soon after folks participate (via VolunteerSpot) so they consider coming back next time.

MB: I have seen some of the features and benefits on the website, but can you give me a quick rundown on what is free and what requires an upgrade?

Any activity organizer can quickly register for VolunteerSpot's FREE service – it meets the needs of most groups and includes: 365 day calendar with easy planning wizard for shifts, jobs and supplies to bring; Participants sign up with a few clicks 24/7 - no account registration required; quick multi-day copy; automated email reminders; easy smart phone sign up and calendar sync; print sign in sheets, calendar summaries and rosters, export data including basic hours; send thank you notes; and one activity organizer

Premium service includes volunteer hours tracking reports, custom registration fields (e.g. to capture t-shirt size or group affiliation), and additional activity organizers (up to 10). It's priced at \$4.99 - \$29.99/month depending on the number of volunteers to make it easy for groups to afford the upgrade if they need it. NASPA members can use promo code NASPA3 to get three months upgrade for the price of one, for any size group!

MB: What benefits do you believe that VolunteerSpot can have for higher education institutions?

KB: There are clear benefits to making it easy for more people to participate in service – volunteering makes a meaningful difference in the communities where our schools are resident, introduces students to new interests and career paths, powers many of our campus-life activities, and feels good!

Find out more at www.volunteerspot.com, and make sure to find them on Twitter (@VolunteerSpot), and Facebook (<http://www.facebook.com/VolunteerSpot>). Keep the conversation going and share your favorite open-source programs on Twitter by using the hash tag #openoasis.

Matt Brinton (@mcbrinton),
Tech KC Rep, NASPA IV-W
Assistant Director of Student Activities
Metropolitan State College of Denver

Register early for the 2012 Regional Conference

Use the current year's budget for your registration fee, and save for next year.

Reserve your hotel room now!

Book your hotel room at the Ramkota BestWestern hotel in Rapid City, South Dakota. Use the code "NASPA" when you reserve your room for discounted prices.

Three Reasons to go to Rapid City for the 2012 Regional Conference

1. **People-** at the conference you will meet new friends, colleagues, and mentors.
2. **Purpose-** find out what purpose student affairs professionals have on our college campuses today.
3. **Passion-** see first hand those people whose has a purpose is to engage, educate, and prepare students through their college experience.

A WORD FROM OUR KCs



Chris Meiers, PhD, is the Associate Vice Chancellor for Student Services/Registrar at the University of Kansas Medical Center. In this role, Chris oversees student life, campus recreation, records and registration, admissions, assessment programs, and student information systems. Chris's doctorate is in research, education, measurement, and statistics where his research involved scaling a student satisfaction survey. Chris has also been involved in AACRAO, Educause, and the Association of American Medical Colleges and served as president of the Kansas Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers. In his spare time, Chris enjoys long distance running, cooking, and live music. In this new position, Chris's goal is to help advance the vital relationships between academic and student affairs that are vital to ensuring student engagement, learning, and retention. Chris is excited to get more student affairs professionals in the region engaged in these issues and collaborations.

Precious Porras has worked in student affairs for 10 years. In her current position at the University of Kansas, she works as the Assistant Director for Diversity Education in the Office of Multicultural Affairs. Precious coordinates programs for faculty, staff and students around diversity, multicultural and social justice issues. Outside of work, she is active with her sorority, Zeta Phi Beta Sorority, Inc, volunteers with a Leadership Development program for high school students and works with the Humane Society.

Precious is strongly committed to the idea of increasing access to higher education for all students, in particular first generation students and students of color. As both, she knows that we must work to create an environment that will foster success, and ultimately graduation, once these students get to campus. She hopes through her work as the Latino/a KC, that she can help colleagues understand the historical, institutional and policy barriers that Latino/a students face. She believes that once we are aware of the problems, we can work together to create solutions. We must be action-oriented within this KC if we hope to make change for future generations. In addition, this KC serves as a support system for our colleagues ; somos todos familia. We are all family!



Katie Ericson is currently a Resident Director at New Mexico State University in Las Cruces, New Mexico. She was born and raised in Salt Lake City, Utah and earned two bachelors degrees from the University of Utah - one in sociology and one in mass communication with a public relations emphasis. It was there that she became involved with student affairs, working in orientation, student government, and housing. She then attended Ball State University in Muncie, Indiana, where she earned her Master of Arts in Student Affairs Administration in Higher Education working in the Office of the Vice President of Student Affairs. She has worked closely with student veterans as an undergraduate and graduate student and has been lucky enough to be given some wonderful resources as she traveled this journey. As Veterans Knowledge Community IV-W rep, she would like to be the disseminator of information, resources, programs, and questions that others across our region have to share. Communicating across the board has the ability to generate some great ideas and resources for the students we work with every day. Any tips or ideas are greatly appreciated!

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Rodney Bates is from Oklahoma City, Oklahoma. He has a Bachelors in Psychology and a Masters in Adult Education and Training from the University of Central Oklahoma. He has been involved in student affairs for over 6 years, particularly in housing. Currently, Rodney serves as a Center Coordinator at Adams Center at the University of Oklahoma.

Rodney is currently seeking a Ph.D in Student Affairs at the University of Oklahoma. He has a passion for underrepresented minorities and seeks to mentor young African-American men. He also is driven by student leaders who provide the source for others to connect while going to college. He loves Oklahoma City Thunder Basketball and also has a twin brother.

Ashlee Roberts serves as the regional chair for the fairly-new-to-NASPA MultiRacial Knowledge Community (MRKC). Excited about the opportunity to get in on the ground level, she has spent much of her nine-month tenure helping develop the MRKC with the rest of the national team. Within Region IV-W, Ashlee hopes to engage with members by sharing information to disseminate on the topic, as well as in-person events. Currently in her second academic year at University of Missouri-St. Louis, she serves as the Coordinator of Diversity and Service in Student Life, and more recently, the interim co-coordinator for New Student Orientation. Ashlee is passionate about helping students find their purpose, develop personally and professionally, and improve their campus. She is a proud alumna of the University of Memphis (Go Tigers!) and University of South Carolina (Go Cocks!)



Vinay H. Patel is excited and looks forward to working with the members of the Asian Pacific Islander Knowledge Community. He is from Stillwater, Oklahoma, home of Oklahoma State University and has a Bachelor’s of Science in Political Science from OSU. After his undergraduate experience, he worked for the State Legislature for two years. He later earned his Master’s of Education in Adult and Higher Education from the University of Oklahoma in 2010. Vinay is currently the McMIndes Hall Director at Fort Hays State University in Hays, Kansas. He has been in this role since July 2010. McMIndes Hall is the largest residential facility at FHSU and houses 600 residents. He also serves on various university and division committees. He had the privilege of being a member of the 2011 NASPA 4-W New Professionals Institute class. Outside of student affairs, Vinay enjoys reading, traveling and spending time with family and friends.

Have you submitted your program proposal?

The deadline is **July 31st** for all program proposals for the 2012 Regional Conference. Submit your program here: (<http://naspa.org/regions/regioniv-w/2012conference.cfm>)

Have you registered for the conference?

The early bird deadline is **October 1**. Register now before you forget!

Do you know someone in the region who deserves an award nomination?

Nominate someone for a regional conference award. Deadline to nominate is **July 31st**.

Submit your article to the Region IV-W Newsletter. The deadline for the next newsletter is **Sept 15**.

STUDENT AFFAIRS ASSOCIATION AT THE UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO-COLORADO SPRINGS

Sarah Elsey- Graduate Assistant for the Student Success Center and the Chancellors Leadership Class
Jacqueline Bisailon-Senior Program Director of the El Pomar Foundation

The University of Colorado-Colorado Springs (UCCS) enrolls over 8,000 undergraduate students and over 1,500 graduate students. In 2008 the Masters Educational Leadership with a concentration in Students Affairs in Higher Education (SAHE) was moved to the Department of Leadership, Research, and Foundations to advance the development of educational leaders who can transform institutions into learning communities in which all members of a diverse society are accorded opportunity and respect.

As the two-year cohort program continues to expand, students are looking for ways to connect outside the classroom, since it can be difficult to meet students from other cohorts and alumni. Most students work as graduate assistants or full-time employees at higher education institutions. Students receive unique perspectives from classmates as different institutions are represented. In previous years, the following institutions have been represented: UCCS, Air Force Academy, Colorado College, Colorado State University-Pueblo, Colorado Technical University, Pikes Peak Community College, Regis, and University of Colorado Denver.



To maximize their time as SAHE graduate students, Sarah Elsey and Jacqueline Bisailon created a new campus club, the Student Affairs Association, with inspiration from Tamarinde Doane. The purpose of the Student Affairs Association is to provide professional development opportunities to those interested in becoming or already involved in a student affairs higher education masters or PhD program. Networking, fostering community, and offering additional education opportunities are values Elsey and Bisailon see in this club. After gathering input from their classmates and UCCS SAHE alumni, the club plans to hold social events and educational panels, and provide information on conferences and events connected to student affairs and higher education.

Remember to join us in Orlando, Florida March 15 - 20



2013 NASPA Annual Conference
March 16-20, 2013
Orlando, Florida

REGISTER
by June 30
to lock in
2012 rates!

New Professionals and Graduate Students KC Consortium at NASPA 2012

Meghan Jagnow
Coordinator of Residence Education
University of Arkansas

On March 10-14, the sunny city of Phoenix, Arizona welcomed thousands of participants for the 2012 NASPA Annual Conference: Ignite Leadership Influence Change. This was my first national conference, and I was thrilled to have an opportunity to work and learn with student affairs professionals from around the nation. When I was researching national organizations to be affiliated with, the opportunity to be a part of NASPA and the Knowledge Communities really stood out to me. NASPA strongly supports professional involvement and offers 25 Knowledge Communities, providing student affairs professionals the opportunity to become involved and share knowledge in a smaller community that is focused and passionate about a particular subject area. I felt that NASPA would provide endless opportunities for involvement and growth.

As a new member of NASPA, I decided that the New Professionals and Graduate Students (NPGS) Knowledge Community would have resources and opportunities that would apply not only to my experience but to my peers as well. As a Coordinator for Residence Education (CRE), I participate in the CRE Training and Professional Development Workgroup for Housing at the University of Arkansas. Every day I have an opportunity to positively impact my peers through professional development opportunities and training. I felt the information that I gathered from NPGS is directly applicable to our CRE Staff.

At the 2012 NASPA Annual Conference, I participated in the New Professional and Graduate Student Knowledge Community Conference Consortium. The NPGS Leadership Team wanted to offer an opportunity to engage new professionals and graduate students through discussion of influential topics in the field. There were 12 NPGS members that were selected and we met four times over the conference period. As a group, we came prepared to discuss professional competencies of new professionals and the influence of technology on student development.

The sessions were empowering, as we discussed our triumphs and challenges as new professionals. We discovered that while some graduate programs prepare their student affairs graduates well, the field as a whole still falls short in preparing new professionals for a career in student affairs. We were impacted by the low retention rates of new professionals within the student affairs field and the NPGS Conference Consortium felt an enormous sense of responsibility to reach out and support this population. As a result, the group is hoping to propose a program to NPGS and NASPA to support a campaign aimed to reach out to new professionals and graduate students in the field, offer opportunities to get involved in NASPA, and provide resources to strengthen and support the Professional Competency Areas for Student Affairs Practitioners.

In addition to my consortium attendance, I had an opportunity to attend several NASPA educational sessions as well as connect with old friends and colleagues. I attended a session about strategically planning your career as a new professional in student affairs, a session explaining the Professional Competency Areas for Student Affairs Practitioners supported by NASPA, a session about “socializing” new professionals (which discussed the important time from when a candidate accepts an offer at an institution to the point that they arrive), and a session that discussed planning the transition from an entry-level position to a mid-level position. My hope is that these concepts can be integrated into our CRE training and development approach to accompany the department’s CRE experience model to further provide our CREs with the tools needed to be successful in their current position and to be competitive in their future career.

WRITER'S UNBLOCK:

FINDING SUITABLE AND EFFECTIVE EDITORS BEFORE SUBMISSION

Matthew Birnbaum, PhD and Jerrid P. Freeman, EdD

One of the most difficult and misunderstood elements of conducting research is writing the manuscript. Because scholarly writing often occurs behind closed doors (do you remember ever seeing a college professor actually writing?), it is sometimes assumed that writing is a solitary act. This thinking also leads to the belief that people are either naturally good or bad writers. In this installment of "Writer's Unblock," we tackle these assumptions and provide concrete recommendations for becoming a better writer.

Writing is a supremely mental activity requiring focus, self-discipline, and a willingness to take risks. Given the concentration required to write, it is not surprising that experienced writers do often identify secluded places behind a closed door to work on initial drafts of their manuscripts. Novice writers might assume that this is when the 'heavy lifting' of writing is done. However, the experiences of most authors are that the truly difficult work of writing manuscripts for journal submission begins after the first draft is completed! Numerous revisions are required, with each focusing on specific areas such as clarity of ideas and concepts, paragraph and sentence structure, conciseness, grammar, and proper APA formatting and citations. Before giving your manuscript to others for editing it is a good idea to discuss which of these you want them to focus on and if there are specific issues about which you are already aware. This is when the iterative editing process begins and authors must take risks and share their writing with other writers and professionals knowledgeable on the topic.

The process of writing a manuscript, even if it is single-authored, ideally involves at least 2-3 additional people who are able to provide constructive feedback on content, organization, grammar and punctuation, and readability. One of the greatest mistakes researchers make is assuming they can edit their own writing or assuming that a first draft of a manuscript is nearly ready to be submitted. The full editing process often involves making structural changes to a manuscript and ensuring researcher congruence (Jones, Torres, & Arminio, 2006). Addressing these types of issues can take time but ultimately increase the probability your manuscript will be given a proper review.

A good editor can provide invaluable advice and guidance on how to address the common issues found in most manuscripts, and not simply "tear it apart." Authors may not like the idea of receiving feedback on a manuscript they have already spent 2-6 months working on but should consider whether the suggestions strengthen the paper. If something is unclear to the reader, the writer is responsible for working on the manuscript until the issues are resolved. Novice writers often feel that whoever edits their manuscript will think them stupid or lazy for making so many mistakes (otherwise why did the reviewer provide so much feedback!?). But experienced editors have been in their shoes and know that they are only reading words on a page.

How should you go about finding good editors? Often the best editors are people who spend a lot of time writing and working on manuscripts of their own. These tend to be faculty members and some administrators. Doctoral students working on degrees in your research area are also good candidates as long as they are familiar with the type of publication to which you intend to send your manuscript. Good editing takes time and concentration. If you give people an hour to "edit" your manuscript because it is due later in the day, you are actually asking them to do a simple check for spelling, grammar, and formatting issues. This is better than submitting self-edited work, but it is not true editing.

Writers should be prepared to receive honest feedback that will improve their manuscripts. All too often, writers

experience intense feelings of despair and anger when they receive feedback instead of developing an outline of specific issues needing to be addressed. It is common for novice writers to think that well-published researchers must be naturally strong at writing. This is often incorrect. People who write for a living know that, in addition to spending the required time to draft a manuscript, what makes a manuscript publishable is the time spent working with good editors.

Jones, S. R., Torres, V., & Arminio, J. (2006). Negotiating the complexities of qualitative research in higher education: Fundamental elements and issues. New York: Routledge.

In each newsletter, Freeman (IV-West Research Knowledge Community Chair) and Birnbaum (Faculty Liaison) will alternate the lead on topics helpful for those interested in seeing their name in print and their research published in different types of publications like peer reviewed journals, book chapters, books, monographs, and other scholarly publications. In addition, they would like to respond to your queries about research and publication in this column and offer and support to help you. Please send comments and questions to: jerrid.freeman@hotmail.com or matthew.birnbaum@unco.edu.

Jerrid P. Freeman, Northeastern State University & Matthew Birnbaum, University of Northern Colorado



NASPA IV-W, November 4-6, 2012



Rapid City and the beautiful Black Hills of South Dakota will be the host site for the NASPA IV-W 2012 conference. Come early and/or stay late to enjoy the attractions. For more information, click on the following links:

[Black Hills](#)

[Badlands National Park](#)

[Crazy Horse](#)

[Mount Rushmore](#)

[Rapid City Visitor information \(includes dining, lodging, local attractions\)](#)

Let us know if you seek additional information at this time.

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THE MOST WONDERFUL TIME OF THE YEAR?

Jess Bank

Student Life Coordinator

Northern Wyoming Community College District—Gillette College

I have come to develop a love-hate relationship with the months of March and April in the two short years I have worked in student services. While it's the time of Spring Break, reenergizing conferences, and warmer weather, these two months also boast freak snowstorms, seemingly endless projects that have to get done before graduation, and a sense of urgency to get next year's calendar done now. Right now. Or yesterday. The students also bring a bittersweet feeling to this time of year. It's exciting to meet future and prospective students, but it's hard to see those students with whom you've developed a relationship move on to bigger and better things.

Yes, March and April can be a whirl of conflicting emotions. But love 'em or hate 'em, this duo means one thing for certain: summer is coming. It's the time to finish those projects left on your desk from last semester, take a deep breath, and prepare for the coming year. Summer is also a great time to reflect on what has been and what is yet to come. One important thing that's to come is this year's regional conference in Rapid City, SD. The theme for this year, "Discovering Treasures," is definitely something worth reflecting on.

"Discovering Treasures" is not only appropriate because I believe NASPA professionals will be gathering in one of the nation's natural treasures, but it's so applicable to student services professionals. Every year we discover treasures—some of them shine bright from the first moment we come into contact with them; others take a little more digging and searching, but they're always there. We find treasures in the hidden qualities of our students, in the amazing work they do around campus, and in the areas they truly have a passion for. I know I've discovered treasures in projects that started small and are finished and larger than I ever would have dreamed, in fantastic presentations from national conferences, and yes, even in the snow in April, which can look beautiful against the newly-green grass. Whether we're discovering treasures now in the most chaotic time of the year, in the summer when we can take a breath and reflect, or at the upcoming regional conference, this truly is the most wonderful time of the year.

LIVING AND LEARNING AMIDST CONTROVERSY

Julie Storing

University of Central Arkansas

Many universities have experienced their fair share of controversies that have resulted in the resignation of their presidents. While the media seems to focus on the events leading up to the resignation and its defamatory effect on the university as a whole, few seem to consider the impact that these scandals can have on the students who previously trusted their president and university administration. Having been a student during two scandals that resulted in presidential resignations, this is a topic that hits close to home and has left quite an impression on me as I work toward achieving my Masters in College Student Personnel Services and Administration.

When I entered the University of Central Arkansas as a freshman in Fall 2006, there was an atmosphere of overwhelming excitement. Great changes were being made, and the student population was steadily increasing. All of this could be attributed to one man: UCA President Lu Hardin.

Hardin was the driving force behind all of this growth. He was a strong, charismatic leader. When he addressed

my freshman class during our first day of Welcome Week, the crowd actually chanted his name. Choruses of “Luuuuuuuuuuuuu!” rang out all over Reynolds Performance Hall’s auditorium. It would be an understatement to say that the man was beloved by the majority of the student population. There was even a Facebook group dedicated to him called, “Lu Is My Boo and Scottie Pippen Too.”

In the summer and fall semester of 2008, however, all of that changed.

I was studying abroad in France at the time that all of the deceit and treachery was revealed. When I returned from my trip, my parents greeted me with newspaper clippings from the Arkansas Democrat-Gazette (2008) detailing the letters to the Board of Trustees that Hardin forged in order to secure an early withdrawal from a \$300,000 bonus. It didn’t seem possible. It took a few days for me to believe that the man who had put UCA on the map could do something like this. I felt cheated and betrayed.

When Hardin resigned at the beginning of the Fall 2008 semester, I was in attendance in the Ida Waldron Auditorium where he publicly announced his resignation. I arrived early so I could grab a seat. By the time Hardin was supposed to speak, the auditorium was standing room only.

Hardin explained that he was resigning due to health problems. He never addressed the forgery or the unauthorized bonus. He simply said that he needed to take personal time to recover from the surgery that had been performed to remove the cancer in his eye.

At the end of his speech, a few members of the audience stood up and applauded him as he walked off the stage. What was more interesting to me was the ones who did not. I did not stand up. I could not stand up. This man had lied and cheated. He had deceived us all and smeared our beloved school’s reputation.

A professor that remained seated next to me, turned to me and said, “This is ridiculous.” I think he summed up that ordeal and predicted our next one when Allen Meadors was brought in as Hardin’s replacement.

There was a bit of a scandal right from the start when Meadors was added to the pool of applicants after several candidates had already been eliminated. According to the Log Cabin Democrat (Log Cabin Democrat Staff, 2009; Bauer, 2009), Meadors was nominated for the position in January 2009 but did not submit his application until May 2009 after the applicant pool had been whittled down to just six candidates. Even though the Board of Trustees had promised a fair candidate search, this late addition just didn’t seem right. It looked even more suspicious after he was selected as UCA’s ninth president.

From the start, Meador’s presidency was disappointing and filled with one gaffe after another. He began his reign by installing treacherous brick sidewalks that could double as a Slip ‘n Slide after a rainstorm and ended with a debacle that involved spending thousands of dollars to renovate the president’s home.

It wasn’t surprising, then, when Meadors finally resigned in September 2011 amidst a scandal involving a “gift” of \$700,000 from UCA’s food service vendor, Aramark, to pay for remodeling his home (Spradlin, 2011) Of course, this gift came only with the stipulation that Aramark’s contract be renewed, and I guess, at that point, the Board finally said enough was enough.

Starting in Summer 2008 and (hopefully) ending in September 2011, UCA has experienced so much never-ending controversy that it hasn’t had time to heal. Taking into account Nancy Schlossberg’s Transition Theory (Schlossberg, 1995), these events (and other controversies similar to it) can create a change in the campus environment that can have a huge impact on students’ lives by creating distrust and suspicion if not addressed. I experienced these feelings whenever I was a student at UCA, and it’s something that I’ve carried with me as I prepare to become a student affairs professional.

Instead of attempting to ignore the negatives that these situations bring to the campus environment, I think it's important to reflect on them and prevent them in the future. My time at UCA has taught me the importance of making ethical decisions and taking responsibility for my actions. Even though we may only be human and are capable of making bad decisions, we need to keep in mind what our main purpose is. We are here to help our students succeed, and we should never let anything compromise that goal.

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What are your amazing plans for this upcoming year? What will you do to plan over the summer? Let everyone know by submitting your article to the Region IV-W Newsletter by emailing submissions to Richard Monroe at RichardMonroe@MissouriState.edu.

The deadline for the next newsletter is **September 15**.

Look for a special SUMMER edition of the newsletter! Coming to an inbox near you.

from the editor

Richard Monroe- Technical Operations and Marketing Manager, Missouri State University

R Rejuvenation. Rejuvenation is what you need because summer is just around the corner. It is a time to refocus, put the past behind you, and look toward the next year. Do you have something or someone that rejuvenates you? What about all those new incoming students? Does their passion and excitement carry over to you? Let this year be the year that you make a difference in one, two, or thousands of students on your campus.



To feel rejuvenated, make sure you take some time for you this upcoming summer break. Sometimes we do not find that there is enough time to take a break, but at least make some time to get outside and take a walk around campus. Look for a part of campus or a building that you may have never been inside. Learn something new about your campus that you can take back to your office, and share with a student. These moments are what can keep you going through the end of the spring, through the summer, and into the next school year.

Life sometimes does throw us a curveball, but we need to react to a fastball. So as I share my reflections on rejuvenating yourself, it comes from a passion which I had put away for a while, but I have brought it back. Finding those new things that you didn't remember you could do, like getting outside, being active, running a race, or taking some time for yourself allows you to feel better about what we as student affairs professionals are passionate about: our students. So as you are thinking about the summer, put on a new outlook and transition your way into a new mindset. Life sometimes moves fast, so make sure you are on the train when it pulls away from the station.

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