



Elizabeth Griego, NASPA President
Report for the 2010 Winter Board of Directors Meeting

December 2010

It has been a busy NASPA fall. I have felt honored in so many ways to serve as NASPA president during this seminal period in NASPA's history.

NASPA Moves Into Our Own Offices: I was very proud to represent the board of directors at the Ribbon Cutting Ceremonies for the new offices on K Street on Tuesday, October 12. A large crowd of about 100 persons, including association officers from the Secretariat and SAHE; two past NASPA presidents and past executive director, Liz Nuss; Board Member-at-Large, Julie Ramsey, and a vanload full of Gettysburg students; plus staff from a number of institutions and a past Board member -- all joined NASPA staff for this happy occasion. Since you will be in the new office space for the Board meeting, you will see the great, light-filled, functional work space that NASPA is proud to call home. The credit goes to past Boards and especially to Gwen Dungy and Kevin Kruger for finding the offices and negotiating a very favorable financial arrangement for the offices.

Consolidation: Much of the work of the presidency through the fall has been taken up with the work of the Consolidation Steering Team as we have drafted parts of the *Proposal for Consolidation*, consulted with attorneys, and planned both the dissemination of the *Proposal* and opportunities for discussion and feedback. I have presented in two Voting Delegate Town Hall online discussions facilitated by Dennis Black, in an online discussion with KC leaders facilitated by David Zamojski, and will present to the NUFPA Board before we meet in December. The meetings on Consolidation at the regional conferences went extremely well and served to add to our thinking about aspects of the Proposal that need additional attention. The Scott Academy and NASPA Foundation survey of SSAOs requested by the Board was concluded on November 5 with a 33% return rate from SSAOs. The results will be mailed to Board members in the next few days. There have been many e-mails and inquiries about Consolidation to respond to, and almost without exception, discussion has been generative, productive, and respectful, as NASPA members learn about the *Proposal* and provide their reactions and input.

November Regional Conferences: Gwen and I visited the four fall regional conferences, with the opportunity to meet with SSAOs, participate in Town Hall discussions on Consolidation, and meet with the advisory board of each region. Each region had unusually successful and well-attended conferences, either record or close-to-record attendance, perhaps a sign that the economy is rebounding—or, more likely, reflecting the good work and careful planning of the conference committees. Also, attendance numbers no doubt reflect the intentional community-building of the fabulous RVPs and other leaders

who continue to develop networks of mentoring, support, and learning. It was fun to watch you all in action with your advisory boards and regions.

Region IV-W hosted 327 attendees in Omaha. They organized their conference and mid-level institute by the new core competencies, reflecting the promise that the competencies might guide professional development. Their small, sustainable program guide is a good model for others to consider. Region IV-W SSAOs gave us some good ideas for round table topic discussions that would attract SSAOs at the national conference. The Western Regional Conference for Regions V and VI established an all-time high attendance of 562. The opening reception at the Portland Science Museum will be memorable for the camaraderie and fabulous Bon Appetit food. Larry Roper served as the keynote speaker in a profoundly memorable talk that seemed to speak to each of us directly: "The challenge of difficult times is to reveal the depth of our care and unleash the force of our energy." He reminded us that as "designated thinkers" in difficult conversations our challenge is to be the person in the middle to "transform the frame handed to you in the conversation from 'do we or don't we' to 'how can we, at the same time.'" Thank you, Larry.

Region IV-E captured more SSAOs than in the past and attracted 288 attendees in what was a feel-good fest of friends meeting friends. We learned the meaning of "Uffdah" and got to hear Jamie Washington sing and talk about making your life count. Their Bring a Student Challenge is a great idea for other regions to consider. The reception, award ceremony, and tour of the former Gold Medal Flour factory was fascinating. In her speech to new professionals, Gwen Dungy animated guiding strategies for your career using the acronym FIRE; F (fate and faith), I (initiative and integrity), R (reflection), and E (empathy). We are so fortunate to have such an inspirational Executive Director! Region I was attended by 351 members, which I think gives them the gold star. Their silent auction was the best I have ever attended and here again, the connection and networking among regional members was palpable. Gwen was the closing conference speaker, reminding us of the importance of creativity and leadership and nudging student affairs folks to think more broadly about education and our responsibility and accountability for learning results.

We were so impressed by the regional conferences! And so grateful for the hospitality and friendship extended to us. Thank you for all you do in these conferences to demonstrate leadership in action and to provide a welcoming place of learning and support for our members at all levels and at all kinds of positions in student affairs. The programs and organization of each of the conferences have risen to an impressive level of effectiveness and you are to be commended for your good achievements on behalf of NASPA.

*Additional Information from Region IV-West SSAO Meeting
in regard to SSAOs Involvement & Scott Academy*

- Potential for a greater formal alignment between the Scott Academy and the regions, especially with the person in the role of SSAO Regional Liaison (Earle Doman for Region IV-West).
- Continue to invest and advance SSAO webinars and teleconferences. It was suggested that the draw for these is topical, but maybe even more important is the expertise of the person facilitating the conversations.
- Scott Academic to work with the Policy Division to create one-page policy briefs on major/current topics which would cover the pro and con of particular issues. Needs to be quickly accessible to SSAOs to formulate opinion and best inform campus.
- Stevens Institute is fantastic, but length/time and cost might be prohibitive. Suggested over a long weekend or shorter week commitment. Those who had previously attended were very, very complimentary of the experience.
- Help us use one another with respects to facilitated conversations at various conference or gatherings. These types of round tables exceptionally beneficial to the advancement of SSAOs.
- Development of specific SSAO tracks at regional and national conferences. Discussion of preselected topic areas, potentially including best practices, competencies, hot topics, etc.
- Develop mechanism by which we can best inform one another as to what professional development is beneficial to us. For instance, what are we reading and what has been our take away.
- More local overnight retreats, which might stem from regions or states (or regional affiliations such as tri-state areas, etc.).
- Continue to the SSAO check-in at NASPA and the SSAO room.