

THE NAVIGATOR



News and information for residence life and housing professionals

Featured article

Pins and Ideas, Using Pinterest in Residence Life *Valerie Heruska, Boston University*



Photo of and provided by Valerie Heruska

For some student staff members, bulletin boards are not their most favorite part of the position. While some staff members thrive on being creative, others struggle to find their inner Bob Ross and creating and informational, yet eye-catching bulletin boards. While there are websites dedicated to helping staff members (ex. Residentassistant.com), there needed to be a solution: a one stop shop of DIY ideas and graphics. Then along came Pinterest.

What is Pinterest?

According to their website: "Pinterest is a virtual pinboard. Pinterest allows you to organize and share all the beautiful things you find on the web. You can browse pinboards created by other people to discover new things and get inspiration from people who share your interests." (www.pinterest.com/about/help)

You can add pictures to your pinboard by uploading some of your own and creating a pin board based on those pictures. Pinterest also allows you to use their "pin it" widget that you can get via their website when you first sign up for an account. This button allows you to surf the web and "pin" a picture from the website to your designated board of choice.

How can I use it?

When you first get started, you will be asked to create an account. After this, you will be invited via email to join Pinterest.

After you get your invite, you can begin to create virtual pinboards. You can label them however you want based on the topics you wish to address. For example, I have a pin board dedicated to bulletin board ideas. On this board, I have found pictures of bulletin boards via search queries on the internet and on Pinterest and have used my "pin it" widget

on my browser and "re-pin" button on Pinterest to create this board.

This is a great multi-purpose tool for anyone working in Student Affairs, and particularly in residence life. One great example is from the people who work at the University of Arizona. Their residence life department created boards based dedicated to "what not to bring" and "what to bring" to campus. They have a "dorm room ideas" board and another dedicated to showing exterior shots of their buildings. They have created the ultimate visualization as a way to orient students into their community. Their board can be seen here: <http://pinterest.com/uaresidencelife/>

Another example is to use the boards for staff. To help staff gain new ideas and be more creative, it could be helpful to create pinboards dedicated to bulletin boards, recognition, or door tags. A lot of RAs and hall staff from institutions are already creating pin boards dedicated to these items, and so you are able to "re-pin" their picture onto a pinboard of your own.

Closing thought

For me, Pinterest is a really cool online platform to utilize to find ideas for any type of project- it is a useful tool for me to generate some new ideas to help my staff succeed. Departments should take advantage of the technology that Pinterest has to offer. The possibilities on how to utilize this platform are endless and can provide a new means of show and tell to students. I would love to hear how readers are utilizing these tools for their department or staff. You can share your thoughts or questions with me on Twitter: @valerieheruska

Valerie Heruska is a Residence Hall Director at Boston University. To contact Valerie, email: vheruska@bu.edu

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A message from the president

**Not Just Partners, but Friends...
Paula "Raz" Randazza, Rivier College**

Photo of and provided by Paula Randazza



One of the most enjoyable parts of my presidential year has been getting to know our Corporate Affiliates. As a long time Executive Board member, stopping by the Exhibitor Fair to say hello and thank-you, has always been a part of my Annual Conference experience. While I have not been as lucky as Beth Moriarty or Cathy Raynis Meeker when it comes to prizes, I am a past winner of Corporate Bingo because I visited every booth! This year, however, I have seen our exhibitors and Corporate Affiliates in a new light.

"We are planning to host more than 40 exhibitors at the Annual Conference."

Like housing officers, they have a professional job to do and they do it well; but also like us, they want to provide education on a topic. In the case of our Annual Conference, they want to provide a product, a service, and they especially want to make connections. I plan to personally meet all of our Corporate Affiliates and exhibitors this year, because the relationships that I have made thus far have not only enhanced my professional world, but have allowed me to make some friends along the way.

We are planning to host more than 40 exhibitors at the Annual Conference. The best way to show them our organizational appreciation is by interacting with them, getting to know their product/service and making a connection with them.



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Our affiliates (partners, associates, and consultants) have made a commitment to help our organization succeed this year. Please join me in thanking them at our Annual Conference. If you do business with them, please let them know we appreciate their support not just as NEACUHO partners, but as friends.

Raz

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Letter From the Editor

**Peter Nardone, 2011-12 NEACUHO Media & Publications Chair
Binghamton University**



Photo of and provided by Peter Nardone

Happy May, NEACUHO!

On behalf of the Media & Publications Committee, we are pleased to share with you the May edition of *The Navigator*! In this issue you will find a plethora of articles from members in the region, updates from our hard working District Coordinators and Committees, updates in technology, our Membership Spotlight and Cathy's Column. We also continue to showcase our Corporate Affiliate Program Members and much more!

As we move full steam ahead into the end of the semester and the end of yet another academic year, I would like to take the time to thank all NEACUHO members for their continued contributions and support to *The Navigator* this past year. Whether it's been a professional highlighting achievements in the field at their institution, staff recognition, discussions on trends and hot topics in Student Affairs or looking at the latest advances in technology, we certainly have had a wide variety of submissions from our membership!

Without YOU the newsletter would not be possible. With only a few weeks left until graduation, this time of year is certainly a time of reflection for a lot of us. I hope you have had a chance to make some new friends this year and have had the chance to share all the wonderful things you and all those around you have accomplished. Whether it's been at a social put on by your District Coordinator, NEACUHO conference, or at your institution, the opportunities for networking and recognition of our achievements are all around us.

The Media & Publications Committee would like to thank you for everything you have done this year and for years to come. We hope to see you at the Annual Conference in June!

Peter Nardone is the Assistant Director for New Student Programs at Binghamton University. To contact Peter, please email him at pnardone@binghamton.edu.

NEACUHO

2011

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SAVE THE DATE

June 6-9

Northeastern University

Boston, MA

For more information:
www.northeastern.edu/reslife/neacuho

 NEACUHO2012

Membership Information

Greetings from the Membership Coordinator! Below you will find a listing of all the institutions that have renewed and completed the payment process for membership as of April 2012. *Congratulations to everyone!*

Institution	State	District	Size				
				Dean College	MA	MA	Small
Albertus Magnus College	CT	CT/RI	Small	Eastern Connecticut State University	CT	CT/RI	Large
Alfred State College	NY	WNY	Large	Emerson College	MA	MA	Medium
Amherst College	MA	MA	Medium	Endicott College	MA	MA	Medium
Assumption College	MA	MA	Medium	Fairfield University	CT	CT/RI	Large
Bard College	NY	ENY/VT	Medium	Fashion Institute of Technology	NY	Metro NY	Medium
Barnard College	NY	Metro NY	Large	Fitchburg State University	MA	MA	Medium
Bay State College	MA	MA	Small	Framingham State College	MA	MA	Medium
Becker College	MA	MA	Small	Genesee Community College	NY	WNY	Small
Binghamton University	NY	WNY	XLarge	Green Mountain College	VT	ENY/VT	Small
Boston College	MA	MA	XLarge	Herkimer County Community College	NY	WNY	Small
Brandeis University	MA	MA	Large	Hofstra University	NY	Metro NY	Large
Bridgewater State University	MA	MA	Large	Husson College	ME	ME/NH	Medium
Brown University	RI	CT/RI	Large	Husson University	ME	ME/NH	Medium
Bryant University	RI	CT/RI	Large	Iona College	NY	Metro NY	Medium
Castleton State College	VT	ENY/VT	Small	Ithaca College	NY	WNY	XLarge
Cathy Raynis Meeker	NY	Metro NY	Affiliate	Johnson and Wales University	RI	CT/RI	Large
Cazenovia College	NY	WNY	Small	Johnson State College	VT	ENY/VT	Small
Central Connecticut State	NY	CT/RI	Large	Keene State College	NH	ME/NH	Large
Chester College of New England	NH	ME/NH	Small	Lasell College	MA	MA	Medium
Clark University	MA	MA	Medium	Lincoln Culinary Institute	CT	CT/RI	Small
Colby College	ME	ME/NH	Medium	Long Island University	NY	Metro NY	Medium
Colby-Sawyer College	NH	ME/NH	Medium	Lyndon State College	VT	ENY/VT	Small
Colgate University	NY	WNY	Large	Malloy College	NY	Metro NY	Small
College of Our Lady of the Elms	MA	MA	Small	Manhattanville College	NY	Metro NY	Medium
College of Saint Rose	NY	ENY/VT	Medium	Marist College	NY	ENY/VT	Large
College of the Holy Cross	MA	MA	Large	Marymount Manhattan College	NY	Metro NY	Small
Connecticut College	CT	CT/RI	Medium	Mass. College of Liberal Arts	MA	MA	Medium
Daniel Webster College	NH	ME/NH	Small	Mercy College	NY	Metro NY	Small

Continued on next page...

Merrimack College	MA	MA	Medium	SUNY College at Cortland	NY	WNY	Large
Mitchell College	CT	CT/RI	Small	SUNY College at Fredonia	NY	WNY	Large
Molloy College	NY	ENY/VT	Small	SUNY College at Geneseo	NY	WNY	Large
Monroe Community College	NY	WNY	Small	SUNY College at Oneonta	NY	WNY	Large
Montserrat College of Art	MA	MA	Small	SUNY College at Plattsburgh	NY	ENY/VT	Large
Mount Ida College	MA	MA	Small	SUNY College at Purchase	NY	Metro NY	Large
Nazareth College	NY	WNY	Medium	SUNY College of Technology at Canton	NY	WNY	Medium
Newbury College	MA	MA	Small	SUNY College of Technology at Delhi	NY	WNY	Medium
Niagara University	NY	WNY	Medium	SUNY College of Technology at Farmingdale	NY	Metro NY	Small
Nichols College	MA	MA	Small	The Culinary Institute of America	NY	ENY/VT	Medium
Northeastern University	MA	MA	XLarge	The Julliard School	NY	Metro NY	Small
Nyack College	NY	Metro NY	Small	TC3	NY	WNY	Small
Pace University	NY	Metro NY	Medium	Trinity College	CT	CT/RI	Medium
Plymouth State University	NH	ME/NH	Large	Union College	NY	ENY/VT	Medium
Post University	CT	CT/RI	Small	Unity College	ME	ME/NH	Small
Quinnipiac University	CT	CT/RI	XLarge	University at Buffalo	NY	WNY	XLarge
Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute	NY	ENY/VT	Large	University at Bridgeport	CT	CT/RI	Small
Rhode Island College	RI	CT/RI	Medium	University of Connecticut	CT	CT/RI	XLarge
Rhode Island School of Design	RI	CT/RI	Medium	University of Hartford	CT	CT/RI	Medium
Rivier College	NH	ME/NH	Small	University of Maine at Farmington	ME	ME/NH	Medium
RIT	NY	WNY	XLarge	University of Maine at Machias	ME	Me/NH	Small
Roger Williams University	RI	CT/RI	Large	University of New Hampshire	NH	ME/NH	XLarge
Sacred Heart University	CT	CT/RI	Large	University of New Haven	CT	CT/RI	Large
Saint Anselm College	NH	ME/NH	Medium	University of Rhode Island	RI	Ct/RI	Large
Showa Boston Institute for Language & Culture	MA	MA	Small	University of Rochester	NY	WNY	Large
Skidmore College	NY	ENY/VT	Medium	Utica College	NY	WNY	Medium
Southern Connecticut State University	CT	Ct/RI	Large	Vassar College	NY	ENY/VT	Large
Southern Main Community College	ME	ME/NH	Small	Wentworth Institute of Technology	MA	MA	Medium
Southern New Hampshire University	NH	ME/NH	Medium	Wesleyan University	CT	CT/RI	Large
Springfield College	MA	MA	Large	Western New England University	MA	MA	Medium
St. John Fisher College	NY	WNY	Medium	Westfield State College	MA	MA	Large
St. John Fisher's University -Staten Island	NY	Metro NY	Small	Worcester Polytechnic Institute	MA	MA	Medium
Stony Brook University	NY	Metro NY	XLarge	Worcester State College	MA	MA	Medium
Suffolk University	MA	MA	Medium	Yeshiva University	NY	Metro NY	Medium
SUNY College at Cobleskill	NY	ENY/VT	Medium				

District Updates

Maine and New Hampshire Zachary Irish

Hello New Hampshire and Maine! I hope all is well as we wind down the school year. First off, I would like to congratulate RLAGS for a fantastic Professionals Conference at New England College. Along with a great Keynote speaker about “moving up,” the sessions were very informative about social media, working together, and building your skills in the field. The conference was a great networking opportunity and a great energy booster mid-semester!

Secondly, I am very much looking forward to the Annual Conference coming up in June. With the conference in such close proximity to our district, I am hoping to see many of you there. Every year, the Annual provides great professional development opportunities for professionals of all levels. Come with energy and an open mind. Do not forget your business cards so you can network with other Res Life professionals around the region.

I wish you all a smooth end to another school year and get ready for the summer projects to begin! I am hoping to catch people between their vacations to have a district event over the summer before trainings, orientations, and the school year begins; maybe even meet some new faces. I hope to see you at Northeastern on June 6!

To contact Zachary please email him at zirish@anselm.edu.

Massachusetts Eric Rollo

Happy closing, and I hope you are all enjoying wonderful Spring weather in your final weeks of the Spring semester. All seems well in the world knowing that for most of Massachusetts, it will be a short commute to the Annual Conference this summer to be held at **Northeastern!** I wanted to be sure to give a shout out to **Tim Touchette**, the Annual Conference Chair, as well as his **entire staff** at NU who are all working so hard to create what is sure to be an amazing experience for attendees. Speaking of attendees, congratulations to Northeastern for having registered the most conference participants in recent history – so, if you’re not already registered, be sure to take care of that ASAP! As the host state it’s important (not to mention efficient) for us to have a great turnout!

I am excited to introduce a wonderful professional and someone who happens to be a good friend of mine, **Julie Hershkowitz**, to the Massachusetts District Coordinator position for her two-year term which will start beginning at this year’s Annual. Julie and I will be working together in hopes of creating a seamless transition for her, and we are in the process of planning a final workshop for this year and a wonderful District Desserts Social for the Annual! We’ll have an update coming out about the social around the first week of May, so be on the lookout and please send me an email if you have any topic ideas and/or are willing to host us!

Folks over at Wentworth Institute of Technology asked me to send a welcome to **Ryan DePesa!** Though Ryan is not new to NEACUHO, he recently joined WIT’s staff and from the sounds of it is truly enjoying Boston thus far! I’d also like to wish all of those searching, especially graduate students, the best of luck in their searches! If anyone ever has any recognition items for staff members, feel free to send them my way, and I’m sure Julie will continue this practice moving forward in her term. Best of luck as the semester winds down – I’m looking forward to seeing you all at the Annual!

To contact Eric, please email him at erollo@baystate.edu.

District Updates

Eastern New York and Vermont **Joe Murphy**

Happy April Everyone! I hope your semesters are winding down with little stress and great success in staff and room selections. I would like to thank everyone who joined us at Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute (RPI) in Troy, NY on Friday, April 13 for a great discussion on staff structures, focusing on the number of people, titles, department responsibilities, individual responsibilities, and more! Many thanks go out to Amanda Bingel and her team at RPI for being great hosts for this event.

Congratulations to Christina Lowery from RPI who will be taking over as your Eastern New York & Vermont District Coordinator next year! I look forward to seeing folks at the NEACUHO Annual Conference in June at Northeastern University!

Best of luck with closing in May and if you need anything please feel free to email me!

To contact Joe, please email him at jmurphy@skidmore.edu.

Connecticut and Rhode Island **Jennifer Crane**

Greetings Connecticut and Rhode Island!

Thank you to all of those who came out this year to participate in the socials and topical round tables we had. I look forward to another year serving as your District Coordinator. At the Annual Conference we will have a district meeting where we will talk about future events for Connecticut and Rhode Island members.

If you are unable to make it, feel free to send me suggestions!

A few other reminders:

- 1) Annual Conference: Late Registration is still open until Wednesday, May 2!
- 2) Recognition: Take a moment to acknowledge the outstanding work your colleagues and NEACUHO members have done over the year!
- 3) Join a committee next year: Applications to join one of our seven different committees will be available June 2 on the NEACUHO website.

Also, if you are coming out to the Annual Conference, please sign up for the fun run/walk!

To contact Jennifer, please email her at jennifer.crane@quinnipiac.edu.

Committee Updates

New Professional Development Casey Wall

We had a great day at SUNY Cobleskill for the New Professionals Conference! Our attendees really did learn about “Building Blocks for your Future” with a fabulous keynote address given by Robin Diana, Hartwick College, and friend of NEACUHO. From there attendees heard from different CHO’s and colleagues from around the region on various topics and ideas related to ones future in Residential Life, Housing and Student Affairs.

The New Professional Development Committee is well underway with the planning for the New Professional Orientation at the Annual Conference. We also have begun planning for something new we will be offering at the Annual: a Scavenger Hunt for New Professionals. We hope to see you there!

I would like to also recognize members of my committee whom have worked hard on putting on our three conferences, as well as submitting articles this year. A big shout out goes to: **Sonya Alexander, Angela Brice, Sara Bowlin, Andrew Fuller, Sam Gabel, Matthew Gregory, Dave Grime, Brendon Goodridge, Cynthia Inz Walker, Sarah Judy, Tracy Hensley, Nicole LeBlanc, Erin McDowell, Amelia McConnell, Keith Moore, Joe Murphy, Jess Moore, Tom Park, Eric Rollo, Tara Rupp, Jeremy Shepard, Matt Talbot, and John Zocco.**

To contact Casey, please email her at cwall@binghamton.edu.

Cathy’s Column

- *Want a better understanding of the behavior of students today?*
- *Need help finding balance at work and at home?*
- *Searching for advice on a career?*
- *Looking to have a different perspective on some questions you are simply just not getting answered elsewhere?*



Photo of, and provided by, Cathy Raynis Meeker.

Why not **Ask Cathy?** If she doesn’t have the answer, she’ll ask someone who does! Consider submitting your questions for the chance to have them answered in the next issue of *The Navigator*.

Please submit questions to: pnardone@binghamton.edu.

Check out this month’s column on page 23 of The Navigator.



Foliot #
furniture

Committee Updates

Media and Publications

Peter Nardone

Happy May NEACUHO! The Media & Publications Committee has been hard at work for the past two months putting together the latest issue of the newsletter! This month we feature several innovative articles including information on Pinterest, helping first year students, the Mid-Level Institute experience, our Membership Spotlight, Cathy's Column, and much more! This month, the committee will also be sending out a survey to gather your thoughts and ideas from the newsletter this past year. For June, the committee will also publish a newsletter which will be made available at the Annual Conference highlighting what you can expect at the conference and important information! As always, we thank you for your contributions and support. If you have any questions or would like to know how to get involved, please do not hesitate to contact me.

To contact Peter, please email him at pnardone@binghamton.edu.

Program

Dave Stender

The wicked awesome Program Committee met in Boston in late March to select the programs for the upcoming June NEACUHO Annual Conference. Thank you for everyone who submitted a program proposal. It was a very competitive process this year! Thank you to Northeastern for hosting the committee and also a big shout out to the Program Committee members who devoted an entire Friday to hash out the overall program selection. I am happy to announce that this year's conference will offer the greatest variety of programs offered by format, topic for a variety of conference attendees from new professionals, to mid-level to senior level audiences.

To contact Dave, please email him at david.stender@jwu.edu.



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(www.TheDiversitySpeaker.com)

Dynamic Influence
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Educational Consultants:

EBI
Demographic Perspectives
Nancy Hunter Denney
Roomatefit

Please visit the websites of our Corporate Affiliate Program Members!

NEACUHO Acknowledgments

Greetings, NEACUHO!

It's hard to believe that the end of the year is upon us, but it is! This has been a great year for our organization, filled with outstanding conferences, district events and planning for the future. Now that we are beginning the transition to summer, it is also a time for us to reflect on a job well done and share the good work with one another. Each year at the Annual Conference, we acknowledge our members for a great year of service to our organization.

We would like to announce that the acknowledgment form (formerly known as the resolutions) is now available! To access the acknowledgment form, all you need to do is go to www.neacuho.org and click on the acknowledgment link. You can submit one or as many as you would like. These acknowledgments will then be compiled and shared with our organization at the Annual Conference.

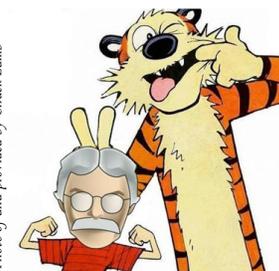
I wish you all the best with closing out the academic year! Hope to see you in Boston for the Annual Conference!

Jen Golojuch
NEACUHO 2011-12 Secretary

Top Ten Reasons/Best Part of Working in Residence Life

Chuck Lamb, Rochester Institute of Technology

Photo of and provided by Chuck Lamb



#10

CREATIVE FREEDOM

#9

YOU LEARN SOMETHING NEW EVERY DAY

#8

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND CAREER ENHANCEMENT OPPORTUNITIES ARE CONSTANT

#7

THE DIVERSITY OF STAFF AND STUDENTS

#6

COMMITMENT RES LIFE STAFF HAS TO STUDENTS, THE INSTITUTION OF CHOICE, PROFESSION

#5

ABILITY TO WEAR SEVERAL DIFFERENT HATS/ ASSUME DIFFERENT RESPONSIBILITIES

#4

STUDENTS AND STUDENT STAFF! WE HAVE AN IMPACT ON THEIR LIVES AND DEVELOPMENT!

#3

ABILITY TO ASSIST STUDENTS AND RECEIVING THEIR APPRECIATION FOR OUR ASSISTANCE

#2

OPPORTUNITY TO CREATE AND NURTURE RELATIONSHIPS WITH PEERS AND COLLEAGUES! BFF'S ARE ALL OVER!

#1

YOU CAN NEVER HAVE ENOUGH FREE GEAR! (SHIRTS, BAGS, POLOS, WATER BOTTLES, ETC!)

Now that you have the reasons you also have the chance to say thanks either to the profession or a specific individual who assisted you along your career path. You can do so by making a contribution to the ACUHO-I Foundation in their name in any amount and you can do that today. Contact the ACUHO-I Central Office. Thank you!

Chuck Lamb is a Director of Residence Life at the Rochester Institute of Technology. To contact Chuck, please email him at charles.lamb@rit.edu.

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The Before and After of a Great Conference Experience

Andrew Fuller, Binghamton University

Photo of and provided by Andrew Fuller



Submitted on behalf of the New Professionals Development Committee.

Many of us spent some (or most) of the last month going to conferences. Whether it was the NEACUHO Mid-Level Institute and New Professionals conference, NASPA, ACPA, another, or all of the above, March tends to be the height of conference season. Did you get what you needed from these conferences? How are you going to apply what you learned?

Many people have addressed what you should be doing during the conference to make the most of it, so I am going to focus on the before and after. Getting the most out of your conference experience begins with your preparations to attend. While you may be reading this article after conference season, these may be good ideas to consider as you prepare for your next conference.

- Spend some time thinking about what you would like to gain from that conference and set goals. What challenges are you and/or your institution facing? What is an interest area in which you would like to gain more knowledge? Which sessions may offer important networking opportunities? Which sessions do you know nothing about? Think outside of your comfort zone, take on a new topic, attend a session intended for an audience just above you (in the organizational chart), and don't just follow a group of your friends. Your sessions should uniquely reflect your own professional development goals and needs.
- If available, review the conference schedule and narrow down your conference session choices. This is especially crucial for national conferences where you may have pages of options for each session. Even if you aren't ready to make the final decision, select two or three "finalists" to choose from. (If these are not available, come up with some topics you'd like to look for when you receive that information.)
- Consider presenting. A lot can be gained from developing a topic to present and in order for any conference to be successful, people must step up and provide quality sessions.

- Tweet! Look for conference Twitter handles and hash tags you can follow for up to the minute updates. Set these up on your phone/tablet/etc. ahead of time (if possible). Most conferences tweet all sorts of helpful information: rescheduled sessions, room changes, updates, etc. Also, many sessions are incorporating Twitter as a means of real-time discussion and feedback during the session. Even if you aren't an avid "tweeter" – this is a great way to stay informed. (Speaking of Twitter – a shout out to @RyanGreelish and @OberBecca for contributing ideas to my article via Twitter. Thanks!)
- Wrap up as many loose ends at work as possible before leaving. You don't want to spend your conference preoccupied about what is happening back in your office, or how much work awaits you. This allows you to focus your thoughts on your own professional development and not what you forgot to do or what awaits you upon your return.

“Getting the most out of your conference experience begins with your preparations to attend.”

As I said, it is easy to find good advice on what you should be doing during the conference itself – so I am going to assume you didn't sleep in past the best sessions, you networked with the best of them, and you participated in some wonderful sessions. (Great job!) Now that you're back from conference, it is important to take some time to reflect.

If you're anything like me, you may have saved your itinerary, schedule book, notes, etc. You may have also immediately shelved and filed those items as you returned to an email inbox full of things to do! So, now that you have had a chance to catch up on those emails, it's time to dust those items off and revisit your conference experience.

Continued on next page...

Helping First Year Students

Elvis Gyan, The College of St. Rose



Photo of and provided by Elvis Gyan

First year students are potentially the most impressionable individuals on a college campus. In the beginning, they arrive in this new “world” unaware of the challenges and obstacles that they will soon face. Some of these challenges could be financial, physical, mental, or even social aspects.

“As higher education professionals, it is our obligation to help students in any way we can.”

Most of their main focus is trying to meet new friends so they do not feel alone on a college campus. By making friends, they would have the ability to guide one another on campus as well as establish positive connections with other individuals. Some first year students hit the ground running and dive straight into their academics while never coming up for air. Then, there are others who are more focused on the social atmosphere than academic pursuits.

Either way you may see it, all first year students need our assistance in helping them to have a successful transition into their first year.

We can all recall a time, (many, many moons ago) when we faced a challenge in our first year and did not seek out proper guidance. As higher education professionals, it is our obligation to help students in any way we can.

Our focus should be to help the students grow and develop so they become effective leaders in our communities. With the ever-changing generation gap, we also need to be aware of the new trends and challenges that may await us. There may be things that we need to brush up on to stay in “current” times with the new students. First year student development should continuously be an on-going discussion on college campuses due to the fact that we will always have these students enrolling at our institutions.

In essence, first year students are important to us in the sense that it will be their “world” one day. It starts with us as professionals providing them with the necessary tools and resources to be intentional and to ensure they are performing to their maximum potential.

Elvis Gyan is an Area Coordinator at The College of Saint Rose. To contact Elvis, email him at gyane@mail.strose.edu.

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The Mid-Level Institute Experience

Josh Hettrick, Westfield State University

Photo of and provided by Josh Hettrick



The Professional Development Committee was excited to host this year's Mid-Level Institute at SUNY Cobleskill on Friday, March 16. Shelly Keniston worked hard to organize this year's institute and provide informative sessions that were educational and led to many discussions amongst participants. Those attending had the opportunity to learn from four experienced professionals, including three Past-Presidents of NEACUHO. The day began with Cathy Raynis-Meeker presenting her session entitled "Managing Change." She discussed the impact change has on college campuses and in a professional's life. The session provided participants the opportunity to consider the change that was occurring on college campuses while reflecting on the change that was going on in their own lives. Cathy drew on her own experience and used examples to help participants understand the importance of change. Because of technical difficulties with Power Point, Cathy changed her approach to her presentation and successfully demonstrated the importance of rolling with the punches when the situation demands it.

Tom Wozniak continued the day with his session on "Navigating Campus Politics" and tied in the importance of managing change when considering any politically charged situation. Tom drew on his personal experience and shared a number of stories to help participants better understand the impact of campus politics on a professional's career. He also focused on the complicated role mid-level managers have in organizations and the importance of managing that role effectively. The session concluded with participants having the opportunity to share their experiences with campus politics and the impact it had on them.

During lunch, participants had the opportunity to sit down with one of the four faculty members to discuss their career path, goals, and plans moving forward. There was also time set aside to review resumes and to get professional feedback from the four presenters.

Dan Volchok presented the third session on the topic "Managing Financial Resources." Dan's experience in many roles on college campuses gave participants the opportunity to learn about finances from a unique perspective. In addition to discussing the differences

that exist between institutions, participants were given the opportunity to see a department's budget and discuss the complicated decisions that must be made by CHOs on an annual basis. A case study was then presented placing participants in the role of the CHO, confronted with making cuts to a budget. The session provided information about an important aspect of any residential life program.

"This year's institute provided important information for mid-level managers in their current...and future roles"

Beth Moriarty concluded the institute with a session on "Managing Human Resources." Beth also utilized many examples from her own professional experience to explain the importance of managing a staff. Participants were given the opportunity to participate in two breakouts with each other. The first reviewed the participant's job descriptions and gave groups the chance to critically review a description and report back to the group. The second gave participants the opportunity to review case studies in which the CHO is confronted with a difficult human resources decision. Participants were able to present how they would handle the situation and then discussion took place as a group.

This year's institute provided important information for mid-level managers in their current roles and CHO roles they will forward to in the future. A great deal of time and effort was spent preparing for the success of this year's institute. The Professional Development Committee would like to thank this year's four faculty for their time and presentations and the participants for their commitment to their professional development.

Josh Hettrick is the Assistant Director for Housing at Westfield State University. To contact Josh, please email him at jhettrick@westfield.ma.edu.

Becoming Best Friends with Facebook Timeline

Thomas Kelley, Rhode Island College

Photo of and provided by Thomas Kelley



So, at the beginning of the year we were talking Facebook Pages and Groups. In January of 2012, Facebook Timeline flooded the news, as this new profile layout was introduced, allowing users to highlight, photos, posts, and events in their life. Facebook profiles went from a social networking site to a Social Time Capsule overnight. Now that Timeline is available to pages in addition to personal profiles, it's important to understand how you can leverage its features, to make a strong, content driven, page. In this article we are going to talk five features that I think are not only cool, but important to know:

1. Cover Photos
2. Milestones
3. Featuring Stories
4. Activity Log
5. Sharing

“All that hard work is now completely accessible 24/7... or whenever you have internet access.”

Cover Photos

The new Timeline layout allows you to create a header banner at the top of your page. You can easily create your own customized banner using any graphic design program in your office. If you are not so graphic savvy, you can always find someone in your building or on your campus that wants to play with some designs. Just set your sizing for 851 x 315 pixels and start designing away. Most recently, we used the cover photos to advertise Room Selection, Informational Sessions, and RA Appreciation Week. So, if you have something you want your students to see right off the get-go, make a Timeline cover for your page, and have a blast with it. Just a note, 24 pixels from the left side of your banner, your page icon will appear, it is 133 x 133 pixels (only 74 pixels in height will show). This information is really important to take into consideration when

designing a cover.

851 pixels
width includes 1-pixel transparent gray border that Facebook overlays on the left and right edges

315 pixels
height includes 1-pixel transparent gray border that Facebook overlays on the bottom edge and 1 pixel of height that becomes hidden under the Facebook header bar (total visible area is 314 pixels)

24 pixels
distance between left edge and inset profile icon, including 1-pixel border overlays

133 pixels
cut-out width, does not include borders

74 pixels
cut-out height, does not include top border

DGdesign social media marketing
8,429,820 likes · 430,249 talking about this · 2,466 were here

Like Message

Photo of Timeline layout retrieved on April 4, 2012 from http://dgdesign.biz/wp-content/uploads/2012/03/ProjName_FBCover_inst.gif

Here are some examples of cover photos we used on our RIC Housing Facebook page:



Milestones

Believe it or not, your office existed before Facebook, try telling a student that, and they may not realize it. Regardless, Facebook Timeline now offers a feature that allows you to insert Milestones into your Timeline. Now that Residence Hall that opened in 1995 can be added to your Timeline. It's simple and easy to add important past events to your Facebook Page. Simply click "Events, Milestone +" select Milestone and fill in all the prompting

Continued on next page...

information. Now take the cluttered Facebook Page and make it an organized time capsule of your department!

Featured Stories

So many things easily get lost or cluttered on your Facebook page. Now with Timeline, it's fast and easy to feature stories, and have them stand out. Simply star a post to make it larger, or pin something to the top of your page. If you have an important announcement like an emergency situation go out through your Facebook page, simply pin it to the top for people to see. Once that issue is resolved, either delete it or hide it from view. By featuring stories,

Activity Log

For some, they have been using Facebook pages for a while, and it's important to track the trends you use on your Facebook page. Now using the Activity Log feature, you can see all the content you produced and date back to it in an easy, user friendly format. Using the Activity Log you can create policy and practice guides to keep your Facebook page going, even after you are onto your next big position in ResLife!

Sharing

It's hard to get the word out about your department's page. With Timeline you can easily send out invite to email contracts using the "Build Audience" feature. Sync your Resident Student list to your Facebook page and invite away. Start building larger readership to your Facebook page!

Closing Thoughts

Facebook is an awesome way to connect with your students and share information. Facebook continues to develop functional features that make connecting easier. Be sure to experiment with your Facebook page and all the new Timeline features. Take the dreary Facebook page and start customizing it! Make your page reflect your office and all the great initiatives you have. If you have questions about Timeline, hit me up on the Twitter [@thomas_a_kelley](#). I am always interested in hearing new ideas with how technology is being used in your office or with your staff. [#technologyinreslife](#)

Thomas Kelley is a Residence Hall Director at Rhode Island College. To contact Thomas, please email him at tkelley@ric.edu.

**Thank you to all who submitted
articles to the February issue of
*The Navigator***

You Make A Difference!

Elvis Gyan, The College of Saint Rose

Robert Hackenson, Dynamic Influence

Keith Johnson, New Professional Development Committee

Thomas Kelley, Rhode Island College

Chuck Lamb, Rochester Institute of Technology

Cathy Raynis Meeker, Former NEACUHO Past President

Cynthia Walker (Inz), Northeastern University

Plant the Seed and Watch a Professional Grow

Yaileimy 'Jamie' Rodriguez, Syracuse University

Photo of and provided by Jamie Rodriguez



It is said that it takes a village to raise a child; in the same manner I believe it takes a village of mentors to help develop a Student Affairs professional. Mentors in the field of Student Affairs are an essential piece to the continued recruitment and retention of the profession. With Student Affairs not being a major in most undergraduate program listings, it is the current professionals in the field that inspire our undergraduate students to transition from student leaders to the professional leaders of the future.

For me, my days as a Resident Advisor count as the beginning of my journey in this field. Six years later I'm still passionate and motivated by the students and colleagues I get to work with in my position as a Residence Director. Mentors have played a pivotal role in my development and these are the three observations I've made that should be kept in mind when moving forward in this field.

“Paying it forward is a common reason why Student Affairs professionals join the field.”

Mentorship is a two-way street. It takes time and effort, just like most meaningful relationships with another human being. It's important to send those emails checking on how the person is doing, make the phone calls to catch up, and schedule face-to-face time if possible. In grad school, my mentors were doors away from my office so making time to check in with them was easy. Since moving more than 1,400 miles away, communication with them hasn't been as consistent but it becomes much more intentional. It's important to pick up the phone, send the email, and make the time just as hopefully they are doing the same.

Just as we encourage our students to expand their social network, a diverse network of mentors can be beneficial. Diversity can come in several forms; from gender, racial, ethnic, professional levels, institution size, student affairs offices, and a variety of people who

you can call on to bounce off ideas with. Seek out mentors that don't look or identify like you, but some that do as well. Find mentors that encourage you and support you in everything you do, but find some that challenge you as well and make you think about choices in your career or position. It's okay to have people mentor you that you may not agree with, but as long as you can respect their work and approach, their mentorship can be a great experience. Don't be afraid to approach people you admire in the field and tell them how you'd like to form a mentorship with them; more than likely they'll be flattered.

Paying it forward is a common reason why Student Affairs professionals join the field. Seeking out students to mentor is a rewarding opportunity to pay it forward. Take a look around your office or building; is there a student who you feel has great untapped potential? Invite them to engage in a conversation to see how you can help them succeed with their goals.

Mentoring students is rewarding because they appreciate the time you invest in them and it's not only they that can learn from us, but sometimes our students can teach us so much if we just take the time to get to know them beyond their roles as student workers, leaders, or residents.

Mentor relationships can begin through informal and formal pairings. I believe that if you are mutually invested in the relationship both of these methods to a mentoring relationship can work out.

Yaileimy 'Jamie' Rodriguez is a Residence Director at Syracuse University. To contact Jamie, please email her at yldrodrig@sy.edu.



Out of the Saddle and Into Res Life: An Undergraduate's Transition from Equine Major to Student Affairs Professional

Leah Krasnor, Post University

Photo of and provided by Leah Krasnor



In the equine world, people say that once you are bitten by the “[Horse] Bug” it’s all over. You are addicted to horses for life. As a freshman in the spring of 2008, that bug bit me hard and I was on course to becoming a certified therapeutic horseback riding instructor. I had a one track mind to finishing my undergrad in Equine Business Management at Post University and going straight into instruction. So, when my academic advisor suggested that I look into residence life, I applied without many expectations. It was just going to be a job to be adding to my increasingly busy sophomore year.

I was not told about a different species of bug lurking with this job. I was used to hearing about the ferocious Horse Bug, but no one told me about the Residence Life Bug. This unsuspecting insect burrows into your heart so deeply that it consumes your entire being until you “eat, sleep, and breathe res life.” From the start, I knew this field was something of interest. It was not until senior year crept up on me that I realized that, not only was I interested in and passionate about residence life, I was good at it. I had moved from Peer Educator Assistant to Peer Educator to Senior Resident Assistant/Senior Peer Educator in my three short years at Post University.

Graduation rapidly became the topic of discussion on campus and I realized that I did not want to leave this field. I knew I would need a Master’s degree in order to progress. It was around this time that I was presented with a unique opportunity. One of Post’s Masters of Human Services students was creating a health education group and they needed a graduate assistant-type position to oversee the group. Enter me. In exchange for housing and my Masters of Education, I would oversee this group as well as undertake several duties from the residence life department.

My transition from Undergraduate to Graduate Assistant at the same institution has not been easy by any stretch of the imagination. Not only did I now have to navigate my new, boundary-laden relationships with many of my closest friends and peers, I also had

to combat the way faculty and staff viewed me. No longer was I “just a student.” I was a professional staff member with authority and influence in the residence halls. Although my path has diverged

“I realized that not only was I interested in and passionate about residence life, I was good at it.”

and I had to overcome many obstacles, it was not without many great celebrations along the way. My involvement in the region and the people I have met is complimented by the conferences I have attended and the knowledge I have gained. I now know that, whether on the back of the horse or in a situation in a residence hall, if I lose my balance and fall in the dirt, I will always have the skills and strength to get up, brush myself and get back in that saddle.

Leah Krasnor is a Graduate Assistant for the Counseling Center and Residence life at Post University. To contact Leah, please email her at lkrasnore@post.edu.

New Professionals Development Committee



Photo provided by Peter Nardone.

Membership Spotlight

Welcome to the NEACUHO Member Spotlight; each issue *The Navigator* will let you meet and learn about the dedicated individuals that are part of NEACUHO. Meet up and introduce yourself to our Spotlights at various NEACUHO Events.



Photo of and provided by Gary Bice

Gary Bice

Position: Director of Residence Life

Institution: SUNY Fredonia

How long have you been in your current role? I am in my sixth year at Fredonia but my 17th year as a Director (three institutions).

Education: BS Biology – Penn State Behrend (Erie Campus), MA Student Personnel Administration – Ball State University

NEACUHO Involvement: Strategic Plan Task Force Chair; Historian; Represented NEACUHO on the ACUHO-I Foundation Board; Presidential cycle; Eastern NY District Coordinator; Risk Management & Legal Issues Chair

Biggest issue(s) facing new professionals and/or CHOs: With how prevalent social media has become, educating students about appropriate conflict mediation, basic social interactions, how to have a conversation to get a job, etc., we need to get more creative and intentional in teaching those skills. For CHO's, given the declining number of high school graduates in the pipeline, enrollment management and potential for declining budgets as a result will continue to impact all of us regardless of institution type.

What piece(s) of advice do you want to share with new professionals about working in the field? The biggest thing for me is to remember that you have a lot to learn. Universities cannot change on a dime and most systemic changes that begin today will not come to fruition until after you leave that entry level position. So focus on where you

do have some focus of control...your building...and become an expert in that realm. Each year you are at an institution you can take on more responsibility and experiences, but always remember your primary role since that's who signs your time sheets.

Favorite tradition your department does: The "Move-in Crew" of student groups that we hire each fall to assist with move in day. Families are always very appreciative and it definitely continues the positive tone set throughout their decision process to attend Fredonia.

Biggest challenge(s) you have faced: This is a difficult question to answer since the nature of our business is to be as proactive as possible but react to challenges effectively and efficiently as they occur. Once the challenge has passed it becomes part of your mental experience bank which then changes it from having been a challenge to something that helps inform you the next time. If you're holding my feet to the fire I would say that 9/11 will always be a defining moment with my proximity to NYC at the time and having to balance the role of an administrator while navigating through all the personal emotions.

What does NEACUHO mean to you? Wow...what does it NOT mean to me? NEACUHO and ACUHO-I gave me a safe place to be during an unexpected year off from working. It is where I find my professional balance throughout the year. I can renew, refresh and reenergize with people who have become close personal friends while at the same time passing on what I know to those who are new to the profession. It is my professional home and will always have a special place inside for me.

Membership Spotlight



Photo of and provided by Elvis Gyan

Elvis Gyan

Position: Area Coordinator

Institution: The College of St. Rose

How long have you been in your current role: 9 months

Education: M.A in Leadership/Higher Education - Rider University/ B.S. in Biology - Montclair State University

NEACUHO Involvement: I have not been involved in NEACUHO until recently because of my *Navigator* newsletter contributions.

Biggest issue facing new professional and/or CHO's: Biggest challenge for new professionals is being able to balance the “working where you are living” aspect. New Professionals have trouble finding the necessary boundary.

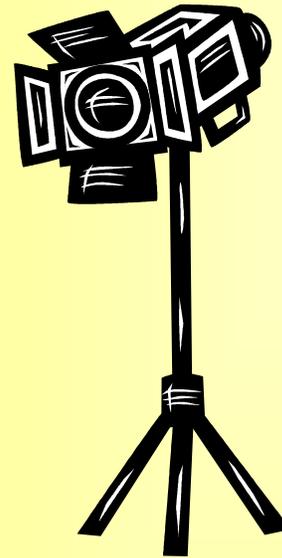
What piece of advice do you want to share with new professionals: When in doubt, ask questions. It is expected, as a new professional, that you will make mistakes. It is better to ask questions and accomplish the tasks correctly as opposed to not asking questions and completing the task incorrectly.

Favorite tradition your department does: The department Christmas Party is my favorite tradition.

Where do you see yourself in five years: I plan to be enrolled in a doctoral program while working full-time in higher education either in an academic advising capacity or a first year experience office.

What does NEACUHO mean to you: In my opinion, this means “opportunity” and “holistic growth”.

Membership Spotlight



Do you know an involved mid-level or new professional that should be in the next NEACUHO Membership Spotlight?

Each month the NEACUHO Media and Publications Committee seeks out two staff members across the Northeast to highlight!

Email your suggestions to Peter Nardone:

pnardone@binghamton.edu



Calling All New Professionals During The Annual Conference!

Dave Stender, NEACUHO Program Committee Chair

Photo of and provided by Dave Stender



During the Annual Conference (June 6-9, 2012) there is a New Professional Case Study Competition sponsored by the Program Committee. You have to be registered for the Annual Conference to participate. If you did not select to enroll in the case study competition during the general conference online registration process don't worry. You can still sign up for the competition on the first day/evening of the conference, Wednesday, June 6.

“As higher education professionals, it is our obligation to help students in any way we can.”

What is the Case Study Competition you may ask?

The competition is a fun experience with small groups of new professionals (defined by those who have worked full-time in the field of Student Affairs for three or less years) who are given a scenario and then have to work together to develop a plan to address a particular problem. Teams then present their overall plan on Friday morning during the conference to a small panel of judges.

There are some nice awards for the winners (nice as defined by monetary awards!). If you have any questions or want to sign up now because this article was so inspiring and you want to join the bandwagon, please feel free to email the Program Committee Chair Dave Stender at david.stender@jwu.edu. I look forward to hearing from you!

Testimonials:

Read what last year's award winning team participants have to say about the Case Study Competition:

“I had so much more fun than I expected to, I was worried that I would miss out on something important but I had a very well rounded NEACUHO [experience]. I went to sessions, I met people, I socialized every night, I learned, and I still had the

opportunity to do something competitive. I highly encourage you to participate in the Case Study Competition at Northeastern University. You will meet amazing people, learn tons, and just participating will develop you more than you could imagine.” - **Nichole Roles, Resident Director, University of Massachusetts Dartmouth**

“If you are looking for a chance to really stretch your mind and collaborate with some new colleagues then the Case Study Competition is an absolute must! The Case Study Competitions gave me the opportunity to create something exciting, intelligent and fun in addition to giving me a new perspective on what may come in my future career as a housing professional. Who knows, you may meet some great new friends or maybe even win a super sweet medal.” - **Jacqueline Coale, Residence Director, Johnson & Wales University – Providence Campus**

Dave Stender is a Complex Coordinator at Johnson and Wales University.
To contact Dave, email him at david.stender@jwu.edu.



From left: Jacqueline Coal, Abigail Stender, and Nichole Roles. NEACUHO 2012 Case Study Competition First Place Team. Provided by Peter Nardone.



Cathy's Column

Ask Cathy! Want a better understanding of the behavior of students today? Need help finding balance at work and at home? Searching for advice on a career? Looking to have a different perspective on some questions you are imply just not getting answered elsewhere? Why not "Ask Cathy?" If she doesn't have the answer, she'll ask someone who does! Consider submitting your questions for the chance to have them answered in *The Navigator*.

Photo of, and provided by, Carly Raynis Meeker



Q:

Dear Cathy: I have recently been offered a position at another university, and now have a lot of tough decisions to make. I currently love my job and feel that I can continue to make a difference and grow, but at the same time would love to be able to move up. Currently, I have been at my institution for three years. I work in Residential Life, and my new position would be a "step-up" in the field, however I am also interested in broadening my experiences. Thanks!

A:

Congratulations on your offer of a new position! That is great. It sounds like you can make the thoughtful decision confidently since you have a win-win decision to make. That is a great position to be in. I think it is best to clarify whether you should stay or go by doing three things. First clarify your life mission statement and the things that are most important to you. Secondly, set up both job options in a chart so you can clearly see the pros and cons of each. Third, give yourself time to take all the information in and reflect so your decision becomes clear and you are confident with your decision.

Clarify what is most important to you.

Clarify your life mission statement and the things that are most important to you. Ultimately what do you want to accomplish in your life personally and professionally? What do you want to be remembered for at the end of your life? Keep these answers as your guide for your career and personal choices. If a choice does not help you move toward or prepare you to move in the direction of your personal life mission statement, then it should not be a direction you take.

Compare and contrast your options.

As you consider both job opportunities, put the pro and cons of both jobs into a grid so you can see your options clearly. Think about professional, personal, and quality of life issues as you make the

grid. Start by considering issues that matter most to you professionally. You state that "making a difference", "opportunity to grow" and "broadening my experience" are things that matter a great deal to you professionally. Make sure you compare both opportunities in these areas. Be specific about the opportunities at each job that will help you grow and will broaden your experience. If you have specific areas you want to get more experience with, make sure you list them as you consider both jobs. The grid should help clarify which job will provide you with the quality of life you want and the job that will most help you move in the direction of the goals you want to accomplish.

You may consider putting the pros and cons of each position you are considering on a grid as you consider professional aspects of new opportunities. I have shared a grid at the end of the article that you can edit so it is appropriate for your needs:

Reflect.

Review your personal mission statement and center yourself on what is really important to you. After completing the pro and con grid to compare both jobs, read through your answers. Then stop worrying and thinking about it for a little bit. Trust that the right answer will come to you or you will be guided to the right answer. I truly believe, when we get centered on what is really important to us, study our options, and fill out the pro and cons grid, and then give ourselves some space to let it all simmer for a while, the right answer will become clear. Once you do your homework, take a break. Do what you do to relax. Go for a walk, do yoga, join friends to laugh and eat, run, sit and watch TV, go for a drive, play on your computer, or do what you do to unwind.... Sometimes I need to repeat this a couple times. Review your ultimate goals and values, study your pros and cons grid and take the time to reflect. Sure you will have a great experience with your position. The right answer to stay or to go will come to you.

Continued on next page...

I trust that you will make the best decision that is right for you. I am sure you will have a great experience with your position.

Job Comparison Pro and Con Grid:

	Pros	Cons
Opportunities for quality interactions with students		
Opportunities for quality interactions with peers		
Opportunities for quality interactions with professional		
Leaders in department and across the campus		
Opportunities for new supervision challenges		
Opportunities for management of larger area		
Opportunities to take on/learn about/enhance		
Knowledge & responsibilities in new areas:		
*judicial		
*occupancy & assignments		
*facility management		
*building/renovation		
*assessment		
*supervision		
*training & development		
*evaluations		
*reports, manuals, contracts & other writing experience		
*website content development		
*enhanced tech experience		
*research		
*best practices		
*other areas in student affairs/res life/housing		
(List the areas that matter to you)		
Opportunities to learn from others		
Salary		
Professional development opportunities		
Personal/Quality of Life Issues		
Cost of commute/parking etc		
Cost of housing		
Cost of living		
Cost of dress code		
Area of country desired		
Support systems available		
Benefit for partners quality of life personally & professionally		
Educational system for partner children		
Childcare		
Opportunities for academic goals		
Opportunities for personal goals		
Opportunities for hobbies, experiences, lifestyle		



Dear Cathy: I have been supervising a graduate student this semester, and it's certainly very different than supervising Residential Assistants. I have tried to utilize strategies I have used in the past, but I also know that the needs of a graduate student (someone who aspires to be a professional in our field) are very different. Any strategies you could share on how to make the most of that experience for both of us would be great.



You are so right! Graduate Assistants are different than Resident Assistants and therefore different strategies should be used to supervise them. Supervising those who want to be in this field is such an amazing opportunity. Many of us also supervise Graduate Assistants who are going into other fields. Supervising GAs who desire to enter other fields require adaptation of the support, challenges, and guidance we provide as supervisors.

Ultimately we want to provide our Graduate Assistants with supervision, training, and development opportunities that meet them where they are at and provide them with experiences that will move them forward so they are ready to take professional positions in their field of interest upon graduation. We want to use best practices as we individualize the experience we provide for each Graduate Assistant. We need to acknowledge that Graduate Assistants may have different levels of experience and different areas of interests. It is important to think about what experiences they will need to successfully stand out when they enter the job market. Allowing them to watch you and your staff as you manage different roles and then gradually having them take on more responsibility in that area should be done purposefully to develop skills that will be transferable to their resume and will enhance their interviews. For example, allowing GAs to learn about judicial, occupancy reports, housing assignments, assessment & evaluation, budgeting, supervision, website content development, and technology projects can have them stand out when they go to interview. If they are preparing for other areas of student affairs or another area, then purposely getting them involved in that area via committee work or an internship would be important.

During staff meetings make sure you provide an agenda, use the time wisely, and limit activities that do not move the staff toward their goals.

Additional strategies

Graduate Assistants have different needs than Resident Assistants

Continued on next page...



because they are starting a two-year academic program at a new level, are usually older than Resident Assistants, and may have life partners and families. It is therefore important to have an orientation for them that acclimates them to the campus, the institution, and the surrounding community. Provide them with information about schools in the area and off campus living opportunities if they have children and/or need to find off campus housing. If they have a partner, providing information that takes into account the employment needs and interests of the partner is also important. During the orientation, it is also important to get them involved in professional development organizations and regional conferences they should participate in. If they are interested in a field outside of housing/residence life, then make sure to include professional organizations and opportunities for them during orientation too. That way they can plan their year appropriately.

“Ongoing communication that is face to face, builds the relationship, and updates the plan to move the GA forward is essential.”

It is important to understand each GA’s resume when they join you and to build a purposeful action plan based on their goals so that at the end of their two years with you, they have accomplished the experiences that will prepare them to be a successful candidate in their field. Ongoing communication that is face to face, builds the relationship, and updates the plan to move the GA forward is essential.

In addition, providing the GA with opportunities to attend conferences, present at conferences, blog or write articles for professional organizations’ newsletters or websites is essential too.

Organize a preplanned development program that takes into account the GA’s transition to the job market and their next position. At the end of their first year, have them volunteer at a placement

conference so they get a feel for the process. It is a great way to start preparing them for their second year with you. Include preparation for the job search and transitioning to the professional world into the training and development program over their second year. Allow for one-on-ones to discuss both the current Graduate Assistant responsibilities and the processing of new opportunities so the GA feels supported and challenged with both.

During the summer between their first and second year have them edit their cover letter and resume. Make sure they understand your expectations of them to master their GA position, gain new experiences, and participate in placement exchanges and conferences. Provide them with the dates of conferences with job search opportunities and/or placement exchanges with their orientation packet and with expectations each year.

Update as new information becomes available. Provide them with registration materials for these conferences and creative ways for them to save money to attend. Introduce them to others in the field and prepare them to search for jobs by including mock placement exchanges and practice interviews in their training and development program.

Provide opportunities for the Graduate Assistants to present programs during training of RAs and development of RAs and GAs. This will help them to prepare to present at regional conferences and to have experience presenting in training and development programs.

I hope this strategy for supervising GAs helps you a little.

Answers submitted by Cathy Raynis Meeker, PhD, Past President of NEACUHO 2008-09.

Cathy is NEACUHO’s 2011 Lifetime Service Award recipient for her work and dedication to the organization and within the field.

If you have a question for her email Peter Nardone at

pnardone@binghamton.edu.

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Let us know if there is something you'd like to see included in the next issue!

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THE NAVIGATOR

August 2011
Annual Conference Edition

NEACUHO
Northeast Association of College and University Housing Officers

News and information for residence life and housing professionals

Featured article

New at NEACUHO
Orrin Kenyon, Binghamton University



Photo of author provided by Orrin Kenyon.

The NEACUHO Annual Conference at RIT was a wonderful experience for me. My first NEACUHO conference was the RD2B conference at SUNY Cortland in the fall of 2009. I was able to learn a few things about other residential life departments at other colleges, but I learned much more at the Annual Conference not only about other departments, but more about myself, and how I wanted to progress in this field.

As a first time attendee I was encouraged to attend as many sessions as possible, and to go outside the box with sessions that I normally would not attend. For the few days that the sessions ran, not only was I able to attend a variety of sessions, but I was able to meet and talk to many people from many different residential life departments. Everyone that attended was very friendly and always excited to talk to new attendees, especially returners. The combination of the sessions and the people that attended them is really where the most was to be gained at NEACUHO. The discussions that were held during and after sessions were full of opinions and ideas. There were people who have had experience in the area for many years, and people that were new and had new ideas. It really was great to go to a session, discuss it at lunch, and possibly discuss the topic later that night with even more people.

Although the presentations covered a broad range of topics and were presented extremely well, they weren't the only way for a new professional to learn. As a new professional, I looked to my supervisors to see what else they thought was

important. They heavily stressed going to the business meeting and the vendor fair for different reasons. At the business meeting, we were able to get a closer look into not only how NEACUHO is run, but how other professional organizations may be run as well. The vendor fair gave us a look at how the colleges and universities that we work for also work with outside vendors not only to buy goods for their campuses, but to make more connections in the field. I'm glad that my supervisors encouraged me to participate in these events because I was able to learn even more about being a professional in this field.

Overall my first NEACUHO Annual Conference was a great experience. I liked it so much that I even decided to join a committee! I made some new friends and was given a look into residential life outside of my own department. I have learned a little bit more about myself and where I want to go within residential life as well as student affairs. Attending the conference also helped me realize that there is more than one way of doing things in this field, and one way isn't necessarily the right way or the best way, but that there is always room for improvement. And if you don't have the answer, there are many other people with ideas and thoughts of their own that are always willing to help.

Orrin Kenyon is an Assistant Community Director at Binghamton University. To contact Orrin, please email him at okenyon1@binghamton.edu.

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NEACUHO is an organization of housing, residential life, and student services professionals and paraprofessionals within the Northeast region dedicated to providing opportunities for colleague support, professional development, sharing of information, collaboration, communication, research, and recognition of outstanding contributions to the field.

The association serves member institutions within Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New York, Rhode Island, and Vermont.

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