
NASPA
Knowledge Communities:
Celebrating Ten Years of Educating for Lives of Purpose

contents

NASPA Knowledge Communities:

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Welcome from the National Director of Knowledge Communities

Dear NASPA Colleagues,

On this, the tenth anniversary of NASPA Knowledge Communities (KCs), we bring you a publication that does what KCs do so well: deliver knowledge to enhance your professional development. Inside, you will find articles on topics from alcohol prevention to being Black and male in the United States today to affordable options for professional development in assessment, and much more. Leading members of our 25 KCs authored the articles as part of our ongoing efforts at keeping you informed about specific subjects that pertain to this great profession of ours.

Since the NASPA Board of Directors approved a proposal to create Knowledge Communities from the existing NASPA Networks back in March 2001, thousands of NASPA members have affiliated with one or more of the KCs, and benefited from the research, workshops, conferences, mentoring, and leadership opportunities provided by the KCs. Knowledge Communities have become what their tagline promises: the "Gateway to the Profession and Connection to the Association."

As we celebrate ten years of NASPA KCs, allow me to take a moment to acknowledge my predecessors, each of whom moved the KC program forward in innovative ways during her term: Bette Simmons, County College of Morris (National Director of Knowledge Communities 2001-2004); Judy Albin, Pennsylvania State University (National Director of Knowledge Communities 2004-2007); and Sandy Scherrens, George Mason University (National Director of Knowledge Communities 2007-2009).

I offer my gratitude to University Parent Media and Action Printing for sponsoring this publication. We could not have produced it without their support.

If you have yet to join a KC, I invite you do so. It is easy to do. Simply visit the KC page on NASPA's website for details, and join as many KCs as you like.

Enjoy your time in Philadelphia.

Sincerely,

David Zamojski
National Director of Knowledge Communities 2009-2011
NASPA Board of Directors
Assistant Dean of Students and
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African-American Concerns Knowledge Community

Yes We Can, But Will We? A Commentary on Being Black and Male in America

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In August 2010, the Schott Foundation for Public Education released a report titled *Yes We Can: The Schott 50 State Report on Public Education and Black Males*, which concludes that the American educational system is systemically failing Black males. The report points out that Black males are the least likely to graduate from high school—only 47% graduate with their education cohort (p. 37). They are disproportionately placed in special education, put on suspension, and expelled from school. *Yes We Can* is the Schott Foundation's most recent report highlighting the miseducation of Black males and the failure of the system to provide conditions designed to support their achievement.

This report also recommends solutions or "Conditions for Success," which include universal, well-planned, and high-quality preschool education for all 3- and 4-year-olds; state accountability to ensure progress in improving student achievement; and programs to address student and school needs attributable to poverty, including intensive early literacy, small class size, afterschool and summer programming, and social and health services (p. 7).

Other writings on what is sometimes referred to as the "plight" of Black males recommend similar solutions designed to address what can only be viewed as systemic and institutionalized racism (Noguera, 2006, 2008). This situation is particularly dire because it conditions Black males to move seamlessly from the educational system to the criminal justice system with a possible stopover in the (un)employment system (see Boyer, 1988; Drakeford & Garfunkel, 2000; Honor, 2002; Males & Macallair, 2000; Pinkney, 2000; Yeakey, 2002). The crisis in education has produced a call for a new civil rights movement. This is quite appropriate, as education appears to have the earmarks of another system in our history, referred to as the "peculiar institution." The similarities are striking. In both institutions African American males are targeted, demoralized, and disfranchised of a quality education. In education, the process begins in the third grade, with the Black male student who is not reading at grade level. It is common knowledge that third grade is a turning point for learning to read (see Guernsey & Mead, 2010). It is also about this time that Black males begin to see school as not necessarily a place they prefer to be (Gentry & Peelle, 1994). Absent mastery in reading, Black males become the fodder for the criminal justice system. A common thread among Black male prisoners is their lack of education. Nationally, Blacks are incarcerated at nearly six times the rate of Whites. Twelve percent of Black males between the ages of 25 and 29 are incarcerated in a prison or jail.

For the past 3 years in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, 60% of African American third, fourth, and fifth graders scored at proficient or above on the Wisconsin Knowledge and Comprehensive Examination Criterion Referred Test. Fourth-grade African American students have the eighth lowest National Assessment of Educational Progress 2009 score in the nation. These stultifying statistics should be of particular concern, yet there is no moral outrage from the public.

With an unemployment rate over 53% among working-age Black males in Milwaukee, Wisconsin's largest urban area and highest concentration of African Americans, and an incarceration rate no less than 12 times higher than that of Whites, the connection between education and incarceration requires even more scrutiny.

Finally, while so much focus has been on the gap between the academic performance of Blacks and Whites, greater focus is needed on the resource gap. Closing the resource gap will weaken the opportunity gap, which, if aligned properly, can eliminate the academic gap.

Student affairs professionals have the opportunity to address the resource gap at the postsecondary level. This urgent call to action is based on the abysmal 6-year graduation rate of 30% for African American males, much of it resulting from their underpreparedness for successfully completing a postsecondary experience. The obstacles to success must be removed by student affairs professionals who demonstrate the leadership and audacity to boldly advocate for the success of African American males. Student affairs professionals must assess the social and academic needs of all African American males currently attending or preparing to enter their respective institutions. Campus support services must be identified and aligned to address academic deficiencies. Social supports in the form of student organizations, fraternities, and volunteer groups must be enlisted. And partnering in the community with faith-based and other organizations will be necessary. Finally, to state a cliché that is never overused when it's about African American males, "Failure is NOT (cannot be) an option." Yes, we can do all of these things—but will we? ■

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Assessment, Evaluation and Research Knowledge Community

Learning to Measure the Difference We Make: Affordable Options for Professional Development

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Few can deny the increased relevance of assessment in student affairs. Practitioners often enter this field to make a difference, and assessment is one way of measuring this difference. Educating for lives of purpose becomes more effective and meaningful as student affairs professionals develop a better understanding of what their students know and can do, as well as what they still need to know. By conducting effective assessments, staff can revise their services, programs, and training to address students' needs and interests. When areas of frustration, confusion, and misunderstanding are eliminated, students are set on a straighter path to achieve their potential.

As assessment and accountability become common buzzwords, more professionals are seeking training and skills in this area, but sometimes they are not quite sure what is available and feasible for their professional development. Several student affairs assessment conferences/institutes are held each year, including NASPA's Assessment and Retention Conference and ACPA's Assessment Institute, but these valuable opportunities may be too expensive for staff with limited funds. Fortunately, many opportunities and sources of information about assessment are available that are free or relatively inexpensive.

To begin, student affairs professionals should explore information available through assessment websites, books, and articles. Many best practices can be gleaned by reviewing the student affairs assessment websites of universities such as North Carolina State, Ohio State, Penn State, and Texas A&M. Practitioners should also refer to recent books that provide helpful overviews of general assessment procedures (Bresciani, Gardner, & Hickmott, 2009; Bresciani, Zelna, & Anderson, 2004; Keeling, Wall, Underhile, & Dungy, 2008; Schuh, 2009; Suskie, 2009; Walvoord, 2004). These resources also highlight the current emphasis on learning outcomes and the growing use of technology in assessment.

Another professional development opportunity can be found in the resources provided by NASPA's Assessment, Evaluation and Research Knowledge Community (AERKC). The AERKC's primary goal is to "increase access to assessment knowledge and training opportunities." To achieve this goal, we will be expanding the resources available on the KC website and providing inexpensive training throughout the year. Training will be accomplished through webinars, as well as by working with regional KC coordinators who can provide local drive-in workshops where best practices and assessment materials can be shared. AERKC welcomes any suggestions for making these professional development opportunities more accessible, useable, and more widely known. As one means to facilitate such information sharing, AERKC publishes its own newsletter, which is disseminated electronically each quarter (and archived at its website: www.naspa.org/kc/saaer/newsletters.cfm).

Assessment webinars, many of which are free, are also provided by individuals, institutions, and companies across the country. For example, StudentVoice, a company that bills itself as the "first comprehensive assessment platform for higher education," offers free webinars each semester on a wide range of topics, including questionnaire design, learning outcomes, rubrics, focus groups, and titles such as "Sustainability and Student Learning Outcomes" and "Models of Building Staff Capacity for Assessment Practice." In fall 2010, StudentVoice provided webinars on 27 different areas.

Finally, student affairs professionals who are looking to make assessment a larger part of their everyday work should consider joining Student Affairs Assessment Leaders, a group that was formed "to meet the professional development needs of educators who coordinate assessment for divisions of student affairs through increased communication and educational activities." This group has an active listserv and facilitates webinars and "structured conversations" through conference calls during the year. The webinars, conference calls, and listserv allow assessment professionals to discuss such topics as preparing for accreditation, developing a culture of assessment, and navigating the changes caused by limited resources and changes in institutional leadership.

In summary, there are ample opportunities for inexpensive professional development in assessment. As student affairs professionals make the commitment

to educate their students for lives of purpose, it is imperative for them to know what their students are gaining through their college experiences. Effective assessment clarifies students' needs and learning outcomes and provides a road map for areas of improvement. Only as we use such data to craft more effective experiences will we help our students find the causes and purposes that will make a difference in the world. ■

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NASPA Knowledge Communities

Administrators in Graduate and Professional Student Services Knowledge Community

Community Involvement Through Community Service: Engaging Graduate and Professional Students

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Beginning a graduate or professional program is one of the most exhilarating and most challenging times for students moving into a new chapter in their lives. Trepidation about what to expect in classes and worries about being academically successful, in addition to taking on new work as a graduate assistant or pursuing other opportunities for campus engagement, come together with excitement about investing in a new endeavor (Laanan, 2006). Student affairs professionals working with graduate and professional students are in the unique position of developing people whose academic, social, and professional interests and needs are significantly different from those of their undergraduate counterparts (Guentzel & Nesheim, 2006).

Most graduate and professional students are older, have more work or other life experience, and come to school with significant others or families. They also are more likely to come from another country or from a different region of the United States. Add to that the larger number of hours graduate and professional students take classes, teach classes, and study their course material, and their opportunities to engage with the community around them significantly diminish. Yet we know how important

it is for these students to connect with each other and the academic community in order to build a support network and identify co-curricular opportunities for engagement (Guentzel & Nesheim, 2006).

Student affairs professionals are uniquely positioned to provide opportunities for graduate and professional students to connect to resources and projects that will give students opportunities "for integration of teaching, research, and outreach" (O'Meara, 2008, p. 28). Community engagement through volunteerism and service-learning creates an opportunity for the students to use their specialized knowledge and skills to initiate, drive, or support change in the community (Narsavage, Lindell, Chen, Savrin, & Duffy, 2002). Campus service-learning organizations and academic clubs and groups working with student affairs professionals can build programs designed to provide engagement with the community while using academic knowledge to "solve real-world problems in ways that fulfill institutional missions" (O'Meara, 2008, p. 28) as well as community challenges.

Drawing on Weidman, Twale, and Stein's (2001) ideas about graduate student development, opportunities for community engagement fit well into understanding graduate and professional students' socialization and commitment to a career or profession. Indeed, students may find that civic engagement creates opportunities for career or professional development as well as an intentional bridge to knowledge, skills, support, or options for further study or vocational accreditation. Communities, too, benefit from students' involvement as they often bring knowledge, skills, and alternative viewpoints otherwise available only through outside consultants. By partnering with these students through community service or professional development programs, the local community can meet its needs while the students develop connections and opportunities for growth.

Certainly the opportunity to make friends or acquaintances and connections to resources is a benefit to the graduate and professional students who are involved with civic engagement projects, but the students' family members have a great deal to gain from the experiences as well. As they build friendships and connections to the community of their own, graduate and professional students' significant others and families may find new appreciation for the students' educational endeavors. Facilitating such opportunities allows student affairs professionals to develop talented and engaged students and their communities (Guentzel & Nesheim, 2006). Participating in community involvement opportunities may also increase students' academic engagement and retention rates.

Creating opportunity for community engagement through volunteerism and service-learning benefits graduate and professional students, their families who accompany the students, and the communities that use the students' expertise. ■

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Alcohol and Other Drug Knowledge Community

Alcohol Prevention in the Early 21st Century

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We educate for lives of purpose, yet the problems of alcohol and other drug abuse persist on our campuses. Knowledge from past prevention efforts inform evolving practices. We strive to find more successful means of creating optimal conditions for student learning and development.

During the 1970s and 80s, alcohol intervention focused on educational and awareness programming and individual intervention, which typically came out of health or counseling centers, and might include a health educator. Next, many campuses developed peer group activities—sponsored alcohol-free fun activities, sprinkled with education—as a way to be more accessible and reach more students. In these efforts too, prevention fell under the purview of the counseling or health center. There was occasional involvement by concerned faculty, but no systematic effort to institutionalize prevention efforts.

During the 90s a more systemic, institutionwide "Envcaironmental Management" model evolved. Campus alcohol task forces, composed of students, faculty, campus police officers, and student affairs staff members, were developed. It was during this period that the Alcohol and Other Drug Knowledge Community (AODKC) was born. Ken Schneck (personal communication, September 27, 2010), the founding chair from 2003 through 2006, recalled:

The challenge at the time mirrors a main challenge that we all encounter today: how to address an issue that exists at a busy intersection of student development, health education, judicial affairs, athletics, Greek Life and countless other facets of college life. It was ever my goal to balance out the voices of the practitioners with PhDs in counseling with the first-year hall directors on the front lines in order to create a fuller base of knowledge to address alcohol and other drug use on campus.

These campuswide efforts typically involved social norms or social marketing campaigns, alcohol policy reform, and efforts at stricter enforcement. They broadened responsibility for alcohol and other drug prevention so that the messages were not only more pervasive but also more connected to the fundamental educational missions of our institutions. Whether prevention has ever truly made it into the classroom in a systematic and sustained manner remains an open question. Beth DeRicco (personal communication, September 27, 2010), AODKC chair from 2006 through 2008, pointed out that "Change is hard and faculty and administrators are used to being the experts in their field; now we are saying that to be successful things must be done differently and we are asking them to infuse health concepts that they know little about and have little investment in." To make this happen, DeRicco continued, we "must link our mission and vision with the academic mission and speak in terms of learning outcomes, not only for our area but also for the way in which our area affects student learning outcomes in general."

Through the 90s and into the first decade of the 21st century, alcohol prevention staff, in conjunction with their vice presidents of student affairs, presidents, and chiefs of police, realized they could not be effective working in isolation. They partnered with the mayors, school guidance counselors, and nonprofits in their localities. These campus-community coalitions attempted to find common ground in preventing underage drinking and coordinate their efforts. Whether we have gone far enough in this attempt to integrate prevention efforts across systems is another open question.

Thomas A. Workman (personal communication, September 27, 2010), AODKC chair between 2008 and early 2010, identified more recent concerns: During the years of 2007–2010, the field of college AOD prevention continued to establish a strong base of evidence for effective prevention strategies, with publications from the NIAAA (National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism), the U.S. Department of Education, and the Harvard School of Public Health. The AODKC continued to disseminate best practices in environmental management and populationwide intervention. While more campuses were seeing success in reducing alcohol and other drug problems, new challenges arose. The Amethyst Initiative brought division to a growing national unity about addressing college alcohol abuse, and support for AOD work continued to struggle amidst political and economic pressures and shifting priorities brought about by the Virginia Tech and Northern Illinois University shooting incidents. AOD would, at times, take a back seat in the minds of administration and budgets as it competed with new and growing aspects of the college riskscape.

Currently, three phenomena related to alcohol prevention appear more prominently: (1) the popularity among and risks for young people of energy drinks mixed with alcohol; (2) the importance of statewide coalitions to support geographically consistent prevention efforts and policy reform; and (3) recovery housing. On the drug side, hot issues are the resurgence of marijuana on our campuses in light of the national medical marijuana phenomenon and the widespread use of prescription drugs for nonmedicinal purposes. All of these issues pose continued challenges for our campus communities. The AODKC will continue to provide the knowledge and strategies that NASPA members need to address these issues. ■

NASPA Knowledge Communities

Asian Pacific Islanders Concerns Knowledge Community

Legacy and Learning: A Look at the API KC's Legacy Project

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Since its formation in 2001, NASPA's Asian Pacific Islanders Knowledge Community (API KC) has provided a place for Asian Pacific Islander Desi American (APIDA) student affairs professionals and allies to connect and discuss issues relevant to the community. Over the years, the API KC has become more than just a space to facilitate discussion. Members regard it as a family and have benefited personally and professionally from the connections made through the community. Past leaders and members initiated programs such as an online mentoring program and a regular newsletter, and encouraged conference program submissions to enhance the presence of the APIDA community within NASPA. One initiative in particular that led to meaningful learning for those involved was the recent Legacy Project, which highlighted the development of the API KC over the years through an online timeline and narrative.

During the 2009 NASPA Annual Conference in Seattle, current API KC National Co-chairs Karlen Suga and Hikaru Kozuma were approached by founding member Henry Gee about recording the shared history of the Knowledge Community. They recognized an opportunity to learn about the

community's past and help maintain a solid foundation for the future, and an opportunity for those involved to learn more about leadership and involvement with a national association. To execute the project, Suga and Kozuma worked with three APIDA-identified new student affairs professionals to interview past API KC co-chairs and founding members. The end result of the interviews is presented in two ways. One is a timeline that highlights significant events in the API KC's history www.naspa.org/kc/api/legacy_project.cfm. The other is a narrative centered on the themes of the interview responses, which included a sense of belonging to and engagement in NASPA and the API KC, mentoring, and advocacy.

True to its intent, the Legacy Project served as a meaningful opportunity for learning and connections, particularly for the interviewers, who are new to the student affairs profession and NASPA. When asked to reflect on the interview process, one interviewer noted that he was not aware of the various perspectives a KC leader had to balance: There is so much involved in being a leader within a group like the API KC that members never see. One of the biggest challenges leaders in these kinds of positions face is that you are "on" all the time. While it is important and key in a role like this to lead with heart, there are times where you need to put your personal feelings aside in favor of what will benefit the group as a whole.

Interviewers noted that gaining a realistic sense of these complexities and challenges was key in helping them visualize and plan their future involvement. Another interviewer stated that "this experience has motivated me to further delve into how to get involved on both the regional and national level so I can one day be a reflection as a legacy in the field as are the people I interviewed." Another significant aspect of the interview process was the connections and stories shared. One interviewer commented that while he knew both of his interviewees personally and interacted with them on a regular basis, he had not known the details of their journey within the association. Their insight prompted the interviewer to reflect on the differences and similarities between their experiences within the association so far:

This experience connected a lot of the stories, legacies, and knowledge that I always knew existed in the KC, but was never able to fully understand and comprehend. By interacting through interviews, this allowed me to gain further insight into where the KC has been and where it will go in the future. By comparing perspectives between legacies and myself, it gave me the opportunity to explore and reflect upon what my role is and how I can contribute to the rich history.

The purpose and experience of the Legacy Project embodies the theme of the 2011 NASPA Annual Conference, "Educating for Lives of Purpose." As leaders, Suga and Kozuma draw inspiration from the stories to help give the API KC direction and purpose, thus creating a foundational pillar to help shape its future. Furthermore, the Legacy Project provided all of those involved, particularly the new professionals who served as interviewers, with an invaluable opportunity to learn and gain a renewed sense of purpose from the development of the API KC. Like the students the profession serves, the API KC will continue to develop and grow as the times and needs of members change. ■

Campus Safety Knowledge Community

Reframing Campus Safety for the Next Decade: Educating the Next Wave of Student Affairs Professionals

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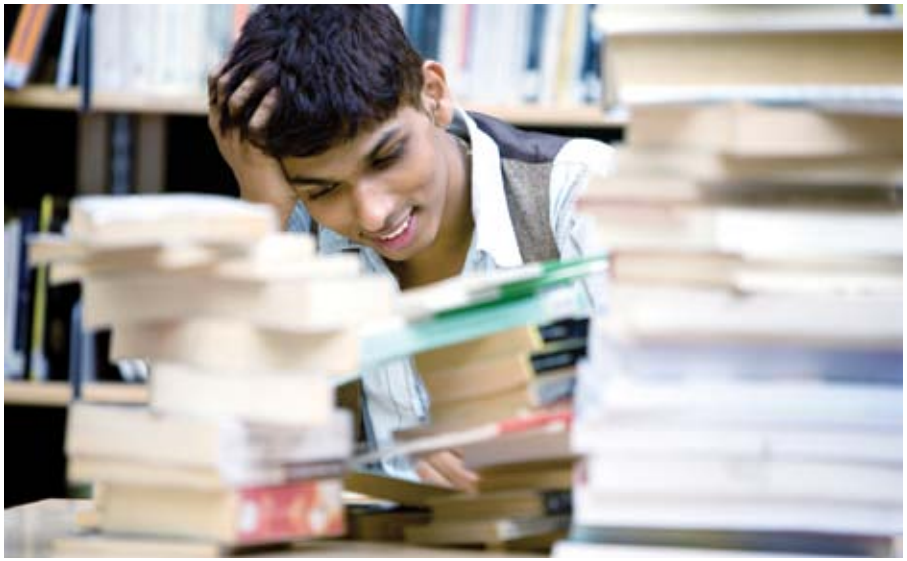
During the past 10 years, our country has seen heightened global conflict with threats to safety and security abroad and at home, beginning with the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001. In addition, our campuses have dealt with considerable threats and attacks at the hands of individuals and the long arm of Mother Nature. How could we not have seen this coming? Why were we not more prepared? These questions fall upon administrators as much today as they did 10 years ago. Our profession is always quick to pronounce our campuses "microcosms of society," yet acts of violence and disasters have always been present in society. So how did we come to perceive our campuses as immune? Until the past several years, campus safety largely has been seen as a campus police function. Recently, however, campus safety has become one of the most debated topics in student affairs department meetings, as well in the media and among parents and government officials. We have an arduous road ahead as we strive to prevent, prepare for, respond to, and recover from the various incidents that our institutions face.

Despite multiple active shooter incidents in secondary schools in the 1990s, most notably at Columbine High School, few imagined what Virginia Tech and Northern Illinois University would experience in the next decade. Societal violence and threats against underrepresented groups and vulnerable populations have occurred for years. Yet the deaths of Matthew Shepherd, Eve Carson, and others shocked us. Today, threats of terrorism permeate our society. So what's next for our campuses? With numerous unguarded campus access points, surging enrollments monitored with limited resources, escalating campus mental health issues, and even changing weather patterns, is it so difficult to envision what may lie ahead?



The tragedies of 4/16/07 at Virginia Tech and 2/14/08 at Northern Illinois University forever changed campus crisis management, particularly with regard to collaboration, multimodal communication, technology, and more extensive student assessments and interventions through behavioral intervention and threat assessment teams. The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act, the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act, and the Higher Education Opportunity Act have also influenced the rocky terrain of campus safety. Yet, since July 2009, we have seen shootings; stabbings; poisonings; bomb threats; facility evacuations; campus evacuations and lockdowns; infectious disease threats; fire and hazardous materials incidents; riots; earthquake tremors; and instances of inclement weather, including flooding, tornados, hurricanes, and snow- and ice-related incidents. Although institutional characteristics influence crisis management, no institution is immune to threats. Unfortunately, we cannot create policy that will guarantee we do not experience critical incidents on our campuses. So, we learn from others; create crisis protocols; select and train responders; analyze strategies through drills, exercises, and actual incidents; establish communication and collaborative channels with internal and external stakeholders; and implement innovative technology. Yet, we seem to learn best from our actions when times are at their worst. After-action reports from Virginia Tech and Northern Illinois provided invaluable lessons for our profession. Coastal institutions and those in flood zones have learned from the experiences of those in the wake of Hurricane Katrina. Tornado Alley institutions and those in earthquake-prone areas provide others with protocols to consider in their own planning.

Our hope should be that 10 years from now we are not asking the same questions: "How could we not have seen this coming?" and "Why were we not prepared?" Let this brief article serve as yet another call for campus safety enhancement. Seasoned professionals must do their part in establishing awareness, changing the climate of campus safety, and mentoring young professionals so that they can learn from past experiences. They should remain true to the conference theme this year by educating students for lives of purpose and by developing the next wave of practitioners, key players in the next generation of campus safety. New professionals should discuss these issues with their supervisors and become involved in efforts to promote the highest standards of campus safety. Reshaping the way we think about campus safety is the only way we will improve it. There are many new resources, including the NASPA Campus Safety Knowledge Community; the National Behavioral Intervention Team Association (NaBITA); the Center for Personal Protection and Safety; the Emergency Management Institute's (EMI) Higher Education Project; and the NASPA-sponsored movement to curb societal violence, Enough Is Enough. Several beneficial documents have been published recently, including *In Search of Safer Communities: Emerging Practices for Student Affairs in Addressing Campus Violence*, the *Action Guide for Emergency Management at Institutions of Higher Education*, and *Practical Information on Crisis Planning: A Guide for Schools and Communities*. Professionals should attend campus safety presentations at NASPA this year and join the critical movement of the next decade in student affairs: enhancing and maintaining the safety of campus communities. ■

Disability Knowledge Community

Making Online Paths Navigable: Leading the Way From Within Student Affairs

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"Information accessibility standards" and "technology procurement policies" may not sound like student affairs terms right off the bat, but these terms are absolutely critical to the work we do as professionals who seek to improve the experiences of students engaged in postsecondary education.

So much of what we do is a function of interactions with technology. We provide online services to students to initiate and check the status of processes related to admissions, registration, financial aid, and more. We offer online courses, interactive tutorials, and social media engagement points. We provide technology-based pathways for students and employees to travel through our institutions. The challenge is that if we aren't careful, we can easily throw barriers in those paths without realizing it.

Universities and colleges are required under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act and the Americans With Disabilities Act to ensure the accessibility of their programs as a whole. This means that not only buildings but also learning materials and online environments must be usable by people with disabilities. Our virtual pathways are often traveled by those using screen readers, file readers, voice recognition programs, modified input devices, caption and subtitle files, Braille displays, and more. We must evaluate the degree to which our online forms and learning materials can be accessed by individuals using a wide range of hardware and software. Those who rely on accessibility features can be impeded when information accessibility standards and technology procurement policies are either not clearly established or not reliably enforced. There are not always equivalent alternatives to our online offerings, which means some end users can find themselves at a dead end.

The Department of Justice, Civil Rights Division, is making Internet accessibility a priority (Nylen, 2010; Parry, 2010; Rowland, 2010). The need for technology to be usable by the full population it is meant to serve is clear, and yet national studies have documented miserable rates of accessibility throughout university websites (Bohman, 2004; Waddell, 2007; Whiting, 2008). The Disability Knowledge Community (KC) has identified technology accessibility as an area in which best practices need to be shared and promotes several key resources for individuals and institutions striving to do better. Relevant articles and videos are highlighted on the Disability KC website, along with links and descriptions to organizations and efforts.

Institutions must make a conscious effort to educate staff and faculty, develop appropriate policies, and commit to ongoing evaluation plans (Bohman, 2007). The best way to proceed will depend on a constellation of factors such as campus climates, population demographics, and internal and community resources (Rowland, 2007). There are, however, some general recommendations:

Establish clear expectations from the top down. Accessibility should be woven into standard business practices, not treated as a stand-alone service. When technology is researched, developed, purchased, deployed, and evaluated, one of the factors in the decision-making process should be the accessibility or usability of that technology.

Provide training and technical assistance from the ground up. A basic understanding of the barriers end users may encounter and a basic knowledge of the design techniques necessary to remove those barriers should be embedded in the various positions across campus that are responsible for content creation and online service development. Job descriptions and professional development opportunities should reflect this commitment. Depending on the resources of the institution, internships or volunteer positions may be used to help produce accessible versions of legacy content.

Evaluate end-user experiences. Engaging in routine self-evaluations, conducting formal assessments, and obtaining end-user feedback are all important methods of making sure we are actually meeting the needs of the population to be served. Recent articles, studies, cases, and statements have called attention to the gap between what we know our students and employees need and what many of us seem to be delivering (Bohman, 2004; Loiacono, 2009; Whiting, 2008). To close that gap, we need to transform our approach to ensuring accessibility of information technology. Doing so is in our own best interest. When we make our online services and information usable through good design, we not only help our students but also attract a wider market, save money, and protect ourselves by demonstrating an understanding of legal mandates.

We need to infuse awareness of potential barriers into conversations at all levels to make sure that steering committees and working groups tasked with making technology-related decisions are considering the needs of a wide range of users prior to the procurement and deployment stages. We need to make sure our virtual environments incorporate the digital equivalent of ramps and elevators so everyone has an equal shot. We can do this, and the Disability KC can help. Look online at www.naspa.org/kc/dckc for resources and opportunities to engage. ■

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Fraternity and Sorority Knowledge Community

Campus Fraternity/Sorority Advisors: From Maintaining Status Quo to Driving Culture Change

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Greek-letter social fraternities thrive on more than 600 American campuses. Incongruence between espoused values and members' behavior presents constant challenges for administrators, faculty members, and concerned alumni. While positive examples of fraternities exemplifying their founding principles of brotherhood, scholarship, and service are easily found, the more public image is centered on alcohol, hazing, and hegemonic masculine behavior, with a dramatic level of related liability and litigation.

Negotiating the politics of these organizations, particularly in terms of amplified institutional loyalty and noticeably superior institutional donor rates among fraternity and sorority alumni as well as their alumni involvement in governing boards and trustee bodies, results in one of the greatest conundrums in our profession. Among senior student affairs officers, the majority opinion is that fraternities, and often sororities, require radical cultural change, at least as individual chapters if not across the entire system.

Frontline management of these groups on most campuses is left to entry-level student affairs professionals straight out of graduate programs, or at best only half a dozen years out. Day-to-day administration, leadership development, organizational advisement, and constant reaction to individual and organizational misbehavior takes up most of the 50 to 60 hours per week these professionals dedicate to their responsibilities. One of the questions on the minds of many senior student affairs officers is whether these fraternity/sorority advising professionals have the breadth and depth of knowledge and the tools necessary to drive a comprehensive cultural change.

Frontline professionals need to understand research and theory on organizational culture and organizational change. Significant research exists on these topics. What is clear from the research is that if change is to be successful and lasting, facilitating the process of change requires strong leadership, an in-depth understanding of the culture, a well-developed vision and plan, and a consistent and continuing drive toward the intended outcome.

The professional who is able to accomplish change is likely to have significant fraternity/sorority advising experience, knowledge beyond what is generally included in a master's preparatory program, and a long-term commitment to stay in the position and drive for change, in addition to institutional support in terms of supervision, collaboration, and resources. Yet on many campuses the fraternity/sorority advising office may not even be staffed full-time, let alone by a seasoned professional.

A 2009 membership survey of the Association of Fraternity/Sorority Advisors, (K. J. Karnes, Association President, personal communication, September 17, 2010) provides supporting documentation. Of 430 respondents who were direct, campus-based fraternity and/or sorority advisors, 410 (95.4%) held bachelor's or master's degrees. Among

447 responding to this question, the average level of professional experience was only 6.9 years, with a range of 0 to 34 years. Most members have a wide range of responsibilities in addition to fraternity/sorority administration. The average salary nationwide for respondents was $40,926. Either no one person had primary responsibility for advising fraternities or sororities on their campus, or the responsibility rested on a single individual (79.2%).

Nearly half (47.8%) reported that the person with primary responsibility for fraternity/sorority advisement was either a current graduate student or an entry-level professional, and another 47.1% reported that fraternity/sorority advising was a director-level position. Finally, 79.8% reported that their operating budget in terms of administering the entire fraternity system was $14,999 or less.

Campus administrators seem united in agreement that fraternity/sorority cultures on their campuses require positive cultural change. Yet accomplishing such change requires constant, targeted professional supervision and direction over a significant period of time. On many campuses, fraternity/sorority life administrators turn over faster than a generation of students matriculate and graduate. If effective, deep-rooted culture change, rather than monitoring current behavior, is truly a priority for the campus, administrative leaders must revisit those elements that would attract and retain talented advisors who possess the depth and breadth of knowledge and the capability to drive such a culture change, not to mention providing the tools, resources, encouragement, and support necessary to accomplish this challenging task.

For a more comprehensive, research-based examination of this and other fraternity/sorority management-related topics, visit the Fraternity and Sorority Affairs Knowledge Community website at www.naspa.org/kc/fsa. ■

Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual and Transgender Issues Knowledge Community

Thinking Beyond the Western Box: Global Transnational Queer Discourses and Our Role as Student Affairs Educators

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As student affairs educators, we have a responsibility to prepare our students for disciplinary excellence, successful careers, and a meaningful life (Braskamp, Trautvetter, & Ward, 2008). As well, it is our responsibility to create opportunities for students to explore multicultural and social justice issues in meaningful, relevant, and productive ways (Pope, Reynolds, & Mueller, 2004). However, in an era of increasing globalization, how do we educate ourselves and our students to cultivate inclusive global understandings? How do we live a life of purpose that is inclusive and socially just? Parker Palmer (2000), a respected author, educator, and activist, suggests that in order to keep our thinking fresh we must look at life through multiple lenses. This article is a call to student affairs educators to think critically about queer discourse from global, transnational perspectives and to broaden our lenses while engaging in topics around queer identity that extend beyond the typical boundaries of U.S.-centered/Western frameworks.

Queer knowledge is received and appropriated globally (Blackwood, 2008). Presently, there is an international proliferation and American homogenization of gay, lesbian, and transgender identities and world sexual cultures (Blackwood, 2008; Jackson, 2009). For example, the international human rights discourse and global queer politics that prevail worldwide are largely centered in Western discourse (Waites, 2009). Moreover, the intranational and international geographies of queer politics are often presented within simplistic and binary categorizations of the "indigenous" or "local" versus "global" or "Western" identities, reducing global queer politics to geographical and socio-cultural "otherness" (Nast, 2002). Thus, queer identity is understood to be synonymous with Western representations of queerness characteristically privileging White, upper- to middle-class, gay men. It is not surprising that queer identity viewed through universal lenses, therefore, marginalizes not only the significance of multiple and intersecting identities but also perpetuates the centering of Western sociopolitical, historical, and economic queer discourse.

There has been some progress in advancing queer discourse outside the Western box. For example, the Internet and technological advancements in Internet-based social networking have created opportunities for the establishment of virtual or imagined communities, providing a venue for queer people across geographical boundaries to meet, interact, debate, and mobilize (Fairclough, 2004). As a result, transnational commonalities and cross-cultural differences have emerged, revealing the strength of local agency in the emergence of new queer identities (Jackson, 2009). Nonetheless, understanding the hybrid nature of identity and the intersection of queer identity with multiple and intersecting social identities such as race, ethnicity, class, gender, age, ability/disability, language, and geographic location remains at the margins of student services, advocacy and programming units, and across curricula in the field of student affairs and higher education.

Taking the current framework into account, what do we aspire to accomplish as student affairs educators? First, we should consider if the types of support, advocacy, and services we offer our lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, questioning, and intersex (LGBTQQI) students are inclusive of global transnational perspectives. As well, we must disrupt hegemonic universalizing of queer identities in curricula and co-curricular settings, and instigate programs that do not re-perpetuate Western representations of queerness. For example, we could use global transnational queer issues (e.g., the case of world-champion runner Caster Semenya) as mainstream prompts for dialogue within our campus communities, or intentionally incorporate a variety of global perspectives in curricular design, planning, and implementation.

In addition, we have a responsibility to educate ourselves and engage students from beyond Western constructions of identity, and place greater significance on understanding globalized, localized, and/or indigenous queer knowledge systems and cultures. It is imperative that we think critically about how regional, national, cultural, and sexual identities intersect within diasporic communities such as the impact of migration across spatial boundaries (Manalansan, 2006) on queer identity. Furthermore, as student affairs educators we must strive to have multicultural competencies that embrace global transnational perspectives if we are to meet the changing needs of our students. Thus, the ever-changing landscape of students and their needs should signal us to the higher call to continue the journey of broadening our lenses to encompass global, transnational perspectives as we empower our students for lives of purpose. ■

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Health in Higher Education Knowledge Community

Creating a Purposeful Environment: Using the Ecological Model for Positive Wellness, Health, and Learning Outcomes

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The ecological model described in NASPA's Leadership for a Healthy Campus: The Ecological Approach for Student Success (2004) is receiving strong support from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Secretary's Advisory Committee for National Health Promotion and Disease Prevention Objectives for 2020, Healthy People 2020.

In these days of "event planning" competing with sustained efforts toward systemic risk reduction and health enhancement for the health promotion/wellness resources, it is nice to know that there is an established way to create a purposeful campus environment for wellness, health, and learning. The ecological model has a strong foundation in best practice health promotion (McLeroy, Steckler, & Bibeau, 1988) and provides institutions of higher education with an established and nationally recognized approach to providing evidence-based primary prevention and wellness services that support student learning. It allows for assessment of student health behaviors, collaboration with campus partners, and coordination for best practice primary prevention initiatives.

Healthy People 2020's Goal 3 is to "Create social and physical environments that promote good health for all" (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 2008). Following is the method for achieving this.

What? An Ecological Approach to Health Promotion

Health and health behaviors are determined by influences at multiple levels, including personal (biological, psychological), organizational/institutional, environmental (social and physical), and policy levels. Because significant and dynamic interrelationships exist among these different levels of health determinants, interventions are most likely to be effective when they address determinants at all levels. Historically, many health fields have focused on individual-level health determinants and interventions. Healthy People 2020 emphasizes health-enhancing social and physical environments.

How? Addressing the Social and Physical Environments

Responsibilities for promoting healthful environments go beyond the health care industry and public health sectors. Changes in social environments, physical environments, and policies can affect entire populations over extended periods and help people to respond to individual-level interventions.

It is common knowledge among student affairs and health professionals that there is a correlation between students' health, academic achievement, and completion of a degree (NASPA, 2004). Certain behaviors and experiences have repeatedly been found to influence student success since the American College Health Association's National College Health Assessment began in 2000. The most frequently reported academic impediments are stress, sleep difficulties, and cold/flu or sore throat. These are complex conditions that are not explained by a traditional disease model. The following are the most frequently reported impediments by more than 87,000 students in 2009 (American College Health Association, 2009):

- Stress (26.9%)
- Sleep difficulties (19.4%)
- Anxiety (18.5%)
- Cold or sore throat (17.4%)
- Work (13%)
- Internet use/computer games (11.7%)
- Depression (11.6%)
- Concern for a troubled friend or family member (11.2%)
- Relationship difficulties (11.1%)
- Participation in extracurricular activities (9.3%)

The Campus Ecological Approach

NASPA's Leadership for a Healthy Campus (2004) recommends the ecological approach as a framework for understanding how the campus environment influences students' health and well-being. This approach can assist campus leaders in addressing health-related issues with the goal of achieving a healthy campus that is community-based and not just individually focused. Campus ecology merges student affairs and health paradigms.

An ecological approach is recognized by campus planning, student affairs, and public health professionals. An ecological approach is based on a complex model that creates a way of viewing the connection between health, learning, and the campus structure, and explores relationships that comprise the campus environment.

Campus ecology identifies environmental factors and influences, which interact and affect individual and community. They include the physical setting, such as the location, weather, buildings, and natural environment; the interpersonal behavior settings, such as cultural influences and socioeconomic forces of the campus population; the social setting of the campus; the institutional characteristics, such as policies ▶

and climate, organizational emphasis on creating a healthy campus, the political climate, and rewards for healthy organizational and individual behaviors; and the characteristics of the surrounding community, such as funding for education and type of activities supported.

Campus ecology requires data to illuminate the various factors. Campuses should actively collect, analyze, and share data on student health status as a way to understand campus environmental influences and individualize risk-taking behaviors of students and the perceptions they may have about particular behaviors or risks. Most institutions collect quantitative data using a variety of survey instruments, and many departments collect the data.

An ecological approach requires campus leaders to shift the philosophy of campus governance, leadership, and action. Using an ecological approach gives student affairs leaders a multifaceted view of the health-related behaviors of the population and the effect of these behaviors on student learning. It offers an established and nationally recognized way to identify the intersections, interactions, and feedback between students and the multiple components of their environments. This leads to a better understanding of the relationships among individual behavior, student-focused services, student affairs policies, and the structures of the institution and the surrounding community. ■

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International Education Knowledge Community

Professional Development in Student Affairs and Services Around the World

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Higher education is at the heart of internationalization, and student affairs and services are an integral aspect of moving this global process forward. Although political and business ventures have been internationalizing for decades, in *Globalization's Muse*, Douglass and King (2009) argue that higher education has provided the requisite efforts and talent for this movement, as well as an ideal platform for global collaboration and exploration. Student affairs and services vary widely from country to country, yet most higher education or tertiary systems offer basic and essential services for students. For example, counseling services are prevalent in South Africa, *collegios mayores* provide multiple services for Spanish students, and Germany and France have created hybrid structures to support students nationwide (Osfield, 2008).

Student affairs/services continues to globalize, as evidenced in recent literature. As far back as the late 1990s, Dalton's *Beyond Borders* (1999) provided information on the roles, skills, and opportunities for student affairs/services. Osfield (2008) added to the canon with a publication on student affairs in specific countries and regions, as well as informative discussions of the current state of student affairs internationally and its future. The work by Ludeman, Osfield, Hidalgo, Oste, and Wang (2009), commissioned by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, highlights country-specific student services efforts and serves as a guide to common practices across the globe. Dalton and Sullivan (2008) present six catalysts for internationalization in the field. These are just a few examples of an increasing focus on globalization in student affairs/services, which will continue to serve as an environmental challenge shaping the future of student affairs (ACPA/NASPA, 2010).

This research makes clear that professional development will be critical for those who perform student affairs/services work. Although professional development does not necessarily have to focus on international skills or knowledge, for developmental efforts to ultimately impact students, practitioners must first understand the importance of their own intercultural competence (Williamson, 2010).

Professional development around the world takes many forms. The approach of each country is context-specific and culture-bound. For example, the German organization Deutsches Studentenwerk (DSW) allows for centralized delivery of program content, in that way similar to NASPA, yet each unit at an institution or within a city reports to the DSW headquarters in Berlin. The organizational structure of education systems may have an impact on the way professional development of student affairs staff functions, or even how student affairs/services are provided, with faculty-run services or staff without an academic degree in student affairs (Fried & Lewis, 2009). As student affairs is an ▶

emerging field for many countries, specialized training may serve as the bulk of professional preparation for student affairs staff owing to the lack of graduate programs. Professional development takes the form of seminars, workshops, self-directed learning, and experiential learning under the guidance of experienced professionals. The format for learning will change as the needs and context change.

Professional organizations take on a large role in training student affairs staff. These organizations may have a local, regional, national, or international focus. Most are national in focus, yet some encompass multiple countries, such as the European Council of Student Affairs, Association of African Universities, and Australia and New Zealand Student Services Association. A new organization is the International Association of Student Affairs and Services, whose mission includes "enhanced communication among student affairs organizations and agencies and international professional development activities for student affairs professionals and providers" (www.iasasonline.org/mission, paragraph 2).

NASPA and the American College Personnel Association (ACPA), as the primary student affairs associations in the United States, are founded in the American higher education tradition, yet have expanded their focus globally. NASPA provides its members with a comprehensive set of international professional development opportunities and experiences, primarily through member leadership and involvement. NASPA's international programs are varied in approach and implementation. The primary initiatives are the International Education Knowledge Community, study tours, regional events and initiatives, international administrative exchanges, and the International Symposium. All of these programs and services are coordinated by an advisory board consisting of the coordinators of each program, the past regional vice president from each region, and an international member (www.naspa.org/divctr/iab).

While the research on the internationalization and professional development of student affairs/services has increased dramatically over the past decade, more research on these topics and involvement with professional associations would help inform the field (Woodard et al., 2006). Additional empirical data on these topics encourage us to reach out across cultures for ideas, thoughts, and concepts.

Collaboration across borders is essential. Ideally, organizing professional development efforts across countries and student affairs/services associations would be beneficial, yet the cultural contexts are important and unique. A coordinated effort could increase awareness of programs, significantly diversify offerings, and potentially save costs. Common electronic mailing lists sponsored through professional organizations can be a vehicle to share information from sources such as global journals and newsletters, inspire shared research, facilitate collaboration on common issues, and serve as a discussion forum, without physical travel.

When travel is a possibility, international professional development opportunities can serve as a forum for student affairs/services colleagues to converse and connect. Conferences and seminars enable professionals to engage in critical discussion and active learning opportunities. It may be possible to plan for attendance at these programs and set desired outcomes so that purposeful dialogue with colleagues leads to mutual understanding and professional enrichment.

As the field continues to develop in the United States, knowing how student services are approached in other countries and regions is important to understanding the global impact of student affairs/services work on students. Reaching out across associations and institutions, networking, and participation in programs all help support international efforts of student affairs/services. It is clear that student affairs/services professionals can learn from one another as higher education continues to play a lead role in globalization. ■

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Indigenous Peoples Knowledge Community

Unpacking the Issues of Invisibility Among Native American Students

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Representation of Native Americans in institutions of higher education has historically been low. Although Native Americans make up approximately 1.5% of the U.S. population (U.S. Census Bureau, 2008), they account for 1% of the student population in higher education, making them the least represented group in higher education (Brayboy, 2004; Ecklund, 2005; Pavel, 1998). The issue of underrepresentation at predominantly White institutions (PWIs) is often compounded when Native American students are lumped in with other underrepresented populations (African Americans, Asian Americans, Latinos), rendering them virtually invisible. When Native Americans are rendered invisible, institutions fail to address the unique issues and status of this population and thus fail to adequately serve Native American students. As student affairs professionals, administrators, and faculty, we must begin to examine the ways in which we perpetuate the invisibility of Native Americans on our campuses and how this affects our students.

The issue of invisibility often comes down to a numbers game: Native Americans are often overlooked because of our "small" population size. Because Native Americans are so underrepresented, we often experience a sort of psychological invisibility. Fryberg and Townsend (2008) describe this psychological invisibility as either the absence of positive representations or the absence of any representation at all. As a result, Native Americans remain outside the consciousness of the larger society (Fryberg & Stephens, 2010). When Native Americans remain outside of the collective consciousness in higher education, they may be excluded and ignored.

Consider the multiple ways in which the invisibility of Native Americans is maintained in higher education: research, data, curriculum, and faculty and administrators, to name a few. In research and data reporting, Native Americans are rarely represented. In fact, Native Americans are largely excluded from research, including national and institutional data, because of our small population size. Consider the curriculum on our campuses, or more important, within academic programs that prepare future student affairs professionals. How visible are Native Americans? Native Americans are generally absent from texts and teaching on college campuses. Native Americans are even less visible among the faculty ranks, where we comprise only 0.5% of university faculty (Snyder, Dillow, & Hoffman, 2009). When Native American students do not see themselves reflected in higher education, when they remain invisible in our institutions, it has serious implications.

The invisibility of Native Americans in educational institutions conveys a message that they are not welcome or do not belong (Fryberg & Stephens, 2010). It is important to examine the detrimental effect an unwelcoming campus climate can have on Native American students, particularly with regard to retention and graduation. Given the fact that Native Americans are the least likely among other racial and ethnic groups to graduate from college, this issue warrants our attention (Benjamin, Chambers, & Reiterman, 1993; Pavel, 1999; Reddy, 1993). Moreover, their invisibility perpetuates an ignorance of Native Americans in general and Native American students in particular. As a result, institutions of higher education, particularly PWIs, fail to recognize the unique status as sovereign nations and the needs of Native American students. This affects our ability to adequately serve and address the needs of Native American students, and it ultimately perpetuates a cycle of exclusion of Native Americans in higher education.

As professionals, administrators, and faculty in higher education, it is imperative that we begin to examine the issue of invisibility among Native American students. We must reflect on the ways in which invisibility is perpetuated on our respective campuses, in our classrooms, our scholarship, and our profession. We have a responsibility to create environments in higher education that are welcoming and inclusive for all our students. If we are to do this for Native American students, it is important that we begin to address the overall representation of Native Americans and begin to unpack the issues of invisibility for this population. ■

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Latino/a Knowledge Community
Reflecting on Our Past, Moving Toward Our Future

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Ten years ago, a group of Latina/o student affairs practitioners gathered at the NASPA Annual Conference in Boston to establish a knowledge community that would educate about, advocate for, and sustain the growth and development of Latina/o students, practitioners, faculty, and policymakers. Through the years, we have provided a space to nourish the minds and spirits of those who are often the only Latinas/os in their programs, on their staff, and in the classroom; those who have courageously fought to create structures of opportunity on their campuses and contribute new perspectives through scholarship and teaching. We stand for those committed to serving the needs of underrepresented, first-generation, and low-income students who have paved the way within the profession and who serve as role models and visionaries for Latina/o leaders in the field. We stand on the shoulders of giants, and it is our duty and obligation to fight against injustice, to voice the concerns of those whose voices are silenced on our campuses, to cast aside the rhetoric in higher education, and to focus on educating our students.

As members of the largest minority group in the United States, we seek opportunities within our Knowledge Community to educate, advocate, and reflect on our experiences and our future in higher education. Latinas/os are the largest minority group in the United States, but college/graduate school degree attainment is not proportional to the population growth (Ramirez & de la Cruz, 2002). In 2008, Latinas/os constituted 12.9% of all U.S. college graduates, in contrast to Asian Americans (50.0%), Whites (30.7%), and African Americans (17.5%) (Pew Hispanic Center, 2010). Multiple individual, institutional, and historical factors account for this finding, such as the vestiges of segregation and "Americanization" programs; deficit-centered research that focuses on cultural values that are purported to contribute to low levels of educational attainment; and academic curricula and pedagogies that ignore cultural practices (Fernández & Guskin, 1981; Solórzano & Solórzano, 1995; Trueba, 2002). Although a majority of Latinas/os have college aspirations, only half believe that college is accessible, especially with regard to financial costs (Lopez, 2009). As higher education administrators, it is our goal to continue to recruit, retain, and graduate Latinas/os as well as all students and assist them in their transitions into academia and the world of work, thus contributing to a pluralistic society.

In terms of cultivating the next generation of student affairs practitioners, Latinas/os represent only 3.1% of all students in student personnel graduate programs (Turrentine & Conley, 2001). In addition, they represent only 2.5% of all full-time higher education administrators in the United States (Canul, 2003). We serve as the advocates for student affairs, and it is our duty to recruit students and colleagues into the field. The exploration of one's Latina/o ethnic identity is reinforced via our Knowledge Community's programs.

Moreover, we have witnessed more research and scholarly publications regarding Latinas/os in higher education in the last 10 years. As scholar-practitioners, we are dedicated to making important contributions to the higher education literature as we write and publish about our experiences and uncover educational inequities and policies that hinder access and retention for Latina/o students. In today's climate, we continue to face difficult challenges that affect our community as a whole and directly impact our students. However, in the spirit of familismo (i.e., "the importance of the extended family as a reference group and as providers of social support," Tatum, 1997, p. 137), we are committed to educating for lives of purpose as partners with the Knowledge Communities and NASPA, and we will strive to serve as a conduit for educational equity and positive change in higher education. ■

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Men and Masculinities Knowledge Community
Untapped Resource: Hispanic Male Success in College

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Given the recent furor over Arizona SB 1070 and the Development, Relief and Education for Alien Minors (DREAM) Act, the Men and Masculinities Knowledge Community (MMKC) thought it imperative to take a closer, albeit brief, look at the success of Hispanic males in American higher education. Of particular interest is the college completion trends of this demographic in light of their underrepresentation in higher education in combination with the increasing importance of a bachelor's degree to both personal and national economic success.

Since 1980, disinvestments in public colleges and universities, stagnant federal student subsidies, and the burgeoning popularity of merit-based state student aid programs have arguably reversed many advances made by the civil rights movement of the 1960s and 1970s. Within 30 years, U.S. postsecondary education opened and then shut its doors, particularly to students of color and specifically men of color, through a series of public policy measures. This assertion is easily confirmed by even a cursory review of demographic data in college attendance and graduation (King, 2010).

College Completion at a Glance

Though college admissions and completion statistics for all groups have increased in varying degrees over the last few decades, racial/ethnic gaps between White students and students of color, especially across sex, have actually widened. While 36% of White students in 2007 had attained a bachelor's degree, up by 12% from 1975, only 13% of Hispanic students had done so, up by only 3% (Engle & Lynch, 2009). When this statistic is disaggregated by sex, Hispanic males fare much worse. Whereas Hispanic females have steadily increased in bachelor's degree attainment to a current figure of 14% of Hispanics aged 25 to 29 with a bachelor's degree or higher, Hispanic males actually experienced a proportional decrease to 9% as their college graduation numbers have failed to keep pace with increases in their overall population (King, 2010). What is more, King states that immigrant men represent one-third of all Hispanic young adults, yet only 6% of Hispanic young adult degree holders. So, as gender, race/ethnicity, and immigration status intersect, more Hispanic male immigrants are without postsecondary credentials at a time when more and more elements of the U.S. economy require higher levels of education and the nation itself looks for more college-educated citizens.

Why Postsecondary Success Matters

As research has long attested, higher levels of education confer definite personal and collective benefits (Baum, Ma, & Payea, 2010; Leslie & Brinkman, 1988; Lumina Foundation, 2010; Perna, 2006). Personal benefits include higher lifetime earnings, lower probability of unemployment, and reduced reliance on public subsidies and services; collective benefits include an increased tax base and greater civic participation. Baum et al. noted that median earnings for bachelor's recipients in 2008 were roughly $22,000 greater than those of persons holding only a high school degree, and that the former are far less likely to be unemployed.

College graduates also rely less on federal food subsidy programs than do high school graduates (1% versus 8%) and are less likely to utilize Medicaid (7% versus 21%) and free school lunch (1% versus 8%) (Baum et al., 2010). In addition, these authors note that college graduates contribute roughly $6,000 more per year to local, state, and federal tax bases, make for more satisfied employees, and are more involved in their children's education than high school graduates. Clearly, substantial evidence suggests that as a nation we benefit financially and civically from a more educated populace.

Conclusions

The MMKC's intention here is not to fuel the debates that currently divide the nation, but simply to make the case that there is untapped human capital in the United States that could allow the nation to achieve both its education and economic goals. The MMKC can be a resource to practitioners and scholars concerned with the status of Hispanic males, both native and immigrant. To this end, the MMKC advocates a particular focus on the intersections of gender, race/ethnicity, and residency status as paramount in meeting the needs of this student demographic. This topic must be addressed in view of the fact that persons of Hispanic origin will comprise almost 33% of the nation's workforce by 2050 (Lynch & Engle, 2010). ■

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MultiRacial Knowledge Community

Check All That Apply: A Call to Action in Support of Multiracial Students

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The collegiate environment provides many students with an opportunity to begin their personal racial explorations. Nevertheless, for college students who identified with two or more races in the 2000 U.S. Census, this notion of racial exploration is typified by the question, "What does it mean to be part of multiple racial groups?" The social aspect of college focuses primarily on each student finding a place of social significance and belonging. While many multiracial students may easily navigate through multiple racial identities, for others, finding the "right fit" presents additional struggles (Ridder, 2010).

As Root (2000) put forward in her Bill of Rights for Racially Mixed People, "multiracial people blur the boundaries between races, the 'us' and 'them.' They do not fit neatly into the observer's schema of reality." Fortunately, research momentum in the 1990s produced racial identity models to suit the challenges encountered by biracial individuals (Chapman, 2004) and accommodate a populous that self-identified as multiracial (Ridder, 2010). Poston (1990) introduced the Biracial Identity Model as an alternative to traditional racial identity models (e.g., Cross and Helms). Renn's (2000) research provided the initial framework for the discussion of multiracial identity in college students. Wijeysinghe's (2001) Factor Model of Multiracial Identity equipped us with a vehicle to understand the experiences of multiracial people. Each of these new racial identity models brings forth an important and necessary opportunity for multiracial people to understand the complexities of their racial identity. However, questions regarding the application of these theories are still under scrutiny.

While the construction of these models goes a long way in mitigating the internal struggles with multiracial identity, the status of the multiracial individual as an acknowledged genre in the discussion of racial diversity remains problematic. Chapman (2004) noted "although individuals may perceive their identity as being whole, society and even family perceive their identity as being dual, in many situations forcing biracial individuals to choose." Acceptance, phenotype, questions of "what are you," "you're not enough of this race or that race," familial influence, and cultural and racial experimentation are some of the factors that may influence multiracial identity (Ridder, 2010). This expectation of racial acknowledgement not only safeguards the myth of cultural conformity and commonality, but also carries lasting effects for multiracial individuals, including feelings of guilt, disloyalty, self-hatred, and lack of acceptance from one or more racial groups (Poston, 1990).

Furthermore, the universities in which we are employed often have a monoracial construction, even if they allow students to mark more than one box on admission or other data gathering forms. Although such data often translate into services offered or budgetary impacts, changes in the essential makeup of cultural centers or diversity offices may be a slow process. Many times diversity offices do not acknowledge multiracial students, but rather expect that they will incorporate themselves into a minority group already in existence. Without space, physical or psychological, for multiracial students to periodically interact through student organizations or programs, it is unlikely that a mixed race student organization would form (Ridder, 2010). Lack of student organizations and sufficient campus resources deprive multiracial students of the counterspace they need to affirm their position as part of the university landscape. Additionally, our own notion of what race is, or is not, may limit any increases or expansions to include multiracial students.

We have an obligation to cultivate all of the components that contribute to one's identity. When we fail to sharpen our senses to the multiracial experience, we run the very real risk of doing these students a powerful disservice. As a new Knowledge Community, we are honored to be included with the phenomenal students, faculty, and practitioners who work tirelessly to ensure that the collegiate environment is safe, inclusive, and nurturing of student growth and development. If we are to truly embrace the NASPA 2011 Annual Conference theme of "Educating for Lives of Purpose," it is imperative that we be mindful of the need to extend our gifts and talents to all students. It is also essential that we continue to channel our energy toward collaborative efforts to create new and exciting research and programs designed to make us all more aware of multiracial individuals. This is our challenge: We must work together to further the support of multiracial students by creating more holistic scholarship, programs, and services conducive to the multiracial community. It is time to foster an appetite for pursuing research, partnering with organizations, and educating others on multiraciality. Individually, we can work to raise awareness of the multiracial experience at our respective institutions and local communities. While our presence may be established, the journey has just begun. Like our racial predecessors, our journey cannot be paved in solitude. ■

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New Professionals and Graduate Students Knowledge Community

Supporting the Millennial New Professional and Graduate Student in Student Affairs

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Millennial students are now new professionals and graduate students in student affairs. The initial student affairs preparation to support millennial students at the undergraduate level must now transition to methods of supporting graduate students and colleagues who claim the identity of millennials. This shift from Generation X to the millennial generation highlights a shift in expectations and learning styles (Wilson, 2004). How might the support services for millennial graduate students, at various levels, differ from previous support services? How will millennial new professionals transition into a professional office? This article aims to raise key points that may assist supervisors, mentors, and offices in supporting, transitioning, and working with adult millennials. For the purposes of this article, a millennial is defined as an individual born between 1982 and 2001. While the article refers to new professionals, the discussion can also be applied to graduate students, as the common thread between these two groups is their millennial identity.

According to a study by Renn and Jessup-Anger (2008), new professionals face four major challenges: (1) creating a professional identity, (2) navigating a cultural adjustment, (3) maintaining a learning orientation, and (4) seeking sage advice. Creating a professional identity encompasses new professionals' need to find balance, gain competency in job skills, apply previously learned information to a new setting, and ultimately prove themselves. The authors suggest the need to focus support specifically on the transition from a student learner to a professional educator. This transition, occurring in one's first professional position, can pose a shock. Navigating a cultural adjustment was a major factor for most respondents in the study. Adjusting to the culture of the department or office may be frustrating at first, but once accomplished, will allow the new professional to feel comfortable and ultimately increase efficiency in the position. Maintaining a learning orientation focuses on the way new professionals perceive challenges in the workplace. New professionals with a learning orientation constantly critically analyze settings and individuals in the workplace and adjust their actions accordingly. Seeking sage advice highlights the importance of a mentor in the lives of new professionals. During the transition period, some new professionals become uncertain about their capability or decision to enter a position. In these cases, mentors and supportive supervisors are key. As the first professional year progresses, new professionals become less dependent on mentors.

As other authors have pointed out, particularly Magolda and Carnaghi (2004), new professionals are charged with accomplishing many other things besides their new job. Combining the identity of a new professional or graduate student with that of a "millennial" can create a positive, yet overly committed and overwhelming, experience for these individuals in student affairs. As experiential learning is crucial to gaining self-confidence and applying theory to practice, it is imperative that these types of learning opportunities be offered to this population. Following are some suggestions for developmental opportunities that research indicates the millennial generation is seeking.

Offer opportunities for public service. Being part of something bigger and more meaningful is a chord that runs deep in the millennial generation. Providing opportunities for millennials to engage in community service may not only increase the overall quality of graduate school or the new professional experience, but will also allow these individuals to give back to the community.

Offer opportunities to experience new responsibilities. A common goal of the millennial generation is to "do it all." Opportunities to take on new responsibilities such as committee work could help to develop leadership and professional skills within this population.

Offer opportunities to network at all levels. Interacting with and being mentored by seasoned professionals is a common interest among millennials. Networking creates opportunities for new professionals to meet not only possible mentors, but fellow new professionals/graduate students as well.

Renn and Jessup-Anger (2008) noted that "Getting students to think about graduate school as the beginning of a lifelong process of professional learning and development rather than as a discrete experience that ends with commencement" can create a seamless experience of professional development (p. 333). In providing these support structures and opportunities, graduate programs and professional departments can create a focus on developing new professionals who embrace self-directed learning. ■

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Parent and Family Relations Knowledge Community

Purposeful Partnering: Educating Our Parents for the Benefit of Our Students

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Working with parents is an exciting component of higher education. Parents and family members help contribute to the campus community in a positive and engaging way. Today's students seek counsel and guidance from parents and family members throughout their college experience. Through a collaborative partnership with parents, collectively we can educate with purpose and cultivate a vital support structure for students.

NASPA encourages engagement and provides its members many opportunities to affiliate and communicate with colleagues who work with parents and family members in the higher education setting. The NASPA Parent and Family Relations Knowledge Community (PFRKC) is an engaging and vibrant community of professionals who love parents! We strive to identify and share current research and best practices in the areas of college parenting and parental involvement; promote opportunities for new research; and provide valuable information on interacting with parents of college students via programming, compilations of current literature, and web resources. The PFRKC focuses on current trends, such as the increasing number of college graduates returning home. Some reports show that as many as 65 to 80% of today's graduates move back in with their parents (Chatsky, 2006; Ogunwole, 2009). How can we educate parents on their upcoming (and often unexpected) role as landlords to someone who has lived independently for a few years? Another current focal point involves outreach and communication with parents of underrepresented student populations. Traditional methods may not be optimal for certain family groups; how do we include them?

We are university professionals who work in a variety of student-related areas; some work with parents in offices of institutional advancement, some do it as a part of another student affairs or student services function, and others dedicate their entire workday to parent programming and communications. This diversity helps bring varied and creative ideas to the table when networking and learning from one another. Equally important is the fact that all of us learn from parents, which helps us stay sharp and focused on student achievement and development.

Working with parents to enhance the overall university community brings many benefits to our campuses. Partnering with parents and family members creates an environment on campus that helps our students feel supported and encouraged in ways we might not even know. We have learned from current literature and the media that today's student has a connected and consistent relationship with a parent or family member (College Parents of America, 2006). This relationship helps students realize that the unfamiliar feeling that accompanies being new on a college campus will pass, that taking a positive risk such as trying out a new intramural sport is encouraged, or that changing a major to better fit the student's strengths is supported back home. Students need to know that someone believes in them. When the university involves and cultivates positive relationships with parents and family members, it is our students who ultimately benefit the most.

In many respects, parents gain from an open and welcoming tone set by the institution. Inviting campuses yield parents who are more inclined to return to campus for visits, volunteer to help at campus events, contribute to annual giving campaigns, and communicate to others about the positive experience they and their students are having. These acts of giving back and being involved validate the college choice made by not only the student, but the family as well. By engaging parents, we give them a role or purpose in the education process and add to a feeling of belonging. A positive, engaged parent or family member speaks to the heart of what many of our campuses promote: family.

Parents and family members are individuals just like the rest of us . . . we just see them through a variety of lenses due to our specific campus work areas. Many offices might wrestle with parents on their "rights." Parents have an earnest desire to help their student(s), and sometimes this desire is manifested in a manner that was not intended. This can lead to conflict, mistrust, and a desire on our part to not communicate with them; however, that does more harm than good. Many parents and family members simply need to be educated

about how the college campus differs from the high school campus, and given parameters for how they can best help in the developmental process of the student. It is through this education from patient, willing, and supportive faculty/staff that a partnership grows that will foster student success in college and beyond.

Regardless of your current department, you probably work with parents in some capacity. The PFRKC is here for you! Find out more at www.naspa.org/kc/pfr, attend one of our sponsored programs at the conference, or find us on Facebook. Welcome to Philadelphia! ■

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Student Affairs Development and External Relations Knowledge Community

The Structure of Student Affairs Development: A Discussion with Leaders in a Growing Profession

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We recall the days when the words "fundraising" and "student affairs" weren't often used together and were always considered two separate entities of colleges and universities. Today, fundraising in student affairs has become an increasingly valuable function for many campuses and a part of our professional language. Furthermore, relying solely on year-to-year budgets is no longer the norm. As a result, the overall profession of student affairs has been challenged to learn new ideas and skills, create new roles, and bring in different types of talent to help grow funding streams. While grants and department collaborations are other important ways to support the needs of student affairs, a structured development model, with full staff support and resources, seems the ideal in reaching fundraising goals. To truly understand fundraising is to know your campus well and the various members who influence the community; to successfully align and prioritize initiatives and needs; and to learn the art and science of fundraising.

What best practices do colleagues use to meet development needs? What are some of the lessons that practitioners in this specialty role have learned? How can colleagues hone skill sets to participate in this emerging field? We thought learning directly from fundraising leaders would help us reflect on these questions. Shane Carlin from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign and Terri Gray from the University of Missouri—both leaders in student affairs development on their campuses and within NASPA's Student Affairs Development and External Relations Knowledge Community—share their thoughts.

Q: What is a student affairs development best practice/model that you currently employ to raise funds for student affairs needs?

Shane: *My position reports to student affairs and institutional advancement. I have a major gift officer, support staff, student intern, and work-study student who is funded by and reports directly to student affairs. All fundraising decisions are made primarily by the vice chancellor for student affairs with some consultation with the vice chancellor for institutional advancement. Our office has opportunities to sit in on many meetings that represent student affairs, institutional advancement, and the University of Illinois Alumni Association.*

Terri: *I am a one-person fundraising office, sharing an administrative assistant and grad student with our Office of Parent Relations. As director of development for student affairs, I have a dual reporting line to the vice chancellor for student affairs and the Office of Development and Alumni Relations. Essentially, I represent the Development Office within the Division of Student Affairs, and I represent the Division of Student Affairs within the Development Office. The vice chancellor for student affairs determines the fundraising priorities for the division. I also serve on the executive cabinet of the vice chancellor for student affairs.*

Our main constituencies are parents and alumni who were actively involved as students. We have had an established parents' development board since 2006. My office works closely with the Office of Parent Relations to serve and cultivate this important constituency. I utilize resources through our main development office, including researchers, who can help identify those alumni who were engaged as students and also have the capacity to give. We recently established the Student Affairs Development Board to assist and support the efforts of the Office of Development for Student Affairs. The board's responsibility is to assist with the identification of prospects and to help make introductions.

Q: What are some of the challenges with your student affairs development model, and how are they addressed?

Shane: *Fundraising in student affairs is still a new and ever-growing community. Some people come from development to student affairs and vice versa, which can add challenges for both sides. Student affairs practitioners are teaching development officers who and what "student affairs" really is. Development officers are telling student affairs practitioners who and what "development" really is. In general, probably at most campuses, student affairs fundraising doesn't get the resources and glory like its academic counterparts, for example, a college of engineering or business.*

Terri: *The biggest challenge we face is actually being considered an option for philanthropic gifts. We're still educating the campus, mainly administration and others in development, on how our programs impact the overall student experience and that alumni would consider funding many of our programs, projects, and facilities if they were more aware of the options. I also spend a lot of time educating external audiences about student affairs' programs and initiatives.*

Q: What words of wisdom would you give to senior student affairs officers who oversee fundraising/development efforts or would like to initiate fundraising efforts in their divisions?

Shane: *Supply ample funding and staffing support. I've seen some institutions not offer support, and it fails. This affects the overall reputation and longevity of support for student affairs fundraising. Also, help educate the rest of the student affairs staff on what our roles are and how valuable we can be to the overall division. Last, continue to make the case that student affairs fundraising is just as important as other academic/college units.*

Terri: *I would recommend that the fundraiser be included in cabinet-level meetings; the development officer should maintain open, regular communication with the central development office, taking advantage of the resources it can offer in support of student affairs fundraising; and the vice president for student affairs and the development officer should visit other established programs for advice and counsel.*

Q: What are words of wisdom for professionals interested in the development area of student affairs?

Shane: *Learn about student affairs and development, understanding the cultures and lingo of both. Also, understand the importance of relationship building, and do not be afraid to ask for money.*

Terri: *It is important to know the jargon of both student affairs and development, and it is critical that you not be afraid to make "the ask." "Development" is mainly about building relationships. In order to cultivate and close a major gift, you must take the time to get to know your prospects, help them identify the programs that they would be interested in supporting, and then ask for the gift. Sometimes it takes time, but it will be worth it in the long run. Remember that many of today's annual gifts will grow into major gifts if given the proper care and stewardship.* ■

Student Affairs Partnering with Academic Affairs Knowledge Community

Peer Interaction for Lives of Purpose

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One of the heartening benefits of a college education, beyond unmistakable financial gain, includes students' developing values and a sense of life purpose that endures beyond the traditional college years into old age (Alwin, Cohen, & Newcomb, 1991). Boyer (1990) claimed that in college communities full of purpose, "learning is pervasive" (p. 16). Developing lives of purpose is the 2011 NASPA Annual Conference theme. To enhance the role of student affairs in developing lives of purpose, we can create environments where learning is pervasive. One approach to developing lives of purpose and intention is to encourage positive interaction among students (Boyer, 1990).

Why are interactions among students so powerful? If we think about meeting students where they are, they are with one another: We find the evidence throughout campus—walking between classes, visiting in residence rooms, organizing group study, connecting through student activities, texting, and Facebooking. They are thinking mostly about one another. Because their hearts and minds are on one another, their interactions are the source of major cognitive, social, and moral development. To encourage that interaction, we can enhance conditions under which their interactions are purposeful and positive, meaning they support and encourage one another's success. One way to enhance conditions for positive interaction is to construct environments such as living-learning programs (LLPs).

LLPs are a contemporary intervention that encourages purpose through pervasive learning and peer interaction, both in and out of the classroom (Lenning & Ebbers, 1999). A 50-year-old theory called the contact hypothesis (Allport, 1954) offers an explanation for why contact among peers is a necessary (but insufficient) condition for open and positive interactions (an old theory, but still relevant and the most widely used for intergroup contact and diversity outcome studies—see Chang, Denson, Sáenz, & Misa, 2006). A dilemma for campuses is that simply recruiting more diverse students to campus is important, but it is inadequate and risky for developing positive peer interactions (Gottfredson, Panter, Daye, Allen, Wightman, & Deo, 2008). For positive interactions, contact among diverse peers should meet four conditions: (1) be of equal status, (2) encompass common goals, (3) provide meaning, and (4) be sanctioned by the campus (Allport, 1954). LLPs hold promise because they offer meaningful interaction among peers with common goals in the context of institutional support, the four conditions of the contact hypothesis. In a recent meta-analysis of contact hypothesis studies, institutional support emerged as the most significant element for reducing prejudice and increasing openness, suggesting that campus institutions play a key role in developing students' openness through institutionally sanctioned programs such as LLPs (Pettigrew & Tropp, 2006).

And indeed, research confirms the living environment in LLPs encourages peer interaction (Inkelas & Weisman, 2003;

Pike, 2002). Once we create LLPs and other supportive environments (such as intergroup dialogue, community and service learning programs), we can suppose then that we do more good by staying out of students' way than we do by intervening directly in their interactions. If we create conditions for quality interactions, students will grow from one another on their own.

Using data from the National Study of Living-Learning Programs (Inkelas & Associates, 2004), a recent study of 2,074 living-learning program participants in 274 LLPs, showed that the strongest predictor (after a precollege propensity to be open to others) of openness to diverse others was meaningful peer interaction (Longerbeam, 2010). The outcome openness to diversity is powerful because enduring openness has the potential to interrupt a lifelong habit of living, working, and socializing in segregated environments (Antonio, 2001; Milem, Umbach, & Liang, 2004). Meaningful peer interaction in the study was measured by asking: How often have you discussed with other students differing values, religious beliefs, lifestyles, cultural perspectives, and political opinions? The scale measures meaningful conversations across differences. We can suppose that when these conversations occurred within supportive environments such as LLPs, they led to greater openness to others, defined in this study as the awareness and appreciation of differences.

Both frequency (see Chang et al., 2006; Gottfredson et al., 2008; Longerbeam, 2010) and quality (see Nagda, 2006; Sáenz, Ngai, & Hurtado, 2007) of contact are important to openness, and they are likely related to one another. That is, positive interactions may lead students to seek out more frequent interactions across differences. Put another way, if my experiences of diverse others leave me inspired, curious, and excited, I may continue to stretch for more interactions that challenge my previous thoughts, assumptions, and ideas. ▶

We can encourage lives of purpose through supporting learning environments that encourage openness to those of varying political, religious, sexual orientation, racial, and cultural perspectives. We have the power to enhance environments for positive interaction, in ways that may forestall segregated lives. I feel a present urgency for more positive interaction across difference in my home state of Arizona. I derive optimism from student affairs work, work that encourages positive interaction, builds relationships, and leads to developing lifelong values. Our work in colleges inspires lives of purpose. ■

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Sustainability Knowledge Community

Developing a Sustainable Sustainability Living-Learning Community

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In 2008, I was charged with revitalizing the Sustainability Living-Learning Community at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. Participants indicated that an intentional curriculum was vital for this program's success.

The *Social Change Model of Leadership Development* had many guiding principles that correlated to the needs of our program. Another valuable resource was the American College Personnel Association monograph, *Toward a Sustainable Future: Student Affairs' Role in Creating Healthy Environments, Social Justice, and Strong Economies* (2008). We fused these two resources to form our learning outcomes. Students who participate in the Sustainability Living-Learning Community will:

- Increase their understanding of their own sustainable living identity through critical reflection of their attitudes, beliefs, emotions, and values
- Discover consistency, authenticity, and honesty between their internal consciousness and external behaviors
- Develop an inner motivation to outreach, educate, and serve others regarding issues of sustainable living
- Learn means to collaborate successfully with their peers in order to achieve common goals
- Explore shared aims and values within their community of peers
- Discover the differences that may exist between individual identities and community aims, and learn means to work openly through these differences
- Become aware of their relationship as individuals and a community within a larger global community; and realize their ability and duty to serve as educators, mentors, and change agents

The refined curriculum was first implemented in 2008–09. A mixed- ▶

method assessment was implemented at three points during the year (pre, mid, and post). The assessment looked at the direct impact on participant knowledge and behavioral changes with regard to living a more "sustainable" lifestyle.

Assessment results indicated that participants were significantly benefiting from the concept of the "Triple Bottom Line" (sustainability expanded beyond an environmental context to include social justice and economic impacts). Other areas where participant knowledge developed were the social justice aspects of sustainability.

From this assessment, the curriculum was expanded beyond an environmental aspect to a larger-scale exploration of the term "sustainability." In 2009–10, participants explored environmental sustainability, sustainability of activist movements, economic sustainability, personal sustainability, sustainability of education, sustainability of creativity, sustainability of religion, political sustainability, and sustainability of development. Diversifying our topics allowed us to remain true to our core structure of social change and sustainability education, while also reaching a larger number of students who may be interested in topics beyond the environmental implications of sustainability.

Based on my experience during the past 2 years, I recommend the following for anyone looking to develop a similar program.

Let theory guide your work. A living-learning community should be developmental for your participants, not just a "fun" experience for them. Carefully choose a developmental model that best represents your values.

Do your research. Look for other programs from which you can borrow ideas to create your own unique program. You don't need to copy all of someone else's work, but you also don't need to reinvent the wheel.

Develop structured learning outcomes. Create a list of tangible, intentional, measurable learning objectives that you want students to meet while participating in your program.

Allow your students to help you. Even though students might not have the same degree that you do, they often are no less qualified to shape their own learning experiences. The bulk of our curriculum for the 2009–10 academic year was created by our students. That also helped us with our participation rates and execution of the seminars.

Assess your work. Make sure your program is actually accomplishing what you set out to do. Ask intentional questions to see the intellectual and developmental impact of your work, and don't be afraid to look at the results. It might be more work in the beginning phases to go back to the drawing board, but the overall sustainability of your program lies in a strong foundation.

Get buy-in from faculty. An intentional academic partnership is key to the success of such a program. Engaging faculty members in curriculum development is crucial for the program's longevity. ■

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Student Leadership Programs Knowledge Community
Assessment of Leadership Development Programs

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One of the hot topics for the Student Leadership Programs Knowledge Community is the assessment of leadership programs. In a time when the higher education system is under increased scrutiny and financial resources seem to be reduced every fiscal year, the last words student affairs practitioners want to hear from their vice president is, "How do you know that your leadership development program is having an impact on the students?"

Although program evaluation helps to improve institutional and departmental effectiveness, it does not provide outcomes assessment results. We want to know not only that students are learning leadership skills but also that they are using those skills. Have their behaviors changed owing to their involvement in a leadership development program? Are they becoming better leaders? There are, however, some discrepancies in the literature regarding the purpose of leadership development programs. Researchers and others who write about leadership believe the purpose of such programs is to develop better citizens (American College Personnel Association, 1994; Astin, Astin, & Associates, 2001; Bell, 1994; Freeman, Knott, & Schwartz, 1996; Komives, Lucas, & McMahon, 1998; Zimmerman-Oster & Burkhardt, 1999). They hope that through leadership development programs, students can become social change agents and help solve social problems (Astin et al., 2001). According to the *Leadership Education Source Book* (Freeman et al., 1996), other program goals include increased self-awareness, development of leadership skills, and knowledge of leadership theory and leadership styles and roles. With such a variety of goals and objectives, it is difficult to determine the impact of leadership programs and what to assess.

Leadership development programs are not doing outcomes assessment in any comprehensive or consistent fashion. Research by Bell (1994) showed that 60% of programs at 4-year public institutions and 63% of programs at 4-year private institutions do not conduct assessment. The *Leadership Education Source Book* (Freeman et al., 1996) describes leadership degree programs, curricular and co-curricular programs, and many other resources for leadership development. Of the 73 leadership instruments it described, only nine are specific to college students. Most of the leadership assessment instruments were designed in the business community with a focus on leadership of a positional nature (Tyree, 2001), meaning leadership based on a hierarchical approach such as president and vice president. The concept of leadership has changed from a hierarchical to a transformational perspective, so instruments that assess positional leadership are no longer valuable.

Leadership development programs have five individual outcomes: knowledge acquisition, self-awareness building, perspective change, skill development, and behavior change (Van Velsor, McCauley, & Moxley, 1998). Although the literature provides some program models, it does not supply information regarding assessment criteria (Chambers, 1992; Roberts & Ullom, 1990; Zimmerman-Oster & ▶

Burkhardt, 1999). Chambers provides specific assessment criteria. The model provides seven recommendations for assessment, including determining the effectiveness of the student leadership development programs by surveying participants' reactions and assessing changes over time. It also provides recommendations for developing an evaluation plan to assess the attainment of program goals and objectives, as well as suggestions on methods to use for assessment and when to administer them.

A qualitative study of the assessment of leadership programs interviewed practitioners who oversaw such programs and experts who served as faculty in programs or senior administrators with a leadership association (Lloyd, 2006). Responses ranged from an expert who could not articulate what is involved in the assessment process to a university practitioner who is conducting extensive assessment on leadership development. The overall theme of the interviews was that there was a lack of quality assessment. Reasons included lack of standards or instruments; lack of knowledge regarding how to conduct assessment; and lack of resources, including staff and time.

Opportunities for professional staff to learn how to conduct assessment are important and can easily be offered, but the issues regarding the lack of staff and time may take longer to resolve. Departments could work collaboratively on assessment so that staff resources can be shared. The assessment process would be easier to conduct if there were agreed-upon definitions, program criteria, and program assessment and evaluation standards. This process, however, may be difficult to facilitate.

Assessment that is taking place should be communicated more within the field. If various programs contributed ideas, assessment concepts, and instruments to a nationwide database, we would be able to improve the assessment process. As practitioners in a field that believes people should work in groups toward common goals, we could do a better job of role-modeling that concept by collaborating and communicating on this topic. ■

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Spirituality and Religion in Higher Education Knowledge Community

New Directions for the Spirituality and Religion in Higher Education Knowledge Community

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As part of a new programming initiative, the leadership team of the Spirituality and Religion in Higher Education Knowledge Community (SRHEKC) sought this year to learn more about its members in order to better serve them in their work with students. We sensed that many of our members did not work in functional areas connected to spirituality and religion, but did hold a significant interest in student spiritual development. We also believed that our members wanted to know how they could best serve students in developing a sense of purpose and their spiritual life.

To inform our assumptions, the SRHEKC leadership developed and distributed an online survey to its members. As expected, results indicated that only 5 of our 179 participants identified as being formally engaged in professional work that was directly connected to spirituality and religion.

More important, we learned of the tremendous level of NASPA member interest in a number of key SRHEKC goals and strategic plans. For example, members revealed that they highly value connecting with professionals who also seek to engage students in their spiritual and religious development or in discussing matters of spirituality and religion. To generate more membership interaction, the SRHEKC leadership team plans to host more SRHEKC-related roundtables at state and regional conferences and create more dynamic lines of communication through our regional representatives. We want to bring together professionals who share similar interests to support and challenge one another as they educate students about finding their sense of purpose and developing their spiritual and religious identity.

Additionally, many SRHEKC members expressed a desire to discover best practices and effective resources for working with a student's spiritual and religious life. This type of information is exactly what NASPA's Knowledge Communities are intended to produce and share. To respond to this request, the SRHEKC leadership will post on our website examples of effective programming and other initiatives that promote students' spiritual development. We further plan to communicate this information through regional newsletters and conferences. For this effort to be successful, we intend to ask SRHEKC members to share their knowledge with each other. We need members to inform us of the strong programs and resources on their campuses so that NASPA members can consider what others are doing and adapt these efforts to their own communities' needs where possible. Calls for best practices and resources will soon be sent forth to our membership to begin this work.

Scholarly interest in student spirituality and religious life emerged as yet another significant concern for our SRHEKC members. Many professionals want to learn more about how student spiritual development intersects with other areas of development, such as leadership ▶

abilities and racial, sexual, and gender identities. Members were also extremely interested to know how social justice issues and interfaith work connected to the spirituality and religious development of students. Members pursuing doctoral work and further research also indicated that discussing these topics was very important to them. The leadership team is now examining how we can better serve our members' scholarly needs. Sharing research articles and ideas through various means will occur more frequently. We hope to find more meaningful ways to connect members who want to gain further information about these topics as well as further our knowledge generation mission within the SRHEKC.

Helping students find and develop their purpose in life is an essential feature of student spiritual development, and therefore a core concern for the members and leadership of the SRHEKC. The responses to the survey have affirmed our beliefs concerning the directions we need to pursue, and they will guide us as we develop plans to better serve our

membership. With the significant interest expressed by many members, we look forward to becoming a more visible and beneficial Knowledge Community. We encourage anyone who has an interest in spirituality and religion to join us! Come to our meeting at the conference or e-mail any one of us listed on the SRHEKC web page. We have some ambitious tasks ahead of us, and we welcome the support and assistance of others who also believe in this vital work and who are dedicated to making a difference in the lives of our students. ■

Technology Knowledge Community
Technology Should Help Prepare Students for Lives of Purpose . . . But Does It?

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A frequent topic of discussion among members of the NASPA Technology Knowledge Community is our use of technology to connect with and enhance the student experience. We want students to capitalize on their intellectual and personal development in order to achieve success after graduation. Gainful employment is one measure of that success, but equally important is that students find ways to meaningfully engage with the world.

Our role in helping students realize these outcomes—to pursue "lives of purpose"—relies on our ability to provide solid academic programs, meaningful cocurricular opportunities, resources for healthy living, and many other critical elements. Yet, there is one looming question on our minds: Is technology one of the components necessary for student success and achievement?

In answer to that question, some have suggested that technology has long been and continues to be a regular part of student development. For instance, years ago advanced graphing calculators brought new pedagogical possibilities to math and science curricula. These devices also gave students the ability to swap entertaining games. In a reverse and more recent example, Facebook started as a social tool for students to "see and be seen" online and yet is now used by many professionals as a part of student outreach.

There are also examples of technology not just affecting students' development, but contributing to their engagement and quest to find meaning and purpose as well. Some universities offer students the chance to search online for service, volunteer, or civic engagement opportunities. Others rely on interactive websites to allow students to register for events, read blogs written by peers, or watch video testimonials on the impact meaningful engagement has had on others. Some schools are using "Online Human Touch" programs to engage distant student populations from the moment of their first interaction with the institution. Students across the board are self-reporting that they find such programs to be at least as engaging as the traditional nontechnology approach.

Therefore, with examples supporting the idea that technology can and should contribute to our efforts to prepare students for purpose-driven lives, it may behoove us to question whether it actually does. There is much research that suggests technology can be leveraged to improve student learning and achievement, but comparatively few studies have looked at whether this same phenomenon applies to student engagement.

It can be argued that whether technology actually affects student engagement is a function of how well we professionals use it. Many an avid blogger seems to think that we in higher education are among the worst in terms of technology adoption, integration, and particularly innovation. Do we share a collective fear of looking in the mirror and gauging whether our technology investments have paid off?

Should we be putting time and resources into developing mobile applications that place our services right at students' fingertips? Should we use technology to extend access to knowledge and information for students with disabilities? Perhaps instead we should leverage technology to allow professional staff to attend more webinars or other virtual professional development opportunities to enable them to meet the challenges of working with students.

The answers to these questions vary from institution to institution. Likewise, the answer to whether technology helps prepare students for lives of purpose really depends on who you ask. Some institutions have cultivated resources, dealt with internal politics, or even shifted their cultures to create a place for technology at the table of student learning, development, and engagement. Others continue to wrestle with those challenges or may even be mired in a series of failed technology attempts.

Regardless of how you feel about technology's role in preparing students for lives of purpose, there is no doubt it is a complicated matter to consider. This is precisely why knowledge communities like those in NASPA must always be committed to asking these tough questions. ■

NASPA Knowledge Communities

Veterans Knowledge Community
The Campus of Dreams for Veterans

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In the 1989 movie *Field of Dreams*, Kevin Costner plays Iowa farmer Ray Kinsella, who hears a voice in his cornfield telling him, "If you build it, he will come." He interprets this message as an instruction to build a baseball field on his farm, upon which appear the ghosts of Shoeless Joe Jackson and the other seven Chicago White Sox players banned from the game for throwing the 1919 World Series.

In 2008, newly elected U.S. Senator James Webb (D-VA) introduced as his first proposed legislation a bill that would become the Post-9/11 Veterans Educational Assistance Act. The act dramatically improved education benefits for hundreds of thousands of veterans. The act's implied message for institutions of higher learning was, "If you build it, they will come."

Passage of the Webb bill spawned a rash of internal assessments at colleges and universities across the country: an examination of services, policies, and recruiting initiatives aimed at student veterans with the hope of building a Campus of Dreams.

In July 2009, the American Council on Education (ACE), in collaboration with the Servicemembers Opportunity Colleges, the American Association of State Colleges and Universities, NASPA, and the National Association of Veterans' Program Administrators, released *From Soldier to Student: Easing the Transition of Service Members on Campus* (available at www.acenet.edu/CPA/STS). Sponsored by the Lumina Foundation for Education, the report details the responses of 723 participating institutions, providing a snapshot of campus programs, services, and policies to support veterans and military personnel, along with recommendations for needed improvements. ACE's website "Serving Those Who Served" (www.acenet.edu/Content/NavigationMenu/ProgramsServices/MilitaryPrograms/serving) is also a great source of information for schools looking to improve their veteran services.

While many institutions tout their veteran-friendly credentials, what matters most is delivery. Veterans can quickly distinguish program promotion from hyperbolic salesmanship. They are looking for schools that not only welcome them but also cater to their needs, starting with access to information. Today's returning veterans belong to the "Internet generation" and are likely to begin their search for the right school on the Internet well before leaving the military. Dedicated campus visit days may work well for schools located next to a major military installation, but planning a campus visit from the combat zone is not really feasible. Schools that want to attract veterans must develop an informative and useful web presence and should have a quick link to veterans' information on their home page.

The second most important step an institution can take is to create a "one-stop shop" dedicated to expediting the admissions process for the student veteran. An example of how this can work is Eastern Kentucky University's Student Outreach and Transition Office (SOTO). The office, established within the Student Affairs Enrollment Management area,

serves all nontraditional students, from adult learners and transfers to veterans and returning students. At SOTO, staff offers the student veteran expedited admission, benefits claims processing, and assistance with evaluation of military transcripts. Co-located is the veterans' lounge, where members of EKU VETS, the student veteran organization, gather to study, socialize, and offer advice to new members. The synergy created by this approach suits the military culture, where the tolerance for getting the proverbial "runaround" is extremely low.

Second to getting their benefits started, the most important step for service members and veterans is obtaining credit for their years of military training and experience. Schools need to clearly explain their process for granting credits and help student veterans understand the difference between general education, core courses, and free electives. The fact that a student's ACE transcript says he or she has a certain number of credits does not mean that all credits will fit the student's chosen degree plan. This is the area student veterans understand least, and they are looking for an answer that goes deeper than "it depends." Schools also need to develop a means for recording and tracking military credits that have true course equivalents. Making each student fight the "articulation battle" for credits is counterproductive. Although the ACE transcript provides recommendations, each academic department generally has the ultimate say in what is accepted within the major or for general education. There is no national repository for approved articulations, leaving schools the task of developing their own databases. Schools with large military/veteran populations may have dedicated resources to accomplish this process, but most schools do not.

While many school are eager to be veteran friendly, being truly "veteran helpful" requires a serious commitment that starts with initiatives like these and moves beyond. Creating a Campus of Dreams is not an easy undertaking—but if you build it, they will come. ■

Women in Student Affairs Knowledge Community

WISA: Supporting Women in Student Affairs to Educate for Lives of Purpose

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Over the past several months, the Women in Student Affairs (WISA) Knowledge Community has been in conversation with myriad stakeholders to discuss the proposed NASPA/American College Personnel Association (ACPA) merger. We have been fortunate to speak with Lissa Place, chair of ACPA's Standing Committee for Women (SCW), about what makes SCW's work unique and what elements of that work should remain if this merger occurs. Both WISA and SCW have signature programs that we would like to preserve, as well as structures that allow us to reach out to women in the field in a significant way.

The interaction with our colleagues at SCW has brought forth many common issues that affect women in student affairs today, including work/life balance, the need for more research by and for women, and the need for both organizations to continue to serve as a voice for women. When we were asked to draft this document, we were tasked with identifying hot topics that related to our knowledge community. Our conversations with SCW and foundational WISA documents revealed some key areas that we could address (see Kowalski-Braun, n.d.). In the end, the following issues emerged as core values for WISA, which empower us to educate ourselves and our students for lives of purpose.

Support the adoption of family-friendly policies. Flextime scheduling, reduced schedules, jobsharing, on-site day care, and comprehensive and affordable health care coverage for partners and children are all benefits that encourage women to stay in the field of student affairs—and they benefit families in general. WISA advocates for these policies when possible and strives to bring these issues to the forefront of our work. We also recognize that the definition of "family" must include all kinds of families, including those without children, and that the needs of all families matter.

Create inclusive environments. Student affairs is enriched by the contributions of diverse women. Therefore, it is vital that we make our organizations as inclusive as possible. To this end, we strive to ensure that marketing materials, policies and procedures, and the environment reflect the experiences of all women—acknowledging a diversity of racial and ethnic backgrounds, sexual orientations, ability statuses, and partner/child statuses, among others. This remains a critical part of all we do, and much of our work with other knowledge communities focuses on providing leadership in this area. Our involvement with the NASPA Gender Task Force, including our partnership with the Men and Masculinities Knowledge Community and the Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, and Transgender Issues Knowledge Community to facilitate the transgender roundtable at the NASPA Annual Conference (as well as support of gender-neutral bathrooms at the conference), are examples of our work in this area. Alongside these knowledge communities, we have committed ourselves to exploring and affirming the intersectionality of identity within NASPA and our field writ large.

Mentor women in student affairs and build the pipeline for more women senior student affairs officers (SSAOs). All women benefit from meaningful and purposeful relationships with others who care about their professional journeys. Experienced practitioners may assist women in areas such as career mapping, navigating politics, and determining strategies for work/life balance. Through these relationships, more women can be encouraged and supported as they pursue senior-level positions. At annual conferences, the Panel of Listeners program provides brief and confidential one-on-one mentoring sessions to discuss such issues. To date, WISA offers this program in five of seven regions as well as the annual conference. To learn more, visit www.naspa.org/divctr/women/panel.cfm.

Nominate outstanding female practitioners for state, regional, and national awards. Although women may be excellent at creating and implementing innovative programs and services, they do not often enough seek recognition and praise for their work! Consider the work of an outstanding female student affairs practitioner and nominate her for an award. WISA models this by sponsoring awards at the regional level, such as Region IV-East's Marlene Kowalski-Braun Award for Service to Women in Student Affairs. Nationally, we partner with the Center for Women to publicize awards such as the Ruth Strang Research Award and the Zenobia Hikes Memorial Award.

Encourage women to become involved in professional development opportunities. Professional associations create networking opportunities, promote resource sharing, and offer numerous leadership opportunities. The Alice Manicur Symposium, established and coordinated by NASPA's Center for Scholarship, Research, and Professional Development for Women, is designed for women in mid-level managerial positions who are contemplating a move to an SSAO position in the near future. WISA has sponsored a Women's Center preconference program for the past 3 years at the NASPA Annual Conference. We also sponsor webinars, conference sessions by and about women, and networking opportunities on the national and regional levels.

Further research on gender issues in higher education. There is an ongoing need to explore the dynamics of gender in higher education both for students and practitioners. WISA leaders compile and distribute a report three times a year featuring current research on women in higher education. We encourage our members to consider submitting a manuscript to the NASPA Journal About Women in Higher Education (NJAWHE). For more information about submitting to NJAWHE, visit http://journals.naspa.org/njawhe. Other publications, including the Journal of Student Affairs Research and Practice and NetResults, are excellent places to feature research about women in our field, as students and as faculty. ■

REFERENCES

Kowalski-Braun, M. (n.d.) Ways to improve the lives of women in student affairs. *WISA leadership manual*. Washington, DC: NASPA.

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