

Sharing the Commonwealth

An e-newsletter published by the Pennsylvania College Personnel Association

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The President's Message

The Year in Review

Terry Wigle, PCPA President, California University of Pennsylvania

Season's Greetings! As the semester comes to a close, I hope that everyone will have an opportunity to recharge before the start of a new year and the spring semester. As 2008 comes to a close, it provides us with an opportunity to reflect on the year that has past while looking ahead to the future.

As we look back in review, it has been a fruitful year for PCPA. PCPA has had a busy year providing Keystone Seminars, the summer book club, the annual conference, and approving a bylaws change. We are a member driven organization and as such I would like to acknowledge the work of the following members who assisted in some of the projects that have benefited our organization. The success of the Keystone Seminars and the summer book club would not have been possible without the hard work of Mary McGinnis. For those of you who were able to attend the annual conference that was held in October, you know what a great job John Mayo and Jessica Koval did in planning and executing the conference. For those of you who were unable to attend the conference, we are sorry that you missed a wonderful professional development and networking opportunity. And last but not least, I would like to thank Dan Kennedy for the guidance he has provided me in his role as Past President. Dan was instrumental in moving PCPA forward with the bylaws change.

The PCPA Executive Board wishes you and yours a fantastic holiday season and a happy new year! As we move forward into 2009, if you have any concerns, comments, or suggestions for the Executive Board, please feel free to contact via email me at wigle@calu.edu or phone at 724-938-4300.

A Recap from the 2009 Annual Conference

Jessica Koval, Penn State University

John Mayo, Point Park College

PCPA hosted its 2009 Annual Conference in Greensburg, PA from October 18-20, 2009. What a great time for re-connecting with colleagues and catching up to speed on new information in the field! Throughout this newsletter you will find out more about the speakers, awards, and meetings that made this conference an important professional development activity for student affairs professionals in Pennsylvania. From thoughtful break-out sessions to stimulating roundtables, there was something for everyone at the conference. And who will forget the fun of the murder mystery dinner?

A special thanks to the conference committee who helped make sure that the conference would be a success. Everything went very smoothly, and this is a tribute to the hard work and dedication of the conference committee. We certainly went "beyond the limits" and we look forward to seeing everyone at next year's conference!



Dr. Hilton Goes Beyond the Limits through Student Engagement

Charmaine R. Strong, Seton Hill University



Although Dr. Dwayne Hilton prefaced his opening remarks at the 2009 PCPA Annual Conference with a “disclaimer” about public speaking, his presentation betrayed the disclaimer! His remarks balanced storytelling and humor with “teachable moments.” He challenged us with the question, “How do we go ‘*beyond the limits*’?”

Using data from the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE), Dr. Hilton highlighted what has been learned from the 10 years of NSEE research and then shared educational activities that matter to success, high impact activities that provide substantial educational benefits to students, and why high impact activities appear to be so effective with students.

How does this relate to PCPA? Through a historical overview of PCPA, Dr. Hilton emphasized that PCPA as an organization has been talking about engagement all along. The names may have changed, but the content has not. Dr. Hilton noted, “PCPA has always been about providing professional development opportunities for student services practitioners so that they will be able to serve their students better.” It is all about students and being student-centered.

As an aside, if you know Dr. Hilton or have seen him at a conference, you may have asked yourself, “Why does this man always wear Hawaiian shirts?” Those of us present at this dinner now know the moving story about why Dr. Hilton always wears Hawaiian shirts. If you were not present, I would suggest you spend some time with Dr. Hilton and ask him. Ask him lots of questions about lots of things – he is always ready, willing, and able to enter into conversation – always mentoring, always engaging, always going *beyond the limits*. That’s Dr. Dwayne Hilton.

Dr. Reason Shares Reflections on Returning to Administrative Role

Bryan C. Koval, Penn State University

Dr. Robert Reason of Penn State University delivered the keynote address at the 2009 PCPA Annual Conference. During his talk, Dr. Reason talked about his experience taking a sabbatical this semester and returning to the administrative side of student affairs while working closely with the Vice President for Student Affairs at Penn State. Dr. Reason talked about what it means for student affairs professionals to push themselves “beyond the limits.”



Dr. Reason talked about the role of student affairs professionals in student learning. It is only recently that our work has asked us to be thoughtful about how the co-curricular experience contributes to student learning, and student affairs has the opportunity to complement the faculty mindset of “content” by focusing on the “process” of student learning. Dr. Reason advocated Sanford’s theory of challenge, support, and readiness as a place to start from when thinking about how to contribute to student learning in a student affairs setting.

Additionally, Dr. Reason gave advice about ways for student affairs professionals to make an impact through our work. Dr. Reason talked about assuming a more curricular approach to our programming, and being proactive about developing learning outcomes for the programs that we offer. Dr. Reason also advocated for ways to teach students to reflect on their experience. Reflection can have a powerful effect on student learning.

PCPA Annual Business Meeting Briefs

Prepared & Submitted by Charmaine Strong, Seton Hill University

President Terry Wigle chaired the annual PCPA Business Meeting on Monday, 19 October 2009 at the 28th Annual Conference, "Beyond the Limits" at the Sheraton Four Points in Greensburg, PA. Following are the highlights:

- The state of our organization is healthy and experiencing growth in membership.
- Executive Board continued to offer reduced rates (which include membership) to encourage and support graduate student attendance.
- Membership was engaged in the second annual on-line book club this summer. Dr. Sue Norton (Edinboro University) facilitated the book discussion.
- Current total assets as of 20 October 2009 are \$14,580.12.
- Membership currently at 205; increase of 10 from same time last year. Discussion about revisiting the student membership language in the Bylaws to reflect undergraduate student membership options. Executive Board will address.
- Webmaster requests any pictures, videos from conference be forwarded to him for posting on the PCPA website.
- On September 17, 2009, proposed bylaw changes/modifications were forwarded to membership for voting at this meeting. Past President Dan Kennedy led this process. Following passed unanimously: adding webmaster position to the Bylaws; changes to the position description for the Constituencies Chair; modification of the Graduate Student Membership section; diversity statement to be included on all materials printed/published, linked to Bylaws, and that Section 5. Statement of Non-Discrimination of the Bylaws be continued; modification to remove the specific individual listings of presented awards; and modification of the method by which membership is notified and can vote.
- Dr. Sandra Emerick, ACPA representative and Terry Wigle updated membership on the focus of the summer leadership meeting focused on the APCA/NASPA Unification process. More information is available at the following links: Main Unification Web page; Common Values; and Frequently Asked Questions on the ACPA site. Comments/questions/concerns: ourcommonvoice@gmail.com or PCPA President, Terry Wigle at wigle@calu.edu.
- Terry Wigle thanked Executive Board, Conference Co-Chairs, and the membership.

A full report of the minutes is available online at pcpa.net.

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Board Meeting Briefs

Prepared & Submitted by Charmaine Strong, Seton Hill University

The Executive Board Meeting was held prior to the Annual Conference on Sunday, 18 October 2009 at the Sheraton Four Points, Greensburg, PA. Following are the highlights:

- Jessica Koval and John Mayo, Conference Co-Chairs, reviewed conference information and shared that all was in order for the 28th annual conference. Excited about the 33 graduate students planning to attend – target audience for PCPA. Through the efforts of Tom Steiner, this year’s conference format allows National Certified Counselors to earn up to 7.0 contact hours.
- Plans already underway for 2010! Stay tuned!!
- Total assets are \$14,580.12. Noted that budget is stable, but given the current economic climate, every effort to conserve financially will be made.
- Proposed Bylaw changes mailed to membership for review; will be discussed and voted on at the Business Meeting on Monday, 19 October.
- Welcome to Bryan Koval, PSU, who will be serving as the Communications Commission Chair.
- Membership Commission Chair, Amber Valentine, reported increased membership by 10 compared to same time last year; current membership is 205. Will coordinate membership lists with MALs after the conference.
- Dr. Sue Norton facilitated the second Summer Book Club participants’ roundtable during the conference. Dr. Sue Norton facilitated summer 2009 Book Club.
- Keystone Seminar is scheduled for Friday, 13 November, Thiel College; topic is “*Considerations for Aiding Students in Distress: Balancing Support While Ensuring Campus Safety.*” Presenter is Dr. Matthew Shupp. Spring Keystone scheduled for 26 March 2010 at Susquehanna University; Nikki Tobias is the presenter on the topic of “*Programming with Financial Limitations.*” **Save both dates!**
- The Mary and Grady Roberts Writing Award competition was successful. Due to the generosity of Dr. Roberts’ Family, two awards granted – Amber Valentine and Morgan Rizzardi. Discussion on whether Executive Board members should be eligible for the award; discussion planned at the Executive Board winter meeting.
- Dan Pretz, Graduate Student Liaison, outlined several initiatives he plans to undertake.
- Upcoming vacancies: President Elect, Two Year East and Four Year Private MALs, Constituencies and Professional Development Chairs. Bylaw change on MAL sequencing forthcoming.
- Approval to Webmaster, Bryan Valentine, to renew Wufoo agreement; has been a great success.

A full report of the minutes is available online at PCPA.net.

Awards Presented at 2009 Annual Conference

Joseph Merkle Award for Outstanding Contribution to PCPA: Kate Linder, Indiana University of Pennsylvania

Ronald Lunardini Award for Mentoring: Dr. Sue Norton, Edinboro University of Pennsylvania

Outstanding New Professional: Jessica Koval, Penn State University

Outstanding Graduate Student: Joshua Voyles, Indiana University of Pennsylvania

Grady and Mary Roberts Graduate Student Writing Awards: Morgan Rizzardi, IUP; Amber Valentine, IUP (pictured below with Dr. Grady Roberts)



Membership Update

(As of December 1, 2009)

Submitted by Amber Valentine,
Indiana University of Pennsylvania



PCPA Current Membership Database = 145

Listserv subscribers = 133

Institution Type

Two Year CC	17
Four Year Public	70
Four Year Private	54
Other	4

Membership Type

Emeritus	4
Associate	10
Regular	87
Student	44

Membership At-Large Representation

Two Year East	6
Two Year West	10
Four Year East Private	30
Four Year West Private	27
Four Year East Public	30
Four Year West Public	42

Expiration Dates

October 2010	120
October 2011	7
October 2012	7
October 2013	3
October 2014	1
October 2015	1
October 2017	1
October 2019	1
Emeritus	4

Fall Keystone Seminar a Success



Considerations for Aiding Students in Distress: Balancing Student Support while Ensuring Campus Safety was the title of the Keystone Seminar on Friday, November 13, 2009 at Thiel College. Twenty student services staff from eight institutions attended to discuss dealing with aggressive and hostile student behavior. The workshop presented student threat assessment levels and threat management strategies. It addressed how to recognize student aggression as well as potential ways to deal with student aggression and tips to recognize early signs of troublesome student behavior. Specific case studies and examples from different college campuses made for lively discussion. Dr. Matthew R. Shupp, the Director of Student Affairs at Penn State Brandywine in Media, PA, was the presenter. He is president-elect of PCPA.

The PCPA Keystone Seminar is an affordable opportunity for professional development that offers NBCC certificates. Mark March 26, 2009 on your calendar for the Spring Keystone Seminar to be hosted by Susquehanna University. The topic is Programming with Financial Limitations.

Anyone interested in presenting or hosting a Keystone Seminar should contact Mary McGinnis, Professional Development Chair, at 724-287-8711, ext 8264 or mary.mcginis@bc3.edu.



Rankism: How Does This Play Out on Your Campus?

Kate Linder, Indiana University of Pennsylvania

It's difficult to believe that another fall term is rapidly coming to a close. Soon many of us will enjoy time to relax, rest, and rejuvenate for another spring term. Breaks are a good time to reflect on the value of our daily experience by informally assessing how we impact our campus environments and considering what we teach our students through our actions, words, and deeds. For example, how do we treat one another? What message do the nuances of our interactions with others send to students?

Recently, I've been thinking a great deal about the notion of "rankism" as presented by Robert W. Fuller in his 2004 book, *Somebodies and Nobodies: Overcoming the Abuse of Rank*. Dr. Fuller, a former physics professor and former President of Oberlin College, discusses the issues of rank and power as a general dynamic under which all other "isms" can be categorized. He defines "rankism" as discrimination based on an individual's rank in a particular context. We all have a variety of contexts in which we have a "rank" and not all of our rankings are the same – a person may have a high rank with regard to financial standing, but a low social rank based on age, ability, race/ethnicity, sexual orientation, etc.

How are people ranked at your institution? What is your rank? How do you interact with people who fit into a rank higher than you? Lower than you? What are examples of ways in which a person's rank at your institution defines their experience? A common example of

how rank affects interactions in the student conduct area of my department is when a caller screams obscenities at our secretary, but interacts civilly with an Assistant Director of our department or myself moments later when the call is transferred. (We make it a point to inform such callers that their disrespect and incivility to our secretary is unwarranted and not tolerated.) Do you ever abuse your rank – have you ever made a student wait longer than necessary for an appointment or ignored a request by a supervisee to make a point?

What are the ranks among students at your campus? Who is visible? Invisible? What role, if any, do you fill in addressing the injustices or abuses that result from rankism? As long as rankism exists at our institutions, our educational missions are hindered and our students learn through immersion to perpetuate discrimination based on rank. My challenge to you (and to myself) is to reflect on these questions during the upcoming break and to make a commitment (new or renewed) to be aware of rankism in all its forms and to strive to eradicate it at your institution.

Wishing you and yours a restful season and an inspired New Year.

- Kate Linder, Chair, Constituencies Commission

Reference: Fuller, Robert W. (2004). *Somebodies and Nobodies: Overcoming the Abuse of Rank*. Canada: New Society Publishers

Do you know a potential PCPA member?

Forward a copy of this newsletter to him/her, along with a personal invite to join Pennsylvania's premier professional organization for College & University professionals and paraprofessionals.

Newsletter submissions are encouraged and welcome! Submit all inquiries to Bryan Koval, PCPA Communications Commission Chairperson, at bck134@psu.edu.

Pennsylvania College Personnel Association Executive Board 2009

President Terry Wigle	Communications Commission Chair Bryan Koval	Historian Dr. Dwayne Hilton	Four-Year Private, West Amanda Ries
President Elect Dr. Matthew Shupp	Constituencies Commission Chair Kate R. Linder	Professional Development Commission Chair Mary McGinnis	Member At Large Four-Year Private, East Lynn Burke
Past President Dr. Daniel Kennedy	Membership Commission Chair Amber N. Valentine	Member At Large: Four-Year Public, West Tedd Cogar	Member At Large Two-Year, West Kelly Carpenter
Recorder Dr. Charmaine R. Strong	Faculty Liaison Dr. Linda Hall	Member At Large Four-Year Public, East Cindy Nguyen	Member At Large Two-Year, East David Watters
Treasurer Joe Puzycki	Graduate Student Liaison Daniel Pretz	Member At Large	Webmaster Bryan M. Valentine
Past Officers Advisory Committee Mary Lou Kennedy	NBCC Coordinator Tom Steiner		

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