

CareerWatch

The official newsletter of the ACPA Commission for Career Development



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Greetings Commission for Career Development

Libby K. Westley, Chair of the Commission for Career Development

This issue of *CareerWatch* focuses on the stories of several career center directors and the varied paths taken by each of them to get to their current positions. I hope their stories will cause you to consider the story of your own career development. What were some of the turning points? The major successes? The lessons learned? And what are the chapters still left to be written?

Checking in on our own career development and on that of our students is important for us to do. One of my favorite activities at work is to wander into the Student Union and ask students if they have any career developments to report. Unless they have encountered me before, their usual first response is that they have no career developments. Then I prompt them a bit with questions like "Have you talked to your advisor about your courses for next semester?" or "Did you discuss your summer plans with your lunch buddies?" This seems to get the gears of the brain turning, and they more easily see that they do have career developments to report. Through my questioning, I hope that students see that career planning is as much about the small developments as the big developments. Knowing this they can then proceed more confidently in the area of career planning realizing that it is small insights and ongoing exploration as well as the big moments like graduation or starting a new job or graduate program that contribute to their career development.

When students turn the question of career developments back to me, I often report to them on what I am doing with the Commission for Career Development. The Commission has been a source for large and small career developments for me. Through the Commission I have met friends and colleagues who have broadened and deepened my knowledge of career development and the network of people I know committed to the field. This group provides

opportunities for me to learn more about how institutional characteristics like size and scope affect the work of career services; how different staffing and reporting structures impact the delivery of career services, and to understand the needs of diverse student populations.

At the ACPA 2008 Annual Convention, there will be lots of ways for you to work on your own career development and to contribute to the career development of others by attending educational programs, participating in the open business meeting for the Commission, and volunteering with Commission programs in placement. The convention takes place in Atlanta, GA from Saturday, March 29 to Wednesday, April 2. You can obtain registration information at the convention site: <http://convention.myacpa.org/>. I hope to see you there!

Finally, I want to highlight the work of a Commission member who has contributed much to the development of many of our careers, John Bradac. John currently serves as the director of career services at Ithaca College. He is among the ACPA Diamond Honorees for the 2008 class. The Diamond Honoree program is a way for us to recognize the outstanding efforts of student affairs professionals by donating to the ACPA Foundation in honor of these honorees. I hope you will make a contribution to the Foundation in recognition of John's unfailing commitment and significant contributions to the profession, to ACPA as one of the Convention Placement Leads for more than 20 years and to the Commission for Career Development for his work as a member of the directorate body. He plays a major role in welcoming entry level professionals in the field and contributing to their professional growth and development. You can make an online contribution at: <http://www.my-elf.org/donate.html>.

Please be in touch and let me know how the Commission can assist you in your work.





Andrea Lowe

Director of Career Services,
Evans School, University of Washington in Seattle

After graduating with a major in communicative disorders I realized that I no longer wanted to be a speech pathologist; however, I did know that I wanted to work in an educational setting. While working full-time at the university that I had just graduated from, I learned about my future path through both trial-and-error and information gathering. I took some school counseling courses at a neighboring university and realized that wasn't the right audience (K-12). While taking the courses I started talking to some student affairs professionals and then visited the Career Development Office on campus. I found myself really interested in learning more about what the person on the other side of the desk was doing and how she got to where she was--something I could tell didn't happen very often in her world. I realized that I really wanted to work with college students in an advising role and she helped guide me through the ACPA directory of graduate programs.

While in graduate school at Western Illinois University's College Student Personnel program, I focused on career development and administration by doing a practicum, and then a graduate assistantship, with the Career Services Office on campus. With a very small full-time professional staff, the office heavily relied upon graduate assistants for career advising and programming. Along with two of my classmates, we were entrusted to open satellite offices on the campus to better serve the students.

Shortly after graduation in 2001 I started a new position as a career advisor serving undecided, exploring students at the University of Wisconsin in an office whose primary function was academic advising. Through that position I was able to fine-tune my counseling, public speaking, and supervisory skills. While I loved that position, I came to

“I highly recommend that those aspiring to be a director should find a mentor... someone who is willing to be candid...”

realize that day-long counseling sessions with freshmen and sophomores was not a good fit for me--I needed to work with older students on their job search. I knew someday I would move on to a new position but did not think it would happen only 2 years into my first position post-graduate school.

A college friend of mine was attending the Evans School of Public Affairs at the University of Washington which is a graduate program that grants a Masters of Public Administration degree. The director of the career services office had just resigned so my friend sent me a link to the job description. I looked at the position description and thought that I wasn't ready, but at the same time the thought of moving out to Seattle was very appealing as it was something that was in the back of my mind for the past 5 years. Why would they hire me? I was only 2 years out of graduate school! As a career advisor, the bar is set very high for those applying and interviewing for career services positions so I had to put in the work to win the interview. To help me with my application, I consulted with my friend who was attending the school and asked for his student perspective who then forwarded my questions on

to some of his classmates who gave me some advice on what they wanted in their director. To be informed for my application (and to also know what I was getting myself into) I contacted 2 career directors from other MPA schools for informational interviews. It didn't stop there, I also conducted an informal focus group with a few students from the University of Wisconsin's MPA program and had several career advisor friends look at my materials. I don't know if there was ever the moment where I said to myself "it is now time to be a director." I think I took an unconventional route and found a school that was small (1 staff person) who was willing to take a chance on me and let me grow as a leader. Now starting my fifth year at the school, my office has grown to include an assistant director--who I hired straight out of her graduate program last year.

I think there are a lot of different types of director positions at many different types of universities and a person needs to figure out which one best suits his or her personality and work style. I don't know if there is one career path, but I do know that an aptitude to lead intelligently is crucial.

There are some really tough skills to be learned to lead an office such as political savvy, fundraising, marketing, supervision, assessment, and working with performance measures. When you run an office, anything that happens (or doesn't happen) ultimately rests on your shoulders even if you weren't involved. Working in an academic department one of the biggest challenges is having what you do be validated by the dean and the faculty (and teach them to stop using the word "placement"). As for the career services field, I won't lie, it was a struggle for me when I started out as I was a young director and it was hard getting the acknowledgement from my peers that I might actually know what I'm doing. When I first started my position at the Evans School, I found that seeking out assistance from my peers, a lot of listening at meetings, and research on best practices had helped my peers overlook my age. I see many new professionals just coming out of graduate school (including my own MPA students) who immediately want to "fix" things in their new offices. You need to prove yourself before you can tell people that there is something wrong and there is usually a story behind the ways things are done that needs to be learned.

Because I work in a small school I am able to balance the strategic parts of being a director with the day-to-day advisement of students. I love my job because I am able to focus in on a specific field and learn as much about it and the type of employers who might hire my students. Throughout the years I have realized that I need to work with older students who are focused in a specific area that aligns with my values. I think I've found that combination by being at the Evans School.

I highly recommend that those aspiring to be a director should find a mentor, and it should be someone who is willing to be candid about what it takes to be successful running an office. Additionally, ask your current supervisor if there is room for you to sharpen your skills in budgeting, supervision, and public speaking. Seek out professional development opportunities that will allow you to attain those skills and to network with professionals in the field.



Troy Behrens

**Executive Director
Southern Methodist University in Dallas**

My career path began when I was an undergrad. I started as a volunteer Peer Advisor in my university's Career Center. That opened the door for an internship once I enrolled in graduate school. I had 3.5 years of internship experience which actually turned into a part-time job in the Center. My first "real job" in the field came after graduate school where I started as a counselor then became director 1 year later (at the age of 28).

I made my decision to become a director while as a counselor. I found myself helping my director manage the staff, plan and develop programs, market our services on campus, etc. I discovered that I was pretty good at it and it got me out of the mind-numbing hourly appointment routine!

If I had to recommend a career path to someone interested in becoming a director I would have to say start as an intern! Make sure you do it all! No tasks should ever be beneath you. File, answer the phone, run the front desk and get involved with all aspects of counseling and employer relations.

One major challenge I have found with being a director would be doing more with less and having to put up with lip service about how everyone has plans to make 'our' Career Center the best there is. Yet when it comes time to buy a box of paperclips, the money isn't in the budget. However, I really enjoy developing my Direct reports into career services leaders.

One piece of advice I can give to someone who aspires to be a director would be to take as many classes you can regarding entrepreneurship or Business management. Running a Career Center is essentially the same as running a business. Finally, if you run a larger Career Center, don't be surprised if you never meet with students because your time will be taken by personnel issues, budget planning, program development, statistical analysis, campus relations, employer networking and more.

Lisa T. Andrews, Ph.D.

**Director
University of Maryland, University College**



Having done an internship during my master's program (in counseling) at a counseling and career center, I entered into the profession of career services directly after my master's as an assistant director. I stayed an assistant director at two different institutions for a total of 4 years, took a breather for my doctorate (another 4 years) then received my first Director's position.

Ever since my internship way back when, I knew I wanted to be in that leadership role. I did want to get my doctorate first, and had the opportunity to do that full time, because I thought that I would never get it while working full time as a director. I do believe the doctorate helped me get the director position, combined with my experience in the assistant director role.

I think it's important to be engaged in the field as much as possible, and do as much networking as you can (being involved the Commission is a great way to do this!). Be content to cut your teeth as a career counselor or assistant director for a while to build up your resume. Also, don't be afraid to pick up and go where the job/field takes you. I had to go all the way from Pennsylvania to

Mississippi for my first professional experience, but it really jump started my career in the field. I also became involved early on in the Commission's activities and thus built a network I still rely on today.

Since I am a counselor by training, it's sometimes hard to be farther away from students. As a director you need to be dealing with a great deal of administrative work so that takes you away from the counseling aspect of the field, especially if you are in a larger office. However, I love being able to set the strategic vision for a center and knowing it will ultimately positively impact students.

My advice to an aspiring director would be to try to get experience in a career center early on - even during undergrad if you can, and try to get a director as a mentor. Again, building that network as you go through your career is vital to gaining future positions. Also, if you can ask to be involved with some of the activities of the director's role, this will only enhance your experience and add to your own resume!

Mike Schaub, Ph.D.

Executive Director & Licensed Clinical Psychologist,
Career Education Center, Georgetown University



My career path involved working in different teaching and student affairs roles. My first stop in student affairs was working as a hall director at my alma mater, John Carroll University. As a hall director, I got valuable experience working with college students and had the opportunity to learn about the different opportunities in student affairs. During this time, I also took psychology courses as a post-bac student to prepare me for graduate school. After spending three years at John Carroll, I entered an MA/Ph.D. program in counseling psychology at The University of Akron. During graduate school, I taught undergraduate psychology classes, engaged in research, worked as an academic advisor, and conducted counseling in the counseling center. My pre-doctoral internship brought me to the University of Maryland where I worked in the counseling center for one year. By the end of my internship, I knew that I wanted to work in student affairs. I always enjoyed career counseling, but also wanted to stay involved in research, supervision, and administration. The Associate Director of Career Education and Counseling position at Georgetown's Career Center allowed me to perform all these duties. I worked as Associate Director for 5 1/2 years, then assumed the role of Acting Executive Director followed by Interim Executive Director. As Acting and Interim Director, I got a taste of the director position and decided to apply for the open position. I have been working as Executive Director for one year and really enjoy it. It want to maintain my counseling psychology roots so I became licensed as a psychologist in Maryland and Virginia. I feel that I use my training as a psychologist every day as Executive Director.

Because there is not a typical career path to becoming a director, you can accumulate a variety of experiences and be competitive for the director role. Most directors have an advanced degree, usually a master's, and some have a Ph.D. Like any job, you should consider the tasks and responsibilities of the director position as you plan your career path. I think that having a range of experiences in the student affairs setting at different institutions is important, especially if the career center to which you are applying is a part of student affairs and the person to whom you will report values the student affairs perspective. Many directors have had experience in the private sector as well. An ideal director candidate will have experience envisioning and implementing short and long term strategic plans; making personnel decisions (e.g., hiring, evaluating, supervising); managing budgets; and communicating with employers, alumni, and faculty/staff. The candidate should have excellent organizational skills, be detail oriented, and be able to solve problems creatively.

The biggest challenge is understanding that the job market--an area in which we have no control--can affect the work we do at the Career Center. As Director, I have to make sure that the Career Center is able to respond to immediate hiring needs and to anticipate changes in the job market. When the economy slows, the

Career Center needs to respond creatively by preparing students for the changing job market and providing new internship and job opportunities. I believe that we can respond effectively to changes in the job market by engaging students in career exploration early, developing productive relationships with alumni and employers, and maintaining a talented career center staff.

I enjoy exploring new programs and services with my staff, implementing these new ideas, and evaluating the programs. I also enjoy talking about the career development process with students, parents, faculty, and alumni.

One piece of advice I would give to aspiring directors would be to develop relationships with Career Center Directors and Associate/Assistant Directors to learn what goes on "behind the scenes" of career services.

DON'T FORGET...

The Commission for Career Development's website is another resource for your professional development interests.

You can access it at www.myacpa.org/comm/careerdev/ Under the **Resources** tab, you will find information on the following:

- Placement Resources for Candidates
- Placement Resources for Employers
- Job Search sites—both general and functionally specific
- Member sites—look to other Career Center web sites for programming ideas, services, benchmarking and more!

Click on the **Newsletter/Listserv** tab, and you will find the current issue of *CareerWatch*, as well as the past two issues. Find out how to submit articles for future *CareerWatch* issues and sign-up for the list-serv.

Keep up-to-date with Convention news and volunteer to help with the various programs and projects that the commission is hosting by viewing the **Convention** section of the website.

Are you looking to get involved? If so, read the descriptions of each of the commission's committees under the **Get Involved** tab. Pick a committee that fits your interests and can use your skills. Commission Committees:

- *CareerWatch* Newsletter
- Convention Placement & Career Services
- Convention Programs
- Member Services
- Professional Development
- Technology

NEW Career Directors and Leads Listserv!

Recognizing the need for a career center/department directors and leads forum that allows for questions, peer exchange, and issue exploration at an administrator's level, the Commission for Career Development has established a new listserv.

The listserv is closed, meaning, subscription requires application (link below) and membership is not open to the general public or general Commission members. Why? Often there is a need for directors and leads to ask administrative questions, explore issues, and seek support amongst peer directors and leads. This listserv is designed to serve this function. The listserv is housed within ACPA's listserv system and has received technical set up support from ACPA. Similar listservs exist for counseling center directors and other areas of administration the Student Affairs profession.

Upon verification, subscription will be provided to Directors and Lead Professional (if no Director). For directors and leads wishing to subscribe, simply go to www.unr.edu/career/acpa/index.aspx

This new service is an added benefit for membership to the Commission. If you are not a director or lead, and you are the only Commission for Career Development member in your group, suggest to your director or lead to join ACPA and the Commission for Career Development. Let them know about this added service and membership benefit!

Listserv is maintained by Kevin Gaw, Director, Career Development, University of Nevada, Reno: kevingaw@unr.edu

It's that time of the year again when many ACPA members renew their membership!

Please note that every time you renew your ACPA membership, you should also renew BOTH your Commission membership AND your listserv registration. Failure to re-join the Commission may prevent you from voting in elections and receiving important email updates. Once you renew your ACPA membership, follow the directions below to join the Commission for Career Development and register for the Commission listserv.

- 1) To join the Commission for Career Development: Go to <https://members.myacpa.org/Scripts/4Disapi.dll/4DCGI/logon/logonmain.html> and log in using your ACPA user name and password. Once logged in, scroll to the bottom of the Welcome page to the section titled, "Committees." Here, you may view the list of committees to which you belong and/or join a new committee by clicking the "list of committees" link. Scroll down to find the Commission for Career Development and click the link to join.
- 2) To register for the Commission for Career Development listserv: Go to <https://members.myacpa.org/Scripts/4Disapi.dll/4DCGI/person/Listserv.html> and log in using your ACPA user name and password. Once logged in, type your email address in the space next to the Commission for Career Development and select whether you wish to receive messages as they are sent, or in digest style, where messages will be bundled and emailed to you once weekly.

Please contact Jennifer Browning at jbrowning@rollins.edu if you have any questions about joining the list serv.

The Online Career Development committee of the Commission for Career Development is in the process of developing regional networks so that the information sharing doesn't end after Convention is over. Our web site is also being grown to include resource sharing opportunities and benchmarking data. You can visit the Commission website at <http://myacpa.org/comm/careerdev>.

If you have suggestions of material to include on the webpage, contact Jennifer Browning at jbrowning@rollins.edu or Andrea Dine at ADine@wheelock.edu.

Jennifer Browning, Directorate

Member and Co-Chair of Online Career Development Committee
jbrowning@rollins.edu





PURPOSE



INCLUSION



EXPERTISE



Commission for Career Development Sponsored Programs

Integrating Service-Learning Reflection into an Online Community for Co-op/ Internship Students

How can we best enhance students' out-of-the-classroom learning experiences? Through REFLECTION! Come and learn how various reflection techniques were incorporated into an on-line, inclusive community to help students make the most out of their co-op/internship experience. A brief review of learning outcomes for higher education, service-learning, and experiential education and key concepts about reflection will be discussed. Possible obstacles to helping students make the most of their internship/co-op experiences and benefits an on-line reflection community will be clarified.

Presenter:
Jessica M. Turos
Bowling Green
State University

You want to do what?! Occupational aspirations of entering students

This presentation shares the findings of a research study that explores college-bound students' occupational aspirations and the social and cultural forces that shape these aspirations. Attendees will participate in case studies and learn to successfully maneuver around common pitfalls in working with entering students as they make meaning of their future career goals.

Presenters:
Heather Rowan-Kenyon
University of Virginia

Mark Kenyon
University of Maryland at
College Park

Amy Swan
University of Virginia

Millennial Student and Implications for Career Services

According to a recent poll conducted by the National Association of Colleges and Employers 26.9 percent of the employers reported that they have Googled candidates or reviewed job applicant profiles on social networking sites. This program focuses on the characteristics of the millennial generation of students and how those characteristics may influence our practice within Career Services. As a group we will create a living resource document that will be sent to all participants for use in their offices.

Presenters:
Dr. Javaune Adams-Gaston
University of Maryland at
College Park

William A Jones
University of Maryland at
College Park

It's only your Shadow: Building a Purposeful Job Shadowing Program

If you have been charged with developing a job shadowing program in your career center, look no further. This presentation will lay all the necessary groundwork to jump start such a program, utilizing data and anecdotes from Brandeis University. We will follow the process from designing the initial learning outcomes, recruiting our alumni, marketing strategies, and matching process. We will explore the methods we are using to evaluate the program and share many lessons learned along the way.

Presenter:
Rusmir Music
Brandeis University

Internships and Outcomes: Learning through Collaboration

The success of an internship program launched at a small, private, southeast liberal arts college is evaluated through assessment of student learning outcomes and dependant on the partnership between faculty and career service staff. While career development is an objective for student interns, conscious choice of faculty and staff working together also results in career development for the professionals. This program reports on the findings from the first year, highlighting assessment data, faculty/staff collaboration and the application of advising methods.

Presenters:
Linda Jameison
Presbyterian College

Suzanne Smith
Presbyterian College