

LIFE-LINE



"WE ARE THE HEARTBEAT OF OUR STUDENTS' LIVING EXPERIENCE"

NOVEMBER 2008

VOLUME 36, ISSUE 2

Greetings from the Chair

Hi Everyone,

As the fall semester comes to a close I want to take a moment to thank everyone who recently voted to elect the new class of Directorate Board members for the commission. Please take time to congratulate any of the members that you may know. These individuals have made a commitment to the profession by volunteering their time and abilities to provide services to all members within the housing profession.

During these challenging financial times, I know many colleges and universities are struggling and have been forced to make cutbacks with regards to travel, professional development and many other areas. I encourage you to find and create opportunities for growth within your schools and collaborate with other local institutions to expand the possibilities for your staff members when funds for travel may be limited.

It seems as if this semester just began and we are already gearing up for closing the halls for winter break. During all your end of semester preparations don't forget to register for ACPA 2009. The convention staff members have been working diligently to make this a truly amazing experience for all who attend. We have chosen the commission-sponsored programs for ACPA 2009 from a wide selection of fine submissions, and we are very excited to showcase them in metropolitan D.C. Enjoy the rest of the semester, and I look forward to seeing everyone in D.C. in March.

Sincerely,

Adrian Gage

Adrian Gage
Chair, Commission for Housing and Residential Life
Associate Director of Residence Life and Housing
Worcester State College



INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

<i>DB Class of 2012</i>	2
<i>Life-Line Submissions</i>	2
<i>Feature Articles on Trends in Staffing</i>	3
<i>Commission-sponsored Programs</i>	6
<i>2009 ACPA Convention</i>	7
<i>DB Members</i>	7
<i>Join the Listserv</i>	8

Congratulations to the Directorate Body Class of 2012

Thank you to everyone in the commission who voted for the Class of 2012 Directorate Body members. Votes were cast by 96 commission members, and many of the races were very close. We are pleased to announce the following individuals have been elected as the Class of 2012 Directorate Body members for the Commission for Housing and Residential Life. Please take a moment to congratulate your colleagues.

At-Large Member

Megan Rowe

Loyola College in Maryland

mmrowe@loyola.edu

Seasoned Professional

Romando Nash

Seattle University

nashr@seattleu.edu

New Professional

Morgan Murray

University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

morgan_murray@unc.edu

Western Region

Michael Richards

Otis College of Art & Design

mrichards@otis.edu

Plains Region

Nadine Kelley

University of Texas, Austin

nkelley@austin.utexas.edu

Midwest Region

To be appointed

Southern Region

Jeff Brown

Clemson University

brownj@clemson.edu

Mid-Atlantic Region

Jimmy Lee Howard

University of Delaware

jimmyh@udel.edu

New England Region

Kelli Raker

Salem State College

kraker@salemstate.edu

Chair Elect

Kathleen Gardner

Southern Illinois University Edwardsville

kagardn@siue.edu

Life-Line Topics and Article Submission

Submitting something for *Life-Line* is a great way to get your work published! *Life-Line* is published four times a year and is distributed to hundreds of members of the ACPA community. Each issue will highlight one of three topic areas the commission has selected to focus on for the year. As you can see from this issue, the fall edition *Life-Line* will focus on current trends in staffing and training. The winter edition will include articles on physical and emotional safety and security in the residence halls, and the spring issue will address academic partnerships between housing and academic units. Be thinking about the topic areas that interest you and please consider submitting a piece for *Life-Line*. Articles, original research, book reviews, critical essays and resource lists on the highlighted topics are all encouraged for submission. Submission deadlines for each issue are listed to the right. All submissions should be e-mailed to Ali Martin Scoufield at amartin@mail.smu.edu.

Submit an article for *Life-Line*!

Winter Issue: *Physical and Emotional Safety*

Deadline: January 20, 2009

Spring Issue: *Academic Partnerships*

Deadline: March 9, 2009

Newsletter Feature Focus: Current Trends in Staffing

Planning and preparing for a successful staff selection season

Submitted by: Ashley Mouberry Sieman, Marymount University

It's that time of the year again! As many on campus begin to pack up and head out for the winter break, housing professionals are gearing up for an exciting staff selection season. If you have not already begun to think about staff selection, we imagine you will begin to do so soon. Therefore, we wanted to share a few tips and tools that can help you plan and prepare for a successful selection season:

Create a Web site for your selection process.

Web sites are a great way to share information about your staff selection process. Students can access a Web site any time the day from virtually any location. Students can also easily share a Web site with their peers and parents. If you decide to create a Web site, here are a few things you should consider including:

- Details about your selection process and timeline.
- An up-to-date position description.
- A downloadable or electronic application form.
- A downloadable or electronic reference form (if applicable).
- A description of available halls (i.e., traditional, suite style, apartment, single gender, co-ed, etc.) and/or communities (i.e., honors, theme housing, living learning programs, etc.).
- A list of frequently asked questions.
- Testimonials from current or former staff members.
- Photos from staff activities and events.

If you are looking for Web site ideas, check out these examples of great RA selection sites:

University of Massachusetts Amherst

http://www.housing.umass.edu/employ/ra_selection.html

University of Nebraska Lincoln

<http://housing.unl.edu/ra/>

Drexel University

<http://www.drexel.edu/rlo/raselection/>

Provide many opportunities for candidates to ask questions.

Uninformed candidates are at a disadvantage in the staff selection process. Therefore, we must provide many opportunities for candidates to ask questions throughout the process. Here are a few ways to help ensure candidates get all of their questions answered.

- Host information sessions in advance of the application deadline. Information sessions provide a great opportunity for candidates to meet professional and student staff, to get information about the process and timeline and ask questions.

- Set up an instant messenger account for your selection process. Instant messenger allows students to directly connect with a staff member who can provide an immediate answer to his or her question.
- Set up a Facebook group for your selection process. Current staff can invite students to join. Questions can be posed and answered via discussion boards. Facebook is also a useful way to advertise the position and remind students of upcoming deadlines.
- Create a frequently asked question (F.A.Q.) sheet that can be posted on your selection Web site, handed out at information sessions, distributed by RAs on rounds or picked up from staff offices. Use your current student staff to help create the questions and answers.
- Create an opportunity for candidates who were not selected to ask questions and receive feedback about their candidacy. This is often a missed step in many selection processes. Providing feedback to an unsuccessful candidate not only helps the candidate learn from the experience but also shows the candidate that we are invested in them and want them to be successful when/if they choose to apply again.

Set candidates up for success.

Remember, this may be the first time that many of our candidates have applied for a job or for a student leadership position. There are many factors that can contribute to a candidate's success. Here are a few ways to ensure that candidates are set up for success:

- Encourage candidates to have their application materials reviewed by the career center.
- Ensure that candidates have accurate perceptions of the staff experience. Set up a process where candidates can meet one on one with current RAs, shadow current RAs, observe a staff meeting, etc.
- Debunk any myths that the candidates may have about the process or position. For an example of how to do this check out UC Irvine's RA website: <http://www.housing.uci.edu/employment/cphara/myths.asp>.
- Host a fashion show at your information sessions to demonstrate "appropriate interview dress."

About the author: Ashley Mouberry Sieman is the Assistant Director of Residence Life and Judicial Affairs at Marymount University. She can be contacted at ashley.sieman@marymount.edu.

Newsletter Feature Focus: Current Trends in Staffing

A new professional's reflection on the first year: Does the transition ever end?

Submitted by: Jonathan Todd, University of Massachusetts Amherst

This was my situation: I had survived the joint meeting in Orlando and landed myself a Residence Director position at UMass Amherst. The job promised (and delivered) autonomy, professional development opportunities, supervision of a myriad of staff, and an emphasis on social justice issues. I was also preparing to move from Ohio to Massachusetts, transitioning from a small private liberal arts college to a sizable land grant university, and starting my career.

What I knew about myself: I had already completed a transition from Texas to Ohio in order to earn a Masters degree. Therefore, I had the right mix of fear and confidence coming into the UMass Amherst position. I knew I needed people around me so I could externally process my experience and quickly get connected to the off-campus community to maintain balance.

My support: I can say with confidence that my graduate program prepared me for my first job. It provided me the perfect combination of theoretical knowledge and practical experience. There were countless late night phone conversations with friends, faculty and former colleagues who encouraged and listened. A faculty member, on her way to Vermont to visit a friend, even stopped in Amherst to have lunch to see how I was doing.

My UMass Amherst colleagues and I supported each other. After a long day of training, I was walking a new RD back to his apartment. On the way, we processed and tried to make meaning of our experience. We were not finished after reaching his apartment, so we turned around and walked to my apartment located at the opposite end of the area. We made five or six trips.

These were (and are) my strategies: I chose my battles. The first battle was learning a new culture and the “way of doing things.” Grad school taught me to respect the culture of the institution that decided to offer me a job. I found that others respect ideas of change when they are grounded in experiences everyone at the table can relate to. A second battle was my inner need to prove myself and not make mistakes. Victory over this battle came when I realized that everyone makes mistakes; you just don’t hear people talking about

them. As for proving oneself, doing your very best will take care of that.

One battle I did not choose to fight: Doing things my way, and ONLY my way. This is where my humility was tested. My graduate assistants and I were new to the community we supervised. At the beginning of student staff training, a returning RA said, “Looks like *we’ll* be training *you* all.” On some levels she was correct. We relied on returning student staff members to share the history, struggles and triumphs of the community. Who better to listen to than those who had a better grasp of what would work and what wouldn’t in a community they had been members of longer. The best ideas came from my graduate students who did not have residence life experience. Their outside perspective added a new dimension to our work.

I went with the flow. When part of me wanted quick answers or an immediate result, I found myself (and others) telling me to be patient and wait for the appropriate time. A wise colleague in grad school once said, “It’s going to get done because it has to get done.” Furthermore, I have a wonderful supervisor who taught me how to pace myself.

I reminded myself about the concept of free time. Hours devoted to reading and writing papers were now free and I had no idea how to fill them. I instantly fell into the trap of leaving my Residence Director apartment for the morning, going back for lunch, returning for an afternoon of work, and finally returning to my apartment at the end of the day. After a week, I realized that some days, I never left my residence hall. As a result, connecting with colleagues across campus and exploring the community became a very high priority.

The lasting lesson: I still have a great deal to learn. The transition might have come to a close, but learning does not end. I hope I become a seasoned professional that continues to learn from students and colleagues and never tires of helping others learn about themselves.

About the author: Jonathan Todd is a Residence Director at the University of Massachusetts Amherst. He can be contacted at jbattività@housing.umass.edu.

Newsletter Feature Focus: Current Trends in Staffing

Book Review: Supervising new professionals in student affairs

Submitted by: Franklyn Taylor, Northern Arizona University

Book selected for review:

Janosik, S. M., Creamer, D. G., Hirt, J. B., Winston, R. B., Saunders, S. A., & Cooper, D. L. (2003). *Supervising new professionals in student affairs: A guide for practitioners*. New York: Brunner-Routledge.

This is a perfect time to review a book that has a wealth of theoretical and practical information from seasoned practitioners in the field. New staff members have been hired and recently arrived on campuses in anticipation of the start of the fall academic year. The book is written as the title suggests for any student affairs professional. As we are all aware, housing and residence life hires, trains and supervises the greatest number of staff especially first time and entry level professionals.

The book is divided into seven sections. The first section starts with a number of definitions of supervision, staffing model and orientation to the position which is vital to employees' success. The book discusses synergistic supervision and the importance of staff development and performance appraisal. Realizing that student affairs professionals come from a variety of backgrounds, the supervisor need to be intentional in their supervision of new professionals.

The second section deals with the orientation process. The authors refer to this as building the foundations for success. The authors suggest that the orientation process is critical and should be developed. The chapter also discusses the importance of starting the orientation during the recruitment and selection processes. The orientation section provided step-by-step instructions on how to start new employees in the supervision process.

Details on activating synergistic supervision are presented in chapter three. The authors provide practical suggestions, which I found to be very true and practical. This can be used or consulted when the need arise. The authors suggest supervision is a complex and a cumulative process.

The importance and necessity of professional development is

discussed in chapter four. The book describes what professional development is and what professional development is not. It provides case studies which are all too real and should be expected when supervising new professionals. There are graphics that illustrate the progress of professional development plans.

The fifth chapter deals with performance appraisals and how that impacts new professionals. This section presents extensive tables and illustrations on how to develop and implement performance appraisal. The graphics and charts are vivid. It gives the reader an understanding or a lens to view employee performance and the appraisal process.

Chapter six explains employee separation and termination. It walks the reader through the possible reasons for voluntary and involuntary separation. It also gives the reader an understanding of the supervisor's role in the separation.

The last chapter discusses the internship process which includes graduate assistants. It includes how to develop and manage internship programs. This section is also detailed with a wealth of information that will assist mid-managers and also senior level managers.

I will recommend this book to all. It is a must read. I currently use it as a resource and a reference guide in my daily practice. I have referenced the book numerous times with my Residence Hall Director who supervises Graduate Assistants. I have also read chapters from the book before I embark on major supervision projects. For the professional supervising for the first time, this book is a valuable road map in your journey towards successful and meaningful supervision.

About the author: Franklyn Taylor is an Area Coordinator at Northern Arizona University. He can be contacted at franklyn.taylor@nau.edu.

Commission Sponsored Programs

The Commission for Housing and Residential Life is excited the 2009 convention is just a few months away. We have recently selected the convention programs that will be sponsored by the commission. We encourage you to attend these program sessions as they support our three focus areas for the year: (1) physical and emotional safety and security on campus; (2) current trends and issues in staffing and training; and (3) academic partnerships. Thanks so much for all of those individuals who submitted programs for sponsorship and the outstanding number of individuals who volunteered to review programs.

Sponsored Programs:

NACURH Student Award for Leadership Training (SALT)

Gudrun Haider (Miami University)

Looking for a creative way to train your student leaders? Interested in learning more about NACURH (National Association for College and University Residence Halls)? Each year, NACURH recognizes an outstanding student leadership training program in the residence halls with the SALT Award, which is co-sponsored by the Commission for Housing and Residential Life. The recipients of this award will share how they developed and implemented this student-led training program.

Re-Imagining Technology: A New Way to Empower and Educate

Licinia B. Kaliber and Jimmy Howard (University of Delaware)

Educational technology is a scholarly field that focuses on using technology as a venue to educate and enhance learning. From training to student leadership, we will examine how educational technology can be incorporated into various student life arenas to allow the transformative learning process to occur. Discussion will also occur on various technology “tools” participants can take with them and implement immediately. Participants are encouraged to bring laptops to this highly interactive presentation.

Cutting too Close: Suicide and Self Injury in Residential Facilities

Joshua DeWar, Marissa Grenel and Ryan Dryer (Ripon College)

Suicide and self injury are two of the hardest issues residence life staff regularly confront. This session will present background information on why students choose to self-injure, how to address issues of suicidal ideation, a history of literature in both fields, and conclude by offering an opportunity to examine how both problems continue to impact larger numbers of students on campus each year. The session is for residence life professionals and aims to meet the needs of live-in staff.

Establishing Hogwarts: A New First-Year Student Residential College

Angela Cottrell, Frank Wcislo and Chalene Helmuth

(Vanderbilt University)

The Commons is a community of first-year students, residential faculty, peer mentors and professional educational staff located on the campus of Vanderbilt University. With over 10 years of planning involved, the first-year student residential college was officially opened in fall 2008. How did we get there and what does that first semester look like? This presentation will provide insight and lessons learned through the multiple lenses of administrators, residential faculty and professional educational staff.

Power to Revolutionize Diversity Training for Millennial Student Staff

Paul Shang (University of Missouri-Kansas City), Hemlata Jhaveri (California State University-Chico) and Michael Speros (Missouri Western State University)

Student staffs today want diversity training to be challenging and discuss topics beyond race. To them, incorporation of technology seems to make training more engaging and credible. Millennial students on campuses are more accepting of differences. However, they usually believe they do not need diversity training, while practitioners believe otherwise. If this is your experience, come join colleagues to discuss innovative diversity training methods designed especially for student staffs based on current research and incorporating tested contemporary techniques. *Co-sponsored program with the Standing Committee for Multicultural Affairs*

The Sexual Stories of Resident Advisors: What can we Learn

J. Bradley Blankenship and Dayna Fischtein (Indiana University)

Each year, students arrive on campuses without adequate information to make responsible sexual decisions. Resident advisors are increasingly called upon to fill the role of sex educator in areas far beyond their expertise. Placed in a sudden “sexpert” role, the reality is that RAs have often had the same sexual health education as the students they advise. This interactive presentation will discuss one Midwestern institution’s attempt to assess and address the emerging role of RA as lay sex educator. *Co-sponsored program with the Commission for Wellness*



Power to Imagine • Courage to Act

March 28-April 1, 2009

The theme of the 2009 ACPA annual convention to be held in metropolitan D.C. March 28-April 1, 2009, challenges us to intentionally explore and tap into individual and collective elements:

POWER TO IMAGINE: Inspires us, sparks our creativity, renews our spirit and refocuses our commitment to our profession.

COURAGE TO ACT: With renewed energy, propels us back to our institutions with a greater sense of strength, motivation and ability to make a difference in the world.

EXPERTISE: Convention participants can build expertise that is based on the best of research in our profession.

The Power to Imagine • Courage to Act starts now! Join us at the 2009 convention in metro D.C. to explore the infinite possibilities.

Registration, housing and placement opened November 3, 2008.

Convention and Hotel Registration is Now Open!

Convention Registration Rates	Early (1/29/09)	Regular (2/12/09)
<i>Member</i>	\$375	\$425
<i>Student</i>	\$100	\$150

Placement Registration Rates	Early (1/29/09)	Regular (2/12/09)
<i>Candidate</i>	\$55	\$75
<i>Employer</i>	\$130	\$150
<i>Interview Table</i>	\$100	\$125

Hotel Rates	Single	Double	Triple	Quad
<i>Gaylord National Resort</i>	\$225 (\$215 + 10 resort fee)			
<i>Hampton Inn Suites</i>	\$189	\$189	\$209	\$229

For additional information on convention rates and registration, view the convention Web site at <http://convention.myacpa.org/>.



Commission Directorate Body Members

Kathleen G. Kerr (Past-Chair), University of Delaware

Adrian Gage (Chair, 2008-2010), Worcester State College

Carla Dennis (2009), University of Georgia

Ryan Green (2009), Southern Oregon University

Rebecca Mosely (2009), Oberlin College

Trent Pinto (2009), Coker College

Catherine Sanders (2009), University of Texas at Austin

Jack Saxon (2009), University of California, Riverside

Jodi Schulman (2009), Rutgers University

Peter Trentacoste (2009), Northern Kentucky University

Evan Baum (2010), George Mason University

Joshua J. De War (2010), Ripon College

Amy Franklin-Craft (2010), Michigan State University

Sean Gehrke (2010), Whitman College

Gudrun Haider (2010), Miami University

Jerome A. Holland, Jr. (2010), Sonoma State University

Ashley Mouberry Sieman (2010), Marymount University

Camilla Roberts (2010), Kansas State University

Darcy Smith (2010), Wheelock College

Scott Francis (2011), George Mason University

Dena Kniess (2011), Clemson University

Aaron Koepke (2011), University of New Hampshire

Bonnie Maitland (2011), Merrimack College

Ali Martin Scoufield (2011), Southern Methodist University

Franklyn Taylor (2011), Northern Arizona University

Greg Thompson (2011), The University of Iowa

Jonathan Todd (2011), University of Massachusetts, Amherst

Veronica Wilson (2011), University of San Francisco

For additional contact information for the commission directorate body members, please visit our Web page at www.myacpa.org/comm/housing/.



Commission for Housing and Residential Life

LIFE-LINE



**"WE ARE THE
HEARTBEAT
OF OUR
STUDENTS'
LIVING
EXPERIENCE"**

Join the Commission for Housing and Residential Life Listserv

To subscribe to the Commission for Housing and Residential Life listserv, please use the following directions:

- Visit <https://members.myacpa.org/Scripts/4Disapi.dll/4DCGI/person>Listserv.html>.
- Log in with your ACPA username and password
- Find the line for "Commission for Housing and Residential Life," verify your email address and select an option from the drop-down menu (subscribe single or subscribe digest).
- Select "Submit Changes."

Commission for Housing and Residential Life Overview

HISTORY

For three decades, the HRL Commission has made numerous and outstanding contributions to ACPA, to the residence life profession and to millions of students who have lived, studied and matured in American residential colleges and universities.

For the past several years, the HRL Commission has been especially productive in five important professional areas: information dissemination, membership involvement, recognition of achievement, liaison relationships and leadership.

PURPOSE

Residence halls are one of the primary settings for student learning at colleges and universities. The Commission for Housing and Residential Life is one of the largest of

ACPA's commissions and actively involves its members in meeting seven major objectives:

1. To provide leadership with ACPA and the profession in general for student learning in college residence halls.
2. To identify issues of special concern and advise colleagues regarding these concerns through the support of research efforts, survey information, reports, position papers and task force investigations.
3. To communicate innovative ideas, special issues, problem resolution and research information with a broad base of individuals throughout the country who are involved in residence education.
4. To maintain a working relationship with other professional organizations, student associations and other commissions, divisions and agencies within ACPA that maintain similar or overlapping objectives.
5. To cultivate professional development experiences through sponsoring and implementing convention programs and regional workshops.
6. To assist in developing a set of professional standards for staff working in residence halls.
7. To develop a plan and a process for evaluating the work and leadership of the commission.

Get Involved!

There are three primary ways in which you can get involved!

1. Check the Housing and Residential Life Commission box on your ACPA membership application. By doing this, you'll become a member and receive *Life-Line*, the commission newsletter. This publication will keep you updated on the activities of the commission. If you didn't do this on your original membership application, you can log into the ACPA site to update your membership information and join the commission.
2. Serve as a member of the directorate body. Visit the commission Web site for more information.
3. Volunteer to assist with the commission's many services and resources, including: awards (review submissions), sponsored convention programs (evaluate program proposals), newsletter (submit an article for *Life-Line*), convention showcase (assist in the planning of the showcase for the annual convention), and business meetings (attend the annual business meeting and have your voice heard).

**WE'RE ON THE
WEB!**

VISIT US AT:

[www.myacpa.org/
comm/housing](http://www.myacpa.org/comm/housing)

For information about this edition of *Life-Line* or for information about future submissions, please contact:

Carla Dennis at
cadennis@uga.edu.

Contributors for this Issue:

Carla Dennis
Josh De War
Adrian Gage
Camilla Roberts
Ashley Mouberry Sieman
Franklyn Taylor
Jonathan Todd

Some of the content of *Life-Line* was pulled from the ACPA and HRL Commission Web site at www.myacpa.org.