



## Chair's Welcome

**Heather Shea Gasser**  
The University of Arizona  
Chair, Commission for Commuter Students &  
Adult Learners



**D**ear Commission Member:  
As we near the mid-point of the summer, many of us are in the midst of orientation programs and summer planning. Others are preparing for summer vacations and perhaps time away from campus. Our hope is that this summer is both productive and relaxing for you. This issue of the Commission's eNews will provide you with valuable tips and information about various topics that you can take back and apply on your campus as you provide services and programs, as well as advocate on behalf of commuter students and adult learners.

## Commission Institutes New Task Forces

**Heather Shea Gasser**

**T**he Commission Directorate has formed two new task forces on sustainability and student parents that will be working over the next year to address pertinent issues for commuter students and adult learners. What does this mean for you? Please contact the chair of each taskforce to find out! At a minimum we are hoping for dialogue about these important topics, perhaps a convention program proposal, roundtable, and articles for this newsletter (published quarterly).

- **Taskforce on Sustainability:** What does sustainability mean for our students who commute to campus? How can our Commission provide suggestions to the larger ACPA Sustainability Taskforce that specifically address the sustainability issues that most affect commuter students? Obviously transportation initially comes to mind. Chair: **Leslie Perkins** ([lperkins@aia.edu](mailto:lperkins@aia.edu))
- **Taskforce on Student Parents:** What are the specific needs of students who have children on our campuses? Child care? Financial Aid? Changing Tables? What resources and information can our Commission develop that would assist campuses in meeting the needs of this historically underserved (or completely un-served) population? Chair: **Heather Gasser** ([gasser@email.arizona.edu](mailto:gasser@email.arizona.edu))

## CAS Standards Update

**Jennifer Bonnet, Coordinator,**  
National Clearinghouse for  
Commuter Programs  
University of Maryland

**T**he recently published sixth edition of the CAS Professional Standards for Higher Education is a landmark publication within student affairs, with far-reaching applications for Commuter and Off-Campus Living Programs. This edition is intended to assist practitioners in designing comprehensive and innovative programs, in building a foundation for professional development opportunities, and in informing self-assessment and evaluation procedures.

The CAS Self-Assessment Guide (SAG) and Framework for Assessing Learning Development Outcomes (FALDO) are additional publications that accompany the new CAS Professional Standards. Highlighting the nature and extent of program assessment, they provide a wealth of information for determining the effectiveness, scope, and viability of Commuter and Off-Campus Living Programs.

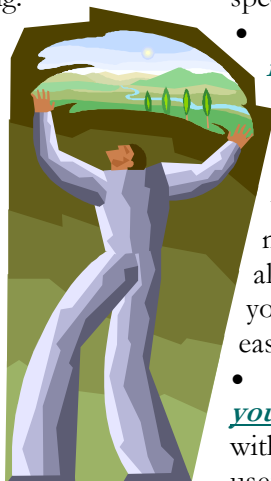
At the 2007 joint meeting in Orlando, the National Clearinghouse for Commuter Programs presented about the application of the CAS Standards to commuter programming. For a copy of the Powerpoint presentation, please visit [www.nccp.umd.edu](http://www.nccp.umd.edu), which includes a link to the CAS Web site.

## Trinkets or Trash? Our Role in Sustainability

Ann H. Wilson Heinl

For ACPA members, our role in impacting global sustainability has been a hot topic. Striking the balance between the desired impact of our programming and the reduction of waste can help us more wisely use our resources for maximum bang.

As we begin to look toward fall kick-offs, it is time to purchase promotional giveaways for our commuters and adult learners. Often we decide to go with the latest gizmo or ask students what nifty little do-dad they might like, but sometimes we do not stop to consider the lifespan of these items. Once we distribute them at an event, do we see some left behind or in trashcans? Was all the time and effort we went through to design, order, pay for, store, lug around, and hand out these giveaways all for naught? Consider the following tips:



- **Always request bids from several vendors.** Even if you have a favorite vendor or if your order is small, other vendors may quote you a better price in anticipation of larger orders later. By putting your items out to bid and saving money, you can potentially divert savings to other programs.
- **Consider more than one giveaway item.** Residents and traditional off-campus students might like laundry bags, but adult learners or long-distance commuters may instead appreciate a public transportation discount card, car air freshener, or free locker rental. Additionally, you can select items that any student would like such as decals, key chains, ID holders, gift cards, etc.
- **Always put your logo and the most important information on your giveaway.** Your office name is great, but a Web site students can visit for more information is even better. As imprint space allows, add your email, phone, office location, or snip-its of why they would care to learn more (locker rentals, free breakfast/lunches, etc.).
- **Consider a partner in promotion and share the cost and logo space.** Does your Info Desk handle locker rentals or laptop checkouts? Does your coffee house want to advertise to those on the go? Is your Rec Department looking to increase the number of players on intramural teams? Pick a giveaway that relates to your partnership for an even better impact.
- **Consider buying fewer items that have a greater impact.** For example, travel mugs may be more practical for daily use to, on, and from campus than

stadium cups. Students may bring and use them more frequently and in turn increase your exposure to other students. (If you do get those travel mugs, see if your coffee shop/dining hall will work out a special promotion for free or discounted refills).

- **Consider alternatives that will not negatively impact your budget.** Using the travel mug example, perhaps you could instead **sell** your customized mugs to students, especially if the dining location will support a deal or coupons that could in effect be a greater value than the mug alone. Win-win-win! Think about what already exists on campus and see if you can get your logo there. It might be more cost effective and easy than you think!
- **Think about the lifespan of giveaways on your campus.** Some items might have a good tie-in with commuters/adult learners that can serve a useful purpose while they are on campus: key chains, cd cases, retractable modem cords, flash drives, mini first aid kits, mini sewing kits, magnet with calendar of upcoming events, compact umbrella, dual highlighter/pen, memo pad, water bottles, carabineers, lip balm, mint tins, etc. Ask promotional vendors for other ideas!

Writing instruments and t-shirts are two great items that are cost effective and may last longer. You can always hand out a pen or pencil after students sign-in for an event, leave them in large lecture halls, or ask the library to hand them out at the circulation desk. If a pen or pencil is left behind, often times another student will pick it up and keep it. So your item impacted more than one person. T-shirts can also be fairly inexpensive and if you have a hip enough design, students will wear them! You could make a competition out of it; consider working with graphic design/art students for better quality. This could provide practical experience for them, and since they are designing for their peers it could increase the “wearability” of your t-shirt. If your budget allows, buy some short sleeve and some long sleeve so that they can be worn year round.

Again the idea is not to eliminate giveaways, but rather to be more responsive to our role in sustainability and think more critically about their impact and lifespan.

**Editor’s Note: Are you doing something on your campus related to sustainability? Email [mckoyd@uncw.edu](mailto:mckoyd@uncw.edu) and we will share your ideas!**

## Creating Commuter Allies at Orientation

Victoria Svoboda, Associate Dean of Students  
University of St. Thomas, MN

**H**ow can we educate our student leaders to be better allies and advocates for our commuter population? Orientation programs are a great place to start. What examples do orientation leaders use that are exclusive to resident students or not relevant for commuter students? What answers do they provide that may have an unintended negative impact on a commuter student? What role could orientation play in helping commuter students feel like they belong and matter on our campus? Consider the following exercises to help student leaders realize how they might re-frame their comments to new students.

**Situation:** On the way to the cafeteria for lunch, the Orientation Leader (OL) says, “This is what we call ‘The Caf.’ If you live on this side of campus, you can eat lunch here every day and use up your meal plan.”

**Re-framing:** Commuter students may not frequent the service areas as resident students, and may need to find places to eat on- and off-campus, understand the differences in meal plan options and express/debit accounts, and learn where they can store lunches from home. **A more commuter-friendly response might be...**

**Situation:** An OL discusses some of the transition issues a new student faces and says, “College is a wonderful time. Sure your parents are supportive, but it’s great to get out on your own – away from your parents. If you work it right, they’ll even send you care packages and be nice when you go back to visit them on weekends.”

**Re-framing:** It is likely that this kind of statement might exclude a number of students – those without family support, commuters, out-of-state, working class, etc. **A more commuter-friendly response might be...**

**Situation:** A parent asks whether it is safe to be alone on campus at night and the OL responds, “If you think about it, our campus is like a small city, so you need to practice good safety habits like you would anywhere

else. Since there is no reason to be alone, just be sure you get people from your floor to go with you at night.”

**Re-framing:** Commuters might be better served by learning about safety escorts, “blue light” systems, lighting near bus stops, knowing campus police phone number and how it is dialed from both on- and off-campus, motor vehicle assistance programs, emergency overnight accommodations, safety issues off-campus, etc. **A more commuter-friendly response might be...**



**Situation:** While in the middle of a discussion about finding assistance if you have a problem and on-campus resources available, the OL says, “There are lots of places on campus you can go if you need assistance. If you have a problem and don’t know where to go for help, just ask your RA.”

**Re-framing:** Commuter students may instead need to know about advisors, making friends and forming networks early on, working on campus, visiting with faculty during office hours, using the campus support services, etc. **A more commuter-friendly response might be...**

**Situation:** A student asks for directions on how to get to Health Services, and the OL says, “It’s right across the street from Residence Hall X.”

**Re-framing:** Navigation points and landmarks vary depending on your experience of campus. Try to use academic buildings as landmarks and/or be careful of assuming commuters know where residence halls are located. Make sure OLs know shuttle locations, parking lots, public transit locations on or near campus. On our campus, people always say that first-year students aren’t eligible for campus parking permits, but that’s only true for first-year resident students. Imagine how that information is received by a commuter. **A more commuter-friendly response might be...**

**Editor’s Note:** Are you doing something innovative at your orientation? Let us know! Email [mckoyd@uncw.edu](mailto:mckoyd@uncw.edu).

## 10 Tips for Success at Your Commuter Fair

Dana McKoy, Coordinator of Commuter & Non-Traditional Student Services

University of North Carolina Wilmington

The fall semester is just around the corner, and many of us are already planning a fall Commuter Services Fair. Typically these fairs assist our commuting students in connecting to a variety of university offices and student organizations and learning more about their valuable services.

Here are some great tips to help make your fair even more successful:

1. **Hold the fair early.** Catch students' attention and educate them about relevant services early in the semester before they settle into their routines. The first day (or week) of classes is ideal, and a very public reminder that your institution cares about its commuters. Consider making the fair part of "Commuter Appreciation Day" on your campus.
2. **Hold it in a location commuters will frequent.** Obviously, this may be subject to the space available on your campus. However when possible choose a location that's convenient for students who are driving or bussing in, perhaps near a popular eatery or student center on campus.
3. **Hold the fair during lunch time and offer food.** Tell students to come by and enjoy lunch on you. Food doesn't have to be expensive, either. Check with local pizza and ice cream vendors and remind them that commuters are busy people who often don't have time to cook dinner. In exchange, allow them to distribute coupons or menus.
4. **Ask students which Fair participants to invite.** Ask several students, "As a commuter, what was your biggest concern during your first two weeks here?" and then invite the office(s) and programs on campus that address those needs. Their answers may surprise you!
5. **Make it fun & festive!** Play music relating to any form of commuting—driving, walking, bussing, even skateboarding! If your budget allows, use helium balloons, colorful table covers and other festive decorations.
6. **Offer a variety of door prizes.** These always draw in students, and are more ecologically friendly than too many promo items or giveaways.
7. **Advertise! Advertise! Advertise!** Find creative ways to advertise and talk about the fair at all pre-semester events (such as orientation). Also, if you have a divisional committee that plans your master "Welcome Week" schedule, ask them to include your event in the official bulletin.
8. **Use the fair as an opportunity to involve commuter students.** Volunteering at the commuter fair is a great way for new first-year and transfer students to learn more about the university and make great connections with other students, faculty and staff on campus.
9. **Be intentional about learning outcomes.** Consider a continuously-cycling PowerPoint presentation that illustrates how each office represented at the fair can help students with their educational outcomes.



## Awards Spotlight: Third Wednesday

Jan Lloyd

University of South Florida  
Lakeland

3W (Third Wednesday) is a collaborative monthly program between the Student Activities Board at Polk Community College and the Office of Student Life at University of South Florida Lakeland. Conversations began in August 2006 when both institutions recognized the importance of building community for their campuses so that students would not be tempted to just take their classes and leave.

This non-residential and non-traditional campus had not implemented student life functions (Student Activities, Intramural, Student Organizations, and Volunteer Programs) until June 2006. Previous programming was coordinated by the USFL Student Government Association and the PCC Student Activities Board but only consisted of approximately twelve programs each academic year.

For the 3W event concept, the PCC Student Activities Board and USFL split the financial cost; USFL provided funding for the activities themselves and Polk CC provided funding for food. Collectively, both institutions advertised the events to their respective students, faculty, and staff so that a full campus community activity takes place each month.

Themes for 3W programs included a 3W Kick-off, a Coffeehouse Theme, Constitution Day, and a "What Winter?" Theme where we celebrated Florida's warm "winters." Approximately 200-300 people participated in each 4-hour event.

*Continued on page 7*



**Award winners receive their certificates and plaques at the April 2007 NASPA/ACPA Joint Meeting in Orlando, Florida.**

## Congratulations Award Winners!

Each year at the ACPA Annual Convention, the Commission highlights a distinguished group of professionals, students and programs that have been selected for Commission awards. In each issue of this eNews, we will provide a description of one outstanding award winner, so that you can glean new ideas from these innovative colleagues and their best practices in commuter & adult learner programs. (see our first column on page 3). Congratulations to the following award winners:

### Outstanding Collaboration

#### Recipients:

- 3W - Third Wednesday Events, *University of South Florida Lakeland*.
- The Rental World Video, *Colorado State University*.

#### Runner Up:

- Intergenerational Book Club and Writing, *Colorado State University*.

#### Honorable Mentions

- Off-Campus Student Services, *Texas State University*.
- Program for Adult Students with Children, *University of North Carolina Greensboro*.
- Off-Campus Housing Database, *University of Arkansas—Fayetteville*.

### Adult Learner Program

#### Recipients:

- Non-Trad. Student Leadership Awards, *University of Arkansas - Fayetteville*.
- Adult Learner Focus (of the College Student Personnel program), *Bowling Green State University*.

#### Runners Up:

- National Non-Trad Student Recognition Week, *Colorado State University*.

### Runners Up, continued:

- Non-Trad Student Resource Handbook, *Central Washington University*.

### Honorable Mentions:

- The Quest Newsletter, *Central Washington University*.
- Brain Works, *University of North Carolina Greensboro*.
- Non-Traditional Students Week, *Carlow University*.
- Ph.D. in Nursing Science Program, *Indiana University*.
- ADVANCE@Mount Mercy College, *Mount Mercy College*.

### Commuter/Adult Learner Perspective by a Professional

#### Recipient:

- James (Jim) R. Hintz, *Ohio University*.

#### Runner Up:

- Ryan C. Holmes, *La Salle University*.

### Commuter/Adult Learner Perspective by a Student

#### Recipient:

- Laura J. Steirman, *University of St. Thomas, MN*.



## 2007-08 ACPA Commuter Commission Directorate:

**Top Row (L to R): Antonio Delgado, Jennifer Bonnet, Jessica Grace, Amy Parsons-O'Keefe, Christina Dominici, Susan Stiers, Ramona Arthur**

**Middle Row: Dana McKoy, Brett Mongeon, Leslie Perkins**

**Front Row: Erik Dussault, Heather Gasser, Laura Yamin, Leslie Perkins, Stefanie Stefancic**

**Not pictured: John Garland, Barbara Jacoby and Carolyn Palmer.**

## Welcome New Directorate Members!

The Directorate for the ACPA Commission for Commuter Students & Adult Learners oversees the agenda for all Commission activities relevant to commuter and adult student advocacy, programs, services, and research. Representatives are elected annually by the Commission constituency to a three-year term of service that includes committee involvement, networking with colleagues, program presentation, and leadership opportunities. For a complete listing of Directorate members, visit our Web site at [www.myacpa.org/comm/commuter](http://www.myacpa.org/comm/commuter). Please join us in welcoming our most recent members!

### **Ramona Arthur, Director of Off-Campus and Transfer Student Services University of Maryland Baltimore County**

Ramona hails from Baltimore, "the Charm City." She supervises the "Commuter Connection" outreach program, UMBC's Good Neighbor Program, off-campus housing and commuter student services. Ramona is proud to work with a fantastic team of staff, student coordinators and graduate assistants of the Transfer Student Network, a peer leader program for transfer and adult students, as well as the Maryland chapter of Tau Sigma, the national honor society for incoming Transfer students. Ramona's philosophy is "every student matters." She has been a member of ACPA and the NCCP for several years.

### **Jennifer Bonnet, Ex Officio—National Clearinghouse for Commuter Programs Liaison Coordinator of the National Clearinghouse for Commuter Programs University of Maryland**

In addition to her role with the Clearinghouse, Jennifer serves as the Graduate Assistant to the Off-Campus Student Involvement office at the University of Maryland (UM), an intern in the UM Community Service Learning office, and a Master's student in the UM College Student Personnel Program. She co-advises the UM chapter of Circle K International, as well as the Off-Campus Student Programming Board, and is excited to be a directorate member for the Commission for Commuter Students and Adult Learners.

### **Christina Dominici, Student Affairs Officer, Molecular & Cell Biology Graduate Affairs Office University of California at Berkeley**

Christina advises graduate students in their 3rd year of grad school and beyond. (Most of UCB's students are commuters, and by the time they are in their last year of the program, most students are in their 30's and removed from the "traditional" undergraduate population.) Christina has a background in psychology and counseling, and is still adjusting to a large public research institution after spending six years at small private liberal arts college. However, she is excited about her new role as an advocate for adult learners and commuters.

### **Jessica Grace, Assistant Director, Commuter and Off Campus Student Programs and Services Drexel University**

Jessica, a native of Cleveland, Ohio, came to Drexel University in the Fall of 2004 as Assistant Director for Commuter and Off Campus Student Programs and Services. Jessica has been involved in developing and implementing programs and



Commission directorate members **Tony Delgado** and **Dana McKoy** staff the **Commuter/Adult Learner Commission table** at the **April ACPA/NASPA Joint Meeting Showcase**.

**Congrats to Tony and his hard-working team who designed an eye-catching tropical display and secured the donation of lovely vanilla-coconut scented candles to distribute to those who visited the table. Congrats also to Mackenzie Jordan from the University of Florida and Jacqueline Austin from Barbados Community College who won the iPod shuffle giveaways!**

## *Welcome New Directorate Members, from page 6*

### **Jessica Grace, continued**

services for Commuter and Transfer Students, and works diligently to advocate for commuters, both undergraduate and graduate. She also supervises an “amazing staff” of Commuter Assistants. Jessica has been a member of ACPA since 2002, and is looking forward to working on the Commission’s Directorate.

### **Stefanie Stefancic, Coordinator of Adult, Graduate and Off Campus Student Services**

#### **Texas A & M University**

Stephanie works with students to address leasing/landlord concerns and roommate issues, coordinates the “Bee A Good Neighbor” campaign, advises the Graduate Student Council, and works in conjunction with her office to provide services for graduate and adult students. In addition, Stefanie is currently enrolled in a doctoral program for Higher Education Administration. She spends much of her spare time with her husband Jeff and their two dogs, Copper and Flash.

### **Susan Stiers, Assistant Director, Off Campus Connections**

#### **University of Arkansas**

Susan grew up in Fayetteville, Arkansas and remains a native of a fast-growing Northwest Arkansas. This year, she is celebrating 30 years as a staff member at the University of Arkansas. Adopting the philosophy of “better late than never,” Susan has recently returned to classes to obtain a Bachelor’s degree and will be the first in her family to complete a degree program at a four-year institution. She is an avid reader, enjoys television, theatre, and film, and enjoys her role as aunt to numerous nieces and nephews.

### **Laura Yamin, Coordinator of Transfer and Transitioning Student Services**

#### **New York University**

Laura grew up in San Juan, Puerto Rico. She joined the New York University staff in January 2006. Laura has been involved in developing and implementing programs for transfer, commuter students and all-university Welcome

## **Contact Us!**

We’d love your feedback about this newsletter, article submissions, or suggestions for upcoming issues. Please contact

**Dana McKoy** with your comments and submissions at [mckoyd@uncw.edu](mailto:mckoyd@uncw.edu).

Need more info about the Commission? Visit

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

## *10 Tips, from page 4*

(Tip 9, cont’d): At UNCW, our PowerPoint is tied to our *Cornerstone Statement*. For example: “I am an engaged learner in constant search of knowledge: Need help with a difficult course? University Learning Services can help you.”

### ***Tip 10. Don’t forget to assess!***

In order to continually improve your fair, utilize a relevant assessment tool linked to learning outcomes. (A bonus tip: Position a door prize/survey table near the exit door. Tell students, “Please fill out this survey of our fair and qualify for great prizes!” Include the door prize registration as a perforated section at the bottom of your Fair evaluation. You may receive higher participation rates!)

## **Inside our next edition...**

- **Hot Topics:** A briefing of timely topics in the commuter/adult learner fields from Dr. Barbara Jacoby, NCCP Scholar
- **Best Practices:** Tips for making your campus more friendly for students with children; Ideas for celebrating National Non-Traditional Student Appreciation Week in November
- **Educating Students:** Plan an alternative spring break trip for local commuter students
- And much more!