

Post-Convention Newsletter

July 2010

Commission for
Commuter Students and
Adult Learners

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Welcome from the Chair!

By [Gerry Panelo Elizondo](#)

Welcome to the Post-Convention edition of the Commission for Commuter Students and Adult Learners Newsletter! The 2010 Convention at Boston was, as always, professionally stimulating and a wonderful opportunity to (re) connect with colleagues both old and new. I am extremely happy that we have welcomed 10 new directorate members to the Directorate board. I do want to acknowledge - Jessica Edonick, Stefanie Stefancic, Laura Yamin, Stephanie Zuniga, and Katie Munsch - wonderful members who have completed their Directorate service to the Commission this past March. It is working with wonderful colleagues like them, in addition to all the members of the Commission, that make our work worthwhile and enjoyable. Enjoy the latest edition of the Newsletter!



Commission News/Updates!

By [Raechel Matyas](#), Owens Community College

1. The Commission for Commuter Students & Adult Learners is on Facebook!

There you will find relevant Commission links, articles, archives, and open discussion space. The Facebook page is a great opportunity to network with other professionals who may have interests that align with your own.

If you are a Facebook user you can “like” our page by:

- [Clicking here to visit our page!](#)
- Or searching for us via the Facebook search box option with: “ACPA Commission for Commuter Students and Adult Learners.”

2. The Commission also has a new blog!

Here professionals interested in commuter students and adult learners can share their ideas and stimulate discussion.

- Check it out at: www.ccsal.wordpress.com

ACPA News/Updates!

By [Raechel Matyas](#), Owens Community College

1. Interested in the ACPA / NASPA consolidation efforts?

- Check out:: <http://www2.myacpa.org/au/governance/unification.php> for the most up to date news and information!

2. ACPA response to Arizona immigration law S.B. 1070

- ACPA will be relocating the 2011 Donna M. Bourassa Mid-Level Management Institute in response to the new Arizona immigration law.



- Check out the full media release at: http://www2.myacpa.org/img/Arizona_SB1070_May10.pdf

Boston Convention Recap

By: [Raechel Matyas](#), *Owens Community College*

With the 2010 Boston Convention behind us, now is the time to reflect on what we learned and share that knowledge with one another. Here Commission for Commuter Students & Adult Learners members will highlight one session they attended at Convention and give you a snippet of that session with important take-away points. Enjoy!

Social Media: A Trendy Tool that Produces Revolutionary Results

(Presenters: *Edward P Wright, Mount St. Mary's University & Kelly Showard, Canisius College*)

Distance Learning Meets RA Training: Creating Innovative Online Training Components.

(Presenters: *Amanda J Horvat, Lynda O'Malley, Susan McNeilly, & Christina King, Hofstra University*)

By [Amy O'Keefe](#), *Texas Women's University*

My place in student affairs is a unique one. As the Assistant Director of Commuter and Distance Education Student Services, I live with one foot planted in student life and the other in distance education. I attended ACPA's conference for the first time this year with the hopes of finding more people like myself who are trying to bridge the gap between student affairs and distance education by providing more support and services to online learners. Although I didn't meet anyone who fits that description exactly, I was encouraged by a number of elements.

In my "distance education world" understanding the benefits of and using technology is fundamental. I was very pleased to see conference organizers offer social networking opportunities through Twitter. Personally, Twitter was a way for me to have access to information about sessions I couldn't attend and to people I might not have interacted with otherwise.

At Texas Woman's University, we are constantly exploring how we can use social media to "meet our students where they are" in order to make connections and build relationships. In the session "Social Media: A Trendy Tool," I learned how two other universities are using social media. It was great to see that they too had been exploring various tools to determine what worked well for their students and institution. One suggestion they made was to use your students. I've since hired a student to be our "Social Media Support Staff," which means she will actively monitor and create content for our social networks.

The other session I was really pleased to see was "Distance Learning Meets RA Training: Creating Innovative Online Training Components." Through the use of Blackboard, this university developed a course to train new and returning RAs. The RAs were required to complete the training prior to coming back to campus to prepare for the arrival of students. Online education affords students with the flexibility to "attend class" on their own schedule and at their own pace. Plus, with the instructional materials online, students (in this case RAs) can go back to reference information when they need it.



Lesla Shouse (pictured) won a Boston Red Sox jersey by visiting the Commission for Commuter Students & Adult Learners table at the 2010 Convention Showcase!



Gerry Panelo-Elizondo (Chair) *center-left* and Jeannette Passmore (director member) *center-right* are shown here with the Commission for Commuter Students & Adult Learners Next Generation 2010 scholarship recipients: *left* Sarah Schultz, Grand Valley State University and *right* Kyle Meadows, Salem State College.

As student affairs professionals, we need to follow the lead of those I've mentioned above by taking a tool or situation and turning it upside down to see what we can do differently to accomplish our goals. Even if an institution does not offer online degrees, when they use technology to reach the most distant student, all other students benefit from better access to their services.

Please contact [Amy O'Keefe](#) with questions regarding this article.

Boston Convention Recap Continued...

E-Student Affairs: Innovative High-Touch in a High Tech World

(Presenters: Amy O'Keefe, Allison Mabry, Annie Phillips Newton, Texas Woman's University, & Shannon Ritter, Penn State University)

By [Gerry Panelo Elizondo](#), Carnegie Mellon Silicon Valley

This ACPA convention workshop, featuring our very own Directorate member Amy O'Keefe and her colleagues from Texas Women's University and Penn State University, was a think-outside-the-box workshop that delved into using technology and social media in engaging remote and online learners. For professionals like I who work on a campus that serves local and remote learners, this workshop examined various ways to engage students using Facebook, Twitter, Blackboard and Second Life to ensure students are connecting to campus resources and finding novel ways to involve themselves in the campus culture. It was interesting to learn how two different universities are utilizing social media in their outreach to essentially commuter and adult learner students, plus gauging its great impact in student engagement and connection to the institution. For more information about the workshop, contact Amy O'Keefe at aokeefe@twu.edu.

Undocumented Students & Access to Higher Education

By: [Raechel Matyas](#), Owens Community College

(Presenters: Kern Williams, Emory University & Kenneth Holmes, University of Bridgeport)

There were two sessions at the 2010 Convention centered around the growing issue of undocumented students and the challenges they face in higher education. I found these sessions both timely and informative. This particular session was well attended and sparked discussion among attendees. This issue is important because over 65,000 undocumented students graduate from U.S. high schools each year, many of whom wind up on our campuses and in our offices. This session focused on defining undocumented students, understanding the laws that might affect them, and resources for how can we better assist this population on our own campuses. Attendees were encouraged to discuss the issue and share their own knowledge with others. This kind of sharing of ideas is important in student affairs and especially with new issues such as this one. A major issue that was discussed was how difficult a legal route to citizenship can be for these students. Many undocumented students were brought into the United States by their parents at a young age and have completed their K-12 education in the U.S. public education system. This session brought many challenges that undocumented students face to light such as: being required to pay out-of-state tuition, not having access to federal or state financial aid, not knowing where to turn upon graduation, and more. If you are interested in the topic of access to education or in learning more about undocumented students in general feel free to contact me at: raechel_matyas@owens.edu for resources or a recommended reading list.

2011 Commission Awards Information

By: [Raechel Matyas](#), Owens Community College

This year we had five outstanding programs and/or professionals receive awards from the Commission. Now is the time to start thinking about your 2011 Awards nominees!

Awards categories include:

- **Outstanding Commuter Program**
- **The Commuter/Adult Learner Perspective by a Student**
- **The Commuter/Adult Learner Perspective by a Student Development Professional**
- **Outstanding Collaboration**
- **Outstanding Adult Learner Program**

Detailed descriptions of each category and previous recipients can be found on our [website!](#)3



Boston Convention Recap Continued...

Got SOUL?: Revolutionary Ways to Combine Leadership Education and Technology

By: [Annie Phillips Newton](#), Texas Women's University

(Presenters: Terri Frysh & Melanie Cruz, University of Buffalo)

Last year, this program won Program of the Year through the Commission for Student Involvement. The presenters were very enthusiastic and passionate about Got SOUL which stands for Student Organizations Understanding Leadership. At University of Buffalo, students have the opportunity to earn a leadership certificate by completing a variety of training options. Frysh & Cruz adapted their existing leadership handbook and created modules based on the various chapters. These modules were posted on Blackboard where students could read the information and take a quiz. The presenters quickly found they needed to adapt the questions because it was clear students were skipping the material and taking the quizzes immediately. They created application questions and it appeared students understanding of the material improved. Upon completion of the Blackboard program, students were eligible to participate in a leadership boot camp which ultimately leads to earning the leadership certificate.

During the open discussion, a major point of discussion was the effectiveness of providing a range of choices for students. Staff from Bridgewater State, described their research which demonstrated an increase in participation when students were offered a variety of levels involvement. They recently shared this research in a webinar focusing on addressing the needs of under involved students. To their surprise they discovered when students were offered three levels of participation ranging from minimal, such as completing Blackboard module or listening to a series of podcasts, to level 3 which required peer mentoring, the majority of students choose level 1 or 3 and not the middle as predicted. Although Bridgewater State is primarily residential, traditional age students, we've found at my institution, Texas Woman's University, that our primarily non-traditional, commuter students also respond well to this strategy.

In my opinion, adult learner, commuter and online student participation will increase when the variety and accessibility of leadership programs expands. As more choices and opportunities are offered online, collaboration with partners outside of Student Affairs may improve the quality of the programs. For example, instructional designers have expertise in translating the classroom experience into an interactive and dynamic online experience, far beyond simple point and click. Another beneficial partnership is with faculty. To increase accessibility for online students, this type of leadership education could be plugged directly into existing online courses. Faculty could tap into the training throughout the academic term as it applies to the material.

Although Got SOUL is targeted for traditional aged residential students, this program as well as ideas surfaced during the discussion are certainly adaptable and beneficial for improving accessibility of leadership education for off campus students and adult learners.

New directorate members Raechel Matyas and Alex Adjei were listening intently and taking notes at the Commission Directorate meeting at the 2010 Convention.



Please contact [Annie Phillips-Newton](#) with questions regarding this article.

Become Active on the Commission Listserv!

By [Jeannette Passmore](#), Owens Community College

Listsrv instructions: Login to your member profile at <http://www.myacpa.org>. Select "Manage Your Subscriptions" from the myRECORD section of the membership page. Scroll down Email Discussion list settings to verify that you are subscribed to the Commission for Commuter Students and Adult Learners list as a single or digest subscriber. Please note the email address you have associated with your account. You will need to send all listserv messages from that address.

Once you have verified and / or updated the list information you may send a message to the listserv using commuter_and_adults@lyris.acpa.nche.edu as the To: address.



Featured Article: #ACPA10: A Social Media Odyssey

#ACPA10: A Social Media Odyssey

by [Peter Gemmellaro](#), Suffolk University

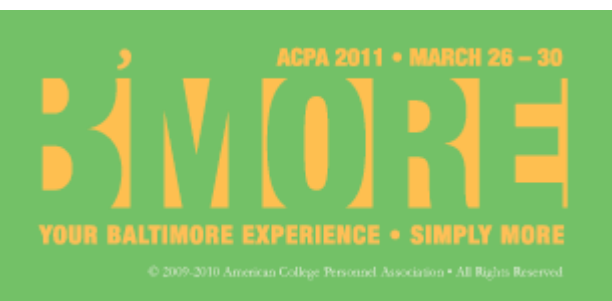
As a student affairs professional that's worked in the field for over 5 years, this was my first (shock and awe!) ACPA conference. I had previously never attended a conference where social media was embraced so much and was used to disseminate information, bringing its participants that much closer together. Facebook. Twitter. Hashtags. Tweetups. You name it, ACPA had it. Twitter was definitely the driving force behind much of the digital interaction between attendees. I think I was introduced to the official @ACPAConvention Twitter account before the Facebook account. Twitter is such a quick and easy way to connect with people without wading through all the privacy muck of Facebook. Thoughts, reviews, opinions, criticisms and conversations can all be conveyed in 140 characters...or less. ACPA was wise in utilizing this groundbreaking form of social media to connect its participants before, during and after the conference. Personally speaking, I made connections with colleagues before I even got to the conference, and wouldn't be writing this article if it weren't for a "cry for help" a colleague had tweeted.

As technology evolves and we are finding new ways to connect with others, the world of higher education must strive to stay current. If we're not utilizing social media ourselves, how can we expect our students to get on the Twitter/Facebook/blogging bandwagon? It's great that all of this social media is available to us in 2010, but how do we apply it in our field of higher education? For those of us unfamiliar or needing a refresher in how best to utilize social media to market to our students, there were a number of different sessions offered at ACPA to give us the tools we needed. I attended the session

entitled Contextualizing Online Social Media Use for Student Learning and Development, run by Jonathan Howard of the University of Rochester. There were quite a number of us in this session, so we broke down into small groups to discuss various topics concerning our familiarity with social media, how we utilize it, pros/cons of social media and what some of the best practices are when employing social media as a PR tool. The best practices that were shared from staff members across institutions helped us to better understand how we as administrators can use social media as a marketing instrument. Learning how students are using these technologies can help professionals know where we need to begin and how to meet students where they are currently skilled. Engagement is clearly the name of the game here.

Now that we've laid a solid social media foundation for this year's ACPA conference, where will we be next year? Will social media still have a solid footing in the lives of the student affairs professional? Will Twitter, Facebook, Flickr, blogs, etc. be relevant to a college student's experience? How can we hone our best practices and keep up with the needs of the American college student? These new forms of social networking have certainly enriched my personal and professional life, and I think my ACPA 2010 experience would have been lacking if not for the indispensable advent of the #acpa10 hashtag.

Peter is the Assistant Director of Off-Campus Housing at Suffolk University in Boston, MA. He is also an adjunct faculty member in the English Department at Suffolk University.



Save the Date!

ACPA 2011 Convention

March 26-30, 2011 | Baltimore, MD

Featured Directorate Member: Margaret Langford

Each newsletter we feature a Commission for Commuter Student and Adult Learners Directorate member. This edition we are featuring newly appointed directorate member, [Margaret Langford](#).

Margaret is the Assistant Coordinator for the Adult, Graduate, and Off-Campus Student Services at Texas A & M University. She coordinates the Aggie Up program for Adult, Graduate, and Off-Campus Student Services which includes a committee of campus and community stakeholders, Walk and Talks, Aggie Up outreach carnivals and the Noise Abatement Class. She also coordinates the Marketing Package and plans the Spring Aggeland Market for off campus vendors. She advises Off Campus Aggies, the student voice for off campus students and Maggies, a women's leadership development organization.

Margaret was kind enough to answer the following questions for this section. She can be contacted by email at: margaretl@studentlife.tamu.edu.

1. What is your favorite aspect of your position?

I enjoy working with people from so many different areas. I work with three different police departments, Code Enforcement Officers, the fire department, the Sheriff's Office and some others. Then I have all of the on campus departments I work with such as Alcohol and Drug Education Programs, Student Conflict Resolution Services, The Association of Former Students and plenty of others.

2. What's the best/worst career advice you've ever been given?

The best advice is to make sure you're getting what you need out of your position. If you're not getting the professional development you need, ask. If you're not getting the assistance you need, ask. You don't get anything if you don't ask for it.

3. What is your favorite student development theory and why?

My favorite is Kohlberg's (1981) Theory of Moral Development. It really struck home with me when I learned it and I use it every time I teach Noise Abatement and try to get students to understand their excessive noise from a different perspective.

4. What are your favorite extra-curricular activities?

I like cooking but enjoy baking more. I used to like taking my dog for long walks in the afternoon but now it's too hot in Texas so we've switched to mornings. I love reading and I have a weakness for shopping.

5. What books are you reading?

I just finished *The Help* and it was amazing. Next, I'm starting *Beach Music* by Pay Conroy and *My Heart May Be Broken But My Hair Still Looks Great* by Dixie Cash. As you can see, it's still too soon after grad school for too much academic reading.

6. Are you Right-handed or Left-handed?

I am right handed but do some things left handed, like holding a bat or a racket.

7. Where were you born?

I was born in Lexington County Hospital in Columbia, South Carolina.

8. What's the most memorable class you've ever taken?

I think most of my classes were memorable but my favorite one was Student Development Theories.

9. Favorite quote:

"The grass may be greener on the other side but you still have to mow it."

Closing Comments from the Chair!

By [Gerry Panelo Elizondo](#)

I hope that you enjoyed the latest edition of the Newsletter and gained valuable information to bring back to your own work on your campus and in your region! Please keep us informed with what's new and exciting, plus ways that the Commission can help you be a stronger commuter and adult learner advocate on your campus. Feel free to contact me at gerry.elizondo@sv.cmu.edu or connect with us via [Facebook](#), our [Blog](#), and our [Website](#)!



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