

TACUSPA TIMES

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Message from the President...

Ahhh!...another fall semester! By now, you have met many of your new students and their families, the residence halls are bursting with activity, the orientation staff is relishing in a job well done, athletic teams are competing, the campus calendar is chock full of events, and our students are beginning to develop their patterns so that they can effectively manage this annual ritual we know as the beginning of a new academic year.

As a student affairs professional, this time of year is our “New Year,” meaning it brings high hopes, resolutions (or strategic plans and learning outcomes!) for things we plan to accomplish this year, and a chance to begin afresh. It is also a time to reflect on the fact that at the basic level, we are *educators*. While most of us are not in the classroom, we still have opportunities to impact the lives of students in profound ways through our various functional areas, such as residence life, student activities, parent/family programs, and academic support programs just to name a few. Parker J. Palmer, a noted educational philosopher, writes in *The Courage to Teach* that “good teaching cannot be reduced to technique; good teaching comes from the identity and integrity of the teacher.” Palmer continues to describe how he believes that a strong sense of identity is what allows one to have the most impact in the lives of students. Thus, the quote goes to the character we must possess as professionals in order to meet the demands of our calling. While Palmer is writing primarily about the dynamics in a classroom, I think this premise holds true for our work with students in the co-curricular arena, as well.

One of the reasons that TACUSPA exists is to give you the support and tools you need to fulfill your calling as an educator and administrator. I hope you will join me, and many other TACUSPA colleagues, as we gather together at the Hotel Galvez for our annual fall conference. The dates for this meeting are October 5-7. A wealth of details about this important even can be found at our TACUSPA website, too.

Best of luck during this semester!

Sincerely,
Dr. Stephen C. Sutton
TACUSPA President



Dr. Stephen C. Sutton
Vice President of Student Affairs
University of St. Thomas

TACUSPA Fall Conference

October 5-7 Galveston, TX

Surfs Up! . . . and the Currents are Converging at the Coast for the Annual TACUSPA Fall Conference, October 5 – 7, 2008 at the historic Hotel Galvez in Galveston, Texas. Participants will be treated not only to the special historic accommodations but also to enthusiastic keynote speakers and worthwhile and engaging educational programs. And as always (It's a TACUSPA tradition you know?!), great food, great receptions and time for shopping on the Galveston Strand and Seawall!



First of all, the conference committee has selected three outstanding speakers for your benefit. I truly believe that you must hear what these folks have to say. Rather than me paraphrasing their abstract, I asked each speaker to tell me why it is important that you hear their message.

Many of you have heard and seen Dr. Scott Swail, President and CEO of the Educational Policy Institute, in his many webinar workshops. You know that he has a wealth of information that really can guide our practices into becoming 'best practices'. Scott says, *"Higher education is currently undergoing a slow-but-steady transformation. The pressures of globalization, evolving funding structures, and a marked change in the ethnic and academic background of students are forcing administrators and practitioners to revisit their institutional practices. In this keynote address, I will talk about the how emerging trends in higher education and the economy impact what student affairs personnel need to do on campus. As well, we'll gaze into the future and provide a perspective on what may be lurking on the horizon."*

And if you've never heard of MediaSauce, you're about to and you'll never forget them! Sarah Robbins and Scott Henderson, and the MediaSauce team, have made it their mission to transform the often confusing and unpredictable world of technology into not only understandable concepts, but also

into vehicles that can be used to increase student success from unfathomable new perspectives. The "Intelligil" asks, *"How many times has your campus rolled out a big idea only to find that students just didn't 'get it'? How many precious budget dollars have you spent on initiatives that never really took off? Our keynote address and breakout sessions will be your opportunity to learn how to guarantee that you're developing the best plans that, with the help of social technology, will create excitement all over campus."*

In addition to these awesome speakers, we have 20 fantastic educational presentations, most of which are being sponsored by our peers! Topics range from insight regarding Clay's Bill, creating a CAS Dashboard, getting students involved in your campus judiciary process, working with alumni relations, the ins and outs of developing a behavioral intervention team and 15 other well thought out presentations that you don't want to miss.

The traditional Monday night reception and sight-seeing adventure will take place a few blocks away at the historic business section of Galveston called the Strand. While conference goers will have the opportunity to stroll and shop throughout the fun and quaint streets of the island, heavy hors d'oeuvres will be provided on the scenic rooftop deck of the historic Tremont Inn. Bus services will also be provided.

So grab your sunglasses and let the currents put you on course for Surf pounding speakers, high tide presentations, beach party reunions, and coastline dining and flare! Student Success is our destination and Galveston is your port of call!

For more information about the conference and how to register, visit our web site at:

<http://prtl.uhcl.edu/portal/page/portal/SLO/TACUSPA>

See you there!

David Rachita

TACUSPA SUMMER INSTITUTE

June 10-13, 2008

Recap by: Linda Contreras Bullock, Chair

TACUSPA members traveled to Houston, TX for this year's Summer Institute held on June 10-13, 2008. The University of St. Thomas hosted the four day event beginning with the Dr. Stephen Sutton's President's Reception and dinner through three days of interactive presentations and an exciting Houston Astros vs. Milwaukee Brewers baseball game. Student retention is one of the topics that are most relevant to us as practitioners in higher education. With changes in education due to increasing tuition, higher book costs, and changing demographics, the institution of education as we know it presently demands attention in several areas. Persistence of students, particularly from a multicultural perspective is paramount as we begin each academic year. The Institute's theme, *New Perspectives for Innovation and Diversity in Student Retention*, was a perfect opportunity to invite internationally renowned experts in the student persistence arena.

Dr. Vasti Torres, Associate Professor of Higher Education and Student Affairs Administration, Indiana University and Past President of ACPA, discussed "Understanding the Influences that help Retain Latino/a Students". Dr. Torres' presentation targeted three areas: factors that influence retention and graduation rates; how we as practitioners may be influenced to focus on deficiencies and failures of students; and solutions to how we can re-construct our focus to address individual student needs, environmental needs and practitioner needs to facilitate successful students.

Dr. Watson Scott Swail's presentation began with some important questions for us to ponder. Dr. Swail is President and Chief Officer of The Educational Policy Institute (EPI) and his research on student retention is extensive. The following are some of the questions Dr. Swail provided for us to consider as we navigate through our planning processes at our institutions. What is student success? How do we define it? What do we want for our students and institution? Who leaves and why do our students leave? What have we done about it?



Michael Weisman of Student Voice introduced an integrated assessment system for higher education institutions. Software, assessment resources, and expert consultation are included in the system. Through a power point presentation, we were able to explore the benefits of a program developed for the University of North Carolina-Charlotte.

Responses from Institute participants indicate it was a great success. Committee members who helped plan and execute the institute are Vincent Canales, Danielle Champagne, Liz Garcia, Karen Engebrecht, Patricia McKinley, Yolanda Norman, David Rachita, Sameer Pande and Zenia Latoff. We would like to thank our sponsors, Student Voice, University of St. Thomas, ARAMARK and University of Houston-Clear Lake, who made this TACUSPA Summer Institute possible.

Did you read the BLOG?

The Graduate Education and Research committee has created a blog dedicated to current research and news in the higher education field. The "Texas Association of College and University Student Personnel Administrators: Higher Ed News" features: video clips, discussion questions, news articles, and monthly polls.

The G.E.A.R. committee also plans to include the following components on their blog: interviews with TACUSPA members, summer and fall conference highlights, and a biannual listing of thesis and dissertation titles from student affairs-based, graduate programs in Texas. Most importantly, this blog encourages feedback and interaction among TACUSPA members.

Interested members may assess the blog at this website – <http://tacuspa.blogspot.com/> or use an online program like Google Reader to subscribe to the blog's RSS feed. Google Reader (<http://reader.google.com/>) is a free online service that enables users to view all of the recent updates to a website or blog.

For more information, please contact Jennifer Edwards at: jennifertedwards@gmail.com.



What's NEW at TCU?

Find out about the Free Flu Shot Program!

All students, faculty, and staff are entitled to work in as healthy an environment as the University can reasonably be expected to provide. To that end, TCU, through the collaboration of the Department of Campus Recreation, the University Health Center, Human Resources and the School of Nursing began offering free flu shots to students, faculty and staff in 2007.

The flu virus has always been, and continues to be a major health concern especially in the confines of residence halls and crowded classrooms. Prior to 2007, the Health Center was administering approximately 250 shots per year to students for a fee of \$20 per shot. The new Health Center Director recognized the need to increase this number and began working Campus Recreation. The new \$30 million Rec Center is the center of campus activity and an easy place to reach large numbers of students. At the same time, Campus Recreation and Human Resources were collaborating to create an environment of wellness for the TCU faculty/staff.

The result was the *Take Your Best Shot Program*. 500 free flu shots were offered to students and an additional 500 shot to faculty/staff. In total, 1147 shots were administered in six hours. The event was held in the Rec Center. Hand sanitizer sprayers with the theme imprinted were given to every participant. Student nurses were on hand to measure cholesterol and blood pressure and personal trainers performed fitness assessments that included body composition, flexibility, and muscular strength. Shots were administered on a first-come basis, an issue that will address in the future. In a connected room, Human Resources conducted a benefits open house to answer question about the health plan.

For 2008 the program is expanding and being somewhat modified. 2000 shots will be offered. The primary collaboration this year is between Campus

Recreation, Human Resources, and Cigna, the TCU health insurance provider. Cigna does hundreds of flu shot clinics each year and offers a turn-key program for less cost than was previously incurred. More significantly, any faculty/staff member on the health plan will receive a free shot since wellness treatments are covered by the TCU plan. Student shots and shots for non health plan members will be charged to TCU on a per person basis. This covers the cost of the vaccine, nursing staff, supplies, sharps' containers, and epipens. TCU will have to provide a gym, tables, chairs, and some staffing to review forms and manage the lines. A reservation system will also be added. The other screenings will not be included with the event but added to a health fair in the spring semester.



The most frequent comment, especially from faculty/staff, was *thank you*. *Thank You*, not just to the providers, but to TCU. The fact that the University was giving back and showing genuine concern to its employees was heartfelt by most of the participants. This has also led to the creation of a University Committee on Faculty/Staff Wellness that is already gaining financial support from the Chancellor.

The Cost for this program in 2007 was covered by surplus funds from the Division of Student Affairs. No budgeted funds were involved. For 2008, the funding will be provided again by Student Affairs surplus funds and the University Wellness Committee.

If funding is available, this program is too successful and too easy not to be done. Good will and a healthier campus are the guaranteed results.

Submitted by,
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