



# The Eighth Vector

## The Standing Committee for Graduate Students & New Professionals The Chair's Welcome

by Mark Garrett

As chair of the Standing Committee for Graduate Students and New Professionals I am very proud of the accomplishments that the directorate members of SCGSNP have made over the past year. We convened in Philadelphia for ACPA's Annual Convention, meeting three times formally, and numerous times informally. We discussed many different ideas and issues for the future of the directorate and our role within ACPA. We also brainstormed different ways that we can better serve you, our constituents over the next few years. We appreciate the effort that many of you made to attend our different events and open meetings. It was through these

events and meetings that we were able to interact with you and gather feedback on what you need from us as the leaders of this standing committee.

At this year's convention in Philadelphia, we continued offering the traditional programs and events that our standing committee has become known for, which include the Convention Colleagues program, the Case-Study Competition,

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on



The Gaylord Opryland Resort and Hotel promise to make the

### A Note from the Editor

by Joshua Hiscock

Welcome to the first issue of The Eighth Vector.

Our first issue addresses a topic that regularly confronts student affairs professionals – the difficulty of making transitions. In these pages you will find useful articles from seasoned profession-

als on how to successfully make the transition as both a new graduate student and new professional.

We hope that readers are able to use this newsletter as a vehicle to become more informed about, and eventually involved with, the standing committee. As one of the largest constituencies in ACPA, we hope that you will all take an active interest in the SCGSNP. Whatever you choose, the possibilities are endless!

*The author is communications chair of the Standing Committee for Graduate Students and New Professionals and a second-year master's student at the University of Maryland.*

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## The Chair's Welcome *(Continued From Page 1)*

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the Roommate Matching service, and of course our great social. We also presented awards to five outstanding graduate students and new professionals, sponsored five programs related to SCGSNP issues, and had a great baseball-toss game at the convention carnival. We hope that those of you who chose to participate in one or more of these events found them worthwhile and enjoyable. — I would personally like to thank the outgoing chairs of the SCGSNP directorate who worked so hard to plan and implement these many different programs and initiatives. They are Kristan Cilente, Maryanne White, Corey Ellis, Sherry Early, Dave Keel, David Chambers, Eric Ramsey, and Melissa Bemus. Your energy and enthusiasm, along with your valuable time, make SCGSNP what it is today!!



*Fall is a time of change and transition, but it is never too early to begin planning to attend the annual convention in Nashville in April*

ACPA members who self-identify themselves as graduate students or new professionals represent the largest percentage of ACPA's membership. We are the future of student affairs, and many of you will become leaders in the field, as deans of students and vice-presidents of student affairs, scholars, researchers, or professors. Thus, we deem our role as a standing committee, and our voice, as extremely important. It is through our work at the convention, and throughout the year, that we will begin to shape the future of student affairs, and to assist graduate students and new professionals in making a successful transition into the field. I appreciate your time, energy and desire to get involved!!

*The author is chair of the Standing Committee for Graduate Students and New Professionals and a doctoral candidate at the University of Michigan.*

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## Case Study Competition

With the changing of the seasons, it is time to begin thinking about the annual Graduate Student and New Professional Case Study Competition!

While the competition does not take place until convention, it is never too early to begin preparing. The competition will take place the afternoon of Tuesday, April 5. Participants will meet Sunday, April 3 prior to the opening session to be randomly paired with their partner(s), given instructions, and briefed on the actual case. For more information, contact [acpacasestudy@yahoo.com](mailto:acpacasestudy@yahoo.com).



*The case study competition affords everyone a chance to meet other ACPA members and put their knowledge to the test!*

# New Beginnings – A Transition Story

by Courtney E. S. Toploski

What does it mean to make the transition from being a student to a professional “expert?” I began having this discussion with my husband a few weeks ago as I prepared to write. He has three college degrees himself and is working on number four – and while he is not in Higher Education, he did switch from his job as a researcher to become a high school teacher and knows what it is to be a new professional -many times over. My experience differs in that I am working in my second professional, post-master’s position but still consider myself a “new professional.” I asked him, “What makes you a professional?” The reply was “I am now the expert. I now have a group of people that expect me to know the answers to their questions in the field that I represent.” He then asked me, “What are your thoughts? Were you an expert?” I explained that I honestly did not feel that I was an expert when I started my first professional position, but upon reflecting, I am able to see that for students and families I was a resource and essentially “their expert.”

The question arises: How does one make the change from being the student to the expert? Certainly, in our field, how do you make the transition from being the student to the new professional? This question may take a great deal of thought because in higher education we look up to those we refer to as the sages, or senior scholars, as our experts. Surely, overnight we will not become the new generation of John Gardner or Susan Komives. It will take years of hard work, scholarship, and experience before we are part of the group heralded as the leading researchers in student affairs. However, the most important thing to remember is that we all have an expertise, and it is our job to use that expertise well, and to the benefit of our students.

First, you must have an understanding of your new



*Caption describing picture or graphic.*

position. What is expected of you? If you have the opportunity to go through staff training, treat it as if you have never been through training before. Here is certainly much different than there, and you need to learn of your employers expectations. Talk openly with your supervisor. Ask what is expected of you; find out what you can expect from them. Talk to those around you to find out the

climate and history. It is important to understand the “why” in your new position. As an example, you may not like the fact that you have to put all of your vacation requests in writing. The answer to the why may be to keep an accurate account of who is out of the office and when a request was received. Perhaps your new department is much larger than your previous department, and the action of re-requesting time off helps to keep the distribution of days even so that there is no change in the product you provide to your students, or other constituents. You are able to use the expertise you have gained

*“...we all have an expertise, and it is our job to use that expertise well, and to the benefit of our students.”*

from your education in a more proficient manner when you understand the climate and history of your institution.

Second, you need to learn about the people around you. How does the person in the office next to you work compared to the person across the hall? One might prefer that you hold questions until a staff meeting, while others have no problem with you walking in to their offices and asking questions.

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## A Transition Story *(Continued From Page 3)*

You need to be willing to ask questions. Find someone that you can rely on that has been at your current institution to ask questions and test the waters. If you do not ask questions, you may not have the information to answer others. If you supervise or advise students, you may be the expert to them, but you need to get to know them so that you present information in a way that they can comprehend. In addition, students, parents, and other constituents expect you to be the “expert” for the group you represent. If you do not know an answer, you need to know who to go to for accurate information. There is a saying that the only bad question is one you failed to ask.

Third, organize your life. As a self-proclaimed “P” from the Myers-Briggs, I can empathize with those who groan at the thought of organization. A former supervisor used to ask to me, “What would you do if the Vice Chancellor walked into your office right now?” When the Vice Chancellor of Student Affairs at NC State University walked in to my apartment while I was in graduate school, I was embarrassed by the mess, I doubt he noticed or remembers. However, it left an indelible impression, and from that point on I made a concerted effort to keep my office organized. Now, I think to myself before I leave work each day, “Are my co-workers able to find the informa-



*Caption describing picture or graphic.*

tion they might need that is in my office?” My job may be to be the office resource for students who are transitioning from another institution to our university, which is great – I am the expert for this population. Nevertheless, if I am out of the office someone else needs to be able to use the information in my office to provide the same quality of customer service.

Fourth, you must stick it out. Even as a new expert, your first year in any position is all about learning - like beginning a new college program. Unless your new position is inarguably a bad fit for you, you should try your hardest for at least two years. You have control of your decisions and how people affect your life. You also need to make sure to have a life outside of your new job. Even the most expert of experts needs to go out to dinner with friends or have a hobby. Ex-

ploring the world outside of your position. Take time off. Renew yourself.

Finally, remember we are here to be the experts for our students. With each student, you have the ability to help him or her make meaning of their lives. Each student has potential; each student represents our tomorrows; and each student represents hope. Each new student should represent the goals of our field of work – to put students first.

As each new student becomes a part of your life, it is time to push away the past negative experience. It is our job as the expert to help guide them, to let them make their own decisions, to show them how to choose, and to understand that they are the hope of tomorrow. Welcome to being a professional, where for each student you are the expert.

*“It is our job as the experts to help guide them, to let them make their own decisions, to show them how to choose, and to understand that they are the hope of tomorrow.”*

*The author is an academic advisor in the College of Engineering and Information Technology at the University of Maryland Baltimore County.*

# 15 Tips For Getting the Most Out of Your Graduate Experience

by Jaclyn Smith and  
Kristan Cilente

Graduate school is a time of transition. Whether you are continuing your schooling, starting new, or returning after some time in the work world, change is upon you. Schlossberg's (1998) transition theory is one that student affairs professionals often use when working with college students, but it is also quite applicable for personal use in graduate school. The "4 S's" provide a framework for understanding transition and putting it into context. Situation, self, support, and strategies are factors that all influence transition. So even if this is a return to graduate school for you, your situation might be different or you may understand yourself differently, making the transition new again. Here are some tips to get the most out of your graduate experience:

▪ **FIND A MENTOR:** Learn from those who have gone before you. They are incredible resources and offer amazing challenges and supports. Develop a positive relationship with a professional staff member or faculty member, and be open to their accolades as well as their criticism.

▪ **MAINTAIN BALANCE:** Realize that you are more than just a student affairs para-professional. Don't allow your academics, assistantships, practicum, and committees consume you. Em-

brace other passions and interests. Try new things because they will become good releases. Learn to set personal boundaries and maintain a positive balance between your personal and professional lives.

▪ **BE VISIBLE:** Remember the clichéd phrase "opportunity knocks?" Well, you can only take advantage of these opportunities if you are there to answer. Being visible allows others to see who you are and your devotion to the profession. Visibility enables you to experience and witness so much more than you would if you confined yourself to the office or your home.

▪ **CHALLENGE YOURSELF:** Embrace and pursue your intellectual and professional interests. Take initiative and be assertive. You

determine the breadth of your experience and your exposure to different ideas and areas of student affairs. Be prepared and confident in proposing new ideas to others and in expressing your opinions. Some will offer encouragement and support, and others may try and block your voice or your progress. Remember, failure and intense challenge offer just as much of a learning experience as success. Perseverance demands respect as long as you

act ethically and with integrity. ▪ **MEET NEW PEOPLE:** Every individual can offer valuable contributions to your development, not only as a student affairs professional, but also as a person. You have amazing wisdom and experiences to share with others around you. Strive to meet new students and new professionals, faculty, and community members. Student affairs professionals comprise a distinct, and surprisingly small and interconnected, group of people despite the field's national and international scope.

▪ **SET PERSONAL EXPECTATIONS & GOALS:** It has been demonstrated time and time again that individuals who develop and write down their personal expectations and goals have a better chance of achieving them. Be cognizant and reflective of your strengths and weaknesses. Seek to further develop your strengths and overcome, or become comfortable in accepting, your weaknesses. It is easy to get caught up in so many activities and ideas as a graduate student; regularly reflecting on your expectations and goals allows you a way to focus your life and become a more intentional person.

*"You determine the breadth of your experience and your exposure to different ideas and areas of student affairs."*

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## 15 Tips (Continued From Page 5)

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▪ **ASK QUESTIONS:** As a graduate student, you have the luxury of asking questions and justifying it as your role as a “student” of student affairs. It is better to ask than to simply assume the answer — or worse yet, to answer a question that you honestly do not know the answer to! Use the resources you have access to and don’t ask the same question twice. Familiarize yourself with ACPA’s *Statement of Ethical Principles and Standards*. Be honest with yourself and others, and seek to broaden and deepen your understanding and knowledge.

▪ **APPLY THEORY TO PRACTICE:** You will intensify your entire graduate experience by integrating your academic and practical knowledge. Doing so will enable you to better serve your students and your institution. Do not simply take what is taught in the classroom or gained through practical experience as fact. It is important to take what the past and the pioneers have offered us, but it is just as important to remember that student affairs is a continually evolving field.

▪ **STAY HEALTHY:** Many graduate students act as if they are Superman or She-Ra. You can only maintain that level of energy when you take care of yourself. Only you can determine how much rest and exercise you need, but do pay attention to your body. It often

provides you with the warning signs of burnout and exhaustion. Take time to recover from illness. Keep healthy, and you’ll be able to maintain the smile and energy you need to work in student affairs.

▪ **LIVE IN THE PRESENT, WHILE ALSO THINKING TOWARD THE FUTURE:**

While it is always important to keep in mind your job search and future career plans, it is necessary to not lose sight of the present. Embrace opportunities and remember to live in the now.

▪ **ESTABLISH EXPECTATIONS FOR YOUR PROFESSIONAL RELATIONSHIPS:**

By thinking about this ahead of time you can avoid frustration and confusion. Work with your supervisor to understand office culture and determine what is best for you when getting to know colleagues.

▪ **REALIZE THAT PRIOR EXPECTATIONS MAY NOT MEET REALITY:**

Many people enter graduate school with expectations of the curriculum, the faculty, and their classmates. Often these expectations do not correspond to reality. Set realistic expectations, but be open to change and typically the experience can exceed expectations!

▪ **ATTEND PROFESSIONAL CONFERENCES:**

By attending national confer-

ences you not only get to learn more about the field and your functional area, but you can contribute to the knowledge and meet other professionals, developing a strong network of colleagues across the country.

▪ **PARTICIPATE IN OR SHADOW STAFF ON COMMITTEES:**

Committees are a great way to expand your knowledge area and network with colleagues on campus. Find areas of interest and get involved.

▪ **LAUGH & HAVE FUN!**

College campuses are vibrant communities, and student affairs is a round-the-clock profession. Have fun, embrace new opportunities, learn from the people around you, and remember to laugh and smile! Make the most out of your experience, make it worthwhile and enjoyable.

*Jaclyn Smith is currently a second-year master’s student at the University of Florida. Kristan Cilente is the Assistant Director of Orientation and Leadership Programs at Georgetown University.*

# Annual Standing Committee Awards

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by Laurence Bolotin

It is time again to announce our ACPA Awards Nominations for the 2005 Convention in Nashville, Tennessee! It's going to be a great convention, and I'm confident we will have the chance to recognize some great professionals. But, before we can do that, we must all take advantage of the opportunity to nominate outstanding individuals within the field of student affairs.

In this newsletter is this year's award nomination form. (See pages 8 & 9). Note that the deadline for all submissions is Friday, November 19th. All nominations should be sent to me via e-mail at

lbolotin@csusm.edu. Feel free to make nominations for professionals you know that have made a great impact on the field.

All nominations should be approximately 500 words (no more than 1000) detailing why the nominee is regarded as exceptional within the category they are being nominated. Resumes and other supplemental material will not be accepted. Please include the following with the nomination:

- \* Award category for which the individual is being nominated
- \* Nominee's name, title, address, phone number, e-mail address, institution, and

ACPA membership number (Nominee must be an ACPA member by the time of convention)

- \* Nominator's name, title, address, phone number, fax number, e-mail address, and institution.

The SCGSNP is also looking for people to serve as reviewers. This is a minimal time commitment, but a great chance to see some of the incredible things people are doing in our field. Please let me know as soon as possible if you are interested in assisting in this capacity!

## *Questions or comments on this issue of The Eighth Vector?*

Please contact Joshua Hiscock, Editor and SCGSNP Communications Chair at [jhiscock@umd.edu](mailto:jhiscock@umd.edu)

Please visit our website at:

<http://myacpa.org>

The Standing Committee for Graduate Students & New Professionals

### ***Award Descriptions:***

#### **OUTSTANDING MASTER'S STUDENT**

- ★ This award is given to a current master's degree student in a higher education or student affairs related program.
- ★ The recipient of this award will have made a positive contribution (either through research or service to the profession) to the field of student affairs and/or has made significant contributions to his/her graduate program and institution.

#### **OUTSTANDING DOCTORAL STUDENT**

- ★ This award is given to a current doctoral student in a higher education or student affairs related program.
- ★ The recipient of this award will have made a positive contribution (either through research or service to the profession) to the field of student affairs and/or has made significant contributions to his/her graduate program and institution.

#### **OUTSTANDING NEW PROFESSIONAL**

- ★ This award is given to an individual in his/her first three years of professional (post-graduate) employment.
- ★ The recipient of this award will have demonstrated outstanding contributions to his/her department, institution, and the field of student affairs (either through research or professional service).
- ★ This individual should demonstrate a propensity for developing students and utilizing theory in practice.

#### **OUTSTANDING MENTOR TO GRADUATE STUDENTS (INCLUDING GRADUATE PREPARATION FACULTY)**

- ★ This award is given to an outstanding student affairs professional or graduate preparation faculty member who goes above and beyond in their efforts to provide guidance and support to graduate students in higher education or a student affairs related graduate program.

#### **OUTSTANDING MENTOR TO NEW PROFESSIONALS**

- ★ This award is given to an outstanding student affairs professional who goes above and beyond in his/her efforts to provide guidance and support to new practitioners in the field of student affairs.

#### **OUTSTANDING DEDICATION TO PROFESSIONAL SERVICE**

- ★ This award is given to a new professional or graduate student in higher education or a student affairs related field who demonstrates an outstanding commitment to the field of student affairs through involvement in professional associations (both local, regional, and national), committees, conferences, and/or graduate program recruitment.

## **SCGSNP Award Nomination Form**



# SCGSNP Award Nomination Form

Award Category: \_\_\_\_\_

## Nominator Information:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Institution: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Fax Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

## Nominee Information:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Institution: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

ACPA Membership Number (Required): \_\_\_\_\_

**Explanation of Nomination (please limit to between 500 and 1000 words).**



# The Eighth Vector

## The Chair's Welcome

by Mark Garrett

As Chair of ACPA's Standing Committee for Graduate Students and New Professionals, I would like to extend a welcome to all of you and invite you to spend a few minutes reading our pre-convention newsletter. We hope to provide you all with information about the events that our standing committee will be hosting at the convention, some tips for first-time convention attendees to assist you in having a great experience, and some suggestions for those of you going through Placement this year.

At each ACPA Convention our standing committee organizes and sponsors a number of key programs and activities meant for graduate students and new professionals. These events include the **Convention Colleagues Program** which matches up seasoned student affairs professionals with people new to the profession and ACPA; our **Sponsored Programs** which are programs on topics specific to graduate students and new professionals; the **Case Study Competition** which allows both graduate students and new professionals the opportunity to meet and work with other colleagues on developing a solution to a real-world problem that student affairs professionals often have to deal with.

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## A Note from the Editor

by Joshua Hiscock

Welcome to the Spring 2005 issue of *The Eighth Vector*. This issue is filled with informative articles on the 2005 ACPA conference in Nashville, Tennessee. From surviving placement to making the most of your free time, there is a little of everything included here!

We hope that readers are able to use this newsletter to maximize their conference experience, and eventually become involved with the standing committee. As one of the largest constituencies in ACPA, we hope that you will all take an active interest in the SCGSNP. Whatever you choose, we guarantee that the possibilities are endless!

### Inside this issue:

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*The author is Communications chair of the Standing Committee for Graduate Students and New Professionals and a second-year master's student at the University of Maryland.*

## The Chair's Welcome *(Continued From Page 1)*

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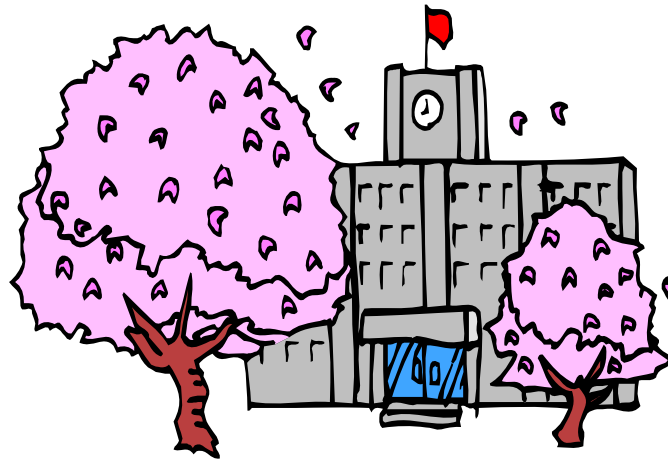
Each year we have our **SCGSNP Social** which provides people an opportunity to meet other graduate students and new professionals, and to learn more about our standing committee.

The **Convention Colleagues Program** will be held on Sunday, April 3<sup>rd</sup> from 4 – 5:30 p.m. in the Opryland Hotel Governors Ballroom B. If you are interested in participating in this program, please contact Alvin Sturdivant at [alvin.sturdivant@uvm.edu](mailto:alvin.sturdivant@uvm.edu).

The **SCGSNP Social** will happen on Monday, April 4<sup>th</sup> from 9:30 – 11:45 p.m. in the Opryland Lincoln D.

Our **Open / Elections meeting** will be held on Tuesday, April 5<sup>th</sup> from 2:30 – 5 p.m. in the Opryland Hotel Bayou C.

If you are interested in participating in the **Case Study Competition** please contact Melissa Bemus: ([MBemus@mariancollege.edu](mailto:MBemus@mariancollege.edu))



*Spring brings the cherry blossoms to Washington, DC. It is also the signal that the ACPA conference is upon us!*

Our standing committee currently presents six awards which include the **Outstanding Master Student, Outstanding Doctoral Student, Outstanding Mentor to Graduate Students, Outstanding Mentor to New Professionals, Outstanding New Professional and Outstanding Dedication to Professional Service**. The award nominees and winners are announced during our social.

We encourage you to attend as many of these events as you would like, to meet members of the current directorate, and to think about possibly running for a position on the SCGSNP directorate during our **Open Elections**. Please visit our website at: <http://www.myacpa.org/sc/scgsnp> and click on the link "Convention 2005" to find out more information regarding these events. See you in Nashville!!

*The author is Chair of the Standing Committee for Graduate Students and New Professionals and a doctoral candidate at the University of Michigan.*

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## SCGSNP Sponsored Programs

*by Justin Gerboc, Sponsored Programs chair*

The countdown to Nashville has begun. As you prepare to look ahead to the annual convention being held in Music City, USA, one of the things you should start doing, especially if this is your first ACPA convention, is begin thinking about what kinds of programs you plan on attending.

Each year, all of the standing committees and commissions "sponsor" specific programs at the convention. This means that they have reviewed the program proposals and descriptions and feel that the programs they are sponsoring would be valuable for their constituents to check out. This year, the SCGSNP has earmarked the following programs that we feel would be good to attend:

### **Grad Student Psychosocial & Identity Development**

*Lynne P. Thompson - New York University  
Patrick Love - New York University  
Blanca E. Vega - Bank Street College of Education*

### **Politics and Student Learning? They can go together!**

*Aimee J. Hourigan - University of Alabama*

### **The African American Doctoral Experience: Insights, Advice, and Perspectives**

*Kenechukwu (K.C.) Mmeje - Univ. of Southern California*

### **A New Professional's Challenge: Supervision of Graduate Students**

*Steven Mencarini - University of Maryland-College Park*

# Surviving Your Placement Center Experience

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Many of you as first-time convention attendees will also be going through Placement, looking for that first professional position in student affairs. Here are tips and suggestions from three SCGSNP directorate members who have gone through Placement and come out with a job!!



*Interviewing does not have to be stressful!*

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*By Jennifer Jerousek*

Make up your message to employers ahead of time with your personal information already typed in. This will save you writing time. You may also want to personalize it or make it stand out. The last time I was in placement I copied them on bright paper and at the bottom I had famous quotes that dealt with leadership. Chances are they won't notice.

But...if they do it will set you apart.

Be sure to give yourself breaks throughout the day. Try to make sure you get something to eat and drink. At least pack an energy bar and a bottle of water with you.

If you are definitely not interested in a college/university that is interested in you, respectfully decline an offer for an interview. Don't go to an interview just to be nice. It wastes your time and theirs.

Alternatively, keep an open mind. You may be staying in a safe zone in respect to region or type of institution. You may only have experience with small private schools but may find success with diversifying.

Try your best to attend at least one program, presentation, or workshop. If you spend every day, all day in placement you are not maximizing your conference experience. The break from interviewing will relieve stress and you never know what prospective employer you may bump into or meet.

If you are not able to go to a candidate social that you were invited to, send the institution representatives a

note thanking them for the invitation.

Plan out for interviewing outfits and iron them the night before. Make sure you are wearing something comfortable or you will not be at ease while interviewing.

Try to maintain a positive attitude. There are many factors that occur with the job search and sometimes you will not obtain a position right away. Have faith in your abilities and know that the right job for you will come along eventually.

Take time to network with other candidates or volunteers and don't focus solely on employers. You may meet a new friend or contact that may lead you to a future position. The longer you are a member of ACPA the more you will see that like the universe, everyone is connected. The conference becomes a family reunion of sorts.

*“Have faith in your abilities  
and know that the right job  
for you will come along  
eventually.”*

Believe it or not placement can be fun if you open yourself up to it. Yes, it is stressful but it doesn't have to be an unpleasant experience.

*The author is Membership chair of the Standing Committee for Graduate Students and New Professionals.*

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*by Beth Greenberg*

Placement can be intimidating, but it's not as bad as you think. Every year, hundreds of ACPA members go through the job search at the conference, and they have passed along advice to you about things they wish they had known. While there are many different bits of information here, they all agreed on one thing: It will all work out in the end!

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## Surviving Your Placement Center Experience *(Continued From Page 3)*

I survived it...you can too! What I wish to pass on to others going through Placement in 2005...

The interviewing tables are really close together. It can be really distracting when you're trying to answer questions and you hear everyone else around you.

It can be really discouraging when you see your top choice interviewing other people. Don't let it get you down!

Go to placement orientation and pay attention!

Pack an emergency kit and take it everywhere with you. Include tissues, mints, cough drops, water, chap-stick, Shout-wipes...etc. You never know when you will need it.

Don't schedule interviews too close together. You don't want to be thinking about your next interview while you are trying to get through your first one.

It's important to take time between interviews to allow for a breather. Get a snack, review your information, or take a walk outside. Do what you need to do to relax and prepare.

Drink lots of water! It's amazing how dehydrated you get just from interviewing.

Don't forget that you are also interviewing the schools. Just because you get invited to interview doesn't mean you have to go there if you don't like it.

Be honest. Don't ever be afraid to tell a school what you need in a job/



*Placement does not have to be a confusing thing! Educate yourself on the process before*

supervisor/work environment. It's all about finding a good match, so you want to be comfortable with your potential new colleagues.

Ask lots of questions! Gather as much information as you can during the interview so you can make informed decisions.

Don't get discouraged if your friends have more interviews than you. My friends were all interviewing for Residence Life jobs and had about 20 interviews each. I only had pre-scheduled 3 and it made me really nervous, but it worked out in the end.

Don't hang out in placement if you don't need to be there. Get a change of scenery.

Wear comfortable shoes! You are on your feet pretty much all day, every day.

Remember to pace yourself and try to have some fun, too. They will tell you this at orientation, but don't hang out by your mailbox or check it every 5 minutes. Remember that the schools are

really busy and might not have time to drop off notes until later in the day.

*The author is Roommate Matching chair of the Standing Committee for Graduate Students and New Professionals.*

*by Dean Kennedy*

Overkill, maybe, but write down what you wore for your interviews. This way, you will not wear the same thing for a second interview and when you go on campus, you are not wearing your same 'favorite suit/tie/necklace' - shows diversification.

If you can, create your own message to employer notes on paper that matches your resume. This way, you only add employer number, name, and institution on a half sheet that matches your material - demonstrates professionalism and being prepared.

Ask questions specific to institutions, departments, and positions - employers should know that you have done your research on THEIR particular characteristics.

*The author is Webmaster chair of the Standing Committee for Graduate Students and New Professionals.*

***“Don't hang out in placement if you don't need to be there. Get a change of scenery.”***

# What We Wish We Knew BEFORE Our First ACPA Conference

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At last year's convention a number of first-time convention attendees told us that the wish they had been given some information about the convention and what to expect before they had arrived. Below two SCGSNP directorate members with a vast amount of professional experience, both in ACPA and student affairs, offer some useful suggestions.

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by Dean Kennedy

I wish I had gotten to the convention earlier than right when it opened - having that time to wander around the convention center and hotel when everyone was already there was totally overwhelming. Also, I have heard that being able to attend the pre-convention workshops are great ways to network and develop great contacts in a relative small setting. These sessions tend to have a more level playing field, making higher level administrators are less intimidating to be around!

I wish I had not waited till the last minute look at the conference program when selecting programs and socials I really wanted to attend. At the convention, I found myself going to sessions I was not really interested in, only because I knew one other person who was going.

I wish I had brought more business casual clothing for evening events. I always found myself feeling over-dressed around my colleagues when socializing beyond the convention center and hotel. Remember though, in school socials where you are interested in employment you are still on display!

*The author is Webmaster chair of the Standing Committee for Graduate Students and New Professionals.*

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by Mark Garrett

Your first convention can be an overwhelming experience. There will be approximately 4,000 people in attendance, and numerous activities and events that you can participate in all occurring at the same time. Try to spend some time early in the convention going through the convention program booklet to determine what interests you, and make an effort to attend those programs and events. If you are interested in a commission or standing committee, attend their open or business meeting to find out more about what they do. Consider running for a position if you really want to get involved with that particular standing committee or

***Get involved It is the best way to meet new people and become connected in the field!***

commission. HOWEVER, don't over-commit yourself. As a seasoned student-affairs professional, I see many first-time ACPA convention-attendees trying to get involved with everything. Make sure that if you get involved with a commission or standing committee that you are able to follow through with any commitment you make. Student-affairs is a small profession and people quickly get to know one another. Not following through on a commitment you make at ACPA can hurt you professionally.

Finally, volunteer!! An ACPA convention offers numerous opportunities for people to volunteer, whether in Placement or for the general convention. This is a great way to meet new colleagues and make a difference.

*The author is Chair of the Standing Committee for Graduate Students and New Professionals.*

# Nashville 2005: What's In Store for Grads and New Professionals

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by Jim Kenny

This year's convention will be an exciting professional development experience for all delegates attending, but as grad students or new professionals, you probably are asking, "what's in store for me?" Well, I am here to give you the highlights!

**Placement** – ACPA is THE place to be if you are job searching! Over 1000 candidates will have the opportunity to interview for 1100 positions!

**Graduate Student Paper and Poster Sessions** – learn what research your fellow Graduate Students are engaged in,

**Case Study Competition** – Sponsored by SCGSNP, Grad Students and New Professionals can compete (in separate divisions) for a prize in responding to a case using student development theory,

**Convention Colleagues** – Make a connection with a seasoned professional who can help answer your questions and better navigate the Convention,

**Pre-Convention programs** which will educate you in-depth on topics ranging from student learning, budget, advancing social justice, supervision, scholarly writing, and many more!

**Inspiring Speakers** such as Mitch Albom, Beverly Daniel-Tatum, George Kuh, and Pascarella and Terenzini!

Best of all, this year's convention is all under one roof! You don't have to worry about how far you will walk to Placement or sessions, because the Placement Center, Educational Program Sessions, Socials, and all Special Events are in the Opryland Resort!

## Getting to the Convention...

The Nashville International Airport services all the major airlines, including Southwest, as well as regional airlines. To get to the Opryland from the Nashville Airport, you can take a taxi (\$20 flat rate, one way) or use the Opryland's shuttle service (\$16 one-way, \$23 roundtrip).

## When I get to the Opryland, what do I do?

First, check into your hotel room. They will give you a map of the Opryland and guides you to your hotel room. After you check into your hotel room and get yourself situated, head to the Presidential Lobby in the "Convention Center" portion of the Opryland. There will be a star on the Opryland Map you receive when you check-in showing you the specific location of the Presidential Lobby. At the Presidential

Lobby, you will find Convention Registration, the Cyber Café, Hospitality Center, and Volunteer Registration. If you are looking for the Placement Center, that will be located in the Ryman Exhibit Hall, also in the "Convention Center" portion of the Opryland. From there, you will have ample information to guide your experience at the Convention!

Complete and updated information about the 2005 Convention can be found online at [www.myacpa.org](http://www.myacpa.org). I hope to see you in Nashville!

*The author is Sponsorship and Fundraising chair of the Standing Committee for Graduate Students and New Professionals.*

*Questions or comments on this issue of The Eighth Vector?*

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