Conference Session Abstracts

Session: 9:15am – 10am

Evaluating New and Old: Establishing and Maintaining High Standards
The Ohio State University
Richard Felty ’15 & Caroline Talda ’15
While the tour guide training process is great for preparing new hires for the role, some of the smaller (but still important) facts and procedures get lost as Ambassadors spend more time in the program. Our program has seen improvements in the quality of tours over time through a New Hire and Veteran evaluation process. Come learn how your tour program might benefit from a similar process.

Tour Guides and Admission on One Team
Penn State
Mary Burzinski ’16 & Adrienne Spears ’15
In this presentation, we will feature the relationship that exists within the Undergraduate Admissions Office and the student organizations on our campus. The student volunteers play an essential role in the daily function of our office. Their role extends beyond just being a tour guide, as they help with the planning and execution of open house events and recruitment events. Some examples of programs our students help with is Spend a Fall Day, Spend a Summer Day, Accepted Student Program Open Houses, Achievers Weekend, and High School Visits. This presentation will highlight each of these programs and how students can be part of similar programs like ours on your campus. We utilize our tour guides to their maximum potential and you can as well!

Outside the Tour: Serving Prospective Students Through “CHOICES Dinners” and “Duke for a Day” Visits
James Madison University
Tyler Howell ’16, Katy Owens ’16, Kate Sundheim ’16, & Tommy Turpin ’16
As James Madison University Student Ambassadors it is our direct responsibility to serve the Office of Admissions. Most commonly, we do this through campus tours. However, tours amount to only a portion of the services we offer. During our accepted student open house, formally known as "CHOICES", we give prospective students and guests a unique opportunity: to dine with Student Ambassadors! Another service outside of tours that we offer to prospective students is "Duke for a Day", or DFAD for short. This is when a prospective student signs up to "shadow" a Student Ambassador through their daily routine at JMU. Although tours are a very important part of what we do as JMU Student Ambassadors, we are gifted with many opportunities to serve prospective students "Outside the Tour" and are constantly surprised at the effectiveness of these other guest services.

A Year in the Life of a Tennessee Tour Guide
The University of Tennessee Knoxville
Jack Fornadel ’16, Evan Smith ’15, Raven Stewart ’16, & Sarah Strong ’16
Come hear about the zany and crazy group of Tennessee Ambassadors who have more fun with their tour guide family than pretty much anyone else. Learn about our recruitment strategies, interview process, training, teambuilding and socials...the works. We will share all our tips and secrets for not just building a successful tour guide program, but forming a family away from home.
Conference Session Abstracts

9:15am – 10am (continued)

Going from 1 to 100: Real Quick
Texas Wesleyan University
Trent Sandles

Less than one year ago Texas Wesleyan University did not have a visit program; however, within one year’s time the Golden Ram Tour Guides are now one of the largest and most prestigious organizations on campus. How can you identify and develop a core group of hard-working, dedicated students and link them to a program that is just starting off or is going through a renovation? This session will discuss how to take your program from 0 to 100 in less than 1 year’s time while not breaking your budget, yet also making the program one of the most prestigious on your campus.

10:15am – 11am

The Amazing Balancing Act
San Jose State
Chelcy Garrett ’16 & Lindsay Sommers ’17

Come one, come all to see the Amazing Balancing Act. Student Ambassadors have a constant struggle juggling work, school and a social life. It seems like we are constantly walking on a tight rope trying to find a good medium to balance everything out. This presentation will map out 8 simple steps that students can follow in order to keep their lives from becoming a circus.

An Engaging Approach to Continuous Learning
The University of South Carolina
Thom Bell ’15, Nandita Karambelkar ’17, Ross Lardo ’18, & Linda Marie Olson ’17

The Professional Development & Training program within the University of South Carolina’s Ambassador Organization aims to promote continuous learning for members through innovative training techniques and creative content. The goal of the PD&T program is to not only create informed Ambassadors but to also shape well-rounded individuals with professional workplace skills, leadership and accountability in a team setting.

#leadANGRY
Wichita State University
Tyler Gegan ’16, Ashley Schrader ’16, & T’Keyah Williams ’17

Learn how our volunteer Student Ambassador Society plan and implement a state-wide leadership conference that is used to highlight various faculty and alumni as we showcase our institution. (Last year’s theme was #leadANGRY - a spin from our basketball team’s #playANGRY).

The Evolution of a Leadership Team
The University of Tennessee Knoxville
Amy Fagan ’16, Tarah Sipes, & Lizeth Tamayo ’16

Current members of the Augustana College Leadership Team will share the story of how the program has evolved over the last three years. The presentation will include examples of what worked, what didn’t work and their vision for the future of the Leadership Team.
Conference Session Abstracts

11:15am – 12pm

Providing Constructive Criticism to Ambassadors and Tour Guides
University of Arizona
Haley Berner ’16, Kate Gromatsky, & Leonardo Sanchez ’17
Campus ambassadors and tour guides are great representations of your college’s student body. But what happens when one of your guides makes a mistake? What do you do as a student leader when you have to critique or issue consequences to a fellow guide, who is also your peer and friend? Come learn about best practices on providing constructive criticism in a peer-on-peer setting.

Assemble the Troops
High Point University
Chandler Brown ’16, Hogan Dyer ’16, James Ensor ’17, Hannah Grau ’17, & Julee Mitsler
Managing a University Ambassador program isn’t easy, but with the help of a strong student leadership team and a forum for feedback, you can make your campus visits extraordinary. Learn how we select, manage and train a group of over 100 University Ambassadors to give consistent, effective and fun campus tours! This session will be a collaboration between our students & staff members, as we both rely heavily on each other to make our program succeed.

Keep it Fresh: Avoid Tour Guide Burnout
Texas Wesleyan University
Trent Sandles
Tour guides are often some of the busiest people on campus. Between academics, organizations and having a social life, balancing it all can be a challenge. At Texas Wesleyan we recognize that fact and built our program around it. In this session you will learn how to build a program that yields all the results you could want; from increased morale to a very low turnover rate and help you build a program that won’t over extend your guides. Come hear about how we went from a program that, just one year ago, had dwindled down to two volunteer tour guides with no morale but is now viewed as one of the best organizations to be a part of on campus.

1:30pm – 2:15pm

Training Tour Guides: No Two Tours Should be the Same
Auburn University
Shannon Smith ’15
No two tours should be the same. That is the motto Auburn University’s Office of University Recruitment uses during the selection and training of Student Recruiters. This session will take an in-depth look at how tour guides include personal experiences and campus history without sounding scripted. We will share practices used by Recruitment to insure that prospective students have an authentic and personal tour.
Conference Session Abstracts

1:30pm – 2:15pm (continued)

An Organization Built on Houses
Penn State
Caroline Briselli ’17 & Tykia McWilliams ’16
This presentation will feature the organizational system that exists within the Penn State Lion Scouts and SMART. The organizations have fostered a more family-like atmosphere within each respective organization by dividing members into “houses”. With the overall organization being large, the houses serve as an immediate support system for members. This helps maintain retention of the members, increases participation in the organizations, and creates a competitive atmosphere that drives the organization toward success.

Elementary, My Dear Watson
San Jose State
Chelcy Garrett ’16 & Lindsay Sommers ’17
You don’t have to be Sherlock Holmes to solve this mystery. This workshop will give you clues on how to change your script for young audiences, and keep them involved and entertained for the duration of your tour. Join us as we work together to crack the case that is elementary school tours.

We’re all in this Together: An Overview of the Structure and Function of the Northeastern Husky Ambassador Program
Northeastern University
Courtney Brown ’16 & Jennifer Cordero ’16
Northeastern’s Husky Ambassador program consists of approximately 300 student volunteers committed to representing the University and supporting Northeastern’s campus visit experience. This presentation will explore the roles ambassadors take on as tour guides, bloggers, and student leadership council members. This overview will explore the merits of the structure as a whole, the importance of each student role, and the proven success in the areas of programming, recognition, and engagement.

3:30pm – 4:15pm

Using Technology to Enhance Tour Guide Programs
Penn State
Matt Clamp ’15
Join in an exploration of Northeastern’s Husky Ambassador Management System and see how technology can be effectively applied to admissions and tour services to supplement student leadership, easily recognize and solve logistical and organizational issues and, ultimately, enhance the visitor experience.
### Conference Session Abstracts

**Session**

**Track**

#### 3:30pm – 4:15pm (continued)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Session Title</th>
<th>Institution</th>
<th>Speakers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Breaking Stereotypes is Hard to Do: Using Student Leaders to Change Perceptions</td>
<td>Georgia Institute of Technology</td>
<td>Albrecht, Hannah Dillon ’15, Sina Mehdikarimi ’16, Tyler McCravy ’16, &amp; Sidney Sherrill ’15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Special Events: How to Manage Fellow Ambassadors</td>
<td>American University</td>
<td>Anna Claire Eddington, Brett Imamura ’15, Steven Marchio ’16, &amp; Megan Nassau</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Walking Backwards, Moving Forward: The Skidmore College Ambassador Program</td>
<td>Northeastern University</td>
<td>Daniela Escudero ’16, Sarah Green ’16, &amp; Asher Siegel ’16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Telling Tour Guide Stories</td>
<td>Yale University</td>
<td>Nicole DeSantis ‘15, Russell Hay ‘15, &amp; Jeremy Hutton ‘15</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Notes:**
- No matter what College, Institute, or University you mention, every place has a stereotype associated with it. Some of these stereotypes are more truthful than others and some are more hurtful than others. However, in recruiting prospective students, all of these stereotypes are harmful. Student leaders have a unique ability not only to defeat these stereotypes, but to give prospective students a chance to create a new "stereotype" about the school and its students.
- Our program aims to address the necessity for poise and professionalism during larger, in depth events, as well as tours and the day-to-day activities of an admissions office. The goal of this presentation is to conceptualize community building alongside professionalism within a non-incentivized program while highlighting the need for promoting skillful student leadership in managing 125+ other student ambassadors. One significant platform for the establishment of these skills comes in the form of Special Events. We want to engage in a learning conversation to translate these skills and our community to components of other school’s ambassador programs.
- The Skidmore College Admissions Ambassador Program is one of the most heavily sought after on-campus jobs due to a combination of students’ pride about their campus community leading to their desire to share that passion with prospective students, the competitive pay the job provides, and the room for advancement within the program. Given the nearly 50% increase in applications to Skidmore in the last two years, the job of the Admissions Ambassador has become even more valuable, and as a result, the Ambassador Program is seen more and more as one of the most important fields of work at Skidmore College.
- There are few moments on a tour that offer the same opportunity to capture the attention of the group like a good story can. Telling the right story at the perfect time can bring facts and figures to life, transporting visitors into the life of a current student. In this session we look to answer questions like: (1) What makes for a good tour guide story? (2) How can we transform everyday events into interesting stories? (3) What is the best way to pass on tour guide stories/create a story bank? And (4) How should stories be updated to reflect changing guides/times? We will rework stories brought by participants to discover the central themes behind a good story and discuss the best way to pass those on to new generations of tour guides and create a culture of both good stories, and good storytellers.