

The Welcomer

Collegiate Information and Visitor Services Association

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News and Information from the
Collegiate Information and
Visitor Services Association

The University of Notre Dame hosts CiVSA's Fourteenth Annual Conference!

This year's Annual Conference was our largest ever, with 110 participants from 65 schools (nearly half of whom were attending their first CiVSA conference).

There were twelve concurrent sessions and three keynote presentations full of informative ideas, covering everything from customer service to recruitment techniques to handling campus emergencies. We also had six concurrent roundtable discussions, which provided an easier way to collect and share ideas with colleagues from all over the country. Another huge thank you to all the session presenters and roundtable leaders! Handouts and PowerPoint presentations from the conference are available in the Members-Only section of the CiVSA website (http://civsa.org/members_only/members-notes.htm).

We toured Notre Dame and its sister school, St. Mary's, and the rain held off long enough for a tour of Goshen College as well. We visited Notre Dame's famous football stadium and later that evening had a fierce regional competition at the College Football Hall of Fame. But as always, the hugest benefit of the conference was the chance to meet amazing people from all over the country. Thank you Jaime, Melonie, Betty, Heather, and everyone behind the scenes for making it happen!

Jennifer McGowan
University of Michigan



Sherry Case from Colorado State University accepts the Nick Award from President Troy Selk. Named for the "Father of CiVSA," Nick Kovalakides, this annual award recognizes an individual who has shown above-and-beyond dedication to CiVSA.

From the Research and Assessment Committee

Research - You Can Do It!

If it has been a while since you looked closely at the CiVSA website, perhaps it is time to do a little exploring! In addition to other new enhancements, we now have a Members-Only section devoted to Research and Assessment. While this can be a topic that makes eyes glaze over for some people, there is some helpful information in this section for everyone.

You have seen a few surveys sent to the listserv asking questions related to the practices at your institution. The results for the survey from February 2007 addressing if and how you track your business are neatly summarized and presented on the website. If you're currently wondering if you should track your business, or how you should track your business, you might find some helpful ideas in these results. The most recent survey results asking about what evaluation methods you utilize will be posted soon.

Are you doing any research on campus visitors, how visits impact college choice at your institution, or any other related area? Do you have an interesting story to tell about your work? A variety of publications are always looking for interesting articles, and there have not been many published that feature the kind of work that we do. One of the new additions to the Research and Assessment area of the website is a list of higher education publications with links to submission guidelines. There are a variety of possibilities for publications. Some focus on admissions, while some have a broader student affairs focus. Some publications, such as ACPA's *Journal of College Student Development* or AACRO's *College & University*, request scholarly articles with statistical support for assertions that are made. Others, such as ACPA's *About Campus* and NASPA's *NetResults*, are looking for interesting stories written in a more conversational tone. I know there are many of you with interesting stories to tell! If you're not familiar with these publications, look in the library at your

own institution. They probably carry subscriptions to most of these publications. Push your comfort zone a little! Write an article! If it gets published, it will be something you can add to your resume and just may help to raise awareness for the role we all play in helping campuses meet their enrollment goals.

Finally, the last piece of information added to the Research and Assessment area is a reference list of articles, dissertations, and reports that discuss campus visits or a related area. If you're looking for support to back a new initiative or are simply looking for a new way to look at what you do, this list is full of resources that might be helpful. Also, if you run across new articles or reports that are not listed, please be sure to forward the reference to Denise Wellman at denisew@gwm.sc.edu. She will periodically update this list.

Most importantly, spend a little time looking at the information in this new section of the website. It is designed to provide helpful information for all of us. If you have comments or questions, or want to become more involved in the Research and Assessment Committee, contact any member of the committee:

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Kim Burdett
University of California, Irvine

CiVSA Best Practices

Retired Faculty Member Volunteers at USC Visitor Center

He might be semi-retired, but veteran medical school professor George Holmes has a new job at the University.

Every Friday from noon to 4 p.m. Holmes reports to the University of South Carolina Visitor Center where he's sought out by prospective students and their parents eager for "insider information" from a faculty member. Holmes is the first retired professor to volunteer at the center, which tours thousands of visitors across campus every year from its base in McKissick on the Horseshoe.

"Parents really enjoy having a faculty member to talk to after the walking tours are done," Holmes said. "They're very open and feel a little relieved to talk to an adult—so much of the tour is geared toward students."

Holmes earned his master's and Ph.D. degrees in the 1960s from Carolina and became a founding faculty member of the medical school when it incorporated William S. Hall Institute into its neuropsychiatry and behavioral science department in the 1970s. He continues to teach medical students on a part-time basis at night.

"I'm sort of the pilot study for the Visitor Center using retired faculty as volunteers," Holmes said. "Denise

Wellman runs a good shop here; she took the idea of using someone like me as an information resource for visitors and ran with it."

Brad Popiolek, a public relations major who graduated earlier this month, was a student ambassador at the Visitor Center for each of his four years at the University. "Parents look at Dr. Holmes as a very credible source of information, plus he's very welcoming and professional,"

he said. "To be able to talk to a faculty member face to face is really comforting. And students interested in pre-med or other pre-professional studies like to talk to a faculty member from medicine."

Since opening in the Spring of 1994, the University of South Carolina Visitor Center has sought the support and advice of outstanding faculty. This is but one way the USC Visitor Center is enhancing their campus visit program. "We had hoped to get this program started years ago but timing just wasn't right," Wellman said. "When a retired faculty member approached me last fall, I just decided that we would seize the opportunity and make the timing work this time. In his short tenure here, Dr. Holmes is already making

a significant impact — parents just love him! Better yet, he is having a great time."

*Denise Wellman
University of South Carolina*



Dr. Holmes on the job at the Visitor Center

Welcome New Members!

Alexis Albarado
McNeese State University

Janice Albritton
Louisiana Tech University

Clayton Alexander
Greensboro College

Sara Amos
Berea College

Eloise Ashley
Kilgore College

Georgia Balafas
Boston University

Kim Beckett
Missouri Western State University

Carol Bishop
Virginia Tech

Myron Burney
North Carolina State University

Carrie Chapman
Missouri Baptist University

Tricia Collins
Northwest Missouri State University

Cherie Dail
Howard Payne University

Kris Dalton
University of North Florida

Shane Davidson
Hardin-Simmons University

Patty Ford
Kilgore College

Traci Forsys
Southern Illinois University Edwardsville

Farrell Griffin
West Texas A&M University

Jennifer Halpin
George Mason University

Aileen Hentz
University of Baltimore

Sergio Herbert
Howard Payne University

Wendie Hernandez
Hill College

Jacqueline Howell
Ball State University

Matthew Hulett
New Mexico State University

Patricia Jackson
Cuyahoga Community College

Brad Johnson
Howard Payne University

Dana Johnson
University of North Florida

Jodie Kern
Virginia Tech

Catie Lenaway
University of Michigan

Chris Lewis
Binghamton University

Susan Livingston
Howard Payne University

Taiya Luce
Cornell University

Daniela Matarazzo
George Mason University

Felicia McCracken
New Mexico State University

Carol McDaniel
Villa Julie College

Kyle Moore
West Texas A&M University

Chris Munchel
Ball State University

Shonna Peppers
Clemson University

Brynn Reynolds
Hardin-Simmons University

Jacque Serafino
Boston University

Lindsey Speer
Ball State University

Emily Sullivan
Texas Christian University

Shawn Thomas
West Texas A&M University

Chelsea Townsend
Houston Baptist University

Amy Venturino
Virginia Tech

Scott Warren
Hill College

Emily Welty
George Mason University

Kathy Westberry
University of North Florida

Nikki Wilmoth
Hill College

Kelley Wood
Hardin-Simmons University



The Welcomer is a quarterly publication of the Collegiate Information and Visitor Services Association. Please send comments, suggestions, or photos to:

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mcjen@umich.edu

Have you visited the CiVSA website recently?

On it you will find lots of useful information from the 2007 conference, including notes and copies of session handouts. You can also watch an introductory movie about our 2008 conference location, look up the e-mail address of a CiVSA colleague you've been meaning to contact, or check out some open jobs in the visitor/information services world.

www.civsa.org/

If you don't remember the CiVSA member login and password, contact web@civsa.org

Membership Renewal

Did you renew your CiVSA membership for one more year when you paid for the conference? If not, don't forget that your yearly membership will end on **July 31**. To continue to receive your fabulous CiVSA benefits including access to the CiVSA website, the listserv, and first notification about the annual CiVSA conference, you must renew your membership immediately.

There are several types of membership available:

Professional Membership (one person) - \$90/year

Institutional Membership (up to three people from the same institution) - \$200/year; plus \$40 for each additional member

Emeritus Membership (members who are officially retired from their institution) - \$40/year

You can visit the CiVSA website to read more details about the various types of membership.

To renew your membership, go to <http://civsa.org/membership/membership-application.php> and fill in all the required fields. You can pay for membership by check or credit card. If you choose credit card, you will be automatically re-directed to PayPal (you do not need a PayPal account to pay). If you pay by check, mail your check and the printed membership application to CiVSA Headquarters:

P.O. Box 971
Clemmons, NC 27012
phone: 336 499-6207
fax: 336 499-3319
e-mail: civsaHQ@civsa.org

Contact Headquarters with any questions about the current status of your membership.

Finally, several members have requested our Federal ID number for use when processing your payment. In case anyone else needs this, here it is...**13-384-4646**.

CiVSA fun

Want to keep up with your CiVSA friends in between conferences? Want to know when to wish someone a happy birthday? Join the CiVSA fun list!

civsafun@civsa.org is an optional list - those who join are sent member birthday reminders and updates on important happenings in others' lives. If you want to join, send a message to Jen McGowan (mcjen@umich.edu) and be sure to include your birthday (years are optional)!

Photo fun

Is your school among the ones pictured in the rotating gallery on the CiVSA website? If not and you'd like it to be, e-mail a picture of your desk, tour guides, or visitor center to mcjen@umich.edu

Customer Service

NPR's *All Things Considered* recently did a short piece on customer service over the telephone - a topic that each of us deals with in our offices. The blurb on the NPR website reads:

"Your call is important to us," companies always say when you reach their recorded telephone line. But what kind of customer service do they really provide? Corporate trainers are working to improve service on the telephone. And call center operators describe what it's like on their end of the phone.

They bring up some interesting topics in this five-minute piece - give it a listen:

<http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=10330403>

Employee Dress Codes

Whether we work at an information center, welcome/visitor center, or supervise campus tour guides, we all want our student employees (and permanent employees as well) to be dressed neatly, cleanly, and in a manner appropriately representative of our institution. Standards vary widely, however, as do rules on other appearance issues such as hair, piercings, and tattoos. Think about some of the issues involved – are sandals okay, or are closed-toe shoes a must? Are shorts appropriate in the summer months? Are your employees told of the dress policies verbally, or are they written in a training manual? Are there repercussions for not following the policy? Do you provide clothes for your employees or are they expected to purchase appropriate clothing on their own? Are nametags required?

The complexity of this issue and its relevance to us all makes it one that comes up frequently on the listserv. To help anyone who might be writing a new dress code or considering updating an existing one, I have summarized some of the discussion and included it here as a future reference guide for us all.

Many CiVSA members' dress code policies are practical and fairly self-explanatory. The majority can be summed up like this one from the University of California, Irvine:

Our dress code is somewhat loose. We “encourage” them to wear the shirts we give them, but if they can't, then something with our university logo. We also generally say NO to other institution clothes, clothes in poor condition, clothes with inappropriate sayings, and no sunglasses or sandals. Other than that, we leave it up to them.

One of the most comprehensive policies comes from the University of Houston:

The Office of Admissions is the door to the University of Houston and often is the first and only contact the public has with our University. Employees are expected to present an appearance that re-

flects favorably on the University and are expected to use good personal hygiene. Anyone arriving for work dressed inappropriately will be asked to leave. Customer Service areas will be required to use a standard office uniform that includes a UH shirt and name tag. All employees are expected to maintain good judgment at all times regarding their personal appearance – to dress appropriately, to be neat, to wear clean clothing, and to be careful of personal hygiene. This is particularly important in student contact areas such as Admissions, where staff represents the University to the students and the public.

Similarly, employees are expected to use good judgment regarding the appearance of their work stations and to keep their work stations clear of inappropriate materials. When an employee's dress, personal hygiene, and/or workstation activities or appearance are considered inappropriate, the supervisor will discuss the matter with the employee in private. If continued counseling fails to bring about the desired response, the supervisor may initiate disciplinary action.

Because of the open location and interaction with the public, public contact counters and areas dealing directly with students and the public on a regular basis must be kept neat and clean and free from personal materials, food, etc.

Because so many people have allergies to perfumes, any scent should be used in moderation.

Admissions employees must be prepared to turn their attention professionally and fully to the customer the moment the cus-

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tomers enter the public contact work space. Personal activities such as chewing gum, polishing nails, balancing checkbooks, reading newspapers, engaging in personal telephone conversations, playing computer games, and other non-business related activities at their work stations are not appropriate.

Such clothing as shorts, tops with bare midriffs, flip flops, and blue jeans (excluding institution approved days) are not considered appropriate and may not be worn to work. The following are examples of inappropriate dress:

- house slippers/shower shoes (no bare feet)
- short skirts (no more than 6 inches above knee when seated)
- short blouses/tops/halters (showing mid section)
- shirts/clothing with emblems from other colleges, explicit words/pictures, etc.
- hats/caps
- gym wear/jogging suits/spandex
- tennis shoes/sneakers (footwear used for medical conditions should be discussed with a supervisor and documented in the employee's file is an exception)

If you'd like to read more about the dress code policies of CiVSA members, you can download a list compiled from many different institutions at <http://civsa.org/DressCodes.pdf>. Thanks to Anne Peterson (University of Idaho) and Wendy Hamstra (Saint Louis University) for doing the compiling.

*Jennifer McGowan
University of Michigan*



The Council for the Advancement of Standards in Higher Education (CAS) was established in 1979 and represents an ever-growing consortium of higher education professional associations. CAS was created to establish, disseminate, and advocate professional standards and guidelines on a nationwide basis for higher education programs and services.

CAS currently has 36 member organizations. These associations represent the vast majority of higher education student programs and service practitioners throughout the country.

CiVSA

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Have a question for the entire Board?
Reach us all at civsaboard@civsa.org

My, How We've Grown. . . .



**CiVSA Then
(First Conference at
University of Alabama-
Birmingham in 1994)**

CiVSA Now

