

# The Welcomer

Collegiate Information and Visitor Services Association

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News and Information from the  
Collegiate Information and  
Visitor Services Association

## CIVSA Board Mid-Year Meeting

Eleven members of the board and conference committee met at Oklahoma City University November 14-16 to talk CIVSA business. We had many lengthy and productive conversations about conference planning, the new website, marketing for the conference and for the organization as a whole, the direction of future conferences, and the appointment of a Conference Hospitality Committee, among other topics. We also toured the Oklahoma City National Memorial and Museum, had some amazing meals, and learned how to count, Oklahoma-style.

If you have questions, suggestions, or comments for the board about any CIVSA business, please contact us at [exec@civsa.org](mailto:exec@civsa.org)



(from left): Georgia Balafas, Betty Spengler, Gina Gonzales, Stephen Barnett, Nancy Franco, Janey Wheeler, Jen McGowan, Rebecca Gloe, Julian Olivas, Michelle Lockhart, and Kevin Kirk enjoy dinner at Red Prime Steak in downtown Oklahoma City

# CIVSA Best Practices

## *Motivating Student Ambassadors at the University of St. Francis*

How do you motivate those around you to work hard and consistently? Recognition! At small schools, it is hard to always find someone to give a tour, work an event, or get volunteers for something around campus. This job does not require the ambassadors to work hours outside our big events (Visit Day, Preview Day, Registration, etc.), so we created a dynamic recognition program to motivate our ambassadors to work more frequently.

It starts with a simple point system. Our ambassadors receive points for a variety of things (see example of how we distribute points in next column). Throughout the semester, the ambassadors accumulate points. At the end of the semester appreciation party, we reward the three top point earners with a nice gift. In the past we have given iPods or gift cards. Recently, we've had our ambassadors fill out a survey telling us what they would like to see the top point earner to receive. We also have a raffle at the party. Every ambassador who has earned 20 points or more is entered into a drawing and three gift cards are given out to those randomly selected. The point system has increased the output by our ambassadors and created a healthy competitive spirit throughout the group.

Every year, we try to enhance our program in various ways so that the program is different for the continuing ambassadors. While the point system stays the same, we add or change some aspect of the recognition program to improve it. This year, we have added a new feature to our recognition program. In our group, we have families. Each family has 5-6 ambassadors in it. In our office, we have created a football field on a bulletin board. Every time each member of the family earns five points, the football moves 10 yards. The football CANNOT move until each member earns five points. This helps the ambassadors to positively

motivate members in the family, especially those who might not work as much. At the end of the semester, the family that has earned the most points gets to go out to a family dinner on us. The ambassadors enjoy this idea and it has positively impacted our group as a whole.

Our final form of recognition is the "Pickle" award. There is a video called "Give 'em the Pickle" (please visit [www.giveemthepickle.com](http://www.giveemthepickle.com) for more information). We show this customer service video at each training session. This award is significant because the ambassadors choose who gets the "Pickle." The current holder of the "Pickle" gets to pass the "Pickle" onto the ambassador they believe has gone above and beyond to show great customer service. It is a big honor to receive the "Pickle" from a fellow ambassador.

The ambassadors are an elite group on campus. We constantly recognize the group, because they do such a wonderful job giving tours and representing our university in a positive manner. Our recognition program is unique and promotes a positive workplace for our ambassadors.

*Annette Jelinek*  
*University of St. Francis*

Point System	
Tour	3 pts
Meal Host	4 pts
Overnight	10 pts
Event	5 pts
Volunteer	5 pts
Good Merit	5 pts

# From the Research and Assessment Committee

## *Future Directions in Information and Visitor Services*

Within the next two weeks, the CIVSA Research & Assessment Committee will be sending out a short survey to determine the research interests of the Association. We ask that you complete this assessment as soon as possible so that this valuable information can be used next spring in a number of important ways. The purposes of this survey are to:

- document the current research interests/needs of the membership,
- encourage the membership of CIVSA to raise questions and search for answers on any topic within the field of information & visitor services,
- inform the Executive Board of current interests/needs for their use in directing future assessment plans among the membership and within the Research & Assessment Committee, and finally
- guide future research proposals.

The Research & Assessment Committee exists to support the research interests of both the individual members of CIVSA as well as the profession of information and visitor services. As a reminder, the Research & Assessment Committee is accepting research proposals for the 2009 year. Please consider submitting a proposal to conduct research in an area of interest to yourself and/or the general membership. The Research & Assessment Committee will lend support in any way possible and if you agree to present your research and findings at the Annual Conference next June, you may be eligible for complimentary conference registration. Our field is growing and therefore in need of sound research to inform best practices and decision-making. Furthermore, in tight budget times, conducting research may assist you in getting to our next great conference in Boston.

Any member of the CIVSA Research & Assessment Committee is available to answer your questions and we encourage you to contact us. Please refer to the CIVSA website for a list of committee members.

The Committee is also looking for a few additional hard working members, especially those that work in the area of collegiate information services. If you are interested, please contact me as soon as possible.

Best wishes for a wonderful holiday season.

*Denise Wellman*  
*University of South Carolina*  
*Research & Assessment Committee Chair*  
[denisew@mailbox.sc.edu](mailto:denisew@mailbox.sc.edu)



### Customer Service Tip

***Remember there is no way that the quality of customer service can exceed the quality of the people who provide it.*** Think you can get by paying the lowest wage, giving the fewest of benefits, doing the least training for your employees? It will show. Companies don't help customers - people do.

*Tip taken from:*  
<http://sbinfocanada.about.com/od/customerservice/a/custservtipslt.htm>

# Welcome New Members!

Sarah Bible  
Houston Baptist University

Alyson Cantu  
West Texas A&M University

Carolyn Curry  
Delaware State University

Delia DeLeon  
New Mexico State University

Kelly DeVoe  
Baylor University

Elizabeth Downing  
University of Maine

Mary Edmunds  
Florida Atlantic University

Hailey Ezekiel  
College of Charleston

Claire Fischer  
Columbus State University

Rebecca Gloe  
Boston University

Joann Hicks  
Coppin State University

Rebecca Hunter  
Columbus State University

Della Jasso  
Baylor University

Audrey Jones  
University of Kentucky

Rachel Kazor  
Florida Gulf Coast University

Yvonne Lundy  
Howard Payne University

Joanne Mathews  
Coppin State University

Aubree McKamie  
Southern Nazarene University

Trudy Mohre  
Howard Payne University

Blaire Moody  
University of Michigan

Valerie Pickett  
New Mexico State University

Barbara Pletcher  
Florida Atlantic University

Elizabeth Primm  
Samford University

Anna Riddle  
Savannah College of Art & Design

Dianne Rincon  
Houston Baptist University

Kristy Rushing  
Southern Illinois University-Carbondale

L. Germaine Scott-Cheatham  
Delaware State University

Carrie Singleton  
Howard Payne University

Karen Stonehill  
Saint Mary's College

Ross VanDyke  
Baylor University

Kate Weissing  
Florida Atlantic University

Rebecca Whitehead  
Winthrop University

Justine Wilmot  
Delaware State University

## CIVSA Member Profile

*Janey Wheeler, Oklahoma City University*

*In the recent CIVSA communication survey, several members suggested a “get-to-know-other-members” or “get-to-know-the-Board” feature for the newsletter. This is the inaugural column; look for more profiles of other members in future issues!*

**Job Title:** Assistant Director, Visitor Services under the Enrollment Services division

**How long have you been in the information/visitor services world?** In August of 2002, a Vice President on campus approached me about starting a

visit program for the university. I asked him what he had in mind and he handed me a blank piece of paper and a pen. It is all history after that, but I would not have had such success without finding CIVSA and the incredible members who value networking and sharing information with colleagues.



**When did you join CIVSA?** I joined in September of 2002 thanks to my V.P. introducing me to former CIVSA President, Leslie Baumert at the University of Oklahoma. I attended my first conference in June 2003 at the University of Nebraska.

**How many CIVSA conferences have you attended?** Six and looking forward to #7 at Boston University in June 2009. Mark your calendars for June 8-12, and be aware that those dates include pre- and post-conference activities (shameless plug!).

**What are your major job responsibilities?** I manage

the Visitor Center which involves not only the campus visit program but also providing services to all visitors, alumni, and OCU friends who use the Lacy Center as a gateway. My job also entails the recruitment, training and supervision of 20 Gold Star Ambassadors. My visit program would not survive without the hard work

and dedication of these incredible college students.

**What is a typical day like at your job?**

A busy schedule full of problem solving and putting out fires...oh yes, and attending to multiple phone calls, emails and meetings on and off campus. There is never a dull moment!

**What is your best piece of advice for other CIVSA members?** In all things, approach your job with a passion, stay flexible and try to keep your sense of humor. If you can't accomplish this, you may be in the wrong line of work. The passion part of that might get you in trouble from time to time but providing excellent customer service in higher education is not for sissies! Why? Because everyone knows how to do it better than you do but no one really wants to do it for you. At the end of the day, take pride in knowing you have played an integral part in moving your institution's mission and success forward.

*continued on next page*

*Janey, continued from previous page*

**What is the most fun thing that your office does?**

The most fun for me is watching the students grow and learn how to effectively work in teams. Their youth and outlook on life can be a breath of fresh air on very trying days. The most fun for the ambassadors is when they get presents and free food at parties or training throughout the year...and of course, double pay when they sign up to work “out of hours.”

**What is your favorite part of working in visitor/information services?**

Using the opportunity to provide students with valuable lessons that extends beyond the classroom about work culture. Our students are in college to learn and to prepare for their career path. Not only faculty, but also staff, on college campuses should take responsibility in this process.

**How many items are on your current to-do list?**

Not so much a list now but more of a catalog of “must do,” “need to,” and “wish I could do if I had the budget money” items. Again, there is never a dull moment!



## Customer Service Tip

**Realize that your people will treat your customer the way they are treated.** Employees take their cue from management. Do you greet your employees enthusiastically each day; are you polite in your dealings with them; do you try to accommodate their requests; do you listen to them when they speak? Consistent rude customer service is a reflection not as much on the employee as on management.

*Tip taken from:*  
<http://sbinfocanada.about.com/od/customerservice/a/custservtipslt.htm>

## Visitor Parking Survey Results

Last month, Sharon Sarver at Virginia Tech asked a question on the CIVSA listserv about visitor parking on campus. Sharon wondered how other campuses handle permits - are they free, or are visitors charged? Is there a time limit on visitor parking? See the survey results on the next page!

Remember that the listserv can be a valuable source of information from fellow members. To reach the entire membership, send an e-mail message to [civsa@civsa.org](mailto:civsa@civsa.org)

*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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734 764-2526 (phone)  
[mcjen@umich.edu](mailto:mcjen@umich.edu)

<b>Institution</b>	<b>Visitor Parking Policy</b>
George Mason University	Provides validation ticket good for whole day at parking garage near student union
Kettering University	No charge; weekday visitors are sent permit in advance
New Mexico State University	No charge; guests are directed to free lot or are encouraged to print a visitors parking pass online
North Carolina State University	Undergraduate Admissions pays for those registered for tour or information session; others must pay
Oklahoma City University	No charge; dedicated lot next to Visitor Center or can obtain hang tag from OCU police to park elsewhere on campus
Purdue University	Office of Admissions guests receive a permit to park free for the day of their visit, but only if they use one specific garage on campus
Southern Illinois University Carbondale	No charge; hang tags for visitors to the admissions office and regular visitor permits for other campus visitors (both provided to us free by parking)
Texas A&M University	Parking garage reserves spaces for visitors, but they must pay a fee (\$2/hour for first three hours, then \$.50 per half-hour after that)
Texas Woman's University	No charge; given out for length of time needed
University of Michigan	Must pay for parking garage or street meters; rate ranges from \$.80/hour to \$1.10/hour
University of North Florida	Campus tour participants get free pass (paid for by Admissions); other visitors pay \$3/day
University of Northern Colorado	Prospective students get parking pass free of charge (paid for by Admissions Office); other visitors must pay meters or \$3.50 all-day pass
University of Texas at San Antonio - 1604 Main Campus	\$1/hour in parking garage
University of Texas at San Antonio - Downtown Campus	six free spaces for visitors who call ahead to reserve a permit from Visitor Center (paid for by Admissions Office); otherwise \$1/hour parking in garage
Virginia Tech	No charge; permits valid for one day - seven days depending on visitor's need

# CIVSA Officers for 2008-2009

## **President**

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Have a question for the entire Board?  
Reach us all at [exec@civsa.org](mailto:exec@civsa.org)



Mark your calendars now to make sure you attend the 2009 conference at Boston University! The conference dates are June 8-12, 2009 and our hosts at BU are already planning to make this conference a fabulous experience for everyone. We already know that Jeff Kallay from TargetX will be our keynote speaker, teaching us how to make a visit an *experience*. Stay tuned to the [CIVSA website](#) over the next few months as more details become available. . . .