

The Welcomer

Collegiate Information and Visitor Services Association

Vol. 13 Issue 4

Autumn 2004

In This Issue

Building Community Partnerships

page 1

What's Wrong with This Picture?

page 2

Update from the President

page 2

CiVSA Officers

page 4

CiVSA Best Practices

page 5

CiVSA Membership Info

page 6

Conference Notes

pages 7-10

2005 Conference Update

page 10

Building Community Partnerships: Then and Now

The article below, written by Denise Wellman of the University of South Carolina, originally appeared in the Winter 1998 edition of The Welcomer. Denise has graciously allowed us to re-print her article and also provided us with a follow-up.

USC Visitor Center makes the Skies even friendlier

Next March, the [University of South Carolina Visitor Center](#) will be opening a Business Center at the Columbia Metropolitan Airport. This project is the fruit of a community partnership between BellSouth and the University of South Carolina. The almost 1600-square-foot facility will immediately greet travelers as they enter the airport either from the parking facilities or the airport concourse. Part of the Business Center will resemble the USC Visitor Center, providing space to display University exhibits and interactive information. The remainder of the Center, equipped with conference facilities, phones, e-mail ports, copying and fax services, as well as a comfortable reading room, will be available by restrictive access to friends of the University and BellSouth. The University Ambassadors, USC student volunteers, will staff the Center from Sunday through Friday.

Like other CiVSA member groups, the University of South Carolina's Visitor Center has enjoyed a wonderful relationship with other local, community organizations - in our case, especially with the Columbia Visitors Bureau, the South Carolina Department of Parks, Recreation and Tourism, and the Columbia Chamber of Commerce. Columbia is a lovely city, rich in history and exciting in cultural and educational opportunities. When publications about the University are developed, the "magic" of the city is used to assist in recruiting students and faculty to the campus. This relationship is fostered each and every day, whether it be through responding to a simple question, attending a local celebration, or the opening of the newly-renovated Columbia Metropolitan Airport. I am especially thrilled that the University chose the Visitor Center to be involved in this innovative project. Not only will there be continuous opportunities to forge community partnerships, but the Center will provide tremendous visibility for the University as well as the Visitor Center. The Ambassadors are excited about the opportunity to network with business professionals as they extend their expertise beyond the walls of the USC campus.

continued on page 3



News and Information from the
Collegiate Information and
Visitor Services Association

Nick Kovalakides poses this Customer Service Question:

WHAT'S WRONG WITH THIS PICTURE?



(see answer on page 4)

Update from the President

I hope that the fall semester is going well for all of you. If things at Missouri are any indication, I know that you are keeping busy with increased tour numbers, more outside groups visiting, merging of athletic recruitment programs, etc., but rest assured that next year's conference is just around the corner!

I wanted to take a moment to let you all know how excited I am to be serving as your President this year and how thoroughly disappointed I was to not be able to attend the annual conference held at Yale/UConn this year. I heard that everything was fabulous and that Nancy Franco and Meg Malmborg were excellent hostesses. And even though I conference called in for the executive board meetings I really missed being there to see everyone and get my annual dose of juice to get recharged for the upcoming year. For those of you who did not hear, my reason for not attending is the only thing that would have kept me away – my husband and I welcomed the birth of our daughter, Lauren Nicole.

We have had some great leadership throughout the organization's history and with the help of my outstanding executive board I plan to carry on that tradition. The board has been busy making plans for the mid-year meeting to be held in Columbia December 10-12th so please let me know of any agenda items that you would like to see addressed this year. Some of the topics to date include the transition of moving the CiVSA headquarters from Rutgers, making changes and improvements to the website, targeted approaches to increasing our membership, and greater membership services.

Well, here is to a great year! I look forward to working with and for all of you. Remember that this is a partnership and we need the whole team pulling together to continue to accomplish great things and to progress this organization to the next tier!

LeAnn Stroupe, President
University of Missouri

If all goes well, the Business Center will open March 1, 1998. As you travel to Columbia for the National Conference next June, be sure to stop in.

So what happened? Six years later, is USC still at the Columbia airport? Denise wrote the article below to bring us up-to-date.

A few years ago, I submitted an article on the opening of our BellSouth/USC Business Center at the Columbia Metropolitan Airport. The Business Center, about 20 minutes from the USC campus, was part of a complete airport renovation project that was completed in 1998. Almost overnight, we had an entirely new airport – first class all the way! The Business Center project was born through a wonderful community partnership between the University of South Carolina and BellSouth, a large telecommunications company in the southeast. This center was built to allow the University to reach out and serve traveling business professionals, advancing an understanding of the many teaching, research, and public service functions we had to offer and to provide a venue to publicize the many services of BellSouth. To say the least, this was a welcome respite for many a weary traveler within the hectic environment of mass transportation. The space was beautiful and offered a quiet place to meet, fax an important document for your next meeting, catch up on e-mail, interview a candidate, or simply catch up on CNN. Our Office of Undergraduate Admissions even used this space to meet and greet scholarship applicants as they flew into Columbia to visit the University.

The USC Visitor Center student and professional staff ran the facility and BellSouth provided the telecommunications support and paid the lease to the airport. The services of this center were free to any of the roughly 6500 traveling professionals that visited each year and the feedback we received offered overwhelming praise and a call for such a center to be in every airport. It was a fantastic marketing tool for the University and touched a population we often didn't have a chance to interact with.

So where did things go wrong? On the tails of 9/11, airport travel around the country dropped off (the

center only saw around 3500 people in 2003), budgets got tighter everywhere, and the overall support for the center broke down in a number of ways. The need for campus visitor services continued to grow and expand and the split up of various entities within BellSouth presented some continuing concerns relative to the availability of adequate telecommunications support. As a result, the Center closed in June of 2004. While we weren't terribly disappointed, as we already had more work on campus than we could say grace over, the challenge was to eliminate the Center while maintaining a positive community partnership with BellSouth and the airport. This took some gentle negotiating and the realization that providing inadequate resources to support the center was a larger PR problem than not having it open at all. Fortunately, the airport administration needed some additional office space so they were willing to let BellSouth out of their lease on the space; I was able to retain the state-slotted position as we were growing here so we didn't eliminate any staff; and we had good records which allowed us to divide up all of the physical resources. Overall, it was a great partnership and provided a wonderful example of how a college campus can benefit from reaching out to the community to expand their constituency.

*By Denise Wellman
University of South Carolina*



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

Jennifer McGowan
Campus Information Center
530 S. State St.
Ann Arbor, MI 48109-1308
734 764-2526 (phone)
mcjen@umich.edu

Have you visited the CIVSA website recently?

There's a wealth of information available, including a member directory, past issues of the Welcomer, and much more!

www.civsa.org

If you don't remember the CIVSA member login and password, contact Jen McGowan.

CiVSA Officers 2004-2005

President

LeAnn Stroupe
University of Missouri
573 882-6333
StroupeL@missouri.edu

President-Elect

Nancy Franco
Yale University
203 432-2301
nancy.franco@yale.edu

Secretary

Janey Wheeler
Oklahoma City University
405 521-5345
jwheeler@okcu.edu

Treasurer

Rahsaan Burroughs
George Washington University
202 994-7459
rahsaanb@gwu.edu

Director of Communications

Jennifer McGowan
University of Michigan
734 764-2526
mcjen@umich.edu

Past President

Barb Dallinger
Illinois State University
309 438-8540
bldalli@ilstu.edu

Membership Chair

Kate Steinbach
University of Wisconsin - Milwaukee
414 229-6235
ksteinba@uwm.edu



WHAT'S WRONG WITH THIS PICTURE? - The Correct Version! *(from page 2)*



By briskly standing from your seated position, you demonstrate your interest in and respect for your visitor. Plus, it puts both of your eye levels closer to each other, which is a friendlier position. Just remember to smile first and speak first!

CiVSA Best Practices

Florida Gulf Coast University's Brand-New Welcome Center

CiVSA member Tami Tassler posed this question to her student staff: "What is your favorite part of working at the Florida Gulf Coast University Welcome Center?" Here is the students' glowing description of their brand-new building, including some details that may be of interest to CiVSA members currently planning welcome center additions or renovations on their own campus.

The newest building to grace our school grounds, the [Margaret S. Sugden Welcome Center](#), serves as the "living room" of the university. Surrounded by lush greenery and located on its own lake, the Welcome Center is a thing of beauty. The Welcome Center is the first building you see. It is so incredible that you have to see it to believe it. This new building is so amazing that words simply cannot describe it. However, since all we have is words, we'll have to try our best.

The Welcome Center is approximately 7,000 square feet and is loaded with state-of-the-art facilities to welcome prospective students, their families and other visitors to campus. The Welcome Center has large windows, cream-colored walls, landscaped cement walkways, a royal green tin roof and two sliding glass doors that part to reveal students and staff members standing by to welcome you to Florida Gulf Coast University, eager and ready to answer whatever questions you might have.

The front desk, located in the reception area, is filled with staff members all set with information packets, maps and computer screens ready to answer any question that could be imagined about the school. If the staff does not know the answer, they know

where to get it. The reception area is filled with rocking chairs, couches, coffee tables, and armchairs. Let's not forget that gorgeous lakefront view. It is an area for visitors to relax and find out more about the school. Also in the reception area is a photograph of the Sugdens; it is being displayed to honor them for their generosity to FGCU.

If you continue through the reception area, you will come across an art gallery. This art gallery is brightly decorated with FGCU Student and Alumni artwork, changing each month to display the University's artistic talents. In the back of the Welcome Center a theatre can be found, where pre-admission sessions as well as small conferences are conducted. The high-tech podium is similar to the podiums located in the classrooms on campus; however, it is the model of a newer system. The blinds and screens of the theatre are automatic and allow for a true theatre-style feel during presentations.

The offices located on the opposite side of the theatre are for the permanent staff, the recruiters and admissions management staff. The staff members of the Welcome Center are given the responsibility to greet all campus visitors, give campus tours and answer general questions about the University.

The Welcome Center, being the "living room" of campus, is the first but most definitely not the last stop of the University. As you leave the center, ready to take on the rest of what the University has

to offer, enjoy the beautiful scenery once more then be on your way to what is hopefully a very pleasant experience!

*Rachel Kazor, Melissa Dsouza, Prachi Ashar, Randall Awil, Jennifer Geffard, Jaimee Howard, Anthony Hyatt, Nick Popoff, Candra Still, Valerie Vilmont, and Dave Walker
Florida Gulf Coast University*



CiVSA members Tami Tassler and Betty Spengler pose during the grand opening of Florida Gulf Coast University's Sugden Welcome Center

Welcome New Members!

Steve Amundson
University of Wisconsin-Madison

Tara Brown
University of South Carolina

Peter English
Caldwell College

Jacob Haskins
James Madison University

Stacy Hopkins
Indiana University of Pennsylvania

James Lynch
Indiana University of Pennsylvania

Megan McCue
Indiana University of Pennsylvania

Geoff Merrill
University of Wisconsin-Madison

Kim Mueller
Washington State University

Stefanie Pirwitz
University of South Carolina

Rachel Savage
James Madison University

Megan Wagner
American University

A Few Notes about Membership

A hearty welcome to all of our new members! You have joined a great group of people. We are very anxious to learn more about you and to have you learn about us.

Thank you to all of our members who have processed their renewals during the transition of headquarters tasks. Your patience has been appreciated. I continue to work with the database and files and will be contacting member institutions that have not renewed for this fiscal year, again, in the very near future. If you are unsure whether or not you've renewed, you can contact me at (414) 229-6235 or e-mail info@civsa.org. Renewing your CiVSA membership takes only a few minutes and can be done online at <http://www.civsa.org/memberapp.shtml> Be sure to print a copy of the form to send with your Purchase Order to the address listed and hit submit so your information comes to me electronically.

Several of you have requested the Federal ID number for use when processing your payment. In case anyone else needs this, here it is...**13-384-4646**.

As we continue to look for ways to expand our organization, please take a moment to think about colleagues you may have on your campus or neighboring campuses that may benefit from joining CiVSA. Please forward contact information to me and your [Regional Director](#). If you are unsure what region you are part of, the [CiVSA Region Map](#) can be found here.

I look forward to seeing everyone again, or meeting you for the first time, at the conference at [Brigham Young University](#) in June!

Please do not be bashful about using the listserv!

*Kate Steinbach, Membership Chair
University of Wisconsin - Milwaukee*

*Some happy new CiVSA faces
at the New Member
Orientation at Yale, June 2004.*



*If you missed CiVSA's 11th Annual Conference in June, or if you just weren't able to attend every session of interest to you, fear not. **Kate Steinbach** of the University of Wisconsin - Milwaukee had the foresight to enlist a team of other conference attendees to send her their session notes, which she is compiling to share with you in this and upcoming issues of The Welcomer. (CiVSA members are nothing if not generous!)*

Personalizing the Campus Visit

Presented by Janey Wheeler, Visit Services Coordinator, Oklahoma City University

DEFINITIONS

- Customer Service: an organization's ability to supply their customers' wants and needs.
- Excellent customer service is the ability to constantly and consistently exceed the customer's expectations.
- Mindset is what leads to better delivery. If you have the mindset to be the best, you will give your best.
- Web searching is one way that students will find out whether they want to visit a school or not. If the website is difficult, they will move on to the next school. Students spend an average of eight seconds on a website.
- The campus visit is the only sure way to convey what and who you are. It is emotional and tangible.

WHY PERSONALIZE?

- Always put yourself in their shoes
- It breathes life into your University
- Adds depth that cannot be done with words

THE CHALLENGE: There will always be those who know how to do it better

- Use what works; you can't make everyone happy all of the time
- Don't let human nature trip you up
- Budget issues
- Learn to work smarter instead of harder - utilize your resources
- Develop relationships with key university people
- Try to get other departments to split costs

THE BENEFIT (Your university will gain the largest reward)

- Build your strategy to outlast you
- Build your strategy to benefit future students
- Involved students are invaluable tools

DEVELOPING THE STRATEGY: Educate your institution to become as equally concerned about your visitors as you are

- Find opportunities to express the importance of recruitment – recruitment is everyone's business!
- Communicate your plans to constituents
- Share accomplishments
- Utilize your school's strategic plan; understand the vision and mission
- Study your benchmarks (who you want to be like) and competitors (who you are like)
- Visit other programs and websites; find out what they are doing with their visit program
- Instill membership in every team member

continued on next page

continued from previous page

HOW DO YOU REACH THEM?

- Effective communication
- The message we send or don't send speaks volumes
 - METHODS OF COMMUNICATION
 - Websites
 - Printed material-keep it simple!
 - Counselors

HOW DO THEY REACH YOU?

- A dedicated email address (visitocu@okcu.edu)
- A link on website to visit
- Toll free number
- Counselor contact

SCHEDULING THE VISIT

- Create set tour times on website and publications
- Provide a confirmation
- Set-up information sharing system
- Schedule faculty and key staff appointments whenever possible

GREETING YOUR VISITORS

- Make parking easy and convenient
- Have students greet your visitors
- Provide a registry at front desk
- Display visitors' names in entry area
- Provide personalized materials for visitors

THE INFORMATION SESSION

- Be sure visitors know they can follow up with Admissions Office or Visitors Center
- Admissions Counselors should do info sessions

THE TOUR

- Have students lead tours
- Make sure tour guides are well-trained and knowledgeable
- Customize your actual tour whenever possible
- Include tasteful showrooms in residence halls

THE FOLLOW-UP

- Send at least two forms of contact (thank you notes, etc.)
 - One could be a handwritten note from tour guide
- Send a customer comment card (return postage paid) so you can get feedback
- Provide faculty with email or mailing addresses of prospects

continued on next page

continued from previous page

IDEAS TO CONSIDER

- Have ready-made bags with materials in them to hand out on tours
- Provide bottled water - the label could have university logo on it
- Schedule appointments with faculty, financial aid, coaches and honors coordinators during the visitor's time on campus
- Use guides to escort visitors to and from appointments on campus
- Provide umbrellas for visitors to borrow
- Send information ahead of visit so your prospects and their families know how to get there, what to expect, where to stay, what area sights and restaurants are available to them
- Make emails user friendly by creating links for information on the web
- Provide lodging discounts

Session notes provided by Emily Jones, George Mason University

How to Think Like Leonardo DaVinci

Presented by Jeff Brake, University of Michigan; inspired by the work of Michael J. Gelb

Leonardo DaVinci is one of the greatest minds in history. What made him such a genius? It's not merely a function of his intelligence. Several principles have arisen throughout history that are used by those we consider geniuses and that can help you achieve your best in your work and personal life:

- Curiosita**
- Dimostrazione**
- Sensazione**
- Sfumato**
- Arte/Scienza**
- Corporalita**
- Conessione**

Curiosita - *an insatiable quest for knowledge and an unrelenting quest for continuous learning*

Do you take adequate time for reflection and contemplation? Are you a voracious reader? Are you always learning other languages and about other cultures? Would your friends describe you as open-minded and curious? Do you actively seek out different perspectives when you must make a decision? If so, you rank high on the Curiosita scale.

Dimostrazione - *a commitment to test knowledge through experience, persistence, and a willingness to learn from mistakes*

Do you seek out new experiences every day? Have you changed a deeply-held belief because of practical experience? Are you willing to acknowledge your mistakes? Do you learn from your mistakes, rarely making the same one twice? Do you question "conventional wisdom" and authority? If so, you rank high on the Dimostrazione scale.

continued on next page

continued from previous page

Sensazione - the continual refinement of the senses, especially sight, as the means to enliven experience

Are you sensitive to color harmony and clashes? Do you know the color of all your friends' eyes? Do you listen to classical or jazz music regularly? Do you have a favorite scent? Do you enjoy many different types of cuisine? Do you like to touch and be touched? Do you often describe one sense in terms of another? If so, you rank high on the Sensazione scale.

Sfumato - a willingness to embrace ambiguity, paradox, and uncertainty (literally "going up in smoke")

Do you thrive on change? Do you enjoy riddles, puzzles, and puns? Do you enjoy paradox and irony? Do you appreciate the importance of conflict in inspiring creativity? If so, you rank high on the Sfumato scale.

Arte/Scienza - the development of balance between science and art, logic, and imagination ("whole-brain" thinking)

Do you like details? Are you organized and disciplined? Do you like lists? Then you are more left-brained. Are you highly imaginative? Do you love to doodle? Do you

rely on your intuition? Then you are more right-brained.

Coporalita - the cultivation of grace, ambidexterity, fitness, and poise

Are you fit and getting stronger? Are you well coordinated? Do you love to move? Would people describe you as graceful? Are you knowledgeable about your own diet and nutrition? If so, then you rank high on the Coporalita scale.



Jeff Brake teaches us all how to be geniuses!

Connessione - a recognition of an appreciation for the interconnectedness of all things

Are you ecologically aware? Do you frequently make connections that others do not see? Do you enjoy similies, analogies, and metaphor? Are your life goals

integrated with your values? If so, then you rank high on the Connessione scale.

Now that you know these seven principles, think about how you apply each one in your own life and especially in your work life. On the scales where you rank low, gradually try to incorporate some of the tenets of that principle into your daily life. You'll be amazed to discover your own strengths and inner genius!



CiVSA Conference

June 5-7, 2005

Come early and see the world-famous **Mormon Tabernacle Choir's** "Music and the Spoken Word" broadcast

Take time to see beautiful **Zion National Park** or hang with the rich and famous in Park City

Come see Y "this is the right place!"

Estimated cost: \$350
plus airfare & hotel

Stay at the **Provo Marriott** - \$79/night
(single or double occupancy)

Call Troy or Chelsy with questions 1-800-238-6717

