

The Welcomer

Collegiate Information and Visitor Services Association

Vol. 16 Issue 1

Spring 2007

In This Issue

2007 CiVSA Conference

page 1

Research and Assessment:
Data Collection

page 3

My First CiVSA Conference

page 4

CiVSA Best Practices:
A New Visitor Center in
Wisconsin

page 5

New Member List

page 6

CAS Award

page 7

Volunteer!

page 8

Here's What Happened at Notre Dame when They Found Out CiVSA was Coming!



Make plans now to attend the 2007 Annual Conference at the [University of Notre Dame](#), June 6 -10, 2007. Go to the 14th Annual CiVSA Conference at the University of Notre Dame, and you'll return to your campus newly determined and prepared to take action - and motivate others to do the same. We have planned many exciting sessions, each designed to explore a dimension of your life's work. Take advantage of the chance to meet with other industry professionals, share ideas, and participate in thought provoking presentations, roundtable discussions and seminars.

All hotel reservations should be made by calling the [South Bend Marriott, Downtown](#) at (800) 329-7349 or (574) 234-2000. Please make your reservation by phone and mention The Collegiate Information and Visitors Services Association (not just CiVSA) to get our special rate of \$124 per night.

This year's conference features two dynamic keynote speakers. First, we'll hear from Dr. David O'Connor, philosophy professor at the University of Notre Dame who will speak on "Hospitality and the Heart of the University." In addition, Dr. Kathleen Sullivan, Senior

continued on next page

CiVSA

News and Information from the
Collegiate Information and
Visitor Services Association

Conference, continued from front page

Director of Service and Spiritual Programs at the University of Notre Dame, will speak on “The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People.”

Your CiVSA colleagues will be offering sessions based on some of their own areas of expertise. We have more opportunities for learning and sharing this year than ever before! Some of the sessions we already have planned include:

- Campus Visits: Completing the Communication Circle
- Utilizing Technology to Manage Your Tour Guide Group
- The Art of Exceeding Expectations
- Commemorating a Sesquicentennial: How a Campus Celebration Affects Your Operation
- How Campus Tours are a Financially Viable Service to the University
- Mountain, Meet Mohammed
- That Special Magic—Customer Service, Disney Style
- Business in the Front, Party in the Back: A Model for Running Our Office

And that is just the beginning!

We'll be visiting three historic campuses. Besides the host University of Notre Dame, we'll visit [St Mary's College](#) in South Bend, Indiana and [Goshen College](#) in Goshen, Indiana in the heart of Amish Country. Each campus will offer us tours, a look at their respective Visitors Centers and a chance to learn more about these three very different institutions.

But don't think our conference will be all work, all the time. We've planned some great fun activities, starting with our kick off dinner at the [College Football Hall of Fame](#) on Thursday. On Friday, we'll be having lunch at historic [Amish Acres](#), a fully-restored Amish farmstead where we've also included time for shopping and tours. Join us for movie night at the [Eck Visitors Center](#) and watch the stars walk the red carpet. Finally, we'll close the conference with a spectacular dinner at the Marriott Ballroom, complete with entertainment by the Oblates of Blues, a Chicago-style blues band.

Check out our conference website <http://www.civsa.org/conference-2007.htm> for a complete conference schedule as well as information about getting to South Bend, Indiana and hotel information.

We'll see you at this year's Conference at the University of Notre Dame!

*Your 2007 Conference Committee:
Jaime Cripe, Melonie Rhodes, Betty Spengler, Heather Rodenhizer and Nancy Franco*



The Notre Dame campus at sunrise

Research and Assessment: Data Collection

by Sandy Roberts

When CiVSA members came together to form a new national organization in the early 1990s, we were mainly concerned with developing our membership, pulling together a newsletter and organizing an annual conference. These activities along with the development of our constitution and by-laws were the main focus of our early years. Applause, applause to all our founding members and officers for making sure these elements were in place to launch our professional association.

As organizational needs were identified during those first years, committees were formed to address those needs. One of those committees was the Strategic Planning Committee, headed by Denise Wellman, University of South Carolina. Denise served as one of our first presidents and was keenly involved in all aspects of CiVSA's founding. She wisely realized the value of planning strategically for our future. She also realized that plans must be based on solid research-based information and this led her to suggest that we begin to conduct research within our organization. At the 2006 CiVSA meeting in Washington D.C. the committee highlighted the need for research and agreed to move forward with ideas to gather some basic statistics on how we record services provided to visitors in our centers. We also wanted to know how these statistics were used in programs and departments.

In February, the newly named Research and Assessment Committee put together a short survey questionnaire to inquire about your data collection. Sherry Case (Colorado State University), Jeremy Hawkins (James Madison University), and Sandy Roberts (University of North Carolina) along with Denise worked to draft questions to include in the survey. The survey was then sent to you on our listserv and the replies were tallied by Jeremy Hawkins. A big thank you to the 46 CiVSA members who replied to the survey and submitted data to us.

Here is a summary of what you told us:

97.8%	Keep records of services provided
76.1%	Keep these records electronically
80 %	Use the statistics for budget purposes
74 %	Use the numbers for strategic planning
78 %	Use the numbers for department annual reports
41 %	Use the figures for marketing
28 %	Use the statistics for impact studies

To see the complete survey report, please go to:
<https://websurvey.jmu.edu/ss/wswebtop.dll/WSPubReport?esid=3545&subaccountid=dyedt>
The password is civsa.

Almost 100% of our members keep track of visitors and most keep them electronically. This probably would not have been the case ten years ago. Excel spread sheets were mentioned often as the method of tallying records. Many members emphasized how important their records were in justifying and increasing their budgets.

If you are that one percent who does not track your visitors, we encourage you to begin. Numbers are increasingly important for budgets and staff justification. When budgets get compressed (which they always will) it is often the department or program with the best service records to come out the winner in the budget crunch. And the greatest benefit of good record keeping is to the program staff in knowing basic data about the visitors they serve.

The initial fruits of the Assessment and Planning Committee was included in our Fall 2006 Welcomer and clearly validated the benefits of tracking visitor traffic. Thanks Steve for sharing your research at Cal Poly Pomona.

Look for future articles from the Committee that may assist CiVSA members considering research and assessment initiatives.

Sandy Roberts
University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill

My First CiVSA Conference: I Found It!

by Kevin Kirk

Almost three long/short years ago I entered into the unknown world of Campus Visits on the campus of Baylor University. It was exciting but very new to me even though I had spent the previous seven years working in both Financial Aid and Admission Services at Baylor. I had many questions but did not know who to ask and there were many more questions that I did not even *know* to ask.

Through the first months on the job, I kept thinking that surely there were people doing what I was doing at other schools. And, if that were so, then I just knew that they were getting together somewhere to help each other and to support one another. Coming from my background in Admissions and Financial Aid, I was very familiar with the acronym alphabet soup of organizations that had served me so well in my previous jobs. I thought that there just had to be a place like that for me now, but I didn't know where.

Not too long after really deciding that I must put in the work to seek out such an organization, I actually got a visit at my office from Troy Selk, our dedicated current president of CiVSA. He just happened to be passing through town while visiting some prospective students in the area. He graciously spent some time sharing with me about his university and about CiVSA. Within the hour after his departure I got online, signed up my school as a CiVSA member, and began the process to be sure that I was in attendance at the 2006 conference in Washington, D.C.

Well, I got to the conference and it was all I hoped for and then some. I had actually found that group of people who were doing what I was doing. Not only did they have the same jobs at other institutions, but they were also facing the same challenges, enjoying the same rewards, and even understood the

same jokes about my new profession. Besides all of that, they were fun, knowledgeable and very welcoming to me as the newcomer.

The 2006 conference provided a great experience to learn alongside so many new friends. I was also given the chance to visit three wonderful schools and see how their visitors were cared for. (This was something I always had planned to do on my own at neighboring schools but never actually made the time for.) We spent time in sessions filled with useful insight into many relevant issues. Plus, there was great discussion that only a group of such experienced colleagues could have provided. If you haven't gathered this so far, I really enjoyed and benefited from my first CiVSA conference!

This has been a year of great things through CiVSA as I have continued to learn from the CiVSA email group, the *Welcomer*, my colleagues by phone and email, as well as materials that I gathered at the conference. I really can't imagine missing out on a CiVSA conference again after finding out how beneficial it is to gather with such an incredible group of people.

I hope that as a member of CiVSA you will not make the mistake of missing this year's conference at Notre Dame! I look forward to seeing you there!

Kevin Kirk
Baylor University
CiVSA Region II Director

CiVSA Best Practices

A New Gateway to UW-Madison

by Nancy Sandhu



This past September, the University of Wisconsin-Madison opened a new state-of-the-art Welcome Center to provide visitors and tourists with a wonderful first impression and a convenient, one-stop-shop for both campus and community visitor information. As a partnership between UW-Madison and the Greater Madison Convention and Visitors Bureau (GMCVB), the new 'gateway' to UW-Madison is a truly comprehensive and complete resource.

Managed and operated by the Office of Visitor & Information Programs (formerly known as the Campus Information and Visitor Center) in collaboration with UW Transportation Services and the GMCVB, the Welcome Center showcases both the campus and surrounding community through vibrant, interactive displays and informative literature. In addition, there are conference rooms, a convenient drive-up window for parking and general visitor information, and friendly student staff on hand to answer questions. The reception area is open weekdays from 8am-5pm and Saturdays 10am-3pm. Hours vary during holiday and university break periods and are expanded at select times of year to accommodate increased visitor traffic and important special events.

Nancy Sandhu

University of Wisconsin-Madison

For more information about the Welcome Center, visit <http://www.vip.wisc.edu>, call (608) 262-INFO, or e-mail askbucky@unmad.wisc.edu



Welcome New Members!

Danielle Barbeau
University of Colorado at Boulder

Jennifer Bland
Stanford University

Donna Bostwick
Florida State University

Naima Bridges
Stanford University

Christina Caldwell
University of Florida

Yolanda Cleveland
University of California, Riverside

Kristin Creamer
University of Colorado at Boulder

Trang Do
University of Houston

Brooke Durbin
University of Houston

La Dawn Duvall
University of California, Berkeley

Jason Edwards
University of Kentucky

Emily Engelschall
University of California, Riverside

John Friesman
Stanford University

Angela Helmke
University of Idaho

Jo Ann McMillan
Baylor University

Jaime Mendez
University of Texas at El Paso

Linc Morris
Oklahoma City University

Stacy Pishko
University of Kentucky

Eduardo Prieto
Oklahoma City University

Ruthie Pyles
University of Southern California

Judy Reeves
University of Alabama

Rachel Reuben
SUNY-New Paltz

Kyle Rubin
Michigan Tech University

Alex Ruiz
University of California, Riverside

David Shankle
Baylor University

Jean So
Georgia State University

Laura Stansell
University of Tennessee

Cara Sturman
University of Colorado at Boulder

Vanessa Watkins
Clark College

Kishan Zuber
Binghamton University



Dr. Doreen M. Tobin, Interim Vice President for Student Affairs at East Stroudsburg University, Recognized at CAS Symposium (Washington, DC)

The [Council for the Advancement of Standards in Higher Education](#) (CAS) recently awarded Dr. Doreen M. Tobin, Interim Vice President for Student Affairs at East Stroudsburg University, its most prestigious honor, the Ted K. Miller Achievement of Excellence Award. This award recognizes outstanding accomplishments in advancing standards of practice and quality assurance in educational programs and services in higher education, with the goal of enhancing student learning.

Jan Arminio, president of CAS, presented the award, joined by the award's namesake, Ted. K. Miller. In her presentation, Arminio cited the selection committee's recommendation, stating that Dr. Tobin is considered "the queen of educational assessment in higher education having led Kutztown University's ten year review twice and coordinated the Pennsylvania State System of Higher Education's review of its alcohol and other drug education programs at its 14 institutions. All three of these assessment efforts utilized the CAS Standards."

Dr. Tobin also served as a speaker at the symposium, facilitating a presentation on "Creating a Culture of Assessment."

The Ted K. Miller Achievement of Excellence Award is named in honor of Ted Miller, CAS's first president from 1979-1989, a professor emeritus of the University of Georgia, and the CAS publications editor until his retirement in 2004.

The Council for the Advancement of Standards in Higher Education (CAS) is a consortium of 36 professional associations in higher education. Founded in 1979, CAS develops and disseminates standards of practice and related materials for the purpose of fostering student learning and development through enhancing the quality of programs and services.



Pictured left to right: Ted K. Miller, Doreen Tobin, and Jan Arminio



The beautiful Notre Dame campus and its famous football stadium await the arrival of CiVSA. Don't miss out on this opportunity to learn from colleagues all over the country. The early-bird deadline is April 15, so

Register today!



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
(734) 763-95569 fax
mcjen@umich.edu

Volunteer and Make a Difference!

The conference committee is working very hard to organize and plan everything for the conference, but they need our help to make it as successful as it can be. Please consider volunteering to:

- Work at the conference check-in table, or
- Take notes at a session so that can be posted on the CiVSA website for those not able to attend a particular session, or
- Be a room administrator, helping to distribute and collect session evaluation forms and being available if the speaker needs anything.

If you'd like to volunteer, contact Betty Spengler at (410) 777-2615 or bespengler@aacc.edu