

Letter from the President

Dear current and past members of the College Student Development Association,

I'd like to warmly welcome everyone to the 2009-2010 school year! My name is Jessica Colwell and I am proud to be serving as the current President of Northeastern University's College Student Development Association (CSDA). On behalf of the entire executive board, I would like to express how excited we are for the upcoming year and all that it entails.



Since coming into office, the executive board has been working diligently towards establishing goals which support our organization's mission. We believe strongly that our mission is to enhance the professional experience of our master's students while also providing networking and professional development opportunities with our distinguished alumni. In April, the executive board came together to formulate goals and ideas for their position and for our entire organization for the coming year. I am proud to say that we have come up with a variety of ideas and have already set a tentative calendar for the upcoming semester. As an executive board, we are committed to these goals.

Both current students and alumni have several new opportunities and events to look forward to this semester! We have a new and improved Mentor to Mentor program bridging the gap between our first and second year students, a professional development dinner series, socials to meet alumni and enjoy each others company outside of the classroom, a retreat to introduce and refresh first and second year students to each other, a more frequent newsletter and last but not least a new and improved website.

I would also like to continue to encourage both current students and alumni to provide any feedback and/or ideas you may have. The CSDA executive board is committed to provide and accommodate the needs of its present and past members. We feel we can best do this through continuous feedback. Please feel free to email us anytime at nucsda@gmail.com or to my email address is colwell.j@neu.edu.

I am looking forward to continuing to serve as a leader among many talented individuals and good luck to everyone this fall!

Sincerely,
Jessica Colwell

How I spent My Summer Vacation

By Brandon Huggon

So it's the end of your first year of graduate school, and you're half way there. So, what now? In terms of advancing one's professional experience, graduate students within the field of Student Affairs are not short on options. I chose the route of taking on an internship to gain experience in another functional area. I decided to take on an internship in orientation through the National Orientation Directors Association, commonly referred to as NODA. As a Massachusetts native, I had yet to see a new area of the country and get out of my all too familiar geographic bubble. I really went into this experience blind with little idea of what to expect.

Upon arriving at Seattle University, I was overwhelmed when I became the center of attention in my first week. It became clear within the first few days how high the expectations were of the NODA Intern from the Student Affairs Division. So, no pressure or anything! Nevertheless, I was immediately welcomed with warmth and compassion. I was treated as a colleague and counterpart, rather than associated with the common clichés of being an intern. This small, private, Jesuit institution prides itself in its student centered vision, of which I would later wreak the benefits. The student development is strong at Seattle University, making it the perfect place for anyone to learn, grow, and excel. Between the outgoing staff and student centered vision, I felt that I had genuinely found my niche. From that moment, I knew I was in the right place.

One of the more commonly known facts about orientation is that it an incredibly detailed process. For someone that typically embraces a big picture perspective, the concept of be-



ing inundated with details was an entirely new animal for me. Seattle University's Orientation program is carried out in three separate sessions over a two day period. During each session, students are broken up into five different gender and ethnically proportionate groups to provide an accurate sample of the incoming class and to make information easier to digest. In addition to organizing each of the 220 students in these groups, our department is responsible for organizing housing assignments. While these lists can be easily completed weeks before Orientation, the challenge became maintaining the accuracy of these lists when faced with a number of changes in session, major, and housing by the seemingly fickle incoming class. As changes could be made at any point, one can imagine that man-

aging the details can be a bit overwhelming. Nevertheless, taking on the position put me in touch with my detailed side which was sorely in need of improvement!

Although dealing the tedious administrative side of the position was not glorious, creating an airtight and

seamless process made the operational side of orientation a pleasure. My role outside of supervising the student staff was fairly minimal, as the program is essentially self sustaining with the cooperation of presenters. The hard work you put in pays off when the compliments pour in from parents and students. I began to realize the level of impact the program had when I could visibly see the attendees' anxiety turn to relief by the end of the session.

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Do you want to write an article
for the CSDA Advocate?
Contact Carrie Miller at
[miller.carr@neu.edu!](mailto:miller.carr@neu.edu)

Making an Experience Your Own

By Lauren Piontkoski

In the realm of student affairs, graduate students participating in any summer internship often take the opportunity to immerse themselves into new and unknown familiarity. Office names and functions primarily stay the same, but what often changes are the students themselves and their unique experiences. I applied for an internship with the National Orientation Directors Association (NODA) and accepted the position at Southern Illinois University Carbondale (SIUC), Illinois. As a two month commitment, I found myself dedicating my summer to SIU and the Student Orientation Advising & Registration (SOAR) Program in the Office of New Student Programs.

My fluency within Orientation and New Student Programs has been built upon over the last few years and made the transition quite smooth. Being a past orientation leader and now positioned as a professional staff member gave me the opportunity to see the student staff rise to the occasion and shine all summer long. Along with the student staff was not only the atmosphere of southern Illinois, but the camaraderie of the office.

My specific NODA position was the overnight early arrival coordinator which was comprised of all the correspondence to students and family, room assignments, registration, payments, and the supervision of six SOAR staff members. Working with a professional staff of five and an amazing administrative aid, I found myself challenged with my first exploration: small office, large incoming class (5,100). Any and everyone had their hands in the pot to get all the logistics and early arrivals situated. I also gained valuable expose to the minor, yet very large details of the registration and advisement procedures.

For me, one of the best parts of Orientation in my opinion is the staff. I enjoy this because of

the team-building and growth I see within all. Bringing in this year's first year class was an excellent challenge for the Orientation Leaders and I am happy I was there to support them, make them laugh and to watch it all happen. SIU's Orientation was the culmination of months of hard work and dedication - it is the reason that I came to Illinois for the summer. I'm beyond excited about my experience I just had and the friendships I was able to build. I hope you all get the chance to make a summer experience your own next year!

Planning ahead for NODA? Some tips that may be useful to keep in mind:

- State vs. Private
- Location
- Size of institution
- Rural or Suburban
- Availability



SAVE THE DATE!

The Annual CSDA Retreat will be held on September 19th. Don't miss out on informative sessions, panels and fun! If you are an Alumni interested in presenting or participating in the panel please email csdcalumni@gmail.com for more information.

Do you want to write an article
for the CSDA Advocate?
Contact Carrie Miller at
miller.carr@neu.edu

How I spent My Summer Vacation *(continued from page 2)*

By Brandon Huggon

While I enjoyed a number of things during my experience, the student staff I had the opportunity to work with was my favorite part above all. This group of talented individuals was nothing short of a delight and genuinely reaffirmed my desire to enter the field. The level of dedication, charisma, and alacrity the group possessed was contagious and really allowed me to dig my feet into the position. While the student leaders were both friendly and welcoming upon my arrival, they also had no hesitation about getting feisty with me either! I was mainly being singled out for being the token Boston transplant... and it absolutely tickled me!

In the end, I found that losing your figurative safety net can teach you a lot about yourself. I had always seen myself as a “cooped up Magellan that needed to break free”; but as it turns out, I’m much more partial to my home state than I initially thought. While it was great to get out and experience something new, I didn’t expect to miss everything about my life back home so much. While exceedingly happy to be back, I would never change the course of events nor do I regret my decision to accept the position at Seattle University. Working at Seattle University ignited a spark, drive, and motivation that I needed in entering my second year of the program.

For those who have not ventured off to another area, I highly recommend it. Becoming acquainted with a new culture and gaining experience with a new institution can widen your scope on diversity. As up and coming student affairs practitioners, I believe we should always be trying to gain a broader perspective to help advance ourselves professionally. Not only can embarking on a new experience teach what kind of person you are, and it can also teach you what kind of person you’re not. Whatever you decide to do in your final sum-

mer before going full time, make it count! It may be the last one you have!

...and that’s what I did on my summer vacation!



A Summer at Bucknell

By Ian Dreger

Greetings from sunny Lewisburg, PA! This summer I was fortunate to receive an Association of Colleges and Universities Housing Offices-International (ACUHO-I) internship.

In May, I packed as much as I could in my car and headed from Boston to Lewisburg. I was hired as the Residential Director for the Bucknell Community College Scholars Program. This program is part of the Jack Kent Cooke (JKC) Foundation. The JKC provides opportunities for individuals to go to a four-year university on a full ride scholarship upon successful completion of the summer program. This year there were 30 scholars. Of those 30 scholars only 15 will be accepted to Bucknell in March.

The summer absolutely flew by. The scholars, besides attending classes, participated in activities during the week and on weekends planned by my assistant and myself.

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They were also able to volunteer in three activities. These activities included Relay For Life, serving at a soup kitchen, and assisting an elderly couple with their organic farm. I was able to volunteer with two of these and it was an amazing experience. My position did not stop there. I also attended weekly staff meetings, planned and assisted with luncheons with specific areas on campus, ran weekly house meetings with the scholars and teaching assistants, planned a detailed 5 day weekend of food for each meal of the day, and developed the end of summer slideshow, just to name a few things.

Looking back on it, I don't think it was a long enough experience. I made some great friends and learned a lot



through this internship. I would say that it was one of the best summers I have had in my life, and given the opportunity to do it once more, I would happily agree.

Save The Date!

***CSDA Retreat
September 19th, 2009***

@

Northeastern

***Check out the CSDA website
for more information on
upcoming events***

http://www.csdc.neu.edu/development_association/