

Student Personnel Association (SPA)

Spring 2011

GARP 2011 - Sandrine Heeren

You may be asking yourself what this "GARP" is all about. GARP is the Graduate Assistant Recruitment Program held every year at the University of South Carolina for students who have been admitted into the Higher Education and Student Affairs master's program and are looking for a graduate assistantship. GARP is a three-day experience where candidates can meet current students and faculty, learn about the HESA program and the opportunities available, and most importantly, take part in up to 8 first and second-round interviews with various offices. GARP is co-organized by the Career Center, HESA, and the Student Personnel Association (SPA).

This year's GARP was a huge success! From February 26-March 1, almost 90 candidates came from across the country to participate. Candidates

consisted of students who are graduating in May, students who have recently graduated, and students who have graduated a few years ago and have entered the workforce. Among the schools represented, the University of South Carolina and Florida State University were the most widely represented. GARP 2011 consisted of a combination of work and play, with several social events as well as academic and work-related events. We are proud to say that GARP is much more than an interview weekend. It is truly an experience to see if the HESA program and USC is the right place for them, as well as give the candidates an opportunity to make friends and meet future colleagues, and we can confidently say that this mission was successfully complete.



Look What's Here:

- GARP 2011
- Presidential Address
- Conference Reports
- True Life: I'm a Graduate Student
- True Life: I'm a New Professional
- Alumni Corner: Where are They Now?
- Professional Development Tips

SPA Presidential Address - Michelle Ganio

It has been a wonderful year for the Student Personnel Association (SPA) at the University of South Carolina! We have showed our Gamecock pride, celebrated achievements and milestones of our members, hosted 90 potential students during our Graduate Assistantship Recruitment Program weekend, and collaborated with departments around campus to provide professional develop-

ment opportunities for our members. SPA members have attended and presented at several on-campus, state, regional, and national conferences. I continue to be astounded by the work that SPA members do both in and outside of the classroom, in their graduate assistantships, and through their contributions to this organization. These future student affairs professionals are surely ready to take on the world!

Inside this issue:

Conference	2
Updates	
True Life Series	3
Professional	4
Development Tips	

SPA is EVERYWHERE

Website: <http://web.sa.sc.edu/spahesa/>

Facebook: Student Personnel Association (SPA)

Email: sospa@mailbox.sc.edu

Student Personnel Association (SPA)

Conference Updates

Several HESA students went to conferences throughout the nation.

Diana Coyle

During the fall semester, Dr. Welsh mentioned a chance to present the ethics cases we were working on for his class at SECRA—The Southeast Case Research Association. After much contemplation, since the weekend overlapped with COMPS, my group and I decided to submit our case and see if it was accepted. During winter break we found out our proposal was accepted and that we would be presenting our ethics case, *To Tell or Not to Tell*.

SECRA was a bonding and learning experience for my group. At SECRA we were

We were welcomed into a relaxed and engaging environment where we conversed with professionals inside and outside higher education.

welcomed into a relaxed and engaging environment where we conversed with professionals inside and outside higher education. We even had the

opportunity to have dinner with current and alumni HESA students. Prior to our arrival, we attempted to think of some discussion items and potential question responses, figuring the session would mirror the one we facilitated in class with our peers. We were wrong! Each of us was looking at the case from a higher education mindset; instead the SECRA attendees were able to take a critical eye focusing on their knowledge in business and teaching. Gaining the perspectives of the different individuals helped us refine our case and paint a more vivid picture of what occurred in our case.

My group and I are continuing the fine-tune the case in hopes of submitting it for publication. None of that would have been possible without the great ideas we gained from this conference. I strongly recommend looking into the conference, the 20th Annual SECRA meeting will be held February 16-18, 2012 in Myrtle Beach, SC. For more information visit <http://www.secra.org/>.

Natalie Cruz

My second year of graduate school has been a full plunge into Student Affairs, which was a field that I honestly knew little about before beginning the program at USC. I had the great opportunity to attend an SCCPA drive-in on a dime conference, the NAFSA regional conference, and the FYE conference before NASPA this March in Phila-

delphia. Those were good experiences to help me get my feet wet for the large national conference, and NASPA was an amazing and overwhelming experience to say the least.

I was very impressed by the wide range of conference topics, networking sessions, and volunteer opportunities at the conference.

I was very impressed by the wide range of conference topics, networking sessions, and volunteer opportunities at the conference. I met numerous people through attending the



Educating for Lives of Purpose

2011 NASPA Annual Conference March 12-16, 2011 Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

sessions and receptions that I have already began to make contact with. I decided to participate in the mentoring program and met with a wonderful, established student affairs professional that works in the Northeast. She has already provided wonderful professional advice about the ambiguous job search process, and I know she will be a valuable contact in the future.

A fellow graduate student and I had the great opportunity to present at the conference, so I was really nervous and excited to see how that went. Although we were presenting to many people that

were much more experienced than us, we were the experts in our topic for our presentation session. The attendees were engaged, asked questions, and talked with us after the session about their further questions and thoughts. We left our presentation feeling very relieved, grateful, and so happy that we took the extra time to submit a proposal and create a great presentation. I am now really excited for next year's conference, and am already working on other topics that I could publish and present in the future. It was an incredible opportunity, and I would recommend that all Student Affairs Professionals take the time to present and attend at conferences. You already have incredible things to share: you just have to do it!

Cindy Ann Kilgo

Attending the Student Affairs Administrators in Higher Education (NASPA) 2011 Annual Conference in Philadelphia was a wonderful professional development experience. I was able to learn about a variety of

I was able to meet and network with professionals and other graduate students within the field of higher education, and even co-present a session.



Volume I, Issue I

programs and pedagogies currently being implemented at institutions across the country. I was able to meet and network with professionals and other graduate students within the field of higher education, and even co-present a session. This year's conference was especially neat, as USC's Vice President for Student Affairs, Dr. Pruitt, was honored with the Scott Goodnight Outstanding Service as a Dean award. I enjoyed the ability to learn about a plethora of pressing topics and issues within the field of higher education. I feel it was particularly beneficial to have this opportunity while in graduate school, as I am still trying to determine which realm of higher education to pursue after graduation. I highly recommend other graduate students attend future NASPA Annual Conferences.



H E S A

Alumni Corner - David Stout, 2010

Every day is a great day to be an alumnus of the USC HESA program! I wouldn't trade my time at Carolina for anything; the preparation I received and the friendships I made within my cohort are priceless. The best advice I could give to current HESA students is to take the initiative to personalize your Carolina experience. What I mean by this is to seek out as many relationships/mentors/experiences as you can. Your two years as a Gamecock will come and go in the blink of an eye, so it is extremely important to gain experience in the areas of Student Affairs that interest you the most. You will have practica and internships to complete, but you also have volunteer opportunities outside of the classroom/internship setting that can be just as valuable. Develop strong relationships with the faculty and student affairs staff at USC, because folks like Dr. Bloom, Dr. Pruitt, Dr. Chaddock, etc. have such a wealth of knowledge and experiences within the field. Finally, MAKE SURE not to leave HESA without a mentor or two. The true value of having mentors from the HESA program is realized upon leaving Carolina. Live it up, Gamecocks!

Professional Development Tips - Sarah Smith

This semester USC's Student Personnel Association (SPA) has had the opportunity to have two different professional development meetings. These meetings inform and encourage our SPA members to grow in their own professional development. Here are some of the great tips we have taken away from these events:

Interview Tips:

- Be prepared for the unexpected- you never know what types of questions you could get asked!
- Make sure you have an example to back up any answer you give. This will help the interviewer learn more about you, your values, experiences, and unique characteristics.
- Be able to explain how you will be able to transfer from a graduate school student to a full-time professional.

Networking Tips:

Take advantage of meetings and any other events you are required to attend. It's a great time to meet new people and network!

- Have your own "elevator speech" prepared. Make sure it describes who you are, what you are doing now and what you are working toward.
- Have business cards available! Make sure that they have your current information on them!

Student Personnel Association (SPA) is a **graduate student organization** dedicated to providing both **professional development and social activities** for HESA students and faculty members. SPA aims to promote interest and involvement in the **development of students in higher education** through associations with students, faculty, and staff who are interested in this field.

Student Personnel Association (SPA)

True Life: I'm a (New) Professional - Jordan Edelman, 2010

"It has been really rewarding to be able to watch my students grow over the past year. They have taught me just as much as I have taught them."

As a recent graduate of the USC HESA program and a new professional within the field of student affairs, it has been an exciting transition to the field. While at USC I was a GA in the Student Success Center, but in my current position I am a Hall Director at the University of Toledo. The transition back in Residence Life was the

biggest challenge for me. I had not lived in a residence hall in 2 years and now had to relearn everything that I knew back when I was an undergrad. Overall, I love my job. I work in a very small building (130 students, 6 RAs), but this has allowed me to get a lot of student contact. There isn't a single student that I don't know by

name. It has been really rewarding to be able to watch my students grow over the past year. They have taught me just as much as I have taught them. I have an amazing group of RAs who are extremely passionate about helping their students and being available for them.

Here are some things that I learned that I would love to pass on to others:

- **Live in the now.** Enjoy the experiences that you are currently having because they will be over before you know it.
- **Be yourself.** Your students will appreciate who you are especially when you are yourself.
- **Be student centered.** The students are why we have a job, so remember that as you work. Put the students' needs and aspirations first.
- **Remember where you came from.** The experiences that you have make you who you are. Remember those experiences and cherish the memories.
- **HAVE FUN!!!** At times you can get burnt out, but make sure you enjoy everything you do.

True Life: I'm a Graduate Student - Krista Prince, 2011

"Does it sound demanding? Well, the truth is that while the demands upon us are many, the rewards are just as plentiful."

Is there really a typical day in the life of a grad student? I think the constants are probably that our life is a blend of our assistantships, classes/ assignments, and personal time (hopefully); and sometimes the lines blur between the three. I believe most of us would agree that our Outlook Calendars have saved us from double-booking ourselves on many occasions, and they serve as a source of sanity in keeping our lives organized. Yes, as a grad student you must be diligent in keeping your life organized and balancing multiple compet-

ing tasks! Does it sound demanding? Well, the truth is that while the demands upon us are many, the rewards are just as plentiful.

Not only do we have the opportunity to enhance our own knowledge and experience on a daily basis, but we are also privileged to strongly influence the lives of one another, other professionals, and the students with whom we work. We do so in a variety of different ways: by attending a professional development session that we make time for during the lunch break that we

barely have, through the exchange of ideas in the classes that we take, or even as we share our experience and challenge one another through our staff meetings and other encounters. Our meetings, classes, and tasks may vary on a daily basis; but a few things remain constant. There are always more tasks to complete, we are privileged to collaborate with the people we do, every day we are learning and growing, and at the heart of what we do is the interest of the students whom we serve.