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NAYLOR
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On Campus Leadership



MARK IRONSIDE
NACAS PRESIDENT

By challenging frontline leaders and junior less experienced personnel to take on greater roles and responsibilities, the team implements proper Decentralized Command so that leaders at every level of the team step up to lead.

Jocko Willink and Leif Babin
The Dichotomy of Leadership

There are so many ways to think about and define leadership. We've all read numerous books and articles about leadership qualities and attributes and "what" makes a great leader. I won't revisit those claims here, but I will share some experiences. In my experience, leadership happens at all levels of the organization and my observation is that those that are waiting for "senior leadership" on campus to make about this or that decision aren't leading, they are procrastinating.

I've seen so many great examples of leadership at Lehigh, at other institutions, and at NACAS. At Lehigh, I had a staff member learn about applying for grants. The only real guidance I provided was lets "identify new revenue streams." She identified a project that she was passionate about, researched grant opportunities, applied, and followed through on all the documentation required after winning the award. She didn't wait for senior leadership to make a decision. She led. She learned. She executed and achieved leadership results.

In another example, I had a staff member co-lead a technology-based project team. She didn't have lots of technology implementation experience, but she embraced the opportunity, led, learned, executed and achieved leadership results by impacting the entire institution with a new platform that has proven critical during this pandemic. And finally, I had staff member basically bootstrap a new operation into place to support the campus response to the pandemic. He didn't need senior leadership to make a decision. He saw a need, led, learned, executed and

achieved leadership results. We are now looking seriously at making the operation that he stood up overnight permanent.

During this pandemic, I've admired colleagues all over the country that were putting together webinar content and best practices during this incredibly challenging time. They didn't wait for someone to give them direction, they identified a need, learned from their experiences, put together valuable content and achieved leadership results by positively impacting campuses all over the country. They didn't have to spend their time in this way, but they did. They led.

I've also appreciated the adaptability and flexibility of the NACAS national staff in pivoting to a virtual C3X conference. They basically produced a 3-day television show that was very compelling! Well, it wasn't Star Wars the Mandalorian, but it was good! They didn't need the NACAS board to make a decision. Yes, they informed us and communicated very effectively, but they led, learned about virtual conferences, executed, and achieved leadership results.

The most acute need now, as we work together to help our campuses achieve their respective missions, is that we need more people on our campuses leading and less people waiting for a decision from "senior leadership." Obviously, you need to check-in, assess legal and risk issues, and communicate effectively, but you also need to lead where you are.

So, on your campus, now more than ever, challenge yourself and your team to lead, to learn, to execute, and achieve leadership results for your campus in 2021 and beyond. ■

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For Mark Ironside
New Strategic
Plan, Inclusive
Excellence, and
Business Recovery
Top List of Priorities

**New NACAS
President Looks
Forward to
Exciting Year**



BY SHERYL S. JACKSON

As Mark Ironside, assistant vice president of Business Services at Lehigh University, and president of NACAS for 2020-2021, looks back at his 25 years in auxiliary services, he points out that he has had "the good fortune to work with excellent vice presidents who have taught me a great deal about hard work, teamwork, and strategic planning."

Ironside earned his undergraduate degree in marketing at Messiah College and his MBA from Penn State University. Although he started his professional life in sales, he found himself looking for something different. "I decided I wanted a role with a great deal of in-person engagement and collaboration, so I contacted a faculty member I had known at my alma mater for advice," he says. "Her husband also worked at Messiah as vice president of Finance and Administration, and she mentioned that he was looking for a project manager." The position was a great fit, he says. Following his 10 years of experience at Messiah, he accepted a position at Lehigh University in 2005. "I love the community and the overall environment of the college campus – it is worth the cost of a parking permit," he laughs.

He joined NACAS almost immediately upon beginning his career in auxiliary services. "As a business professional, I'm constantly looking for new ideas, solutions and best practices, and there is no better association to turn to from a resources and collegiality perspective," he says. Although he focused on increasing his knowledge at conferences, presentations, and networking events his first 10 years in the association, his visibility led to other NACAS members recruiting him to serve on committees and assume leadership positions.

His first volunteer role was on the Awards committee, which Ironside describes as "a great entry point." Following the committee role, he became more engaged in the East Region and worked his

way through the president's track. "My colleagues in the East nominated me for the president's track, which was humbling, and I feel honored to serve NACAS in a broader way."

Strategic planning for the association, which begins during the summer board meeting and will be finalized at the Leadership Team meeting in early 2022, is a priority for Ironside next year. "I do want to thank Ryan Greene for his leadership in the past year, and I'm excited to build on his work," says Ironside. "We've spent the last several months thinking about our values as a board and as an association and have established four values that will guide us in our work: respect, inclusivity, growth mindset, and transparency."

A podcast that urges businesses to begin "planting trees" has inspired Ironside as the board, staff, and members begin the strategic planning process. "The general concept of the podcast is that the businesses and organizations that are intentionally planting a tree or two during this pandemic will thrive in the future," he says. "Organizations that continue to wait for this pandemic to be over or 'see what happens' or wait for normal...well it will be too late." He points out that "As NACAS closes the book on its current strategic plan, it's time to develop a more agile, resilient, and flexible plan that will serve NACAS and its membership moving forward."

The other priority for the next year is inclusive excellence, says Ironside. "We are working to define and develop strategies to ensure inclusive excellence." Goals for this effort include:

- Work in partnership with regional boards to ensure alignment on diversity goals.
- Ensure the nominating process is one that is open to all and inclusive in process.
- Develop effective strategies for recruiting volunteers to regional boards.

"I THINK NACAS CAN BEGIN CRYSTALIZING WHAT WE HAVE LEARNED ABOUT BUSINESS OPERATIONS DURING THE PANDEMIC AND SHARE IDEAS. I THINK WE CAN ALL WORK HARDER TO IDENTIFY NEW AND DIVERSE REVENUE STREAMS, INCLUDING LEVERAGING CAMPUS REAL ESTATE."

– MARK IRONSIDE

Examples of inclusiveness include exposing newer members and emerging leaders to board or committee meetings to encourage engagement. "I also like mentoring programs that pair experienced members with members who are at the beginning of their careers," says Ironside. "We need to engage everyone to ensure that we have an association that builds future auxiliary business leaders."

Another way NACAS can continue to serve members is to help identify common challenges and share best practices and lessons learned with member institutions, says Ironside. "COVID-19 has had a challenging impact on auxiliary services that rely on students to be on campus, but as campuses re-open more fully, these services will begin to thrive," he says. "The positive effects of COVID-19 is that we have learned that we can utilize technology in new and creative ways and that we can begin to consider leveraging talent from all over the country for some positions – people don't have to be physically on campus for some roles." This will open up the talent pool to more colleges and universities to people who may not want, or be able, to relocate for a job, but can add value to the auxiliary services' staff, he adds.

"I think NACAS can begin crystalizing what we have learned about business operations during the pandemic and share ideas," says Ironside. "I think we can all work harder to identify new and diverse revenue streams, including leveraging campus real estate."

Another key challenge facing auxiliary services leaders in the next several years will be a transition to a leaner staff, he says. "There are a wave of retirements coming across the industry, and universities may not be keen on replacing those positions," he says. "This means fewer full-time positions in the short- to medium-term, so we will have to use our time and processes more effectively, and NACAS can support all of the challenges facing members." ■

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Planning the **2020 NACAS C3X** **Virtual Conference** **& Expo**

Becomes an Experience To Remember

**BY KEYA ALLEN**

I can't believe it has been a year since I received a call from Kelsey Harmon Finn asking me to chair the C3X 2020 Conference. At that time it was slated to be held in Anaheim, CA – right in my backyard. As a native Californian I was excited and honored to be considered. I was also apprehensive about whether NACAS would be ready for this beautiful, self-confident, black woman as the chair of C3X. I then looked at my friend Kelsey who is beautiful and self-confident and thought "hell yes, they're ready."

I was brought into the fold and went through a proper orientation with past chairs, the amazing and creative NACAS staff, and collaborated with a committee of professionals from across the country and Canada. I could not have asked for a better team. We went about the task of planning a California C3X that would never be forgotten, filled with Disney, stellar speakers and sessions, a massive expo, and of course good food. Everything was going well until March

of 2020 and the world met COVID-19. Everything changed in a matter of months. All of a sudden there were masks, no travel, no hotels, no indoor events, and the list goes on. Most teams would have given up and had some level of negativity regarding the current circumstances. Not this NACAS team, not this conference committee.

We went about the planning of the C3X Virtual Conference & Expo that looking back at it now, far exceeded our hopes and expectations. We were able to keep the spirit and heart of C3X. We maintained those stellar speakers and thought provoking educational sessions (making some intentional changes to address the current circumstances). We had a virtual expo that in many ways became more purposeful and personal. We made sure that we kept in touch with our membership and checked in to see how everyone was doing. Most of all, we kept the C3X traditions and values alive. It was because of the

dedicated committee, business partners, volunteers, and the NACAS staff that everything just seemed to fall into place.

I thoroughly enjoyed this experience and could not be more humbled and appreciative. 2020 has taken its toll on many, but I hope attendees were able to find a bit of respite. It was our desire that everyone take a little bit extra home with them after this conference. Extra positivity, extra hope, and of course extra knowledge. I would like to extend a heartfelt thank you to Kelsey, the NACAS board, my C3X conference committee, our business partners, and the hardworking staff at NACAS. This experience was well worth it and I can't wait to see what is in store for us next year. ■

KEYA ALLEN, MS, is Associate Executive Director, Associated Students, Inc., at California State University, Fullerton

Excellence in Action

NACAS ANNUAL AWARDS RECOGNIZE MEMBER EFFORTS IN VARIETY OF CATEGORIES

COMMUNITY SERVICE, INCLUSION, INNOVATION AND ASSOCIATION LEADERSHIP HIGHLIGHTED

BY SHERYL S. JACKSON

2020 was a year like no other, and auxiliary professions faced a myriad of new challenges in addition to the ongoing issues presented by shrinking budgets, previously unseen needs of students, and technological tools that can improve services when used correctly.

One of the greatest strengths of NACAS is the opportunity to share the cutting edge ideas that members have to overcome these challenges and recognize auxiliary services programs that deliver some of the best practices from which everyone can learn.

Every year NACAS recognizes members for their contributions to their campus, their community, and the association. These four leaders were recognized for their achievements at the 2020 annual conference:

DAVID H. LORD SCHOLARSHIP FOR EXEMPLARY COMMUNITY SERVICE ESMERALDA C. VALDEZ, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF UNIVERSITY SERVICES, UNIVERSITY OF HOUSTON



Esmeralda Valdez

Busy auxiliary services leaders never seem to have enough time to do all that needs to be done, but Esmeralda C. Valdez, executive director of University

Services at the University of Houston, manages to also find time to give back to her community.

"As the oldest of five children and the only daughter, I understand the value of helping other people in your family, community, and workplace," explains Valdez. "Helping other people was an important part of my upbringing."

Because time is precious, Valdez focuses on volunteering for activities that are not only satisfying but also speak to her values. "I am intentional about the volunteer opportunities I choose, because I want to be able to make a commitment and follow through on that commitment." When asked for her advice to auxiliary service professionals who are not yet actively volunteering for NACAS or for community organizations, she says, "Don't overthink it – be intentional about your commitments and choose activities that can help you learn, that fit your interests, and that allow you to give back to others."

Two examples of her community service include serving as a mentor and research assistant for Las Comadres, a Latina undergraduate college mentoring program, and working with the Texas Association of Chicanos in Higher Education as the Gulf Coast Regional Representative. "Through my involvement with these two programs, I've had the opportunity to

contribute with specific initiatives, either by drawing from my experiences as an auxiliary services professional or through the relationships I've built over the years," says Valdez. "It is through those opportunities that I'm able to share my passion for my job and also help support the needs of the programs and those they serve."

An active NACAS volunteer throughout her 25 years in auxiliary services, Valdez also served as co-chair with NACAS colleagues to launch the Affinity Group at C3X in 2019 with a successful luncheon and panel discussion, and she participated with NACAS CEO Kelsey Finn and other national auxiliary services leaders on a NACAS virtual roundtable in 2019 titled "How Race and Identity Impact Our Work."

"Receiving this award is very humbling because I've learned and grown so much from my involvement with NACAS," says Valdez. "Building lasting friendships and being a life-long learner is part of who I am. Although some of the work within auxiliary services is not truly student-facing, I believe it is important to always look for opportunities to connect with the students and the community we serve," she says. "I have been able to find a balance by being part of committees, volunteering outside my immediate job function, and paying it forward as best I can."

EDWIN R. GOLDEN AWARD FOR INCLUSIVE EXCELLENCE

MORRIS ARBORETUM OF THE UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA VISITOR EDUCATION AND GUIDED TOURS PROGRAM



Bill Cullina

Morris Arboretum is a 92-acre horticultural display garden situated about 14 miles from the main campus of the University of Pennsylvania. It is one of more than 30 Philadelphia area gardens in America's Garden Capital and has carried the distinction as the Official Arboretum of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania since 1988. Annual visitation exceeds 142,000, making Morris Arboretum one of the most frequented destinations in Philadelphia.

The organization provides education, research, and outreach serving state agencies, community institutions, and citizens of Pennsylvania and beyond. A priority for all of these services is to be accessible to all communities, regardless of economic, cultural, individual disabilities, or other barriers to inclusion.

Three innovative approaches illustrate the Arboretum's commitment to inclusive excellence:

- Development of autism-adapted tours that may include tactile interactions throughout the garden, arts and crafts with the collection of natural materials, or a meditative tour focused on sounds and scents in the garden. Tours are tailored to the tastes and interests of the visitors and can include a combination of options.
- Collaboration with Latin American Community Action of Montgomery County to create curricula

and secure funding for the social services organization's summer enrichment camp. The two organizations worked jointly to hire instructors fluent in Spanish and English and provided breakfast and lunch to address nutrition insecurity needs.

- Created a restricted endowment fund to eliminate participation fees and cover transportation costs for Title-1 public schools' participation in the Arboretum's curriculum-based tours. The free-admission plan has resulted in a 50% increase in Title-1 participation in FY2020 compared to the previous two years.

Ideas for new programs come from a variety of sources that include calls to the Arboretum for information about specialized tours as well as contacts made in the community by the development office, says Bryan Thompson-Nowak, Director of Education. "When you hear requests for tours for special needs visitors several times and have to tell callers that you don't have a program now, you realize that there is a need," he says. "We are here to include and inspire everyone, so it is part of our mission to create programs that fit our communities' accessibility needs."

"We also collect feedback through visitor surveys," says Susan J. Crane, Director of Marketing. "We are eager to get input from our constituents so we can be responsive to their needs."

"Morris Arboretum is so proud to have been recognized by the community of our peers for the work we've accomplished regarding inclusivity. Receiving this year's Edwin R. Golden Award for Inclusive Excellence raises the awareness of the value that we place on making diverse and accessible programs available," according to Bill Cullina, the F. Otto Haas Executive Director of the Morris Arboretum. "It is validation for the work toward diversity we have done, and the impetus to redouble our commitment to do much more."

"Belonging to a community of higher-education institutions and being able to both benefit and contribute to the wealth of knowledge and resources from other universities and colleges is invaluable," said Marie Witt, Penn's Vice President, Business Services. "NACAS brings both college administrators and business partners together, and now more than ever, we appreciate the network and spirit of collaboration."

INNOVATIVE ACHIEVEMENT IN AUXILIARY SERVICES

UCI STUDENT CENTER AND EVENT SERVICES



Amy Schultz

Student employees are an important component of many auxiliary services areas, such as dining, housing, transportation, and student center and events. The challenge is managing the training and professional development of these employees who work early morning, daytime, and late night shifts with varying levels of contact with supervisors.

The University of California, Irvine's Student Center and Event Services addressed the challenge with the creation of The Level Up Program, a user-friendly website for managing training activities and professional development of student employees with scores, rewards, and reports.

"We have over 200 student employees but the bulk of these employees report to four people who may not see the students on a regular basis due to the variety of shifts they work," explains Amy Schulz, director. Although learning management programs like BlackBoard and Canvas can be used to track training, they don't offer the level of meaningful engagement that UCI's Student Center and Event Services' staff believed is necessary to support students. "The Level Up Program fills the gap between institutions and learning and hiring managers," she adds.

The program goes beyond documenting training, points out Schulz. Supervisors are able to track student employee progress on training and skills development in the program and can recommend promotion when students reach specific benchmarks. "Staff can easily

"RECEIVING THIS YEAR'S EDWIN R. GOLDEN AWARD FOR INCLUSIVE EXCELLENCE RAISES THE AWARENESS OF THE VALUE THAT WE PLACE ON MAKING DIVERSE AND ACCESSIBLE PROGRAMS AVAILABLE."

- BILL CULLINA, F. OTTO HAAS EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF THE MORRIS ARBORETUM

send the recommendation for promotion to HR, the student receives an email with news of their promotion and pay raise, and it can all be done through one portal," she says. "Student employees benefit from the clearly defined requirements for promotion and a personalized page showing them their job description, their current level and certifications, expected learning outcomes and a real-time status of their progress to their next promotion."

Students can progress at their own pace to pursue promotions and pay raises to supplement their academic degree with specific job experience or to remain

at same level of employment to allow more focus on academic pursuits.

A Resume Builder section allows student employees to copy their job descriptions and training into their LinkedIn profiles and resumes. "The Resume Builder is one of my favorite features because it shows students how to describe what they are doing in their jobs in a way that highlights the skills and experience an employer wants," says Schulz.

HR processes have been improved, says Schulz. The Level Up Program has reduced labor hours for HR staff by automating tasks formerly handled via

email, spreadsheets, and – in some cases – not at all. HR can batch upload new employees with an all-new ease and alacrity. Once done, the system generates email notifications to internal staff automatically. In effect, requests to various departments are triggered instantly for keys, computer setups, and any other onboarding processes that need handling.

"It is a huge honor to be recognized by NACAS for The Level Up Program," says Schulz. "Development of the program was a group effort that included student employees and staff working together to create the program, test it and continually tweaking and improving it."

ROBERT F. NEWTON AWARD FOR DISTINGUISHED SERVICE

CARLOS GARCIA, CASP, VICE CHANCELLOR, STUDENT AFFAIRS, UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO, COLORADO SPRINGS



Carlos Garcia

The Robert F. Newton Award for Distinguished Service is the most prestigious award recognizing an individual who has displayed extraordinary and outstanding service to NACAS and to the profession. Requiring a minimum of 10 years of contributing to the knowledge and stature of the auxiliary services profession, the award recognizes a combination of NACAS involvement and leadership as well as campus and community contributions.

Carlos Garcia, CASP, Vice Chancellor, Student Affairs, University of Colorado, Colorado Springs (UCCS), is the 2020 recipient of NACAS' highest honor. An auxiliary services professional since 1981, Garcia began his career at University of Texas, El Paso and then served for nearly 20 years as the executive director of the University Memorial Center at the University of Colorado, Boulder. In 2016, Garcia joined UCCS serving in roles related to auxiliary services in

both the administration and finance, and student affairs departments. In 2020, he was named vice chancellor for student affairs at UCCS.

In spite of the demands of the university positions he has held, Garcia has made time to volunteer for a variety of roles with NACAS. "I just like giving back to the profession, and I enjoy helping others grow professionally," he explains. "When I was a young professional I was guided by someone who helped shape me into the professional I am today, so I have learned a lot from being involved in NACAS, but I hope I have given back more than I have received."

His nominator described Garcia as rare administrator who has served in administration and finance, and student affairs to lead almost every area related to auxiliary services. His wide range of experience enables him to balance student needs, budget realities and campus politics. These skills have translated perfectly to his work with NACAS.

Garcia has served NACAS and NACAS West in various leadership positions. He served as a long-time NACAS West Board Member culminating in his role as NACAS West President. He has served as treasurer on the NACAS Board of Directors and stepped up to the presidential track upon the resignation of the NACAS Vice President. He served as president of NACAS beginning in 2018 and has just completed his service as past president.

At NACAS West, Garcia was instrumental in helping the struggling region get back on its feet financially through consensus building, budget management, strong business partner relationships and increasing member value. He has been a strong proponent of CASP, not only receiving his certification, but also serving as a subject matter expert in the development of the program. Garcia has also been a long-time supporter and believer in the NACAS Foundation and encourages others to give back to the association.

Of particular note, Garcia has infused inclusiveness in all leadership positions he has held for NACAS. When at NACAS West, he led one of the most diverse

boards in the association and infused cultural education into the regional conference in Albuquerque, NM. As NACAS president he championed efforts to bring Mexican institutions into NACAS bridging the two countries through NACAS.

When asked about the significance of the award he received, Garcia says, "This is quite an honor, an honor I am not sure I deserve because I have witnessed others receive this award over the years." He adds, "I have always felt that those folks were in a category deserving of this award, and I struggle seeing myself in that same category as those colleagues. I am simply humbled and honored that the association felt that I deserved to be in the same category as the previous recipients."

In addition to NACAS, Garcia has been involved professionally with the Association of College Unions International (ACUI) where he has served on the ACUI Board of Trustees. He is the recipient of numerous honors and accolades including: the UTEP Student Association's Miner of the Year Award (1988), ACUI's Pat Moonen Outstanding Service Award (2011), CU-Boulder's Marius Smith Award (2016), a fellow of the Class of 2017 CU System Excellence in Leadership program, and is an honorary member of the USS Colorado Alumni Association. In 2017 the UMC Board at the University of Colorado Boulder named a student leader scholarship in his honor: The Carlos García UMC Director's Scholarship.

"I encourage people who want to make auxiliary services their profession to get involved," says Garcia. Involvement might be participating in education session such as webinars or institutes or attending Annual C3X conferences, he says. "Involvement might also be more intimate such as joining one of our many committees or taking on roles on regional boards and ultimately on the national board." He adds, "Either way, becoming involved in NACAS will help you advance professionally, and will enrich your life personally through the contact you will make within NACAS." ■

2020 NACAS & REGION AWARD WINNERS

David H. Lord Scholarship for Exemplary Community Service

Esmeralda C. Valdez, University of Houston

Edwin R. Golden Award for Inclusive Excellence

Morris Arboretum of the University of Pennsylvania Visitor Education and Guided Tours Program

Innovative Achievement in Auxiliary Services

UC Irvine Student Center & Event Services

Outstanding Business Partner of the Year Award

Chick-fil-A

Central Region Mentor Award

Richard R. Thomas, University of Wisconsin - Milwaukee

Central Region Rising Star Scholarship, Sponsored by The Spelman & Johnson Group

Jennifer Paiotti, Transact (Previously with Xavier University)

Central Region - Volunteer of the Year

Jason Maslanka, University of Illinois at Chicago

East Region Mentor Award

Christopher Bradie, University of Pennsylvania

East Region Rising Star Scholarship, Sponsored by The Spelman & Johnson Group

Jonathan A. Kukta, Penn State - Berks

East Region - Volunteer of the Year

Diane L. Reynolds, MBA, CASP, Virginia Commonwealth University

South Region Mentor Award

Esmeralda C. Valdez, University of Houston

South Region Rising Star Scholarship, Sponsored by The Spelman & Johnson Group

Rosario 'Rosie' Ashley, University of Houston

South Region - Volunteer of the Year

Stephanie Edgett, University of Texas at Arlington

West Region Mentor Award

Jeff Rensel, Arizona State University

West Region Rising Star Scholarship, Sponsored by The Spelman & Johnson Group

Casey Kelly, Sonoma State University

West Region - Volunteer of the Year

W. Colin Moore, University of British Columbia

Silver Torch

Ronald L. Martel, Johnson & Wales University - Providence

Volunteer of the Year

Deborah T. Huebler, CASP, University of Houston

Dr. Wright L. Lassiter, Jr. Legacy Award

Emily A. Messa, PhD, CASP, University of Houston

Robert F. Newton Award for Distinguished Service

Carlos Garcia, CASP, University of Colorado - Colorado Springs

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COVID-19 has taken caused many industries to reexamine how best to serve those who rely on them. For auxiliary services professionals, that has meant finding new ways to meet the needs of students while continuing to keep them safe. This issue we highlight two examples of the way NACAS member institutions are using innovation and technology to keep students safe on campus.

COVID-19 Symptom Screening Supports Campus Safety

BY ERICA WHITNEY NEHRLING

With rising positive coronavirus cases across the nation combined with holidays and family gatherings around the corner, schools will be facing a 'spring surge' of COVID-19 cases. This surge brings threats of campus closures and heightens the importance of a robust system for both identifying and reducing cases on campus. Schools need to evaluate how effective their protocols and systems were for the Fall semester and make changes to adjust and enhance their processes.

Strategies for reducing spread including delayed semester start times, quarantining students upon return to campus, and cancelling spring break must be considered. Testing is crucial for identifying and removing students and staff from campus contact and is the only way to discover *asymptomatic* cases. Some schools – such as Texas A&M University — are employing random testing¹ whereas other schools,

for example, Harvard, are doing routine testing of everyone on campus at defined intervals depending on each person's frequency of coming on campus².

Preventing spread of *symptomatic* cases requires screening staff and students daily for symptoms. Some schools are posting the CDC guidelines online and in print marketing encouraging staff and students to self-monitor and self-report any issues. This method has major limitations as it relies on the honor system with no test result data available for management purposes.

There are some technology options such as chatbots; however, these solutions often just facilitate the self-assessment process but do not usually provide management with a portal in which to monitor failed cases. A number of app based solutions have been deployed to streamline the process for daily self-assessments. Some are

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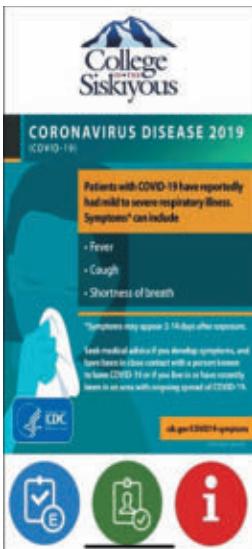
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very basic with limited reporting capabilities whereas others provide more features.



robust and caters for both "at home" symptom screening as well as onsite temperate screening.

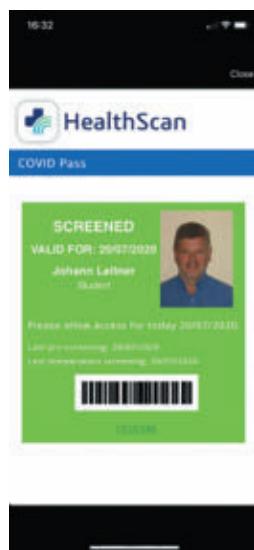
The following are some key features of the HealthScan screening/tracking solution.

- Customizable App – An app must be flexible to meet the specific branding and workflow requirements of each school. Also remember, people are amenable to giving up phone space real-estate for daily use-case scenarios.
- Onboarding – To facilitate widespread usage, a simple on boarding process is required either via self-registration or CSV upload of students and staff.
- Ease of use – Color-coded buttons allow easy navigation. Additionally, a "passport" displaying one's status (i.e. Access allowed/Access denied) is a quick way to control access at campus checkpoints.
- Flexibility with screening questions – The CDC screening guidelines are commonly used, and a solution that allows adjustment of questions is best. For example, one question from the CDC asks if the user has "a headache" or "fatigue". Because headaches and fatigue are actually quite common, adjusting the question to clarify "new or unexplained fatigue/ headache" may help reduce unnecessary call-ins.
- Real-time results – Data needs to be available in real-time to be most useful. This allows for immediate contact tracing and scheduling adjustments.
- Notifications/Communication – Automated notifications by email or text ensures management staff is informed of all failed screens and status changes.
- Status Management – Management needs to be able to adjust and track the status of students who have failed a screen through defined steps. Vanderbilt is using HealthTrack to follow the status and location of all students in quarantine/isolation using a range of steps such as New student/ Under review/ Isolation/



Transferred/Cleared. All departments that need to provide services to these students are automatically notified whenever a change in status takes place. If a student is transferred from one residence hall to another, the status and new assignment is updated automatically notifying the facilities staff of which rooms to clean or prep and dining of the new room assignment for delivery.

The Covid-19 virus will be around for some time to come until effective and safe vaccines are available and accessible for the majority of the population. As the time scales for this are uncertain and may even extend into 2022, it remains critical to follow CDC guidelines to reduce the spread of the virus. Wearing masks, social distancing, washing hands, avoiding large groups as well as symptom monitoring and testing will all help to minimize infections.



important-student-covid-19-testing-program.html
<https://www.harvard.edu/coronavirus/testing-tracing>. ■

ERICA NEHRLING MS, RDN is a Business Development Executive for Touchwork, LLC. Erica is a graduate of University of Georgia with a Bachelor of Science in Dietetics and a graduate of University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign with a Master of Science in Nutritional Sciences. She is a registered dietitian and was previously employed in collegiate dining at University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign as an assistant director/administrative dietitian until she began with Touchwork in 2018.

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Collaboration and Planning Key

to Managing Challenging Times at American University

BY CHRISTOPHER SILVA

It is worth highlighting several silver linings and lessons we have learned due to our campus adaptation to the tragic pandemic experience.

Senior administrators brought together a representation of campus staff and faculty to ensure that a successful transition to online learning and a large move-out effort could be accomplished, and throughout the months, plan and enact successful pivots. I was fortunate to work with highly adaptable colleagues who are experts in their areas and were keen to problem solve at every step of the way. Ambiguity, patience, and flexibility were keywords we used to manage through these challenging times.

The most important aspects of our work were the improved use of technology, the quick reaction for continued process improvement, the increased internal communication, and the effort to utilize lessons learned from our peers.

To improve communication and reduce the lag for student support, we quickly deployed voice-over-ip phones to our frontline staff along with online

conferencing and a ticket-tracking system, ensuring that all questions were answered in a timely manner. This was vital when we were one of the busiest offices across the university, receiving hundreds of questions from students and families. We also activated a chat feature on our website which helped fast-track answers. We reduced stages in our application process and empowered our frontline staff to make decisions to expedite resolutions.

Recognizing that flexibility in our housing terms was needed, we began to pro-rate student housing fees for students approved to remain in student housing. We recognized that the usual three-term concept (Fall, Spring, Summer to many schools) is not useful during times of great uncertainty. It was a no-brainer to allow students to move-in/move-out of their housing assignments and be pro-rated based on those days.

One of biggest challenges, which later became a benefit, was making sure that everyone across the university was informed of our issues and plans as they changed several times. At the beginning, several senior administrators took time to consider the repercussions of the next steps we were planning to take. We learned that we needed to bring directors from various units together to obtain their feedback prior to releasing a new batch of information to students. Making sure they were informed was critical for our collective success. Unfortunately, units that were not prepared or trained left their staff and students frustrated and student support suffered.

Learning from colleagues in different institutions was critical. Early in the pandemic, I sought out the advice from colleagues working in China and Singapore, to understand their insight into the pandemic, since they had been hit prior to the United States. I gathered a great amount of information, including tools and examples of correspondence to the student population. I shared these resources with colleagues within my own university and peer institutions. Unfortunately, several disregarded them as too stringent or far-fetched. It was too early in the pandemic and people thought we would not be impacted severely as other countries. Now, most schools in the US use the same tools that had been adopted in other countries since early January. I am glad to see that collaboration across universities is more common. I hope that we can learn from this experience that there are important examples to be followed from our colleagues.

The reality is that the scenario brought by the pandemic required us to react fast as we tried to address its issues with the same old structures: bureaucracy, organizational bloating, lack of data, and poor communication. But we need to keep adapting. This is playing out now, in our planning for 2021. While a challenging effort, we must continue to address our daily issues, and put all energy into planning for the future. The Fall 2021 incoming class is already applying, and competition will be fierce. We will likely continue to face the pandemic in the Fall of 2021 and possibly Spring 2022. ■



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DR. CHRISTOPHER SILVA is the Director of Housing and adjunct faculty at American University in Washington DC.



Effective Strategies for Developing the Holistic Academic Health Leader

BY BERNADETTE (BERN) MELNYK, CANDICE CHICK, JOSH DOWNING, AND KEIRA MCGLONE

Higher education's transition to virtual learning has truly transformed the fabric of how we move forward in a post-COVID world. We, as health leaders, have learned so many new strategies to bring health and wellbeing to our students through an array of platforms. The activation and creativity for virtual wellness is a tremendous opportunity that we will continue to explore and foster as we meet and mentor students in these spaces. As holistic health leaders, it is pertinent to prioritize the practice of daily selfcare just as we have asked our students to do. Take the time to recharge, intentionally disconnect, and make a little time every day to focus on you. The COVID-19 pandemic has given us all an amazing opportunity to network with other campuses, which in turn, has gifted us the opportunity to capitalize on new adventures. As we head into the Spring semester, we offer steps you and your institution can take to lead in a holistic manner.

1. Self-assessment: As holistic health leaders, one of the first steps in impacting students, faculty, staff, and community members is to clearly understand your strengths and "character-builders" as a leader of change. Take a 360 assessment or similar instrument to help you determine the skills that need further development, and then find talented others to complete the areas that most need support. When analyzing the data provided in such an instrument, it is absolutely critical that the feedback not be taken personally, nor assumptions made. The instrument is to be used

to help you become a more effective holistic leader, hone-in on our strengths, and improve needed areas

- 2. Campus Audit:** Assess your campus community based on the needs, desires, and past exercises that have already occurred in the mental health realm on campus. Once you have an idea from most of the factions on campus, it is time to create an ambassador or influencer model with the appropriate training, data collection, and feedback. Evidence from studies support the positive benefits of these grass roots efforts. Build a prototype that works on your campus. Figure out the messaging that can bring your academic health community closer together. The goal is to create a feeling of family and trust.
- 3. Stay focused on an exciting vision:** Although a strategic plan is important, keeping your team focused on an exciting vision that will keep people motivated is critical to the success of your wellness initiative. Building in regular recognition and appreciation of team members will keep energy up when fatigue or a slowing down of energy is present.
- 4. Model healthy behavior:** Strive to create cultures of wellbeing on your campus that make healthy behaviors the norm. Self-care should be a top priority for all of us so that we can effectively continue to serve our students. Intentionally model integrative self-care activities, such as taking breaks from Zoom, exploring the outdoors on a lunch break, cultivating

mindfulness, and making time for sleep and rest. Also, share the importance of connecting with friends and loved ones during this time of distancing.

- 5. Collaborative Leadership:** Our campuses are a reflection of us; create cultures of wellbeing from administrators, to support staff, to coaches, and faculty. Our campuses flourish when this happens. Communicate with stakeholders, look for opportunities to expand collaboration, find more ways to come together and create cross-support. Promote access to student support services in your offerings, especially mental health resources.

- 6. Be Human:** The continuing pandemic is tough on us for a myriad of reasons. It's okay to share with those around you, including students, that you are struggling. As a health leader, share with your community one to two specific areas where you may be experiencing challenges. Whether it's with childcare, the care of an elderly parent, or just being overwhelmed by the "new normal", we all have things that are stressful. Being vulnerable with your supervisors, teammates, and students will build trust and your relationships likely flourish when common struggles are identified. Open communication about coping strategies will show your holistic approach to problem-solving.

As board members of Building Healthy Academic Communities (BHAC), a Consortium that connects academic health and wellness professionals from across

continued on page 24



2020 CAMPUS CARE GRANT RECIPIENTS ANNOUNCED



The NACAS Foundation is pleased to announce that on November 11 at the C3X 2020 Virtual Conference & Expo, four institutions were selected to receive funds totalling \$22,850 through the Campus Care Grant. The recipients are as follows:

Otterbein University
Promise House - \$5,000

We are honored to be part of a program to ensure that the basic needs of students are a priority,” said Melissa Gilbert, Associate Dean for Experiential Learning and Community Engagement at the Center for Community Engagement. “For our institution, this grant is providing a significant opportunity for us to be part of a national effort to raise awareness about the socioeconomic barriers to student success.”

University of Maryland, College Park
Campus Pantry - \$5,000

“The pandemic has made remote access essential, and this grant would ensure access for our financially vulnerable students,” said Lydia Nicholson, Associate Director for

the Office of Development and External Relations. “By coordinating these much-needed services and connecting food insecure students with service providers using the Pantry’s private meeting room and computer, we will be able to address multiple challenges facing food insecure students.”

University of Nebraska - Lincoln
Big Red Resilience & Well-being Program - \$5,000

“Winning the Campus Care Grant means that we will have the necessary resources to implement additional innovative and fun ways to promote well-being coaching — an essential resource for Nebraska students, particularly during the pandemic,” said Connie Boehm, Director of Student Resilience. “The grant also supported and enhanced our connections with academic areas. Our college deans were amazingly responsive to support these efforts!”

Hartford Community College
Food Pantry - \$7,850

“At Harford Community College (HCC), we strive to make sure we do all that it takes for all students to achieve their



goals. With the help of the NACAS Foundation Campus Care Grant, we are able to do just that,” said Laura Burke, Student Wellness Specialist. “We are grateful to NACAS for choosing HCC for this significant opportunity, and are ready to put forth the work to create a more robust and accessible food pantry on our campus. By helping students with their basic needs during times of hardship, we are invested in reducing and eliminating the common barriers to their academic success.”

The Campus Care Grant awards up to \$25,000 annually to programs or services that support student achievement by addressing a basic need of students on campus, such as housing, food, mobility, safety, academic resources, and counseling. This year, the Foundation received 119 applications that met all of the grant criteria, which included sustainability, replicability, budget, and metrics for success.

“The NACAS Foundation Board was pleased to have seen an increase in applications compared to 2019,” said Eddie Mills, NACAS Foundation President. “We are thrilled that the selected colleges and universities will be able to use the grant money to fund their campus food pantries and student wellness programs.”

As a response to the global pandemic, the Foundation encouraged more submissions that fell within the \$2,000 – \$5,000 range, anticipating that many institutions would have new funding needs associated with COVID-19.

“We know that one in three college students faces food insecurity, an issue that is only heightened by the coronavirus pandemic. We also know from our research that students rank access to basic needs as the number two barrier to their success,” said Kelsey Harmon Finn, NACAS CEO. “The Campus Care Grant expands the level of support campuses can provide to students through service delivery, bridging the gaps between what students have and what they need to thrive.”

About the NACAS Foundation: We are a non-profit, charitable 501(c)(3) corporation formed for the sole purpose of supporting and promoting the auxiliary services profession. The Foundation engages in scholarships, grants, promoting diversity of people and ideas, fostering innovation, collaboration, and creative thinking to improve the quality of life for students.



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Effective Strategies... *continued from page 21*

the country, Canada, and Australia in pursuit of healthier campuses. we have created incredible, useful resources. We utilize technology and collaboration models to develop our approaches. How can we be holistic health leaders? By implementing the tactics discussed above and by joining our consortium. Join our family of academic health and wellness leaders and help build a stronger foundation of individuals and campus communities working together to create comprehensive wellness cultures and improving population health and wellbeing.

For more information on membership, visit the BHAC website and read Executive Director of BHAC, Linda Handley's article Navigating an Uncertain Sea. ■

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2020 has been a crazy 67 months, hasn't it? If you're like me, you might be feeling a little down heading into the holidays and the spring semester. Burnout, exhaustion, hopelessness, and even anger are totally normal and valid feelings to have right now. What are you doing personally to battle the COVID blues? I've been doing puzzles, gathering with girlfriends outside of higher ed, and crushing my pull up game. Whether it's spending more time outside, disconnecting from technology, or spending time with loved ones, I encourage you to make sure you're taking the time to invest in your own wellbeing. You can't take care of others without first taking care of yourself.

Hopefully you're able to enjoy a little bit of rest and relaxation over the holiday season. Take the opportunity to recharge, because when we come back for the spring semester, we need to be ready to take on all the ongoing and new challenges that have bubbled up this year. Sometimes it feels like the hard decisions (and the potential ramifications for those decisions) are never-ending. NACAS is optimistic about the long-term future, but we know the short-term work is going to be intense.

So, how do we move forward? NACAS is here for you. We are committed to providing the best industry resources and solutions to help you make informed decisions and keep up with the latest trends. Join your peers and subject-matter experts for in-depth conversations by attending our webinars and virtual roundtables. In addition to our virtual Senior Executive Summit, which

will take place February 16-17, 2021, NACAS will continue to provide powerful and informative virtual events with our members and business partners' ever-changing needs in mind. In the coming months, we will also be launching our second Benchmarking data collection period. We encourage you to submit your institution's performance data so we can see the impact COVID has had on the industry and make data-driven decisions about where we go in the future.

Although this time has certainly been a rollercoaster, I know that we are better united than divided. This is a great opportunity to flex your creative muscles and solve problems with business partners and other departments on campus. NACAS is partnering with different associations to bring new consolidated resources to the table. Sometimes it helps to look for inspiration and ideas from outside of your regular circle.

In the meantime, hang in there. We will make it out on the other side soon.

Kelsey Harmon Finn
Chief Executive Officer,
NACAS



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