

WACAC Connection

FALL 2006

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WESTERN ASSOCIATION FOR
COLLEGE ADMISSION COUNSELING

Letter from your President

Elsa Heydenreich Clark

*WACAC President
Immaculate Heart High School*

Ben Franklin once wrote, "In this world nothing can be said to be certain, except death and taxes." Ben had obviously never been involved in shepherding students through the college admission process, for if he had done so, he would have undeniably recognized the certainty of a good many other things taking place in our lives – the angst of high school seniors as they begin to apply to colleges, the joy to be found in their expressions of relief as they receive the "large" envelopes in the spring, the wonder of self-discovery as they begin to recognize their strengths and passions while preparing their college admissions essays and resumes, the appreciation of securing a "good fitting" college well-found through solid research, the excitement of setting foot on "their" college campus as the new year commences in the fall. There is indeed a certainty that we all experience as we each begin anew the fall admissions cycle. It is a going back to the future as we set in motion our work with a new class of students. For the colleges, a welcoming to the newest members of their campus families – the Class of 2010 – and a searching out for the even newer recruits. For the high schools, a changing of the guard – out with the old, and in with the new, our own Classes of 2007. It is a fresh

start entombed within familiar trappings. New application procedures, new exams, new personal statement prompts, new deadlines, new reps visiting the high schools, new high schools to visit – all secure within the constant framework of our profession.

Another constant to be found each fall is the National ACAC Conference. Filled with familiar topics, each is presented anew, with a different flair and flavor, reflecting current trends, future issues and common concerns. It has consistently proven to be a solid educational source for our membership from both sides of the desk, and well worth your attendance this year in Pittsburgh during early October. Besides the education to be found among the various session choices, there is also the catching up with old friends, the networking (so important to our very person oriented profession) to be realized and the governance, the assembly and general membership meeting agendas to be satisfied. It is here at this conference where we can share our professional concerns, wisdom and vision with our colleagues on a national level, and make a difference in the running of our profession. It is both heady and humbling, certainly eye-opening, and when presented and used successfully, a well appreciated and

sought out forum for growth and understanding.

Immediately following the conference is an altogether new program offered to our membership here in the west. "The New School Counseling Program in California: AB 1802 - Implementation Conference", to be held on Monday, October 9 in Sacramento reflects the past two years of work headed by Esther Hugo and her WACAC Inter-Association Committee on behalf of public secondary school counselors in California. With \$200 million dollars for school counseling guaranteed, all WACAC members are encouraged to attend the conference in order to have our voices heard as this particular budgetary counseling pie is being divided up. Giving a proactive voice to college counseling and our students' needs vis a vis the college search, application and admission processes is a duty we must take on. Now. We may never be given this opportunity again. Registration for this one day conference is free for any WACAC member.

The old and the new, the familiar and the unique, the invariable start of a New Year well fitted into familiar processes, these all are our certainties. Enjoy what lies ahead. Have a great year.

A chartered affiliate
of the National
Association for
College Admission
Counseling

Connecting
people
Changing
lives

Announcements

Chistine Parra has been promoted to Assistant Director of Admissions at Loyola Marymount University.

Bill McMurray, director of western regional admission for Wheaton College (MA) from 1998-2005, has been appointed director of graduate admission at California College of the Arts in San Francisco.

Erinn Lynnae Evans has been promoted from the Bing Overseas Studies Program office at Stanford University to the Assistant Director the Office of Undergraduate Admission.

Gloria Zelaya has joined the college counseling staff at the Buckley School. She was previously an Assistant Director of Admission at Loyola Marymount University.

Amy Gonzales has moved from the Admissions Office at Saint Mary's College of California to the guidance counseling department at Saint Mary's College High School.



A New Brand

During its 2006 August retreat, the Executive Board voted to approve a new logo brand for Western ACAC to be unveiled at the NACAC National Conference in Pittsburgh and implemented in time for the Annual WACAC Spring Conference in 2007. The new design will replace the current "sun" logo but will retain the orange and blue colors from the original design, while adding definition to WACAC's constituency and territory. As we look towards our 30th annual spring conference in 2007, updating our brand that is seen on all of our official publications from our website to membership requests, from our professional development materials to letters going to our legislative leaders, this change is seen as a positive step for the growth of our association. See you in NACAC for the unveiling!

The New School Counseling Program In California AB 1802 - Implementation Conference

FREE Registration Fee to all WACAC MEMBERS!

California school counselors have won a stunning victory with AB 1802, the approval of \$200 million for counselors in grades 7-12. As a special benefit to our current 2006-2007 members, WACAC member registration at the AB1802 Implementation Conference is **FREE!!!**

The \$200 million allocated for school counseling means that we will add over 3,000 counselors to our public schools, and that students will have the guidance they need to understand their choices for the future. That's right, 3,000!

A major event in Sacramento is being planned to note this achievement - to heighten awareness among counselors, counselor supervisors, school district officials, university counselor educators, and policy makers.

WACAC is working to ensure that college counseling, and college admission and financial aid counseling be part of counselor training. WACAC has a key interest in successful implementation of AB 1802 and we are co-sponsoring this event, along with CASC, the California Association of School Counselors, the Los Angeles County Office of Education, and the California Department of Education.

On Monday, October 9th, YOU have the chance to take action and support our initiatives. The stage is set. It's time to come together and show that our goals are vital and appropriate for California students.

DATE/TIME: Monday, October 9, 2006, 8 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.

EVENT: AB 1802 Implementation Conference

LOCATION: Doubletree Hotel, Sacramento

SPECIAL GUEST: Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger

The program will emphasize implementation of the new counseling program outlined in the legislation.

We need YOU in Sacramento. To register, go to www.wacac.org. Remember, as a special benefit to our current members, WACAC will pay the \$75 member registration fee to this conference for you! Your cost for attendance is only transportation and lodging if necessary.

Esther B. Hugo

Co-Chair, Inter-association Task Force

Outreach Coordinator, Santa Monica College

Hugo_esther@smc.edu; 310-434-4955

NEVADA NEWS:

Changes in admission requirements

The University of Nevada, Reno offers students incredible academic programs and the opportunity to enjoy a quality university education at a great price. With that in mind, several changes have taken place over the past couple of years and it is imperative to keep you apprised of those changes.

First, in the fall of 2006, the University of Nevada, Reno implemented new admission requirements. To meet the new admission requirements high school students must meet the following standards.

2.75 academic grade point average (weighted) in the following core classes

- English – 4 years
 - Emphasis on literature, composition etc.
- Math – 3 years
 - Algebra I, Algebra II, Geometry or higher
- Natural Science – 3 years
 - Biology, Chemistry, Physics etc.
 - 2 lab sciences recommended
- Social Science – 3 years
 - History, Government, Economics, Psychology etc.

If a student does not meet the GPA requirement, a student may use his/her test scores in addition to the academic core for admission purposes. If a student has an SAT combined math and verbal score of 1040 or an ACT composite of 22 and the required academic core he/she is also eligible for admission.

High school students wishing to calculate their academic grade point average may visit www.ss.unr.edu/admissions. Click on New Freshman and then on the academic calculator.

For transfer students, the new admission requirements are:

- 2.3 cumulative grade point average in a minimum of 24 transferable semester credits.

Transfer students can find more information about the transfer process by visiting www.ss.unr.edu/admissions/apply/transfer/ or by calling 1.866.2NEVADA.

The admission requirements will be changing again in the fall of 2008. For high school students the academic grade point average will be a 3.0 and for transfer students a 2.5 cumulative grade point average.

Secondly, beginning in the spring of 2006, California students were finally eligible for the Western Undergraduate Exchange Program (WUE). The requirements for eligibility are high school students with an academic grade point of a 3.0 and the listed core classes OR transfer students with a 3.0

grade point in a minimum of 24 transferable semester credits would be automatically granted WUE. The savings for this program are listed below.

Another program to assist in the cost of education is offered to those students from California counties bordering the state of Nevada. They are Alpine, El Dorado, Inyo, Lassen, Modoc, Mono, Nevada, Placer, Plumas, San Bernardino and Sierra counties. Students from these counties who do not meet the WUE requirements are eligible for the Good Neighbor Program. Please visit www.ss.unr.edu/apply/ to have your students apply and receive information on the incredible tuition benefits!

California Law AB 1381

By Luis South

To show how important it is for my local community members to be involved in the democratic process I recently sent out a nine page proposal to our state elected officials. The ideas were offered as an attachment to the still pending California law AB 1381 (the L.A.U.S.D governance law). The intent was to get their support for a few basic ideas during the many public and closed door debates. The following are the basic ideas presented:

1) California law cannot tolerate abusive work environments.

2) Protecting the right of all public school educators to report deficiencies in schools.

3) Strengthen the internal auditor position so that there is no room for evading accountability in schools.

In order to make our upcoming public forums most interesting please read this legislation now on the internet: http://www.educounselor.com/cur_legislation.htm

2ND ANNUAL LAS VEGAS/CLARK COUNTY PORTFOLIO DAY

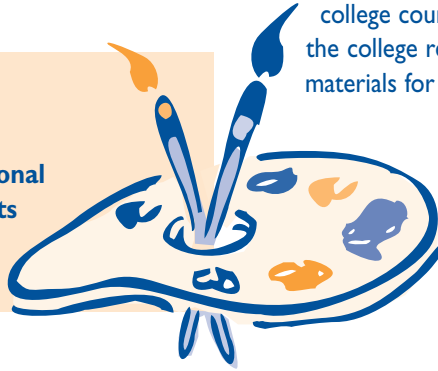
For prospective students interested in painting, drawing, sculpture, graphic design, digital media, animation, fashion design, transportation design, gaming illustration, architecture, set design and much more!

Open to high school, community college and university students wishing to have their artwork reviewed by art schools and university art departments from across the nation. Art instructors and college counselors are invited to visit the tables to speak with the college representative and pick up catalogs and other materials for the offices and classrooms.

Date: Saturday, December 9, 2006

Time: 12 - 4 pm

Location: Las Vegas Academy of International Studies, Performing & Visual Arts
315 South 7th Street
Las Vegas, NV 89101



Co-sponsored by:

UCLA School of the Arts and Architecture
Rocky Mountain College of Art + Design

For more information contact: Joel Diamond,
Portfolio Day Coordinator at
jsdiamond@interact.ccsd.net

Call for Diversity Speakers

WACAC and the Diversity, Equity and Access (DEA) committee is currently searching for dynamic individuals like you to be listed as potential speakers on issues of diversity. Should you choose to be involved, your name, institution and presentation topics will be listed on the WACAC website and other publication materials as a resource to those in need of a presenter.

You are encouraged to join a selected few to serve as advocates on the DEA Speakers Bureau. Share your individual area of expertise, ranging from one or more of the following diversity topics:

- first generation students
- undocumented students
- gender identification
- gay & lesbian issues
- race
- religion
- socio-economics effects on culture
- working with physically or mentally differently-abled students
- culture and counseling
- equity and excellence
- access and university admissions



If you are interested in becoming a DEA Speakers Bureau resource, please submit the online application by visiting the DEA Speakers Bureau section on the WACAC website:
http://www.wacac.org/other_speak.php.

If you have any questions, please contact Marlena Norman, DEA Chair at mnorman@loretto.net or Marcelo Vazquez, DEA Speakers Bureau Subcommittee Chair at mvazquez@humnet.ucla.edu.

The Diversity, Equity and Access Committee Will Award Three \$1500 Grants and One \$2,000 Grant to WACAC Members

YOU Should Apply!

The Diversity, Equity and Access (DEA) Committee values your dedication to promoting equality and access among students in our region. Last year, the DEA Committee awarded four grants to programs that supported the principles of our organization and prepared students for a bright future! Marlena Norman, Chairperson for Diversity, Equity and Access (DEA) and the DEA Grant Review Committee are excited to have this funding opportunity available to western members.

The 2007 DEA grants will be awarded to members who are working with and serving diverse populations. To be considered, members must submit a detailed grant proposal with information about their program and the student community it will be serving. After a thorough review of each grant proposal, the DEA Grant Review Committee will select the 2007 grant recipients. If selected, award recipients will receive funding to support their program needs. In addition, they will be required to present their program while serving as faculty at the 2007 Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, and Access (IDEA) Pre-Conference Workshop.

AWARD REQUIREMENTS

- Award recipients must be current WACAC members working with and/or serving diverse student populations

- The population serving must be diverse, including, but not limited to, socio-economic, religious, lifestyle choice, cultural, and ethnic diversity
- A clear and well written DEA GRANT PROPOSAL must be completed and submitted
- Members serving on the DEA Grant Review Committee and the 2006 Grant Recipients are not eligible to apply for the 2007 DEA Grant
- Financial Need Assessment must include:
 - Detailed program budget

AWARD BENEFITS

- Three \$1500 grants and one \$2,000 grant
- Presenter at the 2007 Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, and Access (IDEA) Workshop
- Registration for the 2007 IDEA Workshop
- WACAC and DEA Recognition

GRANT PROPOSAL REQUIREMENTS

- Cover Letter must include:
 - An introduction
 - A brief description of the program
- Body must include:
 - Statement of intention and objectives
 - Program history
 - Population serving
 - Please address who will benefit and/or have the largest impact from the grant
 - Please indicate the possible long-term effects that this grant will have for the population you are serving
 - Program outline or program schedule
 - Program evaluation
 - Please provide a description of how you will track or plan to track your program

**Proposals Accepted:
October 1, 2006**

**Date Due:
January 29, 2007 Postmark**

**Award Notification:
March 1, 2007**

Please visit the WACAC website (www.wacac.org) or contact the DEA Grant Coordinator, Jessica Benson, at jbenson@villanovaprep.org for more information. Members who serve or would like to serve on the DEA Grant Review Committee must contact the Grant Coordinator to discuss the grant review timeline and process.



Western Members who attended the GWI Conference (left to right): Marlena Norman (DEA Committee Chair), Marissa Reynoso (Scholarship Recipient), Charles Cole (Scholarship Recipient), Nathan Falstreu (Scholarship Recipient) and Robynne Royster (GWI Co-Director and past DEA Chair)

A Special Note from the Guiding the Way to Inclusion Scholarship Recipients

Letter #1

Charles Cole
Admissions Counselor
Sacramento State

I would like to thank the DEA, NACAC and WACAC for selecting me as one of the three scholarship recipients of the 2006 Guiding the Way to Inclusion Conference (GWI). My reasons for wanting to go were to advance my professional capabilities, and to meet and collaborate with people who believe in diversity and equity. It is my mission to continue promoting access and equity in higher education to underrepresented students. I strongly believe the GWI helped me to meet my goal.

There were many things I liked about the conference- the networking, workshops and distinguished speakers. However, there was one speaker I will not forget- the Reverend Zina Jacque. I have to say among all the speakers she delivered the most dynamic and inspiring speech at the conference. Her topic, "Why Are We Here?", made me think about the importance of my role to the overall mission of higher education. My position has value, and as counselors we do make a difference in the lives of students' and the institutions we work for. I could tell on the faces of the audience that her speech inspired them as well. Rev. Jacque's presentation was an excellent ending to the first day of the conference.

The second day I had the opportunity to attend a workshop presented by Deren Fink. It was through two mutual friends that I was introduced to Deren. They kept insisting that I meet him. I'm thinking to myself, is this guy a rock star or something. Eventually, I had the pleasure of meeting Deren during the WACAC Spring Conference this year. Come to find out he wasn't a rock star but he is well respected among his peers for his dedication and professionalism. He did a presentation on "Developing Management Skills." He shared his expertise on becoming an effective manager and the two types of

management styles-autocratic and permissive. I have aspirations of becoming a leader within my organization and career field and after listening to Deren I am confident that I possess the knowledge, skills, and qualities necessary to be an effective leader in higher education.

The final day of the conference, James Montoya's presentation on Race Based Admissions was truly enlightening. He broke down diversity admissions into two parts –a historical context and the legal framework of race based admissions. I learned that in American institutions diversity admissions is not a new term. In fact, it has been around since the early 1800's in such schools as Amherst and Harvard. In addition, Presidents Truman and Johnson created avenues to make education more inclusive. However, in the last thirty years the legal framework has limited diversity in a way that race or ethnicity cannot be used as a determinate factor for admissions. Yet diversity can be used to meet the institutions overall goal. He asked everyone to look at their institution's policy and to make sure that we are in compliance with federal law. I find this so interesting because shortly after attending the conference, I was named the diversity coordinator for Sacramento State! Now I have some background information and ideas to develop programs to do diverse outreach.

No matter what the obstacles are we seem to maintain a positive spirit. Also, it was a first of not having to be the "only." In this line of work there are not that many black male counselors so it was refreshing to know we are out there and playing an important part in the development of students and our respective institutions.

I hope that other counselors have a chance attend next year. The conference definitely contributed to my professional growth and because of that I am confident that others will benefit. Again thanks to NACAC and WACAC, I could not have done

it without the financial support. And a special thank you to Marlena Norman who encouraged me to apply for the scholarship.

Letter #2

Marissa Reynoso
Assistant Director of Admission and Diversity
Recruitment
California College of the Arts

Reminiscing about my job interview for my current position as the Assistant Director of Undergraduate Admission and Diversity Recruitment, I recall being asked about my knowledge of diversity issues and what I could bring to the position. I distinctly remember my answer despite the years that have passed since that day. I claimed that I was not an expert on diversity or multicultural issues, nor did I have the intention to become the sole expert on such issues on my campus. Instead, I confidently told my interviewers, that if given the opportunity I would become a diversity and multicultural resource. That was the key word ~ resource! In my opinion it is not any one person's responsibility to be the sole diversity expert, title or not. The responsibility falls upon us all. I did feel however, that it was my responsibility to serve as a resource for finding information and disseminating knowledge about diversity, multicultural, equity and access issues to my colleagues and my community. And with the generous assistance of WACAC's Diversity, Equity, and Access committee's scholarship, I have been able to fulfill my responsibility by participating in valuable opportunities such as NACAC's Guiding the Way to Inclusion Workshop.

I attended NACAC's Guiding the Way to Inclusion Workshop this past July in Denver, Colorado. The experience was educational and empowering! There were informative sessions aimed at helping us understand the diverse communities of students we work with such as first-generation college

students, undocumented students, and LGBTQ students. We also explored cross cultural communication, financial aid, advocacy issues, and race-based/race-neutral decisions, NACAC resources, developing management skills, and understanding the admissions career ladder. But one of the highlights of the workshop was the personal development I gained by networking and collaborating with professionals (and now friends) who share similar values and are committed to engaging in thoughtful discussion regarding diversity, equity, and access. The joint lunch we had with NACAC's Leadership Development Institute was particularly memorable as we were able to connect with the fabulous leadership of Western ACAC! As a result of my experience in Denver I now have a much stronger and wider network of support in my fellow GWI participants. And now it is my turn to share the knowledge I gained at GWI with my campus colleagues and community!

My WACAC membership has proven to be a valuable investment in my professional and personal development. The values inherent in the organization are demonstrated in the workshops and conferences I have participated in including the WACAC Legislative Conference, and the ICL pre-conference workshop to the Annual Spring WACAC conference. One of my most memorable experiences thus far however, was due to the WACAC Diversity, Equity and Access GWI scholarship I received to attend NACAC's Guiding the Way to Inclusion Workshop. I thank WACAC and the DEA committee for the opportunity, the support and the empowerment!

Letter #3

*Nathan Falstreu
Admission Counselor
Otis College of Art and Design*

I recently had the opportunity to attend the NACAC Conference, Guiding the Way to Inclusion, formally known as Counselors of Color Conference in Denver, CO. This was my second time attending and I was very pleased this year with the attendance and the overall passion of the participants. This conference provides professionals in our field who are truly in the profession of helping under-represented and underserved

students an opportunity to gather and learn from one another.

The event consisted of sessions which touched upon many topics including the recruitment of students of color, gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender, and queer students, first generation students, undocumented students, transfer students, intercultural/cross cultural communication, and management skills.

Beyond the extremely helpful discussions that went on throughout our time there, beyond meeting new friends and seeing old friends, and beyond the important professional connections made, was something much more interesting to me. I noticed a new group of young admission counselors, assistant directors and coordinators of multicultural recruitment who were more close to being on the same page as admission professionals than I have ever seen before. I found that we were not just discussing a selected population of students who need our help, we were discussing why we choose to do the work that we do and why we continue to stay in this profession. Looking around at those who were there, it was quite easy to see that this is the new generation of leaders in higher education who would be presidents of their own state and regional organizations someday. This was the group who would come back to this conference in 10 years as a dean or a director.

This awareness also raised some questions. Why do we stay in the profession and do the work that we do if it's obviously not for the money? As admission professionals we work long hours and weekends, travel so much that we often forget which state we are in, and often work in environments where the word diversity itself is foreign. "What makes us young professionals get up in the morning?" I wondered. The answer was clear. Hope for change.

At the conference, President of NACAC, Beverly Henry Wheeler, pleaded with us to learn to be change agents within our own organizations, to start small and to make a difference, to become the voice for change and to implement that change. From this urging, came the realization that we are not alone in this fight and that everyone in this profession should be a change agent for

diversity and underserved students. Working in Los Angeles, one of the most diverse metropolitan areas in the country, I am often baffled at the number of under-represented students who are not enrolled in colleges and universities. It is too easy as representatives of these schools to say, "Well, that's just the way it is."

The conference concluded with a joint luncheon of GWI conference attendees and president-elects, presidents, and past-presidents of all state and regional associations who were beginning their Leadership Development Institute (LDI) Conference at the same location. Robynne Royster, Director of Undergraduate Admissions at California College of the Arts in San Francisco was charged with bringing the two groups together and asking for interaction because this is the next group of leaders in our organization. She urged the representatives from the LDI Conference to pay attention to the people sitting next to them. I only hope that the members, who attended, noticed the new group of professionals who will be shaping not only the national organization, but also college admissions as a whole.

Now this is my plea to you, my fellow, young admission professionals and Western Association deans and directors: We are the change agents in access to higher education. Let us remember why we do the work that we do and do it with complete passion and while being mindful. New counselors: get involved in our organization and bring your passion and experience back to your own institution. Deans and directors: please recognize your young aspiring counselors and allow them to be involved so that they can make an impact where it will matter. The Western Association was the largest group of attendees at the GWI Conference out of all of the other ACAC's. Let's continue this tradition.

As we begin to schedule our high school visits for the Fall, book our flights and hotels, dust off our maps and get ready to be "on the road", remember why you do the work that you do. More importantly, know that the work you do is on purpose and good.

Thank you to you and the WACAC Diversity, Equity and Access Committee for awarding me a full scholarship to attend.

CONTRIBUTIONS FROM OUR MEMBERS

College Counseling—Not Just for Big Cities

By Cyndy McDonald
McDonald & Associates

In the college consulting world, there is a myth. The myth is that in order to have a successful private college counseling practice, you must be located in a large metropolitan area. As new consultants start off, they are making decisions as to where and how they will set up their practices. Often I hear that they are not sure about the feasibility of setting up a practice in an area that is not urban or suburban.

If you looked in a guide book for a description of the area I live in, Tulare County, you might find the following description: The country's fruit basket and dairy capital of the world. Most of the country's fruits such as oranges, peaches, plums, and various other delectable fruits are grown here. Milk, cheese, and yogurt come from the world's most productive dairies. Walnut, pecan, and almond orchards line the highways. Tulare County is the gateway to the Sierra Nevada Mountains, with Sequoia National Park and Kings Canyon National Park nearby. The largest city and county seat is Visalia, population 100,000. If you dig a bit more into the description of the area, you will find a different picture emerging. There is no four year university in the county. A large percentage of students are children of migrants, and English is their second language. The educational level in this area is low. A majority of parents completed high school or less for formal education. This does not sound like a community in need of the services of a private college counseling practice. Yet, over the years I have found it is fertile ground for college counseling services.

Education is a shared value among people in our community. Parents have the same goal their parents had for them, a better life for their children. They know the

gateway to that better life is through higher education. Often their parents have done well on their own, with their own farms, businesses, or training. The parents know that the "self-made" path is not usually a realistic expectation for the future. The pressing question parents ask when they come through the door is, "What does my child need to do to prepare for and get into college?"

As professionals, we do not see our function as the experts with "all" the answers. We see our role as facilitators, helping a family through the journey of going to college. Preparing for and going to college is a process; it is a journey. This journey impacts everyone in the family—parents, siblings, and friends. As educational consultants, we can help guide the student and parents through this journey: help generate dialog, facilitate the student's growth toward independence, smooth some of the bumps, and help ease stress and worries along the way. Our objective is to work as a team with the student, the family, and the school (counselor and others). Together we build a path for the student to navigate throughout the high school process. Parents and students enjoy taking this journey together, with me or my associate as

the professional tour guide. We do this through family activities, surveys, and joint meetings. We meet with parents and students together for the first four or five appointments. I know in some communities, this approach would not work, but our families appreciate and respond well to this approach.

Then there is the issue of the all-important "college list." I hear that term quite often in the college consulting world. Getting their "college list" is often seen as the ultimate reason students come to a college consultant. We have found the list is a natural outcome of the journey we have been navigating with the student and parents. Together with input from the student and parents, we create a realistic and viable list for the student. The list is a by product, not the focus, of the journey. Last year we had a student with a college list of one college. After navigating the process with parents, visiting colleges, taking tests, and doing all the appropriate preparatory actions, there was one school that was his "dream" school—a school we knew he would absolutely be admitted to. Why apply to more schools if one is sufficient?

Sometimes my students come to us with a list already in hand. If it is appropriate and is balanced, then they are one step closer to their goal. Yet, that does not change the journey they or their parents are embarking on. Whether the list is the local state university, a community college, or the most prestigious college in the country, the student and his or her family still need support and expertise.

Harvard. Yale. Stanford. Cornell. These are often fairytale schools to my



students. I have a few students that apply to these schools each year (usually Stanford). In fact, getting most of our students to apply anywhere “out of state” is difficult. Who can blame them? California offers something for everyone—mountains, beaches, big cities, and nationally-ranked public and private universities. We are thrilled if a student ventures forth and applies to a college in a neighboring state. Often that is a stretch for the parents more than their students. Their priority is not prestige, but keeping their children close to home.

Many students are first generation students. Their parents often have some college or training, but not a bachelor’s

degree. There is no “legacy” school for most of our students. They are blazing trails for their families and for their future generations.

I know how that feels. I am the first in my family to go to college, and, in my generation, I am still the only one in my family who has a college degree. I would not have known what to do at a highly prestigious university or college. I began my journey at the age of fourteen when I began saving for college. I attended college early as a 17-year-old. I was faced with many challenges along the way. I can empathize with the challenges my students face each day. My passion, my ability to help students,

stems from my personal experiences. I know I am not alone as a college consultant in this.

College counseling is not just for the big cities. We have proven it here in the central valley of California. It can be the same for you in your community also. Having the vision, and the desire to provide a service you believe in, is not limited by where you live. It is limited only by the belief you have in what you can offer to your community. Find the community that values education, one that values what the future has in store for its children, and you will find a community in need of a college counselor. That is what I did, fifteen years ago.

CONTRIBUTIONS FROM OUR MEMBERS (cont’d)

On a Sympathetic and Appreciative Note (Keynote Speech)

*By James Astman, Ph.D.
Headmaster, Oakwood School
North Hollywood, California*

Your jobs are impossible. They simply cannot be done. By way of welcoming you this morning, I simply want to explain why.

It’s simple, really. In schools like ours, critical feedback from teachers and administrators can be so carefully couched in metaphors, vague allusions, and warm and effusive poetic language, that students sometimes never quite get an accurate picture of their actual strengths and weaknesses in the classroom. And neither do their parents.

So when they apply to colleges, you’re the ones who have to present them with the unvarnished truth – and you have to do that in a way that assures them you’re on their side, you believe in them, sometimes you even believe for them, and while you’re doing that, you have to form a working alliance with their sometimes overly intrusive parents, some of whom have not yet taken the Harvard banner off of the baby bassinet. If their scores are low they are “poor test takers.” If they have no prayer of getting in, you give them “reach schools” to balance their safeties and make them feel optimistic.

And all the while, sometimes just after you’ve given students and parents information about admissions trends and course preferences and score averages at the colleges of their choice, you overhear faculty members accusing you of working against the school’s philosophy, or at least its commitment to the quality of students’ experience in the here and now. You seem to care only about which college the kid can get in, regardless of the impact on his soul.

But you withstand the slings and arrows because you’re too busy doing everything you can to maintain your affectionate and trusting relations with your colleagues in the college admissions offices, all of whom love your school but face impossible numbers and competing interests on their various committees. And you’re understanding and sympathetic, even while you’re trying to get some reliable information about where an applicant stands, or gently suggesting that this particular kid really is wonderful!

I could obviously go on, and so could anyone else in this room. But all I’ll say – and this comes from someone who’s been a

school head for three decades – is simply this: There is no more challenging job in a school than college counseling. That’s because you have to be a diplomat, a negotiator, a sensitive counselor, a resilient traveler, a salesperson with integrity, a public relations expert, a fast reader, a fluid writer, a flexible thinker, and a gentle humorist who has the strength of character, the appropriate selflessness, and the long-range vision to withstand projections, verbal assaults, distortions of fact, and chronic misunderstandings, and yet who can all the while be a sympathetic and supportive advocate for students.

I think you have the most complicated, and sometimes most misunderstood, job in a school. That’s the reason for this sympathetic and appreciative note of introduction. And in view of everything I’ve said (and so much more I haven’t said), it’s also the reason I don’t think you should be called college counselors at all. I think you should be called miracle workers.

TOOLKIT FOR COUNSELORS REGIONAL WORKSHOPS

In fall of 2006 WACAC is partnering with ACT and College Board to provide a “Toolkit for Counselors” session at selected fall workshops. This will be a one hour session designed with the needs of counselors in mind. Each attendee will receive a resource folder. Look for a workshop location coming near you! There is no cost to attend these workshops, however registration is required.

DATE	PARTNER	LOCATION	CITY
Sept. 13	College Board	CSU Bakersfield	Bakersfield, CA
Sept. 14	College Board	Clark Co. School Dist.	Las Vegas, Nevada
Oct. 5	ACT	Holy Names Univ.	Oakland, CA
Oct. 6	ACT	Radisson Hotel Sacramento	Sacramento
Oct. 10	ACT	CSU Fresno	Fresno, CA
Oct. 11	College Board	Occidental College	Los Angeles, CA
Oct. 11	ACT	Crowne Plaza Ventura Beach	Ventura, CA
Oct. 19	ACT	Courtyard LA Old Pasadena	Pasadena, CA
Oct. 20	ACT	Stanford University	Palo Alto, CA
Oct. 20	ACT	Hyatt Regency	Irvine, CA
Oct. 25	ACT	Truckee Meadows C.C.	Reno, Nevada
Oct. 31	ACT	Ontario Airport Marriott	Ontario, CA
Nov. 2	ACT	San Diego State University	San Diego, CA

ACT workshops:
To register visit www.act.org/ew

College Board workshops:
To register visit
www.collegeboard.com/about/association/regional/west/west.html

REGISTRATION is through ACT or College BOARD, NOT through WACAC. Directions and details are on the ACT or College Board websites.

Spread the word in your district or school!

New Local and Regional College Fair Page!

Would you like to add your college fair or recruitment event to the WACAC website? We are adding a new section to the WACAC website that will allow high schools, colleges, and community organizations to the website. All events must be open to the general public and must be free to students and families. Please fill out this form to have your event add:

Name of Event: _____

Name of Host(College, High School): _____

Date of Event: _____

Location of Event: _____

Time of Event: _____

Contact Person: _____

Date you would like event removed from website: _____

Posting your event on the WACAC website will be free. Colleges may post their regional receptions if they would like them added to the fair list. Please include your organization’s logo.

Please send requests via e-mail to wpineda@san Diego.edu.

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*Submission of articles, photographs, letters, and announcements
of interest to the members of the Western Association of College
Admission Counseling are always welcome.*

Visit our website: www.wacac.org



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