Koinonia

Hugh Hewitt
Debra L. Elliott
Scott Preissler
Dana Alexander
Dennis A. Sheridan

See next page for additional authors

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Authors
Hugh Hewitt, Debra L. Elliott, Scott Preissler, Dana Alexander, Dennis A. Sheridan, Theresa Hanneman, and Sarah Marcum
Spring 1999

Student Affairs Practice in the 21st Century

The Legacy of Ernest L. Boyer, Sr.

Filling Voids in Christian Leadership Training

And God Created...Sex

News from the Regions

Executive Committee Ballot: Voting Deadline is May 10, 1999

The Ultimate Student Service

acsd
Association for Christians in Student Development
As we look forward to the annual ACSD Conference at Biola in June, I want to encourage you to pray for John Back and the Biola staff as they prepare to host our time together on their campus. As staff from past host institutions know, it takes a great deal of time and energy to prepare for the annual conference. The Biola staff have done a great job in planning and working out the details of the conference. Please join me in praying for them. It would be a real encouragement to them if you would take a few moments and send a note or an e-mail message letting them know that you are praying for them.

In the fall I reported that the Executive Committee will be meeting with six or seven past officers in Chicago in February to discuss the future of ACSD as an organization. The following areas will be explored: scope and limitations of a volunteer-based organization, engagement with the secular academy, establishment of institutes for professional enhancement, stewardship of funds, professional research and publications, and services to the membership. I will report on the outcomes of this meeting at the business meeting of the annual conference.

The three-fold purpose of ACSD has served the organization well since its founding in 1980. Our mission is:

- To promote professional growth and provide opportunity for Christian fellowship and exchange of ideas.
- To integrate the use of Scripture and the Christian faith in the student development profession.
- To provide various services for membership.

As an organization committed to serving its membership, we need to assess our purpose and services on an on-going basis and all that we do should affirm our mission.

Included in this issue is a ballot for you to vote for President-Elect and Secretary. I want to encourage you as a member of ACSD to vote and participate in this process of electing new leadership for the organization. I also want to express my appreciation for the faithful service of Mary Ann Searle who has served as Secretary over the past two years. Mary Ann has made a significant contribution to the collective work of the Executive Committee, and it has been very helpful to have the perspective of a Christian who is working in the secular academy.

As I write my last column for the Koinonia, I want to say a big “thanks” to the Executive Committee (Everett Piper, Denise Bakerink, Mark Troyer, Mary Ann Searle, and Sharon Givler). I have thoroughly enjoyed working with them and serving the members of ACSD. We have almost 1000 members and more than half of our membership attend the annual conference. We are blessed to have one of our institutions serve as host each year and plan a four-day conference. I encourage you to support Everett Piper as he leads ACSD into the next millennium as President.

It has been a privilege to serve ASCD during the past four years. As I leave office, I simply want to affirm some of my thoughts from past columns:

- A reflection of the authenticity of our ministry to students is our ability to extend the same care and compassion to our fellow staff and faculty.
- Our ability to make a difference in the lives of students we serve will be reflected in our own spiritual integrity.
- God promises that He will be faithful to us, but we have to continually re-discover His truth. Hopefully, students are not the only ones at our colleges who are learning!
- Proverbs 8:17 reads, “I love those who love me, and those who seek me find me.” This is a reminder that in the midst of the challenges we face in our work, God loves us, and when we seek Him, He responds to us.

May the Lord grace you with wisdom and compassion as you finish another year of serving students, and may you be blessed as you see students go forth whose lives have been touched by yours.

“I love those who love me, and those who seek me find me.” —Proverbs 8:17
In preparing for the 1999 ACSD conference theme Building Structures for the New Millennium, it seems timely to re-visit Dennis Sheridan’s address to the membership at the 1998 conference. In Beyond the Horizon: Student Affairs Practice in the 21st Century, Sheridan addresses the issues of technology, diversity and access, teaching and learning, resources, and accountability. In light of his study of 93 chief student affairs officers at Christian colleges and universities and the work of ACPA’s Trends Analysis project, Sheridan sites these five issues as having great potential for affecting student affairs practice in the next century.

For additional preparatory reading for this year’s conference at Biola, I invite you to read the reprint from a chapter in Hugh Hewitt’s recent book, The Embarrassed Believer: Reviving Christian Witness in an Age of Unbelief, and the review of his book submitted by Chris Carlson of Gordon College. Hewitt will be one of the keynote speakers of the conference. Debra Elliott, Project Administrator of The Boyer Center and Scott Preissler, Vice President for Education at the Christian Stewardship Association, also offer timely information and challenge in this spring issue of Koinonia.

Please note that it is time to exercise your voice and vote. This year we are conducting elections for the positions of President-Elect and Secretary. Cast your ballot by placing a stamp on the reply postcard, conveniently provided for you in this issue, and return it to me by May 10, 1999.

As always, I welcome your contributions to the Koinonia.

—Sharon Givler, Editor
People are Hungry to Talk about the Deep Things

By Hugh Hewitt

We are honored to have Hugh Hewitt as this year’s ACSD Conference opening keynote speaker. Hewitt will assist us in understanding how the culture is influencing the kinds of students entering our institutions and how we might work more effectively in challenging and supporting intellectual, moral, emotional and spiritual growth in these students. The following is a chapter from his most recent book; The Embarrassed Believer, Reviving Christian Witness in an Age of Unbelief, reprinted with permission from Word Publishing, Nashville, Tennessee. All rights reserved.

It is particularly important for believers to understand that a time of great opportunity for evangelism is opening up—has opened up.

The debate had been fairly intense. The crowd of two hundred consisted overwhelmingly of human-relations professionals who were wedded to the amorphous cause of affirmative action. My television studio and the Human Relations Commission of Los Angeles had jointly sponsored a “dialogue” entitled “Beyond Affirmative Action,” which turned out not to go very far beyond the issue of the day: Proposition 209—the California Civil Rights Initiative, which became law in 1996. At the time of this debate the controversy surrounding the CCRI had just begun to swirl. It still continues to swirl.

The discussion had been civil, but the views of the participants could not be reconciled. And following a too-long two hours of back and forth, we adjourned.

There’s a space in time that follows all such forums. It is the courtesy zone, wherein no matter how sharp the exchange or how deep the disagreement, the participants mix and mingle and smile and acknowledge that, after all, it’s just a forum. Watch C-SPAN to the end of any given program, and you will see that this milling around follows nearly every presentation.

A cardinal rule of the courtesy zone is that the debate ought not to carry over into it. Certainly no new or taxing subjects should be introduced. “Give it a break” is the motto. The weary participants, after all, deserve their getaway to unfold unmolested.

Well, after this particular verbal twelverounder, the executive director of the commission, Christopher McCauly, came up smiling broadly, grabbed my hand, and gave me an intense look. “I’m really looking forward to your God series,” he said. “It will mean a lot to me.”

The sudden juxtaposition of an intense affirmative-action debate with my Searching for God in America series was jarring. As was this self-disclosure. Lots of folks greet television people with throwaway lines about shows they’ve watched and enjoyed. But few go out of the way to declare value in that which they haven’t yet seen.

I did not inquire at the time why Chris was looking forward to the shows. More than a month passed, but I continued to ask myself why he would care and why he would tell me he cared. Finally I called him at his office to ask why he thought he was going to enjoy it. When he returned the call, he said that in the last year he had experienced a personal religious renewal. Through All Saints Episcopal Church in Pasadena, he had begun to search for God, and he had come 180 degrees in his relationship with God. Thus his interest in the series. It was arriving on the air not long after he had arrived back in church.

Another story. As election ’96 began to heat up in the spring of that year, my friend Bill Press—now of Crossfire fame and a hopeless, if amiable, lefty—decided to pitch television stations in the Los Angeles market on the idea of a right-left commentary segment. The first station we targeted was channel 9, KCAL-TV. One week into the discussions, Bill landed the Crossfire job and moved to D.C. But KCAL still wanted to talk, so I made my way in early March to the restaurant on the Paramount Studio lot to meet the station’s political producer, Lisa Eichenberger.

We were at lunch for two hours, and except for the first twenty minutes, the subjects were God, religion, American spirituality, and the rise of belief. Lisa is herself a Presbyterian but also an enthusiastic proponent of The Celestine Prophecy.
a book—as I’ve already argued—the very commercial success of which under-score America’s search for the transcendent even as its content drags millions away from the path to genuine faith. Once again, my Searching experience had allowed a conversation to open a door that is normally barred, and two people who had never met before, both working in the business renowned for its hard edges and standoffishness, were deep into a conversation about God. In all fairness, the accelerated intimacy of the conversation was helped along by our discovery that Lisa was a great friend of, and had been maid of honor in the wedding of, a man with whom I had passed hundreds of hours of friendship in high school. But, as Lisa said, such meetings are not accidents.

Of course the reaction of two people to a pending television series and its host hardly makes a statistically significant sampling. But this reaction was part of the general response of strangers to the title and subject matter of Searching for God in America. That pattern suggests a reason is behind it all. Take my university faculty. I teach at Chapman University Law School in Orange County, California. As part of the life of the university, faculty members give talks to each other concerning their recent work. I was asked to deliver such a talk, and I titled it “Searching for God with PBS” and included a bite-size summary of the series. The room was set up for an ordinary attendance, but the provost and I were soon carrying in chairs to meet demand. And the faculty was intrigued. The dozen questions that followed my thirty-minute talk were not the polite thank-you-for-coming variety but rather variations on the theme What did it mean? What were all these religious people telling you? Is another Great Awakening upon us? Ought that to upset us?

The faculty forum was just another episode in the now nearly three-year-old series of questions I’ve encountered as a result of taking the subject of God seriously. Who’s buying these Deepak Chopra books by the millions? Who’s showing up at the Promise Keeper rallies? Why are these megachurches going mega? Is there significance to the end of the millennium? What’s all this New Age stuff? Is Jesus God? Is Mohammed a prophet? Why is Islam advancing? What’s the Tibetan Book of Dying? I’m worried about my kids; should I join a church? How do I know God is real?

A friend suggested to me that SFGA was an expanded version of a late-night gabfest among college sophomores lost in the search for the meaning of life. He was right. That’s exactly what it was. But the sophomores are now in their thirties, forties, and fifties or older, and they want to continue the conversation. I have to conclude that everyone enjoys the conversation, even if he or she never went to college and never argued about whether God exists.

Here’s what’s going on, I think. It is particularly important for believers to understand that a time of great opportunity for evangelism is opening up—has opened up. Here’s why.

The twin illusions of control and significance are shattered beyond repair.

The illusion of control allowed its believers in America and beyond to hold the idea that hard work and moral living would yield happiness. But they often don’t. Rabbi Harold Kushner, author of When Bad Things Happen to Good People and a guest on my series, forcefully assaulted this myth in his recounting of the tragic death of his son. In fact, evil and tragedy are everywhere around us, and it is getting harder not to notice. Practically everyone who has reached the age of forty has directly experienced unfair suffering.

The idea of American omnipotence was an unspoken assumption of the youth of most baby boomers. There were enemies, certainly; but we could outthink and outspend even the combined force of the Soviets and the communist Chinese. While Vietnam shattered the faith of many younger people in America’s purpose, it did not dent the underlying assumption about the country’s power. It was American omnipotence that repulsed so many among the antiview crowd. And on the other side—the Silent Majority side of the street—the discontent was not that America lacked the ability, the power, to run the world but that it lacked the will. Both sides could agree at least that the country was a superpower of almost unlimited resources.

This belief supported not just the Vietnam expedition but the Great Society, the Apollo program, the explosion of the higher education imperative, and the Americanization of global culture as well. The idea that talent, wealth, and smarts should control the future seeped into everyone’s outlook. Hubris was to American life what fluoride became to American water.

Even as the illusion of control took root, the other grand illusion, the illusion of significance, allowed its adherents to believe in enduring contributions and the stability of influence or power. The rapidity of decline and the suddenness of power and taste shifts clobbered this one years ago. Some politicians still labor under the misapprehension that they

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People Are Hungry to Talk About Deep Things

matter in the long haul. But if the collapse of the Soviet Union and the fall of the Berlin Wall stand for anything, it is for the proposition that nothing human lasts for very long, even when backed by totalitarian force. The acceleration of obsolescence is marked, and the age of the Internet is the age of zero controls.

Once the beliefs in the possibilities of control and significance blew up, the rise in the interest in spirituality was inevitable. Set aside our Christian beliefs. Approach the situation as any intelligent agnostic might. If nothing matters and nothing lasts and there are no guarantees, then what gives life meaning? Mere reproduction? Even those who deeply love their children intuitively know there’s got to be more.

The quest for that “more” is what powered the interest in SFGA. Sort of. But not wholly. Anyone who believes that confusion and chaos in the culture are the only things behind the burgeoning interest in spirituality has bought into a secular response. If you examine that response you will see the quiet, corrosive influence of pseudo-psychology at work in the explanation of spiritual hunger. Folks uncomfortable with the big question about the existence of God hold on to a psychological explanation for the upsurge in wondering. It is an explanation that is plausible for them because it obviously connects the rise of faith with a “rational” explanation for all this praying.

But there is another explanation as well. Star Trek fans know of the potency of the tractor beam. When the Klingons wished to pull an unsuspecting earth-craft into their range, the tractor beam went on. When the starship Enterprise needed to retrieve its small command vehicles, its tractor beam went on. Tractor beams were invisible rays that acted as retractable grappling hooks.

High concept: God’s got a tractor beam, and He’s flipped the switch. It’s working. We are collectively drawing close to Him. Some of us are aware of this and want to know what’s up. Others are unaware ...for now.

The risk I take in writing the preceding two paragraphs is that the highbrows among Embarrassed Believers abandon this book the moment this first, less-than-serious device arrives on the printed page. Effective imaging doesn’t work for them if it’s insufficiently highbrow, and Star Trek will not do. Give’em some lines from Sufi mystic Rumi that are impenetrable without a decade of training, and that’ll hold their attention, but not Star Trek.

But the tractor beam is exactly the answer that fits any theology and the only explanation that can unify the similar reactions of tremendously dissimilar people. Insecurity is indeed on the rise. Absolutely. But that need not compel a rise in the interest in spirituality. To say so would overestimate the relative insecurity of our age compared with, say living in Paris in 1791. I am not aware of any great spiritual awakening during the Reign of Terror.

On the other hand, if God does exist and He’s upped the power of His call on His people a notch or two, well then, all sorts of hard to explain things make sense.

Why do books on angels fly off the shelves?...Why do acquaintances you’ve known for decades reveal that recently they’ve started attending a weekly Bible study?...How does a movement like the Promise Keepers put a million people on the Mall in October 1997?

How does the Middle East long rent by insolvable conflicts find and hold on to a genuine progress toward peace, even in the face of horrible stresses such as have marked Jerusalem in the past two years?

Why do books on angels fly off the shelves? Why did tens of thousands journey to Medjugore in the former Yugoslavia in the belief that the mother of a Man born two thousand years ago is appearing there regularly to children?

Why do acquaintances you’ve known for decades reveal that recently they’ve started attending a weekly Bible study?

How does a movement like the Promise Keepers put a million people on the Mall in October 1997?

Of course there are still tremendous horrors in the world. The killing fields of Bosnia and Rwanda are just additional reminders that the ’90s have produced butchery on a scale with any other time.

But it is impossible to deny real, measurable upticks in concrete evidences of religious belief. I have already mentioned Promise Keepers, the parachurch movement that effortlessly fills stadiums with vast crowds of men in search of spiritual significance and that stunned America
with its national gathering in 1997. And an evangelist like the Harvest Crusade’s Greg Laurie is addressing immense crowds, including more than sixty-three thousand in Orange county, California’s Anaheim Stadium on July 4, 1996, and an overflow crowd in the same stadium (then under extensive renovation) a year later. And there is the “new church” movement, captured in its intensity and significance by journalist Charles Truehart in the August 1996 issue of the Atlantic Monthly.

The Churches are remarkable chiefly for their size. Many of these (mostly Protestant) congregations count thousands of people in attendance on a weekend-in some cases more than 10,000. For their hugeness they are often known, and often chagrined to be known as megachurches. Among the other labels one hears are full-service churches, seven-day-a-week churches, pastoral churches, apostolic churches, “new tribe” churches, new paradigm churches, seeker sensitive churches. No two of these terms mean quite the same thing, but together, like blind men with the elephant, they describe the beast rather well. These very large and dynamic congregations may at the moment number no more than 400, but are the fastest growing ones in the country.

Not even a large raft of statistics will turn some heads. Some cannot allow themselves to focus on the phenomena I’ve just reeled off. The prospect of the triumph of faith is too upsetting for too many skeptics. Particularly if it grew so close as to compel a personal evaluation of the issue. Very quickly each of these “movements” and many others—the rise of Christian publishing and music, for example—are boxed up and shipped off to the warehouse of untidy facts and surprising/unsettling discoveries.

I am aware of how harsh the judgement of an elite can be, and I’ve already heard some of that collected judgement denigrating the renewal movement in the U.S. The skeptics are still numerous. The Roman Emperor Julian ought to be their hero. More than sixteen hundred years ago he attempted to reimpose paganism after nearly fifty years of unfettered Christianity. Julian failed. He liked the old system, but the rise of Christianity had crushed it beyond recovery. Christianity prospered even though the empire that first persecuted and then nurtured it collapsed.

No, the real danger to the new revival is not in the skepticism of elites but rather in carnival mysticism: a melange of beliefs and bits of philosophy backed by CDs of Gregorian chant.

And I think any attempt to dismiss the growing spiritual revival outright will fail as well. The tractor beam is too strong. And the need is too great.

No, the real danger to the new revival is not in the skepticism of elites but rather in carnival mysticism: a melange of beliefs and bits of philosophy backed by CDs of Gregorian chant. The “mystical” is however, very thin. Substance is required, and discipline. Not surprisingly, each of my guests on SFGA emphasized rigor in religious practice. More on that later. There are worse things than nonbelief.

But the lesson is obvious. The great churning is well advanced. People want to ask even the most unsophisticated questions and many are increasingly refusing to allow embarrassment at their lack of sophistication to overcome their curiosity. They want to know about God. In fact they want to know God.

The one overwhelming obstacle continues to delay millions. People are embarrassed by their desire to know God. Hoffer and his allies past and present have done their work well.

Hugh Hewitt is the co-host of Los Angeles PBS affiliate KCET’s nightly news show Life & Times Tonight. He is the author of two previous books, the winner of two Emmys, recipient of the 1997 Gold Medallion Book Award and the 1996 Wilbur Award from the Religious Public Relations Council. He is an honors graduate of Harvard College and the University of Michigan Law School. He served six years in the Reagan Administration in a variety of posts including Assistant Counsel in the White House. He is presently a law professor at Chapman University Law School in Orange, California.
The Legacy of Ernest L. Boyer, Sr.: 
The Boyer Center at Messiah College

By Debra L. Elliott

Ernest Boyer was one of the first authors I learned to respect as a graduate student of student affairs during the mid 1980’s. I realized then that within education circles, when Boyer spoke people listened. This was good news for those of us in student affairs because his prophetic voice called for a recognition of the value of the co-curriculum and helped to infuse co-curricular professions with greater meaning and challenge. For example, in response to the fragmentation of campus life Boyer recommended principles for strengthening campus community and bridging the curricular and co-curricular in institutions of higher learning. Even though his life and career came to a close three years ago, more than a decade after my introduction to him, I am still listening to Ernest Boyer’s passionate message for education but with greater admiration through my work with a new scholarship center established in Boyer’s honor.

The Boyer Center was launched in the fall of 1997 at Messiah College and is still in a start up phase. Soon, however, the Center will be initiating new programs and opportunities. By introducing Koinonia’s readership to the Boyer Center’s conception, mission and formation this article should encourage ACSD members to look for and become involved in these future activities.

Boyer’s Ties to Messiah College

After his death in December 1995, Ernest Boyer’s family was faced with a decision about what to do with the large collection of papers, awards and memorabilia that had accumulated during his career. Several institutions approached the Boyer family about housing these items, including Stanford University. But, it was finally decided that the papers would go to Messiah College for a permanent archive collection. The reason for this decision was that Dr. Boyer and several of his family members have strong ties to Messiah. Ernie attended when the school was a two year Bible College, at which time he met his wife, Kathryn (Kay) Tyson, also a student. In addition, Ernie and Kay were both raised in the Brethren in Christ church, Messiah’s founding denomination. During his career, Ernie served on Messiah’s Board of Trustees for many years. After his death, Mrs. Boyer took his seat on the Board. For these reasons Messiah seemed like a natural home for Ernie’s papers and memorabilia.

The Center’s Mission

The Boyer Center endeavors to preserve and advance the educational vision of Ernest L. Boyer, Sr. To more fully appreciate both the historical and forward looking components of the Center’s purpose, it is helpful to be familiar with the “high water marks” of Boyer’s career, the themes that shaped his work and the current status of the archive, programs and leadership of the Boyer Center. These are summarized below.

A Brief Career Sketch

After his graduation from Messiah Bible College, Boyer went on to finish his Bachelor of Arts at Greenville College. In 1956 he completed his doctoral work in audiology at the University of Southern California and went on to post doctoral fellowships abroad and then to positions in academic administration in California. In 1965, Boyer was recruited as vice chancellor for the State University of New York (SUNY), then the largest university system in the world. In 1970 he became chancellor of SUNY and would serve for the next seven years during an era of great student unrest and institutional change. In 1976, Boyer joined the Carter Administration as U.S. Commissioner of Education overseeing 3,000 employees and a $12 billion budget. In 1979 he succeeded Clark Kerr as president of The Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching. Wanting to stay closely connected to higher education, but always mindful of the power of the press and the import of public policy, Boyer chose to locate the Foundation offices on the campus of Princeton University and the Woodrow Wilson School of Public and International Affairs. At the same time he maintained an office in Washington, DC. During the Carnegie years Boyer advised five U.S. presidents, both republicans and democrats, by serving on presidential commissions on education.

Boyer’s belief that education was a “seamless web” shaped the research agenda for The Carnegie Foundation during his tenure. His writings offered critical analyses and creative recommendations for the full spectrum of education, from preschool to graduate school. In addition, Boyer worked to raise the status of Native American tribal colleges, wrote a weekly column on education in the London Times, chaired boards of various organizations in support of the Arts, such as the Lincoln Center in New York City, and worked on education reform in China.

At the conclusion of his career, Boyer’s work had influenced all levels of American education and far beyond.
Robert Atwell, former president of the American Council on Education, described Boyer as “an evangelist of education... [h]e never tired of carrying his message of the importance of education, and of its improvement, to any audience, at any time, in any place.”

Boyer’s Themes
Several themes characterize Boyer’s vision of education:

A lover of words, he considered language to be crucially important. Whether in speaking or writing, his aim was to clarify fundamental issues with simplicity of expression. He so rigorously revised his writings that, in one instance, the Boyer Center staff found 200 drafts of one chapter of one book.

Seeking advice from experts and lay persons alike, he was an attentive listener and valued everyone’s input.

He viewed life as a coherent whole and built bridges between people and disciplines that would not normally be linked together. For Boyer, all experiences are part of learning and all of life is connected.

Boyer championed community as a necessity for education viewing it as equally important for the elementary school and the university campus.

He saw service as essential to the curriculum in order for learning to have relevance beyond the class room. Service would enable colleges and universities to improve practically the neighborhoods and regions in which they are located. By expanding the definition of scholarship to include service, Boyer encouraged professors to apply their research to real community needs.

Preserving the Boyer Vision: The Boyer Center Archive
Together with generous cooperation from The Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching and the Boyer family, an effort to organize and index the manuscripts, speeches, correspondence, calendars, awards and other items that comprise the Boyer archive has been underway since the summer of 1997. At present, the project is approximately half complete. The Center’s goal is to provide access to the archive for scholars, researchers and the public in an appropriate facility on the Messiah campus and electronically through the Center’s web site. The Center is temporarily located in a newly renovated house on Messiah’s campus. Within the next few years the College is planning to build a more extensive facility with room for interpretive displays, administrative offices and a conference center.

Extending the Boyer Vision: Boyer Center Programs
To further the educational themes and projects begun by Boyer, the Boyer Center will convene workshops and conferences on a variety of education topics. A Boyer Fellows program will support visiting educators, teachers and scholars in their contributions to the educational community. Finally, Boyer Reports on Best Practices will showcase exemplary educational practices on a variety of issues. Christian higher education will be an important focus.

Leadership at the Boyer Center
Glenn R. Bucher, Ph.D., will become the first executive director of the Boyer Center in July 1999. Dr. Bucher is currently president of the Graduate Theological Union, a consortium of nine theological schools and 11 affiliated research centers located at the University of California, Berkeley. It is Dr. Bucher’s intention to have a five year plan for the Center in place by this time next year.

Conclusion
Ernest Boyer was one of the most influential voices in education during the 20th century. Given his strong advocacy for the importance of student affairs work, co-curricular educators should feel especially encouraged to participate in the programs of a new scholarship center established in his honor. It is this author’s hope that ACSD members will take advantage of the Center’s future conferences and projects to work together with faculty colleagues in carrying forward the themes and vision of Ernest L. Boyer, Sr.

Notes:
2. Given Dr. Boyer’s energetic life and national prominence, the sheer volume of items contained in the archive collection is astounding. For example, he was awarded 136 honorary doctorates including academic hoods and framed diplomas.
5. The Boyer Center’s web site address is: www.boyercenter.org
6. The Center’s first national conference, “The Boyer Legacy: Prospects for a New Century,” was held in 1998 in honor of Boyer and featured colleagues Sheldon Hackney, former Chair of the National Endowment for the Humanities and former President of the University of Pennsylvania, Arthur Levine, President of Columbia Teachers College, Carolyn Reid Wallace, former Senior Vice President for the Corporation for Public Broadcasting, and the new Carnegie Foundation president, Lee Shulman.

Debra Elliott is Project Administrator for the Boyer Center. She worked in the area of housing and residence life for 10 years prior to joining the Boyer Center staff at Messiah College.

Annual Conference Sites Needed
Might you consider hosting the ACSD Annual Conference in 2003, 2004, or beyond? The ACSD Executive Committee desires to know of member schools who would consider the possibility of hosting a future conference. Applications and information may be obtained by contacting Sam Shellhamer, ACSD President, at Wheaton College, 501 E. College Ave., Wheaton, IL 60187-5593, 708-252-5022, samuel.a.shellhamer@wheaton.edu
Filling Voids in Christian Leadership Training Today: Connecting Student Development, Stewardship & Nonprofit Education with Emerging Leaders

An Interview with Scott Preissler, Vice President for Education, The Christian Stewardship Association

**KOINONIA:** You and I seem to agree, Scott, that student life professionals could be the vital link in connecting emerging Christian student leaders to nonprofit leadership education they miss in their traditional curriculums. Why is this so important today?

**PREISSLER:** Traditional curriculums for the most part are not connecting emerging Christian student leaders to essential training in nonprofit leadership education they need to lead ministries in the new millennium. We live in an America where over 50% of charitable giving is directed back to religious causes. Reflective studies over the past 60 years show Christian leaders lack understanding of the connections between personal stewardship and nonprofit ministry leadership to mobilize these resources. Student life professionals can work across the curriculum to fill in voids in the traditional education of student leaders and help prepare them to effectively lead nonprofit ministries in the new millennium.

**KOINONIA:** Why is it so important that emerging student leaders learn about the nonprofit sector and Christian principles of stewardship?

**PREISSLER:** Student leaders do not commonly learn the fact that over 90% of ministries in America are incorporated as not-for-profit organizations. Ministries in America own over 25% of the entire assets in America’s nonprofit sector, or that churches (also registered as not-for-profits) give more than all U.S. foundations & corporations combined. Ministries depend on the stewardship of God’s people to support efforts, and on their leaders to effectively model stewardship practice in their own lives.

**KOINONIA:** Are there career opportunities for student leaders who want to learn about, intern in, and apply for jobs in the nonprofit sector?

**PREISSLER:** Absolutely. In fact, while most career opportunities do not go through traditional on-campus recruiting methods, there are thousands of job opportunities each year in ministries. Student life professionals could begin to connect emerging student leaders to these ministry opportunities through targeted education initiatives. For example, include some reading on the nonprofit sector or nonprofit leadership with Christian leadership training. Have the career services team develop listings of registered 501 © 3 ministries and their contacts for personnel in any of the 20 top nonprofit ministry fields. These fields include foreign missions, Christian broadcast/radio/TV, outreach and evangelism, and urban development ministries. Here are prime opportunities to integrate calling and career interests.

**KOINONIA:** You mentioned a void in Christian higher education on this subject. Can you elaborate on this?

**PREISSLER:** The new field of nonprofit leadership and philanthropic studies has been in place in secular higher education for over 15 years now. In fact over 90 collegiate programs offer majors or minors in the subject. In contrast, only one school in the CCCU coalition and none in the AABC Bible College association has a formal major or curriculum educating students in Christian leadership in the nonprofit sector in America. A recent survey of pastors in theological training reported 85% of pastors in America have not learned Biblical principles of stewardship or how to teach these principles to their congregations. And the Bible speaks to stewardship issues of our time, talents and our treasure more than any other subject in the Bible; over 2,350 times! It is easy to see that if we are to advance ministry in America and beyond in the next millennium, teaching on stewardship upon which all nonprofit ministries are dependent, needs to be re-integrated in the education of emerging Christian leaders. From my view in one of the largest associations of Christian leaders in the country, traditional curriculums are not keeping pace with the need for this training. This is why I believe that the educational programs led by student life professionals can more easily, and quickly begin to reintroduce students to leadership training which involve nonprofit and Biblical stewardship principles.

**KOINONIA:** What would you say are some of the topics student life professionals could educate students on nonprofit and stewardship leadership principles today?

**PREISSLER:** What our student leaders do not know about these principles, especially stewardship in their own lives could hamper how effective they will be as leaders. Our best and brightest student leaders need to know about the field of nonprofit leadership, how ministries organize and operate, the role of stewardship and financial resources for ministry, and
effective board and volunteer leadership. Rodney Clapp once defined stewardship as "spending money, time, talent, and resources for the service and praise of God." Practicing stewardship is designed to help us understand our discipleship to the Lord and His work for us. With the myriad of programs and roles of student life professionals in campus life, there are hundreds of opportunities annually to integrate this "missing education" in student life programming.

**Koinonia: You've said you feel emerging Christian student leaders are at risk today of missing opportunities to integrate career and calling. How so?**

**Preissler:** Student life professionals are some of the most influential people in student’s collegiate years. If both professionals and faculty don’t partner on educational initiatives to teach students about the role of Christian leadership and ministry in the nonprofit sector, students will graduate without the knowledge and skills to lead effectively. Here’s a prime example of how the lack of teaching on stewardship is hurting student’s potential to rise to Christian leadership we hope for.

Today, 90% of students will have one or more consumer credit cards before the 2nd semester of their freshman year of college. 20% of college students report they don’t know how much they accumulate in consumer credit debt, nor how compound interest affects long-term debt. Gambling on the internet is growing faster among college students than in any other segment of the U.S. population. Christian planned giving experts tell us that in the next 15 years, Christians can expect the largest transfers of family wealth ever on record; somewhere between 10 and 13 trillion dollars. Without education on stewardship principles our student leaders will increase in their debt accumulation and not understand how to steward entrusted family resources for God’s Kingdom work in the future.

**Koinonia: If you could recommend teaching resources student life professionals could use to integrate into programs, classes, or dorm groups or studies, what would a few resources be?**

**Preissler:** I like the small group study books and resources provided by Crown Ministries in Longwood, Florida. A number of colleges have implemented their small group studies with student leaders turning out amazing results. The people at Larry Burkett’s ministry, Christian Financial Concepts, are also putting out some incredible resources for individuals, dating couples, young marrieds, and leaders. For student leaders interested in careers in nonprofit ministry leadership, I would also recommend contacting the Christian Stewardship Association for cassette tapes of past conference presentations as well as the Christian Management Association. I believe both associations offer a very low cost student rate for their national conferences as well.

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**Reply to an Idealistic Job-Searcher**

By Dana Alexander

The exchange reproduced below is real. It also embodies the kinds of encounters I have had with a distinct sort of student or alumnus, getting ready to launch out into a highly idealistic search for employment. For you Myers-Briggs aficionados, these individuals are typically the INFP or ENFP types, with a deep commitment to change the world for better, but with the accompanying difficulty in putting wings to their dreams. They are expert at generating possibilities and vision, but struggle with details, focus, and closure. They often have a vital faith in God, and a commendable servant’s heart.

While it is probably a given their employment pathway will be circuitous, with many twists and turns (not the "straight line" of many other types), I have found that there are a few principles that can help them in their journey. I hope my reply to Juanita may give you some ideas as you encounter them as well.

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Dear Mr. Alexander:

Hello, my name is Juanita. Thank you for calling me back and giving me your e-mail address. Let me introduce myself. I graduated in 1997 with a degree in International Studies and Social Sciences. I am currently studying French and some other classes at a junior college while holding two waitress jobs.

What I seek fromm you is what every senior desires: help in finding a career. I feel strongly that God is calling me to live overseas and to work with the poor in the third world. However, I am not exactly sure what I am to do and I am not really sure how to go about finding out. If I am to go into missions, I would want to join the mission agency my parents work for. But they will not allow me to go overseas until my college loans are paid off, which will take several years, and I feel a greater urgency. I was looking at non-profit cor-

Continued on page 12
Reply to an Idealistic Job-Searcher

Juanita,

I would like to help the people so that they would be able to help themselves, like the Peace Corps kind of stuff, but I don't know if I want to be related to the US government. I don't feel called to become a doctor, and I don't have a background in agriculture at all. United Nations organizations require a lifetime of experience. I don't know whether I should go on for higher education. I think I am looking for an organization which is large enough to get funding and get things done, but small enough that I would be able to grow with the company. I don't know what types for jobs I can reasonable expect to get based on my degree.

If you could give me some advice and/or resources, I would appreciate it.

Thank you for your time,

Juanita

Dear Juanita:

You may have your work cut out for you. You are really at the beginning of the exploration process and that can be frustrating when you are looking for closure. Your profile of interests and motivations is one I frequently run into with both students and graduates: a heart for people, an interest in missions, and a desire to live in another country. Finding a place to realize all that is not easy, especially for one without a lot of experience or expertise to offer, which, as with you, is often the case. But, here are some thoughts that I hope will help:

1) First and foremost, you need to find people who are doing what you would like to do, and get as much information from them as you can. In person is best, but it may have to be done over the telephone. Ask them how they got where they are, what kind of education and training they have, what opportunities are there and what they are like, what might they do differently if they had to do it over, etc.

Not only will this help you flesh out your goals, but you also will have made a contact that could be very helpful now or in the future. Let me emphasize this: YOU NEED TO TALK TO MANY, MANY PEOPLE. It is the only way. Looking at lists of organizations or reading articles won't do it. One of the things you may find out is that there are actually people doing exactly what you want to do, or that they are so few and far between as to be unrealistic to pursue. You may also find that there are many steps involved, steps that may require months or even years before you end up where you want to be. I'm sure this is not news to you, but money will no doubt be a real issue. Pay tends to be very low or non-existent for the kind of work you describe, or you may have to raise your own support, as your parents have to do.

How do you find these people? First, think of people who work for appropriate organizations, if you know any. Think of those who know people in this kind of work (e.g. college chaplain, leadership director, people at the mission agency of your parents, etc.) Think of people who know lots of people, such as extended family, pastors, or denominational leaders. Talk with the alumni department here; there have to be alumni doing this kind of thing and they would make excellent contacts. You get the idea?

2) Surf the Internet. I have been amazed at the staggering amount of information regarding just about anything that I can access through the Internet. Most organizations and ministries have websites that can be invaluable (and time saving) in seeing if they really are what you are seeking.

3) Think about doing an internship, whether it is a formal or informal one. This can be a great way “into” an organization or field that would be impossible to simply go and find employment in. It would give you both experience and entree. Check organizational websites for information on internships, the Peterson’s Guides to Internships, or just plug “internship” into an internet search engine and see what you get.

In a way, you have to think of this process as one similar to writing a huge research paper, or better yet, an in-depth article for a newspaper, with lots of quotes from experts and people in the field. Through that process, you will find your vision getting clearer and more focused, which is one of the things you need right now, and along with that the steps you will need to take will become apparent as well. Your question about higher education will also be answered because the experts will tell you if that would be a good or necessary move. And when all is said and done, you may find your research taking you in a totally unexpected direction!

I hope this doesn’t discourage you or seem too daunting. I’m afraid it’s the only way to get where you want to go, and as you well know, God is with you every step of the way. If I can be of more help, please let me know.

Sincerely,

Dana Alexander, Director
Career and Life Planning

Dana Alexander is the Director of Career and Life Planning at Westmont College. His conversational writing style in directing students about career issues was captured recently in an article on graduate school planning, published by The Wall Street Journal in Managing Your Career.
1999 • ACSD

Executive Committee Ballot

RETURN BY
May 10, 1999
FOR THE POSITION OF PRESIDENT-ELECT

Judy Hiebert  
Vice President of Student Development

College/University:  
Tabor College, Hillsboro, KS

Education:  
MS in Counseling Education, Emporia University

Experience:  
Student Development (20 years of service as Director of Learning Center, Career Services, Director of Counseling, Associate Dean, and 4 years as Vice President)  
High school teaching and coaching (6 years)

ACSD Involvement:  
Member since 1984.  

Goals for the Position:  
To be an officer in ACSD is like “standing on the shoulders of giants” (Sir Isaac Newton). I will strive to be visionary, encouraging, and always use scripture as my foundation. My goal would be to continue the rich heritage of ACSD that has so richly blessed me.

Vision for ACSD:  
As Student Development Professionals we have opportunities to teach, reprove, train, and equip college students to be salt and light in the world. ACSD has a rich history of encouraging and equipping professionals. My hope is that as we face a rapidly changing new century, we remain steadfast to our mission.

Doug Wilcoxson  
Vice President for Student Affairs

College/University:  
LeTourneau University, Longview, TX

Education:  
BS – Grace College, Indiana.  
Communication, Education, Psychology  
MA – Ball State University, Indiana.  
Student Personnel Administration  
In progress: PhD – University of North Texas, Higher Education

Experience:  
Admissions Representative, Grace College. 4 years  
Career Development and Academic Advising, Grace College. 2 years  
Associate Dean of Students, Greenville College. 1 year  
Dean of Students, Greenville College. 5 years  
Vice President for Student Affairs, LeTourneau University. 2 years

ACSD Involvement:  
Years of membership: 10  
Leadership & Presentations: Regional Representative, Student Academic Advising, Peer Advising

Goals for the Position:  
If elected president, I would continue the effective use of the existing officer and conference structure. As President, I would lead the Association in developing the following two areas which are my passion: 1) identifying ways to maximize the kingdom work of equipping students to be salt and light in their chosen vocations, Ephesians 4:12-13; and 2) identifying ways to shape the campus learning environment by teaming with faculty.

Vision for ACSD:  
To remain faithful in pursuing Jesus Christ so that our role in God’s earthly kingdom is clear.

To continue to encourage educators for the work of equipping students to be salt and light in a world that God passionately loves and desires to minister.

To expand opportunities for professional stimulation and research.

Ron L. Coffey  
Associate Dean of Student Development

College/University:  
Huntington, College, IN

Education:  
BS, Business Administration, Huntington College  
MA, Student Personnel, Ball State University

Experience:  
Resident Director, Fort Wayne Bible College. 3 years  
Associate Dean, Huntington College. 13 years

ACSD Involvement:  
Years of membership: 16  
Leadership & Presentations: member of New professionals Task Force; one of the founding members of CoCCA; led and co-led workshops in Student Activities and Residential Life.

Goals for the Position:  
I feel that I am a vital part of maintaining the sense of heritage of any organization is closely linked to the quality and regularity of record keeping. It would be my goal to ensure that such important documentation is well kept and cared for. As a member of the ACSD Executive Committee it would be a goal to represent, to the best of my ability, the concerns and issues of the membership of ACSD.

Vision for ACSD:  
My hope for ACSD is that it continue to provide a place where Christian Student Development professionals can make valued interpersonal connections with one another. Furthermore, it is important that ACSD continue to encourage more research and discovery related to what students learn as a result of their interaction with Student Development practitioners and programs.
ION OF SECRETARY

Joe M.
Gonzales, Jr.
Assistant Dean
of Students

College/University:
Moody Bible Institute, Chicago, IL

Education:
BA, Moody Bible Institute, International Ministries, 1986
MEd, Loyola University, College Student Personnel

Experience:
Resident Assistant, Moody Bible Institute. 2 years
Residence Hall Director, Moody Bible Institute. 4 years
Assistant Dean of Students, Moody Bible Institute. 6 years

ACSD Involvement:
Years of membership: 12 years
Leadership and Presentations:
Presentation at ACSD Regional Conference:
Headed the planning committee for the 1994 ACSD Regional Conference in Chicago.

Goals for the Position:
As the Secretary of ACSD, my primary focus would be to furnish accurate and concise minutes to the executive committee members and members at large. My goal would be to work with the regional directors to explore creative regional activities to stimulate their current membership and to pique the interest of future members.

Vision for ACSD:
I see ACSD as a storage house of resources primarily divided into a strong reservoir of knowledge and a well of spiritual refreshment. My desire is to see ACSD cast a vision where the acquisition of knowledge, as important as this is, is subservient to the implementation of knowledge as part of the process of our sanctification. In other words, as we walk in the imago dei that we use our gained knowledge to encourage and inspire one another to professional excellence and spiritual mentoring of our selves, our students, and new professionals in the field.

1998 • ACSD
Executive Committee Ballot

Cast your vote today! Simply tear out the ballot and add postage then drop in the mail by May 10, 1999.

FOR THE POSITION OF PRESIDENT-ELECT
☐ Judy Hiebert
☐ Doug Wilcoxson

FOR THE POSITION OF SECRETARY
☐ Ron L. Coffey
☐ Joe M. Gonzales, Jr.

RETURN BY May 10, 1999
Over the past few weeks I’ve been involved in an exercise I could never have imagined even three years ago—I’m designing my first web-based course for delivery this summer to graduate students in Haiti and the Dominican Republic. Most of the students will be missionaries or others involved in Christian ministry of some kind. As excited as I am about the possibilities of teaching students I’ve never met through a medium I’ve hardly used, I am equally apprehensive about how this will all turn out. How can I provide support and challenge to these “non-traditional” students? How can I replicate the dynamic of classroom interaction? How can I assure quality in the delivery of the course? How can I be certain that students will achieve the intended outcomes?

Our society and its institutions are changing at a thundering pace. Just as web-based course and program delivery were hard to imagine only a few short years ago, the horizon is filled with innovations and changes that are difficult to imagine today. These changes will affect the very design and delivery of every facet of higher education—including student development programs and services.

The American College Personnel Association (ACPA) began an effort last year to analyze the trends in higher education and to specifically explore how these trends will affect student affairs practice. The project is under the direction of Dr. Cynthia Johnson of California State University, Long Beach, and was undertaken by ACPA’s senior scholars. Their work can be very helpful in our discussions regarding how we, as Christians, understand and perform our work as student affairs professionals.¹

Last year, in preparation for the ACSD annual conference, I surveyed 93 chief student affairs officers (CSAO’s) of Christian colleges and universities regarding the future of student affairs practice within their institutions. The results of this study, in concert with ACPA’s Trends Analysis Project, form the basis of this article.

Greatest Concerns

When asked to identify their greatest concerns for the future, three issues dominated the responses of the CSAO’s in the study: the changing nature of college students, the competition for resources, and confusion over mission and purpose.

Many of the CSAO’s in the study expressed great concerns about the changes in the kinds of students enrolling in their institutions and what this means for the future if the trend continues. They expressed great concern about the emotional, academic, psychological, and spiritual needs of students; the diversity of student populations (residential-commuter; traditional-nontraditional, majority-minority); and the sense of entitlement and narcissism present in many students. As one dean wrote, “The increasing baggage students come with creates more opportunities for us to respond, but will we be ready or able to respond? The needs may be growing faster than our support capabilities.”

CSAO’s were also concerned about issues of mission and purpose. They wrote about their fear of losing their spiritual focus, losing a sense of community on their campuses, becoming “too professional and technical” and losing their emphasis on community and personal relationships. Many indicated that there is a lack of understanding of the value of student affairs by faculty members and administrators and more than a few expressed their concerns about expanding into distance education and other non-traditional programs. As one dean said, “The work done in our area is not seen as truly complementary to the academic mandate of the university. The professors have seen themselves as educators of the total person for so long that they don’t always seem to realize how crucial it is today for student affairs to be a part of this goal with them.”

In light of this study and the work of ACPA’s Trends Analysis Project, I would like to briefly address five issues which have great potential for affecting the nature of student affairs practice in the

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Beyond the Horizon: Student Affairs Practice in the 21st Century

coming century: technology, diversity and access, teaching and learning, resources, and accountability.

Technology
There is no question that the technological revolution is having a profound effect on higher education. In the classroom, students and teachers interact through desktop groupware conferencing; large classes are downsized through guided discussion software and campus computer network applications; courses utilize web pages and chat rooms to disseminate information and facilitate discussion; traditional classrooms are being enhanced with computer networks to project anything from PowerPoint presentations to videos to web sites; virtual classrooms are being created using one-way and two-way audio-visual links.

Outside the classroom, students visit our campuses, obtain admissions information, apply for admission, receive academic advising, and register for classes without ever setting foot on campus. Once they arrive, students come to our campuses expecting computer accessibility in every facet of their lives—from the computer lab to the residence hall room to the library. Students are virtually connected to virtually everyone, on campus and throughout the world. Computers are used for information retrieval, course preparation and delivery, reading assignments, entertainment, chat rooms, web pages, and social communication. Students function within circles of friends who may physically be located anywhere in the world.

Increasingly, students are accessing courses and entire academic programs without ever setting foot on a college campus. Virtual courses, virtual programs, and even entire virtual universitites are in place and in design. The necessity of students, faculty members, and administrators to be in close proximity in terms of time and space is a fast disappearing proposition.

These changes are forcing student affairs professionals to "let go" of our control of time and space delivery of programs and services. Creative thinking is needed to find ways to promote whole person development in an asynchronous learning environment. Just because we no longer have control over the time and place of our interventions does not mean that students are no longer in need of becoming whole, complete, and integral human beings.

In the CSAO study, a majority (56%) indicated that it is likely that their institution will offer more student services via technology in the foreseeable future; an overwhelming 95% indicated that the library of their institution will dramatically increase technological offerings; and nearly 20% of these respondents indicate that in the foreseeable future it is likely that most of their academic programs will be delivered in non-traditional ways.

The impact of the technological revolution on the development of students as whole persons is uncharted territory. There is very little research on the effect of the electronic age in higher education, but this isn't slowing anyone down. Decision-makers in most institutions are hard at work addressing ways to "keep up" with the rapid changes in technology. Student affairs professionals must participate in this dialogue, or others will decide for us.

What should we be concerned about?

- We must understand that traditional program delivery can be enhanced by technology if used wisely. Technology can help us do what we do better.
- If students are not entering our time and space, we must be prepared to enter theirs. Distance learners may come to rely on student affairs practitioners as resources who help them connect with service providers in their local area for counseling, recreation, cultural events, spiritual formation, or even housing and transportation.

- We must find ways to compensate for the lack of peer interaction. The student development literature is full of evidence that peer interactions are very influential in the personal development of college students. Virtual peer groups can be created on-line, and students can be guided into real-life interactions through course assignments and institutional expectations.

- Technology has great potential for creating "haves" and "have nots" among students. We must become concerned about people with limited financial means and limited computer literacy in order to help them access a technologically revolutionized educational environment.

- Ethically and legally, new definitions and understandings are emerging regarding confidentiality, harassment, obscenity, pornography, copyright and "fair use," privacy, search and seizure, and freedom of speech.

- Spiritually, we must address how technology can be used in the creation of community and for spiritual formation. We must develop discernment for differentiating between usefulness and danger and be willing to speak out on these issues within our campus communities.

Diversity and Access
Our college campuses are becoming increasingly diverse. This is good for us because it helps us become globally-minded kingdom people who have the competencies necessary for relating effectively across cultural boundaries, who appreciate different perspectives,
who are better prepared for the workplace, and who are culturally sensitive leaders. The reality of most campuses, however, is that there is much to be done to create campus environments which are hospitable places for new student populations.

In the CSAO study, nearly two-thirds of the respondents (64%) indicated that they think it is likely that the ethnic diversity of their student leaders will increase significantly in the foreseeable future. What are the implications of this change? Are we ready to do what it takes to become inclusive communities?

A dean of students shared with me not long ago this story. He was sitting around the campfire near the end of a two-week wilderness experience for student leaders; the students were singing contemporary Christian songs. He asked the young African-American man sitting next to him why he wasn't singing along. His very honest reply was “These aren’t my songs, man.” Diversifying our campus cultures will require us to learn some new songs—both literally and metaphorically.

As we struggle with the issues associated with the increasing diversity of our institutions, there are several implications for student affairs practitioners to consider:

- As Christian student affairs professionals, we must become more culturally competent ourselves. We must lead the way in developing the knowledge, skills, and attitudes necessary for working effectively with diverse students.
- We must recruit diverse people into our profession—both for graduate preparation and for staff positions.
- We need a deeper understanding of the biblical, legal, and administrative implications of creating more diverse communities.
- We must develop awareness of the specific developmental needs of diverse student populations and be willing to provide the support they need.
- Christian student affairs professionals need to provide a prophetic voice in challenging institutions to develop programs, admissions policies, and strategies that are culturally sensitive.

Teaching and Learning

Administrators, faculty members, and even student affairs professionals are changing in their understandings about how students learn and how the educational environments we create contribute to that learning. The outcomes assessment movement has forced many educators to reconceptualize what goes on both in and outside the classroom and the relationships of those activities to student learning. We have been challenged to think in terms of what we want students to know, what we want them to value and feel, and what we want them to be able to do. Only when we clearly understand desired learning outcomes can we design the experiences which will produce those outcomes.

In the co-curriculum the research literature is full of evidence that certain kinds of environments and experiences contribute to student learning. We know, for example, that student learning is positively related to living on campus, working on campus, having significant interactions with faculty members, having quality relationships with peers, participating in orientation, being involved in campus life, studying abroad, participating in community service, holding leadership positions, tutoring other students, and socializing with people of different racial and ethnic groups.

There is a lot of talk in our profession about creating “seamless” learning environments. If this is truly our goal, we must take seriously our role as educators in teaching relational and personal competence, career and vocational decision-making, spiritual formation, moral and ethical development, leadership skills, and wisdom. These are some of the basics within our curriculum—the co-curriculum. Creating seamlessness in the college experience requires that student affairs practitioners learn to speak a common language with faculty members, collaborate with faculty and work cross-functionally with them, develop an understanding of how student subcultures affect student learning, and focus on systematically changing the way we envision the purpose of our work.

In the CSAO study nearly two-thirds thought that it is somewhat or very likely that student affairs practice and academic delivery will become “seamless” in their institutions in the near future. For this to become a reality the following must happen:

- We must learn to articulate the purposes of our programs and services in terms of student learning. In doing so, we must come to realize that learning involves far more than simply retaining facts and information. It involves emotions, attitudes, feelings, commitments, aspirations, passions, discernment, and wisdom.
- We must develop new assumptions about students, how they learn, what their prior experiences have been, what their ultimate goals are, and what forces in their lives are competing for their time and attention.
- We must tailor the services we offer to specific student populations. We can no longer assume that our campus populations are homogeneous. A one-size-fits-all mentality will not be effective with our students. Nationally, only 40% of all college students fit the “traditional” 18-22 year-old model.
- We must develop new skills for evaluating programs based on what students have actually learned, how they have changed, what new insights they have developed. Assessment is not what we do to satisfy the accrediting associations; it is a way of determining the impact we are having on the lives of students.

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Beyond the Horizon: Student Affairs Practice in the 21st Century

Resources
The costs of higher education during the past decade have increased at a rate significantly higher than inflation. Those outside higher education are highly critical of the waste they perceive and are quick to propose solutions for greater cost efficiency. Those within private higher education are concerned about pricing themselves out of business and learning how to be more efficient with the limited resources we have. Many feel that the solutions to rising costs in education are to be found in strategies that have worked well in the business world. For student services this has resulted in efforts to outsource and downsize, generally based on the belief that bureaucracies are filled with mismanagement, waste, and unnecessary employees.

Gener ally, the CSAO study shows signs of remarkable financial health among most of the reporting institutions. About 90% of CSAO’s expect to see new academic programs and campus buildings added, and about 80% think it likely that their institutions will add graduate programs. On the flip side, however, about one-fourth expect to go for long periods with no salary and to see decreases in the number of student affairs staff members.

This suggests several implications:

• The number of for-profit companies specializing in student services will increase. These may include such services as financial aid management, career counseling, counseling services, health services, and recreational sports.

• Institutions will increasingly outsource some student services, and the cost of in-house delivery of services will be compared against the costs of outsourcing the same services.

• An increasing number of people who enter the student affairs profession will work for companies that provide outsourcing services for universities, and their allegiance will be corporate rather than institutional.

• More student service fees will be converted to user fees in a system where students pay only for the services they use.

• Chief student affairs officers will find more of their time consumed with contract negotiations, preparing bid specifications, and labor disputes with non-institution personnel.

• Some student affairs services will be downsized or merged with academic or business services.

Accountability
Generally speaking, student affairs programs and services have not been at the center of controversy over accountability in higher education. In recent years, however, concerns about student behavior and institutional discrimination have led to increased regulation of higher education—including private, church-related higher education.

In terms of student behavior, media accounts of hate speech issues, drug raids, hazing, cheating, gang rape, binge-drinking deaths, acquaintance rapes, campus violence, and riots by drunken hordes of college students bring a great deal of attention to the national student culture. Even if our campuses have not experienced the extreme manifestations of these behaviors, we have our own versions of all of them.

The Campus Security Act has been one way in which the federal government has tried to force America’s colleges and universities into accountability for student behavior. Now, the privacy of campus disciplinary records is being seriously challenged, and the possibility is very real that these records will be removed from the confidentiality protections of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act. This would, in many states, make disciplinary hearings and disciplinary records open to the public. Recent court challenges have forced public institutions in Georgia and Ohio to release disciplinary information on students even though these records remain confidential under FERPA.

In efforts to eliminate discrimination in higher education the federal government has enacted numerous laws and adopted hundreds of regulations. These include the ones which require all colleges and universities to report the completion rates for athletes by sport and by sex; anti-discrimination laws in admissions and employment; the provisions of Title IX which require equity in athletic programs for men and women. They include the Americans with Disabilities Act, which has opened the doors of higher education for thousands of students with disabilities, and anti-discrimination laws related to age and veteran status. Currently, religious institutions are allowed to discriminate on the basis of religion and are generally allowed exemptions to provisions outlawing discrimination based on sexual orientation. Both of these will be hotly contested legal battles in the coming century.

In American higher education in the coming century there will be increasing pressure on institutions to be more accountable for student behavior, and there will be increasing regulation of higher education (even private, religious higher education) by federal and state governments. This suggests the likelihood that:

• There will be greater media attention into personal lives and on individual student behavior.

• There will be less confidentiality of student records, particularly records concerning disciplinary actions.

• There will be increased litigation from students concerning their right to privacy.
• There will be an increasing reluctance among administrators to collect information on student behavior because of the potential impact of such information on the image of the institution.

• Student affairs practitioners of the next century must be well-versed in the legal and governmental implications of our work—even within the private religious sector.

• Student affairs practitioners must become engaged with the political process. We must work collaboratively with organizations which promote church-state separation and who work within the political process to promote the interests of Christian higher education.

Is There Hope?

In the CSAO survey I asked chief student affairs officers about their hopes for the future in spite of the many changes coming our way. The overwhelming majority spoke about the teamwork and collaboration they were experiencing on their campuses, particularly between academic and student affairs. Person after person used words like unity, partnership, seamlessness, integration, collaboration, respect. The said things like “Our staff has the big picture;” “we have unity with the administration and faculty;” “we are moving toward a seamless curriculum;” “there is openness to collaborative learning among faculty;” “we are receiving increased respect and cooperation from academic affairs.” One dean wrote, “God has always been faithful to meet our needs, and I am sure He is sufficient!” Many expressed similar thoughts.

Preparing ourselves and our institutions for the changes coming our way in technology, diversity, teaching and learning, resources, and accountability is vital. To ignore them is to commit professional malpractice. But it would be spiritual malpractice for us to ignore who we are Christian disciples, why we do what we do as Christian educators, and what we must sacrifice as servant leaders. We must attend to matters of the heart and the spirit and the will. We must commit ourselves to balancing the spiritual, emotional, intellectual, professional, physical, and relational aspects of our lives in ways that honor God and reflect our stewardship of the gifts he has given to us. We must see the students we serve for who they are capable of becoming and not just who they are. We must sacrifice our egos, our hidden agendas, and our drive to control so that we become people of integrity personally and professionally. We must strive to reflect the character of God in every dimension of our personal and professional lives.

As I think about the future of our institutions and our profession, I find great comfort and tremendous hope in these words of Jesus found in the 6th chapter of Matthew’s gospel: “Do not be anxious

then, saying, ‘What shall we eat?’ or ‘What shall we drink?’ or ‘With what shall we clothe ourselves?’ For all these things the Gentiles eagerly seek; for your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things. But seek first His kingdom and His righteousness; and all these things shall be added to you. Therefore do not be anxious for tomorrow; for tomorrow will care for itself.”

It is quite comforting to know that Jesus is Lord...even of the future!

Dennis Sheridan, PhD is Department Chair of the Department of College Student Affairs and Leadership Studies at Azusa Pacific University.

1. I am particularly indebted to Charlie Schroeder, Pat Terenzini, Lee Upright, Greg Blimling, Annette Gibbs, Pat King; Marsha Baxter Magdol and Susan Komives for their individual contributions to this project. Their ideas are woven throughout this article, and they should be duly recognized.

ASSOCIATION FOR CHRISTIANS IN STUDENT DEVELOPMENT Presents the Sixth New Professionals Retreat

To be held immediately prior to the ACSD national conference at BIOLA UNIVERSITY • LA MIRADA, CA • JUNE 4-6, 1999

The New Professionals Retreat is open to individuals with 1-4 years of experience in the field and who are currently employed in Student Development. Enrollment will be limited to provide for a highly interactive format, so be sure to register early! Several experienced professionals will be involved in leading and teaching activities and facilitating small groups. The following comments are from past participants:

“The New Professionals Retreat at ACSD gave me a broader perspective of what the Student Affairs field is about and a greater appreciation for our profession.”

—Greg McCurdy, RD, Evangel University

“'I was at a point this summer where I knew I needed a 'shot in the arm' concerning my job. I really do feel the Lord answered my prayer for refueling with the New Professionals Retreat!”

—Nancy Stewart, Director of Career Center, Southern Nazarene University

More information will be arriving soon. Plan now to arrive early for ACSD and attend the New Professionals Retreat!!

FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT: Judy Hiebert, Tabor College, 316-947-3121
The Embarrassed Believer: Reviving Christian Witness in an Age of Unbelief

By Hugh Hewitt

The Embarrassed Believer: Reviving Christian Witness in an Age of Unbelief


$14.99 US

The act draws sappy grins from patrons nearby, my four year old son singing “Thank you, God,” to the tune of “Frere, Jacques” in the restaurant. And when he doesn’t feel like singing, we pray out-loud. But even if people are looking, they’re probably thinking, “Oh, isn’t that a nice little family, praying before dinner.” I’m sure it doesn’t affront anyone’s belief system, or cause anyone to laugh and scoff at the Jesus-freaks in the corner. I’m sure we’d never be asked to leave the restaurant or move our table because of the disruption. Yet we still sing quietly. And not because paper (which sails listing steeply to port) paper (which sails listing steeply to port)

But Hewitt takes a swipe across the smirking faces of the intellectual elite with his open palm, he bonks us in the head with his fist as he returns his hand to his side. We are the embarrassed believers. Few of us probably escape the classification. Those who think they do ought to think again. The picture on the book jacket is an overturned bushel with a beaming light bursting forth from within. In higher education, just to survive, have I covered this little light of mine to better fit into the conversation about students and how they develop? And at what price?

The Embarrassed Believer is not a difficult book to read yet it will be extraordinarily difficult to dismiss if you reflect on the message. This is more than apologetics. It is well written and easily understood; Hewitt can turn a phrase while hammering home another blow to our well-practiced, defensive separation of the sacred from the secular. Take the following excerpt from chapter 14, “Actually, It’s Not That Hard.”

In the U.S. at the end of the twentieth century it simply does not require courage to witness to one’s belief in Christ. It most certainly does require boldness and the defeat of personal timidity. And there is definitely the risk of embarrassment and even financial loss. But there is zero prospect of physical danger from witnessing because of the witnessing.

Yes, I know. The act of witnessing in a tough neighborhood can be courageous. But it is not because of the witnessing; it’s because of the neighborhood. Delivering groceries is also courageous in such places.. (p. 82)

Student-lifers will find these chapters appealing:

“People are Hungry to Talk about the Deep Things,” and “People Are Embarrassed to Talk about the Deep Things” (I connect them to meaning making in the college student experience); “A Few Kind Words for Hell” (for anyone ever confronted by someone claiming, “All my friends are going to hell; it’ll be one big party, man.”); “The Great Commission Did Not Have an Expiration Date,” and “No One Would Make Up a Religion Like Christianity.”

This would be a great book to read together with a residence life staff, or to start a conversation on with your professional staff, if you are privileged to have such a collection of the faithful with whom you work. It can be an encouragement to those brothers and sisters without the apparent safety of employment within an institution of Christian Higher Ed, for those who struggle non-insulated from the ravages of political correctness and liberal campus, media, and political structures and personas. It has also convicted this reader of the importance of remaining faithful to whom we are called to serve in the sacred and the secular, in the world but not of it.

Hugh Hewitt is starting a conversation with this book. We ought to continue the conversation amongst ourselves, and be brave enough to let the light shine beyond our own conferences and our own familiar groups. He is also challenging each of us that we ought to stand firm even at the cost of appearing silly, or being dismissed as merely unenlightened or even accused as ultra-right-wing and dangerous to society by the "opinion elite" and "chattering class." To describe evil for those who haven’t the courage. To challenge assumptions and badly drawn conclusions. To exhort one another to greater witness in the face of ever growing corruption, selfishness and apathy. With Paul, to say, “I am not ashamed of the
gospel, because it is the power of God for the salvation of everyone who believes: first for the Jew, then for the Gentile’ (Romans 1:16, NIV).

Hewitt warns, “But even if every one of the graduates of Azusa Pacific takes up the mission, and even if every one of the graduates of Gordon, Eastern, Hope, Wheaton, Westmont, and the dozens of other Christian colleges do the same, the tide is still flowing strongly against them. The church as a whole must shake off its lethargy, must recover its voice and boldness” (p.17).

He acknowledges the hope of Christian higher education and in the students who are challenged and led by us, but our own personal commitment needs to be added. And even, perhaps, the added strength of our institutions influencing the academy — shining beacons in a fallen world.

Reviewed by Chris Carlson, Director of Campus Activities and Recreation, Gordon College, Wenham, MA.

When Hope and Fear Collide:
A Portrait of Today’s College Students
By Arthur Levine and Jeannette S. Cureton

188 pages, ISBN# 0-7879-3877-7
$30.95 US/$44.95 Canadian

What are the general characteristics of the college students of the 90s and how do they compare with the students of the 70s and 80s? This question, often central to my thinking, motivated me to read When Hope and Fear Collide: A Portrait of Today’s College Student. Through extensive surveys and campus visits, Arthur Levine and Jeanette Cureton present a general picture of the student of the 90s and offer suggestions on how institutions can their curriculum and educational goals to meet the needs of these students in transition.

The authors begin by establishing that our students have lived in a time of great demographic, economic, technological, and social change. The student population is becoming more diverse and has grown up in a technological revolution that has given them access to information on a global scale. During the 90s, the U.S. lost its status as the financial superpower and went further into debt. The social institutions that have typically nurtured students, such as family, churches and schools, are becoming less powerful. All this to establish that during our students’ lifetimes, many things have been unchangeable and in great flux, leaving them fearful and angry.

Perhaps one of the most intriguing parts of the book is the next section entitled “Flaws, Problems, and Decline” in which we find out what students would identify as the key or significant social and political events of their lifetimes along with how they consider to be their heroes. A picture emerges of a generation that does not have a defining historical moment to which they all cling and looks more to immediate family and friends as role models as opposed to national figures who the students of the 70s and 80s named as influential. It is interesting to note that all the events chosen by the students as significant were in some way negative. The events of their time have fueled a growing mistrust of government and politicians along with many other social institutions.

While the above information seems to present a pessimistic look for the future, research shows our students have great hope and believe their generation can make a difference. But students feel they can have an effect most often at a local level. The chapter concerning campus politics states students are politically involved on campus, but the issues have changed to deal with more on-campus concerns. The students are now looking at their education as consumers and are seeking convenience, quality, service, and cost. While there has been a decline in political student groups on campus, there has been an increase in support and advocacy groups, possibly resulting in an increase in student activism. The level of students involved in demonstrations has risen to the level it was in the 60s with multiculturalism and rising costs of college being the top issues of demonstration.

Multiculturalism is then discussed in detail as it became apparent to the researchers that it was a great source of tension on campuses. Through group interviews, the students were more willing to discuss the details of their sex lives than to discuss the issues surrounding multiculturalism. The authors present four characteristics of current students that seem to contribute to the tensions: preoccupation with differences, mitosis of student groups, segregation on campus, and a growing sense of victimization.

The final two chapters discuss the personal and academic lives of students. The findings state students are coming to college more emotionally damaged than in the past and have learned to cope by retreating from intimacy. Alcohol continues to be the number one source of “fun” with most of the social activities moving off campus. Academically, students continue to go to college to prepare for a career with less value being placed on nonmaterial goals such as forming life goals and learning to get along well with people.

Levine and Cureton conclude their book by suggesting revised goals and curriculum changes to meet the needs of the 90s generation of college students. The

Continued on page 20
And God Created...Sex

By Theresa Hanneman and Sarah Marcum

This past January a Westmont board member and his wife happened to come upon six first year students in an off campus social setting. For fun, they both began to question the students without revealing their own affiliation with the college. Within a few minutes, the board member queried, "So, what is kind of the hub or talk of campus these days?" knowing that a comprehensive set of 14 programs on healthy sexuality was in motion. Without hesitation the students replied in unison "Sex!" Eventually the couple revealed their own affiliation with Westmont, and they all had a good laugh because they were scheduled to talk to the Westmont student body the following night on sexuality, dating and marriage.

This is only one example of how the programming effort launched by the student life department has successfully grabbed our students' interest. What initially began over two years ago at Westmont as a desire to address the growing problem of students' accessing pornography on the Internet, evolved into a full fledged year long intensive programming effort on the topic of healthy sexuality which was titled "And God Created...Sex." In previous years, healthy sexuality was addressed during chapel and a few evening programs in the space of one week. This effort has spaced events throughout the academic year and from the first mention of that "S" word, students have been listening and actively participating in campus wide discussions.

But to back up...Two staff members in the student life department were selected to oversee the programming effort; an individual hired specifically as "Pro-gra mming Specialist," and a Resident Director who could serve as partner and liaison with residence life. Collaboration was a key desired ingredient during the planning. With that in mind, the effort began with a task force consisting of three student life directors, two resident directors, the associate dean of students, three professors, and two students.

Several brainstorming and planning sessions later, an ambitious and comprehensive programming effort of 14 different programs for the 98-99 school year was solidified. A wide range of program offerings was in motion: speakers in chapel, evening presentations in the dorms, panel discussions, video presentations, a survey, a drama/play, a popular movie, and even a fair. Topics included: dating, intimacy, physical boundaries, date rape, sexual abuse, masculinity and femininity, body image, and physical health. A comprehensive brochure was designed with a cover imaginatively designed by an art student.

An enticing mixture of outside speakers, Westmont faculty and staff, and very important students were chosen or offered to be a part of programming. The college was fortunate and blessed by the likes of Dr. Tremper Longman, noted Old Testament scholar; author and co-author; Dr. Dan Allender eminent Christian psychologist and co-author along with Dr. Longman of The Wounded Heart, Bold Love, Intimate Allies; Dr. Greg Spencer author of A Heart for Truth: Taking Your Faith to College; Deborah Taylor, M.F.C.C., author of The Secrets of Eve, a book on female sexuality; and Dr. Michael Lastoria, director of counseling at Houghton College.

Included in the brainstorming and planning sessions as well as surrounding discussions was pointed conversation on the nature of the topic, the make-up of the student population, and the philosophy or ethos of the college. Aside from the scriptural mandate that intercourse is only intended for those who are married, the campus community wrestled with some of the scriptural ambiguities with respect to the appropriateness of different levels of intimacy and questions concerning masturbation. There existed among task force members and administrators a mutual understanding that many aspects of the topic area such as masturbation and questions of morality are ambiguous at best and almost always varied and controversial. Students, given varying stages in development, often desire black and white para-

**Book Reviews**

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When Hope and Fear Collide

Authors believe we should be providing four things through the education process: hope, responsibility, appreciation of differences and preparation for a transitional generation. They then offer five specific elements that should be part of the curriculum, which include the study of communication skills, human heritage, environmental issues, individual roles and values. Through this curriculum, educators would be seeking to "marry intellectual vitality, which is intrinsic to academe, with the practical education students so urgently require today." (pg 165)

My one critique of the book would be to expand the conclusion to offer more detailed and practical advice on how to carry out the recommendations for change in educational goals and curriculum. While the ideas sound good in concept, I think more time could have been spent helping us understand how to make it happen on our campuses. Overall, I found the book fascinating and thought-provoking. The authors presented the myriad of valuable statistics and tables in a readable fashion. While many of the campuses involved in the ACSD organization may vary from those studied, I think parts of the information presented will ring true on every campus. When Hope and Fear Collide offers great insight into the thoughts and behaviors of our students. But read it now, as it will soon be time to learn about the students of the new millennium.

*Reviewed by Julie Degraw, Director of First Year Program, at Westmont College*
meeters. Given these two coexisting realities, it was predicted that there would arise "waves" and controversy. With topics involving clear gray areas, the goal was to provide a spectrum of beliefs and opinions for students to come to their own conclusions. It was deemed that the ideal was to use the waves created by the nature of the topic and students to stimulate and create meaningful dialogue. And as stated in our Student Handbook, a goal of the college is to create an environment where students can feel free to discuss the "non-essential issues." With all of this in mind, the programming itself began...

The official kick-off occurred at the beginning of chapel with each member of the task force reading a program title and date and time. Laughter and cheers rose as the student body heard their familiar RDs, Dean & Associate Dean, professors, staff members and friends read the various titles: "Let's Talk About Sex, HIV and Victoria's Secret: Sex Images and You," "Much Ado About Dating," "To Date or Not to Date?" "How Far is Too Far?" and "The Song of Songs and the Joy of Sex" among others. The student body verbal and facial response said it all: we were offering programs that met them where they live.

With an excitement and anticipation, the first program was launched titled "Let's Talk About Sex." A booth was set up in the student cafeteria where students could and were encouraged to submit anonymously any and all questions they had about sexuality, dating, relationships, and marriage. They were informed that the following week a panel consisting of the college's physician, counselor, religious studies professor, and a student in a long-term healthy relationship, would address their questions in an evening presentation and discussion. At least 100 questions were collected and distributed to the panel members. Over 200 students (on a campus of 1200) attended that first presentation. Topics ranged from how far is too far, medical questions about anatomy and the act of sex itself, to questions about premarital sex, lust, and masturbation in a moral light.

This article is being written now towards the last stretch of programming. The question is begged: What are the results? What has been the feedback? At every program we have required students to fill out evaluation forms eliciting their feedback and comments. The responses have been predictably varied, sometimes heated, and often positive. Of all those turned in, approximately 85% indicated on a question "overall helpfulness to you" which they were to range 1-5, 5 being most helpful, indicated a 3 or higher.

Feedback in the form of comments has ranged from "Awesome speaker! Very helpful!" to (same speaker) "I was absolutely appalled by what the speaker had to say."

This much can be stated with conviction — no other programming effort has drawn as much participation as this. And perhaps no other programming effort has created as much in and outside of classroom dialogue. It is that fact and comments such as the following that make the glory and enticement of the title "And God Created... Sex" fitting: "gave me more questions than answers, but in a good way. Made me think and question my values," "less legalistic than I expected, thanks," "more stuff like this please — this was awesome. I liked the openness and honesty of the speakers. We don't address this enough. It was such a great idea to have a series like this," "liked how honest the guests were. THANKS!!" "The program didn't make me feel guilty but gave me more of a desire to pursue holiness in this area. It was a much more understanding and less judgmental approach."

Sarah Marcum, Programming Specialist, and Theresa Hanneman, Resident Director and Programming Assistant, serve at Westmont College.

Any questions or comments you have regarding this programming effort can be addressed to them through email: smarcum@westmont.edu or thannema@westmont.edu.

**PALM BEACH ATLANTIC COLLEGE HOSTS SOUTHEAST REGION ROUNDTABLE**

Warm weather welcomed southeast region ACSD members on February 19, 1999 at Palm Beach Atlantic College. A small group of Chief Student Affairs Officers met for the one day roundtable held in West Palm Beach, Florida.

Dr. Ken Mahanes, Vice President of the PBA School of Ministry opened the conference with a short devotional. An exchange of printed materials from each college kicked off the conference and assisted in the start of the roundtable discussion. Materials such as campus policies, calendar of events, and student handbooks were shared and discussed.

The Roundtable discussion sparked engaging conversations about such issues as faculty involvement in Residential Halls, student leader salaries, visitation and curfew guidelines, mental health withdrawal policies, sexual identity issues, suspendable violations, alcohol policy, organizational structures, and other student development topics.

At lunch, PBA's Dean of Admissions, Buck James, shared the Mission of PBA and a touch of history as he hosted a campus tour featuring the beautiful view of the intracoastal ocean water adjacent from PBA's main campus.

According to conference attendees, the smaller group size provided an intimate atmosphere allowing for more detailed questions, specific responses, and the freedom to individualize specific topics for each institution represented.

Special thanks to those who attended and all of the Palm Beach Atlantic College staff who helped make the Southeast Region Conference a success.

*Carrie Farley, Coordinator of Student Development, Palm Beach Atlantic College.*
The Ultimate Student Service: Prayer?

I returned to the office from Christmas vacation this year a little more than stressed. Like many family gatherings, this one had turned into a mixture of happy memories, clashing personalities, and ghosts from the past. I returned home to find my apartment flooded with an inch of water from a burst pipe and an "oh-so-timely" bill in my mailbox for my graduate school loans. What a way to start 1999! My body went to the office and my mind stayed behind at home, snug in bed and hiding from all that plagued me in this season of joy.

Fortunately for me, the Lord sent a colleague my way who sensed I was not my usual self. She took me aside and asked how my Christmas had been. This was precisely the question I did not want to answer, and I feared my tearful response would look less than professional. After carefully listening to my plight, her response became a breath of fresh air to my weary soul. She said, "Can I pray for you?" We sat in my office and she lifted a prayer of encouragement and restoration for me that reminded me of two things. First, that the circumstances I found myself in do not determine my worth as a person. She reminded me in her prayer of what I had grown to mean to the people I work with and the students I serve. Secondly, she spoke hope into my heart. I was able to recall that never before had God allowed circumstances to control my life in His place. In five minutes, my friend's prayer had brought me from the dark brink of depression to the lighter side of hope. Now that was more like what I thought 1999 should be like!

Her gift to me kept on giving. Later that same day I welcomed a student into my office that was obviously as stressed-out as I had been. My own response surprised me when I found the strength in my own spirit to say, "Can I pray for you?" God gave me the words of encouragement and hope that this young lady needed to hear, and He answered by restoring His peace to her as well. When she left my office, I realized that my job and my ministry embodies no other purpose than to boldly bring "my students" before His throne, making intercession for them and encouraging them in the faith. I had discovered the ultimate student service: prayer.

Why was I so surprised that a colleague stopped to pray with me and not merely for me? I guess because I am accustomed to the non-stop pace of the profession. Our lives are often as busy as the students’ we seek to mentor and develop are. We mean well when we say, "Sure, I’ll keep you in prayer." I know I have said that many times in sincerity, but there is something a bit too impersonal about that. It lacks the warmth and personal commitment demonstrated in the act of taking a person’s hand and bowing before the Lord together. When my friend did that for me, her sacrifice of five minutes of her valuable time communicated a caring attitude that whispered to me, "You are not alone." It said, "I believe in you and you are important to God and to me." Imagine the encouragement, the healing, and the hope that our prayers with students would provide.

If the mission of Student Development is to encourage and promote the holistic growth and development of students, then it follows that Student Development in Christian institutions of higher learning can not exist with integrity without an emphasis on the spiritual development of students. Most Christian colleges and universities do maintain this emphasis, even if only in the historical traditions and encrypted pages of the Student Handbook. How can we better communicate our commitment to the students’ spiritual development? How is the emphasis we place on spiritual development more evident than in our own lives? Can we pass the test of being a mentor by truly modeling spiritual disciplines? Or is telling our students how God wants their lives to be enough? It is my belief that the practice of prayer with our students would send the message even louder than the words we pray.

Students of today carry heavier and heavier burdens every year. High schools are often war zones fraught with battles of self-esteem, race, social status, individuality and acceptance, peer pressure, and family issues. Students enter our college and university halls nearly defeated and needing assistance with their personal problems and an accurate identity founded in Christ. Will they hear our concerns for their career development or care about racial harmony if we have not first heard their most basic cry for the "peace that passes all understanding?" Our prayers will build the relationships, communicate the caring, and minister the healing they need to grow and mature. Our programs on sexual purity, financial responsibility, building community, and even discipleship will make a dent, but they will not make a difference unless we also help students to first gain victory in their personal lives. Prayer must become our foremost program.

Restoration and preparation. These are the true aims of our profession. We receive students in one condition and expect to graduate them in another. Often they do need to be restored to their faith in God, or even introduced to Him for the first time. Sometimes the restoration needed is a renewed belief in and a healthy love for themselves, or even a peace accord made with the past. We can be God’s agents for change in the lives of our students through prayer. Our prayers will also prepare them as we ask Him to teach them, to fill them with grace and mercy, and to mature them and equip them for His plan for their lives. Prayer is indeed the greatest student service we can provide.

"Is anyone among you suffering? Let him pray. Is anyone cheerful? Let him sing psalms. Is anyone among you sick? Let him call for the elders of the church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord," James 5:13-14 (NKJV, italics mine). Is there a clearer call? If Abraham Maslow were a religious man he would applaud our prayers, as they meet our students at their most basic needs and set the stage for further growth and development. Shall we recommit ourselves to the most budget-friendly, cost-effective student service we can provide? Join me as we pray!

Joanie Massey is the Assistant Director of Student Activities at Palm Beach Atlantic College.
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