

Frontline

VOLUME 7, ISSUE 4

APRIL/MAY 2004

A "GREAT JOB" GOES TO THE SPA CONFERENCE 2004 PLANNING COMMITTEE:

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and
Stephanie King, chair

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Janet Heiss

Undergraduate Student Representative:

Nate Daigle



As I write my final article for the newsletter as SPA President, I have sincerely appreciated the opportunity to serve in this capacity. I appreciate the opportunity to work with an amazing group of people that you elected to represent you and your needs. When I ran for president-elect two years ago, I stated a few goals that I had at that time and as I write my final article as President, I want to give you a progress report on those goals and "tie up some loose ends."

Loose End #1: Last semester we asked you, the membership to respond to a survey regarding the raising of membership dues for SPA. Many of you had some wonderful ideas and suggestions regarding the SPA budget, and we sincerely appreciated all of them. It helped the executive board come to a very educated [decision that we will not be raising dues for the 04-05 academic year and we will continue to look for ways to cut costs.](#) Based on your feedback from the survey [beginning, next year, we will be sending you the newsletter electronically.](#) We all agreed that hard copy is nice, but financially it makes

sense to eliminate that expense.

Loose End #2: The SPA Exchange Program was established several years ago to provide an opportunity for student services staff to "shadow" another staff member to gain a better understanding of other operations and programs. Part of the challenge with the program was that the "exchange" was suppose to occur in February, which for some of our offices isn't necessarily a good time to get a true "experience." We also noticed that participants registered for the program, but for various reasons the exchange did not take place. What you will see in the coming months, is a Web-based program where you can shadow a department when it is convenient for you and provides a more worthwhile experience. For example, ever wonder how SOAR works? Summer is probably the best time to "shadow" that program. How about sorority recruitment? Early fall would be the ideal time to truly "experience" how that process takes place. [With a Web-based program, we are hopeful that members can pick programs that interest them at a time that is convenient and meaningful.](#) [Watch for more details this](#)

[spring.](#)

Lastly, Loose End #3: It was my hope to develop a relationship with the Educational Administration Department, and although I did not fulfill all of my goals in this area, I do feel that the organization has made some progress in this area. Our graduate student representative, Janet Heiss, has assisted in keeping us informed from a student's perspective, and we became more intentional in our communication with the students currently in the program. For this year's conference, we had over ten graduate students attend, asked professors in the department to lead sessions, and had two graduate students, Consuelo Contreras and Divya Malik Gupta, present a session on current research in the field. Their handout, if you are interested, can be found on our Web site. [There is still more work that can and should be done in cultivating the relationship between SPA and the Educational Administration Department,](#) and it is my hope that the organization continues to move in that direction.

Final Message from the President: Tying Up Loose Ends...

In closing, one final quote from Katherine Meyer Graham: "To love what you do and feel that it matters—how could anything be more fun?" Thank you for the fun and the wonderful opportunity to serve. Renee Alfano, SPA President

STUDENTS EXPERIENCE ALTERNATIVE SPRING BREAK

By Stephanie King

Each year, while hundreds of UW-Madison students take advantage of spring break on a sunny beach or head home for some R & R, a few hundred make a decision to seek a different path. Instead, these students choose an alternative break. These educational service trips send dozens of small groups of students to communities all over the country to do positive and productive work for nonprofits and other organizations in need.

"These students want spring break to count," said Sarah Hissom, program advisor for the Wisconsin Union Directorate (WUD) Alternative Breaks program. "They represent a wide variety of majors, ages, interests, but what they all have in common is that they value their time, and they value service."

This year, the WUD Alternative Breaks committee, led by student and director Dave Ponce, organized nine trips to New York, Texas, Boston, the Florida Everglades, New Orleans, South Dakota, Washington, D.C., Arizona and Kentucky. The demand for placement was extremely high with 161 applicants and just 90 positions to fill. Students operated using a shared leadership model as they worked with immigrants in New York preparing for citizenship tests, built homes and offered advocacy for migrant workers in Texas, participated in environmental projects in Arizona's Coronado Forest and in the Florida Everglades. Other organizations, such as Hillel, Habitat for Humanity, Chadbourne Residential College and St. Paul's University Catholic Center also planned trips for

"It made me think about my privileges and I think every student should take advantage of this!"

UW students.

Most WUD alternative breaks range in cost from \$130 - \$190, with approximately 25 percent of accepted applicants receiving a partial scholarship. Students were also encouraged to not only participate but to reflect and bring their experience back to the campus community.

"This unique opportunity has transformed me," said a returner from a previous alternative break. "This was a pivotal moment in my college career that gave me real-world experience. It was a chance to step outside of my comfort zone, take action and really think about my privileges and how I want to take responsibility for the rest of my life. I think every student should take advantage of this!"

SPA Spotlight

STEVE AMUDSON – Director, Campus Information & Visitor Center



Steve Amudson
Director
Campus Information
& Visitor Center

What is your idea of perfect happiness?

Sitting on a remote tropical beach with my wife and having a cold beverage of choice while we watch our twin boys play in the ocean.

Which talent would you most like to have?

The ability to hit a golf ball long and straight on a consistent basis – like Tiger Woods.

What is it that you most dislike?

People not returning phone calls and emails.

Who are your heroes?

My parents for all of their love and support and my twin boys who were born prematurely but refused to give up – by the way, they're both doing great!

What is your most treasured possession?

The men I probably think my answer is corny, but the women may appreciate it – my wedding ring. I don't know

where I would be without her – we've been through a lot together.

What is your most prominent characteristic?

This is a tough question, but I would have to say my ability to communicate effectively on all levels.

What is your motto?

Treat people how you would like to be treated.

What turns you on creatively, spiritually, or emotionally?

Keeping things in perspective – knowing there are less fortunate people that would love to have my worst days.

What is the quality you most like in a person?

I like a person who has a "can do attitude."

What is the trait you most deplore in others?

People that continually make excuses for not getting jobs done.

What profession other than your own would you like to attempt?

Becoming a physician – it would be gratifying to professionally help people both physically and emotionally.

What profession would you not like to do?

Financial Planner – playing with other's financial livelihoods would be too stressful.

What do you consider your greatest achievement?

Besides my exciting new career at the CIVC and various athletic accomplishments – my family.



REFLECTIONS

by guest contributor: Phillip R. Certain, Dean of Letters & Science

I was almost 22 years old in 1965 when I first set foot on the University of Wisconsin campus as a beginning graduate student. I will be nearly 61 when I retire as dean of the College of Letters and Science and as a faculty member in the chemistry department. It has been a real privilege to be part of this fine university for so long.

I entered this university as a student, and students have always been an important part of my life. As a TA during my first year, I remember the student who broke down in tears during an evening chemistry exam. When I approached him, he told me that he couldn't answer the questions. He was valedictorian of his small high school class and had never failed before. I remembered him when we set up the Wisconsin Emerging Scholars calculus program,

partly targeted toward students from rural Wisconsin zip codes.

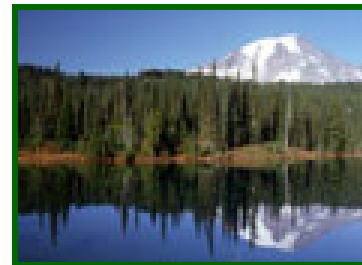
Later, when I was on the faculty, I remember when I served on both the Letters and Science Appeals Committee, for students who had been dropped from school for poor academic performance, and the Phi Beta Kappa Election Committee. The contrast between the two groups of students was breathtaking, and I remember most vividly some of the heart-wrenching appeals — such as the student athlete who flunked out after one semester and faced returning to a drug-infested neighborhood. There is more to the university than going to class and studying!

I remember the student who was making the highest grade in my introductory chemistry class. When I asked her how she would

use the course, she told me that she wanted to become a physical therapist — actually she wanted to become a doctor, but her high school physics teacher told her that she was too dumb to be a doctor. I was so pleased when she decided to strive for her first goal, and when she graduated from the UW Medical School.

I remember a student advisee who had taken a small freshman honors class in economics. When I asked him what value it had beyond the class itself, he told me that it made him much more willing to approach the faculty in the large lecture classes. He is the reason I have advocated for small classes for first-year students for over 15 years.

I remember particularly Charles Holley and Solomon Ashby, the co-chairs of the Black Student Union in



1987, whose intelligent leadership gave the campus a new way to look at issues of race and discrimination and neglect. They were “just students” but they taught me so much, and literally changed the course of my life.

These few stories are not new or strange to members of the Student Personnel Association. These are the sort of student interactions that give your jobs substance and meaning. I want to express my gratitude to you for all you do to make UW-Madison a human and a humane place to study and work. Thanks!

Dean Certain will retire in June 2004.

Have You “Claimed” Your Education?

By Janet Heiss

In class recently, someone posed the question of when we have “claimed” our own education. I was surprised when I realized that I have typically claimed my education when I wasn't involved in a formal education setting. The two years that I took away from school between college and graduate school were some of the most profound experiences yet. I believe that especially about the year I spent working in Germany. I had more free time than ever before to read books, hang out in cafes, and reflect on my life and what I read and experienced.

As a child I loved to read for fun. I don't think I recognized at that time the manditoriness of school. I didn't see school as a means to an end, rather as a time to see my friends and do science experiments or art projects. As I grew up though, life became more hectic, and learning has taken less priority. I have noticed in my life that reflection is one of the first activities to go when my schedule becomes busy.

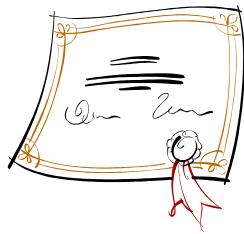
You might wonder how this relates to college students, but I think that students are expected and need to work, intern, join clubs and sports, and many other activities to boost their resume. It seems that there are so many opportunities, and students may feel so busy that they don't take time to reflect on what they're learning in or out of the classroom. This simple question, asking when I have claimed my own education, invited me to think about how I work with students in my current graduate assistantship.

**DON'T FORGET!!!
SPA AWARDS LUNCHEON**

Wednesday
April 21, 2004

11:30am-1:00pm

Gordon Commons



Please plan to join us for fun
and a festive celebration of the work and
people in student affairs!
Invitations will be coming soon...

**PICTURES & QUOTES FROM
SPA CONFERENCE 2004**



*"Great networking opportunities. I
feel more connected to campus."*

*"It looked like it went flawlessly.
Upbeat volunteers, high energy of
participants, humor, knowledge. I
had a great time!"*



*"I really enjoyed the sessions
and meeting new people."*



*"I always enjoy the
small size of the con-
ference. It allows for
meaningful conversa-
tions with campus
partners."*



A
PUBLICATION
OF THE
STUDENT
PERSONNEL
ASSOCIATION
(SPA)

WHAT'S INSIDE:

- FINAL MESSAGE FROM YOUR SPA PRESIDENT
- MEET STEVE AMUDSON

Frontline

FINAL EDITION OF FRONTLINE FOR 03-04. See you next fall!

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Find us on the web @
www.ohrd.wisc.edu/spa

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