NASPA | Student Affairs Partnering with Academic Affairs KC

Newsletter for NASPA SAPAA Knowledge Community

Synergy

February 2015

SAPAA CO-CHAIRS WELCOME

Happy New Year SAPAA Members!

We hope the spring semester is off to a good start for all of you and that the holiday break has left you rejuvenated and excited for the semester to come.

The 2015 Annual Conference is just around the corner. We hope you plan to join your SAPAA colleagues in New Orleans in a few short weeks. SAPAA leadership and members have been busy planning meetings, roundtable discussions, educational sessions and coordinating award selections. We would like to highlight a few of our sponsored activities here, and we encourage you to read this issue of Synergy closely for opportunities to network with other SAPAA members.

As mentioned in the last issue of Synergy, the KC will host a **Business Meeting on Monday, March 23 from 3-5pm** in the Port – Hilton room. Agenda items will include KC accomplishments and goals, presentation of the Promising Practice Award, as well as recognition of specific members of the KC for their service. In addition, many working groups and committees within the KC will break into individual team meetings for members and those who may be interested in joining and becoming active in a particular committee or working group. These meetings also will take place in the **directly after the business meeting** from 4-5pm in the Port – Hilton room (except for the Research & Scholarship Committee which will meet in Starboard – Hilton room)**.**

SAPAA is also proud to sponsor three programs at this year's conference. We hope you will attend and support the following programs:

- **"A New Conceptual Framework for Assessing the Educational Experience of Students with Disability"** – presented by Newl Lipsitz on Tuesday, March 24 from 2:30-3:20pm in 223 Convention Center
- **"Revitalizing Campus Partnerships and Student Presistence through Centralized First Year Advising"** – presented by Emily Horne – date/time/location TBA
- **"Non-Traditional Education: The Importance of Co-Curricular Activities"** – presented by Lindsay McGloon on Monday, March 23 from 1:15-2:05pm in 223 Convention Center

This conference serves as the last one in which we have the honor of serving as the SAPAA co-chairs. We could not be more thankful for the work of the SAPAA leadership team and its active members. SAPAA has much to be proud of and we are happy to have served the KC. After working together on SAPAA for over three years, we are grateful to have had this experience and serve you.

We are proud and excited that at this year's business meeting, Leanna Fenneberg and Marguerite Bonous-Hammarth will officially become your SAPAA Co-Chairs. Both Leanna and Marguerite have accomplished much in their roles as co-chairs of the Research & Scholarship committee and we are eager to work with them this coming year as they assume SAPAA co-chair positions. Please extend your congratulations to both Leanna and Marguerite!

Best wishes!
Shannon Gary & Dan Stypa

SAPAA KC Guide for the 2015 NASPA Annual Conference

Pre-Conferences	
Sunday, March 22, 2015	**Venue/Room**
9:00 a.m. - noon	
Establishing and Sustaining Academic and Student Affairs Partnerships in Support of Student Learning	Convention Center 220
Assessment-Driven Orientation: 5 Key Components for Success	Convention Center 230
1:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.	
L.E.A.D. (Leadership, Education, Achievement & Development) with Courage	Convention Center 220

Educational Sessions	
Monday, March 23, 2015	**Venue/Room**
1:15 p.m. - 2:05 p.m.	
Hired! 8 Ways to Excel in the Interview Process as a Graduate Student	Hilton - Grand Ballroom - A
Sponsored Program (Dual sponsorship with Adult Learners & Students with Children KC) Non-Traditional Education: The Importance of Co-Curricular Activities	Convention Center 223
Understanding and Measuring Undergraduate Career Development: A Theory-to-Practice Conversation	Convention Center 220
2:30 p.m. - 3:20 p.m.	
Bringing Back Field Day: Developing Career-Ready Students through Cross-Campus Collaborations and Employer Engagement	Convention Center R06
3:40 p.m. - 4:30 p.m.	
Demystifying Work-Life Balance: The Power of Positive Psychology for Women	Convention Center R03

Educational Sessions

Monday, March 23, 2015	Venue/Room
Relying on Scholarship to Navigate Student and Academic Affairs Partnership	Hilton - Grand Salon 12

Tuesday, March 24, 2015	Venue/Room
1:15 p.m. - 2:05 p.m.	
Civil Rights for Social Change: Using the Movement in Leadership Education	Hilton - Grand Salon 12
2:30 p.m. - 3:20 p.m.	
Sponsored Program (Dual sponsorship with Disabilities KC) A New Conceptual Framework for Assessing the Educational Experience of Students with Disabilities	Convention Center 223
Hiring with Purpose: Recruiting and Retaining Diverse Staff	Convention Center R03
3:30 p.m. - 4:20 p.m.	
Sponsored Program Revitalizing Campus Partnerships and Student Persistence through Centralized First Year Advising	Convention Center R05

Highlighted Events

Monday, March 23, 2015	Venue/Room
3:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.	
SAPAA KC Business Meeting - open to all	Hilton - Port
4: 00 p.m. - 5:00 p.m.	
SAPAA KC Academic Advising Working Group Meeting	Hilton - Port
SAPAA KC Career Services Working Group Meeting	Hilton - Port
SAPAA KC Communications Committee Meeting	Hilton - Port
SAPAA KC Living Learning Communities Working Group Meeting	Hilton - Port

Highlighted Events

Monday, March 23, 2015	Venue/Room
SAPAA KC Research & Scholarship Committee Meeting	Hilton - Starboard
5:00 p.m. - 6:00 p.m.	
Regional Business Meetings	Convention Center R03-R09
7:00 p.m. - 9:00 p.m.	
NASPA KC Communities Fair	Convention Center Great Hall B&C
9:00 p.m. - 11:00 p.m.	
Regional Receptions	Hilton - Grand Salon (A-D)
Tuesday, March 24, 2015	**Venue/Room**
4:30 p.m. - 5:30 p.m.	
NASPA Annual Business Meeting	Hilton - Grand Ballroom (B)

AWARDS

2015 Promising Practices Award - Building Bridges Mentoring Program,
University of Notre Dame

2015 Promising Practices Honorable Mention - Blue Hen Leadership Program, University of
Delaware

REGIONAL HIGHLIGHT: REGION II

Inclusive Exclusion: Considering Learning Communities and At-Risk Students

By Elizabeth Bracey

Learning communities have been prevalent in recent literature for their innovative approach to helping the modern college student (Smith, et.al., 2006; Tinto, 2003). These communities have been called "key factors" both for sustainability in higher education administration and for helping students acclimate to the college environment (Smith, et.al., 2006; Tinto, 2003). These cohorts are not only implemented during the academic year; others include summer bridge programs in which students whose grades and standardized test scores preclude them from being accepted into a college or university immediately after high school graduation. More recently, universities have implemented programs that allow students to enter as a cohort during their spring semester after taking transferable courses at a community college. These students often are conditionally admitted and, therefore, are considered an "at risk" population. Although college learning communities have proven to be successful, there are many ways in which they may prevent at-risk students from acclimating to the expectations of the university; in particular, the inclusive nature of learning communities may deprive at-risk students of experiences in which they can model their behavior after successful upperclassmen. Since

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students are so influenced by how they understand the culture of college and how they see it modeled, it is imperative to consider how the at-risk population may be affected by some of the current conditions of learning communities and to consider integrating more opportunities for these students to see and experiment with models of successful academic behavior.

The inclusive nature of learning communities creates initial concern about the student's ability to understand the expectations of his/herself in a new academic community. While colleges and universities have their own unique cultures, students' behavior is often influenced by the presumption that there is only one way to approach and navigate academia (Bartholomae, 1986, p. 4). David Bartholomae (1986) calls this influence the necessity for the student to "invent the university" insofar as the student must learn to "speak [the academics']

LIM College Mentor Recruitment Group Process. Photo credit: Casey McKenna

language…and to try on peculiar ways of knowing, selecting, evaluating and concluding and arguing that define the discourse of [the academic] community"(p.4). However, students typically struggle as they learn these tenants of academia because they must "carry the bluff" of the behavior and communication that is expected of them at the college level before they learn how best to approach university expectations (p. 5). According to Nancy Sommers (1992), the culture of the university is one that demands consumption, understanding, and production of difficult and often verbose material. This material is based upon whatever is considered classically academic and as such prevents the university from being a space of actual cultural or academic difference. Essential to both authors' arguments is the notions that students are confronted with various new academic tasks that require them to acclimate to the requirements of higher education, even if they have not fully learned how to assimilate. This requires students to "mimic" or "appropriate" specific behaviors as they learn to adapt them (Bartholomae, 1986, p. 5). In order to learn how to internalize the culture of academia, students must have a clear indication of what to mimic and, perhaps, what to avoid.

2014 Student Leadership Council participating in SLC Benefaction Challenge.

Learning communities for at-risk students, however, may prevent this opportunity and consequently disadvantage students who may need positive role models. Since many learning communities, particularly those for at-risk students, limit the courses that students can take and may require students to take most of their classes together, at-risk students' access to faculty and peers is more limited than a typical college student. For example, one "general studies" cohort at a New Jersey University is prohibited from taking major-specific courses until they prove their proficiency in first-year courses by maintain a GPA of 2.0 or above. On the one hand, these students travel in a cohort of peers who are ostensibly working toward the same goal. On the other hand, these students' experience limits their in-class contact with professors other than those chosen to instruct in the program and it limits their contact with the rest of the student body. In turn, these students are largely prevented from seeing successful college behavior being modeled. Glenn Potts and Brian Schultz (2008) point out that while students thrive in a freshman seminar cohort, they need to have access to faculty and upperclassmen within their specific major in order to avoid being disadvantaged (p. 19). The separation of students from the population of the college and the limited exposure to more mature upperclassmen or major-specific faculty, removes a significant opportunity for students to learn the culture of the community and see it applied successfully (Potts & Schultz, 2008). In his article "Learning Communities can be Cohesive and Divisive, David Jaffee (2004) reinforces this point, stating that because these students are always together, they "have less opportunity to interact with older students, who tend to be more mature and often more academically serious" (para. 7). If students need models of success in college but are restricted to students like those in the aforementioned general studies program who have consistently struggled scholastically, then the university they "create" as they attempt to adapt to the expectations of academia is based upon behaviors that have not been successful. As a result, at-risk students may be forced to model their behaviors mostly after each other, which in this instance may not always be a great benefit.

In order to continue improving college learning communities, advisors and student affairs professionals in higher education must consider the at-risk freshman or transfer student and work to create opportunities for them to reach college-level proficiency without limiting access to resources like

major-specific faculty or advanced student body. This does not mean that students should never travel together as a cohort during their first year experience. Instead, it suggests that students understand acclimation through more than just linked courses and classes together. For instance, current research suggests that living learning communities in which first-year students live together in a residence hall are successful precisely because they integrate the social and academic components of college without necessarily restricting student contact with other models of academic culture (Pike, 1999). These communities allow students to work together in study halls or in classes held in the residence hall but do not move

LIM College Orientation Leaders Training 2014. Photo credit: MT Teloki.

students through a block schedule in which all of their courses are either first-year, major-unspecific courses or courses taken with the same group of students. Moreover, the encouragement for students to participate in "high impact activities" like community or on campus service provides the same opportunity for students to become involved not only in learning from one another but also from students and faculty outside of the first year cohort (Kuh, Kinsie, Schuh, & Whitt, 2005). All of these experiences enable the student to understand the culture and expectations of college for him/herself,

which may minimize the frustration that some students feel as they enter their first year of college. For at-risk students, creating the proper conditions for integration is essential since their prior experience in an academic setting may not have been successful. Ultimately, an awareness of students' "creation of the university" in the structure of learning communities, particularly for at-risk students is essential in order to facilitate successful learning and integration into academic culture.

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LIVING/LEARNING

Living the Learning: It Starts With TLC*

* Themed Learning Communities

By Jes Takla

Themed Learning Communities (TLCs) are residential communities with a co-curricular focus that guide community development and learning within the residence halls. TLCs differ from Living Learning Communities (LLCs) in that they do not have a formal curricular connection (e.g., a linked course). The number of TLCs has increased on U.S. college and university campuses, especially in the past twenty years. This growth is supported by numerous studies in the field of higher education indicating the positive effects that these communities (both LLCs and TLCs) have on college outcomes, such as critical thinking, increased interaction with faculty and peers, increased sense of belonging and satisfaction, and increased openness to diversity and new ideas (Banta, T. W., 2001; Evenbeck, S., & Borden, V. M. H., 2001; Inkelas, K. K., Soldner, M., Longerbeam, S. D., & Leonard, J. B., 2008; Inkelas, K. K., Vogt, K. E., Longerbeam, S. D., Owen, J., & Johnson, D., 2006; Mac Kinnon, J. L., 2006; Pascarella, E. T., & Terenzini, P. T., 1980; Smith, C., & Bath, D., 2006; Spanierman, L. B., Soble, J. R., Mayfield, J. B., Neville, H. A., Aber, M., Khuri, L., & De La Rosa, B., 2013; Stassen, M. L. A., 2003; Tinto, V., 2000; Ward, L., Siegel, M. J., & Davenport, Z., 2012; Wawrzynski, M. R., & Jessup-Anger, J., 2010; Woosely, S. A., & Johnson, N. J., 2006; Woosley, S. A & Shepler, D. K., 2011; Zhao, C., & Kuh, G. D., 2004).

Zhao and Kuh (2004) found strong empirical evidence of the direct impact that learning communities have on student outcomes by integrating "diverse academic and social activities into a meaningful whole … to convert the experiences into authentic learning" (pp. 116-7). Similarly, in a study comparing learning community participants to students in a traditional residence hall

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(TRH), Inkelas, Vogt, Longerbeam, Owen, and Johnson (2006) found, LLC "students were statistically more likely than TRH students to feel competent in their critical thinking skills, application of knowledge abilities, growth in liberal learning, and academic self-confidence" (p. 64). Results of numerous studies have indicated that learning community students are more likely than students living in traditional residence halls to have closer faculty/peer relationships, be more involved, and experience greater academic achievement across institutional types. In a study examining three different institutions, Tinto (2000) found that learning communities had a positive academic and social impact regardless of institutional type. Stassen (2003) inferred that, particularly at large institutions where learning is highly individualistic and

residential communities may be large and potentially alienating, learning communities can serve an important function in creating an integrated academic community.
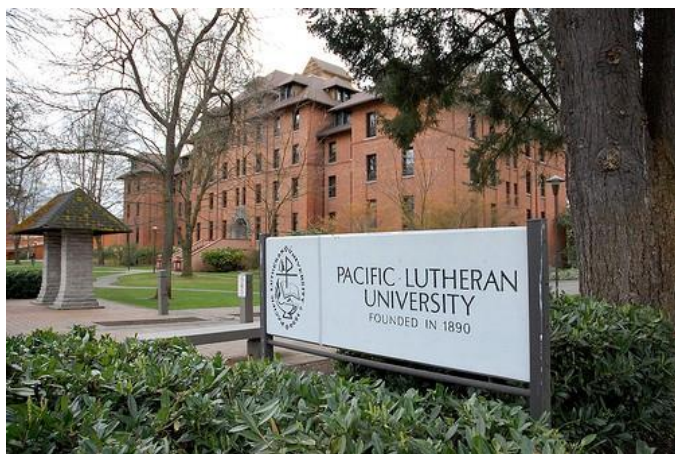
View of Harstad Hall, home to the Harstad Women's Empowerment + Gender Equity community.

While many campuses have established robust Living Learning Community (LLC) structures, other institutions are in the earlier stages of development and may just be introducing new Themed Learning Communities (TLCs) as residential living options. TLCs can be easier to establish than LLCs because often they can be initiated and implemented by a singular department (e.g., Residential Life); even without a formal curricular connection, TLCs can have a positive impact on student outcomes. Mac Kinnon (2006) found, "students in the TLCs performed significantly better academically (as measured by fall-semester cumulative GPAs) than nonparticipants" (p. 4). Organizing hall programming around a theme can build connections with faculty by inviting them to participate in co-curricular planning based on their interest in or relationship to the theme. Similarly, a hall theme that relates to a class topic or area of research encourages faculty to continue curricular conversations outside the classroom in a residence hall.

Pacific Lutheran University (PLU) has a variety of LLCs and TLCs on-campus in various stages of development. Hong International Hall [HIH], established in 2004, was PLU's first TLC. Given the success of this inaugural TLC (as evidenced by PLU data which shows that HIH residents have on average higher GPAs than other residential students from +.24 to +.35, and EBI Resident Assessment data

which shows that HIH residents have greater self-reported satisfaction and learning compared to residents of other halls), PLU sought to expand the TLC opportunities on campus. PLU's Residential Life department has grown seven new communities since 2007, including Social Action & Leadership, First Year Wings, Hinderlie Community for Creative Expression, Harstad Women's Empowerment and Gender Equity community, First in the Family (a first generation student community), the Kreidler Community (for upper division non-traditional, veteran, and commuter students), and Gender Neutral Housing. These communities all began as TLCs (themed wings or buildings), which emerged and grew from student interest and in response to various needs identified on campus.

Hong International Hall Welcome Desk. Photo credit: Jes Takla

Identifying Themed Learning Communities
Developing successful TLCs begins by assessing the needs of one's campus community (including students, faculty, and administrative staff). This can be done in a variety of ways such as reviewing admission and persistence trends, conducting focus groups and/or needs assessment surveys with current students, and collaborating with campus partners to identify emerging themes. Sometimes student affairs professionals may be the individuals recognizing the trend and need for a community (e.g.,

for PLU's First in the Family community, Resident Director Joe Harper Kowalczyk worked with campus partners to identify PLU trends and research student affairs best practices to support the growing first generation student population). In other instances, the drive for the community may come directly from the students (e.g., PLU's Gender Neutral Housing grew out of a collaborative petition from the Associated Students of PLU [ASPLU] and Residence Hall Association [RHA], supported by Residential Life).

Hinderlie Community for Creative Expression at fall 2013 Sound Off Event (annual Welcome Weekend tradition hosted by RHA). Photo credit: John Struzenberg

Partnering Across Campus to Gain Institutional Support
Once TLCs are identified, an integral step in growing them is building stakeholder buy-in through collaboration. In support of the TLCs at PLU, Residential Life has forged collaborative relationships with our Diversity Center, Women's Center, Student Involvement and Leadership, Academic Advising, International Student Services, Wang Center for Global Education, Center for Vocation, Career Connections, Center for Community Engagement and Service, Sustainability Office, Admission, and faculty from myriad departments on-campus, including but not limited to First Year Experience Program, Women and Gender Studies, Sociology, School of Arts and Communication, and Languages and Literatures. These collaborations range from inviting campus partners to participate in singular programs and

events to participating in ongoing TLC Taskforce committees to direct co-curricular development.

The Taskforce committees were designed to include students (who live in the TLC), faculty (with an interest in or teaching concentration related to the TLC theme), and staff (who have roles on-campus relating to the TLC theme) so as to have representation from multiple constituent groups on-campus. Hong International Hall, comprising five language wings and an International Honors (IHON) Program wing, was co-founded by Residential Life with faculty from Languages and Literatures and IHON. The connection with academic affairs and other campus partners continues through the Hong Taskforce (including Hong residents, faculty from each of the languages and IHON, and staff including Residential Life, Admission, International Student Services, and Wang Center for Global Education). Based on the effectiveness of the "Taskforce" model, for 2014-15 Residential Life has developed interdisciplinary Taskforces for Hinderlie Community for Creative Expression and Harstad Women's Empowerment and Gender Equity community.

2014-15 Residence Hall Association with member from Associated Students of PLU (ASPLU). Photo credit: Jes Takla

PLU's Social Action and Leadership (SAL) community was developed in partnership with the Diversity Center in 2007. Since that time, the Resident

Directors and Resident Assistants have reached out to faculty from a diverse array of fields, as well as staff from PLU Sustainability and the Center for Community Engagement and Service, to identify partnerships to strengthen the community. Similarly, the Kreidler Community is a joint endeavor with Student Involvement and Leadership to strengthen programming and resources for non-traditional, transfer, veteran, and commuter students. Harstad Women's Empowerment and Gender Equity community forged partnerships with PLU's Women's Center and the Women's and Gender Studies Program. Identifying key collaborators from other student affairs and academic departments through intentional outreach, often times beginning with programming, can help grow TLCs and move toward development of a shared co-curricular plan.

Two members from 2014-15 Residence Hall Association. Photo credit: Jes Takla

Develop Learning Outcomes, Assess, Document, Repeat
The first step in co-curricular planning is developing specific, measurable Learning Outcomes (LOs) that guide programmatic structure, initiatives, and activities. Formal assessment questions should mirror these LOs to guide TLC growth and improvement. Whether conducting a pre- and post-test of community participants, focus groups during the year, or quick formative assessments through paper and pencil surveys at programs, understanding the impact of programming and other co-curricular endeavors is important to the ongoing development of the community. Intentional documentation of the TLC (i.e., photography, video, and/or artifacts from events, programs, etc.) is integral to complement data reports to share successes as well as provide content for future marketing of the community to prospective, incoming, and continuing students. Assessment is an on-going process and should be continued with regularity to determine if TLC initiatives are successfully accomplishing desired LOs and to inform future program improvements as needed.

Growing TLCs to LLCs
In Fall 2014, Residential Life piloted a course linkage with PLU's PSYC 113 Career and Educational Planning course and the First in the Family community. The recommendation for and initiation of this pilot was informed by best practices identified through student affairs research (Woosley & Shepler, 2011; Ward, et al., 2012). Residential Life is currently in the process of a robust assessment of this linkage, including gathering student feedback (via survey and focus group) and reviewing institutional data that will be collected over the course of the academic year (e.g., GPA, retention). However, initial feedback is encouraging as the instructors of the two PSYC 113 courses in the pilot linkage reported that students were more engaged (including increased peer collaboration, discussions in class, and openness/vulnerability in sharing) than in previous PSYC 113 sections they taught without a residential link.

In Fall 2015 Residential Life and the First Year Experience Program (FYEP) will be piloting course linkages with FYEP Writing 101 courses and Harstad Women's Empowerment and Gender Equity community and Hinderlie Community for Creative Expression; the writing courses will have themes related to gender equity/social justice and creativity/innovation, respectively. These course linkage pilots were co-developed with colleagues from academic affairs (including the faculty Director of FYEP, the Associate Provost for Undergraduate Programs, and Academic Advising) and supported by

sharing student affairs research demonstrating LLC's positive impact on college outcomes (as cited above).

Themed Learning Communities (TLCs), and their further development into formal Living Learning Communities (LLCs), have been shown to augment the educational experience and provide significant learning opportunities outside of the classroom. Developing TLCs on your campus could be the foundation toward building (or enhancing) a robust co-curricular structure to support students living their learning beyond the classroom.

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R&S NOTABLE READS

Promoting Success by Building Community: Supporting the Transition of First Year Students of Color

By Dametraus L. Jaggers

Elizabeth J. Whitt (2005) posited that "high-performing organizations are marked by partnerships, cross-functional collaborations, and responsive units" (p. 2) and suggested that "effective partnerships are among those who have the most contact with students—faculty and student affairs professionals—and fuel the collaborative spirit and positive attitude characterizing these campuses" (p.2). In fall 2013, the Multicultural Mentoring Program at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville, fostered a cross-functional collaboration by introducing a new living and learning community into an existing peer-mentorship program.

Since its inception in 1986, the Multicultural Mentoring Program has played an integral role in the success and retention of students of color. Recent data show that the fall to fall, one year retention rate of first year students of color who participate in the program is 91.8% Feedback from semester surveys and focus groups identified the need to strengthen the academic focus of the peer-mentoring program and to enhance the sense of community among first-year students of color—thus, the idea for a learning community was born. Kuh (2008) identified learning communities as formal programs where groups of students take two or more classes together and categorized learning communities and first-year seminars and experiences as "high-impact practices."

Brownell and Swaner (2009) elaborated further:
> Participants in first-year seminars are more likely to report that their campus is a supportive environment . . . and that learning communities help ease the transition to college. Several studies of underserved students have shown

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> that these communities help students build their identities as learners and give them a sense of belonging on campus. (p.27)

Launched in fall 2014, the Multicultural Mentoring Program's "Connect" Living and Learning Community provides students with a strong support system that also boasts academic enrichment, community-building, and campus engagement opportunities. The community's goals are to:
- Promote academic excellence;
- Encourage community building and interpersonal connections; and
- Enhance student engagement and retention.

Wooten, Hunt, LeDuc, and Poskus (2012) suggested that institutions—while keeping students at the

center of their missions—integrate peer-leadership programs to foster student growth and to support the educational process as a partnership among the various components of the campus community. In addition to being paired with an upper-class mentor to assist with the transition to college, community participants take a first-year seminar course and an English composition course together. On a monthly basis, students can engage in academic and professional development opportunities, network with university alumni and faculty, and develop interpersonal relationships with peers through meaningful social activities.

In its first year, the program received positive feedback about the engagement of LLC participants within the residence hall and throughout the college campus. Further, the program has been applauded by students for the strong sense of community and family bond that it has fostered among LLC community participants.

In *The Student Learning Imperative*, the American College Personnel Association stated that "student affairs professionals [should] attempt to make 'seamless' what are often perceived by students to be disjointed, unconnected experiences by bridging organizational boundaries and forging collaborative partnerships with the faculty and others to enhance student learning" (ACPA, 1997, p. 3).

In our efforts to enhance the experience of students in our peer mentoring program, we sought a seamless approach that would generate collaboration across university departments. In fall 2013, we began to develop a framework for the Multicultural Mentoring Program's "Connect" Living and Learning Community (LLC). Periodic meetings with colleagues in University Housing provided us with an opportunity to discuss potential challenges that might arise once the community was launched. Further, we were able to identify the methods that would be used to recruit students into the community and how we might proceed if the community did not reach the pilot target of 50 students. Consistent communication with the English department, First Year Studies Office, and the Registrar's Office helped to ensure that students registered for the right courses in a timely fashion.

Careful thought went into how resident assistants would interact with the four peer mentors who would on the floor with the LLC participants. We refer to these mentors as "peer mentors-in-residence." Peer mentors live on the floor with community participants. The Office of Multicultural Student Life partnered with University Housing staff to provide specialized training that specified the individual responsibilities of peer mentors-in-residence and the resident assistant. We also used this training as an opportunity to build community among the residence hall director, the resident assistant, and the four peer mentors-in-residence. Our emphasis on holistic community building even came into play as we planned a post orientation event for all LLC participants to take part in, which we scheduled prior to the start of classes. The event emphasized community expectations, relationship building, and social engagement among the 50 first-year participants, the four peer mentors-in-residence, and the resident assistant. Collaboration, cross-functionality, and responsiveness have been critical components of the coordination, operation, and implementation of this new initiative. The Multicultural Mentoring Program's "Connect" Living and Learning Community has helped students engaged with the larger campus community while also having a smaller community of peers to whom they can relate on various levels. Through integrative assessment practices and student data tracking we will evaluate the impact of continued partnerships across student affairs and academic affairs units on this living and learning community—particularly in regard to student retention and graduation—for decades to come. To learn more about our mentoring program and the living and learning community, visit our departmental webpage at multicultural.utk.edu.

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SYNERGY NEWSLETTER ARTICLE SUBMISSION

Format Guidelines

Manuscripts must be clear and concise, with a well-organized presentation of ideas. The *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association, Sixth Edition* (2009) should be followed for general style guidelines and reference formatting.

- 12 point font, 1 inch margins
- Single space with double space between paragraphs
- No more than 3-4 pages with references
- Please include author information
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    o A brief 2-3 sentence personal/professional bio
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Please send photos and/or accompanying artwork for articles as high resolution .jpg files with suggested captions identifying relevant individuals, institutions and/or programs in attached WORD documents

- Authors are responsible for the accuracy of all references, quotations, tables, and figures. Please make every effort to ensure that such items are complete and correct.

- Material should be submitted electronically only by the due dates below to Editor, Mitchell Levy at mlevy@atlantic.edu and Elizabeth Bracey at Elizabeth.bracey@limcollege.edu.

April issue on Service Learning/Civic Engagement

text due by Monday, March 9, 2015.

WHAT IS SAPAA

The Student Affairs Partnering with Academic Affairs (SAPAA) Knowledge Community provides a forum for interaction among student affairs professionals serving in an academic unit within their institutions and/or those who are interested in the collaboration between student and academic affairs and how this collaboration can continue and thrive in the future. It also promotes the presentation of programs and workshops at regional and national conferences on issues related to the connection between student affairs and academic affairs. In doing so the SAPAA Knowledge Community serves to enhance the professional development of the person working in this area as well as to provide an opportunity for others to become aware of, and more familiar with, these issues. Finally, the SAPAA Knowledge Community encourages research and scholarly publication in the area of collaboration between academic and student affairs as well as promising practices at institutions.

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