

## Jason C. Wiegand

I have been active in NACADA since joining in the spring of 2012, when I received a Region 6 Scholarship to attend the conference in Minneapolis, MN. This was my first conference experience with NACADA and funding to attend the conference was critical at that time. My original advising mentor at Iowa State University, Dr. Luiza Dreasher, was the individual who influenced me to join. She described it as “a very nurturing organization with an international focus” that was “free of primadonnas.” I was delighted to experience this firsthand in Minneapolis, where my expectations were surpassed and my interest in an advising career was confirmed. I left the conference feeling energized and developed an understanding of what my contribution to the advising community could be.

We are blessed with a dedicated and diverse community of advising professionals in Region 6. Unfortunately a number of our members are unable to attend regional and annual conferences, whether due to timing, a lack of funding, or even a lack of awareness that NACADA exists. We need to invest added energy and imagination in order to reach those members and institutions that are without the means to attend events. How else might they benefit from a meaningful exchange with colleagues? We have to work to share resources and foster a sense of community throughout the region. It is in our best interest to continue growing and attracting new membership to Region 6. This includes not only new faculty and staff, but also graduate students and seasoned advisors who could serve as ideal mentors and guides for emerging leaders.

As an Academic Advisor at the Greenlee School of Journalism and Communication, I lead recruitment efforts and supervise a community of student ambassadors. I am also the founder and Intertribal Staff Chair of the American Indian Faculty and Staff Council. I was grateful to be selected as a member of the NACADA Emerging Leaders Class of 2014-16. My participation in this program has led to a number of leadership opportunities. I currently serve on the NACADA Diversity Committee and as Chair of the Native American and Tribal Colleges Interest Group. At the regional level, I am Co-Chair of our Uncommon Advising Mentoring Program and ELP Liaison to the Region 6 Steering Committee. I will graduate from the Emerging Leaders Program at the Annual Conference in Atlanta, where I will also receive an Outstanding New Advisor Award. My varied identities (first-generation, multiracial, low-socioeconomic status, probationary student) are what most inform my work as an academic advisor. I am a strong advocate for underrepresented and at-risk students.

Beyond advising, I keep busy parenting my three children: Cierra (14), Julius (10), and Ivy (8). I also coach youth sports and enjoy running and biking.

Keep Doing Good Work,

Jason