

NACADA

Rocky Mountain Region 10

Dear NACADA Region 10 Members,

I hope you can take a few minutes out of your busy day to learn more about some of the terrific people who are representing Rocky Mountain Region 10.

Thanks again to Patty and Chrissy, our 2009 Region 10 Conference Chairs!



Region 10 Scholarship Applications Available!

Thanks to the fabulous work of our 2009 Conference Co-chairs, Chrissy Renfro and Patty Pedersen, we are able to offer scholarships to attend the 2009 NACADA Annual Advising Conference in colorful San Antonio, TX from September 30th through October 3rd. Please visit the following website for more information about the scholarships:

http://www.nacade.ksu.edu/Regional_Divisions/region10/index.htm

2009 Best of Region!

Please join me in congratulating our "Best of Region 10" winners from University of Wyoming: Tami Breske, Tonya Gerharter, Kristen Rigoni, and Sande Yentes. Their session entitled "**Energizing At-Risk Students: Integrating Career and Self-exploration with Academic Advising**" will be featured this fall in San Antonio, TX at the NACADA National Conference. If you missed them in Cheyenne, we hope you'll be able to join us in San Antonio.

Winners of the 2009 Scholarships to the conference in Wyoming! Keep reading and learn more about their experiences....

Aubrey Burkland, University of Arizona
Carmel Hill, University of Northern Colorado
Liz Scholenleber, Front Range Community College, Colorado
Steve Johnson, Utah State University

Carmel Hill

**M.A.
Academic Advisor
Academic Support and Advising
University of Northern Colorado**



As a professional new to the field of advising, my purpose in attending the NACADA regional conference was to get a sense of the range of approaches different institutions bring to academic advising as well as to gather practical tips on how to more intentionally engage exploratory students.

The conference covered a range of advising topics from a few different speakers' perspectives, giving attendees a chance to hear different approaches to similar challenges. In two different workshops I was able to hear from professionals at both Aims Community College and Wyoming State University about ways they are using career assessments to help exploratory students make progress in defining themselves and selecting a major.

At Wyoming State, Career Services and Academic Advising are one integrated office. At Aims, they are separate offices that work closely together. It was good to see two models. Inventories and assessments like the Strong Interest Inventory or Strengthsfinders are a great tool for academic engagement and decision-making. The presenters equipped me to use these inventories in advising sessions by describing the way they integrate the test results into progressive advising sessions. I became aware of the need to work with Career Services to create a common appointment tracking system so we

could share information on what tests a student has taken and what awareness was reached in the debriefing.

"I gleaned much from these two days, and am now committed to NACADA as a relevant tool in my process of becoming an excellent advisor. "

In my work as an academic advisor at the University of Northern Colorado, I have been using Strengthsfinders on a case-by-case basis with students on probation as well as exploratory

students. I have seen positive results in both populations. I will be using Strengthsfinders as a core part of the First Year Experience courses I teach in the fall of 2009. Our entire academic advising staff is in a learning process with Strengthsfinders and I would not be surprised if we have results to report to NACADA in coming years.

I am so thankful to have received the NACADA scholarship. I gleaned much from these two days, and am now committed to NACADA as a relevant tool in my process of becoming an excellent advisor.

Steve Johnson

**M.S.
Academic Advisor
University and Academic Advising
Utah State University**



It was a wonderful experience to attend the Region 10 Conference. One of the Region 10 pre-

sentations discussed using a combination of technologies to give out basic information to students. This was appealing because advisors often repeat information over and over again when they could save advising time for larger issues addressed in advising such as major exploration, prerequisites, and so forth.

Our university advising group at Utah State could benefit from the following:

- Using audio visual podcasts explaining basic general education requirements, advising tips, financial aid, registration tips, among others
- Displaying registration calendars for upcoming terms on centralized websites

- Looping silent power point presentations in the advisor lobby that cover new courses, special announcements, available resources, activities, etc.
- Peer created DVD's about various programs and resources available to students

I plan on exploring and developing the above areas with the appropriate groups at our university.

It was also a wonderful experience to apply and receive a scholarship. The learning experience in doing this was beneficial. Hopefully funds will be available for others to take advantage of this opportunity in the future. I look forward to interactions and supporting Region 10 activities in the future.

“...advisors often repeat information over and over again when they could save advising time for larger issues.....”

Aubrey Burklund

**M.Ed.
Academic Advisor
Physiology Department
University of Arizona**



It was my pleasure to attend the NACADA Region 10 Conference held in Cheyenne, Wyoming this year from April 28th through the 30th and receive one of the region scholarships for this attendance. The experience was beneficial not only to myself and my professional development, but also to my institution as I take some of the ideas gleaned from this conference and apply them to my position here at the University of Arizona.

I attended several concurrent sessions that had valuable information and insight for the field of advising. One of the sessions I attended presented how one department developed and now uses podcasts to communicate with their students. Communicating with students, especially first semester freshmen, can be a challenge to many departments. Our department has considered for several years including podcasts as a part of a first semester advising meeting, but we have not been able to incorporate this into our procedures, yet. Attending this session provided me with several

ideas our department may be able to explore regarding the use of podcasts and other new technologies to reach out to students where they are, instead of requiring students to meet us where we, as staff and faculty, are. Using this new technology, we may be able to reach more students and help students better acclimate to the college scene.

Thank you for the opportunity to attend this year's Regional Conference and I hope to be able to continue my involvement in NACADA at future events.

“The experience was beneficial not only to myself and my professional development, but also to my institution....”

Liz Schoenleber

**M.Ed.
Academic Advisor
Advising Career and Counseling
Center
Front Range Community College**



Liz hard at work in her office
?!?

I won't say it was just the three sessions I attended on the second day of the conference that created the lasting impressions I took away from the conference. When I arrived in the morning for breakfast, I sat at a table with three advisors from a community college in Arizona. From the moment I sat down we discussed working with two-year students and the various programs we offered through our advising offices, as well as what type of activities worked and what did not. We exchanged business cards with the hope that we would follow up with each other throughout the year. In addition to the networking outside of the sessions, I really enjoyed the Keynote presentation by Dr. Dave Throgmorton. He was funny and engaging and did a wonderful job of tying together how the economic recession affects those of us in the advising profession. He referred to us - as individuals in the advising profession - as being on the

forefront of **hope** for the many students we work with on a daily basis. I think about this statement and believe that he struck a chord with many sitting through the presentation. The perspective of viewing advisors as being in a position of providing some glimmer of hope in a student's academic and career pursuit helps me, as I'm sure it will help other participants, to stay motivated in work.

The sessions I attended were: *Academic Privilege: Uncovering Assumptions That Stop Advisors from Shining*; *Mild Traumatic Brain Injury – The Invisible Disability: How to Best Serve our Students with MTBI*; and *Using Mindfulness to Energize and Enhance the Academic Advising Process*. The Academic Privilege session was presented by two academic advisors from Colorado State University. I liked how they shaped the presentation around the culture of educators and advisors. It makes sense that

we as advisors can and have made assumptions and judgements about advising and about our students. This session helped me to see that we do come from a background of preconceived academic notions and that we sometimes need to take a step backward and pause before asking specific questions or advising a student.

I chose the session on advising students with mild traumatic brain injuries (MTBI) because many times I think we forget to acknowledge or recognize students with disabilities that may not be apparent. Laurel Amsel from the University of Colorado used her own person experience with MTBI as a basis for the presentation. She provided us with statistics about the disorder as well as tips for working with students who have MTBI. Following the conference, Laurel forwarded her presentation slides to the attendees via email. The slides will be a valuable resource to include with other articles and information I have filed for future reference.

The third session on Using Mindfulness in advising was both enjoyable and relaxing. Kristin Douglas from Laramie County Community College began her session by having the attendees listen to a musical CD of relaxing music. We discussed what individual aspects of the music we identified while listening to the music, such as how many voices were singing, if there was a change of language, what different instruments were being played, etc. The lesson was to show us the importance of listening attentively while also maintaining clarity and balance when working with students. Many times it seems we take

listening to students for granted and don't always hear what students are really saying. This is definitely an aspect of working with students that we need to be aware of at all times.

Overall, I thoroughly enjoyed the conference and feel the information I received as well as the connections I made will be helpful to me as I work in the field of academic advising. I've always believed that it is the networking and exchange of ideas with colleagues that helps to keep me motivated and current with professional information.

My attendance at the regional conference allowed me to observe and learn more detailed information about the advising profession. I believe I gained a better appreciation for advising students. I recognize that there are many ways of advising and creating programs for students and

I look forward to applying what I have learned at this conference to my practice. Most

importantly though, is the fact that this conference confirmed that I made the right choice in choosing this profession and reinforced the passion I have for working with students/adult learners. I have always been a person who wants and likes to be involved in professional and social organizations. The benefits of the exchange of information and networking are invaluable and NACADA can allow me to stay current. I look forward to future conferences and staying connected through my membership in the organization.

