My Journey to a Career in Higher Education

This year’s Alumni Weekend marked 20 years since I earned my Master’s Degree (1993), and entered the higher education profession as a junior student affairs program coordinator, working for GW’s then Office of Campus Life (OCL) in the Division of Student and Academic Support Services (SASS). Back then our weight room was a single Smith Center racquetball court; nearly all of the freshman class lived in Thurston Hall; and open parking lots dotted the campus (today they house several new schools and colleges).

While that seems like a long time ago and GW was, in some ways, a galaxy far, far away in terms of our current admissions standards, academic reputation, scope, and size, little has actually changed in terms of our university’s commitment to student development.

In reflecting on this most recent alumni reunion milestone, I would be remiss if I didn’t recognize those who were so instrumental in my own academic, career, and personal development, including professors and mentors who helped shape my experience with various readings, assignments, and activities that allowed me to put my knowledge into action, first as a graduate assistant and then as a new student affairs professional.

In truth, I was fortunate to have a diverse group of supervisors, several of whom became true professional mentors. People like Barbara McGraw Edmondson, Steve Loflin, Leorman Strong, Mike Gargano, and later Bob Chernak. All of them saw in me a commitment to helping students. All influenced my early contributions to the profession as a creative programmer and as an aspiring educational leader. I encourage you to take a moment and send an email to those who mentored you along the way.

Today, I relish the opportunity I have to serve and support the development of our undergraduate, graduate, and doctoral students, both in and out of the classroom. The greatest alumni legacy I can contribute to my Alma Mater is this, the ability to nurture the development of our students as they become future citizen leaders.

While I aspire to eventually offer more ‘treasure’ as an alumni, what I readily have available now is my ‘time and talent’ that can impact and support this generation of students, whether they are connected through their course work, serve on our student staff, are part of GW’s student leadership, or when they simply follow me on Twitter.

As we continue to celebrate October as Careers in Student Affairs Month, I encourage every member of DSA to support the emerging ways we contribute to GW in large and small ways that enhance student learning and development.

Consequently, I’m especially excited that this month we pilot both a new student employee career and professional development series and launch our new Dean for a Day program for GW students interested in careers in student affairs.
**DSA Staff Updates**

**New Hires:**

![Nicole Davy](image)

**Nicole Davy** *(ndavy@gwu.edu)*

Registered Nurse, Student Health Service

BS, Nursing, Stony Brook University

BS, Business Administration & Long Term Care Administration, Southern Adventist University

**Favorite Movie?** My favorite movie is *Love and Basketball*. I must have watched that movie literally 100 times. I can recite the script line for line. I'm a sucker for a great love story.

**Most Memorable Meal?** My most memorable meal was a buffet lunch in Belize after a zipline and cave tubing excursion. The buffet was an assortment of traditional Belizian cuisine. I remember the food being well seasoned and full of different spices. I'm getting hungry just thinking about it.

**If you had to choose another profession, what would it be and why?** I would probably be a detective or crime scene investigator. I've become obsessed with police dramas and think it's such a cool job to solve crimes and mysteries.

**If you could meet anyone from history, who would it be and why?** I would want to meet Martin Luther King Jr., to feel his compassion and desire that made him fight every day for equality even though it cost him his life. I would thank him for his bravery because his actions made way for freedoms and opportunities I'm able to experience today.

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![Kelly Lawton](image)

**Kelly Lawton** *(kelmil85@gwu.edu)*

Senior Industry Consultant, Center for Career Services

BS, Communications, Appalachian State University

MPH, Public Health, East Carolina University

**Best Vacation?** To Malawi, Africa to work with an NGO for a summer in college.

**Most Memorable Meal?** Nachos we had for dinner while camping on a safari – all I remember is how good the meal tasted after a long day and watching the sunset with new friends.

**If you could meet anyone from history, who would it be and why?** Princess Diana. Such an inspiration, I would like to understand what motivated her to do the work she did and learn from her.

**What is your favorite dessert?** Simple brownie sundae.

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**Staff Departures:**

We wish these former DSA staff members well in their future endeavors:

- Grace Henry
- Jenn Solt
- Marcus Williams
Lynaya Morris, Center for Student Engagement
(lrmorris@gwu.edu)

**DSA: What is your role here at GW? How long have you been with GW?**

Lynaya Morris: I work as an Area Coordinator in the Center for Student Engagement. This role involves working with students in the residential setting, responding to crisis situations on campus, and also advising student organizations. I have been with GW for two years. I came to GW as a graduate student in Higher Education Administration at the Graduate School of Education and Human Development. I worked as a Graduate Fellow/Residence Director until January of this year when I started my Area Coordinator role. I recently completed my Master’s degree this past May.

**DSA: What have you enjoyed about working here?**

LM: I enjoy the staff here at GW. Everyone is super friendly and invested in the students. It is great to be around people who care about the student experience as well as their colleagues. The staff are also interesting because they have varied interests outside of higher education.

**GW TRAiLS Upcoming Trips**

by Myles Surrrett, Center for Student Engagement (msurrrett@gwu.edu)

Part of the Center for Student Engagement, GW TRAiLS is a private, non-profit learning organization that is run by GW students to serve the GW community.

TRAiLS is made up of devout student volunteer Guides who put countless hours into the planning and execution of a very diverse range of outings, trips, events, and service projects. The underlying theme of all TRAiLS “adventures” is a fervent passion for the outdoors. All TRAiLS Guides share this passion... whatever their preferred sport or activity may be!

TRAiLS is off to a flying start in the academic year with already over 170 members of the GW community going out on adventures. We have an amazing array of trips remaining in the fall, including skeet shooting, tons of hikes, opportunities to get your picture taken with Santa while Scuba diving, and more.

Please Visit [Upcoming TRAiLS Trips](#) to see the full array of trip opportunities and register.
Event Planning 101
by Anne Moore, Administration and Hallmark Programs (armoore@gwu.edu)

This semester the Administration & Hallmark Programs (AHP) team has developed a new event planning resource for the Division of Student Affairs to help colleagues improve their event planning skills and develop collaborative conversations across the division. With over 30 combined years of event planning experience, the Administration & Hallmark Programs staff has developed a workshop that provides best practices and insider tips for a well-planned and successfully-executed event.

Event Planning 101 is a two-hour workshop. Its first offering was held in early September and attended by 15 colleagues representing various DSA departments. Through this workshop, attendees learned best practices for event planning, specifically how to develop an effective event planning checklist. This list allows professionals to keep an eye on the big picture by developing goals and learning outcomes while strategically planning the details, through marketing plans, space reservations and organizing event logistics. In discussing event logistics, participants learned how to proactively plan for ADA considerations as well as effective planning for inclement weather during events. Throughout the workshop participants discussed how to develop key partnerships, including tips for fostering collaborations with each other and academic colleagues, as well as how to engage students in developing a successful event. Additionally, best practices were discussed for how to develop and track financial expenditures, and how to efficiently use division resources to help keep costs at a reasonable level. Some resources that are available for sharing include laptops, iPods, a projector, outdoor lawn games, and board games. These items are available as programing supplies and a full list will be provided to the Division later this semester. Lastly, participants were given practice scenarios in which to discuss potential outcomes and key steps that they learned during the workshop.

To help you best prepare for the spring semester, AHP will be hosting another Event Planning 101 workshop in early December. This workshop is open to staff who serve in a programming role for the Division or who are interested in learning more for their own development.

For more details, contact Anne Moore.

Who’s left standing…
by Alexis Janda, CADE (ajanda@gwu.edu)

If you were at the DSA Forum on September 20, you know exactly what I am talking about! If you don’t know, you missed out on a good time! The Professional Development and Teambuilding Committee wanted to incorporate an icebreaker into the DSA Forums this year and on September 20, staff present participated in “Stand Up If” where various qualifications were read out and if it applied to you, you stood up.

It was a fun and entertaining way to learn about our fellow DSA co-workers. For example, did you know that Bridgette Behling has a LOT of siblings? Or that Silvio Weisner is fluent in Sign Language? How about this, Mike Ruybal has lived in more foreign countries than he has US States! And Kate Selden has dogs, cats, and a turtle! “Stand Up If” provided much laughter and an opportunity for colleagues to learn something new about one another, like who’s rooting for the wrong team (which was just about everyone!).

The Professional Development and Teambuilding committee is looking forward to the next forum where we plan to “stand up” again. Who will be left standing? Go to the next forum to find out!

Fight The Flu: Free Flu Shots
Foggy Bottom Campus:
Tuesday, October 15, 10am-3pm, Marvin Center Grand Ballroom
Thursday, October 24, 10am-3pm, Marvin Center Continental Ballroom

Register today by e-mailing GWUflu@LifeWorkStrategies.com and including “GWU Flu Shots,” your name, campus location, preferred date, e-mail address, and phone number.
Visit Get Vaccinated to learn more about fighting the flu.

Know Students Interested in Working in a Higher Education, College, or University Setting? Encourage Them to Consider Being a Student Affairs “Dean for a Day”!
by DSA Leadership Team (students@gwu.edu)

In honor of National Careers in Student Affairs Month (October), the Division of Student Affairs will pilot a new opportunity for GW students to experience various leadership roles in student life.

Students can learn from, shadow, and serve side-by-side with the senior leadership team managing various units that support the GW student experience, including:

- Student Affairs
- Career Services
- Outreach and Planning
- Student Administrative Services
- Student Engagement
- Student Support Services
- Student Wellness and Prevention

This job shadowing experience will allow interested GW students the opportunity to have an open, transparent view into how university leaders make decisions and manage operations in support of the GW student experience.

This pilot program will start in October. Interested candidates must complete a brief application that focuses on a few key questions designed to create an optimal learning opportunity for students to explore careers in higher education by working directly with administrators.

If selected to participate, scheduling will be coordinated between the candidate and an appropriate “Dean” within DSA. Interested students can learn more and apply.

Applications are due Monday, October 21.
The Administration and Hallmark Programs (AHP) team, among other roles, serve as programmers who plan the cornerstone undergraduate events within the Division of Student Affairs. With four full-time staff, two graduate students, and over sixty student staff, AHP staff is responsible for the planning and implementation of Colonial Inauguration, Welcome Week, Octoberfest, Midnight Breakfast, Welcome Back Week, the Excellence in Student Life Awards, and Grad Week.

As we ushered new members into the GW community through CI and Welcome Week, our goals were to help students and families feel welcome at GW, orient them to resources, and provide them with tools to succeed in their new environment. Our efforts have a broadly reaching impact. From Spring CI through Fall CI, AHP staff has already served over 2,700 incoming students, 1,700 parents and 120 siblings of incoming students. New initiatives unrolled at this year’s CI included composting at the Buff and Blue Barbecue and more opportunities for students learn how to engage in conversation with faculty at the GW Academic Experience. More than 140 faculty participated in the GW Academic Experience session at CI this year. Over 6,500 students attended eight Welcome Week events that were directly planned by AHP staff. Thousands more attended the close to fifty other events featured during Welcome Week, planned by various campus partners.

This year, to continue our intention to offer programs that prepare students to succeed academically and socially, and to plan programs that care for the holistic development of our students, learning outcomes were established for AHP programs. Data from CI is still being analyzed, but an initial glance at it indicates that students learned “academic resources”, that “there is a wonderful support system here at GW”, and that “students are not alone when coping with personal challenges”. Initial results from Welcome Week surveys also show that we are achieving these newly established learning outcomes with our programs. Student participants indicated that attending a Welcome Week event made them “more aware of resources and people”, made them “appreciate the community”, and feel “more excited to be here”. One of the most impactful student comments noted that participating in Welcome Week “made me realize I picked the right school”.

In addition to planning our own events, we also serve as a resource to the entire Division of Student Affairs and are available to offer consultation services and best practices for any other department’s event planning process. In addition to Event Planning 101 Sessions offered regularly to the Division and by request, resources will be included on our new departmental website that will launch this fall. Each member of the Administration and Hallmark Programs staff has also been assigned to the departments within DSA that plan events. Liaisons have been established as follows:

- Bridgette Behling: International Services Office, Military and Veterans Services, Office of Parent Services
- Chrissy Batterson: Center for Student Engagement
- Jovanni Mahonez: CADE, Student Health Services, University Counseling Center,
- Anne Moore: Center for Career Services

These staff are available to help DSA event planners problem-solve event related issues that may arise in their events, offer access to resources that create efficiency both fiscally and within staff practices, offer event planning checklists, contract templates, consultation about risk management with events, establishing learning outcomes for an event, ADA considerations with events, and much more! Through the extensive collaborations we have established through our event planning processes and committees, AHP staff also work with a large number of faculty. If you are looking for ways to engage faculty with your programs, we are available to suggest faculty who may be appropriate. Don’t reinvent the wheel or learn the hard way, when you can consult with staff with over thirty years of professional event planning experience!

This year has been off to a great start for the AHP team as an additional area of focus has been on professional development within the department. From weekly discussions aimed at keeping us informed about latest trends in higher education and student affairs, to the development of learning outcomes for graduate students and undergraduates who work in our department, we are a team committed to learning, growing, and collaborating with others. We plan high quality programs that provide students with resources to succeed academically, and the opportunity to make connections with others.

We are always looking for students and staff who want to serve on our planning committees. E-mail hallmark@gwu.edu to express your interest in planning these impactful events! Follow us on Facebook or on Twitter or stop by and visit us in the John Quincy Adams House!
Nominate Outstanding Seniors for the PAF Program
by PAF Advising Team (paf@gwu.edu)

The Presidential Administrative Fellowship (PAF) program is now looking for nominees and could use your support in two ways:

If you know of any qualified seniors (see below for details), please nominate them using this form. We will then contact them with an invitation to apply for this prestigious program. Spread the word to your students about the PAF program.

About the Presidential Administrative Fellowship program: The PAF program is a two-year commitment, which benefits both the student and the university. The PAF program is designed to offer graduating GW seniors administrative experience within various offices at the university while also giving them the opportunity to pursue a master’s degree in their chosen field. The PAF program combines classroom education, professional experiences, service opportunities, and ambassadorial interaction with faculty, staff, and alumni to provide an excellent learning experience in leadership and administration as a foundation for nearly any professional career path.

PAFs are provided with graduate tuition and fees (maximum 42 credit-hour graduate program) plus a graduate salary and stipend. The PAFs also complete a competency-based professional development curriculum designed to enhance their leadership and administration skills that can be applied during their time at GW and post-graduation.

Applicant criteria: Applicants must meet certain criteria in order to be eligible. They must be undergraduate seniors graduating from GW during the 2013-14 academic year, have completed at least 60 credits at GW, have a minimum 3.25 cumulative GPA at the time of application, and be admitted into a GW master’s degree program for the fall 2014 semester before accepting the PAF opportunity (J.D., LL.M., and M.D. students are not eligible for the PAF program). PAF program applications are due by Friday, October 18.

Interested students can also learn more about the PAF program, including general information and the recruitment and selection timelines, by visiting the PAF Program website. Thank you for your interest and continued partnership!

From Our DSA Colleagues

A Recipe for Baked Pasta with Butternut Squash and Ricotta
by Seth Weinshel, GW Housing (sdweingw@gwu.edu)

Serves: 8
Prep time: 25 minutes
Cook time: 60 minutes

2 spray(s) cooking spray
20 oz uncooked butternut squash, fresh, peeled and cubed
1/8 tsp table salt, for cooking pasta
12 oz uncooked whole wheat pasta, penne
1 1/4 cup(s) fat free skim milk
2 Tbsp white all-purpose flour
2 tsp minced garlic
1/2 tsp table salt
1/4 tsp black pepper, freshly ground, or to taste
1 Tbsp fresh thyme, fresh, chopped, divided
1/2 cup(s) part-skim ricotta cheese
1/3 cup(s) grated Parmesan cheese, Parmigiano-Reggiano recommended
1/4 cup(s) chopped walnuts, toasted

Preheat oven to 375ºF. Coat a baking sheet with cooking spray. Coat a 2 1/2- to 3-quart baking dish with cooking spray.

Place squash on prepared baking sheet; roast until tender, about 20 to 30 minutes. Place in a large bowl and mash.

Meanwhile, bring a large pot of salted water to a boil. After squash has been roasting for about 10 minutes, cook pasta according to package directions; drain and return to pot.

In a medium saucepan, whisk together milk, flour, garlic, salt and pepper. Bring to a boil over medium-high heat, whisking frequently; reduce heat to low and simmer, stirring often, until thickened, about 2 minutes. Remove from heat; stir in mashed squash and 2 1/2 teaspoons of thyme. Add sauce to pasta; toss to mix and coat.

Transfer pasta mixture to prepared baking dish; dot with spoonfuls of ricotta and then sprinkle with Parmesan and walnuts. Bake until top is lightly browned in a few spots, about 15 to 20 minutes; remove from oven and sprinkle with remaining 1/2 teaspoon of thyme.

Yields about 1 cup per serving.
ITF Student Scholarship Competition

The Innovation Task Force Scholarship Competition calls upon students to submit ideas to the university that will reduce costs or generate revenues of $1M or more for GW per year. The ideas will be vetted through a three-round selection process and the winning idea will be implemented at GW. The winning student or team of up to four students will win a scholarship of up to $50K for continued studies at the university. Not only is this a way for ITF to engage students to make a significant impact, it creates an opportunity for GW to highlight a culture of innovation and turning knowledge into action. Encourage students to learn more and apply by Friday, October 25.

NASPA Region II Awards Nominations Process Now Open

Nominate a student affairs colleague for the NASPA Region II Awards in three easy steps:

1. Ask the nominee for a copy of their resume. (5 min.)
2. Write a letter of support based on the award criteria. (20 min.)
3. Connect with at least one other person who will also support the nomination by writing a letter. (10 min.)

Of course, if you find others willing to write a letter as well, great! Just keep it to a maximum of 5.

Submit nominations by Friday, October 11.

GW Alternative Breaks Seeks Learning Partners

GW faculty and staff are invited to become part of the GW Alternative Breaks program as a Learning Partner! GW Alternative Breaks is a student-led service trip program, which takes students to 17 different locations across the U.S. and Latin America to experience new communities, participate in service projects, and learn about a variety of different issue areas. A Learning Partner is an integral member of the Alternative Breaks learning experience. Learning Partners are faculty and staff who participate as a team member of a GW Alternative Breaks trip. While Learning Partners are not responsible for the general planning of the trip, Learning Partners do serve in a more hands-on role through expertise in the issue area of the trip or geographic location as well as guiding students during their reflection and personal development.

Submit your application by Friday, October 11 at Midnight. Be sure to check-in with your supervisor before submitting an application.

Food Day 2013

Celebrate the Food Day 2013 with a weeklong celebration of events from Wednesday, October 23 through Thursday, October 21 presented by the GW Urban Food Task Force. Highlights include Apple Day Crunch and a speech on “The End of Overeating” by noted physician and former FDA Commissioner, both on Thursday, October 24.

Visit the Urban Food Task Force or e-mail gwufoodtaskforce@gmail.com.
In Case You Missed It: DSA in *GW Today*

**Panhellenic Association Sororities Welcome New Members**

**Jon Favreau Shares Advice with Students**

**Record Number of Students and Alumni Visit Fall Career Fair**

**GW Among Top Teach for America Contributors**

Interested in contributing to the DSA Newsletter? Have feedback to offer?

E-mail [students@gwu.edu](mailto:students@gwu.edu) with story ideas, events, etc.

Help enhance the DSA Newsletter by sharing your feedback... what do you like the most? the least? what's missing? what would encourage you to read it? E-mail DSA Communications Committee co-chairs [Mark Levine](mailto:mark.levine@gwu.edu) and [Robert Snyder](mailto:robert.snyder@gwu.edu) with your feedback.

We look forward to hearing from you!
News and Tips from Higher Education and Beyond

The Student Affairs Feature captured life in student affairs with “Your Work is in the Interruptions.”

Diverse Issues in Higher Education highlighted the trend of students taking college credits while in high school in “College Costs Drive Record Number of High School Kids to Start Early.”

GW Graduate School of Education and Human Development faculty member Dr. Sandy Baum co-directed a project exploring how student behaviors and decisions affect educational success: “GSEHD Research Examines Structural and Behavioral Barriers to Student Success.”

Education Advisory Board Insight Centers

Looking for ways to enhance the impact of your behavioral intervention team? Wondering how to integrate career exploration into the college experience? Education Advisory Board (EAB) has your solution.

EAB’s new insight centers consolidate our most relevant and progressive research and resources on today’s key topics to save time and keep you ahead of the curve. Get connected to the resources that will help you:

- Better manage mental health services on campus
- Target support services and programming for special populations
- Integrate career exploration at every level of the college experience
- Support academically and financially challenged students and improve time-to-completion

Any member of the GW community can sign-up for an account on the EAB website, which provides access to EAB’s Insight Centers, vast library of best practice studies and custom research reports, webinars and other training resources, all of which are included in DSA’s membership. To create your account, visit Register for Education Advisory Board and complete and submit the form. For more information about accessing EAB’s programs and services, e-mail Robert Snyder.