From @GWPeterK

Building Community and Supporting Each Other

Reflecting on Homecoming this past month, I’m reminded of how our community is built in simple ways like roasting s’mores by the GW Birthday Bonfire or catching up with Colonials past, present, and future at a basketball game. The launch of our #HistoryLivesHere Square 77 residence hall naming contest is another way that institutions like GW build community. With the contest, we hope to recognize and celebrate those who have made a dramatic impact on our community—those who are literally making history during their tenure at GW!

The naming of a physical building is one of many strategies colleges and universities use to build community. It brings people together and, in this case, engages across generations as we seek to connect with all members of the campus, most notably students, parents, and alumni.

Likewise, the many spring semester events—including Martin Luther King Day of Service, Homecoming, George’s Birthday Bonfire, Excellence in Student Life Awards, Grad Week, and Commencement Weekend—help serve to not only build school spirit, but also to foster a sense of community and campus affinity.

Through these traditions that unite our campus, we celebrate common focal points: service, athletics, our university’s namesake, leadership, graduation, and postgraduate life.

Higher education, as in many other sectors, also often uses symbols, slogans, and colors as another way to visually unite constituencies and build community. The phrase "Raise High" ties us to the GW Fight Song, which is taught at orientation. It proudly references what we hope students, staff, faculty, and alumni feel as they sport Buff and Blue around our campuses and at our athletic competitions. (If you want to see our DSA staff #RaiseHigh while singing the fight song, this clip with bloopers is worth a look.)

This type of identification is no different than what we saw this month at the Olympics, where national identity of Team USA is on display under a red, white, and blue banner. We also rally to “Support our Troops”, our military and veteran brethren, and we stand with the brave police and fire personnel who serve as first responders on the front lines of protection and defense.

From both anthropological and sociological perspectives, these elements of tradition are what bind us culturally and unite us collectively together, allowing us to recognize that we are bigger than ourselves as individuals. Indeed, we are part of a larger group with shared values and purpose as we gather, celebrate, and support each other.

This even more significant when we need to rely on each other, during a university incident or tragedy. When we are drawn to look for external support, we quickly notice the existing alliances that help us get through the most challenging times. We realize we can count on those who are part of our team, tribe, sect, or circle. We see that our community is stronger because of the people in it, the people who offer help and support. We find that we are stronger together, and that as a community, we thrive.

Editor’s note: Check out another opportunity to build community – the new DSA Blog!
Department Spotlight

The Second Year Experience in the Center for Student Engagement

By Gregory Rheault, Center for Student Engagement (grheault@gwu.edu)

The Second Year Experience (SYE) unit within the Center for Student Engagement is responsible for the residential and co-curricular engagement of GW’s second-year students. The SYE professional staff team consists of Greg Rheault (Director), Angela Esquivel (Area Coordinator), Connor Knapp (Area Coordinator), and Lynaya Morris (Area Coordinator).

Greg Rheault joined the SYE team as Director in October 2013 and has been at GW since 2010. Originally from Plymouth, Massachusetts, he holds a B.S. in Education from the University of Vermont, a M.Ed. in College Student Personnel from the University of Maryland, College Park, and is currently pursuing an Ed.D. in Human and Organizational Learning in GW’s Executive Leadership Doctoral Program. Angela Esquivel has been at GW since 2010. Originally from San Jose, California, she received her B.A. in Music from the University of Southern California and her M.A. in Higher Education from the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor. Connor Knapp has been at GW since 2012. Originally from Concord, Massachusetts, he holds a B.B.A. in Marketing and M.A. in Higher Education and Student Personnel Administration from the University of Mississippi. Lynaya Morris has been at GW since 2011. Originally from Pocomoke, Maryland, she holds a B.S. in Biology from Syracuse University and an M.A.Ed. in Higher Education from The George Washington University. Together, the professional staff team provides supervision and support for the six Residence Directors and 27 House Staff engaging the more than 2,000 sophomores at GW.


The introduction of a new Director to the unit in October 2013 provided an opportunity to examine where SYE engagement efforts were at the time and to create a new vision for where the unit would aim to go in the future. After preliminary observations of weekly reports, discussion with Area Coordinators and Residence Directors, and informal conversations with the House Staff and second-year students, two distinct findings emerged. First, student staff were spending considerable time and resources on traditional programs in the residence halls. Second, students described a desire to connect more individually with other students in mentoring, advisory, and support roles. While programs provided opportunities for some students to get food and interact, the majority of both students and House Staff did not describe depths of interactions that added significant value to their sophomore experience. With these two early findings, the SYE team adopted a “back to basics” approach for all residential staff during the months of November and December. A moratorium was placed on traditional programs and staff time was exclusively devoted to individually engaging with residents in their rooms, over lunch or coffee, and at student organization events. The Residence Directors adopted a coaching role in their supervision of staff and worked with them to overcome common barriers to individual relationship-building in the residence halls.

While the residential staff focused exclusively on individual engagement, the SYE professional staff conducted focus groups and structured interviews with second-year students to gain insight to their experiences and understand what they need to be successful at GW. Professional staff also connected with Second Year Experience offices around the country to share effective engagement practices with sophomores. Data from the House Staff and Residence Director weekly reports along with the transcripts from the focus groups and interviews were analyzed for emergent themes that guided the development of priorities and strategies for all engagement efforts moving forward.

An Outcomes-based Approach

The SYE team set out to re-envision engagement of GW’s sophomore student population through the development of an engagement approach that:

- More fully meets the needs of second-year students based on what was learned through the interactions in November and December.
- Increases quality of relationships between staff and students. Allows staff to exercise creativity and innovation of design and execution of initiatives.
- Utilizes the strengths and abilities of staff most effectively.
- Promotes learning and growth for both staff and students.

Emergent Findings from Sophomore Student Focus Groups and Interviews

Decisions: Second-year students described the many decisions they have to make and the anxiety and stress that come from having to make difficult decisions. (academic, internships, involvement, financial, transfer, study abroad, leadership roles.)

Self-discovery: Second-year students shared how they are developing a sense of who they are and what they want to do. (perception of self changing from high school and freshman year are noticeable, passions and interests are changing, seeking new experiences, relationships are changing, trying new things previously not considered.)

(Continued on p. 3)
**Pressure & Fear of Missing Out (FOMO):** Second-year students described the pressures they face from peers, friends, and family that result in a perpetual "fear of missing out" and difficulty committing to action. (competing opportunities, many events and activities to choose from, long term benefits often overlooked as immediate needs/interests are more regularly considered, constantly assessing value of experiences or opportunities in the moment, receiving constant feedback from friends, family, and peers.)

**Seeking Community:** Want to make new friends, seeking diversity, looking out for one another.

**Desire to Meet Others with Similar Interests:** Building personal and professional network, major decision process, academic study groups, make new friends.

**Advice:** Seeking support from others who have been through similar decisions and experiences.

**SYE 2.0 – Progressing Towards our Vision**

The synthesis of findings from the critical review of the second-year student experience led the SYE team back to the Center for Student Engagement’s vision: The Center for Student Engagement at the George Washington University is committed to transforming the student experience and empowering students to become active and engaged global citizens and leaders. The idea of transforming the student experience requires a strong focus on the relationships that guide students in their development. With this philosophical approach in mind, five priorities were developed and implemented across all levels in the unit.

1. Staff Priorities
2. Know Your Students
3. Support Your Students
4. Connect Your Students
5. Manage Your Configuration of Students
6. Enhance the Second-Year Experience

Through individualized performance planning in which staff create goals, strategies, and performance assessment measures centered around the five priorities, second-year student engagement efforts are focused on creating, cultivating, and sustaining individual relationships with students as they explore their passions and interests. Through the relationships with students, staff seek to empower students to become active and engaged global citizens and leaders while making the most of their time at GW.

This "back to basics" approach to student engagement challenges staff to foster individual relationships with students both within their formal work and in mentoring capacities. With the broad portfolios of responsibilities staff possess, it can be challenging to progress from the transactional nature of the day-to-day administrative work. With clearly established priorities and a uniform philosophical understanding of student engagement, the SYE staff have committed significant efforts both within the formal responsibilities of the job and outside the office. Whether it be formally mentoring students, teaching classes, or connecting with students at student organization events, the SYE team is committed to holistically developing and supporting second-year students through this critical year of their undergraduate experience.

*Photo taken from [http://studentengagement.gwu.edu/second-year](http://studentengagement.gwu.edu/second-year)*
What was one of your most memorable meals (where was it, what did you eat, why was it memorable)?
Homemade Veggie Lasagna, prepared with love by my mom, before I went back to St. Louis for my last year of graduate school.

If you had to choose another profession, what would it be and why?
Chemistry teacher, to make blue chocolate cake with my students.

If you could meet anyone from history, who would you meet and why?
Sojourner Truth, to share stories of triumphs and struggles with this strong, confident and outspoken woman.

Can you tell us about any hidden talents or hobbies?
I love playing volleyball.

What was one of your most memorable meals (where was it, what did you eat, why was it memorable)?
While in Australia and thinking that we would just throw caution to the wind, my group ordered the lamb brains appetizer for our table. I ate one little piece. It was memorable for the obvious reason of being kind of crazy... and gross.

If you had to choose another profession, what would it be and why?
If I had to choose, it would be one of three things: working with a non-profit that supports cancer research, working in tourism in a position where I could travel the world, or working for one of my hometown sports teams.

What is one of your favorite songs (and by what artist)?
"Africa" by Toto. I dare you to not want to sing it at karaoke.

What is your favorite dessert?
Frozen yogurt or frozen custard. One of my favorite little local spots is the Dairy Godmother in Del Ray (Alexandria).

What is your favorite movie, book, or TV show?
Movie: Steel Magnolias
TV Show: Breaking Bad
Book: Cold Sassy Tree

What is the best vacation or trip you have taken?
I took a month long, cross country road trip with three close friends after I graduated from college. We went from South Carolina to California and back!

What was one of your most memorable meals (where was it, what did you eat, why was it memorable)?
I had an incredible salmon dish in Sorrento, Italy. It was my last night in the country after a trip over the holidays to visit my college roommates. I always say that I would want it to be my last meal!

If you could meet anyone from history, who would you meet and why?
Martin Luther King, Jr. His conviction and tireless commitment amazes me and I would love to the opportunity to say thank you and talk to him.
Viraj Patel (vpatel1@gwu.edu)
Area Coordinator, Graduate, Distance, and Professional Student Experience
Center for Student Engagement
BA, English, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign
M.Ed, Higher Education Student Affairs Administration, University of Vermont

What is your favorite movie, book, or TV show?
Movie: Back to the Future Series
Book: Pride and Prejudice
TV Show: Scandal

What is the best vacation or trip you have taken?
Yellowstone National Park.

What was one of your most memorable meals (where was it, what did you eat, why was it memorable)?
During the summer, one of my family's traditions is to go to Navy Pier in Chicago to watch the fireworks and get a pizza delivered to us. I love it!

Can you tell us about any hidden talents or hobbies?
I love to write and dance.

Christopher Pedo (cpedo@gwu.edu)
International Student Advisor
International Services Office
BA, Community Development, Daystar
University-Nairobi-Kenya
MA, Public Administration, Southern Illinois University

Where were you born (city/state/country)?
Kericho-Kenya.

What was one of your most memorable meals (where was it, what did you eat, why was it memorable)?
Ostrich meat for sure and other game meat at the Carnivore Restaurant-Nairobi-Kenya.

If you had to choose another profession, what would it be and why?
Non-profit, creating opportunities for skills and professional development for people in developing countries.

Is there anything else you want to share about yourself?
I love meeting new people and working at GW. Being in DC is really greatest of all wishes on my list of places to be.

Gerri Rollins (gmroll@gwu.edu)
Office Manager
University Counseling Center
BA, Music, George Washington University

What is the best vacation or trip you have taken?
Snorkeling off the coast of Isla Roatan in 2010.

What was one of your most memorable meals (where was it, what did you eat, why was it memorable)?
The "Big Game Dinner" that I used to go to with my family when I was younger. It wasn't just one meal but it was one event held annually in the town next to where I grew up. I loved it because it's when my whole family got together and we got to try game that we wouldn't otherwise have the opportunity to have; bear, moose, rabbit, venison (deer), etc. It gave me and my family a time to bond over traditional food and would always involve stories about years passed from my grandparents and older family members.

If you had to choose another profession, what would it be and why?
Production Manager at a large music venue like the Kennedy Center. I live for the arts and to be able to be part of furthering the life and appreciation of music and the arts would complete my life!
DSA Staff Updates (Cont.)

Staff Transitions

Katie Porras has been named Interim Director of the Office of Student Rights and Responsibilities (SRR) through the end of May while Gabriel Slifka is away for the semester. Mark Levine will be assuming the supervision of Katie and will also supervise Tim Terpstra, Director of Academic Integrity.

Staff Departure

We wish this former DSA staff member well in her future endeavors:

Lyndsey Fjellstedt, Center for Student Engagement

Staff Spotlight

Jay Jones (indy@gwu.edu)
Special Assistant to the Deans
Division of Student Affairs

How long have you been with GW?
I’ve been here since my freshman year as a student living in Thurston and have worked professionally in one role or another since 1999. I’m about to celebrate my 15th year!

What is your title/role here in DSA?
I’m Special Assistant in DSA, working in the Central Office in Rice 401.

You wear a lot of different hats in your role here. Can you tell us about some of them?
My favorite hat to wear is a deerstalker. (I’m a big Sherlock fan.) I wear it when solving particularly challenging student issues. I also like to wear a beanie with a propeller when I’m working on the DSA websites. (A funny word like “Drupal” requires a funny hat.) I’m trying to think of a cool hat to wear when producing the Colonials Weekend performances (Jimmy Fallon, Bill Maher, Train, The Fray). Any suggestions?

What have you enjoyed about working here at GW?
My colleagues. The Division of Student Affairs has the most passionate staff members I’ve ever worked with. It’s exciting to come to work every day because I get to work with such a talented bunch of caring people.

How did you get interested in working in student affairs?
I sort of fell into it. Applied to be the Assistant to the Assistant Dean so I could stay at GW and just never left.

If you weren’t working in student affairs or higher education, what do you think you’d be doing instead?

What do you do for fun outside of the office?
I read voraciously. Usually have two or more books going at any one time. I also dabble in writing. I’m also just starting to use my bike more.

Do you have any regular hobbies? How did you get into those?
I don’t really. I have inherited four stamp collections from my great-grandparents, but haven’t had the time or inclination to delve into them yet. Maybe when I retire?

Do you do anything fun/interesting during the blizzards and snowstorms that we sometimes get in DC?
I watch A LOT of British television when snowed in. Thank goodness for Netflix!
Sochi 2014 Olympics Opening Ceremonies Viewing
By Alexis Janda, Center for Alcohol and other Drug Education (ajanda@gwu.edu)

Thursday, Friday, and Saturday are prime nights for GW students to "hit the town" and engage in risky drinking behaviors. Similarly, large televised events (such as awards shows) also present students with an interesting platform to develop drinking games particular to the event. On Friday, February 7, 2014, CADE hosted a viewing party for the opening ceremonies of the 2014 Sochi Winter Olympics in an effort to provide students with an opportunity to view the opening ceremony in an alcohol free environment.

Several campus partners assisted in making the event a success, including the Multicultural Student Services Center, Program Board, Allied in Pride, Study Abroad: Programs in Russia, Colonial Army, GW Athletics, and GWise Peer Education Group. The event began at 7PM in the Smith Center Colonials Club with an open forum discussion surrounding the LGBTQ laws in Russia and some similar laws present in the United States. GW’s “You Can Play” video was shown and students were encouraged to give their feedback on the importance of having discussions highlighting these types of laws and how they affect or may affect us as a whole as well as the individuals targeted. Anika Taylor, from Programs in Russia, Ethan Choy and a fellow member of Allied in Pride also chimed in with beneficial information for students present regarding the topic. The two organizations, Programs in Russia and Allied in Pride, also tabled during the entire event giving students the opportunity to ask further questions and gather further information.

After discussion students were able to eat and settle in for the start of the opening ceremony. During the commercial breaks of the ceremony students were engaged in a number of random trivia questions regarding the Olympics. Students were able to yell out answers and the first person to yell the correct answer received a gold “#1” medal. Also, upon entry students were able to up their chances of not going home empty handed by either 1) entering a raffle where numbers would be called approximately every thirty minutes giving students the opportunity to choose from an array of donated prize items, 2) completing an approximately 30 question trivia page and turning it in for a chance to win a $30 gift card to Sweet Green, or 3) a entering their name and email into a drawing for free movie passes. Along with trivia, students were given the ability to take a picture with their friends holding specially created Olympic rings. Pictures were tweeted to the students on the spot giving them immediate access to their photo and including the event hashtag of #RaiseHighOlympics, further promoting the ongoing event.

The event turned out to be a major success ranging in attendance of 130-150 students. The event was very informal and inviting to the students who were able to stand around the room, sit at the tables, in the lounge chairs, or with friends on the steps along the length of the room. Students anxiously waited for their favorite country to appear and several rounds of cheers were heard across the room for several different countries. The event proved to be a gathering of pride and togetherness fueled by constant chatter among friends and friend groups.
Save the Date! Upcoming DSA Forums

Thursday, February 27th @ 1:00pm, MC 309
Join DSA & Organizational Development and Effectiveness (ODE) on February 27th at 1:00pm for Advanced True Colors. If you don’t already know your color or remember it, don’t worry, you will have a chance to re-take the assessment at the beginning of the workshop and then we will learn how your colors affect your team dynamic.

Thursday, March 27th @ 12:00pm
International Heritage Potluck

Please watch your email for more information about these great events!

Professional Development @ GW

General Safety Training - Please join the GW Office of Health & Safety for an important introduction to working safely. The General Safety training will cover when and how to evacuate, when and how to shelter-in-place, and a fire safety overview. Sessions will be held on February 25th from 2-3pm in Marvin Center, Room 405 or February 27th from 10-11am in Marvin Center, Room 407.

Share Fair Volunteers - Calling all GW students, faculty, staff, and alumni! Volunteers are needed at Share Fair on Saturday, March 8. Share Fair is a free event for educators, students, and communities to come together with leaders in STEM education innovation to experience fun, hands-on, minds-on education methods...but we couldn’t do it without you! We’re looking for volunteers with outgoing personalities that are willing to work in a fast-paced environment that requires strong customer service skills. All volunteers will receive training, a Share Fair t-shirt, and refreshments at the event. Please note that Share Fair coincides with GW’s Spring Break.

Take Your Daughters & Sons To Work Day - The George Washington University will be hosting our annual Take Your Daughters and Sons to Work Day on Thursday, April 24th, 2014 on the Foggy Bottom and Virginia Science and Technology Campuses. This promises to be a fun-filled day for parent and child! If you are a GW faculty or staff member and have a child or children between the ages of 5 and 18, we encourage you to sign up.

No kids? No problem. Consider working with others in your department to host a session.

The LEAD recommended book for February is Conversations That Get Results and Inspire Collaboration by Shawn Kent Hayashi - Featuring case studies illustrating best practices for engaging managers, peers, and employees to build momentum toward success, this book gives you the tools to create the right conversation at the right time to achieve any business goal.

Don’t forget to recognize your colleagues by submitting a positive vibe!
Faculty Guide and Faculty-in-Residence Program Events
By Anna Mahalak, DSA Planning and Outreach (amahalak@gwu.edu)

Faculty Guides and Faculty-in-Residence plan a variety of co-curricular events and programs each semester to support the residential experience. Below are a few examples from this month.

Jeffrey Sich, Associate Professor of Microbiology, Immunology, and Tropical Medicine

Program: Jerusalem IMAX Film

Description: I purchased 10 tickets for a showing of the new IMAX film Jerusalem at the Smithsonian Museum of Natural History on Saturday, January 18th. A review in the Wash Post said: "It may be as close as a person can get to praying at the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, the Al-Aqsa Mosque and the Western Wall, without actually going there."

Theo Christov, Assistant Professor of Honors, History, International Affairs

Program: State of the Union Watch Party

Description: I am the faculty in residence in Ivory. This is my third year as faculty in residence. I hosted a State of the Union viewing party at my place- we started gathering about half hour before the speech over snacks and refreshments, chatting about expectations from the speech (or the lack thereof). We had about 15 students in attendance and watched the speech in its entirety. As we all know, GW students are the most politically active students of any other campus, so I thought it would be natural to host the event. We chatted afterwards about the speech and sharing our views on it.

Ben Fritz, Associate Professor of Music

Program: An Apple A Day

Description: I have been a faculty guide since 2008. I am an Associate Professor in the Department of Music and GW's Director of Bands - a position I have held since 1990. "An Apple a Day" was an opportunity to interact with Thurston students on a very casual basis. The fundamental goal was to suggest, and model a healthy snack while discussing topics of academic importance. A majority of the discussions centered on the declaration of major (I also passed out some of these forms). The program was a great deal of fun and was quite efficient. We made use of time in the elevators, time waiting for laundry, time taking a quick study break in the student lounge, etc.

Recipe of the Month
By Seth Weinshel, GW Housing (sdweingw@gwu.edu)

Barley and Chorizo Sausage Stuffed Roasted Acorn Squash
Servings: 6 • Size: 1/2 squash 1/2 cup stuffing

Ingredients:
3 acorn squash, cut in half, seeds and fibers removed
olive oil spray (I used my mister)
salt and fresh cracked pepper to taste
1/2 cup uncooked pearled barley, rinsed and drained
1 1/2 cups reduced sodium chicken broth
2 links raw chicken chorizo sausage
1/2 tbsp olive oil
1/2 large white onion, chopped
2 celery stalks, chopped
2 sage leaves, chopped
parsley, for garnish

Directions:
Preheat oven to 350°F. Mist the cut side of squash with olive oil and season with salt and pepper. Place in a baking dish and add 1/4 cup water to the bottom of the pan. Cover and bake 50 minutes. Uncover and bake an additional 10 minutes. Remove from oven and allow to cool before serving. Meanwhile, cook barley in chicken broth according to package directions.

While the barley is cooking, in a large sauté pan cook chicken sausage on medium heat, breaking up the meat into small pieces as it cooks until the sausage is cooked through and is browned. Set aside on a dish.

Add olive oil to the pan and add the onion, sauté 1 minute, add the celery, salt and pepper to taste; cook until celery is soft, about 8 to 10 minutes.

Add sage to the pan, more salt and pepper if needed and cook, stirring 5 minutes, then cook covered for 2 minutes, Return the cooled sausage and the cooked barley to the sauté pan and mix well.

Divide the barley stuffing evenly between the roasted acorn squash, garnish with parsley and serve and place in the oven for 10 minutes.
The Ribbon Project: Program Overview
By Michael Ruybal (US Army), Military and Veteran Student Services (mruybal@gwu.edu)

The Ribbon Project is a one of a kind training module that puts staff and faculty completely within the military environment. It gives every participant the shock and awe value of what it is like to lose their self-identity, forcing them to leave their status in academia at the door. Instructors stress the importance of face to face conversation with service-members. This training session will not cover everything; we highly encourage all faculty and staff to continue to communicate with The Office of Military and Veteran Student Services to advance their own personal and professional growth.

Moving forward, all staff and faculty will also receive “The Ribbon Project Manual,” a resource that can help them better understand some of the issues that student veterans and military personnel face in the ever-changing world of higher education. The TRP manual like all presentation materials will be pre-downloaded onto a set of Dog Tags, one of them being a 4GB USB Drive.

The Ribbon Project: A Reflection
By Andrew Sonn, Student Services (asonn@gwu.edu)

The Ribbon Project is a unique immersion training that was designed by and is facilitated by GW student veterans. GW student veterans share their experiences both in the service and in the classroom. Their stories provide an authentic window on the student veteran experience. More information on the project is mentioned in GW Today's article from the fall semester.

Before I participated in the Ribbon Project in October, I thought I knew a lot about military culture and student veterans. After all, I had worked with GW’s student veterans for the last three years so I thought I had a solid understanding of military culture, and the needs of this student population.

Reflecting on the Ribbon Project experience three months later, I realize how wrong I was, and how much I learned during the session. In fact, it was the most impactful training I have ever participated in.

There will be moments of the training that will bring tears to your eyes; there will be moments that will bring laughter; there will be moments that may surprise you; there will inevitably be moments of illumination; there will be moments that will help you when you work with the growing number of student veterans enrolled at GW.

What is it like to go through basic training? What is it like to be in combat? What is it like transitioning from the service to the classroom? What are the academic and co-curricular needs of student veterans?

All of these important questions are addressed in the Ribbon Project, a faculty and staff training experience created and facilitated by GW student veterans. The Ribbon Project is an intellectual journey, taking the participant from the civilian world to the military world of basic training, deployment, and combat, and finally to the academic arena we all work in. Your own questions will be answered by the project’s instructors, student veterans from various branches, who are, from my experience, eloquent, thoughtful, and eager to provide you with a window into their world narrated in their own voices. I don't want to give much more away - it is an experience and an immersion.

My advice is to take the time to participate in the Ribbon Project this semester – it is a transformative experience, and it is free. There may even be moments you will remember the rest of your life – I have a few.

My information on the project can be found in this GW Today story from last semester.

Please visit the Ribbon Project site for more information and to reserve a seat.
Around DSA (cont.)

New ISO Youtube Video – Watch Now
Watch the new ISO video now available on Discover GW’s Youtube channel.

The International Services Office at the George Washington University facilitates international educational exchange through its services and programs. It serves as the primary administrative, programming, and advising office for the GW international community.

Around GW and Beyond

NASPA Virtual Conference

Attend the 2014 NASPA Annual Conference without leaving your house with the NASPA Virtual Conference! Using the latest in online technology you'll be able to participate in wide-ranging selection of programs and Featured Speakers, including Opening Speaker Wes Moore.

NASPA is excited to offer a groundbreaking learning opportunity to bring together student personnel administrators from around the world for the inaugural 2014 NASPA Virtual Conference! Virtual conference attendees will be on the cutting edge for outstanding educational opportunities, be able to share best practices within a digital platform, are able to ask questions and interact with speakers and attendees live from the comfort of your home or office. Virtual conference registrants will have access to the opening and closing sessions, and some of the hottest featured speakers and educational sessions of the 2014 NASPA Annual Conference. This is a live virtual extension of the 2014 NASPA Annual Conference in Baltimore, MD, with live broadcasts March 16 – 18, 2014. Be ready to engage, network, and learn from your home or office!

Professional Development Tip of the Month: Improve Communication in the Workplace

Here are 7 tips for positive workplace communication:
- It's not what you say; it's how you say it.
- Limit your message list.
- Know your audience.
- Stick to the facts.
- Give frequent updates.
- Never say "no" as a first response.
- Always follow up.

For more information on how to put these tips into action, read this article.

GW’s Teaching & Learning Collaborative:
Upcoming Events

Registration and details are available online.

February 28 - Hybrid and Blended Learning (theory and hands-on practice)

1:00 - 2:00pm. Presentation by Dr. Jennifer Spohrer, Bryn Mawr College

From 2011 to 2013, Bryn Mawr College coordinated a 26-institution study of blended learning in a liberal arts setting funded by a Next Generation Learning Challenges Wave I grant. Jennifer Spohrer, the project coordinator and Bryn Mawr's Coordinator for Academic Technology Initiatives, will provide an overview of blended and hybrid learning, describing best practices and general principles, as well as current findings from Bryn Mawr's project.

2:00 - 4:30pm. Hands-on Workshop (Registration is required for this portion of the afternoon)

Participants will learn about and explore technologies for blended and hybrid learning. The technologies and their use include: simple video creation, basic video editing, and lecture capture.

March 31 - Faculty Honors Ceremony

The Office of the Provost and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs presents the fourth annual Faculty Honors Ceremony on March 31st from 4:00-6:00pm in the Jack Morton Auditorium, 805 21st ST NW. The annual event recognizes faculty achievements and announces the winners of many awards, including the Trachtenberg, Bender, and Amsterdam teaching awards.
In Case You Missed It: DSA in *GW Today*

- **University Welcomes Students Back**
- **TEDxFoggyBottom Dares to ‘Illuminate’**
- **Career Internship Fund Supports Student Success**
- **FutureU Teaches Life Lessons 101**
- **#HistoryLivesHere Residence Hall Naming Contest**
- **Students and Faculty Shine at TEDxFoggyBottom**
In Case You Missed It: DSA in *GW Today*

**GW a Top Peace Corps Producer for Sixth Consecutive Year**

**Eating Disorder Specialist Joins University Counseling Center**

**Sen. Mark Warner Speaks to GW Students**

**University Announces Housing Renovation Plan**
News and Tips from Higher Education and Beyond

The Guardian discusses the growing focus on the “student experience” in “Student experience is the new buzzword, but what does it mean?”

**THE CHRONICLE OF HIGHER EDUCATION**

The role of universities in ensuring career outcomes for students is discussed in “Put Undergraduates to Work, for Their Own Good.”

What new technology tools can be put to use to improve student mental health? The Chronicle of Higher Education looks at a case study in Florida: “Campus Psychological Counseling Goes Online for Students at U. of Florida.”

NPR’s “College Students Can Learn To Drink Less, If Schools Help” highlights the prevention measures universities can implement to combat binge drinking among students.

InsideHigherEd’s “Integrating International Students” asks the question: “So you have X number of international students on your campus. So what?”

**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 to-day’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**.

**Requests for Contributions/Feedback**

Interested in contributing to the DSA Newsletter? Have feedback to offer? E-mail **Anna Mahalak (amahalak@gwu.edu)** with story ideas, events, etc.

The next deadline for submissions is Wednesday, March 19th.