

THE 2016 NACA® NATIONAL CONVENTION IN PICTURES

Delegates Imagine the Possibilities in Louisville!

The NACA® National Convention is always filled with possibilities for booking great entertainment (and saving money while doing it), for student leadership and professional development through educational programs, and for getting in on the act behind the scenes through volunteering. At the 2016 Convention in Louisville, KY, everyone took the idea even further as they were able to Imagine the Possibilities while making plans to bring great programs, ideas and entertainment back to their campuses in the coming months.

Inspiring delegates' imaginations were newsmakers such as Keynote Speaker Bree Newsome, Hall of Fame Award recipient RETTA, diverse showcase offerings, and featured speakers who addressed contemporary topics ranging from how gender is portrayed in popular music to best practices in programming for military-connected students, and much more.

Diversity is always at the heart of the NACA® National Convention and 2016 was no different, as evidenced by the NBC StandUp for Diversity comedians and other showcase attractions, and the diversity of topics in educational programs, as well as by the daily interactive Diversity Connections sessions, Diversity & Desserts social events, and a Black History Month display.

All this and more gave delegates much inspiration to "Imagine the Possibilities" during their four days in Louisville. In the next several pages, enjoy images from the 2016 National Convention as you continue imagining the possibilities throughout the year.

Photography in this section is by Kenneth Breivik.















NACA® Institute Season Is Under Way!

You Still Have Time to Engage in Five Experiential Learning Opportunities This Summer

NACA offers nine Institutes that offer team building, effective training and inspiring programming ideas that will leave you highly motivated to build better programs on your campus in the coming year. Registration is open now, so visit our Institutes home page (http://naca.ws/22G32ZI), check out the Institutes menu and register for the one (or more) you plan to attend! Questions? Contact Dionne Ellison at dionnee@naca.org.



Concert Management Institute DATES: June 28-July 1 **LOCATION:**

University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee WHY SHOULD YOU ATTEND?

Everybody loves a good concert and when you return to campus after the Concert Management Institute (http:// naca.ws/22G75Ff), you'll be planning and implementing large-scale events like a pro. Hands-on concert scenarios and the practical application of skills involved will get you ready to create standingroom-only events back on your campus. You don't produce large-scale events? No matter: the skills you develop in this Institute will serve you well with smaller events, too. This Institute is open to both students and staff and includes a behind-the-scenes tour at Summerfest, the world's largest outdoor summer concert. **COST?** Fees begin at \$515 per delegate.



management, legal issues, student group conduct and other crucial issues involved in working with student organizations.

COST? Fees begin at \$590 per delegate.



INSTITUTE: Student Government-West

DATES: July 14-17

LOCATION: University of Oregon

WHY SHOULD YOU ATTEND? If you serve on your student government, you likely already know that representing a diverse group of students and organizations on campus is an important job. The Student Government-West Institute (http://naca.ws/1PrSeoD) will help make that job easier by exposing you to current leadership development theories while also giving you hands-on experiences learning about personal leadership skills and helping you define the role of student government.

COST? Fees begin at \$515 per delegate.

INSTITUTE: National Leadership Symposium

DATES: July 18-21

LOCATION: University of Tampa (FL)

WHY SHOULD YOU ATTEND? From the introduction of the Social Change Model of Leadership Development in 1996 and the Kellogg Report Leadership in the Making in 2001, to research from the Multi-Institutional Study of Leadership (MSL) from 2006 to today, and with many other contributions in between, the conceptual, theoretical and empirical research base on college student leadership education has substantially grown. We know much more today than ever before about college student leadership development, and it is our responsibility as leadership educators to use this great insight to guide contemporary practice in leadership education. If you participate in the National Leadership Symposium (http://naca.ws/1Si1P5R), you'll



be in a much better position to do that, as the Symposium will focus on intentional and evidence-based pedagogies, practices and considerations that can maximize student leadership learning and development.

COST? Fees begin at \$575 per delegate.



INSTITUTE: Student Government-East

DATES: July 28-31

LOCATION: University of North Florida

WHY SHOULD YOU ATTEND? If you want to offer strong, effective student-driven leadership on campus, the Student Government-East Institute (http://naca. ws/1U9LOCt) is for you. It will help you define the role of student government as a liaison for students and organizations and its interactive program will help you focus on personal leadership development and strengthening your organization on campus. There will also be an advisor's track that will promote networking and idea sharing.

COST? Fees begin at \$540 per delegate.

Do You Have the Perfect Site for the 2017 Student Organizations Institute?

If your campus or institution has the perfect venue for the 2017 Student Organizations Institute, the Institute's planning committee would like to receive your response to its request for proposal (RFP) (http://naca.ws/1W8VUF3) by June 1. The committee is seeking an engaging environment for the event, which generally hosts up to 100 professionals for four days in large group, breakout, and networking sessions. The SOI



also requires meeting space, lodging and meals. Review the Student Organizations Institute Request for Proposals (http://naca. ws/1W8VUF3) for more information.

Questions? Contact Student Organizations Institute team members Kim Pho (kpho@acui.org) at the Association of College Unions International (ACUI) or Telesia Davis (telesiad@naca.org) at NACA.

Update Your NACA® Profile Today!

Do you have a new job title? Have you moved to a new institution? Do you have new professional responsibilities or interests? Then visit www.naca.org, click on the **My Profile** button in the upper right of the page and make any needed changes. Doing so not only keeps our records up to date, it also helps make sure you get the information, communications and connections that are so important to you as an NACA® member. Update today!



New NACA® Members

NACA welcomes these new members, for the period beginning March 24 and ending May 5, 2016.

SCHOOL MEMBERS

Dickinson State University (ND)

ASSOCIATE MEMBERS

National General

How To Concerts LLC (WI) Lake Erie Talent Agency (OH)

National Self-Represented or Solo Artist

3MG Entertainment LLC (GA)
Dan Wilbur (NY)
Glittour Productions (NY)
Kalliope & The Walter Show (AZ)
Kilted Colin (MA)

Licity Collins - Singer Songwriter Speaker (CA) Lux Nexus Productions (CA) Matt Jaffe & The Distractions (CA)

Steve4Magic (CA)

Regional General

Foam N' Glow
"World's Largest Foam Party" (PA)
Frequencydjs (WI)
Get Rite Records LLC (CA)
Kayvee Comedy, LLC (RI)

Regional Self-Represented or Solo Artist

Black Tie Stereo, LLC (PA)
Denim Blue & Miclain Keith (FL)
DownBeat Percussion (NY)
Entertainer Academy (CA)
H Douglas Jones (NY)
Loki Loke (CO)
Mariachi Amor (TX)
ORIGIN LLC (CT)
Rainbow Rhythms (MD)
Sonya Jevette (TX)
Trapdoor Social (CA)
ULTIMIXX (FL)

z*stonish Comedy Hypnotist & Magician (SD)

Not Too Late to Renew Your NACA® Membership!

The NACA® membership year began May 1. Did you forget to renew? The good news is you still can re-up for the year and continue to enjoy the benefits of membership, including members-only discounts on events, professional development, webinars, the NACA® Connect online community, the ENCORE digital library, research grants, leadership opportunities, timely communications and much, much more. To renew online, visit www.naca.org and log into your NACA® profile.

Are You a New NACA® Volunteer?

If so, we're going to need a little information about you, including your contact information, headshot, a brief professional/volunteer bio, and any special accommodations you might require while participating in NACA® events. What's the best way to share this info with us? Just complete the Volunteer Information Request Form (http://naca.ws/1WIsxYF)! It's easy, takes only a few minutes and we won't have to pester you later when we need your bio, headshot or other information.

Questions? Contact Laura Jeffcoat at lauraj@naca.org.

Take Advantage of These New NACA® Member Benefits

Networking at regional and national events, professional development training and saving money through Block Booking have long been benefits of NACA® membership. Now, you have new benefits bringing additional value to your membership and helping you reach your professional development and volunteer goals.

Amplify Your Experience!

You know the value of NACA® membership. Help spread the word to prospective school members and



create a greater, stronger Association. More members mean more resources, more Block Booking opportunities, expanded professional development and more professional networking. Plus, when you participate in the Amplify referral program, you will have an opportunity to enjoy some great incentives. Visit www.naca.org/Amplify to learn more.

What's NEXT for Your Students?

It's graduation season! NACA® NEXT (Navigating Employability and eXperience Tool) helps students



prepare for their next step after graduation - their careers. It has been developed in response to a survey published annually by the National Association for Colleges and Employers (NACE), in which employers identify the skills they are seeking from recent college graduates.

This online tool allows students to evaluate themselves on the skills employers seek and provides them with suggestions for mastering these skills through their involvement in campus activities. As an added option, this tool allows them to have their advisors evaluate them on these same skills. For more information on this member benefit, visit www.naca. org/Members/Next and sign up your students today!

Outstanding Performance? ENCORE Is Ready for You!

School is nearly over. Submit your resources associated with your officer retreat curriculum, officer training materials, and assessment plans to ENCORE (http://naca.ws/1TKFJcS) – make your knowledge and experience available



encore

to other NACA® members as we transition to the next school year. While you're there, find all of our spring webinars ready to watch on demand! ENCORE is a members-only benefit, so log in at www.naca.org, click on the Resources tab and choose ENCORE from the drop-down menu. Then, watch a tutorial video (http://naca.ws/20E7kOd) or click the Launch ENCORE button to begin. Questions? Contact Kayla Brennan (kaylab@ naca.org).

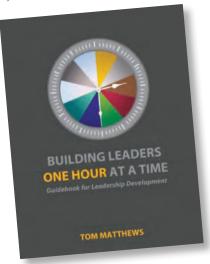
Building Leaders One Hour at a Time

NACA continues its partnership with Tom Matthews and the SUNY-Geneseo GOLD (Geneseo Opportunities for Leadership Development) leadership program to offer the book Building Leaders One Hour at a Time to our members.

"This great resource incorporates cutting-edge ideas on leadership and a variety of methods to help students develop their leadership capacity," said Dr. Corey Seemiller of the Wright State University (OH) Sonoran Center

for Leadership Development. "The vast amount of program design and curriculum included make this a wonderful tool for any leadership educator."

Learn more about the book and order copies online (http://naca. ws/1RU7Uq5). A portion of every book purchased will be donated to the NACA® Foundation to help fund scholarships and research grants for our members. Use promo code NACA when ordering.



PUT NACA.ORG ON YOUR EMAIL SAFE LISTS

To be sure you're not missing important news, updates and member information from NACA, include naca.org on your safe lists for incoming emails.



NACA® Member Benefit: Job Opportunities from The Placement Exchange

NACA partners with The Placement Exchange to promote job opportunities within the field of higher education that are relevant to NACA® membership. Sign in at www.naca.org, then

look under the Member Resources tab to find Higher Ed Jobs. To learn more about an opportunity listed there, click on the job title. If you are interested in applying for the position, visit The Placement Exchange at https://www.theplacementexchange.org.



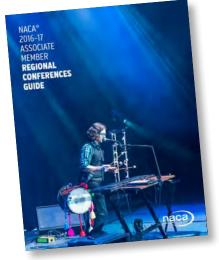
Associates – 2016-2017 Regional Conferences Guide Is Here:

Plan Now for Your Best Season Ever!

It might seem a bit early to begin planning your fall 2016 NACA® Regional Conferences schedule, but it's not. Showcase application, early registration and booth purchase deadlines will be here before you know it! In fact, the showcase submission deadline for NACA® South is June 1!

The **2016-2017 Regional Conferences Guide** (http://naca.ws/1UzaVy7) contains all you will need to know to get started on your most successful fall regional conference season yet, so check it out today!

Please make sure you have read and are familiar with all deadlines and fees listed on the **NACA®** website, as well as policies outlined in the **NACA®** Regional Conferences Guide before submitting. You will be responsible for knowing policies and following them. You're spending your money - take the time to understand where it's going and how the process works, and begin planning your regional conference season today!



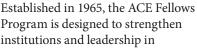
Advertise in the NACA® Spotlight Electronic Newsletter

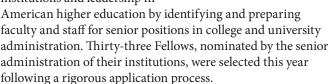
Would you like the opportunity to reach your core customers through the NACA® Spotlight electronic newsletter? If you have questions or are interested in learning more about how to feature your company in this weekly electronic publication, produced in partnership with MultiView, contact Geoffrey Forneret, Director of MultiBrief Advertising, at gforneret@multiview.com or call 469-420-2629 and request a media kit.

NACA® MEMBER NEWS

Kane Named ACE Fellow

The American Council on Education (ACE) has named Cindy Kane, Director of Student Involvement & Leadership at Bridgewater State University (MA), an ACE Fellow for academic year 2016-17.





Kane, a long-time volunteer for NACA, has served on the Association's Board of Directors, in addition to serving in a number of other capacities, most recently as Chair of the Research & Scholarship Group.

www.naca.org facebook.com/thenaca twitter & instagram: Othenaca



Share Your News!

Share what's going on with you professionally and personally in the Member News section of the NACA® Spotlight in Campus Activities Programming® magazine. This feature is designed for students and staff to inform others about what's going on in their lives. It's an easy way to announce a

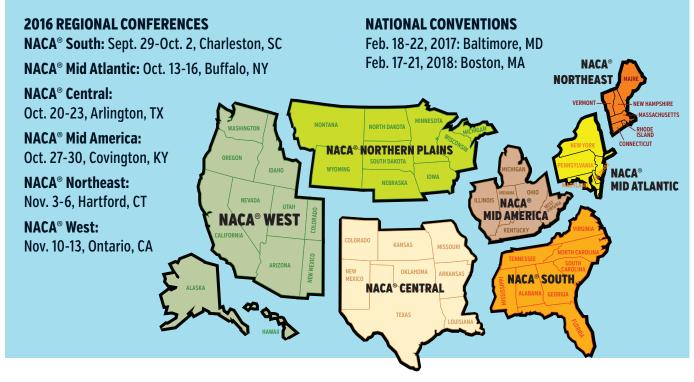
- New job or promotion
- Marriage or civil union
- Birth or adoption of a child
- Graduation
- · Award or other recognition
- Thank-you to another member
- And much more

To submit information, email it to Glenn Farr. editor of Campus Activities Programming®, at glennf@naca.org.



Dates, Locations for Future Conventions, Regional Conferences

Dates and locations have been confirmed for NACA's future National Conventions and regional conferences. Mark your calendars now!



Want to Help Choose Your Region's 2016 Showcases?

Take an active role in determining who will appear on the showcase stages at NACA's fall 2016 regional conferences. Students and staff at NACA® member institutions can apply now! If selected, you'll be reviewing audio/visual and printed material submitted by NACA® associate members and making selections after discussion and deliberation. You'll need a broad view of campus activities and a strong ability to work through the decision-making process as a group member. Follow the links for more:

- NACA® Central: Apply (http://naca.ws/censhowselcomm) by June 1, 2016; contact Jessica Barraclough at jessica.barraclough@washburn.edu.
- NACA® West: Apply (http://naca.ws/wstshowselcomm) by June 1, 2016; contact **Pete Erschen** at peterj@pacificu.edu.
- NACA® Mid America: Apply (http://naca.ws/MAMShowSel-Comm) by June 8, 2016; contact Devon Sanchez-Ossorio at dsanche5@nd.edu.
- NACA® Northeast: Apply (http://naca.ws/nstshowselcomm) by June 15, 2016; contact Casey Mulcare at Casey.mulcare@ bridgew.edu.

(NACA® South and Mid Atlantic application deadlines have passed.)



Write for Campus Activities Programming®!

2016-2017 Editorial Calendar

No matter whether you're a novice or a seasoned writer, Campus Activities Programming* has a place for you. Take a look at the suggested topics in our 2016-2017 editorial calendar and see where your experience or expertise will lead you in contributing an article during the coming year.

These topics are starting points for content and are not meant to be all-inclusive. Do you have additional ideas of your own? Contact Editor Glenn Farr at glennf@naca.org and share them!

BACK TO SCHOOL 2016

Article deadline: June 6, 2016 (This issue is under way.)

Getting Down to Business

(beginning of the year, conference prep, and more)

• A guide to CAMP, negotiations, booking talent and getting the most from interactions between schools and agencies

NACA® Connect-ing

• Showcasing new member benefits, along with networking, traditions, communication, and enhancing professional and volunteer connections.

SEPTEMBER 2016

Article deadline: June 24, 2016

Finding Your Niche

(niche/genre programming)

· Covering everything from films, comedy and weekend programming to late-night, alcoholfree and commuter programming.

Growing Your Programs

• Developing programs that get students out of their dorm rooms and off their electronic devices, developing home-grown programs, getting out of programming ruts and creating programs that impact academic missions.

OCTOBER 2016

Article deadline: July 24, 2016

Supporting Our Students (advising and leadership)

• Setting boundaries and expectations, creating advising styles that work, impactful mentoring relationships, helping students avoid involvement burnout, managing student activism, mental health programming and experiential learning.

Creating Your Path (professional development)

• Maintaining work/life balance, transitioning between student affairs jobs, challenges and successes of being a new student activities director, student affairs practice at different institution types, supervising graduate assistants and making the best impact on your team.

NOVEMBER/DECEMBER 2016

Article deadline: Aug. 26, 2016

Campus Activities by the Numbers (assessment)

• Designing quality surveys, demonstrating student learning outcomes, demystifying assessment, peer audits and straightforward assessment strategies.

Show Us the Money (budgets, sponsorships, etc.)

• Pursuing corporate sponsorships and incentive programs, a big impact with a small budget, finding funds for leadership development and making the most of your student stipend/salary.



JANUARY/FEBRUARY 2017

Article deadline: Sept. 19, 2016

The Online Student Union (new media, social media)

• Programming on Fleek, amping up your social media game, building the online student union, and managing organizations online (using Google, etc.).

Selling Your Brand (marketing, branding, social media)

• Leaving your marketing comfort zone, the best apps for marketing, creating a digital marketing buzz, how to get a second look, and giving your brand a boost

MARCH 2017

Article deadline: Nov. 18, 2016

And Now for Something Completely Different ... (embracing change)

• How small changes can have a big impact, putting theory to practice in leading change, updating campus traditions, implementing staff transition guides, managing transitions for professional positions, and returning to student affairs after working in other areas.

Uncommon Commonalities (diversity)

· Leading a multicultural organization, cultural programming, impact of class, power and privilege on leadership, addressing gender identity through programming, leading events - and leaders - to become more inclusive, balancing between the First Amendment and political correctness, working with students who are veterans and building teams that celebrate diversity at community colleges.

APRIL 2017

Article deadline: Dec. 12, 2016

Cooler Heads Can Prevail (conflict, controversy, risk management)

• Managing conflict, controversial conversations and events, censorship and freedom of speech in programming, empowering students to lead in crises, and understanding risk in a legal context.

Getting Along to Get Ahead (collaboration)

• Collaboration vs. co-sponsorship, cross-campus collaboration, creditbearing co-curricular collaboration models and engaging faculty as part of a co-curricular leadership program

MAY 2017

Article deadline: Jan. 12, 2017

Follow the Leader ... Or Lead the Followers (leadership development)

• Leading your friends, guiding members to greater heights, avoiding common leadership mistakes, reframing task delegation, and recruitment and retention.

What Matters Most? (values, mission, wellness/balance)

 Living and leading with integrity, discovering your own values and/or mission, leading with facts and intuition, discovering passion and purpose, refocusing to rejuvenate, managing family in the midst of student activities chaos, and how to work, love and play when you don't have time.

Have a Research Project in Mind? Grant Application Deadline Is June 12!

If you're a faculty member, staff member or graduate student from an NACA® member institution and you're planning to conduct research on issues related to campus activities and student engagement, you should apply (http://naca.





Julia Broskey (left) and Amanda Papinchock, recipients of a 2015 research grant

ws/24qE3hh) by June 12 for the NACA® Advancing Research in Campus Activities Grants (http://naca.ws/1W7yoHG). Individual researchers and cross-institutional research teams are encouraged to apply, and you can start by reviewing eligibility requirements and the application process. Remember: the application deadline is June 12, 2016, at 11:59 pm PST! Grants will be awarded in three categories and notification to recipients begins Aug. 15, 2016.

Did You Know You Can Support the NACA® Foundation at Any Time?

If you believe assisting students in professional and leadership development is important, you can offer your support to future professionals and leaders through the NACA® Foundation. At your convenience, contribute (http:// naca.ws/1k4P9CB) directly to the NACA® Foundation online, where you can find a complete list of scholarship support opportunities.



Megan Warren, 2015 Illiana Scholarship for Student Leaders recipient

Show What You Know: Present at NACA® Events!

Start sharing your experience and knowledge at NACA's fall regional conferences! The deadline to submit educational sessions is June 17, with deadlines for other NACA® events following throughout the fall and winter.

- Have you perfected a programming board evaluation process?
- Have you succeeded with an innovative program on your campus?
- Maybe you've completed research on a topic of interest to campus activities professionals, or you are using a phone app to engage with students during a program.

Share your knowledge and expertise on these and other relevant topics by submitting a proposal for an educational session at a regional conference, the National Convention, or for a webinar. There are engaging new formats from which to choose, too.

Learn more online (http://naca.ws/1X8Auqm), where you can also find information about the proposal submission process and see specific submission deadlines.

Questions? Contact Dionne Ellison (dionnee@naca.org).



May Deadline for NACA® Foundation Scholarships

The NACA* Foundation offers numerous scholarships that are available to undergraduate and graduate students, student leaders, professional staff and associate members on an annual basis. Deadlines vary according to scholarship, so always check online (http://naca.ws/1LtDAge) to see when to apply for funds to assist with tuition and books or to attend workshops and other professional development events.

May 30 - NACA® Graduate Scholarships: One way the NACA® Foundation demonstrates its commitment to the development of campus activities professionals is through providing scholarships to individuals pursuing graduate work in preparation for, or to enhance, a career in campus activities. NACA offers three graduate scholarships - the New England McCullough Memorial Scholarship Fund, the William E. Brattain Graduate Scholarship Fund, and the Hayward M. "Skip" Daugherty Jr. Graduate Scholarship Fund. The Brattain and the Daugherty scholarships are for students in the Mid Atlantic/Central and Mid Atlantic/ Mid America regions, respectively, while the McCullough scholarship is for students in the NACA Northeast region.

Find complete scholarship descriptions online (http://naca.ws/1LtDAge). Questions? Contact Telesia Davis at telesiad@naca.org.

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University-Daytona Beach (FL)

VOLUNTEER WITH NACA!

Opportunities abound throughout the year. You don't have to attend an event to contribute to the Association. Find out more at www.naca.org or contact Laura Jeffcoat at lauraj@naca.org.

10 OUESTIONS WITH...

Alexandria Gurley

Assistant Director of Campus Events and Coordinator of Multicultural Programs

Quincy University (IL)



1. Leadership/management book you are currently reading?

A book I recently read is Common Sense Management: Quick Wisdom for Good Managers by Roger Fulton. It flows well once you begin and is filled with basic principles, encouragement and advice for anyone newly promoted to a position of leadership or who wants to be in that position soon. It also distinguishes the differences between leaders, supervisors and managers.

2. What recent campus program most exceeded your expectations and why?

Our Tea Party for Women's Empowerment Week. The students on the planning board really went beyond their expected duties to make the event go well. They worked until 2 am sometimes creating handmade decorations for the tables and keepsakes for each young woman to take with her. The presentation was powerful and moving. They also made hors d'oeuvres to be served. It was an amazing event.

3. Favorite campus program in your entire career and why?

An event for Black History Month called The Spoken Word Evolution at Tarrant County College (TX) in 2013. It was a two-part event consisting of five spoken word artists giving performances, then also speaking on a panel about the trajectory of the art form, its history and its roots in black culture. It was a very exciting event that garnered a lot of attention from staff, faculty, administration and students. People continued to talk about it for a couple of weeks after the event.

4. Three things on your desk right now you couldn't live without for work?

- My to-do list. I create a new list at the beginning of every week and use it to keep myself in check for what I have planned and what I still must accomplish.
- A framed photo collage of my family. I often glance at it to keep myself motivated and feel a little touch of "home" at work.
- Speakers to listen to music. I usually listen to Pandora throughout the day, including stations for The O'Jays, Marvin Sapp, or Earth. Wind and Fire.

5. Best teaching tool for your students?

The best teaching tool I can offer my students is myself. I like to offer myself as a living witness and share testimony. The best advice I can give comes from a combination of my own experiences and those I have gathered from my own mentors. I often rely on the quote, "A wise person learns from the mistakes of others. A foolish person learns from his or her own mistakes." Though I would like my students to gain their own individual experiences, I also do not want them to go through anything potentially damaging that can be prevented.

6. Technology that most benefits you at work?

Google products are really helpful to me. especially the Google Calendar. It really helps keep me organized by making my calendar cohesive and sending reminders of upcoming meetings, etc.

7. Most challenging aspect of your job?

All the consistent late nights and lack of sleep. I make up for that on the weekends, and my students help make up for the long days. They offer me warm words of encouragement and conversation, and even sometimes gifts.

8. Tip you can share for balancing work with a personal life?

Draw a line in the sand early on and stick to it. Keep one day (or time block) for yourself and adhere to that sacred time. I specifically do not sync my work emails to my personal cell phone because I like to keep my work separate from my personal life. I check my work emails in the office at work. When I am on vacation. I turn myself completely off from work so I can unwind and rejuvenate.

9. Best programming advice vou've ever received?

To continue to remember what my focus is and what my intentions are in doing this kind of work, which is, and must continue to be, the students.

10. Something unique about your programming board?

I co-advise the Campus Activities Board, a vast majority of whose members are firstyear students (90%). All of them are new, but passionate and sincerely interested. I also work as Coordinator of Multicultural Programs, through which I form separate programming boards for various events. These boards have helped create very diverse experiences and the students involved have been eager to implement new ideas.

CURTAIN CALL

A Billionaire in Zimbabwe

By Mark Nizer



BECAUSE THIS ISSUE OF CAMPUS ACTIVITIES PROGRAMMING®

covers developing budgets, low-cost programming and international programming, I will tell a true story that involves all three.

Dateline, summer 2010 - Harare International Festival of the Arts (HIFA), Zimbabwe, Africa

I love going to this festival. It brings together performers from all over the world. And Zimbabwe is a country sorely in need of some art and merriment. I gladly gave them a low-cost deal, since it was such a great cause and took me to an international location that is different than anything else I have experienced. The final negotiations actually involved me speaking to the promoter long distance as he stood in the middle of the latest violent incident and assured me and my wife he would personally guarantee my safety.

The gig was in an old theater space in an odd strip mall. There was a grocery store next to the venue and people would wheel their shopping carts into the store with black trash bags full of money. Every register had a cash counting machine to rifle through the wads of cash being hauled around.

The Zimbabwean dollar had lost so much value it literally took bags and bags of cash to buy anything. The typical note was in the millions. The per diem they gave me for my meals alone, when laid out next to each other, covered my entire hotel room floor, bed and desk.

I did have to **develop a budget** to make this money last, though. I used the tried and true "measurement" method. Breakfast was free with the hotel. Lunch cost about one and a half inches of cash. Dinner and a beverage were two inches of cash.

As I came closer to concluding my stay, I figured I should buy some gifts for my family back home. The festival included local artisans who were within the HIFA hotel compound. I wanted to support them while bringing back some cool memories.

I got in touch with my handlers and arranged for one of them to exchange \$10 for me to spend on gifts. Everything was crazy cheap and I thought that would be enough to buy three nice gifts. A few hours later, she returned with my nineinch stack of cash.

I headed down to the festival grounds and bought a handdyed tablecloth. It cost only an eighth of an inch! I also bought a beautiful soapstone carved statue for a 16th of an inch and a wooden serving plate for a couple bills off the top. I felt like a billionaire!

I couldn't imagine how I could possibly spend all this money in the one night I had left. I couldn't carry much more stuff with me since my luggage was on the line for weight already, so I bought earrings for my three daughters and myself, a bracelet for my wife and a nice dinner. I then headed over to the VIP tent and started buying drinks for anyone who wanted one. I still couldn't make a dent in this money pile. It was like a genie that kept on cranking out the cash.

Exhausted, I headed back to my room for the night. Once I turned off the lights, I noticed a blinking red light on my phone. I checked the message and it was from the woman who had brought me the stack of money. She was frantic, switching from crying to pleading faster than I had been buying drinks for everyone at the bar. Apparently, she had mistakenly added a couple zeros while converting my money, giving me \$1,000 instead of \$10.

Well, that explained soooo much!

I returned all the money I had left, and when I got back to my room, I fell asleep on my bed, still in Zimbabwe, but no longer a billionaire.

MARK NIZER, a long-time NACA® member, is an award-winning juggler and comedian who incorporates 3D technology into his performances. He is represented in NACA by DCA Productions (www.dcaproductions.com). For more information, visit http://nizer.com or contact him at mark@nizer.com.

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