

AWISA Minutes
Winter Meeting
Friday, January 26th, 2007
Lake Washington Technical College

- Social time was held from 8:30 – 9 am
- 88 members signed in.
- Leana de la Torre, current AWISA Chair, began the meeting at 9 am.
- Welcome by Dr. Mike Metke, Lake Washington Technical College President

Sessions

Session A: Using Technology to Enhance Communication with Students

Presented by Peggy Setoguchi, Ed Sargent and Ludmila Bagriy of Lake Washington Technical College

9:30-10:30

This session highlighted three major tools used by LWTC to communicate with both students and other campus departments: E-Publications, a MySpace page, and Podcasting. The opening discussion allowed attendees to share how offices are currently communicating (email, websites, face to face interaction, phone, mailings, posters, etc.), how frequently (a range of several hours per week to every day), and through whom (staff, work study/work grant students, student volunteers).

There are many motivations for using technology for better communication: a small staff, keep up-to-date with student communication methods, avoid challenges with room assignments for workshops, give student workers or interns a substantial task to be proud of, collaborate, ease of information dissemination, time limitations, repeated questions, and to increase international understanding and awareness.

E-Publications: LWTC's International Student Programs Office sends out newsletters about every two weeks using Microsoft Publisher. This saves money (no costs for printing or buying additional software) and looks professional. The newsletter is in the body of the email, not an attachment, so students are more likely to read it. It is also one page, which is an appropriate length for student attention. Links, calendars and pictures can all be included. Tip: build the newsletter in the "Websites and Email" tool in Publisher, not the "Publications for Print."

MySpace: Benefits of this page include easy access, number of users (54 million people use myspace.com), and it's free. Their office page includes links to LWTC's webpage, information for prospective and current students, activity slide shows, pictures, and event calendars. They also offer online advising/chat sessions. It is possible to restrict users, though LWTC's is an open account which can even be accessed without a MySpace account (the office provides a password). The page is monitored every day, and it can be viewed in different languages. Some audience questions voiced concern about legal issues and the public nature of the site; LWTC received approval from the top. Students also sign a form agreeing to not post hateful or obscene messages. Information about the account is shared at orientation and invites are emailed.

LWTC MySpace page: <http://www.myspace.com/internationalprograms>

Podcasting: This allows mobility of information; PowerPoint workshops are accessible at all times. 73% of MP3 players are iPods, and students without them can still access Podcasts by downloading iTunes, which is free. You can also house your Podcasts on your individual office websites. The number of downloads and subscribers can be tracked. Make sure legal paperwork is in order; speakers must sign releases. Podcasting allows students to view your presentations, workshops, orientations in a time frame that is completely dependent on their schedule. You do not need to arrange rooms and have as many

sessions in person – allowing advisers more flexibility for other responsibilities. Podcasts can be demonstrated in a variety of ways: a simple microphone taping of the person's voice giving the presentation, Powerpoint slides and music interludes, to a video production of your session/workshop. The difference really is in the amount of production time. Once a new version of the Podcast is updated, it's automatically sent out to the individuals who viewed it previously as they are already signed up. To get this Podcasting set up on your campus, it is best to work with your IT department and administration to make sure your process goes smoothly.

Works in progress: Zoomerang surveys. (Tip: don't use trial version; get an account). E-Publications for marketing to prospective students. Virtual reality site (see www.secondlife.com). Letter Pop is another option for newsletter publications online. An audience member asked about using these tools for alumni contact.

Session B: The Next Generation TOEFL

Presented by Jonathan Dietzen, Kaplan English Programs

Please refer to AWISA website (www.region1.nafsa.org/AWISA/AWISA_index.htm) for notes on this session.

Session C: International Recruitment & Marketing Panel

Presented by Peggy Printz, Study USA, Herman Calzadillas, Lake Washington Technical College, Christa Schulz, Skagit Valley College, Ariana Stafford, Everett Community College, Cheryl Hansen, Pacific Lutheran University and Chris Samia, Bellevue Community College

Panel dialogue will be attributed to speaker by their initials; CSa = Chris Samia, CS = Christa Schulz.

[CH]: Cheryl emphasized market research and focusing on your school's strengths

[CSa]: Encouraged a strong, accurate identification and analysis of market. Urged recruiters not to expect immediate results. When he is recruiting, he emphasizes connections with Microsoft and Boeing, who hire many international students. Encouraged visiting countries and markets where one is welcome as well as a combination of University and Community College fairs, or fairs with both universities and community colleges being positive.

[HC]: Noted that American Association of Community Colleges (AACC) sets aside time during their fairs to allow one to speak with agents.

[PP]: Noted that at AACC and IIE fairs, there are booth size restrictions and many fairs don't allow photos to be posted

[CH]: Stated all back banners must be correct. Be sure that the correct Chinese language is used, for example. Cheryl uses in-country alumni at every international fair at which she recruits.

She even translates the text in the Nordic countries. If you can speak Norwegian in Norway, it makes all the difference. Work with your alumni office to get in-country alumni to work at the overseas fairs. Notify alumni in country that you will be visiting their country; invite them to visit your booth. Also, ask them to spread the word to potential students and others about your visit!

[CSa]: Keep extra recruitment materials with you in case your luggage is lost! You don't want to end up standing at an empty recruitment table.

[AS]: Attended an AACC fair, and went on to attend Governor Gregoire's tour, then the "Oh America" tour. Warned that recruiters should be aware of luggage weight restrictions.

[CH]: Had brochures printed IN CHINA so as not to worry about shipping. Encouraged recruiters to research this option, as can save time and money.

[HC]: Focus on localizing translations, be certain that translations are correct, choosing AACC was positive because they provided translators who were very young and enthusiastic.

Spoke of the "human investment" – some students overseas don't know about community colleges, and may not have community college systems in their home countries.

[CH]: Try fairs, agents – try everything to find out what works best. Go into classrooms; arrange information sessions in hotel meeting rooms in the evenings.

First sell yourself, then your institution, then the programs that matches your student's needs. Stated that the recruitment trips are not a vacation, but rather demand 16 hour days, from breakfast to evening meetings. In Asia, the parents often make the decision where students go to school.

[CSa]: Encouraged citing statistics, creating a spreadsheet with all of the recruitment fairs in any given month and then select the ones you will attend. Some fairs are sponsored by agents.

[HC]: Mentioned monitoring results. His last trip cost \$19,000. Administration often looks for immediate results – are the results enough to justify the trip? Follow-up is key.

[CS]: On application, have a section where students indicate where they found out about your school. Did they find out about your school from an agent AND a fair, for example?

[PP]: Student intake interviews can be helpful as sometimes incoming students indicate how they found out about your school at a fair. At other times, they can't recall and just say "a friend" or "internet" even if they've met you!

[CSa]: However, "word of mouth" to a new international student could really be a fair. Such interviews may not be inaccurate and destroy your marketing plan.

[Audience question]: Have any panelists done a cost/benefit analysis of attending fairs?

[CS]: Consider what is giving you the best return. Believes sometimes seeing a student in person make you stand out vs. just seeing "Skagit Valley CC" in print doesn't tell the whole picture.

[CH]: Codes all international student inquiries. Found face to face interaction the very best marketing tool. Fairs, agents, print media – do a combination of it all. Be sure to track inquiries.

[HC]: Flying over and shaking someone's hand, being there in person makes all the difference.

[CH]: Some schools give recruiters marketing funds based on how many new international students have enrolled.

[Audience question]: Is it better to go to the same fair year after year and go on repeat visits, or to attend new fairs and visit new places?

[CH]: Fairs are new since 10 years ago. At Pacific Lutheran University, they travel to Norway every year, and are trying different fairs as well.

[HC]: Plan to participate in other fairs and recruitment travel in addition to AACC now that the contacts and knowledge to go individually have been established.

[CS]: Very useful to go into embassies. On last trip to Korea, she was able to see visas being issued and could see that process first hand. AACC is a "whole package tour" including a fair.

[PP]: There are many fairs available: Linden Tours, Oh America, AIEF, IEFT in Turkey, Expo Estudiante in South America

[CSa]: Agents are good for in-country follow-up

[CH]: Leaves a copy of student information card she has collected in country with her agents for them to follow up.

[Audience question]: What is your opinion of agent fairs?

[CH]: Miami Beach, LA, Berlin are agent fairs. The key is follow-up. If you don't follow up, they will forget about you.

[PP]: Print media: why is it so valuable?

You can take print home and read it with your family. Print indicates stability and permanence. When your program is featured in a brochure or anything in print, you will be remembered. Translated material is key. Agents and U.S. advisors love to have printed materials to give students.

[CH]: Print allows you to show a map of your campus – i.e., in Norway they show a Viking ship and Norwegian flag displayed on campus

[CSa]: Web creates a demand for print. Parents and grandparents need print.

[PP]: Print media also increases prestige and drives traffic to your website.

[CS]: In Japan, like to see more branding, tailored marketing

[HC]: In Taiwan, brochures need to be more flashy and vibrant. The standard U.S. brochures may be too dull.

[PP and panelists]: Print ads:

- ✓ Big photos, less text
- ✓ Examples were given of ads which improved every year
- ✓ Including a rank or an award is very important
- ✓ In Asia, students may not be as involved in outdoor activities, so using photos of the outdoors may not speak to them
- ✓ Don't let students be too casual in the photos (i.e. not sitting on the grass – doesn't portray a serious academic setting)
- ✓ Name of school should be predominant and spelled out
- ✓ Maps are important (for example, to show close proximity of Tacoma to Seattle)
- ✓ Use student testimonials

Session D: Tax Issues for International Students and Faculty

Presented by Donald B. Walter, CPA, and Ebon Ameen of GlobalTaxHelp.com

A note about this session's minutes

As I am not a tax expert, I would like to avoid the danger of having misunderstood any of the session's information and further passing along inaccurate facts. I have provided a minimal description of *my understanding* of the topics (thoroughly researched, but not expert advice!) and direct links to the relevant IRS website sections. This will hopefully provide a good resource for advisers researching tax issues.

The Substantial Presence Test: Determining Tax Status

Foreign nationals living in the U.S. may be taxed as either nonresident aliens or resident aliens depending on how much time they have spent here. It is possible to be in a nonresident status for immigration purposes *and* be considered a resident for tax purposes. One way to determine one's tax status is to take the "Substantial Presence Test." It should be noted that students in F-1 and J-1 statuses are exempt from the test for five years. This does not mean they are exempt from paying taxes; they are simply temporarily exempt from having to consider this test, which affects tax rates. For more details about the test, visit:

<http://www.irs.gov/businesses/small/international/article/0,,id=96352,00.html>

Form 8843: Statement for Exempt Individuals and Individuals with a Medical Condition

F-1 and J-1 students and J-1 scholars who are still in their "Exempt" phase must submit Form 8843 to the IRS. This is regardless of whether or not they were employed or will submit an income tax return. This form does not require a Social Security number or Individual Tax Identification Number. It is not clear what the penalty is for not filing, but it may be important in determining a student's filing status, especially of that student will be here a long time and potentially change tax status and/or visa status. For more information and a link to the form, visit:

<http://www.irs.gov/businesses/small/international/article/0,,id=96352,00.html>

Social Security and Medicare Withholding

During a student or exchange visitor's "Exempt" phase social security and Medicare taxes should not be withheld. For more details, visit:

<http://www.irs.gov/publications/p519/ch08.html#d0e9552>

If these taxes were withheld in error, the employer should be contacted about reimbursement. If this route does not work, here are more details about applying for a refund:

<http://www.irs.gov/faqs/faq-kw130.html>

Forms W-4 and 8233

Forms to complete when accepting employment.

Form 8233 *Exemption from Withholding on Compensation for Independent (and Certain Dependent) Personal Services of a Nonresident Alien*. This form and instructions should be reviewed before completing Form W-4.

<http://www.irs.gov/pub/irs-pdf/f8233.pdf>

Instructions for Form 8233

<http://www.irs.gov/instructions/i8233/ch02.html>

Form W-4

<http://www.irs.gov/pub/irs-pdf/fw4.pdf>

Advisor Liability

Many advisors feel that they, or their institutions, may be held legally liable for offering tax help to their students. GlobalTaxHelp.com could not address this directly – they are not tax lawyers – but did note that a company like H&R Block does not use an entirely CPA staff and does not seem to accrue liability. Generally, the only person/entity who should accrue liability is the filer themselves or a person who signs as having prepared the returns on the filer's behalf.

* At the very least, advisors should keep this in mind: our job is mainly to assuage a student's fears and help them make sense of what they have before them. Even if an advisor does not want to (or is not able to) tell a student what to put in a given field on a tax form, an advisor should always feel comfortable explaining to a student *how* to fill out a form and providing them with resources.

General Advice

Anyone who sends multi-year tax returns to the IRS at the same time (i.e. returns for both 2006 and 2005) should send them in separate envelopes. People should also send tax returns via certified mail or FedEx for proof of mailing. Copies of tax returns should always be saved.

General Resources

- **Internal Revenue Service:** <http://www.irs.gov/>
- **Publication 519:** U.S. Tax Guide for Aliens at <http://www.irs.gov/pub/irs-pdf/p519.pdf>
- **Publication 597:** Information on the U.S. - Canada Income Tax Treaty can be found at <http://www.irs.gov/pub/irs-pdf/p597.pdf>
- **Publication 901:** U.S. Tax Treaties at <http://www.irs.gov/pub/irs-pdf/p901.pdf>

- **2005 Foreign Student and Scholar Text:** This is a guide for volunteers trained to help people prepare their returns. The language is more “user-friendly” than that in the various IRS Publications and it covers the same topics. <http://www.irs.gov/pub/irs-pdf/p678fs.pdf>
- **VITA:** Volunteer Income Tax Assistance Programs are volunteer-run, community tax assistance groups. Seattle locations are listed here: <http://www.seattleu.edu/asbe/acct/vita.asp>.
- **Seattle Public Library:** The Seattle Public Library will offer free tax preparation services. Reservations are required at some locations. <http://www.spl.org>

Lunch:

Lunch was enjoyed in the Lake Washington Technical College Chef City Grille, managed and run by Culinary Arts program students, the Lake Washington Technical College cafeteria, or nearby restaurants.

1:00 – 1:15 **International Dessert Buffet and coffee service**

1:15 - 1:25 **Study Abroad Scholarship Update from Mariah Ortiz** (posted on AWISA website)

1:25 - 2:15 **Advisor to Advisor—Updates from Peggy Setoguchi**, the new Regulatory Ombudswoman for Region 1

Immigration Quiz was given – see “Traveler’s Pursuit” document (on AWISA website)

Peggy Setoguchi and Abe Schafermeyer, 2007 NAFSA Region I Regulatory Ombuds were announced, and their Ombud job responsibilities were outlined:

Immediate Case Intervention:

RegBud Contact: Abe Schafermeyer
Assistant Director
Office of International Programs
University of Oregon
Eugene OR 97403-5209

Phone: 541-346-1215

Fax: 541-346-1232

E-mail: schafea@uoregon.edu

Contact Preference: E-mail. He will contact you back via phone as needed.

Note: Cases will be sent in batch on Tuesdays to NSC. Please use IssueNet to document your case information.

General Immigration/Advising Questions/Conference Planning:

(Back up for Immediate Case Intervention when Abe is out)

RegBud Contact: Peggy Setoguchi
Career Specialist, International Programs
Lake Washington Technical College
Kirkland, WA 98034

Phone: 425-739-8160

Fax: 425-739-8145

E-mail: peggy.setoguchi@lwtc.edu

Contact Preference: E-mail. She will coordinate a time to phone you and discuss the case/situation in person. Please provide as many details as possible in the e-mail for correct response. Will try to call back by no later than Friday of each week.

Immigration updates:

- ✓ As of January 3rd, 2007, a passport is needed for flying across the Mexican / Canadian borders. As of 2008, a passport will be necessary for land border crossings.
- ✓ A question was raised re H-F change of status. There was a student wanting to go to Canada for a visa. Apparently the consulate in Vancouver has been very receptive to change of status and new visa issuance.
- ✓ Question re I-515A – an advisor had experience with 2 students not being issued this when they didn’t have the proper documentation, a different form was issued.

- ✓ Reinstatement has been taking much longer than usual: 5 months before approval in some cases.
- ✓ The question was raised whether or not schools would change the start date of an I-20 in order to accommodate a student's schedule. The answer was NO.
- ✓ City U had a question re OPT. If a graduate student is enrolled in a 15 credit certificate program, with 6 credits taken per quarter, does this meet the requirements for OPT. YES!
- ✓ Question re. reinstatement – if students have dates of I-20 extended, extension of I-20 is not for academic probation. Could possibly be solved by a change of program. One must also consider that if student has been failing consistently, any extension application will be denied.

2:15 - 3:00 **Business Meeting**

Announcements:

Position Openings:

- ✓ Pierce College – 60% Student Support and Activities Specialist. Position will be temporary, moving to full time.
- ✓ Seattle Central CC – Assistant Director of Marketing – full time. Assistant – part time. Contact David Roseberry if interested.
- ✓ Shoreline CC – Part time hourly Administrative Assistant position

Many of you know Mary Fetterly, International Admissions Coordinator in the University of Washington's Office of Graduate Admissions. Recently both her sister and brother-in-law passed away, leaving behind four children between the ages of 7 and 17. If you would like to send cards, they can be sent to Graduate Admissions, Box 352191, Seattle, WA 98124.

A trust account has been established for those wishing to assist the couple's children. Contributions to the "Stussy Children Fund" can be made at any Bank of America branch, account no. 4570 0372 8262.

For additional information, you can contact Astrid Rivera in Graduate Admissions at 206.616.0367 or astririv@u.washington.edu.

Our thoughts and prayers go out to Mary and her family during this difficult time.

- ✓ Next AWISA meeting to be held Friday, April 27th at South Seattle Community College. The AWISA positions of Treasurer and Secretary / Chair Elect will all be voted on. Think about nominations!
- ✓ Mabelle Allman brought up revisiting the process by which AWISA meeting locations are chosen. Instead of deciding live at the spring meeting, we could decide on meeting locations via email. This could lead to more schools being involved in hosting.
- ✓ Cheryl Hansen of Pacific Lutheran University announced that with Governor Gregoire's support, CTED has created a new position promoting Washington State as an international education destination. Cheryl will begin her position on February 12th as the Education Program Manager. The goals of the newly created position will be to promote international education and international student exchanges in Washington State. Cheryl plans to work closely with Study WA in their efforts to increase visibility of Washington State. Future ideas include continued trade missions, a booth at the NAFSA national conference in Washington DC in 2008. CTED is in the process of opening a 7th overseas office in Beijing in the coming weeks and will work toward promoting schools. She plans to visit WA schools and their international Marketing Directors – wants to bring WA state to a whole new level!
- ✓ Mabelle Allman announced the Washington Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers (Wacrao) meeting on March 16th. Details were sent out via email to the AWISA Listserv.

AWISAns are encouraged to attend. Mabelle said that it will be very pertinent and valuable to AWISAns. There will be sessions on helicopter parents, technology and reaching students, and Ginger Villanueva will be doing a training re international students. The cost to attend is only \$15.

- ✓ Treasurer's Report: Current balance is \$2,888.00. \$1,045 in membership fees have been deposited.

3:15 **Wine Tasting, presented by David Coan, Sommelier/Service/Hospitality Instructor**

AWISAns enjoyed a wine tasting pairing local and regional wines with chocolate truffles and delicious cheeses!