



NAFSA REGION I NEWS February 2016

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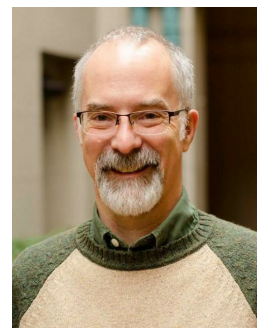
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Welcome New Members of the Region I Team

We are very excited to welcome several new team members to the Region I Team! Join us in thanking the following for volunteering their time and contributions to the region.



International Student and Scholar Services Knowledge Community Representative, Brad Huggins, Bellevue College

International Enrollment Management (IEM) Knowledge Community Representative, Perri Schodorf, Bellevue College

Two-Year/Community College Knowledge Community Representative, Jennifer Falzerano, Lane Community College

Membership/Outreach Representative, Mary Ellen Brewick, University of Idaho

Regulatory Ombudsman - Scholar Issues, David Brandt, Portland State University



Alaska Conference Co-Chair, Sarah Reed, Oregon State University.

Regulatory Ombudsman - Student Issues, Catherine Creason, South Seattle College

Teaching, Learning, and Scholarship, Sandi Janush, University of Washington

Advocacy Representative, Amanda Fletcher, Edmonds Community College

Local Activities Coordinator, Carol Holz, University of Alaska Fairbanks.

Team Member Spotlight: Chair, Robert Rigg

Tell us about yourself and the work you do at Washington State University?

I am the SEVIS Coordinator and PDSO at WSU - I am the university's lead F-1 and J-1 student regulatory expert and I manage WSU's SEVIS compliance and the software we use as part of maintaining compliance. I have been in this role for 12 years now, expanding my scope over time.

What excites you the most about your role?

Many things - meeting students from about 100 different countries, regulations and technology that are constantly changing which keeps me learning and adapting/updating constantly, having one foot in the tech world and the other in the advising regulatory word.... Are three that come to mind.



Why did you decide to join the NAFSA Region I team?

NAFSA has been a big part of my learning and professional development over the years and it was time for me to pay that forward - also it is a great experience for me as it pushes my me to do new things that are outside of my day to day duties at work.

Can you tell us about your participation on the NAFSA Region I team?

I joined the region 1 team as the KCISSS rep a few years ago, but have been presenting sessions and CEP workshops for many years now. Being asked to serve in the chair stream was a great honor for me, and I will do the very best I can in this position.

What are some ways we can encourage more people to get involved in NAFSA Region I activities?

One of my main goals for my chair year is to get more people involved in helping the team with planning and activities over the year - so many people offer to volunteer or be part of the team, but the team has a limited number of positions. Having more volunteers be on the team's committees and mentor with current team members can have the great effect of getting more individuals excited about NAFSA, attend more events, and become future leaders themselves. Also this year we are giving a big push to more robust communication out to the region, improving our presence on social media, enhance our newsletter, and find more ways to have events happen throughout the year other than just at the annual regional conference.

How did you end up in the field of International Education?

This would be a very long story indeed - let me keep it short and say that it was not something I had ever aspired to, although I have always been very passionate about cultural understanding and making the world a more peaceful and respectful place. It was my technical skills that brought me into this field (having been self-employed for most of my life), coming aboard right as SEVIS was created and new technology was needed to help with SEVIS reporting and compliance. I started as a consultant with my current office, being hired to examine and give advice on their current practices and systems... and as I was finishing up my contract I was encouraged to apply for the brand new SEVIS Coordinator Position.... It took some persuading as I enjoyed being self-employed, but I took the job and here I am 12 years later still loving what I do.

What do you most look forward to every day when you are heading to work?

The challenges and fast pace of the office - never a dull moment and definitely never a time where I do not feel like I am doing something important and needed. And that I know every day I am doing something that helps students, and in some small way am helping to make the world a better place by helping others have a good intercultural experience.

What is your favorite thing to do outside of work?

Spend time with family (have two daughters age 11 and 17), play bass guitar in a local band, home brewing and home roasting coffee.

News of Cecile Mitchell's Passing

We are saddened to share that a beloved colleague in our field has passed. Cecile Mitchell (1938 - 2015) passed peacefully at home in Anchorage, Alaska, on Sept. 24, 2015, surrounded by her family and her best friend, Henny Newcomb of Phoenix, Ariz. Born on June 29, 1938, in Chewalla, Tenn., Cecile was the oldest daughter of Mae and Cletus York. She moved to Anchorage in 1973 and worked for the University of Alaska, Anchorage, for 39 years, most recently as the Director of Admissions and the Foreign Student Advisor. Cecile had a passion for education and touched the lives of hundreds of foreign students who attended UAA. She is survived by her husband of 59 years, Ernest; two children, seven grandchildren, and one great-granddaughter, as well as her brother and sister. Cecile will be greatly missed. A graveside service was held at Memorial Gardens in Bartlett, Tennessee on October 3, 2015.

Survey on Travel Information Needs

Hello Region I NAFSA Members,

This is Brad Huggins at Bellevue College. I've served on the Region I Team in the past as the International Education Leadership Knowledge Community Representative and as the IT and general support volunteer for several conferences. In the footsteps of the fantastic Catherine Creason, I will be taking on the role of KCISSS Rep for Region I.

I will be working with the team to bring your resources, collect your thoughts and needs in this area and plan to serve you to the best of my ability in support of our International Student & Scholar Resources, Programming and other needs. Please feel free to [email me](#) and say hello!

I'd also like to passing along a survey about Travel Information Needs for your students. Please take a minute to fill this out and we can use this information to assess what kind of resources we should consider for supporting your students and scholars around travel. Read below for more information!

NAFSA's ISS-RP Committee Needs Assessment Survey on Travel

Are you overburdened by standard international student or scholar travel questions during the holiday season? Are you a supervisor who would like travel resources developed for your new and seasoned international advisers?

Let NAFSA's ISS-RP Travel Subcommittee support you by letting us know the most valuable resources that we should prioritize developing in our 2016 Needs Assessment Survey on Travel. The survey will take approximately 10 minutes.

[CLICK HERE to access the survey!](#)

Knowledge Community Updates

International Student and Scholar Services (ISSS) Knowledge Community Updates

SEVP Publishes Stakeholder Issues Response Report

In response to feedback and suggestions receiving during the NAFSA 2016 Annual Conference & Expo open meeting "Discussion of Trends and Issues" with SEVP Director Lou Farrell, the Student and Exchange Visitor Program (SEVP) issues a [Stakeholder Issues Response Report](#). The report addresses 15 key issues for students, schools, and Designated School Officials, including Form I-17 update processing times,

nontraditional programs, and the temporary absence process.

NAFSA to Host Government Connection Event on J-1 Exchange Visitor Program

On Thursday, February 4, 2016, at 3:00pm (EST), NAFSA will host a Government Connection event on the [J-1 Exchange Visitor Program: What, When, Why, and How to Report Incidents to the DOS](#). During this free live event, Mark Howard from the Department of State's Office of Private Sector Exchange Administration (OPA) will provide additional guidance on reporting J-1 exchange visitor program incidents to the department.

Extension of stay of the STEM OPT Vacatur

On January 23, 2016, the District Court granted DHS' motion to extend the stay of the vacatur of the STEM OPT rule from February 12, 2016 until May 10, 2016. [Read the court's order and memorandum opinion explaining why the court granted the extension.](#)

USCIS & IRS Sends Out Scam Warning: Keep Your Students and Scholars Informed

USCIS and the IRS recently issued a scam warning notifying stakeholders of con artists who pose as IRS officers and aggressively threaten their targets to get them to immediately pay a fine or fee. These con artists also often pose as "immigration officers," FBI agents and other government officials. At Portland State University there have been a number of students and scholars who have received these scam calls. The students reported that the scammers were very aggressive, persistent (even called back repeatedly) and sometimes frightening. Anyone who receives such a call should just hang up and report it to the Treasury Inspector General for Tax Administration by calling 800-366-4484 or visiting www.tigta.gov. Also, report it to the Federal Trade Commission at www.ftc.gov/complaint.

For more information on tax scams, [watch this video](#).

Visit uscis.gov/avoidscams or uscis.gov/eviteestafas to learn how to recognize and avoid immigration scams and find authorized legal services.

Job Postings in the Region

Visit the NAFSA Region I Job Board for the most up to date job postings in the region. [Click here!](#)



NAFSA Region I Team

[Visit our website](#) and connect with us on social media at the links below.

