

Region III Newsletter

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Report on Region III Conference

-- Brenda Robati, Past Region III Chair



I want to begin by thanking everyone for their numerous contributions, both large and small, that helped to make the Region III Conference in New Orleans a great success! I want to add a special thanks to the local arrangements team headed by Dr. Janice Thomas, who made it all appear seamless. A total of 388 people had the opportunity to participate in 6 pre-conference workshops, Academy Mentor and Participant training sessions, 2 pre-conference sessions on "How to do that in SEVIS", 49 concurrent sessions, one "slightly" off-Broadway presentation of "SEVIS hits Broadway", and an all conference event at the Generations Hall featuring Sunpie Barnes. I am happy to report that this event saw a record number of NAFSAns dancing way past quitting time. What a great event! Of the 388 registrants, I am pleased to report that this was the first Region III conference for 71 participants. This conference also marked the launching of the NAFSA Academy. Region III was pleased to have 13 participant programs and 13 mentors. By all accounts, this promises to be an exciting program that will bring new voices to NAFSA and new opportunities to serve our members.

Thanks to the generosity of Region III members, this year saw a record amount raised by the Region III Silent Auction and the raffle of a stunning pearl necklace donated by Whisnant Galleries of New Orleans and a large print donated by the local artist Robert Guthrie. The monies will go toward travel grants for future Region III conferences. With budget cuts and the unfortunate downward trend in international student enrollment, these monies will go far to ease the burden of travel and conference attendance. THANKS to all Region III NAFSAns who participated in the raffle and who donated items for the silent auction. [continued on page 2]

Report on Region III Conference, continued

The most remarkable thing about this year's conference was the number, variety, and cross-sectional appeal of our concurrent sessions. We offered an unusually high number of sessions, with a record number of each appealing to more than one interest section. Even more remarkable was the range of presenters from lawyers to adjudications officers to students—all sharing their expertise and experiences to enrich fellow NAFSAns. In fact, the three sessions nominated for Best of Region and for possible presentation at Baltimore in 2004 demonstrated this diversity in both material and presenters. Nominated sessions were: "When Cultures Meet and the Bubble Bursts"—presenters Olesuen Ekunwe, Arnald Fosah, Eudaline Hell, Vanya Kasakova, and Maryam Rashid; "Moral Turpitude: The Consequences of Criminal Activity and Misrepresentation for Non Immigrants"—presenters David Ware and Debbie Danna; and "The Redesign of an Intensive English Program: A Case Study"—presenters Dr. Alan D. Lytle and Suzanne Lee. Best of luck in the selection process. I look forward to the opportunity to see one of these wonderful sessions at the annual conference.

I'm already looking forward with anticipation to Corpus Christi in 2004 and Colorado Springs in 2005! I hope to see each of you there.

Congratulations to the NAFSA-Region III Grant & Scholarship Recipients!

The following conference participants were awarded either a scholarship or grant to attend the 2003 Regional Conference in New Orleans. Money to support the scholarships comes from the Silent Auction and Raffle proceeds. The recipients were acknowledged during the Business Breakfast on Friday morning. Congratulations to the following scholarship and grant awardees!

First-Time Attendee Registration Scholarships

Melita Bizette, Louisiana State University-Baton Rouge
Brian Cantrell, Educational & Cultural Interactions, Inc.
Gillian Gietz, Texas Intensive English Program
Margaret McCall Emis, University of Arkansas
Joy M. Ernst, John Brown University
Eudaline Patricia Hell, Henderson State University
Christy D. Honeycutt, Spring International Language
Center at the University of Arkansas
Vanya Kasakova, Henderson State University
Heather Lechner, Tulane University
Hye-Yeon Lim, The University of Texas at Austin
Cornell McClellan, University of Arkansas
Patricia A. McElhaney, Texas A&M University

Lauren Marie Moise, Louisiana State University
Ethel Jeannine Nelson, Louisiana State University
Alicia Ulloa, Coastal Bend College
Alan Wang, Henderson State University
Bonito Fofeyin Yengo, Henderson State University

Financial Need Travel Grants

Gwendolyn Marie Burgess, Alvin Community College
Lisa Currie, Howard College
Eudaline Patricia Hell, Henderson State University
Vanya Kasakova, Henderson State University
Alan Wang, Henderson State University
Bonito Fofeyin Yengo, Henderson State University

Region III Welcomes New Team Members !

-- Michele Stelljes, Chair



Congratulations Dan Erickson! Region III Chair-Elect

In typical Dan Erickson manner, he arrived in New Orleans with his sleeves rolled up and ready to do whatever he could to make the conference in New Orleans a success. Dan will serve Region III until 2006 in the roles of Chair Elect, Chair and Past Chair. Dan comes to this position with an attitude that has earned him the respect and love of Region III. Dan is a people person and an energetic colleague committed to our region. Professionally, Dan's philosophy is "Its all about the students". It's time to focus on the lives of our students and focus less on our troubles with technology.

Dan's commitment to students is best seen in the numerous people to people programs he has implemented at Louisiana Tech. "We want the arriving international student to experience an immediate shift from their harrowing experience getting here – from the anxiety to a genuine welcome". Tech has a student waiting at the airport with a hearty welcome, a ride to a home cooked meal and a place to sleep. "We know that what our students go through to get here" and he is committed to get students past all the delays, the long hours travelling and intimidation at the border with person to person hospitality.

Dan has been Director of the International Student Office at Louisiana Tech since 1991. He has been the Louisiana State Rep (1993-1995) and the COMSEC Rep (1995-1997). He has helped many of us with our practical challenges through his presentations on the "one person office" community programming, regulatory issues, ethics, and crisis management.

Dan finished his masters degree at the University of Minnesota before teaching in China for three years in the mid-1980's, first teaching English at Beijing University and then International Business at Jilin University. He returned to teach two years at ELS in Minnesota, moved on for a short time to the University of Houston before finally settling at Louisiana Tech in the pine forest country of North Louisiana. Dan lives in Ruston with his wife Dawn, Director of a graduate dietetic and nutrition program at Tech, and their daughter Emily whom they adopted several years ago from China.

Effective January 1, 2004 six new members joined the Region III leadership team. These colleagues will serve the region for two years in their capacity as member representatives implementing the NAFSA strategic plan at a regional level.

ADSEC Representative: Julie Sinclair, Director of International Services at Oklahoma City University replaces outgoing Sandra Rodriguez, President of SDR Educational Consultants. Julie has served on the team in capacity of State representative and will represent the Oklahoma branch of our membership in this new capacity.

ATESL Representative: Dave L Burns, International Student Counselor at the University of Houston Language and Culture Center will begin his term representing ESL members. Dave takes over as Jane Hughey, of the English Language Institute at Texas A&M University, rotates off the Region III team.

COMSEC Representative: Rebecca Brown, Director of International Student Services at Dallas Baptist University will relieve long time COMSEC Rep. Joan Litzenberger. Joan will return to University of Houston with less on her plate so she can tackle renovating her home and welcoming new hospitality families.

Arkansas State Representative: Lisa Shoemake, Interim Director of International Programs at the University of Central Arkansas will begin her term as Katherine Vlassek rotates off the team. Katherine, Director of International Programs at Henderson State University, chaired one of our region's best sessions this year. "When Cultures Meet and the Bubble Bursts" was an excellent session with a panel of students sharing their experiences in a challenging way. Kathleen has been a great representative for Arkansas and we welcome her successor.

Oklahoma State Representative: Tamara Newell, International Student Advisor, Oklahoma Christian University, will step in as Julie Sinclair becomes ADSEC representative.

South Texas State Representative: Kristalina Karabunarlieva, Program Manager at the University of Houston Office of International Admissions replaces Sylvia Medel, formerly of University of Texas at San Antonio and currently of the University of Texas Houston, Health Sciences Center.

F-1/J-1 Student CIPP Representative: Laura Hammons, International Student Advisor, International Student Services, Texas A&M University, will become our F-1/J-1 Student CIPP Representative. Laura takes over this position as Deane Willis rotates off the team.

-- Continued on page 4

Region III Welcomes New Team Members (continued).

J-1/H-1B/TM and IMM Scholar CIPP Representative: **James L. Nesmith**, International Faculty Counselor, Texas Tech University, will serve as the J-1/H-1B/TM and IMM Scholar CIPP Representative. Jim will take over for me, Michele Stelljes. Both Deane & I are especially happy to have Laura and Jim joining the team.

Development Chair: **Steve Bell**, Program Coordinator, International Office, University of Texas—Austin will replace the irreplaceable John Singleton as Development Chair. John, who is Director of International Student Services at Texas Christian University, will move off the team to serve in a national role on the NAFSA membership committee.

Treasurer: **Cristen Casey**, Director, International Student Services, The University of Texas at Dallas will replace Steve Bell as Treasurer as Steve rotates to the Development position.

Local Arrangements: **Millie Slaughter**, Assistant Director, International Programs and Student Services, Texas A&M University - Kingsville, will chair the Corpus Christi Local Arrangements Team. Millie's Local Arrangement predecessors have been Janice Thomas, New Orleans; Regina Henry, Oklahoma City; and John Singleton, Fort Worth. Millie will draw from all of Region III to volunteer their talents and time toward the success of the Corpus Christi conference in October 2004.

ADSEC Report

--- Sandra Rodriguez, Out-going ADSEC Representative

The Local Arrangements Team, headed by Janice Thomas, made the New Orleans Conference one of the best ever. And, congratulations to the Chair Stream and the entire Region III Team for all the outstanding conference! The sessions were great, and thanks and congratulations go to all who made them so. The sessions on the educational systems of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Cuba, and Bulgaria were informative, and all were very well presented and well received. Changes in educational systems in Europe to meet the needs of the EEC is one of the "hot topics" of great interest to all ADSECians. The "Bologna Process" session was not only timely but also an excellent presentation. In addition to country/system-related studies, we were also privileged to share in the presentations on third party recruitment, graduate admissions policies, changes in the SAT which affect foreign student admissions, and a look at English ability and English testing in the context of admissions. Thanks so much to all the presenters and chairs. The sessions were very well attended, and the evaluations reflected the gratitude to all presenters for such professional work. We apologize to those whose names did not make it into the program, and we assure all of you that your work was, indeed appreciated. Those presenters were: Kay Hart, Rebecca Murdock-Smith, Craig Satterfield, Jane Hughey, and Susan Ringer at the "Just What is English Taught Outside the US?" And, Sandy Drane chaired the SAT sessions. Finally, thanks to Linda Jahn and Kristaline Karabunarlieva for their marvelous work in the Graduate Admissions Workshop.

One final word from your outgoing ADSEC representative. It has been a genuine pleasure! Thanks to everyone who has contributed to the last two wonderful years. It has been easy to work for you because all of you are so eager, cooperative, and just plain wonderful. I wish the very best for all of you, ADSECians and all the rest. I know you will keep up the good work and that your outstanding support for the section, the Region and for NAFSA will continue. The section will be in good hands; Julie Sinclair is a wonderful person and will be a super Rep! My very best wishes to her in undertaking this splendid job. And, to all of you, I again extend my sincere thanks for your support, your hard work, and most of all, your love and friendship. I remain ready to assist you in any way I am able.

ATESL Report

--- Jane Hughey, Out-going ATESL Representative

Congratulations to Brenda Robati and the New Orleans Local Arrangements Team for a terrific conference. What a great time was had by all at the NAFSA Region III Conference in New Orleans over the Halloween weekend. The ATESL section was awash in a wide variety of presentations. There was really something for everyone. In fact, there was an ATESL presentation for every session time throughout the conference. Presentation topics ranged from the use of computers for placement and teaching to American/international conversation partners, ITA training, vocabulary strategies, Korean students, Student Advisory councils, and finally to the redesign of an IEP program. In fact, the session titled "The Redesign of an Intensive English Program: A Case Study" presented by Dr. Alan Lytle and Suzanne Lee from the University of Arkansas at Little Rock was selected by the regional team as one of the three conference highlights and will be submitted for consideration for the annual conference in Baltimore.

We all know how difficult it is in this time of tight budgets to spend and attend our professional conferences, but the Texas A&M group set a fine example by piling a half dozen plus NAFSA's into one of the A&M school vans and making the trip an odyssey of fun and fellowship. These terrific people also provided many of the ATESL presentations at the conference.

It has been my pleasure to serve as ATESL rep over the past two years. Serving on the team is an incredible learning experience. Our new ATESL representative as of January 1, 2004 is Dave Burns from the University of Houston. I know he will continue the momentum we have started for increasing both ATESL membership and the number and quality of presentations at the regional meeting. We will be looking forward to seeing all of you at the state conferences and especially at the regional conference in Corpus Christi. In 2005, Region III will participate a biregional conference in Colorado Springs so start planning now for that exciting event.

CAFSS Report

--- Jalal Daneshfar, CAFSS Representative

Hello Fellow Region III CAFSS members: For those of you who attended the Regional Conference in New Orleans, I hope you enjoyed it and benefitted as much as I did. Visiting and networking with our friends and meeting many new advisors to the Region and to the profession was as always, very enjoyable. Attending the various Sessions and Workshops and meeting many Presenters and Government officials were the highlights. They were many choices among the CAFSS Sessions which were highly informative. My thanks and appreciations go to all the Session Presenters and Chairs who, with their knowledge and expertise, gave so much of their time to plan, prepare, and deliver such outstanding presentations from which we all benefited.

I hope we all take steps to make sure that our respective State meetings are well attended. These meetings could bring together more people who could not attend the Regional Conference, as well as those who did, for the most recent updates on changes in the Regulations and Procedures and better ways to serve our students.

Keeping in touch with each other and sharing of information in order to provide better service has always been what we, as a profession, are all about. Each one of us plays an important role in shaping the future as we touch and influence the students from across the globe. As you continue with your noble work, I hope to hear from you as questions or concerns come to mind.

COMSEC Report

-- Joan Litzenberger, *Out-going COMSEC Representative*

"International Education and All That Jazz!" Region III 2003 conference was so great. ...fun location, great weather, lovely hotel, delicious food and most of all, very informative and valuable sessions for COMSEC. The sessions offered were interesting, well presented, had variety and useful content. All of the COMSEC sessions received top evaluations.

"Interacting With South Koreans..." by Hye-Yeon Lim, a graduate student, and her American professor, W.I. Griffith, was very enlightening and well presented using power-point. Several requested that it be repeated at the national level.

Steve Bell chaired a session with Jane Dunham, Phyllis Rovner and Joan Litzenberger presenting spouse's programs on a budget. In the light of the latest budgetary problems, this was received very well. Jane was also responsible for the two great games oriented sessions, "Icebreaker to Warm Up Any Gathering" and "Towers for Thirdians: A Simulation Exercise".

In "Friendship Family Training-How To Avoid Problems", Cynthia Smith offered several different approaches to help American families understand the cultural differences they may encounter in their relationship with an international student. The last session to tell you about is "Reality Check on Community Program Ethics" presented by Ronit Weingarden, Priscilla Hagebusch and Cynthia Smith. This was a first for COMSEC in our regional conferences. We all have ethical situations that don't fit into nice categories for solving. This was a good session to discuss those situations with others with more experience in community programming. Comments about this session was "excellent, very thought provoking, and should be done every conference."

Along with the good fellowship at the conference, the great news is that Rebecca Brown, Director, International Student Services at Dallas Baptist University, will be the COMSEC Rep for 2004. I am stepping down after 3 years on the team. It has been very enjoyable, but I'm very happy to turn it over to Rebecca. She has a real heart for COMSEC, so it is in good hands. Please be supportive by turning in sessions for presentation and attending the regional conferences. You rub shoulders with some very experienced and dedicated people.

SECUSSA Report

-- Sue Mennicke, *SECUSSA Representative*

Hello, Region III SECUSSAns! As I begin my second year as your representative, I'm excited to see so much energy from such a wide variety of folks in education abroad. For those of you who were at the regional conference in New Orleans: thank you so much for your enthusiastic participation! For those of you who could not attend: we hope to see you in Corpus Christi in November!

One of my goals for SECUSSAns in the region is to ensure that there is participation and interaction among the broad range of education abroad professionals in this region. We have much to offer each other, and we can certainly accomplish more together than we can individually. The recent NAFSA report "Securing America's Future: Global Education for a Global Age" clearly lays out the message that international education is not simply a luxury, but rather is vital to the health of our nation. If you have a chance to read the report (available at the NAFSA website), please do. The message is energizing in that it brings home the immediacy of the work we do — something that can be lost in the every day experience of completing paperwork and doing advising.

I welcome ideas as we move forward, and also encourage you to consider submitting a proposal for this year's regional conference! Think you don't have enough material to create a whole presentation? Get together with a couple of colleagues and brainstorm with them to craft a session to which each of you contribute a piece. Worried that you aren't experienced enough in the field to stand in front of a group and present on a topic? Think about the issues that you confront on a daily basis in your work — you know a lot more than you might realize! If there is a topic that you feel needs to be addressed, there are probably others out there who feel the same way. Why not pull together your thoughts and propose a session? It can be a great way for you to not only provide useful information to others, but to crystallize your thinking around an issue.

Please let me know if you have suggestions regarding the advancement of education abroad in Region III during the year ahead. I'd be happy to hear from you!

Two-Year Institution Report -- *Reginald Cooper, Two-Year Institution Representative*

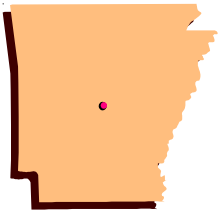
Hello colleagues and fellow NAFSAns, it is an honor to represent two-year institutions in NAFSA Region III. If you attended the Region III conference in New Orleans, you know how exciting it was and that it was a great success. If you did not attend, you missed a great opportunity to enhance your professional knowledge, see or meet some great colleagues and friends, and attain or develop some great resources. In this time of constant change, it is critical for our students to have access to a well-informed resource and ally on campus. Likewise, it is of paramount importance that we become or remain active in NAFSA because this is a one-stop resource for current information, best practices and collegial resources to help us care for our students.

It is extremely important for us in the two-year institution setting to realize that we must keep ourselves current and well connected. Even if the campus attracts only a small number of international students, that one, two or ten students need to have a well-informed resource and ally on campus. My greatest fear is to misadvise a student or mishandle his or her documentation. For that reason, I feel compelled to be active in NAFSA and help the organization help me keep current and observant regarding best practices, information and ethics.

Over the next year, I plan to revive the directory of two-year institution in the Region and make it available to NAFSA Members in the two-year institution setting. I will be contacting each of you to verify the contact information.

Please contact me at any time to share your ideas, concerns or if you need to talk with a colleague. I am looking forward to the coming year and the next Region III conference and I hope you are too.

Arkansas State Report



-- *Katherine Vlassek, Out-going Arkansas State Representative*

International students from Henderson State University were a big hit at a recent meeting of NAFSA Regional Conference at New Orleans. Bonito Fofeyin and Eudaline Patricia Hell from Cameroon, along with Vanya Kasakova from Bulgaria and Alan Wang from China, presented an intercultural session at the conference. The fifth member of the student panel, Mohamad Badir from Lebanon, is a student at University of New Orleans. Katherine Vlassek, Henderson's Director of International Student Programs, served as a chairperson of the session. The students were awarded a financial need travel grant by NAFSA Region III to enable them to participate in the conference.

The session, titled "When Cultures Meet and the Bubble Bursts ..." dealt with academic, social and cultural adjustment of international students in the rural South. Other presenters at the conference were educators, immigration attorneys, and representatives of the Department of Homeland Security and Student and Exchange Visitors Information System (SEVIS). International educators from four states awarded the fresh voice of students with a highlight of the conference - a nomination to present at the annual NAFSA Conference in Baltimore in May 2004.

The **Arkansas NAFSA State Meeting is scheduled for the second part of the April 2004** – the exact date is still to be determined.

Louisiana State Report -- Alea Morelock Cot, Louisiana State Representative



On behalf of local arrangements, Janice Thomas would like to thank everyone who played a part in making the Region III conference a success. We were proud to host such a great conference here in New Orleans and showcase our city to fellow NAFSAns. The local arrangements team is definitely looking forward to Corpus Christi in November 2004!

For the first time in celebration of International Education Week, Tulane University and the University of New Orleans were pleased to hold several joint activities including international films and a photo contest. This year's theme specifically showcased dance. Activities included a Capoeira Angola performance at Tulane's Dixon Hall, a Flamenco performance in the UNO University Center, and an Ethnic Dance Festival at the UNO Downtown Theater.

In addition, the University of New Orleans held the founding ceremony of the Beta Lambda Chapter of the Phi Beta Delta Honors Society for International Scholars on Friday, November 21st. Dr. Eileen Evans, Executive Director of Phi Beta Delta, was on hand to participate in festivities. UNO Chancellor Timothy P. Ryan received honorary membership and assisted in distributing the certificates and medallions. UNO Research Professor Oluwaniyi Osundare provided the keynote address and was also conferred honorary membership. The chapter was founded with 49 inductees and two members who transferred their membership.

Over 60 LaNAFSA members were in attendance at the state meeting held during the Region III conference. Thanks for such a great turn-out! **The next state meeting is scheduled for Friday, March 12, 2004 on the UNO campus.** Check the web site early next year for more details. By the end of the year, UNO will take over the hosting of the LaNAFSA list serve that Ronit Weingarden has so generously maintained for a number of years. Thanks to Ronit for maintaining this list serve over the years and for hosting it at Tulane.

Oklahoma State Report -- Julie Sinclair, Out-going Oklahoma State Representative



Oklahoma NAFSA sponsored a "Staff Appreciation Day" on December 4, 2003 at Oklahoma Christian University. This event honored all those people who work with International Offices to serve international students and study abroad students. Members invited staff from their institutions who work in other departments, such as Financial Aid, Housing, Career Services, Human Resources, etc. Members also invited volunteers who assist students or staff from their departments who are not normally able to attend NAFSA events. The agenda included cross-cultural activities, immigration basics, and question/answer time.

The Oklahoma state NAFSA meeting is scheduled for Thursday, February 12, 2004, at Oklahoma Baptist University in Shawnee. Members requested that part of that day be devoted to international taxation issues. International tax experts will be invited to speak as well as a VITA volunteer who has trained international students to assist other students with their tax forms.

Other sessions will include Study Abroad issues and a half-day admissions credential evaluation workshop. The special guest speaker for the admissions workshop will be Jean Ringer from Global Credential Evaluators. If anyone has particular admissions issues they would like to discuss during that time, please send that information to Julie Sinclair at jsinclair@okcu.edu. A finalized agenda and registration information will be sent out on the state list serve in January.

Texas State Report -- Kristine Combs, North Texas State Representative



The NAFSA: Association of International Educators Region III conference held in New Orleans LA, from October 28th -31st was nothing short of spectacular! A very special thanks goes to Dr. Janice Thomas and the local arrangement committee for all their efforts and for the wonderful off-site venue at Generations Hall. An extra BIG THANK YOU to Brenda Robati, our Region III chair and all the Region III team for a job well done.

If you were unable to attend the Region III Conference, please consider attending the Texas State Meeting. **The Texas State meeting will be held in Houston, TX. on February 27, 2004.** Rose Mary Valencia (UT Health Science Center) has graciously agreed to host the meeting. Preparations are currently underway to plan a state meeting that will have something for everyone.

As most of you are aware, many schools have seen budget cuts that have translated into little or no travel funds. These cuts have come at a time when greater resources are needed just to keep pace with the increased workload and demands that have occurred since 9/11. In light of this, the Houston Forum leadership and the Texas State Representatives have made the decision to combine our resources and talents to bring about a state meeting that will benefit everyone. Details concerning hotel arrangements and session offerings will be communicated when they are finalized.

Although we are barely finished with the 2003 Region III conference, it is not too early to start looking ahead to 2004. The 2004 Region III conference will be in Corpus Christi, TX, more good news for Texas NAFSA's. Dates for the conference are Oct. 30-Nov. 2, 2004. Millie Slaughter of Texas A&M-Kingsville will be in charge of the local arrangement team. If you are able to help Millie in any way, please be sure to contact her.

Our very own Michele Stelljes (Baylor College of Medicine) is our chair for the 2004 Region III conference. With Michele at the helm of the ship, we are sure to sail smoothly.

In closing, I would like to say thank you to Sylvia Medel, our out-going South Texas Representative, for all the hard work and guidance she has provided our state. Our new incoming South Texas Representative is Kristalina Karabunarlieva. I am sure Kristalina will serve the south Texas region well. I will remain as the North Texas Representative until the end of 2004. If you have any ideas on how Kristalina or I can best serve the needs of Texas NAFSA's, please do not hesitate to contact either one of us.

Call for Trainer Corps Nominations!

It is time again to be thinking about outstanding colleagues who you feel may merit nomination to the 2004 NAFSA Trainer Corps. These individuals must meet general eligibility requirements, section/group-specific eligibility requirements, and be recommended by the Region III Team's sectional representatives. **For more information on the Trainer Corps policies, please visit the NAFSA website at www.nafsa.org.**

New members applications will be accepted through February 6, 2004. Acceptance notices to those applications approved will be mailed by March 1, 2004. There will be a pre-conference and post-conference training session offered to New Members of the Trainer Corps at the Baltimore Conference in 2004. Serving on the NAFSA Trainer Corps will afford you numerous opportunities to grow professionally and to contribute to the growth of your fellow colleagues!

Enhance Your Job Description!

-- Adria Baker, Texas State Whip



In the session "Can You Hear Me Now?: Enlightening Policymakers on International Education" at the Region III conference in New Orleans in November 2003, participants were encouraged to **reserve one hour a month on their calendar** to dedicate to "advocacy issues". **Your advocacy hour could include:**

- § Downloading and reading "In America's Interest: Welcoming International Students" (<http://www.nafsa.org/content/PublicPolicy/stf/inamericasinterest.htm>) or "Toward an International Education Policy for the United States: International Education in an Age of Globalism and Terrorism (May 2003)" (<http://www.nafsa.org/content/PublicPolicy/USIntlEdPolicy/NIEP2003updateFINALwebversion.htm>).
- § Sending an automatic email via the NAFSA website <[http://econstituent.votenet.com/\(yee3zm55vqxmy4aqq2xzk12o\)/index.aspx/nafsa/home.aspx](http://econstituent.votenet.com/(yee3zm55vqxmy4aqq2xzk12o)/index.aspx/nafsa/home.aspx)> to your Senator or Representative. (Note: Following the links, this takes only about five minutes).
- § Call, or write a local, state, or national government leader. Tell them what you have done during International Education Week, or about concerns you have dealing with international education.
- § Meeting with your government relations person on campus to discuss international education issues and its importance.
- § Reviewing all of the many materials and briefs NAFSA has on their website concerning policy issues (www.nafsa.org - "Public Policy" all links).

International education has taken a triple "hit" in the past two years: 1) the attacks on 9/11 have shed doubt on many issues of bringing international students to the USA, resulting in draconian changes in immigration laws affecting university foreign nationals, 2) concern for the safety of US students studying abroad, and 3) political and diplomatic unrest, causing tremendous challenges and competition for support and attention for international education by lawmakers. We are working in a field that has changed, and continues to do so on a daily basis. Personally, everyday I wonder if one of our foreign visitors is going to be adversely affected by a new law, security check, or something else that we have not been able to anticipate.

We must add advocacy to our job descriptions in order to reserve a small amount of time to educate ourselves and give a balanced perspective to university administrators, colleagues, friends and relatives, and to those who represent us in all levels of government. It is not unpatriotic to give a complete picture of what is happening as a result of the many new laws. I truly believe that in the effort to make national security a priority, negatively affecting colleges' and universities' foreign nationals was an unintended result.

Before September 11, 2003, I was one who never thought of issues concerning advocacy. When people called or asked me to send an email, I never paid attention, since it did not seem to be as urgent as the student who was in front of me with a problem. I realize now that problems far worse can occur, due to lack of educating those who can affect laws. Laws, that can negatively affect some aspect in our field, can pass through Congress in the matter of 1-2 days. Therefore, we need to be ready to respond, and do it quickly. We cannot afford not to add advocacy as a part of our jobs now.

One letter is considered 1,000 voices. One phone call is equivalent to 100 voices. Members of Congress rated letter writing from constituents as the #1 effective advocacy communication tool. Office visits were ranked #2, and telephone calls ranked #6. In response to a recent call in Texas for advocacy on the SEVIS fee law, there were 312,000 "voices" on Capitol Hill, as 58 NAFSAs responded with a total of 312 letters!

(Continued on page 11)

Enhance Your Job Description! (continued)

In late October, a positive-toned letter explaining the “heads-up” and importance of U.S. International Education Week, and what NAFSAns from Texas did in IEW 2002, was sent to every Senator and Representative in Washington and Austin (both national and state congressional bodies). Many have written letters back acknowledging the importance of international education.

Mark your calendars for March 16-17, 2004 for Congressional Education Day, where NAFSAns will have a unique opportunity to meet “on the Hill” with their Washington representatives to discuss key issues facing international education. While you are looking at your 2004 calendar, earmark one hour a month for advocacy issues.

Finally, I'd like to recognize and thank **Michelle Pickard**, **Dave Burns**, and **Kathy Bellows** for the research and work they put into the Region III conference advocacy session.

Congratulations to:

David Ware

Attorney, David Ware & Associates

Deane Willis

Director, International Student & Scholar Services, The University of Texas at Austin

recipients of the ***Plaque for Outstanding Service to International Education***.

The Plaque for Outstanding Service to International Education is awarded to individuals who have demonstrated outstanding performance of a sustained and serious nature in the field of international education. The recipients have made extraordinary contributions to the field through projects and/or service of national impact, reflecting on and/or raising the visibility of Region III outside the region.

Jane Dunham

Assistant Director, Office of International Programs, The University of Texas at San Antonio

recipient of the ***Certificate for Special Service to International Education***.

The Certificate for Special Service to International Education is awarded to individuals who have contributed to the field of international educational exchange through long and outstanding years of service in the local, academic, or professional community through innovative projects. Their activities have stimulated, strengthened, and/or supported international education in the region.

David, Deane & Jane were presented these awards at the 2003 Region III Conference in New Orleans.

Immigration Update

-- Deane Willis & Michele Stelljes, Out-going CIPP-RRs



The year has flown by, and keeping up with the rapid changes has been a challenge to say the least. It is imperative to continue to keep updated with the NAFSA Practice Advisories at www.nafsa.org/sevp. There is a new compilation of previous conference calls through this same site. It is wonderfully organized by topic. We would like to point out a few items of importance:

Texas Service Center News:

I-765 Forms: Some of the previous I-765 forms have become outdated, and TSC will not accept them, so be sure to download the most recent form for OPT and hardship applications. A reminder – if filing electronically, all the same support evidence must be submitted by regular mail noting the electronic receipt number on the application.

COS from OPT and during grace periods: There have been some denials for Change of Status applications from F-1 OPT and during F-1 grace periods. TSC has indicated that the student should prove that he/she has been working during the OPT period, and they have also indicated that the grace period is for transfers and preparing to leave. Although we are addressing these issues with the NAFSA liaison at the TSC and with Laura Taylor, it is advisable to be sure the student indicates on the I-539 form any employment he/she held during the practical training period.

COS applications to F-1: Be sure to monitor the program start dates on I-20's submitted for COS to F-1. If the start date passes by more than 20 days, defer it to a later date or the record could go invalid. Pay careful attention to the school's tuition, cost of living and incidentals. Also, remember to pay special attention to the funding evidence and review for clear statements of financial commitment with supporting bank statements.

Visa Issues and Automatic Revalidation/Deferred Inspections:

Third Country Nationals who are applying for visas in Mexico and Canada need to be aware that the consular officials are frequently taking the I-94's of students if the visa application is denied or security check procedures are begun. This makes it clear that the student is no longer eligible for automatic revalidation. Consequently, many students are approaching the port of entry to re-enter and many have been given deferred inspections. This does allow the student to come back into the U.S., but they are *not* considered to have "legally entered" the U.S. until the inspection is complete at the district office or local airport. This inspection has resulted in anything from a new I-94 with D/S, a charge to waive the visa requirement (\$195 for form I-193), voluntary departure, or even expedited removal proceedings (which carries a 5 year bar). Advisors will want to be sure that students are aware of the risks of applying for visas in contiguous countries if their current visas are expired.

Immigration Update, continued.

SEVIS News:

SEVIS' 30 day registration notification: DHS has notified DSO's that they must perform the initial registration function within **30 days of the program start date** recorded in the SEVIS system and indicated on the student's I-20. For more updated information on recordkeeping and reporting, see NAFSA's SEVIS Resource 2003-a.

This resource also provides information on the recent DHS memo reminding schools that had been approved in SEVIS under the preliminary enrollment regulation [67 Fed. Reg. 44344 (July 1, 2002)] that the deadline for those schools to complete the SEVIS enrollment process, including payment of the required fee and having a site visit, is May 14, 2004.

NSEERS Registrants:

On December 2, 2003, the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) published a rule that amends several requirements associated with the Special Registration program. Under the new rule, individuals subject to Special Registration are still subject to departure controls that require them to use only designated ports of departure when departing the U.S., but they are no longer subject to the requirement to report to DHS offices in between entry and departure (the so-called 30-day and annual re-registrations). For further information see NAFSA's Practice Advisory 2003-F.

It is still imperative that registered students process out correctly when leaving the U.S. Students have reported that airport officials have given them erroneous information about the process or have told them that it is not necessary to do before departure. Unfortunately, if returning students have not followed the correct process, they could be turned away at the port of entry and required to apply for a new visa in their home country before they can return again. Detailed instructions on how to find an appropriate immigration officer at ports of entry can be found at <http://www.immigration.gov/graphics/shared/lawenfor/specialreg/BLISTOFFP.pdf>

And now for the good news:

Our new Region III CIPP-RR's are Laura Hammons from Texas A& M and Jim Nesmith from Texas Tech. Laura will be handling F and J student issues, and Jim will handle scholar and employment issues. We are excited to have them come on board and appreciate their willingness to take on this responsibility. Their contact information is on our Region III web site.

Thank you for your patience, support, and good will as Michele and I have served as your CIPP-RR's. Madeline Burgess from the Texas Service Center has been a lifesaver for all of us and David Fosnocht and Laura Taylor have saved our sanity.

See you at the State Meetings and Conferences!!

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