



A Message from the Chair of NAFSA Region V



Dear Region Vers,

To say that 2020 has been quite a year would be an extreme understatement. From the impacts of the Coronavirus on our world and our field, to the ongoing and renewed call to action incited by the Black Lives Matter movement, this year has highlighted inequities within systems and structures that international education can either work to reinforce or can help to break down.

In this brief letter and update I highlight some of the work that has occurred over this past year, knowing well that there is much more work ahead of us!

As a field, and as a region, we are committed to diversity of perspective, whether that be within our own communities or abroad. International education and inclusion efforts are one in the same and we remain dedicated to these efforts within our field and beyond. To this end, I am happy to announce the addition of a new Region V Diversity, Equity & Inclusion in International Education Award. This award recognizes an international education professional in the region whose work fosters inclusive practices, promotes diversity, or advances equitable systems at their institution or beyond. Read more about this year's inaugural recipient, Hernando Sevilla-Garcia, below.

This award is one change that we have made in the region, but we work toward further initiatives that highlight and amplify this important work and aim to expand support and resources within the region. If you have ideas and want to get involved, please reach out to Region V leadership. We look forward to collaborating with you to improve the future of our field!

Each year we savor the time when we can come together to share ideas and energize one another at our regional conference. It is a time for connecting, learning, and challenging our assumptions and ourselves with a goal that we can develop as professionals and better support our communities and world. We know that this virtual offering cannot fully replace the amazing in-person connections that we all long for, but we hope that the programming over the next few days will help you achieve some of these same outcomes!

Below you will find some Region V updates as well as a link to a digital publication which serves as a sort of virtual expo hall, allowing you to learn about and connect with important members of our region and field. Thank you for your work as international educators at this challenging time, and welcome to the NAFSA Region V Virtual Conference 2020!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Cat DeBord".

Catrina DeBord
Chair, NAFSA Region V
Assistant Director, Global Learning, Northwestern University



NAFSA Region Updates 2020

Below are some updates on what has been happening in Region V during 2020!

Advocacy

With all of the policy updates, institutional pivots, global crises and the U.S. election already underway, advocacy remains an indispensable value and high priority in NAFSA Region V. Sadly, Advocacy Day 2020 was canceled due to the Coronavirus, but prior to the cancellation, Region V expected a fantastic turnout. We had 25 Region Vers registered to attend Advocacy Day (11 from Illinois, 7 from Michigan, and 7 from Wisconsin). Region V awarded grants to:

- Tammy Gibbs - Madison College
- Laure Bordas-Isner - Wayne State University
- Susan Conway - UW Milwaukee
- Theresa Anderson - UW Oshkosh and
- Hernando Sevilla-Garcia - IES Abroad
- Samantha McCabe- UW Madison

In addition to these regional awards, members from Illinois, Michigan and Wisconsin were able to register with support from their state organizations. Wisconsin, in particular, remains one of the key states in which NAFSA is devoting the association's support and attention to advance our public policy agenda. To that end, Early Bird participation rates were extended for Fivers from key districts in Wisconsin, and, with the help of Region V and WAIE leaders, were able to reach out to members working for institutions in those districts to encourage additional participation from Wisconsin advocates. In addition, three Region Vers were interviewed about their advocacy work in the most recent issue of International Educator.

With the election already underway, Region V is partnering with our friends in Region III to host a webinar on Friday, October 23rd at 1pm Central, 2pm Eastern, titled, *Home Stretch: International Education and the 2020 Election*. Check it out on Region V Facebook or Twitter, or navigate [here to register to the event](#). There has never been a more important time to give voice to the issues that matter in our field. If you are interested in ways to connect, please reach out to Region V Advocacy Coordinator, Emlyn Torres at e-torres@northwestern.edu.

NAFSA Region V Leadership

The end of the calendar year will also mean the end of my term as the NAFSA Region V Chair. I have really enjoyed my time and service in this role and am very pleased to introduce your incoming chair stream:

Chair 2021

As you are aware, we are happy to remind you that Kelly Wagner will serve as the Chair in 2021. Kelly is a program manager in the International Center at University of Michigan. Kelly has been active in the field for years and has served as a member of the Michigan Association of International Educators and as their chair from 2016-2017. Kelly is passionate about subjects such as intercultural communication, cultural identity and cultural humility and we are very excited for her chair year!



Chair-Elect 2021

We are also excited to officially announce that Chamu Gowrishankar has been voted in as the Chair-Elect for 2021. Chamu is the Assistant Director for the Office of International Students and Scholars at Wayne State University and has been involved with NAFSA at various capacities presenting and chairing numerous sessions at the state, regional and national conferences. She was a Trainer Corp member and conducted workshops in F-1, H-1B, and Intercultural Communication in Practice and currently serves as a KC ISSS Liaison for Region V. We look forward to Chamu moving into the Chair-Elect role.

Again, we welcome both Kelly and Chamu into these roles and look forward to seeing all the amazing work they do to support our region in the coming years! Other leadership roles will be opening on the team in 2021 so keep an eye out for updates!

NAFSA Region V Awards

New Award! - Diversity, Equity & Inclusion in International Education Award - Hernando Sevilla-Garcia

Hernando has worked tirelessly to advance opportunities for study abroad at Hispanic-Serving Institutions. Among his many accomplishments, Hernando has presented on advancing diversity in study abroad at numerous conferences, co-authored Diversity Abroad's LatinX Student's Guide, and launched Tu Mundo, an outreach initiative designed to increase participation in study and internships abroad for students at HSI's. He is currently working toward the launch of a faculty-led service-learning study abroad opportunity for HSI students in Chicago. Hernando's contributions have been, and continue to be, very valuable to our field and we are honored to award him the inaugural Diversity, Equity & Inclusion in International Education Award in 2020.

Patti Jones Award for Outstanding Leadership in Region V- Kristy Aoki

Kristy's contributions to the region and the field are numerous. Kristy has served Region V in various roles including the chair stream and conference planner for 2019. Additionally, Kristy has also served at state and national levels within the Wisconsin Association of International Educators and as a NAFSA Regional Affairs Committee Chair. Kristy's work and support is valued at local and national levels and we are excited to honor her with this award in 2020.

Budget

NAFSA Region V remains in a strong financial position which is the result of thoughtful and sustainable financial stewardship over the years. As of October 14, 2020, NAFSA Region V has a current operating balance of \$138,458, an investment account balance of \$98,930, with a total balance of \$237,388. While this amount may seem high, it is important for an organization such as ours to maintain strong financial standing given our multi-year financial commitments, such as our regional conference.

This strong financial position also allowed us to absorb the cancellation of the in-person regional conference for 2020. Unfortunately, the pandemic did not provide sufficient justification to cancel existing conference contracts, so with the assistance of NAFSA Nationals we were able to negotiate a much lower expenditure for the cancellation of the in-person event. Despite the difficulties this year, we remain on solid financial footing as we prepare for next year's bi-regional conference with Region IV in Schaumburg, Illinois.



In addition to cancellation costs, NAFSA Region V was able to honor Advocacy Day travel awards for our membership (covering reimbursements for cancel travel plans of our awardees), fund NAFSA Region V Academy Coaches and class, offer several 2020 Regional conference awards, and organize our virtual conference at no cost to attendees!

2020 Conference

We are pleased with our ability to offer this free virtual event in 2020. This [Digital Publication](#) compiled by NAFSA Region V Exhibitor and Sponsor Coordinator, Katerina Roskina, serves as a sort of virtual expo hall, allowing you to learn about and connect with important members of our region and field! Please take some time to review this and connect with Region V exhibitors and sponsors from the past few years.

2021 Conference- Save the Date

While we aren't sure what new challenges 2021 may bring, we hope to return to an in-person conference format next year. Additionally, the 2021 conference is a Bi-Regional event with our friends from Region IV (the Dakotas, Iowa, Minnesota and Missouri)! We will return to the Renaissance Convention Center Hotel in BEAUTIFUL Schaumburg, IL so, please mark your calendars for October 4-8, 2021! We hope to see you there!

Thank You

Managing uncertainty, and pivoting from an in-person event to organizing a virtual conference has taken a lot of hard work and collaboration from a lot of people. I want to thank all members of the Region V team who worked hard to provide this virtual offering, all the presenters and hosts who are leading sessions, roundtables, state meetings and MIG/SIG events, and to all the participants. We are happy to have this time together and thank you in advance for all you have done and continue to do for our region!