

NALP Small/Solo Section First Report

To: Vic Massaglia, NALP Board Liaison to Small/Solo Section
From: Jennifer Zwagerman, NALP Small/Solo Section Chair
CC: Fred Thrasher, Deputy Director
Date: 6/20/2013

I am excited to be serving as the 2013-2014 Chair of the Small/Solo Section and appreciate the opportunity to do so. I'm excited about the start to this current year, and think that we have ideas, plans and programs starting to be set in place for a great year.

Below is a summary of key activities of the group since the Annual Meeting. Section members have been very enthusiastic, and the Vice-Chairs have been active and supportive, particularly working recently on RFPs and Bulletin article proposals.

A. RFPs

The Small/Solo Section sponsored seven RFPs for the 2014 conference. The proposals cover a wide array of topics and involve section members ranging from new additions to the profession/section to those more seasoned veterans. I think the proposals were strong, which was shown in part when we polled members and asked them to rank the proposals as part of the evaluation process. Of the more than 30 members who responded to the survey, some proposals were clear favorites, but overall, interest was widespread across all the proposed topics. The vast majority of those responding also indicated an intent to attend the 2014 NALP conference in Seattle. Margann Bennett, the RFP Vice-Chair, has been extremely helpful in keeping us organized in this process and ensuring everything was submitted on time. In addition to the proposals noted below, we also have numerous members participating in RFPs in conjunction with other sections. The sponsored proposals included:

1. **Getting on the Same Page: Making Your Team Work**

In an era of doing more with less, strengthening your career services team's

performance is one of the least costly and most effective things you can do. Facilitated by an organizational development consultant and three law school leaders, participants will learn practical strategies and a simple two-part process for strengthening their teams.

Huebner Vicki, Stephanie Powell, Mina Jones Jefferson, Eric Ryan

2. Hot Topics for Small/Solo CDOs: How to Do It All, And Then Some

Small/Solo Career Services Offices face unique challenges when it comes to meeting student needs while balancing administrative and reporting requirements. As we see enrollment drop, and perhaps resources, this can pose additional challenges. Doing more with less is reality on both a budgetary and staffing level. From worrying about employment statistics, audits, alumni counseling, and meeting the ever-changing needs of students, the list of potential topics is long. A panel of newcomers and more experienced member will lead a discussion on recent developments and issues with the goal of sharing ideas, time-saving tricks and continuing the discussion beyond the conference.

Jennifer Zwagerman, Lauren Donald, Trish Hodny, Margann Bennett

3. Providing Personal Attention and Individualized Counseling without Draining Your Budget or Your Energy

Despite our best efforts, we still only have 24 hours in a day – and we can't spend all of them at office! This program will show you how to provide students and alumni with individualized career plans and quality personal attention without adding hours to your day or dollars to your budget. Come learn how some of your colleagues are decreasing big panel pizza parties and increasing quality time with students and alumni. There won't be free food, but you will get fresh ideas!

Margann Bennett, Suzanne Patrick

4. Strategic CSO/Faculty Partnerships: Expand Your Employer Outreach and Support Student Career Development Goals.

This interactive session facilitated by seasoned and more junior professionals will provide CSO administrators with a roadmap of how to strategically use faculty as employer relations ambassadors and in career programming.. Showcasing highly effective CSO and faculty initiatives, this interactive session will present best practices for collaborating across CSO, faculty and law school administration. Whatever the staffing or resources of a CSO, we will identify important steps all CSOs can take to develop positive faculty collaboration. After presenting key strategies, presenters will facilitate small group discussions and guide participants in goal setting, identifying key players, potential obstacles, and how to overcome them for successful implementation.

Jill Green, Dena Bauman, Vanita Saleema Snow, Leah Terranova

5. Tips, Tricks & Timing: Streamlining the CSO from Programming to Statistics

We all know our lives revolve around the academic calendar, but why do we keep reinventing that (school bus) wheel? Why is it that every year our deadlines sneak up on us? This program will give tips and tricks for organizing and streamlining your office programming and data collection using Symplicity and other free project management software. The presenters will offer fresh ideas for collecting data and improving student responsiveness, including an overview of NALP Best Practices and brainstorming from the audience. Come get the wheels on your bus going round and round with no potholes on the horizon!

Margann Bennett, Jennifer Zwagerman, Elizabeth Base, Christine Guard

6. Where Do I Go From Here? Mid-Career NALPers Speak!

It's not enough to simply stay current, CSO's must strive to remain relevant and energized. In our ever changing world of employment and reporting, we must learn and adapt quickly, even more so in a solo/small career services office because of the many hats we wear. Through a mixture of anecdotes and advice, mid-career professionals will share tried and true approaches on many topics including advocating for your CSO, maximizing resources, leveraging mentors, engaging students, and navigating your career journey. Whether you are new to the profession or an experienced or mid-career professional, this program is for you!

Markeisha Miner, Patricia Hodny

7. Just Down the Hall: Partnering with Development and Alumni Affairs for Employer Outreach

Do you wish you had a ready familiarity with a greater percentage of your alumni base? Wouldn't that help tremendously in your employer outreach and student counseling efforts? The good news is, your development/alumni affairs officers have that kind of familiarity. All you have to do is tap into that resource! This program will give you a quick "Development 101" so that you can more easily relate to and partner with your development and alumni affairs officers. Then we will discuss strategies for interoffice communication and best practices for effective collaboration, including ideas for receptions, CLEs, programming, and more.

Joe Christian, Alexandra Epsilanty, Julie Doss

B. Bulletin Articles

We are currently soliciting proposals for Bulletin articles. Interest has not been as strong as with RFPs, but it appears as though we will have somewhere around 3-5 proposals submitted. Our Vice-Chair, Maria Comas, is coordinating this process and has been contacting past presenters in particular about the possibility of drafting an article based off the 2013 presentation in which the member participated.

C. Webinars

Our webinar Vice-Chair, Sonja Hayes, is excited to work to develop, ideally, at least two Section webinars. Several ideas and issues raised at the April section meeting would transfer well into educational webinars, and RFPs that are not selected for the 2014 conference will be toward the top of the list of potential topics as well. Discussions have just reached initial phases when it comes to webinars, but this is something we plan to move forward with over the next quarter in terms of planning, likely later for implementation.

D. Conference Calls

The first conference call was held in May, focusing primarily on RFPs, but also including a brief discussion on articles, webinars and a general update. We discovered after the fact that many members did not actually receive notice of the call until an email was sent out right before with updated (corrected) call information, which may have been due to some notification issues with the Section. I believe (hope) that John has been able to sort all that out and that future calls will have larger member attendance.

E. Upcoming Events/Plans

Over the next quarter I'll be working with our Vice-Chairs for Outreach and Resources to start to expand that program. A suggestion was made that I hope to adopt of using the quarterly calls to cover a topic of interest, in addition to general section updates/business. This will allow us to expand the educational component of these calls as well. With the addition of this and the webinars, I think that the Section can continue to grow and meet the needs of its members as our offices are required to do more and more, often with fewer resources.