

## MEMORANDUM

**To:** NALP Board of Directors  
**From:** Elizabeth Armour, NALP Liaison to NACE  
**Re:** First Quarter Board Report  
**Date:** June 22, 2017

It was my pleasure to attend the recent National Association of Colleges & Employers (NACE) conference in Las Vegas, NV on behalf of NALP. Below is a summary of my general observations, programming/event highlights, and takeaways which I hope will be of interest both to the NALP Board and the AEC conference planning team should you wish to share this memorandum with them. Again, thank you for this opportunity and please let me know if you have any questions or would like any additional information.

### General Observations

- The NACE conference feels very similar to our AEC – on steroids. There are plenaries (they call them keynotes), concurrent sessions with tracks, and networking events.
- Differences include: The conference is larger (2,500 attendees), with more vendors, and short-duration breakout/mini sessions (labeled “campfire conversations” and “smart talks”) covering niche or hot topic areas. I learned that these latter sessions were created to offer more content and lessen the limitations placed on the RFP concurrent session selection process. Prior to each plenary (there were four!) they have several awards and member recognition ceremonies. They also had an Elvis impersonator at the kick-off plenary – “What stays in Vegas.....?!”
- They had a welcome breakfast for newcomers and they offered dinner signups for newbies with fellow newbies. I must add that it was humbling to be a newcomer after so many years of being an old shoe at our NALP conferences. Note to our AEC team: the effort we place on welcoming our conference first timers is valuable
- The composition of the membership is skewed heavily to schools (c. 65% -- which includes four year colleges and universities, two-year—AA degree programs, and a relatively small number of graduate schools) and c. 35% employers (ranging from Employers like EY and Bank of America to GAP and Enterprise-Rent-A-Car)

### Programming & Event Highlights

- Programming tracks included: Career Services, Talent Acquisition, University Relations Recruiting, Career Readiness, and Advocacy & Legislation – with either advanced or mid-

level designations. They appear to have fewer blended-audience programs rather schools attended school programs and employers attended employer programs.

- Content themes focused on technology & innovation, diversity & inclusion, deep-dives into student assessment and engagement, working with distinct student populations (e.g. international students), and on the employer side building a better recruiting mouse trap.
- Standout concurrent programs were: “Reinventing the Recruiting Process and Mitigating Inherent Bias”, “The Future of Recruiting: New Challenges, Strategies and Possibilities”, and “A Nation of Immigrants? Immigration Policy in the New Administration.”
- Standout Keynotes were: Mike Walsh, a futurist (and lawyer by training), who spoke on Innovation and Technology for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century; and Richard Montanez, an executive from PepiCo, who gave an inspirational closing talk on how to “Act Like an Owner.” He started as a janitor at a Frito-Lay plant and took to heart their top exec’s request of all employees to act like an owner of their company. His action: suggesting that the company offer more diverse snack flavors to attract a wider consumer base (his idea – and actual recipe -- for “Flamin’ Hot Cheetos” became the company’s top-selling product!)
- NACE Past-President (and honorary NALPer – Skip Horne’s partner) Andy Cerperley graciously accompanied me to the President’s Reception (she is Kathleen Powell from William & Mary) and did a shout out to NALP in one of the sessions he moderated on which Gihan Fernando, NALPer and NACE member, participated entitled, “The Language and Practice of Disruption in Career Services.”

### Takeaways

- The aforementioned keynoters, Mike Walsh and Richard Montanez, and an impressive gentleman who spoke on implicate bias (Edward Smith-Lewis of the United Negro College Fund’s Career Pathways Initiative) would be excellent plenary or diversity speakers for a future NALP AEC. I have shared their names with Mary Beal and Norma Cirincione.
- NACE seems to have a lot of corporate sponsors who offset conference costs. A potential growth area for NALP?
- At registration, they had keypads to sign in and from that they printed the name tags – efficiency idea for NALP?
- In sum, NACE approaches conferences similarly to NALP with similar positive affect. I look forward to attending next year’s conference and to reporting on other relevant NACE developments in the meanwhile. Again, thanks for this opportunity!