



The CLARION

Wisconsin Association for College Admission Counseling

REMEMBERING MLK DAY: SERVICE, COMMUNITY AND ACCESS

"If we are not careful, our colleges will produce a group of close-minded, unscientific, illogical propagandists, consumed with immoral acts. Be careful, brethren! Be careful, teachers!" – Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., ("The Purpose of Education", 1947).

As each of us work in our individual areas, it is important to reflect on the broader, collective work we are performing together. For the students we work with, we don't just help them "get in" somewhere – we help them find their way to higher education, to a place where they will learn to think differently than they do.

Through this work, I believe we are serving as some of the teachers Dr. King is warning in the quote above. At any point, we can find ourselves too focused on our institution's goals, the pressures of a school district, or the concerns of parents and miss the bigger picture. Together, we are part of the solution – ensuring students find the right college fit.

Finding the right fit includes finding the place where a student can flourish academically – to question what they know and ponder what they don't. While our work with students involves just a small portion of their educational journey, it's an important one.

In his essay from over 70 years ago, Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. wrote, "The function of education, therefore, is to teach one to think intensively and to think critically." Communally, we help ensure this purpose is achieved by matching the right college to the right student at the right time.



This year, as we celebrate the work and the dream of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., I hope you'll take a moment to reflect on how the work you do every day is helping us move a little bit closer to the society he hoped we'd become.

Teege Mettill
WACAC President

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INCLUSION, ACCESS & SUCCESS: IDEA SCHOLARSHIP

Matt Mallum, WACAC Inclusion, Access & Success Chair

The Inclusion, Access & Success Committee (IAS) aims to expand access to higher education for students who, for reasons of poverty or other circumstances, may have more limited options than other students.

A sizable portion of the Committee's spring agenda focuses around soliciting applications for its IDEA Scholarship initiative. The IDEA Scholarship is a one-time, \$500 award available to first-generation, low-income students who attend a WACAC-member high school and plan on pursuing higher education at a WACAC-member institution (regardless of citizenship). Three to four scholarships are awarded each year.

As the pool of applications grow from year to year (2017 saw over 50!), the process of making a final decision becomes increasingly difficult. Often, each applicant is deserving in their own way – each with an incredible story of hardship transcended and astonishing things to come.

The students chosen to receive the scholarship are presented to the WACAC membership at the spring business meeting, alongside a short quote about who they are and where they plan to study in the fall. To give you a taste of what that looks like, here are the words of three recent recipients:

"I am looking forward to continuing my academic journey at UW-Oshkosh in the fall. While my major is presently undecided, I'm considering the fields of education, psychology and Spanish.

And as a first generation student, I would just like to say that I'm incredibly grateful for this scholarship, and to all of the organizations that actively support the youth of Wisconsin and their journeys towards a college education. Thank you!"

- Jessica Martinez

"I will be the first in my family to go to college. My family consists of me, two brothers, seven sisters, and my parents. We total 12 people. I am also the oldest of my siblings. I moved to the US when I was seven years old with my parents and four other siblings.

I was in my school's girls' tennis team from sophomore year to my senior year, and am also in Youth Leadership Alliance. The Alliance spreads awareness of the Hmong culture throughout the school and sell eggrolls as a fundraiser. In my own time, I like to read. I am a bookworm.

My college plans are to get my Bachelor's Degree in Accounting at UW-Milwaukee."

- Mai Chong Lee

"In the fall I will be attending the University of Wisconsin - Madison as an undecided major.

Being bicultural has shaped me as a person and has lead me to be more open and aware of the world. My parents grew up in Mexico, and I was born and raised in the United States. Their lack of opportunity for an education strengthened my determination to succeed.

Because of this, in high school I took advantage of as many AP courses as I could in order to prepare myself for college. Additionally, only after convincing my parents of the importance of extracurricular activities, I joined clubs such as Key Club, Upward Bound, National Honor Society and the Literary Magazine. All of these activities have allowed me to pursue my goal of going to college. Thank you!"

- Gisela Sanchez

The IDEA Scholarship application and donation form can be found on WACAC's website at <http://wacac.org/IDEA-Scholarship>.

INSTILLING BEST PRACTICES IN OUR PROGRAMMING

Susan Zarwell, WACAC Past-President

Professionals on both sides of the desk are eager to better serve their students and communities. Several experts in the field offer their recommendations about what counseling professionals should consider when looking to improve their own programming for underserved, underrepresented, and first generation populations. Special thanks to:

- Dennis K. Beale Jr., College Success Coordinator, UW - Eau Claire
- Andre X. Douglas, Director of Graduation Plus College Access & Success Services, Boys & Girls Clubs of Greater Milwaukee
- Kay Eilers, Director of Student Success, UW - Milwaukee
- Beth Mesrobian, Director of College Transition at Carmen Schools of Science & Technology
- Zuleyka Rios, Admissions Counselor- Multicultural Community Outreach, Marquette University
- Kelly Schaer, Program Director, Colledge Possible

Good equity work begins with a look at our own biases and assumptions. For example, individuals in higher education often avoid what they see as “hand holding” behavior, thinking more explicit instruction or assertive outreach hinders student growth. At the same time, students in traditionally underserved populations are often “scared to ask the questions that could suggest they don’t belong” in a college-bound or campus community. These students often have had fewer mentors with college experiences to guide them, so they may not recognize the resources available to them. They may also be lacking a sense of belonging and may not have the confidence in taking advantage of the resources they see. Here, an educator’s well-intentioned fixed adherence to rules or restraint in communication to prepare a student “for the real world” isn’t helpful: it’s harmful. This communication gap makes for missed opportunities and failure on both sides. A hard look at our campuses and ourselves may show us that we exclude, neglect, and silence our traditionally underserved students in subtle, unintended ways.

Professionals should take advantage of multicultural training opportunities through groups like WACAC, NACAC, College Board, and other affinity-related professional organizations. In addition, we should be participating in professionally sponsored online resources like webinars, and regularly reading *Diverse Issues in Higher Education* and the *Chronicle of Higher Education*. By training ourselves to be more sensitive to the assumptions we all bring into an educational setting, we can recognize and remove the systemic obstacles we’ve unwittingly placed in the path of those we invite onto our campuses. Experts in the field also never think they are done with this work. They are tireless enthusiasts in their own professional development, active in multiple professional organizations, networking and learning about successful practices elsewhere, touring campuses and meeting with counterparts. They are also strong advocates for inclusive and diverse hiring practices for a simple reason: the power of a mentor who has walked in your shoes cannot be overstated.

Whether at a high school, college, or CBO, these professionals consider the majority of their jobs to be fostering partnerships to benefit students. They see establishing relationships between counselors and campuses, employers, and community stakeholders to be essential to student success. Creating “pipelines of knowledge” between schools and supporting organizations allows students to be better served at both the secondary and postsecondary levels. Professionals of all stripes get to better understand the students, and the students learn much more about the opportunities, resources, and responsibilities before them. These partnerships might be as simple as a regular conversation between an admissions officer and a high school counselor, or they might be more formal, funded and programmed. Regardless of scale, the essential ingredient to a successful partnership is always keeping a student-centered perspective throughout regularly scheduled and honest discussion, which must include issues of affordability. The conversation also asks key questions repeatedly: what is working? What isn’t? Why isn’t it? What could we have done differently, and how can we apply that knowledge moving forward? This approach has led to highly successful programs that contribute to student recruitment, retention and success, as well as improvements to campus climate and community relations.

Each of these professionals, whether they are on the front lines working one-on-one with students or overseeing larger programs and staff, emphasizes the importance of really getting to know students and their families’ situations, often in granular detail, and championing every success. Constant follow up, support, and demands for accountability not only builds trust and student confidence along the way, but provides rich and valuable data. This allows professionals to spot trends in the obstacles many students face, from academic to affective to financial issues, and to build programming to bridge the gap. In addition to maintaining one-on-one relationships with students, experts recommend surveying the underrepresented and first generation students already enrolled in your institutions about their experiences on your campus and their senses of agency, knowledge, and belonging. Inviting all of these voices to the table, again and again, ultimately helps students find their own.

MILWAUKEE NCF PROMOTES ACCESS ACROSS WISCONSIN

Jim Stamatakos, NCF Chair



Another year, another successful National College Fair in Milwaukee! The Milwaukee NCF committee would like to extend its sincere gratitude to the nearly 230 colleges and universities that came from all over the world to meet with our students! Special thanks go out to our friends in WAICU, the UW-System, and the WTCS. All three were represented en masse at this year's fair!

While there's no system in place to track the specific number of individuals that attended the fair, we estimate that between 4,500 and 5,000 individuals attended. That would represent an increase of 500-1,000 individuals over last year's fair. Anecdotally, we received feedback from many college representatives that our fair was more productive for them than the Chicago NCF the day before!

We recognize that the Milwaukee NCF plays a vital role in promoting access to and information about post-secondary education in all its forms to students from all backgrounds. We also recognize that having access to schools from around the country and the world provides students and families with a much wider and more comprehensive view of the post-secondary landscape. Students and families may discover post-secondary options in other states that are as accessible and affordable as ones in-state. The workshops our volunteers facilitate on the admission process and financial aid, as well as the assistance our school counselors provide in the on-site counseling center are also important. These individuals provide access to information many students may not be privileged enough to have both in and out of school. We want to ensure the fair is well-supported each year so that we may maintain this valuable pipeline of information to the students and families who need it.

We've been working with our contacts at NACAC to explore the implementation of an incentive we hope will draw more interest in our fair from colleges and universities. We would like to offer colleges an opportunity to register for the Milwaukee NCF at a discounted rate if they register for the Chicago NCF. College/university attendance at the Milwaukee NCF has declined since 2013, and we're sure budgetary constraints play a role in some schools' decisions not to attend our fair. We hope this incentive, if approved, will attract more colleges to our fair since the fairs are so close geographically. We would also like to explore the possibility of busing in students from cities such as Madison and Green Bay, as well as students from schools in Lake County, Illinois to increase access to the information our fair provides to a more geographically diverse population.

Milwaukee is fortunate to be one of a select group of cities that hosts a NCF each year. Continued support from individuals and entities inside and outside the state of Wisconsin is crucial to making sure this resource remains a tool well-utilized.

Save-the-date for our next professional development workshop: April 18, 2018

NACAC recently hosted a workshop for affiliate presidents and vice presidents on the topic of cultural fluency. The Professional Development Workshops committee will be hosting a program in April which will focus on cultural fluency and social justice work in college admission and school counseling. This workshop will also include faculty colleagues from across the state to assist in guiding the discussion on how to improve relationships among colleagues and provide access to higher education to all of our students.

We hope you and your colleagues will make plans to join us on Wednesday, April 18 at Concordia University- Wisconsin to engage in a thoughtful discussion surrounding this important topic.

CAREER CRUISING HELPS ELIMINATE BARRIERS

Christine Voice, WACAC President-Elect

While many of us have heard the buzz around Academic and Career Planning, it's important to understand the components and programs that support successful implementation as well as inclusion, access, and success for our high school students pursuing their post-secondary dreams.

Beginning in the fall of 2017, the Department of Public Instruction required Academic and Career Planning for all grades 6-12 in public school districts. Along with this mandate, DPI allocated funding for the state-selected Career Cruising/Xello software to support Academic and Career Planning. Career Cruising is a program that provides innovative self-exploration and planning software to engage students in the process of building their future; the goal is to inspire and inform dreams. Through this state-wide supported program, Career Cruising creates many opportunities for access and inclusion of students throughout our state. Sheboygan County, for example, has done some great work in utilizing Career Cruising/Xello to create access for all students.

Jason Duff, Academic and Career Planning Coordinator for the Sheboygan Area Public School District commented on the district's use of the program, "One of the things we, as a district, like about Career Cruising is that we have been able to add Inspire Sheboygan County to the platform. In so doing, Career Cruising becomes a comprehensive destination, allowing all students to learn about themselves, learn about colleges and careers, map out their course, and with Inspire, make connections to employers in our community."

Inspire Sheboygan County is a platform within Career Cruising that connects students to employers, professionals, job shadow and career experience opportunities throughout the county.

Nikki Kiss, Executive Director of Inspire Sheboygan County, shares, "The Inspire platform allowed our nine districts in the county to collaborate on a system that created access for all students. In the past making connections for job shadows, internships and tours was all based on the people you may know in the community, which could vary greatly by school district and teacher. Through the Inspire platform, we were able to build a large network of ready-made connections for students and teachers to access, no matter who you know or what city you live in."

Duff added, "Due to the fact that all students use Career Cruising, there is a leveling of the playing field. In the past it was more likely that students who knew they were going to a four-year college were involved in post-secondary planning. We have shifted our thinking to realize that students who pursue direct-entry work right after high school need just as much career education and planning as any other student. Approximately half of our students do not go directly to a two or four-year college. It's critical that we serve those students' needs. Career Cruising helps us do that."

While Academic and Career Planning is currently in its first year of mandated implementation, at the state-level in Wisconsin, a lot of work and programs have already been implemented to connect students to their post-secondary aspirations. Through increasing knowledge and exposure, we hope to eliminate barriers and continue to support all youth in achieving their dreams.

GOVERNMENT RELATIONS

John McGreal, WACAC Government Relations Chair

Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. worked until his assassination for civil rights and became a martyr for the cause. Now, 50 years after his assassination, civil rights have taken on a new form. DREAMers are fighting for their ability to stay in the United States. Back in September of this year, President Trump announced that the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) program would be phased out in six months; citing it as unconstitutional.

DACA was a program implemented by President Obama August of 2012, and students could qualify if they came to the United States when they were under the age of 16, and were currently under the age of 31 on June 15, 2012. They also had to have lived in the United States continuously and had not been convicted of a felony or multiple (3) misdemeanors. When the program was enacted, Pew Research Center estimated that as many as 1.7 million people could be eligible for the program, and DACA has given over 800,000 people legal status in the United States since its inception. The program has given many students and young professionals the opportunity to learn, work, and live in the US.

According the Migration Policy Institute, DACA recipients tend to complete their high school education. DREAMers also continue their education at the post-secondary level. Of DACA recipients, ages 15 - 32, MPI reports about 18% choose to attend college, which is comparable to about 20% of the general population of the U.S. who choose to enroll in college. DACA recipients in college often pursue degrees to work in industries such as hospitality, retail, construction, education, health and social services and professional services. These students tend to lean towards service-oriented fields. MPI also reports that in Wisconsin, there are roughly 6,700 DACA recipients; 40% are either in secondary or post-secondary education.

DACA and DREAM legislation was supposed to be incorporated into the federal budget conversation in Congress this December. However, the status of this legislation has been linked to the federal budget, which continues to complicate the process. I would encourage you to look deep into this issue, form your opinion and take action. The National Government Relations Committee has created an action alert to allow you to voice your support of DACA and DREAM Legislation that will give legal status to these students.

Here is the link to the Action Alert supporting the DREAM Act of 2017: <http://cqrceengage.com/nacac/app/write-a-letter?4&engagementId=379893>

MIDWEST CONFERENCE UPDATE

As is tradition, in even numbered years the ACACs of Minnesota, Iowa, the Dakotas, and Wisconsin all come together for the MIDWest Conference. This year's Super Conference will take place in Dubuque, IA May 20- 22, 2018 at the Grand Harbor Resort. This will be a great opportunity for us to come together as a membership, show our WACAC pride, and work to become better servant leaders as we work to make Dr. King's dream a reality.

You can view details about the conference at www.iowaacac.com/conferences. You can also submit a session proposal on the conference website. Due to the success and overwhelming popularity of round table discussions at last year's WACAC conference, we have brought that idea to MIDWest. Please consider submitting a proposal today! The deadline is February 9, 2018. We look forward to seeing you in Dubuque!

WACAC BOARD SEEKS NOMINATIONS

The WACAC Nomination Committee is seeking nominations for the following WACAC Board positions:

- ▶ President-elect
- ▶ Secretary

Nominations will be due by February 1, 2018 and can be completed online at <http://wacac.com/WACAC-Nomination-Form>

GRADUATION PLUS: ACHIEVING COLLEGE ACCESS IN MILWAUKEE

Kate Hooper, WACAC Communications Chair

Boys & Girls Clubs of Greater Milwaukee offers a suite of college access and success programs under its Graduation Plus umbrella, serving 415 high school students and 360 college students. While the participation criteria and funding partners may vary, each program aims to help low-income and often underserved students overcome barriers from admission all the way to college graduation. Most of the Clubs' college access programs begin working with students their sophomore year of high school, and follow them throughout their pursuit of a higher education degree. Past experience has shown that simply helping students gain access to college did not necessarily translate into successfully graduating with a degree.

"We help with everything from A to Z when it comes to college," says Adrian Flores, Program Coordinator for the Graduation Plus Sponsor-A-Scholar program. "Such as 'what is a major' or 'what is the ACT, and how do I send test scores?' Anything that has to do with college specifics, we educate and help with the process."

Much of the assistance provided for the students is done through a variety of workshops that are hosted bi-weekly, and cover topics such as college applications, scholarships, understanding college support services and public speaking with confidence. Graduation Plus students also participate in programs such as Majors Meetings Careers, College Signing Day and Bank Your Future, all which focus on what's to come after high school. Attendance at 90% of these events and workshops is a requirement for the program. Other requirements include four college visits, applying to a minimum of five colleges, and applying for at least eight scholarships. Students that fulfill these requirements and continue to participate throughout college are awarded a \$5,000 scholarship.

Sponsor-A-Scholar coordinators such as Flores, are also in the schools. The Milwaukee schools served through this program are Rufus King, Alexander Hamilton, Riverside, South Division, Ronald Reagan and Bay View High Schools.

"We are directly in the high schools working with the students every day," says Flores. "We work one-on-one to make sure their needs are being met and we continue to follow the students through college. That is what makes us unique. Our programming is tailored year- to- year to help them understand what the entire college search process is about. When they are in college, we prep them for life after graduation through interview practice, resume building, and help them with networking skills."

The program reports a 100% high school graduation rate, with 100% college enrollment. In addition there is a 91% persistence rate from freshman year to sophomore year of college. Even though Adrian and his colleagues help students break down some barriers to college, they still have hurdles they find difficult to help their students overcome. These include financial burdens, such as application fees and the cost to send ACT scores and transcripts, which can make students reluctant to start the application process.

Small hurdles such as these can seem like big obstacles for high school students and their families who are new to the college admissions process. Its groups like Boys and Girls Club that help simplify the process for the students and their families. Non-profit organizations that work with students to break down these barriers are important, not only in helping to start the process of applying to college, but the overall realization for students that college is a possible option for them after high school graduation. Students who participate in programs such as Boys and Girls Club's Graduation Plus program are being exposed to the resources they will need to be successful before, during and after college.

So what can be done at the high school and college level to help students with similar barriers find success? On the high school side, finding a way to streamline the application process can really help.

"Using Naviance and Parchment really makes things easier for the student. The process is smooth and they have access and control, and see what they are doing and what needs to be done," Flores has observed. "These resources make everything more accessible."

On the college side, keeping an individual student's needs in mind can make a difference. Colleges should not make assumptions based on a student's profile. For example, just because a student is low income and first generation does not mean he or she needs to be in a remedial program. The student could have a 30 ACT and 4.0 GPA.

"Colleges and universities need to take the time to understand who the students really are instead of lumping them into a group based on what they think they know about them." shared Flores. "Taking a look at the student holistically will help colleges better understand the history of these students."

Boys and Girls Clubs of Greater Milwaukee is just one group that focuses on college access for the high school students we work with. There are many organizations in our communities that have similar goals in helping students become more college-ready. When high schools and higher educational intuitions are open to forming relationships with college access organizations, it can open doors for new partnerships and opportunities to help provide even more access to their students.

ADMISSIONS PRACTICES

Name Change: Statement of Principles of Good Practice becomes Code of Ethics and Professional Practices

Perry Robinson, Admissions Practices Co-Chair

College counselors and admission professionals have a new code of ethics to guide them as they assist students in the transition to postsecondary education. The National Association for College Admission Counseling's Assembly voted unanimously to adopt the document – "NACAC's Code of Ethics and Professional Practices" during the association's 73rd National Conference in Boston. So, we have moved from "SPGP" to "CEPP."

The code went into effect immediately. The 15-page document may be found at: https://www.nacacnet.org/globalassets/documents/advocacy-and-ethics/statement-of-principles-of-good-practice/2017_spgp_final.pdf and provides clear ethical principles, as well as procedures for implementing and monitoring them. It protects students from unethical recruitment practices and shields institutions from unfair competition. ALL members of NACAC agree to follow the statement.

Over the next year, both NACAC and their affiliates will be using a variety of platforms to inform the membership of CEPP and how some of its policies and directives differ from the former SPGP. Members should do their best to become aware of our new ethical guidance document.

During the 2017-18 academic year, the CEPP guidelines will be in effect, and members who are not in compliance - relative to any new policies or procedures which CEPP mandates - will be asked to come into compliance, no later than September 1, 2018.

ACT WAIVES SCORE REPORT FEES FOR LOW-INCOME STUDENTS, COLLEGE BOARD FOLLOWS SUIT

On December 13, ACT announced that starting September 2018, ACT will offer free score reports for low income students. A day later, College Board announced that they too will grant free score reports for qualifying students.

To read the full press release from ACT, click on the following link: <http://leadershipblog.act.org/2017/12/act-will-offer-free-score-reports-to.html>

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