

American College Personnel Association

# Interchange

## A Word from the Editor

### Special points of interest:

- Welcome to the newest Directorate Body members! See page 9 to see the CSI Leadership Team!
- Questions or feedback? E-mail the incoming Commission Chair, David Rachita, at [Rachita@cl.uh.edu](mailto:Rachita@cl.uh.edu)

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Thanks for reading this special Convention issue of Interchange!

I have had the wonderful opportunity to serve as the Editor of Interchange for two short years now. The time has flown by! In that time, we've created seven editions of Interchange, all of them with their own unique stories, research, reviews, and great information.

Yet for all of the wonderful authors that we've featured in Interchange, chances are, we haven't yet published an article from YOU! For some, it may be intimidating to submit a work to be published. Let me assure you, the editing volunteers who devote time to Interchange are the best in the business at providing thoughtful feedback, revisions, and correcting the occasional typo. Works that are submitted do not need to be perfect! We're happy to help.

Others may think they have nothing to say. They're wrong! Got an opinion on the latest and greatest summer reading or the newest Student Affairs trend? Does your campus have any unique or interesting programs? Have you recently reviewed various new pieces of technology through a request for proposals? Are you a stu-

dent? If you answered "yes" to any of these questions, you have something to say!

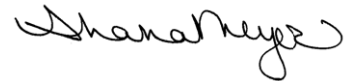
Many of us juggle so many responsibilities it is difficult to keep all the balls in the air. Writing an article for a publication may seem like one more ball to juggle. While I can't argue this one too much, there are benefits to writing. Clear your head and vent in an opinion piece. Find an answer to a question you need to research for your position, anyway. Use something you are already doing at work and get more bang for the buck. Rework that grad school piece and enjoy seeing your name in print!

While Interchange would not exist without the authors, it certainly would not exist without the support and contributions of the Commission for Student Involvement Directorate Body members. Thanks to all for their many submissions, suggestions, solicitations, and assistance. Thank you to all of the Commission members for YOUR help—whether as editors, author solicitors, or general assistants, I appreciate all you have done to make Interchange a success.

This special convention issue of Interchange features some of the great work the Commission

will be doing over the course of the conference, as well as highlighting a piece from author Shane Windmeyer. The Campus Climate Index is receiving an "Innovative Response to Social Justice" award from the Commission for Social Justice and Education during the conference. I think you'll find his article engaging and informative.

Enjoy the conference, and thanks for reading!



Shana Meyer  
Commission for Student Involvement  
Vice Chair for Publications  
Assistant Vice President for Student Affairs, Fort Hays State University



**ACPA**  
COMMISSION FOR  
**Student Involvement**

## LGBT-Friendly Campus Climate Index: Using Technology to Find a Gay-Friendly College

By Shane L. Windmeyer, M.S., Ed.

*"It was great to have my first college fair be one where I could ask important questions about myself as someone from the LGBT community. This type of college fair was also very important for me as I have two moms – I want to be at a college where I can feel comfortable about my family."* --Isabel Galupo, a high school senior from Towson, Maryland, after attending a 2007 college fair hosted by Campus Pride, a national nonprofit group for LGBT students and campus organizations.

It is true, even straight youth are looking for gay-friendly colleges. The complexity of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) issues transcends the question of "who's gay or who's not gay?" Students like Isabel come from diverse families and social networks and want to go to college where their families are safe, welcome – and even celebrated.

Some colleges and universities have realized that embracing diversity related to sexual orientation and gender identity/expression creates a positive impact for all students. It is not a surprise that youth today are by far more open-minded to LGBT issues than those over the age of 35. Despite this, over ninety percent of LGBT youth report being harassed or assaulted due to sexual orientation or gender identity/expression even before college (GLSEN,

2006).

When a young adult arrives on a college campus, there is no guarantee that there are LGBT protections to provide a safe, welcoming, learning environment in which they can learn and grow. Only 600 four-year colleges and universities (out of nearly 2500) prohibit discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation and approximately sixty campuses have explicit protections inclusive of transgender people (Campus Pride, 2007). Overall, Campus Pride estimates that half of all colleges have an active LGBT and / or ally student group or organization that is working to create positive change.

So how do students like Isabel sort through the many colleges and universities to determine which will best meet her LGBT-friendly needs? How do colleges reach out to gay and straight students and their families? A new online initiative called the LGBT-Friendly Campus Climate Index ([www.campusclimateindex.org](http://www.campusclimateindex.org)), can assist students in determining how safe, welcoming, and supportive U.S. colleges and universities are.

### The Concept

Everyone has seen and heard of college guidebooks, expensive texts written by "professional organizations" that claim to know what is important for higher educa-

tion. Some are good. Some are bad. Skeptics have reason to wonder whether they contain accurate information or are simply marketing tools. For LGBT youth, there are only two such publications to date. Colleges have yet to find an effective way to reach this population – until now.

The concept behind the LGBT-Friendly Campus Climate Index was to create an option outside of the thickly bound, high gloss, often no-substance college guidebooks. It was to utilize technology to make an online interface that would create visibility for an often-invisible college population – LGBT and ally people.

By creating this type of resource an online tool was also created that could be used to support campuses in improving their LGBT campus life. Ultimately, the Index can be used to shape the campuses' educational experiences to be more inclusive, welcoming, and respectful of LGBT people and allies.

In development since 2001, the Index was developed by a Campus Pride team of researchers, including Dr. Brett Genny Beemyn, Dr. Susan R. Rankin, and Shane L. Windmeyer. The Index was built on the philosophy that every student has the right to a safe learn-



**Shane Windmeyer is the Executive Director of Campus Pride. Campus Pride is the leading national nonprofit organization for student leaders and campus organizations working to create a safer LGBT learning environment at colleges and universities. It exists to develop, support and give "voice and action" in building future LGBT and ally leaders.**

**You can take the Index at no charge, at: [www.campusclimateindex.org](http://www.campusclimateindex.org)**

**Shane will receive a Voice of Inclusion award from ACPA for his work with the Campus Climate Index and Campus Pride at the 2008 Convention.**

**He may be reached at [shane@campuspride.org](mailto:shane@campuspride.org).**

## Commission for Student Involvement Sponsored Programs

By Jacquelyn R. Jones

Be sure to attend one of the many exceptional programs being sponsored by the Commission for Student Involvement this year in Atlanta! These programs collectively represent each of the functional areas of Greek Life, Community Service and Service Learning, Leadership and Student Activities – all of which are covered by the commission and went through a special selection process to be considered for sponsorship.

### Using the Power of Peer Influence to Create Community Change

Presented by: **Debora Liddell**

Monday, March 31, 2008

8:45 AM - 10:00 AM

Marriott Marquis, International 6

Peer education has become a popular tool for college health services to promote students' healthy behaviors, although there is mixed evidence supporting its efficacy. This program will discuss one university's approach to developing a health advocacy model of peer education, Health Ninjas, by using peer opinion leaders (POLs), the quietly influential leaders found in most peer groups. We review the literature, describe the program and its effects, and discuss other applications of this model for change on campus.

### RedHawk Traditions: History, Athletics, and Tradition in a Learning Community

Presented by: **Brittany Garner**

Monday, March 31, 2008

10:15 AM - 11:30 AM

Marriott Marquis, A703

RedHawk Traditions, an innovative living-learning community at Miami University, bridges the gap between student-athletes and non-athlete students for a more inclusive residential experience. Simultaneously, the community addresses school apathy by collaborative efforts to educate students about the history, athletics, and traditions at Miami University. During this presentation, learn how to gain buy-in from key stakeholders, develop holistic learning outcomes, and create residential programs for this type of initiative.

### A Model For Developmentally-Appropriate Leadership Experiences for First Year Students

Presented by: **Teniell L Trolan**

Monday, March 31, 2008

11:45 AM - 1:00 PM

Hyatt Regency, Courtland

How can student affairs professionals be more intentional in developing campus leadership and involvement experiences that engage students and focus on student learning? Presenters will discuss this and other questions about how to successfully involve first year students in developmentally-appropriate leadership experiences. This program will challenge participants to examine a model developed for first year student involvement based on current research and student development theory, and will encourage professionals to adapt and apply this model to everyday practice.



*Jacquelyn R. Jones is CSI's Vice Chair for Programs. She is the Assistant Director of Student Activities and Leadership in the Office of Student Involvement at the University of Toledo.*

## Commission for Student Involvement Sponsored Programs

(Continued from page 2)

### The Impact of Greek Life: Findings from a National Study

Presented by: Ramsey G Jabaji

Monday, March 31, 2008

2:45 PM - 4:00 PM

Marriott Marquis, International 2

Greek Life findings from the Multi-institutional Study of Leadership, a national study examining student leadership development of approximately 62,000 college students from 52 campuses, will be presented. A national sample of Greek and non-Greek college students will be compared to show potential differences in the experiences and development of Greek and non-Greek students. As a result of this study, areas of opportunity for student affairs staff will be presented.

### Assessment in Student Activities: A Purposeful Approach for New Professionals

Presented by: Sarah A Sunde

Tuesday, April 1, 2008

10:15 AM - 11:30 AM

Marriott Marquis, International 2

Student activities are an integral part of student learning and preparation for effective citizenship. Determining what student leaders learn through their involvement can be a challenge, especially for new professionals who may have little to no experience doing so. Session facilitators, current new professionals working in student activities, will guide participants in a discussion of steps that can be taken to identify learning outcomes appropriate for student activities, methods for assessing learning, and specific assessment strategies useful for professionals.

### Pre-Service Training for Service-Learning: What Students Have To Say

Presented by: Melissa A. Rychener

Wednesday, April 2, 2008

8:00 AM - 9:15 AM

Marriott Marquis, International 3

Have you ever wondered whether orientation is really useful for preparing students for work in service-learning? Join us for a discussion of how students who participated in a training session before beginning a service-learning program make meaning of their experiences. Student experiences will be interpreted and analyzed according to current theories in student development, service-learning, and higher education. Following the presentation, participants will be invited to help analyze some of the interview data.



*Commission for  
Student Involvement*



## CSI Silent Auction

The [Commission for Student Involvement](#) will once again sponsor a silent auction during the [ACPA Atlanta 2008 Annual Convention](#).

To find information regarding the silent auction, go to:  
<http://csisilentauction.blogspot.com/>

The website will have the most up to date listings of entertainers, books, conference registrations, professional resources and paraphernalia available for bid.

All silent auction proceeds will support the commission's work including the CSI reception and [commission awards](#).

### When to Bid:

- CSI Open Meeting  
Sunday, March 30, 1-4 pm

Marriott Marquis - International  
9

- CSI Resource Fair  
Monday March 31, 11 am - 3 pm  
outside Starbucks in the Marriott Marquis
- Convention Showcase  
Monday, March 31, 6:30-7:45 pm  
Hyatt Regency-Centennial Ballroom  
Community Service  
Steve Terry - Being Greek: Beating the Stereotype

For further information on [how to bid](#), [how to pay](#), [how to donate professional resources](#), [college spirit items, etc.](#), or [how to donate as a performer or agent](#) please visit our website at : <http://csisilentauction.blogspot.com/>

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**Michael Severy is the fundraising chair for the Commission for Student Involvement. He may be reached at: [severymt@uiuc.edu](mailto:severymt@uiuc.edu)**

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## Submit an Article to Interchange!

*Interchange* is currently accepting articles for the next issue. Articles should address research, current issues, examples of theory to practice, best practices, or other themes relating to Community Service, Leadership Development, Greek Life, Student Organizations, or the use of technology in any of the above areas. You might also consider writing a review of a book from one of the above topical issues.

**This is a fantastic opportunity for graduate students to publish papers from class or results from a thesis.** Past

issues have also featured a number of articles by faculty members.

For more information on submission guidelines or to submit an article, please email Shana Meyer, Vice-Chair for Publications, at [slmeyer@fhsu.edu](mailto:slmeyer@fhsu.edu). Submissions will be peer reviewed. Please only send word documents as an email attachment.

All submissions should be received **by no later than** Friday, May 2, 2008 for the next newsletter.

## LGBT-Friendly Campus Climate Index: Using Technology to Find a Gay-Friendly College

*(Continued from page 2)*

ing environment where they can learn, live, and grow academically and socially. As a result, campuses have the power and responsibility to enact policies, programs, and practices that work to enhance the campus climate for all students -- including LGBT and ally students. In addition to this philosophy, the team relied on a decade of LGBT campus climate research by Rankin, as well as a host of national LGBT best practices and standards. It is important to note that the Index does not assess attitudes or perceptions; instead, it looks specifically at LGBT policies, programs, and practices.

Substantial testing and sampling of the Index was administered at higher education conferences and with individuals on campuses across the country. The key was to utilize the web to develop a dynamic tool that would reach out to the LGBT population and to develop a fair evaluation of four-year colleges of all types and sizes as it pertains to LGBT issues. After testing, the Index tool was narrowed down to 56 self-assessment questions, which correspond to eight different LGBT-Friendly factors. The factors are:

- LGBT Policy Inclusion
- LGBT Support & Institutional Commitment
- LGBT Student Life
- LGBT Academic Life
- LGBT Housing
- LGBT Campus Safety
- LGBT Counseling & Health
- LGBT Recruitment and Retention Efforts

Questions were ultimately weighted to compensate for size and type of institution as well as to

add value to specific components of LGBT campus life. The backend database instantly compiles the assessment, generates a confidential report, and provides output scores based on the responses. Results are immediate and provide the college or university with a national benchmark to assess their LGBT policies, programs, and practices.

### How it Works – For Campus Officials

The first step for a college or university to participate in the LGBT-Friendly Campus Climate Index is to complete the online assessment tool. The Index allows only one designated campus official that can speak legally on behalf of the college or university to complete the assessment for the campus. The individual goes online and creates their campus account.

Campus Pride encourages a team approach to completing the Index, comprised of student leaders, faculty, administrators, and staff. The individuals involved should be the most credible, diverse population of LGBT and ally people who would either know the answers or be responsible to find accurate answers. The Index does not rely on multiple reports, assumptions, or opinions.

Once the campus official compiles responses, the individual goes online to a private login area and completes the assessment for each of the eight LGBT-Friendly factors, making online notes and saving responses at the end. The official may save, change responses, and return to their campus profile

at any time, until hitting the final confirmation to submit the assessment for the college or university.

The assessment is then scored and approved by the online administrator. The campus official receives an email invitation to view the confidential report for the campus and can view a special private profile page summarizing the findings with a link to print the full 14-18 page report. The report lists detailed scores from the assessment and also suggests recommendations and readings to create a safer, more welcoming campus for LGBT and ally people. The report is confidential, to be viewed by the campus only. Assessment responses can be updated annually to measure progress year to year.

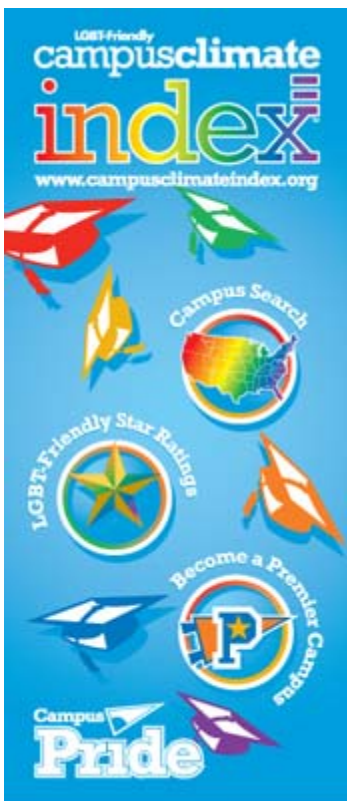
The final step is for the campus official to determine if the college or university wants to be visible on the Index to potentially reach out to future LGBT and ally students. By clicking a box, the campus can choose to “opt in” or “opt out” of the online database. A choice to “opt in” creates a public profile page for the campus automatically. The profile page sample is available to preview from the private log in area and consists of the name of campus, demographic information, and general star ratings from one to five stars.

Should the campus prefer its profile not be available to the public, a choice to “opt out” allows the campus to have access to the confidential report without the profile being visible to the public. All campuses participating in the Index are acknowledged for their commitment to LGBT and ally people and can choose to “opt in” at any time.

## LGBT-Friendly Campus Climate Index: Using Technology to Find a Gay-Friendly College

(Continued from page 6)

**Some LGBT and ally faculty and staff have even commented that they plan on using the Index as a tool to choose their next job in higher education.**



### How it Works – For Prospective Students & Families

The MySpace, Facebook, and YouTube generation expect readily accessible resources at the click of the button. Finding a gay-friendly campus is effortless with the LGBT-Friendly Campus Climate Index. Youth can search several campus profiles and compare what each has to offer. If a particular college or university is appealing, prospective students click the “My Bookbag” feature and the profile is stored in the student’s “book bag.” All campuses in the book bag receive referrals with contact information, so they may follow-up with prospective students.

The quickest way for prospective students to search is by using the “Campus Search” feature. Users can complete a detailed search by region, size, type of institution, tuition cost, and even by star ratings. On the front page of the Index, a section titled Spotlight showcases different campuses with photos. Campuses that score three, four, or five stars are featured in a separate “Honor Roll” listing. Campuses may add personal quotes, photos, events, web links, and much more to profile pages for users to learn more about LGBT campus life at their institution.

Finally, LGBT and ally youth and their families have a reliable, up-to-date resource to help in finding the right college. The dynamic technology of the Index makes it easy to navigate and the various campus profiles provide a tailored look at LGBT campus life. Some LGBT and ally faculty and staff have even commented that they plan on using the Index as a tool to choose their next job in higher education.

### Conclusion

Since launching in September of 2007, the LGBT-Friendly Campus Climate Index has grown from profiling 30 to over 150 colleges and universities across the United States. Plans are underway to release an upgrade to allow non-residential campuses and community colleges to participate in the Index. The expectation is that the Index will continue to grow as more colleges learn about the value and benefits.

By using the web, as well as profile pages and features reminiscent of popular search engines, the Index is not only attractive to today’s younger generation, but it also provides a way to reach out to what has often been an untapped population in college

admissions – LGBT people. To date, the Index has made over 880 referrals of prospective students and families, and it is beginning to gain increased national visibility in coordination with the Campus Pride College Admission Fairs. There have been over 32,000 unique site visitors, an average of 5,550 per month.

For students like Isabel who have two moms, the Index provides the most up-to-date information regarding campuses’ LGBT policies, programs, and practices. It is a highly reliable online resource to find an LGBT friendly campus that is right for her. And that is what’s most important to remember.

### References:

- “From Teasing to Torment: School Climate in America.” Gay, Lesbian and Straight Education Network, 2006.
- “Campus Facts to Know.” Campus Pride, 2007.



**Commission for Student Involvement  
Convention Schedule of Events 2008**

**Saturday, March 29:**

*Commission for Student Involvement I Directorate News & Team Building (New & Old Directorate Body Members)*

5pm to 6:30pm: Marriot Marquis M104

**Sunday, March 30th:**

*Commission for Student Involvement Elections & Other Business*

9am to 12pm: Marriot Marquis – International 7

*Commission for Student Involvement Open Meeting: Exploring Our World of Student Involvement*

1pm to 4pm: Marriot Marquis – International 9

**Monday, March 31:**

*Commission for Student Involvement Resource Fair*

11am to 3pm: Marriot Marquis – Hallway Outside Marquis Ballroom  
(In front of Starbucks)

*Commission for Student Involvement Transition Meeting for Newly Elected Executive Members (Leadership Positions Only)*

5:45pm to 6:45pm: Marriot Marquis L404

*Convention Showcase*

6:30pm to 8pm: Hyatt Regency – Centennial Ballroom (March Madness Theme)

*Commission for Student Involvement Social & Awards Reception*

7:30pm to 9pm: Hyatt Regency – Greenbriar

**Tuesday, April 1:**

*Commission for Student Involvement Open Meeting: Learn, Share, Join*

2:30pm to 5pm: Hyatt Regency – Regency Ballroom V

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**Please join us for our  
Open Meetings,  
Resource Fair, or at  
the Showcase to get  
to know your  
Directorate Body  
members and to  
become more  
involved in the  
Commission!**

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*The Commission for Student Involvement (CSI) strives to create an engaged and supportive community of student affairs professionals committed to providing meaningful co-curricular & curricular experiences for today's college students. By providing access to unique resources as well as additional networking, recognition, and professional development opportunities, CSI enhances the knowledge and practice of educators working in the areas of Greek Life, Leadership Development, Student Activities, and Community Service/Service Learning.*

We're on the web!  
<http://www.myacpa.org/comm/student/index.cfm>

**CSI is the 2007 Overall Distinguished Accomplishment Award for Commissions Recipient**

