

# The Program

NEWSLETTER FOR THE MASTER'S PROGRAM IN HIGHER EDUCATION AND STUDENT AFFAIRS

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## In this issue:

- ✚ Interview Days 2006
- ✚ UCSAA Update
- ✚ Welcome Dr. Lee Burdette Williams
- ✚ Assessment Update
- ✚ NASPA Case Study Competition
- ✚ NASPA Placement Conference
- ✚ Graduate Profiles
- ✚ Cohort of 2008 Profiles
- ✚ Presentations, Publications, Awards & Congratulations



*First-year Students Jen Minot & Julie Silverstein*

## HESA Interview Days 2006



Interview Days for the 2006-2007 cohort candidates were held March 2<sup>nd</sup> through March 3<sup>rd</sup>. We were privileged to host 42 candidates seeking admission into the HESA master's program. Candidates traveled from as far away as Washington and represented a diverse and impressive applicant pool. Candidates were interviewing for any of the eighteen graduate assistantships offered through the Division of Student Affairs, Academic Affairs, and Multicultural and International Affairs and included Cultural Centers, Residential Life, Career Services, and Student Activities, among others.

This year we had over 128 applications for admission, representing student from all over the world. The impressive applicant pool boasted an average GPA of 3.4 and includes

students from some of the country's most prestigious institutions of higher education.

This years Interview Days brought an uncontrollable element; snow!! Connecticut received a significant snowfall on the day of arrival, however, our candidates toughed it out and made it to campus safely. After a Welcome Session with introductions from the program's co-directors, coordinator, and faculty, a panel composed of current students fielded questions for nearly an hour. Following the panel, the festivities commenced in the gallery of Wilbur Cross where after a welcome from the University of Connecticut Student Affairs Association (UCSAA), the candidates enjoyed dinner, deserts, and a warm atmosphere (in spite of the snowy conditions outside).

Friday brought the interviews; candidates had anywhere from 3-5 interviews plus a faculty interview. This years' interview days were nothing short of successful and we are excited at the quality and caliber UConn HESA is currently attracting.

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## UCSAA Update

### Fall 2005

*Here are some highlights from UCSAA for the fall of 2005...*

#### **Link Up For The Future – Graduate Student Network Gathering**

*October 14, 2005*

With nearly 50 students and faculty members in attendance representing six different institutions from the area, this event was a huge success. The program focused around job searching, but also allowed for some informal time to meet and socialize. The event consisted of: an informal ice breaker, a keynote address by UConn's new Dean of Students Dr. Lee Burdette Williams, a panel of faculty members and professionals, and an informal social with snacks and refreshments. The feedback from other programs was extremely positive and Boston College has already started discussing whether or not they

want to host a similar event next fall. Hopefully, UCSAA will have started a new tradition with this graduate student event for our region.

#### **Brown Bag Lunches**

- ✚ Job Search topics sponsored by Career Services
- ✚ Various Professional Development/Academic Events

#### **UCSAA Social Event**

Hayride & Maze organized by the Social Committee

#### **Friends of UConn Social**

NASPA Region 1, co-sponsored with the VPSA office

#### **Participation at the All of the Above Conference**

David Daniels and Gudrun Haider participated on the All of the Above Conference Committee. David helped with finding a keynote speaker and organizing a panel for the conference. Together with a graduate student from Southern New Hampshire University, David and Gudrun organized the Professional Organizations/ Graduate Preparation Programs Fair.

*Submitted by Gudrun Haider*

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*Link Up for the Future Conference*

## Spring 2006

UCSAA took some exciting new initiatives this spring; here are some highlights from this semester:

- ✚ Formed a committee and started to plan a separate aspect of new student HESA orientation for the fall
- ✚ Social event - Went to the Vagina Monologues
- ✚ Made goody bags for the candidates for HESA interview days
- ✚ Hosted a social game night after the Thursday reception for interview candidates
- ✚ Social game night for UCSAA members
- ✚ Professional development events
- ✚ Helping to plan the Graduation Celebration for 2<sup>nd</sup> year HESA graduates and their families

*Submitted by Julie Silverstein*

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### Greetings from our newest faculty member, Dean of Students Lee Burdette Williams, Ph.D.



The chance to work with graduate students in the HESA program was a big draw for me as I considered the opportunity to come to UConn this year. I'm happy to report that it has turned out to be the benefit I anticipated. Our HESA

students are smart, ambitious, committed to the field, and fun to work with.

I taught in the graduate program at Appalachian State University in Boone, NC for eight years while working as a student affairs administrator in various capacities. These included leadership, student activities, the Women's Center, and residential learning communities. For four years, I directed Watauga College, a small, funky residential college at Appalachian, where I grew to appreciate students who intrinsically understood one of my mottos as an educator: "An unquestioned answer is more dangerous than an unanswered question." I think I've brought that appreciation here to this job, where I work hard to understand students' questions (which may come in various forms—written, spoken, organized protests). As Dean of Students, I try to keep my ear to the ground, listening for all kinds of things that have an impact on student life in Storrs.

Though I love to be in the classroom, I love even more that I come to the classroom after a day of being out on campus, interacting with students, faculty and other administrators. My teaching style is very much centered on those interactions and the stories I'm able to tell about my work. Story-telling, I think, is how I make sense of work that is complex, ambiguous, exhilarating, and occasionally frustrating (often all in the same day).

I'll be teaching a course this fall called "Student Affairs Leadership in Higher Education." That title is pretty intentional. What I hope to explore is how someone in student affairs interfaces with various other leaders and constituents on a campus. We bring a perspective to the table—a valuable one that I hope is student-centered. But we need to understand the perspectives of others at the table, especially our colleagues on the faculty. Effective partnerships are the key to serving students, and the institution well, and those partnerships require the ability to see the world through the eyes of others.

As John Saddleire says almost daily, "There is no place in the country I'd rather be than at the University of Connecticut at this moment in its history" or something similarly profound. I agree. I also agree with John's statement, "A Blackberry is a beautiful thing," as well as with his appreciation of lunchtime.

I'm glad we're here, at this same moment in UConn's history. I look forward to meeting our new cohort and getting to know our second year students better.

*Submitted by Lee Burdette Williams*

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*Fall Holiday Party*

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## HESA Assessment Activities

The class of 2007 has finished a two-semester sequence in assessment, evaluation, and research in Student Affairs. Four teams of students have designed and carried out an assessment of a genuine challenge related to Student Affairs administration at the University of Connecticut. Each team has a project sponsor—an administrator who has provided guidance and resources to assist the team. Ultimately, each project will support the needs and interests of the Division and enhance the experience of UConn students. Below is a brief description of each project. Any team member would be happy to give you more details!

### ***An Assessment of Undergraduate Student Perceptions of Mental Health Services with a focus on Students of Color***

***Team Members:*** Sarah Miller, Jennifer Minot, Kimberly Roberts, Michael Sarra

***Project Sponsor:*** Michelle Williams, Department of Psychology

The purpose of this assessment project is to examine perceptions of undergraduate students of color with regard to their general attitudes towards seeking help for mental health issues, their awareness of supports and services available at UConn, and overall satisfaction with services.

### **Peer Mentoring: The Role Peer Mentors Play in Supporting First-Year Students**

***Team Members:*** Kelly Duncan, Jennie Moore, Megan Wildenstein

***Project Sponsor:*** Dr. Jennifer Lease-Butts, Honors Program

The purpose of this project is to gain a better understanding of the role peer mentors play in supporting first-year students at UConn. We will examine the qualities and characteristics of peer mentors, the needs of first-year students, and the types of support peer mentors need to perform their roles effectively.

### **Assessment of the Effectiveness of Academic Accommodations Provided by the Center for Students with Disabilities**

***Team Members:*** Joshua Brandfon, Saben Littlefield, Julie Silverstein, Jessica Smestad

***Project sponsor:*** Donna Korbel, Center for Students with Disabilities

The purpose of this project is to assess the perceptions of undergraduate students with disabilities regarding their utilization of and satisfaction with academic accommodations provided by the Center for Students with Disabilities.

## An Assessment of the Impacts of First Year Learning Communities

**Team Members:** Julie Betz, Jennifer Johnson, Amelia Learner, Stefanie Rabin

**Project Sponsors:** Dr. John Sears, Coordinator for Academic Programs in the Department of Residential Life & David Ouimette, Director of First Year Programs

The purpose of this assessment project is twofold: first, to compare perceptions of first-year experiences as well as academic outcomes between students in selected majors who are and are not involved with an FYLC; second, to better understand student motivations to join an FYLC and overall student satisfaction with their FYLC experiences.

*Submitted by Sandy Bell*

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*Interview Days Dinner in the Gallery of Wilbur Cross*

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## NAPSA Master's Case Study Competition

First year HESA students, Julie Betz and Joshua Brandfon participated in the NAPSA Master's Case Study Competition at the 2006 NASPA National Conference in Washington, D.C. All participants were provided with the case on the afternoon of March 12<sup>th</sup>. The case consisted of a multitude of issues concerning student groups at a community college and community member concerns with the institution on the brink of a bond campaign for upgrading the institutional infrastructure, among many other issues. Operating from the standpoint of a director of student life, Betz

and Brandfon set out to utilize their skills gained through the HESA program. They spent many hours on Sunday evening researching law and best practices, examining key points, formulating opinions, applying theories, and developing sound arguments to back up their approach to the case. On March 13<sup>th</sup>, Betz and Brandfon presented their case to two judges and received very positive feedback. Later that afternoon, they found that their hard work paid off; they received 2<sup>nd</sup> place in the first-year competition, and were very proud to represent UConn HESA. Congratulations to Julie and Josh for their hard work and effort!

*Submitted by Julie Betz*

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## NASPA Career Placement

I attended the NASPA placement at the national conference in Washington D.C., March 11-14. This was my first experience with placement, and it met and exceeded all my expectations. Over 900 positions were posted and over 1000 candidates registered to spend 30 minutes with potential employers in first-round interviews for positions. I had a very good experience and was able to fit in several interviews. Here's my top ten list of things you need to know about placement...

10. It's not a case of "He who has the most interviews, wins." – Having time to adequately prepare for a smaller number of interviews is a better strategy.
9. Be prepared to answer the question "So what else do you want to know?" – As simple as it sounds, that question can really catch you off guard.
8. Be supportive of the people you know – sharing advice and tips isn't going to give anyone else an advantage over you.
7. Notes of encouragement in your mailbox can make your ENTIRE day.

6. If you have trouble tuning out distractions, practice early – It's pretty much one big warehouse with employers sitting less than a foot from each other. Don't be afraid to ask someone to repeat a question.
5. Thank you notes are really not an option; the people you interview with will send them to you, so definitely take the time to write them.
4. If someone invites you to a reception, do your best to be there. And when you're there, try to lighten up a little, make small talk. The interviewers need a break too.
3. Get decent sleep – save the parties and late nights for next year, when you already have a job.
2. Try to relax and smile – the HESA folks will make sure you are MORE than prepared for this; you have nothing to be nervous about.
1. High heels are the devil!!

*Submitted by Sarah Clegg*

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## Meet the Graduates!

This year, we anticipate graduating 18 students from the HESA program. These soon-to-be Student Affairs professionals are in the thick of the job search process and are eagerly awaiting job offers and placement opportunities.

### Jeffrey Alton

**Hometown:** East Hartford, CT  
**Undergraduate Institution:** University of Connecticut, B.A. English, Minor, Asian American Studies  
**Graduate Assistantship:** Asian American Cultural Center  
**Practica:** Office of Undergraduate Admissions

I hope to be gainfully employed in the arena of multicultural affairs with a focus on working with Asian Americans, or in admissions with a focus on recruiting historically underrepresented groups. The HESA Program, in tandem with my graduate assistantship and practica have taught me what student affairs is: 6 days a week, 12 hour days, high stress, politics, and irregular sleep patterns. This "baptism by fire" reminded me of why I chose Student Affairs in the first place: my love for students and my love for affairs... But really, I love hard work that requires always changing and adapting and also the sense of fulfillment I get when I see students succeed.

### Bryanna Anderson

**Hometown:** Gorham, ME  
**Undergraduate Institution:** Hartwick College, B.S., Psychology, Minor, Sociology  
**Graduate Assistantship:** Judicial Affairs, Dean of Students Office  
**Practica:** First Year Programs Office and Center for Students with Disabilities

I will be continuing my education for one more year as a graduate student earning a Certificate in Advanced Graduate Study (CAGS) in Special Education with a concentration in Postsecondary Services for Students with Disabilities. After the completion of that program, I aspire to be a member of a disabilities services center at a college or university. I want to assist in changing the culture of an institution, to create a place where students with disabilities are not only supported and accommodated, but allowed to plot a developmental route for them to follow as independently as possible.

### Chad Austein

**Hometown:** Monmouth Junction, NJ  
**Undergraduate Institution:** University of Hartford, B.A., Politics and Government, Minor, Judaic Studies  
**Graduate Assistantship:** Department of Educational Leadership, Graduate Assistant for Graduate Program Recruitment and Advising

**Practica:** Department of Residential Life, Office of Undergraduate Admissions

I have decided to pursue a career in collegiate admissions; a functional area that I had prior experience in before being accepted to UConn. I enjoy being a part of shaping a student's future and by being on the front line of admissions; professionals in essence have the opportunity to effect change by granting admission to students. I have recently accepted a position at Columbia University in New York City as the Coordinator for Student Recruitment in the School of Nursing. My time here at UConn has been one of professional and personal growth and I am confident that I now have the experience and knowledge to be an effective and competent collegiate administrator.

## Courtney Bazan

**Hometown:** Canastota, NY

**Undergraduate Institution:** Le Moyne College, B.A., Psychology, Minors in Communications and Theater

**Graduate Assistantship:** Graduate Hall Director in Residential Life

**Practica:** Women's Center, Center for Student Involvement's Leadership Experience

I have had the most phenomenal experience at UConn and in the HESA program! My life and future have been enhanced by the wonderful people that I have worked and built relationships with. My practical experiences working in Residential Life, the Women's Center, and the Center for Student Involvement, along with the coursework has continuously challenged me and has prepared me for my future in student affairs. I will leave UConn with a set of friends and colleagues (and Jonathan the Husky Dog, of course!) who have become my family and who I will always hold close to my heart. My future in student affairs is an open road--I'm willing to try new things and to always keep myself challenged. I may not know the specifics of what my future holds, but I am extremely excited about all of the opportunities that lie ahead!

## José L. Barzola

**Hometown:** South Windsor, CT

**Undergraduate Institution:** University of Connecticut, B.A., Anthropology, Spanish, & Latino Studies, (Individualized Major)  
Concentration: Cultural Diversity through Latino Awareness

**Graduate Assistantship:** Office of the Registrar

**Practica:** Office of Undergraduate Admissions and Office of the Vice Provost for Multicultural and International Affairs

My career aspirations are to obtain a position in higher education that is involved in fostering multicultural education both inside and outside of the classroom. I want to continue to bridge the gap that exists within communities and to create a welcoming environment for individuals of all backgrounds to aid in student success. I aim at fostering a campus climate that recognizes the diversity that enriches our own identity. My focus is on issues of diversity, identity, and multiculturalism in higher education.

## Melissa Berkey

**Hometown:** Vernon, CT

**Undergraduate:** Clark University, B.A., Social Services

**Graduate Assistantship:** Department of Career Services

**Practica:** The Women's Center

I look forward to continuing to build my career in the field of Career Services.



*Fall Pumpkin Picking at Foster Farm*

## Sarah Clegg

**Hometown:** Born in Santa Monica, CA but moved here from Atlanta, GA

**Undergraduate:** Shorter College, B.A., Music Performance

**Graduate Assistantship:** Office of Alcohol and Other Drug Education and Services

**Practica:** Dean of Students, Judicial Affairs

My ideal career in student affairs would be to work as a Judicial Officer. I have been very fortunate to have had a wonderful practicum experience in the Office of Judicial Affairs with Cathy Cocks and Donta Johnson. They have shown me what a truly educational experience judicial affairs can offer to students and how relevant judicial matters are to our entire profession. I hope to spend my days working to preserve the integrity of an academic institution; that is my ultimate career goal.

## Emily Comstock

**Hometown:** Tecumseh, KS

**Undergraduate Institution:** Baker University, B.S., Business

**Graduate Assistantship:** First Year Programs

**Practica:** Student Support Services, Department of Campus Activities

As I enter the higher education profession, I hope to find a job that will allow me to develop meaningful interpersonal relationships with students as they make the transition to the college environment. In addition, I would like support and encourage students in developing and achieving their academic, personal and career goals.



*Student Panel at HESA Interview Days*

## David Daniels, Jr.

**Hometown:** Birmingham, Alabama

**Undergraduate Institution:** University of Montevallo, B.S., Elementary Education

**Graduate Assistantship:** Residential Life

**Practica:** Dean of Students Office, Greek Life

I will continue working within my three functional areas of interest: Leadership Development, Judicial Affairs, and Residential Life. I hope to work in various sizes and types of institutions in as many regions of the country as possible, and eventually earn a Ph.D. in Higher Education Administration. The ultimate goal is to become a successful chief student affairs officer.

## Victoria Farris

**Hometown:** Lindenhurst, NY

**Undergraduate Institution:** Marist College, B.S., Psychology

**Graduate Assistantship:** Office of Residential Life, Graduate Hall Director

**Practica:** Dining Services, Center for Student Involvement – Peer Leader Instructor Program

I am currently looking for professional residence life positions, hoping to work as a Resident Director for the next few years. I am considering positions both in the New York/Boston area and on the West coast. I'm very excited to see where we will all end up and look forward to a career in Student Affairs!

## Allison Foster

**Hometown:** Palm Harbor, FL

**Undergraduate Institution:** Stetson University, B.A. Marketing, Minor, Spanish

**Graduate Assistantship:** Community Outreach, Department of Student Activities

**Practica:** Career Services, Judicial Affairs

My life-long career aspirations are not specific aside from a desire to work with students and make an impact on their lives similar to those that made an impact on my life. Specifically, I hope to help students in understanding their role in the direct community they are a part of as well as the

larger societal community, hopefully helping to create a thoughtful, engaged citizen at some level. I believe in higher education and the power that it has in assisting in the development of an individual, no matter what age. I also believe in higher education and that as many individuals as possible should be able to attain an education of this level; it is in my hopes to assist in this goal if not directly through my work but through supporting this cause in other ways.

## Gudrun Haider

**Hometown:** Bregenz, Austria

**Undergraduate Institution:** State University of New York, New Paltz, B.A., Journalism

**Graduate Assistantship:** Residential Life

**Practica:** Alcohol & Other Drug Education Services, Student Activities, Residence Education

I want to continue working in Residential Life. I don't really like to plan long term because you never know what will happen...right now, I'm just focusing on getting a job, so that I'll be able to stay in the country...preferably a Hall Director position. My greatest experience here at UConn has been advising the UConn Residence Hall Association and seeing the student leaders in the organization grow over those two years. In addition, managing to pull off the 'Link Up For The Future' Graduate Student Network Gathering was a great accomplishment.

## Kellie Kirby

**Hometown:** Winter Springs, FL

**Undergraduate Institution:** University of South Florida, B.S., Elementary Education

**Graduate Assistantship:** Office of the Vice President for Student Affairs

**Practica:** Office of First Year Programs, Office of Alcohol and Other Drug Education and Services

At this point in my job search, my main career aspiration is to get a job, however it really is much more than that. My hope is to gain a position that allows me to both interact with students in an educational capacity, as well as to offer advocacy services for students who

are in need. Eventually, I would like to hold the position of a special assistant to a vice president or president to coordinate special projects related to student affairs. Presently, I am looking at a variety of positions including those in the areas of student activities, residential life and orientation services. I look forward to using my fellow cohort members as resources and support in the coming years. Good luck and see you all next year at the ACPA/NASPA joint conference!

## Timothy Stumph

**Hometown:** Chatham, NY

**Undergraduate Institution:** Earlham College, B.A., Spanish

**Graduate Assistantship:** Office of Study Abroad

**Practica:** Department of International Services and Programs

Hopefully, someday I will be the Director of Study Abroad at a small, liberal arts college somewhere in New England. The HESA program has given me a solid background in the field of student affairs and I look forward to applying my skills in a global context. The last two years have been amazing and I look forward to seeing all my cohort-mates out in the real world!

## Amanda Testo

**Hometown:** North Haven, CT

**Undergraduate Institution:** University of Connecticut, B.S., Psychology

**Graduate Assistantship:** Center for Students with Disabilities

**Practica:** Career Services and Wesleyan University

Over the past two years, HESA provided me with the opportunity to learn about student affairs on an academic and practical level. I was able to use the knowledge from my course work and apply it to my daily work in the Center for Students with Disabilities, where I was treated as a professional staff member. I am grateful to my cohort and to everyone involved in the HESA program for enriching the experience through their

consistent dedication to student affairs. Everyone's unique backgrounds and experiences inspired so many educational conversations and challenged my thinking. I do not have a job set at this point, but I feel prepared to take on whatever the future holds.

## Amber Ulmer

**Hometown:** Union, Maine

**Undergraduate Institution:** University of Maine at Farmington, B.S., Elementary Education, Concentration in Natural Sciences

**Graduate Assistantship:** Dean of Students Office, Graduate Assistant for Student Success and Services

**Practica:** Rainbow Center, FYE Leadership Seminar Intern- Involvement Office

I look forward to initially working in Residence Life at a small school where I can get experience in all kinds of activities. Long term, I hope to work in Leadership Development & Civic Engagement. I would also like to be a middle school science teacher at some point.

years ago, I had no idea that it was possible to make a career in student development, but was excited by the opportunities to get involved! I have worked with a variety of campus departments and activities including Residence Life, Admissions, Academic Development, and Campus Activities. I absolutely love working with students and believe that student affairs professionals have the potential to make a significant impact all across campus.

I am very excited to explore a new part of the country, a larger university, and meeting awesome new people!



## Gregory Champion

**Hometown:** Vernon, CT

**Undergraduate Institution:** University of Connecticut

**Major:** Psychology

**Assistantship Location:** Neag School of Education

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## Cohort of 2008 Profiles

This year, we are happy to welcome 16 new students into the UConn HESA Program. These future student affairs professionals were selected from among the top graduates across the country and represent the bright future for the professions. Without further adieu, the HESA Cohort of 2008...



## Lindsay Blair

**Hometown:** Aberdeen, SD

**Undergraduate Institution:** University of St. Thomas,

**Major:** Communication Studies

**Minor:** English

**Assistantship Location:** Residential Life

Hello Everyone! Originally from South Dakota, I have spent the last four years in St. Paul, MN attending the University of St. Thomas. At St. Thomas, my primary studies were Communication Studies and English. Three

Hello, my name is Gregory Champion and I am from Vernon, CT. I will soon be graduating from UConn with a B.A. in Psychology. During my undergraduate years, my favorite experiences were related to student affairs. I worked as a tour guide, was involved with the Honors and First-Year Programs, community service, and residential life groups. After a student affairs professional pointed out that I could do this as a career, I realized that I didn't want to do anything else. My GA is in the Neag School of Education Advising Center, and I can envision myself working in a number of capacities in the future within the field of student affairs. I am sincerely looking forward to the start of the program in the fall. Can't wait to meet you all!



*HESA Candidates trekking through the snow*



## Jane Duffy

**Hometown:** Milwaukee, WI

**Undergraduate Institution:**  
University of Wisconsin-Madison

**Major:** Spanish and International Studies

**Assistantship Location:** Career Services

A cheese-loving Wisconsinite, Jane E. Duffy was born and raised in the Milwaukee area. At the age of 17, Jane spent a summer in Barcelona, Spain where she first found her passion for all things Spanish, especially tortilla española. Attending the University of Wisconsin-Madison, Jane studied Spanish and chose the Cultures in an Age of Globalization option in the International Studies major.

During her undergraduate career, Jane was an active member of LGBT and social justice-oriented student groups and worked two years with Residence Life. A former Campus Tour Guide Queen known for her corny jokes, she spent much of her time in the Campus Information and Visitor Center welcoming guests to campus in both English and Spanish. Jane lived and studied abroad in Madrid, Spain from 2003-2004 and experienced firsthand the March 11<sup>th</sup> bombings and the Spanish Royal Wedding. Her interest in Higher Education includes the needs of traditionally underrepresented students, study abroad, and career services. It is her hope that she will look as good in Husky blue as she did in Badger cardinal.



## Billy Dunn

**Hometown:** Wilson, NC

**Undergraduate Institution:**  
Campbell University

**Major:** Mass Communication

**Assistantship Location:** Department of Educational Leadership

I'm looking forward to the UConn weather, and by "looking forward to" I mean "Deathly Afraid Of." I am actually looking forward to a warm and welcoming program that will provide me the tools necessary to have a positive impact on college students for many, many years. I was a first generation college student who could have struggled, but instead succeeded in every aspect of what "college" truly means. For the last two years, I've been in politics and I'm definitely ready for a fresh environment. My Student Affairs interests include student development and campus service, and my dream job would be to return some day to my alma mater as Dean of Students. I love photography, lifting weights, and the beach. In addition to cold weather I'm afraid of snakes and commitment. Go Huskies!



## Vivienne Felix

**Hometown:** Queens, NY

**Undergraduate Institution:**  
Lafayette College

**Major:** International Affairs and English

**Minor:** Spanish

**Assistantship Location:** Residential Life

My name is Vivienne Felix and I am from Queens, New York. A graduate of Lafayette College, I currently work and live in Wichita, Kansas. As a Lafayette undergraduate, I studied International Affairs and English, and minored in Spanish. Outside of the classroom, I devoted most of my time to residence life, diversity initiatives, and community outreach. I look forward to meeting my cohort and sharing experiences at UConn. I cannot wait to embark on this journey of my career in Higher Education and Student Affairs.



## Bevin Goodniss

**Hometown:** Westfield, MA  
**Undergraduate Institution:** Westfield State College  
**Major:** Mass Communications  
**Assistantship Location:** Dean of Students Office

Hey there! My name is Bevin Goodniss. I was born and raised in Westfield, MA. I recently graduated from Westfield State College with a degree in Mass Communications. Even though Westfield State was right down the street from my home, I felt like I was in another world. As a commuter, I knew I had to get involved in activities so that I could get the most out of my college experience. I took advantage of the many great academic and extracurricular opportunities on campus for me. I served as a Peer Advisor, served on the Communication Department's Curriculum Committee, and was a member of Phi Kappa Phi and Lambda Pi Eta Honor Societies. I've also worked as a children's librarian the past three years at the Westfield Athenaeum.

When it was time for me to make a decision about graduate school, I was thinking about library science, but after learning about the higher education and student affairs program, I knew that was exactly what I wanted to do. The wealth of knowledge available to students at college is so immense that it makes college one of the most exciting places to be! My hope is to promote success through assisting students in getting the most out of their college experience. I can't wait to come to UConn and join the awesome HESA program with the new cohort of '08. I am thrilled to break out of my hometown shell and become a Husky!!



*HESA Candidates*



## Robyn Kaplan

**Hometown:** Marlboro, NJ  
**Undergraduate Institution:** Brandeis University  
**Major:** Political Science & History;  
**Concentration in Legal Studies**

**Assistantship Location:** Residential Life

Hey everyone. My name is Robyn Kaplan and I'm originally from Central New Jersey (yes, I have Jersey pride). I recently graduated from Brandeis University and am so excited to start with the HESA Cohort in the fall. Like many of you, I pretty much had my hand in everything at my undergraduate institution. Some of the highlights are Orientation, Student Government, Student Events, Admissions, Community Service Organizations, and Student Activities. Coming from such a heavy Student Activities background, I figured this would be a great opportunity to jump into another pivotal aspect of Student Affairs - Residence Life! I'm really excited for the challenge.

Originally having every intention to go to law school, my mentors pointed me towards this other path once I realized how much I loved the world of Student Affairs. I couldn't be more grateful for their guidance and I only hope to be the kind of mentor to my students that I had for myself. I eventually want to be a Dean of Students at a University, so you can imagine how anxious I am to take this first step into the realm of Higher Education. That's all from me for now - Can't wait to meet all of you in a few months!



*HESA Interview Days*



## Stefanie Landsman

**Hometown:** Cherry Hill, NJ  
**Undergraduate Institution:** Franklin & Marshall College  
**Major:** Psychology  
**Assistantship Location:** Office of the Vice President for Student Affairs

Hi Everyone! My name is Stefanie Landsman. I am originally from South Jersey, but have spent the last four years in Lancaster, PA. I am graduating in May from Franklin & Marshall College with a B.A. in Psychology. I was originally very interested in clinical psychology, but my involvement on-campus through our Office of Student Activities and Athletic Department opened my eyes to what can be learned outside of the classroom. I look forward to making my way up to Connecticut in the fall and becoming a Husky; my undergrad mascot was the Diplomat... so I'm really excited! I look forward to seeing everyone and formally entering the field through the HESA Cohort of 2008!

the future, I want to help students in developing a healthy lifestyle for their time as undergraduates and beyond. I am a huge sports fan and cannot wait to be a Husky. I look forward to meeting everyone in the fall and wish everyone the best before the start of the program!



## Shelissa Newball

**Hometown:** Brooklyn, NY  
**Undergraduate Institution:** Wesleyan University  
**Major:** African American Studies

**Assistantship Location:** Residential Life

I was born and raised in Brooklyn, New York, but fell in love with Connecticut when I went to Wesleyan. I entered college intending to become a doctor, but after a year of pre-med, I realized that medicine is not my calling and that I could help people in other ways. Working as a resident advisor sparked my interest in higher education and I am very excited about attending UConn in the fall. I would like to rule the world but will settle for becoming president of a university, hopefully Harvard!



## Brendon Martin

**Hometown:** Schenectady, NY  
**Undergraduate Institution:** Bryant University  
**Major:** Marketing

**Assistantship Location:** Department of Career Services

Ahola! My name is Brendon Martin and I am originally from Schenectady, NY which is a city in upstate New York. I will be graduating from Bryant University on May 20, 2006 where I majored in Marketing. I have been a part of different organizations while attending Bryant including, the Bryant Players, Student Programming Board, and the Bryant Singers. I have also been a Resident Assistant for the past year and half. I have known I wanted to pursue a career in Higher Education for two years and I am thrilled to be continuing my experience at the University of Connecticut. In



## Conor O'Rourke

**Hometown:** Fairbanks, AK  
**Undergraduate Institution:** Pomona College  
**Major:** Economics  
**Assistantship Location:** First Year Programs

My name is Conor O'Rourke. I am originally from Fairbanks, Alaska, but later moved to Oregon. I attended Pomona College in Southern California and graduated in 2003. With no job lined up after graduation I decided to take a long trip across the U.S. and scout out places to live next. I finally stopped in Boston, MA when the Atlantic Ocean impeded me from going any further. Since then, I've been working for an academic enrichment program that runs

summer camps for grade school kids at various campuses around New England. However, I've been feeling the tug of graduate school for awhile now and am so excited to be attending the UConn HESA program this fall!



### Jodi Roth

**Hometown:** Parsippany, NJ  
**Undergraduate Institution:** Colorado State University  
**Major:** Sociology  
**Assistantship Location:** Student Activities - Office of Community Outreach

Hello! My name is Jodi Roth and I'm originally from Parsippany, New Jersey. I graduated from Colorado State University in May of 2004. Since then, I've been working for Hillel: The Foundation for Jewish Campus Life as a Jewish Campus Service Corps Fellow/ Acting Program Director. Last year, I worked at Oregon Hillel at the University of Oregon and currently I am at the University of Delaware's Kristol Hillel Center for Jewish Life. One of my favorite aspects of working for Hillel has been leading Alternative Spring Breaks and social justice programs. I'm looking forward to continuing empowering students to get involved with community service. I'm also really looking forward to becoming a Husky and meeting you all in the fall!



### Colleen Ruppert

**Hometown:** Baltimore, MD  
**Undergraduate Institution:** George Mason University  
**Major:** English

**Assistantship Location:** Student Union, Reservations & Operations

I spent the first 18 years of my life in Shepherdstown, WV, a small town in the eastern panhandle of the state. From there, I headed to George Mason University (sort of ironic after that elite eight game!), in Fairfax, VA, which is about 20 minutes outside of DC

and 1 1/2 hours from home. I had a great time at Mason, and during my sophomore year I became involved with my sorority and orientation, which provided me with fabulous leadership opportunities and unforgettable experiences. Upon graduation, I was not 100% sure about pursuing a master's in student affairs, so I made my way out into the "real world." Since the fall of 2003, I have been working at a for-profit, online university in admissions, which is really more like working for a big corporate company! This has been an eye-opening experience that has helped me realize that I truly want to be working in a traditional college environment with like-minded professionals who want to impact the development of college students as much as I do. So here I am heading back to school. Coming to UConn will be a huge adjustment, but I cannot wait! I look forward to getting to know everyone and learning as much as I can, not to mention exploring an entirely new part of the country!!



### Andrew Toczydlowski

**Hometown:** Chadwicks, NY  
**Undergraduate Institution:** SUNY Oneonta  
**Major:** Adolescent Education and French  
**Assistantship Location:** Student Activities

Originally from a small town in upstate New York where they pride themselves in having more cows than people (Chadwicks), the first thing I feel I have to say is, "No, it didn't take me longer than everyone else in kindergarten to learn how to spell my last name." To piggy back off of that, you can call me "Andy T." Student Affairs has been my passion since I started my undergraduate years. I fell in love with making a difference on my campus and being a voice for the students. Being involved in the First Year Experiences, Campus Activities, and Greek Life, I am well-rounded in my experiences and can't wait to take them to the next level and become the professional staff member that I looked up to as an undergraduate.



## Fany Velasquez

**Hometown:** Somers, CT  
**Undergraduate Institution:** Smith College  
**Major:** Latin American Studies  
**Minor:** Portuguese and Brazilian Studies

**Assistantship Location:** Puerto Rican and Latin American Cultural Center

Hola! Oi! Hello! HESA Cohort '08, I am honored to be part of this group of future and successful professionals in the Higher Education and Student Affairs field. I am Fany Velasquez, originally from Honduras, but I have been living in the United States for almost ten years. Wow! Time really flies! As you can read, I love languages, I wish I can speak more than three, but there is always room for learning. This philosophy has kept me going throughout all my life; therefore, I knew that I wanted to be in the field of education for the rest of my life. During my years at UConn, I hope to do research in the area of Adulthood Education. Also, I am very interested in Multicultural Affairs and community colleges and universities. I am very friendly and am looking forward to meeting all of you! I am also very positive and believe me, I am ALWAYS SMILING, NO MATTER WHAT!



## Stephen Wood

**Hometown:** Fairhaven, MA  
**Undergraduate Institution:** University of Massachusetts Amherst  
**Major:** Psychology  
**Assistantship Location:** Department of Residential Life

Hey there! I am Steve Wood, and I can't begin to describe how excited I am to be a part of the UConn HESA program! I was born and raised in southeastern Massachusetts, so this will be my first attempt at venturing out of the state. I am only making a short move south on I-91 to come to UConn, having done my

undergraduate work at UMass Amherst. (Now I don't know which side of the rivalry to take!)

I originally came to college to be a high school Spanish teacher, but soon realized that it was not for me. I picked up Psychology, and began to work within Residence Life, only to find a love and passion for working with students. Currently, I am working as a Community Development Assistant, Judicial Assistant, and serving on the Executive Board of our National Residence Hall Honorary chapter. I do not deny that working in Residence Life can be a challenge, but I enjoy the fact that the challenging aspect keeps me on my toes, and can't wait to start my assistantship as a Graduate Hall Director. Looking at the big-picture, I would like to be a Vice President for Student Affairs one day, and know that my experiences at UConn will give me a phenomenal foundation to do so.

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## Presentations

- ✚ UConn Leadership Advance Conference  
August 2005

*" Various Programs "*

Presenters: Bryanna Anderson, Chad Austein, Jose Barzola, Julie Silverstein, Jessica Smestad, Amber Ulmer

- ✚ NEACUHO New Professionals  
October 2005

*" The F-Word, what does it look like? "*

Presenters: Courtney Bazan, Victoria Farris

- ✚ NASPA Region 1 Conference  
November 2005

*" Learning by Doing - The Value of Job Shadowing Initiatives "*

Presenters: Melissa Berkey, Laura Evangelista Newbury

✚ NASPA Region 1 Conference  
November 2005

*"Making the Most of our Graduate Experience Today"*

Presenters: Gudrun Haider, Kellie Kirby

✚ NASPA Region 1 Conference  
November 2005

*"Effective Advising: Blueprints for Building Stronger Residential Councils"*

Presenters: Gudrun Haider, Robert Yanez

✚ NASPA Region 1 Conference  
November 2005

*"Learning by Doing: The Value of Job Shadow Initiatives"*

Presenters: Melissa Berkey, Laura Newbury

✚ All of the Above Conference  
February 2006

*"Grad's Anatomy: Finding the Right Program for You"*

Presenter: Josh Brandfon

✚ All of the Above Conference  
February 2006

*"Student Development Theories in College Films"*

Presenters: Sarah Clegg, Gudrun Haider, Kellie Kirby

✚ All of the Above Conference  
February 2006

*"Keys to Successful Interviewing"*

Presenters: Melissa Berkey, Sarah Miller

✚ All of the Above Conference  
February 2006

*"What's Your Type? Using the MBTI as a Tool for Staff Development"*

Presenter: Victoria Farris

✚ The National Conference on the First Year Experience  
February 2006

*"PeerFest: An Educational Initiative"*

Presenters: Jen Minot, David Ouimette, Alexa Smith

✚ American College Personnel Association  
March 2006

*"Linking Theory and Practice: Perspectives of Senior Scholars and Senior Practitioners"*

Presenter: Sue Saunders

✚ 19<sup>th</sup> Annual Leadership Institute, SUNY College at Oneonta  
March 2006

*"Peer Leadership"*

Presenter: Megan Wildenstein

✚ 2006 Community Leadership Association Annual Leadership Conference,  
April 2006

*"Preparing Today's College Students for Leadership Tomorrow"*

Presenters: Joseph Briody, Julie Silverstein



1<sup>st</sup> Year HESA Cohort at the Ropes Course

# Publications

## ✚ The Interchange

"Political and Religious Polarization and the Double Standard: Are Conservative Student Groups Being Ostracized?"

Author: Sarah Clegg

## ✚ Chi Omega National Fraternity Journal

"Invited to publish an article in the upcoming issue"

Author: Sue Saunders

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# Internships

## **Chad Austein**

Connecticut Department of Higher Education, Hartford, CT

"Longitudinal Study of the National Postsecondary Student Aid Study (NPSAS)"  
*Summer 2005*

## **Courtney Bazan**

University of Chicago, Chicago, IL  
'Student Manager of Summer Conferences"  
*Summer 2005*

## **David Daniels, Jr.**

National Association of Student Personnel Administrators (NASPA), Sturbridge, MA  
"NASPA Region 1 Conference"  
*November 2005*

## **Victoria Farris**

Barnard College, New York, NY  
"Pre-College Program Graduate Assistant"  
*Summer 2005*

## **Gudrun Haider**

University of Connecticut, Storrs, CT  
"Course Instructor, Peer Counseling Class/CA Class"  
*Spring 2006*

## **Jennifer Johnson**

National Orientation Directors Association (NODA)

"NODA Orientation Intern"  
*Summer 2006*

## **Amanda Testo**

Wesleyan University  
"Summer Intern"  
*Summer 2005*

## **Dr. Julie Bell-Elkins has been quite busy as of late...**

- ✚ Appointed by President Austin as the University Spokesperson on Sweatshop Labor Issues. This position includes working closely with faculty, staff and students to coordinate the day-to-day efforts to eliminate sweatshop labor.
- ✚ Director and founder of the AIDS Memorial Choir; recently performed at the 18<sup>th</sup> Annual AIDS Memorial in Indianapolis, IN to over 800 conference participants.
- ✚ Treasurer, American College Personnel Association
  - o Instrumental in editing, and moving the Ethics Statement for the Association forward for recent unanimous vote within ACPA.

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# Awards

## ✚ **Julie Betz**

*International Scholar Laureate Program, Delegation on Diplomacy*  
June 2006, Australia

## ✚ **Julie Silverstein**

*NEAG Graduate Student Association Travel Grant*  
March 2006

## ✚ **Gudrun Haider**

*NASPA Region Connecticut State Richard F. Stevens Outstanding Graduate Student Award*  
November 2005

- ✚ Congratulations to HESA faculty member **Sandy Bell** on receiving tenure and being promoted to Associate Professor!