

FLORIDA CAREER PROFESSIONALS ASSOCIATION CONNECTION

KEEPING FLORIDA FIRST

SPRING 2008 EDITION

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

It is hard to believe that spring is upon us and that we are nearing the end of another academic year. It has been a somewhat difficult year for many FCPA members, especially those that work at State-funded universities and community colleges. The budget issues you are facing have presented many problems and challenges. During times like this, the network of FCPA friends and colleagues is an invaluable source of support and ideas. Your FCPA board is also very aware of the budget problems faced by many of our colleagues and we are keeping them in mind as we plan future programs.

A lot has happened since my last article in November. I attended the first ever SoACE Conference in San Antonio on behalf of FCPA and thoroughly enjoyed meeting our new colleagues from the Southwest and reconnecting with our Southern friends. Next year's SoACE Conference will be held in Orlando at Walt Disney World so you can expect that FCPA will have a greater role in supporting this conference.

The FCPA Board has been extremely busy and productive this year. Our most recent Board meeting was hosted by Andrea Koegel at the Enterprise Rent-A-Car offices in Orlando on January 17 and 18. The Board continued to work on the ambitious goals that I presented at our August Board meeting and I'm pleased to say that many of the initiatives are either completed or well on their way to completion.

1. FCPA is now incorporated as a non-profit corporation and we have applied for federal tax-exempt status. These actions will not only save the organization money in future years by not having to pay state sales tax but donations made to FCPA will be tax deductible. It is also in everyone's best interest to have the association organized as a proper legal entity.
2. An online credit card payment system is now available to pay for your conference registration as well as for membership and President's Council payments. I would like to thank Lindsey Katherine, our Information Manager, for spearheading this initiative and working very diligently to get the process completed for conference registration. Special thanks also go out to Jennifer Browning, Conference Registration Chair for her help with this process. We often mention that FCPA is a volunteer organization and these types of large and complex projects are managed by people like Lindsey and Jennifer in addition to their very busy full-time jobs. Please take a moment to thank them both for their work in making the FCPA Conference registration easier and more efficient for you.
3. The Board voted to review the membership categories that are stated in the Constitution. The recommended changes will be presented to the membership in the next few weeks and will be voted on at the Annual Business Meeting at the Conference.

Continued on next page

AWARD NOMINATIONS

April 18 Deadline Fast Approaching!

We've updated our awards! Our association now has THREE annual awards to recognize outstanding colleagues and students. We encourage all members to nominate a student and/or colleague for one of these prestigious awards.

For award criteria and nomination instructions, visit:

<http://www.fl-cpa.org/awards.html>

NEW MEMBER AWARD

This is a new award this year. The goal is to recognize a new member who has helped keep FCPA strong by volunteering for conference committees and/or special projects. Anyone who has been a member of FCPA for less than four years and has served on projects and/or conference committees is eligible.

BROWNLEE LEADERSHIP AWARD

In honor of John Brownlee's dedication and commitment to FCPA, this award has been presented at our summer conference annually since 1987. The award recognizes an outstanding member who has made a contribution to a specific programs, project or activity within FCOA or a professional contribution to the career/recruiting field.

STUDENT OF THE YEAR AWARD

Please note: The nominating process has been streamlined and the judging criteria have changed. Please visit the website for details!



4. The Board also voted to review the job titles and duties of the Board of Directors based on changes to the awards process and to better divide the workload of the various positions. The Constitutional changes that are required to change the job titles of the Board of Directors will be presented to the membership in the next few weeks and will also be voted on at the Annual Business Meeting.

We hope that these changes will help FCPA become even more financially secure and will help us provide more programs and support to the membership.

In addition to all of these new initiatives, the Board has also been very busy with the regular business of the Association. Andrea Koegel reported at our meeting that FCPA is on solid financial ground. Dee Dee Gatch has been working hard to put together an excellent Slate of Officers for next year that will be presented at the Business meeting in Naples. Sandy Jakubow and her membership committee have been working hard to increase membership, especially employer membership. A Site Selection Committee was formed at the January meeting to start the process of selecting a site for our 2009 Conference. Andrea Alfano, Laurie Ragsdale, and Ray Rogers have joined me in visiting various locations and we hope to have a decision made very soon. Our goal is to keep our conference expenses and room costs down so that we can continue to offer an affordable conference with excellent programming.

That brings me to the 2008 Conference. Ray Rogers and his Conference Planning Committee have been hard at work planning a wonderful conference at the Naples Grande Resort. There will be many more details about the conference provided later in the newsletter but I would like to thank Ray and his committee members now for their hard work in putting together a great conference. I would like to encourage you all to register for the conference (now so easy and convenient with the online payment option!) and to consider volunteering for a committee. Becoming involved at the Annual Conference can be your first step towards a leadership role with FCPA.

Finally, this is the last article I will write as President of FCPA. I would like to take this opportunity to thank all the Board of Directors for accomplishing so many things and for their strong support throughout the year. I would also like to thank you, the FCPA members, for your support and for your faith in allowing me to lead this organization. I have been honored to serve you. In my many years as a career professional, FCPA has always been the best professional association with the best people and the best conference. Let's continue to keep Florida First!

See you in Naples,

Donna Gaynor

FCPA PRESIDENT



QUICK LINKS TO INFORMATION YOU WANT:

- Conference information and updates, including breakout session descriptions, hotel information and conference registration, can be found under the *Annual Conference* page at <http://www.fl-cpa.org/conference.html>
- Updated membership directory information can be found under the *Member Resources* page at <http://www.fl-cpa.org/directory.html>
- *Awards* nomination forms & procedure: <http://www.fl-cpa.org/awards.html>

2008 CONFERENCE UPDATE

RAY ROGERS, VICE PRESIDENT & 2008 CONFERENCE CHAIR

Florida Career Professionals Association

Keeping Florida First: Leveraging Strategic Alliances

June 18-20, 2008 - Naples Grande Beach Resort



The 2008 Conference Committee has been working hard these past several months to put together a truly outstanding conference for our members. Our annual meeting is only a couple of months away and much of the program planning is complete. Before I get into the details of what's in store for this year's conference, there are a few important reminders I wanted to share with you.

- Online **conference registration is open** on the FCPA website. New this year, members can choose to pay the conference registration fee by check or credit card. If you have not already done so, you may register now by going to www.fl-cpa.org/conference.html.
- Hotel rooms are booking up fast and we are nearing our contracted room block. **Please make your room reservations as soon as possible.** The official cut off date for getting the FCPA rate of \$155 per night isn't until May 18th, however, it is likely our negotiated room block will be filled before then. You may reserve your room with the Naples Grande by phone or using their online reservation system. More information about the Naples Grande and room reservations can be found at www.fl-cpa.org/hotel.html.

One of the new programs we have developed for the 2008 conference is the **Employer Spotlight** on Wednesday afternoon, offering registered employers the opportunity to showcase their companies to conference participants. This segment will precede the President's Reception and last from 4:15 to 5:30 p.m. During the first part of the program, company representatives will give a brief overview of their organization and the opportunities they offer to college students and grads. Once all employers have been introduced, conference participants will be encouraged to meet with each company representative in a job fair format to learn more about their organization and explore strategic alliances. Using an interactive game format, conference participants will be given 3 or 4 interesting or fun facts about each company and will be challenged to learn which company the facts relate to while talking with the various representatives.



Naples Grande Beach Resort, host site of FCPA 2008

One of the greatest benefits of FCPA has always been the networking opportunities our conferences provide—where recruiters and college/university educators can meet and discuss common goals and partnerships. Recognizing that we have a significant number first-time participants attend our summer conference, we are hopeful that this year’s new Employer Spotlight program will help members make these connections early during the conference.

We are very fortunate this year to have three outstanding key note speakers, each touching upon a different aspect of this year’s conference theme of leveraging our strategic alliances. **Dr. Phil Gardner, Director of Research at Michigan State University’s Collegiate Employment Research Institute (CERI)** will open this year’s meeting on Wednesday afternoon. CERI is nationally recognized for its research on the transition from college to work; employment readiness of college graduates; and the transition experience through college. The Institute is also involved in the assessment of learning in the workplace; assessment practices for university accountability; and evaluation of integrated learning opportunities. CERI publishes annually *Recruiting Trends* that provides an analysis of the college labor market. Dr. Gardner’s presentation will cover recruiting trends, both for the state and nationwide, as well as depict the generational challenges college educators and employers may experience in light of those trends. If you would like more information about the Collegiate Employment Research Institute, I encourage you to visit their website at www.ceri.msu.edu.



Dr. Phil Gardner-- Director of Research, Collegiate Employment Research Institute at Michigan State University

Jennifer Floren, Founder & CEO of Experience, Inc., will lead our general session on Thursday afternoon. Jennifer founded Experience with the mission to educate, assist and inspire college graduates by giving them the experience they need to launch and lead extraordinary careers. Recognized as one of the nation’s youngest leaders in social entrepreneurship by numerous organizations including Forbes, Business

Week, New York Times, Working Woman, Boston Business Journal, Boston Globe, Women's Business, and Entrepreneur, Jennifer is a frequent speaker at nationwide universities and major business events to share her unique perspective on the up-and-coming workforce. Her presentation topic will revolve around the future process of recruitment, inclusive of the changes brought about by new technologies and emerging trends as well as other factors that could impact the manner in which we do our work. Jennifer's presentation Thursday afternoon will be followed by a FCPA member-sponsored panel broadening the discussion of future trends in recruiting.

The program committee has also been busy reviewing ed session proposals for our three break-out time slots. Members can choose from a selection of four ed sessions offered during each of these times throughout the day on Thursday. We, of course, will also continue our traditional Thursday morning fun run/walk as well as the employer vs. school volleyball game later that evening. Taking advantage of the seashore view and cool evenings off of Naples beach, we will conclude Thursday with an outdoor sunset banquet that promises to be a conference highlight.

Our closing key note speaker on Friday morning is **Donna Cutting**. **Donna is a nationally recognized expert in employee engagement and extraordinary customer service.** A stage actress turned author



Jennifer Floren—Founder & CEO of Experience, Inc.



*Donna Cutting—Nationally
Recognized Expert in Employee
Engagement and Extraordinary
Customer Service*

and professional speaker, Donna helps leaders create places where employees get standing ovations and customers get star treatment. Her enthusiasm and extraordinary sense of humor will surely send our members home laughing, happy and brimming with easy-to-implement action ideas once back at work. For more information on Donna Cutting, you may visit her website at www.donnacutting.com.

Oh yes...it wouldn't be an FCPA conference without the ever popular offering of door prizes spread throughout the three-day event. We even got the Naples Grande Beach Resort to throw in a two-night vacation stay certificate to one lucky attendee.

Finally, we were also careful to allow plenty of time in the schedule to catch up with old friends and meet some of the new faces of FCPA. In developing the program for this year's conference, I remembered how some of my favorite and most productive times at the summer meetings occurred during those informal "down" times where I made a new friend, learned of a new program or shared an idea. This year's conference site in Naples provides a beautiful and casual atmosphere to learn, socialize and relax.

Updated program information and breakout session descriptions will be posted by early May on the FCPA website at www.fl-cpa.org/program.html. We will continue to send out informational updates by email to help you pan for this summer's conference. Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions about the conference. I look forward to seeing you all there!

FCPA 2008 – Schedule at a Glance

Tuesday, June 17, 2008



- 1:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.FCPA Board Meeting
- 4:00 p.m. - 5:00 p.m.2008 Conference Leaders Meeting

Wednesday, June 18, 2008



- 9:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.Registration Open
- 9:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.Exhibitor Area Open
- 1:00 p.m. - 2:30 p.m.Welcome & Opening Keynote Speaker
Phil Gardner – *Recruiting Trends for the Southeast*
- 2:30 p.m. - 3:30 p.m.Interest Group Meetings
- 3:30 p.m. - 5:30 p.m.Exhibitor Area Open
- 3:30 p.m. - 4:15 p.m.Break
- 4:15 p.m. - 5:30 p.m.Employer Spotlight
- 6:00 p.m.President's Reception

Thursday, June 19, 2008



- 6:00 a.m. - 7:00 a.m.Fun Run/Walk
- 7:30 a.m. - 10:30 a.m.Registration Open
- 7:30 a.m. - 8:30 a.m.Continental Breakfast
- 8:00 a.m. - 9:00 a.m.Business Meeting

2008 President's Council Donors

President's Sponsor (\$2,000 and above)

- Florida Career Centers (FCC)*
- Enterprise Rent-A-Car

Platinum Sponsor (\$1,000 - \$1,999)

- Colleges of Central Florida Career Consortium (CCFCC)^

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- Manatee Community College
- Rollins College
- Seminole Community College
- The University of Tampa
- Webber International University

Bronze Sponsor (Up to \$99)

- Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University

For more information on becoming a President's Council sponsor, visit the President's Council page (www.fl-cpa.org/presidentscouncil.html) on the FCPA website.

*The Florida Career Centers (FCC) is comprised of the Florida's 10 public Universities - Florida A&M University, Florida Atlantic University, Florida International University, Florida Gulf Coast University, Florida State University, University of Central Florida, University of Florida, University of North Florida, University of South Florida, University of West Florida

^The Colleges of Central Florida Career Consortium (CCFCC) is comprised of 11 private ICUF member colleges in Central Florida - Clearwater Christian College, Eckerd College, Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University, Flagler College, Florida Institute of Technology, Florida Southern College, Rollins College, St. Leo University, Stetson University, University of Tampa, Webber International University

CONTRIBUTE TO ONE OF
OUR FAVORITE PARTS OF
THE CONFERENCE:

DOOR PRIZES!

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BY APRIL 30, 2008



NEW MEMBER UPDATE

ANDREA ALFANO
FCPA SECRETARY

If you have not renewed your membership for 2008, please visit <http://www.fl-cpa.org/join.html> to download the membership form. As a reminder, the password to our online membership directory is "brownlee." If you have any questions regarding your membership status, please contact Andrea Alfano, FCPA Secretary, at 863-638-2936 or secretary@fl-cpa.org.

FCPA is happy to welcome the following new members to our organization:

Marly Guzman	DeVry University	Jillian Smith	SOS Children's Villages - Florida
Cindy Refuglo	DeVry University	Dawn Dierkes	SOS Children's Villages - Florida
Julie Slepner	Eckerd College	Marjory Bruszer	SOS Children's Villages - Florida
Ommy Cruz	Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University	Jeffrey Zirulnick	SOS Children's Villages - Florida
Eduardo Angulo	Enterprise Rent-A-Car	Victoria Basnett	St. Johns River Community College
Kristen Herring	Enterprise Rent-A-Car	Gene Kirkland	St. Johns River Community College
Matt Pethers	Enterprise Rent-A-Car	Shelley Sutter	St. Johns River Community College
Pete Masini	Enterprise Rent-A-Car	Melissa O'Connell	St. Johns River Community College
Teri-Anne Davis	Enterprise Rent-A-Car	Jan Rooney	State Farm Insurance Companies
Elizabeth Frazier	Everst University	Colleen Oles	Target
Jennifer Richardson	Florida Institute of Technology	Gregg Henderschiedt	University of Florida Career Resource Center
Darrin Carr	Florida State University	Lauren Daley	University of Florida Career Resource Center
Danielle Gooselin	Florida State University	Forouk Dey	University of Florida Career Resource Center
Nancy Santiago	Goldstein, Lewis & Co.	Vince Carnes	University of Florida Career Resource Center
Maggie McLaughlin	Lake City Community College	Rew Woodruff	University of Florida Career Resource Center
Tom Martin	Lake City Community College	Lynn Drees	University of South Florida; Sarasota - Manatee
Gordon Levy	Lynn University	Christine Goldson	Wal-Mart Distribution Center 7038
Gil Bixel	Pensacola Junior College	Alisha Ussery	Wal-Mart Distribution Center 7038
David Beck	Pensacola Junior College	Lori Bush	Warner Southern College
Saundra Colville	Pensacola Junior College		
Cynthia Flamagan	Ringling College of Art and Design		
Allisa Johnson	Rollins College		
Benet Bondi	Saint Leo University		
Lawson Jolly	Saint Leo University		
Tricia Thibodeau	Saint Leo University		
Carmen Mandujano	Seminole Community College		
Barbara Mitchelle	Seminole Community College		



From Our Members

Career Center & College Collaboration: Enhancing Career Development and Opportunities for Students

The Career Center and the College of Communication at Florida State University (FSU) have partnered to provide students with an innovative career information and networking event, Communication Career Awareness Day (CCAD). The event begins with a panel of distinguished communication professionals and is followed with a two-hour career exposition for students and alumni seeking internship or full time positions.

History

CCAD originated from the College of Communication administration's desire to better serve their students' career development. For years the Communication students attended FSU's general career expo, Seminole Futures, but were unsatisfied with the types of employers they encountered. In response to their students' feedback, representatives from the College of Communication lobbied the Career Center's liaison, Beth Lujugiri, to host a career exposition specifically for communication career fields. Having the Career Center manage the logistics of the event allows the College of Communication administrators to focus on their day to day responsibilities. Additionally, the Career Center's staff manages several events a year so they have more resources and infrastructure to implement an event of this kind.

Initially the Career Center was concerned of a lack of employer interest in the event since communication jobs are in such high demand that many employers do not have to extensively recruit new graduates. To counteract the possibility that the expo would not be well attended by employers, Beth incorporated a panel of professionals from various communication fields into the event. This allows students and alumni, and even students that are not currently looking for full time or internship positions, to gain career information from the event, even if a great number of recruiting employers did not attend. Communication students were also included in the publication development process, providing them with the opportunity to gain experience in their field as well as assisting students with their career goals.

The first CCAD, held in March of 2005, was more successful than expected attracting 27 employers, 6 employer panelist, and 130 students. Typically 50 to 80 employers and around 200 students attend FSU's established smaller expositions. While CCAD did not reach FSU's typical event numbers, the results were promising for a new exposition. The event is now in its fourth year and it continues to grow in popularity with this year's CCAD attracting 36 employers, 6 panelist, and 236 students.

Benefits of Collaboration

The support the Career Center receives from the College of Communication allows this event to be a success both with the number of students that attend and the number of employers the event is beginning to attract. The College of Communication plays a large part in promoting the event to students. College representatives send out CCAD promotional emails to their students and encourage their student groups to volunteer on the CCAD committee. Even the college's faculty members are motivated to support the event. Many faculty members agreed to announce the event in class and some cancel class so students can attend the event.

Working with the college also allows the Career Center to obtain high quality employer contacts to invite to the event. Many of the Career Center's contacts originate from administrators, faculty members, and alumni. The panel portion in particular draws high quality panelist due to panel moderator, Betty Ann Korzenny, a College of Communication faculty member. Her experience and contacts within the communication's field provides many opportunities to obtain high quality panelist such as the 2008 panelists; **Dale Brill, Ph.D.** (Director, Office of Tourism, Trade & Economic Development, in the Executive Office of the Governor, State of Florida), **Alex Shorter** (Account Associate at the William Mills Agency), **David Smith** (producer and vice president of Soapbox Films), **Mike Smith** (Vice President of News, Production and Engineering at Tallahassee's WCTV), **Joe Snowden** (Founder and President of McRae Communications), and **Peggy Ann West, J.D.** (Vice President, Business Affairs for Coca-Cola).



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Plans for the future

Each year the event is evaluated to determine if it is serving the purpose that it was created to achieve; to provide students and alumni with more career information and opportunities in the field of Communication. Event evaluations from students, alumni, and employers are analyzed to determine if their needs are being met by the event. While not everyone is ever satisfied by the number or types of employers present at the event, the majority of evaluations each year are favorable and indicate that the event was a success for students, alumni, and employers.

The video of this year's panel is available at: <http://www.career.fsu.edu/expos/communication/>

-Nancy VanKoughnet, FSU Career Center

INSIGHT FROM OUR GRADUATE STUDENTS

From Teaching Job Search Strategies to Being in the Job Search

After two years as a graduate assistant in the Florida State University Career Center and countless hours spent both presenting and advising students on how to embark on their own job search process, I am now trying to take the valuable information that I teach to my students and put it to good use in my own job search. I have enjoyed my time in career services and would like to take the knowledge and experiences I have gained and move into my first professional job in a Career Center.

When I started my search in career services around five months ago, I used a variety of avenues. I began with higher education job posting websites, but I also used helpful networks such as professionals in Florida State's Career Center and contacts at other institutions. I constantly watched for job postings online and applied for positions that came my way that I felt would be a good fit for me. I found various positions from advising intensive to placement intensive and everything in between, but because I feel like I have gained a comprehensive career services base from Florida State University's Career Center, I applied for a variety of these positions.

As the end of my final graduate school semester draws near, I am currently working hard to balance my overwhelming excitement for graduation with the nervousness I have for my job search outcome. The logistics of finishing graduate school and balancing the job search are constantly challenging, but my real excitement and nervousness comes from not knowing what will happen next and where I will be. Within months I will be in a new location, a new position, and beginning a whole new part of my life. I am not sure where this path will lead, but I do know that I have developed a passion for higher education and helping students through career services and I would like to take this passion into my first employment opportunity.

-Holly Radford,
FSU Career Center, Graduate Assistant

CSO Professional Internship Experience

As a fairly new professional in the field of student affairs, the opportunities to learn and gain experience from seasoned professionals, supervised practicums, graduate assistantships, and professional internships are endless. As many individuals decide on pursuing careers in Higher Education administration, they must take into consideration factors related to improving, strengthening and learning new skills in order to be able to meet the growing needs and challenges of a diverse student body.

As I wrapped up my first year of graduate school this past year, I began to think about what I would be doing during the summer months as well as preparing myself for the fall semester. That meant taking a closer look at practicum and internship opportunities that were going to be available for the summer and fall. Immediately I had thought about participating in some of the national internship programs being offered through NASPA, ACUHO-I, and NODA. Going in to the application process, I knew that I would be at a disadvantage, as I was geographically bound to the state of Florida, and my availability was going to be limited because of my military requirements. After a failed attempt to gain a national internship opportunity, I sought other on campus opportunities. I wanted a practicum where I would be challenged; I could step outside of my comfort zone, and be able to open new doors upon graduation.

After speaking with a few of my peers, I felt that working in the Career Services Office was going to enable me to seek out the opportunity that I was looking for. After previously working in the Career Services at my undergraduate institution, I had an idea of how a Career Services office operates. My experience at FIU would enable me to expand on what I already knew, as well as build a stronger foundation and understanding of a Career Services

Continued on next page...

department. I made initial contact with the director expressing my interest and we scheduled a formalized one on one meeting, where he went more in depth into the position requirements and what his expectations were. After negotiating a start date, I wrote down a list of goals and objectives for my practicum. Upon my initial review, the goals and objectives were not accepted, and I was sent back to the drawing board and asked to make the goals and objectives more detailed. From that moment, I knew that working in the Career Services Office was not going to be easy, and was going to require a lot of work and dedication on my behalf.

Upon gaining the approval of the goals and objectives, I started my practicum in July of 2007, which began with a brief orientation and meeting with the director. I was given a brief overview of the department and met a few key staff who would be instrumental in my success as a practicum student in the office. One of the reasons why I chose a practicum in the Career Services Office was because I knew that the director, who had been on the job for less than a year was really going to push me beyond my limits. I felt that at the time I needed a new challenge, and that I really needed to step out of my comfort zone in an effort to better prepare myself for the job search. I knew that working in this area would allow me to immerse in a different type of organizational culture. The Career Services Office operates like a corporate environment with structured hours as well as extended hours, and professional attire. At the time of my acceptance of the position the new director had come into his position with several openings, new staff, and a major renovation project of the facility. What an opportunity to learn and contribute in a changing setting!

But I knew this is the type of excitement that I was looking for and began to ready myself for the challenge. My relationship with the director wasn't as close in the beginning as it was when I finished. At first I was a little hesitant to talk to the director, and would avoid him when assignments or tasks were to be completed. Upon traveling to the annual staff retreat I was able to begin developing our mentor/mentee relationship. Throughout the course of the practicum experience I was able to open up more and began to bond with the director of the Career Services Office. We began to share similar experiences that we had in common such as being in the military and members of a fraternity. He was also instrumental in teaching me and encouraging me to think outside the box and would often challenge me to do better on any assignments or tasks that I was assigned. He helped me develop new analytical and critical thinking skills which he would make me utilize as the projects and tasks became more difficult. My supervisor

would continue to encourage me to develop my skills by giving me tasks that would force me to think outside the box and be creative. Often times the demands of the practicum would become frustrating to me, however I knew that when I accepted the position it was going to be a challenge.

My adjustment to the office was difficult at first, I really did not reach out to the staff members as much as I should have, it wasn't until my supervisor "highly encouraged" me to schedule one on one meetings with staff members to gain a better understanding of their role and the department itself. This enabled me to build stronger relationships with the staff, as well as it allowed me to participate in other office learning opportunities.

The application of theory to the practicum proved effective during the portion of the practicum where I directly advised walk-in appointments in the cyber café; which included resume critique and general career advice. Having an understanding of theory enabled me to utilize best practices and approaches when it came to advising students on career choice and options available to them throughout their undergraduate experience. Understanding theory enabled me to better understand the issues and concerns facing students, primarily first-year students who were often confused, or simply utilizing the office as part of their requirement for the First Year Experience Course (FYE). Being able to effectively understand the developmental needs enabled me to be a better career coach and facilitate stronger discussion with students. Application of theory also enabled me to facilitate better FYE course presentations, when I was required to give them through the practicum experience. The application of theory to practice enabled me to better deliver the presentation in a way that students were more engaged, and were able to ask questions relating to career development and the undergraduate experience.

Working in the Career Services Office taught me a great deal about what it means to be professional. My graduate assistantship is in the Campus Life Department, but in the Career Services Office, I received opportunities to interact with external influences, such as employers, alumni and major corporations. In an effort to best meet the needs of this unique clientele, professionals must be well suited to deal with the needs and demands of the office. Thus, you in turn will help enhance the services and success of the department. Being a professional doesn't just mean dressing up each and everyday. It means being willing to go above and beyond the call of duty, and carrying one self in a professional manner.

There are times in this profession where we may have challenging days, but having the ability to be patient and remaining calm under pressure can help you achieve and succeed in all your tasks. During my practicum I came across numerous obstacles and challenges that at times were difficult to overcome. Being able to work as part of a team and asking the right questions enabled me to have an enjoyable experience, which greatly enhanced my knowledge of this career field.

Most importantly, I have learned that being successful in this profession doesn't mean winning awards, but what really matters is ensuring the success of the team, the department, and the institution. Surrounding yourself

with a team that share and have a positive attitude and are committed to achieving the overall mission and goals of the department, outweighs any other aspect of making a department successful, whether it's a bigger budget, or more resources, having a team that is committed and a leader with a strong vision for making the department and other members of the staff stronger, can really make working in this profession a rewarding and enlightening experience.

-Kelvin Rodriguez,
Florida International University
Career Services

DO YOU HAVE SOMETHING TO SHARE?

The **Connection** is a great way to communicate with fellow FCPA members! Please educate the membership on exciting new happenings in career services or recruiting by writing a brief article. In addition, please help any graduate students in your office become involved in our organization by encouraging them to submit an article.

Please email all submissions to Lindsey Katherine, our current Information Manager for the FCPA Board, at informationmanager@fl-cpa.org

Our submission deadline for the Summer Post Conference Issue is July 3, 2008.



2007- 2008 FCPA BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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