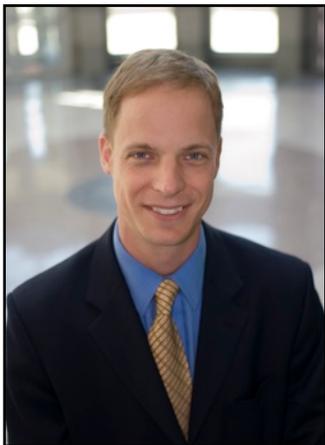


# NYSACAC NEWSLETTER

Fall 2011



## Message From the President Welcome From President Kent Rinehart



Fall is in the air. Colleges are traveling around the world recruiting students, while college counselors are finishing recommendation letters, reviewing essays, and coordinating letters of recommendations - all while not forgetting the students in grades 9-11.

I was fortunate to attend the National Association for College Admission Counseling (NACAC) Conference in September. I also realized the impact that NYSACAC has at the national level. NYSACAC members received national awards at the conference. Karen Staller (Lawrence HS), Chris Milton (Brooklyn College), and the entire Camp College program received the NACAC Human Relations award. Christine Stumm (Univ. of Buffalo) received the NACAC Rising Star award. Congratulations to all! In addition, Harry Gong (Niagara University) has just completed a term on the National College Fair Committee. Susan Davidson (Cooper Union) is the National Chair for the NACAC Government Relations

Committee, while Mike Acquilano (Staten

Island Academy) has just begun a term on the NACAC Admission Practices Committee. Furthermore, in recent years, Lisa Sohmer (Garden School), Richard Alvarez (CUNY), and Scott Hooker (RIT - National Institute for the Deaf) have all served on the NACAC Board of Directors. Finally, Sandy Behrend (formerly of Orchard Park High School) was NACAC President not too long ago.

Each of these individuals are making an impact nationally on our profession. They have given back to a profession that has given them so much. They have expanded their professional network to include the most dynamic people in our field. They all have one thing in common. It all started with their involvement in NYSACAC. We offer opportunities to be involved - be it through our committees, our conference planning group, by submitting an article in our newsletter, etc. Invest in yourself and become more involved in NYSACAC. You never know where it may take you!

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In other news - a list of Fall College Fairs throughout NY State is available on the NYSACAC website at <http://www.nysacac.org/assets/pdf/Technology/nysacac%20college%20fairs-%20fall%2011.pdf>. As you plan fairs for the spring and fall, we encourage you to send any fairs your school or organization are planning to our College Fair Committee at [College.Fairs@nysacac.org](mailto:College.Fairs@nysacac.org). Also, in anticipation of the NYSACAC Annual Conference held in June at Ithaca College, our School, College, and CBO Relations Committee has already secured over 30 grants, which will help pay the way for NYSACAC members who otherwise may not be able to attend.

Thank you for your continued interest and support of NYSACAC. It is an honor to serve as president of NYSACAC.

Kent Rinehart  
 Dean of Admission  
 Marist College ★

The Affiliate Presidents Council and the Imagine Fund are pleased to announce the opening of the 2012 Imagine Grants Program. Submission Deadline: December 1, 2011.



- Imagine** a grant for your professional development needs or a special project that will help your students.
- Apply** online at [www.nacacnet.org/ImagineGrants](http://www.nacacnet.org/ImagineGrants). If you or your students are underserved, NACAC's Imagine Grants are for you.
- Grow** professionally and personally by continuing your involvement despite a restricted budget. NACAC has the resources!



**Imagine Grant Recipient:** Toby Loukmas, Counselor, Berkley High School (MI)  
**Imagine Grant Awarded for:** Professional Development Assistance—NACAC Membership Dues  
 “The heart of NACAC is its members and the diversity of their experiences. The Imagine Fund provides opportunities to participate for people who may not have the opportunity otherwise.”

# NYSACAC

Conference 2012

# ITHACA

Ithaca College, Office of Admission  
 953 Danby Road, Ithaca, NY 14850-7002

[www.ithaca.edu](http://www.ithaca.edu)

# NYSACAC Membership Committee Update

By Erin B. Craig- Associate Director of Admission, Le Moyne College

On behalf of the NYSACAC Membership Committee, I hope everyone had a wonderful summer and is excited to start a new academic year. As students return for the semester and we transition into fall, our association has some exciting news to share. For current and new members, we have launched a new membership cycle that will run from **September to August**. This change, in part, is intended to help accommodate busy schedules as well as provide a seamless transition of membership renewals in the future. Therefore, the sooner you join or renew your membership, the sooner you can start enjoying all the benefits of NYSACAC!

The quickest and easiest way to reactive or join is to log-on to [www.nysacac.org](http://www.nysacac.org) and look for the “Membership Login” section that will take you step by step through the appropriate prompts. As an association, we boast our strong membership benefits which include, but certainly are not limited to, access to professional development workshops; annual conferences throughout the state; leadership, mentorship, and networking opportunities; and local and national job postings. So please do not delay!

This year, our membership is comprised of some new and old faces. We welcome anyone to contact a committee member with your inquiries so we can highlight the numerous opportunities of NYSACAC. The NYSACAC Membership Committee includes:

Dave Follick, Long Island University/C.W. Post Campus

Erin Craig, Le Moyne College

Chris Buonocore, CUNY

Anthony Grant, Syracuse University

Luis Santiago, Marist College

Lauren Sangimino, SUNY Stonybrook

Steven Smith, D’Youville College

We look forward to working with our fellow and future NYSACAC members! ★

# Summer Institute 2011

## Not the Average Conference

By Tai Nycole Harriss- Admissions Counselor, CUNY Welcome Center

During my relatively short career with the City University of New York, I have had the opportunity to attend a few conferences to foster professional development. I have been to the NYSACAC conferences at Niagara University and University of Rochester. The workshops offered at these conferences provided information instrumental to succeeding in higher education. I had the opportunity to attend Summer Institute 2011 with seven of my colleagues and our University Director of Admissions, Richard Alvarez.

The annual conferences are wonderful, but for someone that is new to this field, the sheer number of people can be overwhelming. Networking is a fundamental part of this career, but when faced with higher education veterans, sparking conversation can be an especially daunting task. Summer Institute makes conversation and networking more manageable because there is a smaller group of participants. With fewer people present, it was easier to get to know my colleagues from other institutions and to glean pearls of wisdom from more seasoned counselors. I appreciated meeting people with varying levels of experience since we were all able to learn from one another.

As with all of the workshops offered at NYSACAC's conferences, the ones at Summer Institute were quite informative. The presenters were knowledgeable and responsive to questions and concerns raised during the course of the week. During the "Nuts and Bolts" presentations for experienced counselors, we were given information about making presentations, building relationships with colleagues, and professional development opportunities. This session provided me with information I will be able to utilize moving forward in my career as a counselor.

The most touching presentation was "Coming Together to Guide Underrepresented Students to College." Navigating the admissions process is a challenging for most students, but it is even more difficult for those without resources available to them. The work that Chris Farmer does as the Director of College Counseling with Young Women's Leadership School is admirable. The videos he showed us of the students receiving their acceptance letters brought me to tears. In this field, it is easy to get caught up in the numbers and to sometimes lose sight of the students. Actually seeing how much our students have riding on an acceptance and how enthused they are to be admitted reminds me of what we are working for.

Summer Institute 2011 renewed my drive and made me want to redouble my efforts to make an impact on everyone I work with from colleagues to counselors to applicants. I want to make a difference in the lives of our students and Summer Institute offered me a perspective I did not previously have. I am quite lucky to have been given this professional development opportunity, and I strongly recommend everyone have the chance to attend Summer Institute. ★



# Vice President of Communications Report

By Christine Stumm- Assistant Director of Admissions, University at Buffalo School of Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences

NYSACAC NEWSLETTER Fall 2011



Greetings NYSACAC members! I am excited to introduce myself as the new Vice President of Communications for NYSACAC. The committees that I coordinate are Technology, Newsletter, and Marketing. To give you a little background on myself, I have been an active member of NYSACAC for four years and the NYSACAC Newsletter Co-Chair for two years. I am the Assistant Director of Admissions at the School of Pharmacy & Pharmaceutical Sciences and have been working there for five years. Beyond my regular admissions duties, I have been extensively involved with technology and marketing activities including revamping, updating and monitoring our school's website and designing admissions marketing pieces. I was awarded two

SUNYCAP Achievement Awards within the past two years for my print marketing pieces and received a nomination for a 2011 award for the work I did on the School's website. In addition, I am humbled to receive a NACAC Rising Star Award at this year's annual conference in New Orleans.

We have a great group of dedicated NYSACAC members who are involved in each of the three committees that I oversee. Over the past few months, each committee has worked on clarifying their roles and charges and taking action to contribute to the organization's success. The work of these important committees is extensive.

- The Newsletter Committee is busy collecting articles, advertisements and, announcements from NYSACAC members to include in the NYSACAC Newsletters.
- The Marketing Committee is collecting and revising marketing materials from NYSACAC committees, seeking out media opportunities to promote NYSACAC, and interacting with members through the NYSACAC Facebook and Twitter pages.
- The Technology Committee is collecting website updates, creating online forms, and helping the Membership Committee organize the membership database. They also fulfill requests from all other NYSACAC committees and leaders.

We hope you will consider submitting an article, advertisement, announcement, or photos to the Newsletter Committee to publish in the NYSACAC Newsletter. Articles are due September 30, January 15, and April 15 to [newsletter@nysacac.org](mailto:newsletter@nysacac.org). Secondly, if you are on Facebook or Twitter, be sure to follow NYSACAC. Thirdly, if you have events, publications or websites where we can promote NYSACAC, please contact [media@nysacac.org](mailto:media@nysacac.org). Lastly, if you or someone you know is interested in getting involved and would like to join the Technology Committee, please contact [technology@nysacac.org](mailto:technology@nysacac.org). ★



**Stay informed through NYSACAC's Facebook & Twitter page to receive news and information related to members.**

<http://www.facebook.com/nysacac> <http://twitter.com/#!/NYSACAC>

# Adults Go to College Too

By Eric Neutuch- Coordinator, Strategic College Initiatives, Manhattan Educational

A boom in adults going to college is quietly reshaping higher education. According to the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), the number of college students age 25 and older grew by 43 percent between 2000 and 2009, compared to a 27 percent increase in the number of students younger than 25.

*"...only eight percent of low-income adult students pursuing associate degrees earn them within six years."*

Many adults enroll in higher education to build their skills for an increasingly sophisticated economy. According to research from Georgetown University's Center on Education and the Workforce, 63 percent of jobs in New York State will require some form of postsecondary education by 2018.

Florence L. is one of the more than six million adults enrolled in college. After 15 years doing back-breaking work as a nursing assistant, she decided that she wanted to continue her education into college. The native French speaker from Benin earned her GED and then enrolled at LaGuardia Community College in fall 2010. She says, "If you want to have a decent job, you need to have some type of degree. I had experience, but I didn't have a degree."

Adjusting to the rigor and requirements of college-going is an uphill challenge for many adult students. Florence says, "English 101 was very difficult for me, but things got easier." After surviving English 101 and English 102, she is presently enrolled in English 103, which she says is "not that hard."

Hudson Vincent is a 47-year old student in his first semester at Borough of Manhattan Community College (BMCC). He had always wanted to go to college but says, "Everything takes time." Before his morning classes, he works the overnight security guard shift at Citigroup's Midtown headquarters. He receives a small federal Pell grant, but he does not receive grant aid from the New York State Tuition Assistance Program (TAP), as his income exceeds the cut-off level for single adults of \$10,000. To cover his expenses, he has taken out a few thousand dollars in loans and plans to maintain his full work schedule.

Hudson is participating in BMCC's Accelerated Study in Associate Programs (ASAP) project, one of the many initiatives within CUNY aimed at smoothing the transition to college-going for new students. ASAP provides some additional financial aid to Hudson in the form of free textbooks and monthly Metrocards. ASAP also offers a number of support services, including career advisement, individualized counseling and linked classes. He says, "Being in ASAP means tremendous assistance and motivation to achieve my goals." He says that he is doing fine juggling everything for now.

President Obama has set a goal that America will have the highest proportion of college graduates in the world by 2020, but to get there, America's college production rate will have to produce 23 million more graduates than it would otherwise yield. Low college graduation rates among adult students are a significant obstacle to realizing Obama's 2020 college attainment goal. According to NCES data, only eight percent of low-income adult students pursuing associate degrees earn them within six years. Moderate-income and upper-income adult students earn them at a rate of 14 percent and those aged 18-24 at a rate of 22 percent. To get to the 2020 college attainment goal, not only do more high school students need to be going to and completing college, more adults need to be doing so as well.

At my adult education center—where both Florence and Hudson prepared for the GED—one of our core beliefs is that it is never too late to continue one's education. As Florence says, "I don't want to give up. I won't let any obstacle stop me." ★

# Union College's New Super Computer

By Union College Communication Department

What can help close the gap between the research capabilities of small liberal arts colleges and larger, well-funded universities?

Technology: the great equalizer.

Over the summer, Union College, a private 2,100-student campus in Schenectady, New York, known for integrating the humanities, social sciences, and arts with science and engineering, was thrilled to receive an Intelligent Cluster computing solution, donated by IBM.

The "cluster," as it's called by staff, vastly increases the institution's computing capabilities, giving it more technological power than any undergraduate liberal arts college in the country. The system's installation follows the recent opening of the college's new \$22 million Peter Irving Wold Center, which houses interdisciplinary research facilities, classroom space, and an advanced computing lab.

"The cluster can process 10 trillion operations in the blink of an eye," says Union's Chief Information Officer, Ellen Borkowski, of the new system, which fits on a rolling rack in the college data center. "The machine is smaller than a desktop, but it's like having 1,000 computers clustered together, running as a single unit."

What does the massive upgrade mean for Union's current and prospective students? After a summer spent installing, networking, configuring, and testing the new system, the college's IT department is still exploring the possibilities, Borkowski says. Staff members are surveying faculty and department heads this fall to determine current research needs and future goals that will allow them to best optimize the cluster.

At a basic level, it will greatly expand the scope of research professors and students can take on, Borkowski says, changing the questions they can tackle and data they can analyze. Huge gains will be made in efficiently processing research "jobs." Previously, professors often waited overnight for computational results. With the cluster, such jobs could take just an hour. Many more analytical runs can be completed in less time, accommodating more focused tweaks to questions. It's a major leap forward for a college that prides itself on integrating research in the liberal arts and sciences with coursework.

Molecular Chemistry Professor Janet Anderson is just one researcher whose work will be enhanced by the cluster, which should become available to select faculty this month. Anderson's work, performed with a student assistant, is a collaboration with the New York State Department of Health. It revolves around the analysis of protein dynamics using nuclear magnetic resonance spectroscopy.

Currently, Anderson is using nine networked Macs with 72 cores (or processors), running around the clock, to interpret experimental results through molecular dynamics programs that simulate motion over time. The computer time required to do an accurate simulation can take weeks and months, Anderson says. The cluster, with 1,056 cores housed in 88 servers, can break the simulations up into smaller parts and run them in parallel, substantially decreasing the time it takes to deliver results. The increased computing capability will allow her to take her research to a new level of complexity.

The cluster will also aid physics faculty in studying galaxies and facilitate biology research simulations that can be run by students in the classroom. Three courses focused on energy, sustainability, buildings, and analytics are also expected to make use of the cluster and joint Neuroscience Imaging research projects between IBM and the college are also imminent. College researchers also plan to use cluster computing to collect environmental data along the Mohawk River.

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# Super Computer Continued...

The sciences are a natural fit for the cluster's capabilities, but the humanities can benefit as well, Borkowski says. A classics student could use its power to analyze how many times a particular word appears in ancient Greek texts, looking for patterns and meaning. Students and faculty college-wide will be encouraged to think more ambitiously about new research possibilities.

There's no doubt the gap between large research universities and small liberal arts colleges is growing, but technological advances that vastly enhance the computing landscapes of liberal arts colleges such as Union demonstrate that active research communities can also thrive at smaller institutions. Apparently, global employers like IBM agree, recognizing the advantages of providing undergraduate students at smaller colleges with opportunities to apply their learning in practical settings.

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617-861-3679 ★

## Treating Sticker Shock: Reframing College Costs

By Amy Estersohn- Assistant Director of Admissions, University of Chicago

As college admissions counselors, we're stuck in a tough sell: not even the coolest piece of clothing or the hottest videogame that a teenager wants costs as much as a college education. College tuition, no matter what college we represent, can be unfathomably expensive, even to a latte-sipping, designer shoe-wearing high school student.

How do we capture these students who are lost in sticker shock?

The first is for us to bring the cost of a college education to scale. Since many students are used to making their own clothing and entertainment purchases but are not paying groceries, rent, or home and car mortgages nor earning annual salaries, their idea of what is "expensive" is different from ours. Many of your students may think that somebody earning \$1,000 a month would be rich. But, in fact, a single parent with that salary would fall under the poverty line.

Are your students familiar with the average salaries in your region, in your state? Are they familiar with the average salaries of the professions they are interested in entering after graduation? (Hint: <http://www.bls.gov/oco/> is a great resource.) What about average rents, home prices, and dinners out for a family of four? Do they know how much their dream car costs, and what sorts of monthly payments they'd need to make on it? Do they know how much their cell phones, televisions, computers, and living room furniture cost?

The next time a student tells you that college is too expensive, I challenge you to have them tell you how much stuff they'd be able to buy in place of a college education. Depending on your student population, you may want to adjust the sticker price in advance, factoring in any grant-based aid your students are likely to receive. But it's an interesting question that needs a lot of research: How many homes and cars would a college education buy? What kinds of homes, how many bedrooms, what kind of neighborhood? Is a college education cheaper than a desirable car? What about a vacation in Disneyland? This way, your students can realize just what an investment a college education is, and that it's cheaper and than they'd think. ★

# Summer Institute Celebrating 25 Years!

By Casey Pedrick- Summer Institute Publicity Director

“What we have imagined sitting over coffee years ago has survived and thrived,” shared Kent Jones of the Emma Willard School to the crowd gathered at Skidmore College for the last night of Summer Institute 2011. Kent Jones was one of the founding members of Summer Institute, which marked 25 years this past August with another 89 participants becoming S.I. alumni!

Adding to the yearly menu of S.I. mentor groups, special sessions, workshops, and the early morning trip to the Saratoga racetrack was a definite feeling that we were a part of something special this year. Mary Lou Bates, Dean of Admissions and Financial Aid at Skidmore College and the lifeblood of Summer Institute, gave an inspiring and humorous speech about the rocky early years, including the lack of air conditioning and accidentally locking herself out of her dorm—with her infant son on the other side! Bumps in the road aside, it is with “love and pride” that she looks back on the legacy that Summer Institute has left and is still making.

Thirteen former mentors and management team members returned to campus to relive the good times and laugh over decades of old S.I. photographs. Prior to the traditional closing night karaoke, these S.I. enthusiasts took to the stage to share their thoughts on the Summer Institute legacy: “What we are trying to do is impact the lives of 17, 18 year olds and let them know they are important and that they matter,” shared Diane McKoy, Senior Associate Director of Undergraduate Admissions at Columbia University.

Patty Taylor, who has risen in her profession from guidance counselor to Assistant Principal of Guidance to Principal of Rye High School, spoke words that many of us can already relate to: “We all go off on different paths, but we always come back to our [Summer Institute] friends.” Her sentiment was echoed by Kent Jones. He added, “Remember this moment in your lives. It will keep circling back and surprising you.”

The return of so many participants did more than provide a historical perspective; it added richness to the event and showed this year's attendees and mentors that the lessons and friendships of Summer Institute are lasting. Our mentors stay our mentors even when we become mentors ourselves, and this group of 89 new professionals will always know that back in 2011, they "did" S.I.

It may take going through another school year before the 2011 S.I. alum fully appreciate their four-day college counselor “boot camp.” It will take them reaching for their S.I. binder to look up a contact they made in their mentor group to email a question; it will take them meeting with a student athlete to hark back on their NCAA session led by John Young, Director of Admissions at Hobart and William Smith Colleges; it will come to them when they are preparing for their first presentation and remember the tips provided by Ann Fleming Brown, Director of Admissions at Union College during the “Effective Presentations” session; it will hit them in January with the first wave of FAFSA applications that they need to review the many notes they made when the queen of financial aid, Heather McDonnell, Director of Financial Aid at Sarah Lawrence presented. Then in June, when they attend the state conference in Ithaca and realize how many friendly faces they see from Summer Institute, they will come to fully appreciate that Summer Institute was a true investment in their professional lives—an investment that pays dividends throughout the year. ★



# What NYSACAC Means To Me

By Casey J. Pedrick- College Counselor, Stuyvesant High School

NYSACAC NEWSLETTER Fall 2011

Becoming the College Counselor at the High School for Arts & Business in Queens four years ago really changed the trajectory of my career. In that first year, I could have just kept my head down, punched the clock, processed a few applications and called it a school year. But then I got involved with the wonderful community of NYSACAC, and I was inspired to be the best college counselor I could be for my students. NYSACAC has provided me with so many opportunities to learn from high school and college admissions counselors and build professional and personal relationships with many in the field.

Through a night program at my school, I already had a relationship with dynamo college counselor, Roz Sternlieb, who was my mentor in that first year. It was she who told me I *had* to attend Summer Institute in 2008.

When I did, I really started building the skills and making the contacts I would need to be a successful counselor. In my Summer Institute mentor group, I met Mina Gomez from CUNY, who has been my “go-to” CUNY contact ever since. She visits my high school twice a year and is always available via phone or email for questions from me or my students. Another Summer Institute attendee that year was Brian Loew from Marist College, who I can call up and identify myself simply as “Casey from Summer Institute,” and he knows who is calling.



When I attended my first NYSACAC regional meeting in Manhattan, there was a guy on the panel from Columbia University who looked familiar. Turns out it was David Weisbord who graduated one year after I did from York College of Pennsylvania! Since that reunion, David has been a great source of support for me as I learn and grow in this position.

Attending the state conferences has proven invaluable. In 2009, I was inspired by President-Elect David Coates’ fundraising bike ride for Camp College to volunteer that summer as a mentor. In those few days, I built up a relationship with James Luciano, Associate Director of Admissions at Hobart and William Smith Colleges. He and I first met at Summer Institute where he was serving as Publicity Coordinator—a position I would assume in the summer of 2010. Our professional relationship has turned to friendship with dinners and Broadway shows in the city.

Of course, one cannot mention Camp College without two names: Chris Milton of Brooklyn College and Karen Staller of Lawrence High School. That summer of 2009 established the foundation of our relationship so that in the fall of 2010, when I saw them both before a college fair, I had a place to sit at the pre-fair dinner. Afterwards, Karen and I made a manicure/pedicure date that has now become the cornerstone of our friendship.

At the state conference in 2010, I did the Niagara gorge hike and became instantly bonded with Eric Neutuch of SUNY’s Manhattan Educational Opportunity Center when we were soaked to the bone in a rain storm right in the middle of the hike. Eric and I now not only use each other as counselor resources, but we also email about the latest bands coming through our area!

-Continued

# What NYSACAC Means To Me Continued...

Heading home from that same conference, I shared a cab ride with Susan Davidson of Cooper Union, and a friendship was born. This friendship was taken to the next level when we participated in a Wii dance party at Karen's earlier this year.

As a Summer Institute participant in 2008 and my subsequent years as Publicity Coordinator, my personal and professional relationships have flourished the most. Going out to lunch with Patty Peek of Fordham and knowing I can call on The Garden School's Lisa Sohmer's years of experience in my position is an invaluable resource. This past summer, I hit it off so well with S.I. mentor Heather Stinson of Colgate that exactly eight days after Summer Institute concluded, I was staying in her guest bedroom after dropping one of my graduates and a new Colgate freshman off on campus.

All of these relationships have helped to support me as a college counselor, and I do not know what I would do without a single one of them. It was so wonderful to call on some of them this summer for insight and advice on a job interview I had lined up at Stuyvesant High School, a nationally ranked public high school in Manhattan. Without hesitation, David from Columbia and Susan from Cooper Union were there to answer questions and lend support. Accepting the job offer just days before Summer Institute, I received so many warm wishes from the attendees and mentors. When Diane McCoy of Columbia University arrived on campus, she surprised me by already knowing about my new position. She informed me that Stuyvesant was one of her assigned schools, and she had just called to check in with them. When she heard I was the new hire, she jumped at the chance to share with them that she had been my Summer Institute mentor. With the respect Diane has in this field, I already had a great reputation before I even walked in the doors at Stuyvesant!

As I left Summer Institute, it was great to hear, "Good luck in your new position. Call me if you need anything," from Richard Alvarez, Director of Admissions at CUNY. "I know you'll do great," from Tom DaRin, Vice President for Enrollment Management at Nazareth College, and a reminder from Chris Farmer, College Bound's Director of College Counseling at The Young Women's Leadership School, that he is just a click of support away via email. Knowing that I can call up any of these people and many more simply by mentioning our NYSACAC connection ("We sang karaoke at Summer Institute," "We roasted marshmallows at the state conference this year") gives me great comfort.

Once I started at Stuyvesant, the secretary who books all the college rep visits was surprised at how many of them I already knew, like fellow 2008 Summer Institute alum Catherine Chan of Vassar. There are even reps who have visited who I didn't even know I knew. When I introduced myself to Michael Coad of Canisius College, he reminded me that he was a recent Summer Institute graduate!

On my third day of work at Stuyvesant, I was told to book my trip to the annual NACAC conference, occurring less than two weeks later. Although the start of the new job and being among 6,000 conference attendees was overwhelming, all of the friendly NYSACAC faces made me feel at home. I was bumping into New Yorkers left and right, including Allison Ruth of The Urban Assembly School for Criminal Justice, who has turned into my conference buddy.

If you have been a member of NYSACAC for years, you can completely relate to my experiences and you could very well have written this article about the friendships you have made. If you are new to NYSACAC, I would like to use this opportunity to encourage you to get involved in the association. Make conversation with the stranger sitting next to you at that breakfast meeting, definitely sign up for Summer Institute, build up your contacts at the annual conference, take your colleague up on their offer to share a taxi—it could be the ride of your professional life! ★

# Platanos and Coffee Beans

By Elisabeth Medina- Director of College Counseling, CollegeBound Initiative at Juan Morel Campos Secondary School

You would think that the hardest part of my job is getting my underprepared students to understand the importance of their grade point average or getting them through the rigorous and somewhat foreign SAT exam, but in fact it's not. One of my most difficult challenges as the Director of College Counseling at Juan Morel Campos Secondary School is my students' parents' reluctance to let their children go away to college, specifically, my Dominican mothers.

I remember my very first senior parent night four years ago. My principal introduced himself, said a few words, and before he closed, told parents, "Let your birds fly free." At first I could relate to the metaphor, but four years later, his words could not have been more appropriate. Our parents, specifically Dominican mothers, have a really difficult time letting their children go away to college. They cannot comprehend the need for their child to get the full college experience of living on campus. They struggle with the mere thought that their child is leaving their nest. One parent in particular told me, "Ms. Medina, I respect and trust you and your judgment and appreciate all that you are doing for my daughter. Do whatever you need to do for her, but just remember, she is not going away to college." What am I supposed to do with that?

And while the Common Application is painstaking enough for anyone, for my first generation, low income students from the projects, it is a laborious task. However, I must commend my students for their dedication and commitment because they see a light at the end of the tunnel and want to end this cycle of poverty. Even after getting through the rigorous application process, understanding the importance of recommendation letters and fine-tuning activity resumes, my biggest challenge is helping parents understand that a \$3,000 loan at a private, four year university is a fantastic financial aid package. "What do you mean my daughter needs a loan? I don't even want her to go away." Excuse me. With all due respect, your daughter is our valedictorian, and although she only has an 89 average (which at most high schools might get her ranked at number 120), at Juan Morel Campos she's a star. And apparently, many of the universities she applied to think the same if they are willing to give her a \$53,000 financial aid package of free money!

So what's my strategy? Parent meetings in Spanish, café con leche, lunch meetings, home visits, dinner, you name it. My strategy is not bribery, it is informal relationship building while educating and sharing a meal or a simple cup of coffee. My goal is to find a way to get my parents to build a relationship with me before they can trust me with the future of their child. Granted I can't bring my homemade coffee into the office, but in a New York City Board of Education building, a Keurig coffeemaker goes a long way. I utilize my parent meetings to plan together with parents who never graduated high school or had an opportunity to attend college. I educate parents on all aspects of the college process and make them an integral part of the choices their child makes. I assist parents in planning day trips to visit college campuses and experience life outside of Brooklyn. I have them speak with alumni, admission representatives, and other members of our school's team (teachers, principal, etc.). Often, I will even join them on campus visits so they are not completely overwhelmed by the experience.

By our fourth or fifth meeting, most parents are giving me hugs and kisses when they greet me. Not every story has a happy ending, but my success stories are so gratifying that they are worth every bit of café con leche I share with them. So moving forward, I will continue to work on my strategy one coffee bean or empanada at a time! ★



# Reflections of a Grant Recipient

By Claudia Mendez- Director of High School Programs and Placement, Summer on the Hill

When I learned that I was a grant recipient for the NYSACAC Coming Together and Annual Conference, I never imagined the actual worth of this award. Although a monetary value can be placed on this grant, the actual worth has a measure beyond that amount. The wealth of information, relationship building and confidence that I gained at this conference exceeded all of my expectations.



The most valuable part of attending this conference was by far my ability to make connections with college representatives. As a counselor for a non-profit with limited resources, it can be difficult to branch out to as many colleges as I feel could make me a stronger resource for my students. Attending NYSACAC opened the line of communication between me and many of the colleges that could be the right fit for many of my kids. It was encouraging to speak with college representatives and hear how eager they are to help my low-income, first-generation college-bound students achieve success at their institutions. Having the time and space to build connections with so many wonderful institutions was the highlight of my experience.

Although I have attended many conferences in the past, it is easy to say that NYSACAC is a unique experience. Aside from giving us plenty of time to relax and have a good time (not a hard task when you are dealing with counselors), it also provided workshops that were practical in spirit and made me excited about the year to come. I feel very grateful for the opportunity I was given to attend this year's conference and hope to see you all again next year! ★

## ACT 2011 College and Career Readiness Workshop Schedule

Join ACT this fall for the 2011 College and Career Readiness Workshops where you and your educational team will:

- Learn how to make the most out of actionable data and translate scores into standards-based skills.
- Use longitudinal data to engage your school and district staff in conversations about college and career readiness, planning, standards, curriculum and intervention.
- View ACT's new College and Career Readiness Information System that provides real-time access to data and information for schools, districts, states and approved educational organizations.

These three-hour workshops are recommended for district administrators, superintendents, principals, curriculum staff and counselors. They are offered FREE of charge and are delivered by highly knowledgeable ACT consultants. All registered attendees will receive a copy of the ACT College and Career Readiness Workshop Resource Manual, and continuing education credits will be available for NBCC members.

To register for FREE workshop near you, visit: [www.act.org/ccrw](http://www.act.org/ccrw)

### Schedule of Events:

Wednesday, November 2 - Adelphi University

Wednesday, November 9 - SUNY Plattsburgh

*\*All events run from 9 AM – 12 PM. Breakfast will be served at all locations. Host colleges may offer lunch and campus tours following the workshops. ★*

# Western NY Consortium of Higher Education

***Attention Guidance Counselors and Transfer Counselors !***

***You are invited to...***

- see and experience campus dynamics,*
- interact with and become inspired by students,*
- take in some sights and photograph some memories,*
- make new friends, and so much more.*

The Western New York Consortium of Higher Education announces that they will be hosting a Counselor Tour Program April 22-25, 2012.

Coming to the Western New York area, it is anticipated that approximately 40 high school and college counselors will be visiting their campuses. During this four-day adventure, counselors will have the opportunity to tour ten colleges and universities of Western New York, including:

*Alfred State College  
Buffalo State College  
Canisius College  
Daemen College  
D'Youville College  
SUNY Fredonia  
Medaille College  
Niagara University  
St. Bonaventure University  
University at Buffalo*

Registration materials are available at: [www.daemen.edu/admissions/collegetour](http://www.daemen.edu/admissions/collegetour)

Sign up and become part of the excitement!

Contact Deborah Goodrich at (607) 587-4215 or [goodridj@alfredstate.edu](mailto:goodridj@alfredstate.edu) for further details. ★

# Member Spotlight

## Susan Davidson

By Jackie Taylor- Assistant Director of Admissions, Daemen College

Susan Davidson, Assistant Dean of Admissions at The Cooper Union, is a remarkable example of a NYSACAC member who has climbed the ranks in higher education admissions and utilized professional networking opportunities to grow in her career and advocate for the students she is most passionate about. You may know Susan as a NYSACAC College Delegate and Co-Chair of the Government Relations Committee. Susan is also active at the national level of higher education and recently assumed the role of Chair of the NACAC Government Relations Committee for a two year term. Susan also won the NYSACAC Human Relations Award in 2010. So, how does she do it all?



Susan began her admissions career six years ago at The Cooper Union. After graduating from Cornell University with her Bachelor's Degree in Education, Susan moved to Washington, DC. There, she worked for an education research organization, and her research focused on testing projects. She also learned about the admissions field as she served as an alumni interviewer for students applying to Cornell from the DC area. While working at the research organization, Susan became very interested in the transition from high school to college as well as access to college for underrepresented students. She asked the organization she was working for to put her on a higher education project, and when they refused, she decided to go back to school for her Master's Degree in Higher Education Administration from the Harvard Graduate School of Education.

Susan completed her degree at Harvard and began working at Cooper in August of 2005. She started as the Assistant Director of Admissions and soon became the Associate Director of Admissions. In her current role as Assistant Dean of Admissions, Susan works primarily with undergraduate students. She does recruitment travel, reviews applications, manages Cooper's Facebook page, and arranges campus tours among many other duties. Because there are only three people in their admissions office, Susan works with all applicants from various regions.

"My favorite part of my job is working with students," Susan said. "They all have amazing stories." Susan went on to tell the story of one particular student who was studying art at Cooper and wanted to go on to medical school after graduation to combine her love of art with her passion for medicine and helping people. The student's mother worked in textiles, and Susan was impressed as the student talked about comparing patterns on fabric to patterns in the human body. "I'm constantly learning from the students," Susan added.

Susan has a number of people to credit for teaching her about admissions and helping her achieve her goals. "My dean and colleagues have taught me everything I know. Dean of Admissions, Records and Registrar at The Cooper Union, Mitchell Lipton, and my colleague, John Falls, and I have worked closely for six years," she said. Her faculty advisor at Harvard, Dr. Bridget Terry Long, inspired her to work on access issues for underrepresented groups.

Susan also has high regard for past NYSACAC Presidents. "They have inspired me to keep working, keep volunteering my time, and stay involved in the professional networks. I have really benefited from being part of these professional networks," Susan said. Susan has been the Co-Chair of the NYSACAC Government Relations Committee since 2007. She was put on the NACAC Government Relations Committee in 2010 and attended her sixth NACAC conference this past September.

Susan has a wonderful story of involvement in professional networks and passion for student access. She is also an excellent resource for new NYSACAC members who want to get more involved in advocacy, access, student success, and NYSACAC's committees, professional development opportunities, and conferences. ★

# 2011-2012 GOVERNING BOARD

New York State Association for College Admissions Counseling

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NYSACAC NEWSLETTER Fall 2011

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# Political Advocacy and Why Is it Important to YOU!

By Annie K. Brickel- College Counselor, Retired: NYSACAC Government Relations, Human Relations, Camp College Mentor

No matter what our various job titles and their descriptions might encompass - whether we work in a college or university, a high school, or in a community-based organization - another role that we need to consider undertaking is that of political advocate. With the political climate as it exists today, you might be thinking, "I don't think so." Whether you agree with what is happening nationally, state-wide and locally, we all have a vested interest in the outcomes of specific issues that relate to our profession. As a member of the Government Relations Committee of NYSACAC, I am asking each of you in whatever way you can to contemplate becoming more involved in some form of political advocacy.

In general, advocacy is a political process by an individual or a large group which aims to influence public policy and resource allocation decisions within political, economic, and social systems and institutions. Advocacy includes many activities that a person or organization undertakes such as media campaigns, public speaking, commissioning and publishing research, polling or even letter writing campaigns. Lobbying is a form of advocacy where a direct approach is made to legislators on an issue which plays a significant role in modern politics.

More specifically, NYSACAC does all of the above and more through the tireless work of the Government Relations Committee, a diverse and very dedicated group of your peers, co-chaired by Susan Davidson and Brian Loew. Several of the projects we worked on last year included: (1) **The Rolodex Project:** handwritten holiday cards and letters were sent to all State Senators and Assemblymen introducing them to NYSACAC; (2) **Legislative Advocacy Day:** NYSACAC members and some of their students met with NYS representatives and shared the NACAC College Access Agenda; they also attended a higher education meeting; (3) **Legislative Advocacy in Washington, DC:** Government Relations Chairs spoke with several Senators and Representatives sharing the NACAC College Access Agenda and the need to support the *DREAM Act*. (4) **E-Mail Advocacy:** informed NYSACAC members through NACAC and CICU mail systems to send e-mails to their elected representatives supporting *The Pathways to College Act* and the *DREAM Act*; (5) **Legislative Session at the Annual NYSACAC Conference:** provided keynote speaker from the Rockefeller Institute who made a presentation dealing with current and timely issues in New York State politics.

One important way for you to become an advocate is through e-mail advocacy, especially when you receive an e-mail from NACAC, NYSACAC, or CICU. Thank you for responding to several requests this past school year to support various pieces of legislation. This year, you will have the chance to exert your political advocacy again or for the first time, especially in support of the national *DREAM Act*. The only way that this bill will have the slightest chance to become law is if we and our colleagues from every state continue to advocate for it by contacting our legislators.

-Continued

# Political Advocacy Continued...

Briefly, the *DREAM* (acronym for Development, Relief and Education for Alien Minors) *Act* is a legislative proposal first introduced in the U.S. Senate on August 1, 2001 and most recently on May 11, 2011, when the bill was re-introduced in the U.S. Senate. This bill would provide conditional permanent residency to certain illegal alien students of good moral character who graduate from U.S. high schools, arrived in the U.S. as minors, and lived in the country continuously for at least five years prior to the bill's enactment. If they were to complete two years in the military or two years at a four-year institution of higher learning, the students would obtain temporary residency for a six year period. Within the six year period, a student may qualify who has "acquired a degree from an institution of higher education in the United States or has completed at least two years, in good standing, in a program for a bachelor's degree or higher degree in the United States" or have "served in the armed services for at least two years and, if discharged, has received an honorable discharge."

This bill, which offers a path to citizenship for illegal immigrants who arrived as children, has been supported for the past ten years by Senator Dick Durbin from Illinois and has *not* lost support among Democrats even as they ease into campaign mode. The same Democrats scrambling to show off their moderate or conservative-leaning credentials are still standing by the legislation. The fourteen Democrats up for re-election in 2012 who voted for the measure in December say their support has not wavered.

On May 11, 2011, Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid re-introduced the *DREAM Act* in the Senate. Some Republicans who had supported the bill in the past withheld their votes, objecting that such a bill should not be granted without some sort of balance increasing immigration enforcement. Reid indicated that he would consider adding a workplace enforcement measure in the *DREAM Act* that would require every employer to use E-Verify, the government's Internet-based work eligibility verification system. President Obama supports the bill as one of his efforts to reform the U.S. immigration system. The debate goes on, and hopefully the bill will come up for a vote in the next (112th) session of Congress.

Aside from our e-mail advocacy campaigns, this year we hope to follow a similar path of programming as we have followed in the past. On Tuesday, December 6, 2011 at 6:30 pm, we will be meeting at Marist College in Poughkeepsie for our annual Rolodex Project. On Tuesday, February 7, 2012, we will gather in Albany for our Legislative Advocacy Day. On June 7, 2012, we will convene our Legislative Session at the Annual NYSACAC Conference in Ithaca.

Now that you have a better idea of what it takes to be politically active, I hope that you will answer our call when we ask you to e-mail your legislators. It is a political action that will only require a few minutes of your time but one that could have wide-ranging effects.

If you would like to become more involved as a member of Government Relations, contact either of our co-chairs, Susan Davidson or Brian Loew at [government.relations@nysacac.org](mailto:government.relations@nysacac.org). ★

# The Huge Disconnect between Colleges and Applicants

By Jane C. Hoffman, M.B.A- College Advice 101

Too often there is a huge disconnect between what families understand and what colleges know to be important in college admissions.

Confusion stems from the fact that there are many different stakeholders and players in the college admissions process. Each views things from its own vantage point and paradigm and is not positioned or inclined to consider impacts beyond its own purview. Each has its own agenda and unwittingly places its own demands on the process without consideration or understanding of the impact on each other, students and families, society and the bigger picture. Confusion for students and families trying to understand and consider the opportunities for an education, the student's needs and interests, and the differences between colleges too often ensues.

[Stakeholders include colleges, the College Board, the Common Application, high school guidance counselors, educational consultants, the news media, publications like U.S. News and World Report, the test prep and tutoring industry, students, parents, and others. Furthermore, one can consider that the stakeholders of "colleges" could be represented variously by admissions representatives, admissions directors, vice presidents of enrollment, presidents, and boards of directors.]

Students and parents often think that admissions decisions are based primarily on assessment of the qualifications of the applicant. Families are unaware of the institutional imperatives and objectives that must be realized and that may supersede the review of individual applications. Little do families understand how hard colleges work to enroll a full class and how deeply they worry about yield. Families don't know about the impact of ability to pay, what "need sensitive" means, and that early decision plans are advantageous to institutions since they enable them to increase their yield and control enrollment and are a critical part of their enrollment management strategies. Families don't always know the importance of "demonstrated interest" and that visiting a campus can be interpreted by the college as a proxy for "likely to enroll" if admitted. Families mistakenly conclude that the marketing materials that may fill their email and mail boxes are signs of colleges' targeted and informed interest in the student. And students and their parents worry incessantly about whether another 50 points on a standardized test or a different phrase on a college essay will render a completely different admissions decision.

Families are also unaware of the counseling role that good college admissions representatives play and often do not understand how available college representatives are to serve as resources. Students often don't know that they can enter into a dialog, pose questions, and expect to receive informed and enlightening responses.

I encourage colleges to more fully consider the perspective of students and families who are trying to make sense of the myriad of opportunities for an education and the differences between colleges. That would do a lot to relieve some of the stress they experience and that too often defines and clouds the college search and application process. And I encourage students and parents to become well informed, recognize what they have control over, and focus on educational values, the student's needs and finding the best college for the student. ★

# 2011 Rising Star Award Congratulations, Christine Stumm!



The Rising Star Award honors individuals and programs that exemplify excellence and dedication to serving the needs of students in the transition from high school to college.

This award encourages state and regional affiliates to look within their associations, identify and nurture those new members and programs that are deserving of this honor, and also encourage the honorees to continue their professional development through membership in NACAC.

This year, our past Co-Chair of the Newsletter Committee and current VP of Communications – Christine Stumm – received this honorable award. She received a commemorative award from NACAC which was presented at the national conference, a complimentary individual membership for one year in NACAC, and complimentary registration to the New Orleans national conference.

To submit a nomination for next year, download the Rising Star Award [information](#) and [nomination form](#) from the NACAC website and submit the completed form to the president of your state or regional affiliate. All submissions are due by June 15<sup>th</sup>. ★



## NYSACAC NEWSLETTER

### Call for Articles!

The NYSACAC Newsletter contains information that reflects the issues and needs of high school and college counselors and administrators.

Please share resources and ideas that others would like to see and read about in our newsletter. Examples include journal articles and book reviews, tips, innovations, important dates, and more. Your contributions will help NYSACAC create one of the best newsletters in our profession.

Comments and suggestions should be directed to: [newsletter@nysacac.org](mailto:newsletter@nysacac.org). Submissions are due September 30, January 15, and April 15. We look forward to hearing from you.

### Get Published!

# 2011 NACAC Human Relations Award



NACAC's Human Relations Award was established in 1984 to award those who have been instrumental in making postsecondary education opportunities available to historically underrepresented students. The recipients of the 2011 Human Relations Award are two individuals who NACAC, NYSACAC and many other state and regional affiliates owe a tremendous debt of gratitude.

As directors of NYSACAC's Camp College, a program bringing historically underrepresented students from around the state to a college campus for a weekend of learning and fun, Karen Staller and Chris Milton have dedicated their time, talents and, in some cases, personal resources to making a difference. New York State's Camp College, which serves about 200 students each summer, focuses on college preparation while immersing students in campus life. Each year, Karen and Chris coordinate the sites for the camps and recruit a crew of stellar counseling and admission professionals to staff the program.

For many of the students, this experience is life changing. By teaching them the ins and outs—and ups and downs—of a campus that is far from home, this unique experience has made a strong, positive impression on students who previously may not have envisioned themselves attending college.

Over the years, Chris and Karen also have devoted enormous energy and support to helping other affiliates start or enhance their own Camp College programs, growing local programs throughout the country while helping to create a lasting impression in the lives of students.

Their dedication, hard work and service to students exemplify the best of NACAC and the Human Relations Award.

**Congratulations again, Karen Staller and Chris Milton, and your great achievements! ★**



# 34th Annual Conference at Ithaca College

## “Beyond the Headlines,” June 6-8

## Coming Together Conference, June 5-6

This year’s NYSACAC Annual Conference will be taking place from Wednesday, June 6<sup>th</sup> through Friday, June 8<sup>th</sup> on the gorgeous campus of Ithaca College. The Coming Together Conference will start on Tuesday, June 5<sup>th</sup> and conclude in the early afternoon of Wednesday, June 6<sup>th</sup>.

The staff from Ithaca College and the NYSACAC Steering Committee have been busy organizing and planning what will be an amazing conference since early July. This year’s conference theme will be “Beyond the Headlines” and we have numerous exciting ideas to help incorporate and thread this theme into the entire conference. Here are some highlights for this year’s conference:

- We will be adding a **Counselor College Fair** on Thursday afternoon. It will be structured similar to the Counselor College Fair at the NACAC national conference.
- We will continue with the **Mega Session** concept used at University of Rochester and will once again offer numerous educational sessions on both Thursday and Friday.
- Our **conference welcome** will have a different structure and feel to it that should help kick the conference off in a positive manner.
- The **golf outing** will be held at the Trent Jones Golf course at Cornell University, which is a phenomenal golf course!
- The **conference socials** on Wednesday and Thursday evening will showcase Ithaca’s beautiful campus and the downtown Ithaca Commons area. I promise you there will be something for everyone and a few surprises thrown in for good measure.
- **BOCCE** under the lights on the Ithaca’s new turf field, adjacent to their incredible new Athletic and Events Center, should take this annual event to a whole new level!

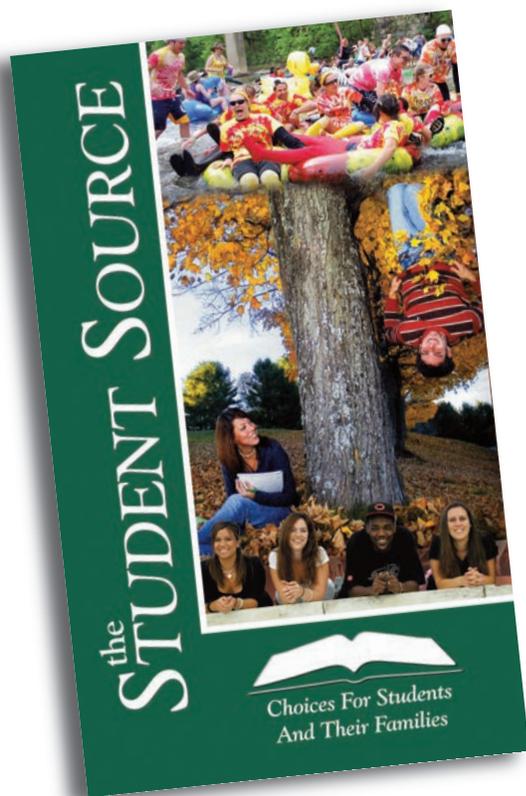
I encourage you to visit the NYSACAC webpage ([www.nysacac.org](http://www.nysacac.org)) and check out the 2012 conference link on the homepage for more information on the conference and surrounding Ithaca area. We will also be unveiling a **mobile application** that you can access from your smart phones. I look forward to seeing all of you this June at Ithaca College, for what promises to be an educational and social event you will remember forever!

Sincerely,

Dave Coates, NYSACAC President-Elect and Chair of the 2012 Conference Steering Committee ★

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# Congratulations!

**Karen Staller and Chris Milton  
Camp College Program**

*Congratulations to Karen, Chris, and the Camp College Program - recipients of the NACAC Human Relations Award! Karen is NYSACAC's VP for Inclusion, Access and Success; and Chris is a Delegate and Co-Chair of Camp College.*



**Christine Stumm  
University at Buffalo**

*NACAC's **Rising Star** award winner for 2011 is Christine Stumm. She is NYSACAC's VP for Communications.*



*Christine is second from left.*

# Congratulations!

**Susan Davidson  
The Cooper Union**

*Congratulations to Susan Davidson - she has been appointed **Chair of the NACAC Government Relations Committee** for a 2 year term. Susan is NYSACAC's Government Relations Committee Co-Chair.*



**Mike Acquilano  
Staten Island Academy**

*Congratulations to Mike Acquilano - he has been appointed **Chair of the NACAC Admission Practices Committee** for a 2 year term. Mike one of NYSACAC's Past-Presidents.*



## Would you like to be a committee member?

Involvement in the committee planning process can be a fun and rewarding way to develop professional skills. The organization is always open to new members on our various committees. If you have an interest in being a leader, join one of our committees today.

Phone: (845) 389-1300

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**Newsletters are published in October, February, and May. Submission deadlines are as follows: September 30, January 15, and April 15. The newsletter is distributed electronically. Print copies are available upon request.**

### ARTICLE SUBMISSIONS

**Articles submitted for consideration for publication should be concise. Articles may be edited. Please include contact information of persons mentioned in articles, as well as the contact information of person(s) submitting articles. Email submissions to [newsletter@nysacac.org](mailto:newsletter@nysacac.org).**



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