



# THE SIGNPOST

Fall 2015

**It's not too late to register for the Annual NCHO Conference!**

**More details on pg. 2**

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## RIDE WITH US:

This year we will be offering a free shuttle service to the Annual NCHO conference from two different locations. The bus will be available to folks in the Raleigh area and the Greensboro area. If you are interested in using the bus to travel to and from the conference.

Any questions can be directed to Brian Stutz at [stutzb@ecu.edu](mailto:stutzb@ecu.edu)

Once you've registered for the conference you can use this link to sign up for the bus:

<http://tinyurl.com/NCHObus>



NORTH CAROLINA HOUSING OFFICERS 2015 CONFERENCE



**OCTOBER 12-14, 2015**  
REGISTRATION BEGINS JUNE 15 AT NCHO.ORG

East Carolina University

It's not too late to register for next month's NCHO Annual Conference!

**REGISTRATION INFORMATION:**

**Professionals:**

- Late Registration, September 12-October 2 @ 11:59pm \$160

**Grad Students:**

- Late Registration, September 12-October 2 @ 11:59pm \$ 90

Registration must be done online - go to [www.ncho.org](http://www.ncho.org) to register. You may pay either by sending payment in the form of a check or pay through a Pay Pal account. The mailing address for the checks is:

ATTN: Holly Bowen, NCHO  
100 Jones Hall  
ECU  
Greenville, NC 27858

**Scholarships available:**

<http://tinyurl.com/NCHOScholarship15>

**Award Nominations:**

<http://tinyurl.com/NCHOawards15>

**Guidebook - will be up early Oct:**

Download the Guidebook app and keep an eye out for an up-to-the minute conference guide there.

**HOTEL INFORMATION:**

The Holiday Inn  
203 SW Greenville Blvd.  
Greenville, NC 27834  
252.355.8300

When booking a hotel room please let reservations know you are with NCHO!  
Cost: \$89.00 for a room + 2 breakfast tickets (if you book by September 18th.)

# From the Desk of The President:

by: Mindy Bliss

NCHO President

## Greetings NCHO!

Excitement is abounding as we approach our annual conference Greenville at ECU. Hopefully everyone's check in went well and the students have settled back into lives as a students in higher education.

Each year we all face new struggles and some old ones sneak back into our lives. However, it is these types of challenges that keep many of us in this field. I am not sure if I could do the same thing every day in my chosen profession. I know that when I step into my office that my day will probably will not go as planned according to my schedule. That flexibility keeps me fresh and seeking new ways to improve my program and to challenge others that I work with.

I believe that learning is a lifelong engagement for me and also for those in our field. It is a joy to meet with others and hear of their successes and failures. As I reflect back on my first years working in housing, I wonder how I accomplished so much without all of the programs and gained knowledge I have now to assist me.

If I were to give up my complex spreadsheets and go back to sharing an office computer as I did in my first years, I am not sure that I would be up to the task. Many of the improvements I have seen over the years have been positive. As technology improves, I am able to produce a better product in a shorter time. Allowing for the creation

of new projects and setting a higher bar to reach for.

*"Start by doing what's necessary; then do what's possible; and suddenly you are doing the impossible."*

- Francis of Assisi -

On the down side with all of the new technologies, we are able to do more and often times now take on more projects we should. I spend more time in front of a screen, instead of connecting with the students. There is so little time to accomplish all that needs to be done. Some days, we do need to stop then reflect on what our actual goals are and if we are working towards them or around them.

That is one of the reasons I look forward to our annual conference. It gives me a chance to stop and reflect on the accomplishments of the past year. The time away from my campus allows me to connect with old friends and make new connections in a relaxing setting. It inspires me to set higher goals and to work towards raising the level of the program while still focusing on the competencies that are the back bone of higher education. It also allows for a chance to express concerns with others that may have the same challenges and to see how others are facing them. It is a time to support and empower each other to rise above status quo and be the inspiration for the future.

I look forward to our time together at ECU in October and cannot wait to hear about of the successes.

## Going Green at Queens Thanks to SEAHO

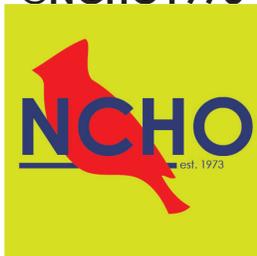
Contributed by: Amanda Morales

Each year SEAHO awards grants for educational programming. During the Fall 2014 semester intern Amanda Morales at Queens University of Charlotte submitted an application that was awarded a \$500 grant towards sustainability programming on campus. Seeing the need for innovative sustainability initiatives across campus, Morales and Student Activities Director Erin Fox created and led the Queens Sustainability Task Force. Goals for the Task Force included the creation of a campus-wide sustainability pledge, new marketing strategies to promote campus-wide green initiatives, and planning a week's worth of programming events surrounding Earth Day (April 23, 2015). The Task Force enlisted students, faculty, and staff, who met frequently throughout the spring semester to work toward initial goals, as well as create more, such as moving towards certification for the campus to be a Wildlife Habitat and Tree Campus USA. With the help of the SEAHO grant, Morales and her team were able to create and facilitate a wide variety of campus programming leading up to Earth Day.

### Tweet, Tag, and Share

Are you one of our followers yet? If not, you should definitely join us on Twitter.

Follow us today:  
**@NCHO1973**



Our Twitter account can be a great space to share ideas with one another between conferences. Use **#NCHO15** at the Conference

**NCHO RA Drive-In**

*save the date*

**Saturday, 10/24**

**Guilford College**

**REIGNITE  
YOUR LIGHT**

See page 8 for  
more information!

## Introducing a New Webinar!!

The NCHO professional development committee is excited to share the following info about a new webinar coming up at the end of this month:

### **Microaggressions: A Campus Climate Conversation with Maura Cullen** **September 30th 2pm - 3:30pm EST**

Join us for this conversation with leading diversity expert, Maura Cullen, as she provides insight and suggestions for assessing and improving your campus climate. In a year that has seen tremendous upheaval, on campuses and in communities at large, it's critical to consider the role and responsibility you have in creating a safe and secure campus environment for your students and staff.

"It's not a big deal." We often hear that after an insensitive comment is made. But what happens when that comment is indicative of an undercurrent of racism or other social tension on campus? An environment where some of your students feel invisible or unsafe? "IT" is a big deal. These "microaggressions" create a larger divide and have a cumulative impact, leaving students feeling unheard, unsafe and unwelcome.

As they reach their tipping points, students are becoming more and more active in confronting these acts. They turn to your professional staff of color, especially those in position of providing extensive care and advisement — sometimes to their own detriment. They begin to feel underappreciated and burnt out in the face of upheaval. At the same time, staff members of dominant identities are beginning to feel that potential pitfalls and land mines are inevitable, leaving them

at a loss for how to best support their colleagues and students with target identities.

Maura will discuss communication traps and how to avoid them, as well as what tools to use in their place. This webinar will include an extended Q&A, where Maura will engage in open-ended dialogue designed to get at the heart of how institutions can maintain a community of respect and open dialogue, in spite of today's challenging social climate and growing tensions.

#### **Participants will take away:**

- Strategies for creating a more inclusive and socially just community
- Ways to confront non-inclusive behaviors appropriately
- Tools for identifying personal bias and stereotypes — and what to do about it.
- The ability to recognize intersectionality and how it impacts the personal identity dynamic.
- Common ground for conversation with your professional staff and faculty, so you can work together to assess your campus climate and put action steps in place for addressing issues in 2015-16.

# Professional Development Calendar

## Twitter Chats:

#SAChat - Every **Thursday** at 1pm and 7pm

#WISAchat - Every **Wednesday** at 12pm

## Upcoming Webinars:

### Dealing with Difficult Student Employees

Tuesday, September 29 2-pm

<http://tinyurl.com/pyabooz>

### Microaggressions: A Campus Climate Conversation

Wednesday, September 30 2-pm

<http://tinyurl.com/o6mpypa>

### Student Behavior Online: Setting Policies/Standards

Wednesday, September 30 2-pm

<http://tinyurl.com/ozauvww>

### Autism on Campus: Serving & Supporting Students

Tuesday, October 6 2-pm

<http://tinyurl.com/oucjs4s>

### Generation Z on Your Campus

Wednesday, October 7 3:30-pm

<http://tinyurl.com/p5blbsc>

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## Upcoming Conferences & Events:

### Business Operations Conference

October 5 - October 8

St. Pete Beach, FL

<http://www.acuho-i.org/events/busops>

### Living - Learning Programs Conference

October 17 - October 20

St. Pete Beach, FL

<http://www.acuho-i.org/events/llp>

### ACUHO-I/APPA Housing Facilities Conference

October 19 - October 23

St. Pete Beach, FL

<http://www.acuho-i.org/events/facilities>

# SEAHO Program Submissions:

by: *Jameson Sellers*

*NCHO's SEAHO Representative*

I hope you have had a wonderful summer and are enjoying the other side of training and opening! Now that things are starting to fall into place and routines are being established, we wanted to reach out to let you know that the Program Committee is now accepting proposals for the 2016 Annual Conference in Raleigh, North Carolina. We are excited to read about all of the great knowledge you want to share with the region.

The program proposal window this year will be **Monday 8/31- Friday 10/2** and the form can be found here. Please consider submitting a proposal to share your expertise with the region.

We will be looking at program categories this year and are using the new SEAHO Values to denote tracks within the sessions. These values are Connected, Inclusive, Collaboration, Intentional, Innovation and Ethical. Please think about which value is best connected to your presentation topic, format, or audience. For example:

- "Speed Mentoring" is a great Practitioner Development program and is a demonstration of the "Connected" value.
- A program on strategic planning might embody "Intentional" or "Innovation".
- Curriculum review for a Living Learning Community or Residential Learning Program may be connected to "Collaboration" practices with campus partners or how to be more "Inclusive" when serving student populations on your campus.

This is a great way to think about how our daily practices reflect the values of our regional organization.

More details are available in the Summer SEAHO Report which for reference can be found here: <http://www.nxtbook.com/nxtbooks/seaho/2015summer/>

Please contact Andrea Becker at [abecker@email.unc.edu](mailto:abecker@email.unc.edu) with any questions. We are excited to shake things up a bit this year and Capitalize on our time together at the annual conference.

We look forward to learning from you and growing with you in Raleigh!

# NCHO ELECTIONS!

## Join the Exec Team

By: Chris Gregory

NCHO President-Elect

- Applications are now being accepted
- for a number of NCHO Executive Council positions.

### These positions are elected at the Annual NCHO Conference:

- - President Elect
- - Business Manager
- - HCBU Representative
- - Graduate Student Representative
- - NCARH Liaison (February - Student Election)

### There are just three easy steps to applying for one of these positions:

- 1) Complete a Nomination Form with a statement of intent and experience for the position, which should include proposed goals of the candidate.
- 2) Send a current resume
- 3) Send a letter of support from the candidate's direct supervisor or Chief Housing Officer.



All application materials are due October 1st, 2015. To find out more about the election process and how to apply, click on the following link: <http://ncho.org/executive-council/leadership-opportunities/>

### The following additional positions are selected by the NCHO Executive Council at the Annual NCHO Conference.

- Pro-Devo Chair-Select
- Technology Chair
- Assessment Chair

Please email Chris Gregory, NCHO President-Elect at [atcdgregor@uncg.edu](mailto:atcdgregor@uncg.edu) if you are interested in an appointed position. You do not need to apply using the link above.

### The Signpost is in need of articles from

# YOU

### Please consider writing articles for The Signpost!

If there is something you are passionate about or would like to share we want to read about it!

Contact: Jessie Stellini  
[jessie.stellini@duke.edu](mailto:jessie.stellini@duke.edu)

NCHO's Current Executive Council on a hard hat tour of ECU's new Gateway Building which you can see in it's completed state at the Conference!

# RA Drive In Conference

## October 24, 2015 - Guilford College

Greetings from Greensboro!

Registration for the RA conference is live! We are looking forward to seeing all of you on October 24th for the NCHO annual RA Drive-in Conference at Guilford College in Greensboro. For specific information about the conference, please visit the conference website:

**[ncdrivein2015.weebly.com](http://ncdrivein2015.weebly.com)**

Registration will run between now and October 19th. Make sure to register early if you would like to save some money! Our early registration fee is only \$25/student, and lasts until October 4th. After the 4th, the fee becomes \$30/student. Also, keep in mind that each delegation gets to send one advisor for free.

Our program submission form is live as well. Be sure to check out our program submission form if you are interested in presenting.

Additionally, the NCHO RA Drive In committee has decided to collect school supplies to be donated to several schools throughout Guilford County. Feel free to begin collecting for that. There might be an award for the delegation that brings the most supplies....

If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to email us at [ncdrivein2015@gmail.com](mailto:ncdrivein2015@gmail.com)



Some North Carolina Housing Officers from around the state gathered together to socialize, and cheer on the Greensboro Grasshopper's Minor League Baseball team in August.

They even sent us a photo! Looks like tons of fun, and social events such as this happen throughout the year so keep an eye on your emails!

# Partnering with Parents in a Changing Landscape

## Effective Parent and Family Partnerships

By: MarQuita Barker

Associate Director of Residence Life Operations and Information Management,  
*Elon University*

By now, we've all heard about the importance of partnering with parents on our campuses. The academic year has just begun and already many housing professionals have received calls from parents regarding facilities, dining, roommate issues, etc. For faculty and staff, our training in psychosocial student development teaches us the importance of independent thinking and problem solving during these very formative years. We also know that these beliefs can co-exist with parent involvement. The following list suggests ways to accomplish the ultimate goal of student success while partnering with their parents and families.

### **The landscape is changing.**

You will often hear faculty and staff make comments like, "in my day, my parents never called the university". This statement may be true and there is certainly value in letting students handle situations independently. However, with technological advances and increasing concerns around student safety, parents are more involved than ever in even the minutest details of their students' lives. How many of us have been in meetings with students about something as simple as a broken light bulb and the student is on the phone with their parent or texting for advice while in the conversation? As discouraging as this may seem, it is imperative that we embrace the opportunity to involve parents in the educational experience of their student. The more parents know (within reason) the less likely they are to feel shut out by the university. This brings us to the next important point.

### **Be proactive.**

We know parents are involved and want to know what's happening in

their students' collegiate lives. Instead of waiting for them to call us, being proactive in communicating whenever possible tends to relieve some anxiety for the parents/families and often reduces phone calls and emails to your office. For example, if you have an important housing process coming up, disseminate the information to the parents and families in addition to what is sent to students. This communication may not include as much detail, but should include enough information to bridge the gap between what parents know and what your institution thinks is important for them to know. Promptly sending parents information when a major facility-related event occurs aides in framing your position as well as adding assurance that the matter is being handled properly. You may consider email along with hard copies of publications in the mail, online chat sessions, or targeted phone calls to diversify communication efforts enabling inclusivity of parents from various backgrounds.

### **Involve the student.**

How often has a parent called you to express a concern and you have never heard from the student? Or you meet with a student and a parent face to face, but the parent dominates the conversation? In developing independent thinkers and responsible adults, it may be appropriate to contact the student to inform them that you have spoken to their parent and want to hear from them directly. In many cases, the student has vented to their family members and the family members call the university to express their concerns or seek a solution on behalf of their student. The student may or may not desire the same resolution, so hearing directly from them is imperative to solve the issue in the most beneficial way.

### **Managing expectations.**

Parents and students expect a lot. And with the increasing cost of higher education coupled with growing pressure to perform, those expectations are transposed onto faculty and staff. It is important to communicate early and often about what assistance and services your institution can realistically provide.

### **Go the extra mile.**

When parents call your office, they may have many questions. Some you will know the answer to and others you will not. Parents often get frustrated when they are bounced from one office to another to get the answer to a simple question. It can be very easy to hit the transfer button because an issue

*How do you  
empower students  
when their parents  
have contacted you?  
Tweet and share with  
#empowerstudents  
and tag us  
@NCHO1973*

is not handled by your office, but telling a parent you will research the issue for them and get back with them, will be much appreciated. It gives them one point of contact and creates a feeling that you care about their concern. This connection may minimize future issues as the parent now has an ally to aid in their student's collegiate experience.

### **Be student centered.**

Faculty and staff have the same goal as parents and families: student success. Many times, we design policies and procedures around what would work best for the administrator. However, how would it look if we kept student needs first? Proactively soliciting student and family input gathers invaluable assets that can decrease confusion and make our constituents feel like they have a voice in the everyday matters that affect them on our campuses. This student centered approach puts the focus on the student experience while supporting the needs of parent and family members.

Providing excellent communication and “customer service” to our students and their families should be a pillar on every campus. This doesn't mean that we bend or conform to every demand. This approach can actually be more harmful to students in the long term. First generation students also suffer with this approach as their families may not call the university when a difficult situation arises. They tend to go with the flow and not challenge in the same ways. However, we do have an opportunity to partner with those who are active in their students' lives. Research suggests that this is not a dissipating trend, so effective partnerships should be incorporated into graduate program curriculum and staff training for the best and most effective outcomes.

### **About the Author**

*MarQuita Barker is currently the Interim Director of Residence Life at Elon University. While residence life and housing are her first passions, diversity and inclusion and parent relations are also areas that she thinks are critical to student success.*



Sign up for the first NCHO 5k Fun Run at the Conference check-in and get a shirt the day of the race. The Fun Run will be held on October 13th starting from the hotel at 6am.

### **WOLFPACK WELCOME!**

University Housing at NC State is excited to welcome Andrea Becker to our team as the Assistant Director for Wolf Village. In this role, Andrea will be assisting with building the S.T.A.T.E Village (Second year Transition and Transfer Experience) and developing a Faculty in Residence component for the Village.

Andrea comes to NC State after serving as the Coordinator for Staff Recruitment and Development at UNC-Chapel Hill. Prior to that, Andrea was a Residence Coordinator at Duke University. Andrea is the current Program Chair for SEAHO 2016 which will be held in Raleigh, February 23-26, 2016.