From the Chair:

Hello friends. I suspect you have been thinking of “us” a great deal this winter, or at least our basketball team! Go Orange. I think I have read reference letters from at least 6 alumni so thank you for sending good students our way! In addition, we just completed over 18 practicum site visits and at least half of the supervisors are HED graduates. We can’t thank you enough for continuing to mentor prospective and current students in the higher education/student affairs profession! You are fabulous role models! Students are busy packing and completing the final organizational touches before placement at the ACPA Boston convention. I also am thrilled to be co-presenting with two 2nd year master’s students at ACPA –Cheryl Cobbina and LaShelle Cross-about the challenges and barriers that first generation graduate students face. They facilitated a lively focus group with first generation graduate students in our program and a few others and did a fabulous job teasing out how the lack of traditional cultural and social capital plays itself out in our graduate programs. My interest in this topic really has developed over the past few years with more and more first generation students entering our program (this fall’s class probably is over 60% first generation). Our students have a great deal of insight to offer about how institutional barriers get in the way of both access to and success in graduate school. This area of inquiry is a direct testimony of how much our faculty have learned from the experiences of our diverse students. I am confident that our graduates truly leave with a solidified passion to be advocates for students under-represented and marginalized on our college campuses. Best wishes for a great spring and I look forward to seeing many of you at the reception in Boston!

Friends of Syracuse University Reception at ACPA 2010 Convention

WHEN: Monday, March 22 from 7:30-9:00 P.M.
WHERE: The Dartmouth Room, Boston Marriott Copley Place
HOSTED BY: Thomas V. Wolfe, Senior Vice President and Dean of Student Affairs

On behalf of the Division of Student Affairs & the Higher Education Program, please join us to mix and mingle with Syracuse University students, staff and friends. Light refreshments will be served.
CONFERENCE NEWS:

LeAnne St. Gelais won the Outstanding Graduate Student Award from CSPA-NYS. Christopher Hockey (’05), Syracuse University’s HED alumna, nominated LeAnne by collecting recommendations from Cathy Engstrom, Rocco Fragomeni, and co-workers from SUNY Oswego. Along with the award, LeAnne St. Gelais was appointed as the Graduate Student/New Professional Representative on CSPA’s Executive Board. She writes, “I am so honored and excited to continue my work with this amazing organization!”

Becky Daniels and Michael Kavulic will present at the 2010 ACPA Convention in Boston, MA. The Standing Committee on disability is sponsoring their presentation, Encourage Advocacy: Empowering Students with Differing Abilities. Their presentation will explore how institutions of higher education continue to be impacted by such policies as the 1990 Americans with Disabilities Act.

Cheryl Cobbina and LaShelle Cross will be co-presenters with Cathy Engstrom at the 2010 ACPA Convention in Boston, MA. Their program is titled, First generation graduate students: Barriers to and promoting their success. The program examines how our graduate programs and accompanying practical experiences might be reinforcing a sorting process by social class.

Matt Sheehan was on the CSPA-NYS 2009 conference planning committee and a member of the logistics subcommittee.

REFLECTIONS FROM FIRST YEAR STUDENTS:

By Kori Johnson

Summing up the magnitude of my experience in the Higher Education Learning Community is difficult, because each day I reflect on a new way my peers and professors impact my life and learning. When I started the program, I questioned whether I truly belonged back in the classroom. I graduated from my undergraduate institution six years earlier and felt unsure of my academic ability and insecure about making friends.

The first pivotal community building experience was the HED ropes course in September. We had only known each other for about a week; so on the bus ride to Cornell University we mostly chattered about school related topics. The ride back, however, vastly differed. An outsider would have guessed we had all known each other for years. The day transformed our cohort.

We started with the low ropes group challenge in the morning to break down barriers like personal space and begin working together as a team. With 13 people on a tiny cube of wood, we quickly became close! As obstacles continued to arise, we all shared ideas for how to best accomplish the feat ahead, failing and accomplishing together. After lunch, we took part in personal challenges through the high ropes course. Before that September day, I never would have found the courage to participate in any of the high ropes elements. Surrounded by my cohort, though, I felt confident and inspired to push myself. While I cheered them on as they were launched into the air by a team of students and faculty, I made my own leap, knowing I was part of something special and unique to a learning community environment.

As the weeks progressed, we have faced stress and sickness and felt overwhelmed and anxious—we have dealt with it, though, all together. Unlike other graduate programs we do not have to deal with competition, we genuinely care about each other’s successes. From our exam study groups and supporting each other’s GA events to celebrating a classmate’s birthday, we epitomize a community. The late night phone calls, e-mails, and FaceBook chats constantly remind me that I am never without a support system. With most of the semester behind me, my insecurities are a distant memory. I no longer question whether I belong back in the classroom, because I know I do. I owe my confidence to the support and the encouragement of my cohort and professors. I am blown away by how much I have gained from this experience and I am excited to see what the future brings!

Ropes Course 2009

In This Picture:

Rocco Fragomeni, Michael Kavulic, Kori Johnson, Emma McKinley, and Rachel Smith.
REFLECTIONS FROM FIRST YEAR STUDENTS:

By Rocco Fragomeni

As I moved to Syracuse to begin the Higher Education Program, I found myself feeling the same sense of freedom and accomplishment I felt four years earlier when I started my undergraduate work. Having just graduated from SUNY Oswego, a small state school North of Syracuse, I also felt the sensation of slightly warmer temperatures. Nonetheless, I was anxious to start and curious to see how my story would unfold.

With any transition to a new place, amidst the excitement I experienced some challenges. To mention a couple: financial stress (like most recent college grads and graduate students), my first apartment (desperate for repairs), noisy neighbors (with nasty tempers), and my windshield annihilated by a 15 foot tree branch on a rainy night! I could not help but feel greater forces trying to send me a sign as all this occurred in my first week at Syracuse. Classes had not even started! I thought, if graduate school is everything mentioned at the open house and more, how would I manage school and everything else that life (or a tree) throws at me?

That was mid-August. Now, at the end of my first semester, with the overwhelming amount of support from my classmates, colleagues, and professors, my concerns have subsided. This support does not stop at the classroom door, which has impressed me the most. Whether we go to lunch or form a study group, the students in the Higher Education program support, care, and assist each other. I can honestly say, I feel like I can handle any challenge put before me!

The same theme resonates through my graduate assistantship in the Office of Residence Life. I advise the Residence Hall Association. Hence, I work very closely with the Executive Board, made up of nine undergraduate students, who also support each other and me. Having the opportunity to apply what I learn in the classroom to the field, helps me relate better to the students and understand the coursework, as well as make for an amazing experience that I look forward to everyday.

Winter break is almost here, and, though I do not want my time at Syracuse to go by too fast, I anxiously await for what next semester brings and the continuation of great friendships and memorable moments.

ACHIEVEMENTS:

Suzy Nelson—defended her dissertation entitled, High-And Low-Achieving Fraternity Environments at A Selective Institution: Their Influence on Members’ Binge Drinking and GPA, on December 18, 2009.

Ashley Hanry—led two journalism sessions during the “Writing for Ourselves” workshop on Nov. 7 at the Dunbar Community Center. Faculty and students organized this writing program for middle and high school students.

Becky Daniels—After two years as an Assistant Residence Director in the Office of Residence, I have recently accepted the position of Coordinator of Communications for the Office of Residence Life. In this new position I will handle the marketing and publication materials for the department, as well as, work closely with staff recruitment, selection and training. Becky says, “I am very excited about the move and will transition into the new role soon!”

Raphael Richard—received the “Graduate Black/Hispanic Scholarship” from Syracuse University.

Parker Gallo—wrote a new programming model for the Office of Residence Life at Onondaga Community College. Both the Office of Residence Life and the programming model have been nominated for the Paragon Award at OCC, which awards for innovation to improve educational processes with creative approaches. Recipients of the award will be announced in mid-December. Parker also co-authored an article

PICTURED AT LEFT: Back Row (L-R): Rocco Fragomeni, Kori Johnson, Lauren Hannahs, Michael Dedes, Emma McKinley.

Front Row (L-R): Justin McDowell, Christina Sutphen
By Jennifer Sanborn

The Women’s Education and Leadership Fund (WELFund) is a legacy program of Hartford College for Women (HCW) at the University of Hartford. WELFund offers grants, programs, and scholarships that serve as catalysts for women’s personal and professional growth. The WELFund board of directors and staff steward the remaining endowment of a two-year women’s college founded in 1933 as “Mount Holyoke in Hartford,” and take equally serious the stewardship of the institution’s mission to serve women in all their diversity.

WELFund’s founding in 2006 represents a significant turn from a tumultuous history of institutional neighbors turned institutional partners (HCWR and the University of Hartford merged in 1991), and the eventual closing of a much-loved area college. With 62 projects funded, nearly half a million dollars invested in the education, and leadership of women at the University, and once-disenfranchised HCW alumnae returning to connect to this legacy and one another, there are lessons to be learned in WELFund’s launch that are of benefit to all mission-centered programs in this time of economic and societal change. I want to share just one of these lessons.

Stories are at the center of human life and human-designed institutions and organizations: listen to them and share them often.

When I arrived at the University of Hartford in August 2006, I had only my job description—a single sheet of paper—from which to launch a major University’s initiative. As I awaited the arrival of a computer and phone to my empty office, I visited the institution’s archives and poured through boxes of personal notes, program bulletins, and photographs from Hartford College for Women, the college from which this legacy was to be created.

I took notes, wrote key words and themes, and gathered names of individuals who had shaped the life of the college. The spirit of the college began to emerge from these archival stories, and this spirit was further depicted and articulated as I went out into the community to meet graduates, faculty, staff, and trustees.

Simultaneously, I sought out members of the University community to ask for their stories—what works well for women, what changes are needed, what are the greatest opportunities for impact in the lives of women across the institution. WELFund’s grants, programs, and scholarships represent the intersection of the Hartford College stories with those of the University, and I have twice collaborated with a student to depict this on film (www.hartford.edu/welf). Having brought together the best of the past and present, we began to tell a story of a new future.

This future has recently taken an unexpected and fascinating turn with the announcement that Dr. Lynn Pasquerella, provost of the University of Hartford, has been named president-elect of Mount Holyoke College, her alma mater. Mount Holyoke was the original founding institution of what was to become Hartford College for Women. On the one hand, Lynn’s departure is the loss of a friend, a colleague, and a critical advocate for WELFund. On the other hand, it is a “full circle” opportunity to connect the legacy of this college with its founder through partnership initiatives. We inherited the stories of the past, we have shaped the stories of the present, and we are happily preparing to write the next chapter for women’s education.

- Jennifer Sanborn, MS’96, Higher Education, Student Affairs Administration, worked for ten years at Wheaton College in Norton, MA in residence life, service-learning, and multicultural affairs before becoming the founding director of The Women’s Education and Leadership Fund. As a recipient of the M. Eunice Hilton memorial Scholarship, she celebrates this legacy of the Student Dean Program at Syracuse, and she stands on the shoulders of the women of this program with deep gratitude and affection.
MY INVOLVEMENT IN CSPA

By LeAnne St. Gelais

As a first-year graduate student, I remember not really knowing what to do about professional affiliations and conferences. I paid my dues to the National Association of Student Personnel Administrators and the American College Personnel Association because they were the largest professional organizations, and I occasionally read the e-mails and the articles sent to my home. When it came time for the national conferences I felt like many students-too busy with my job and school and astounded by the cost. Ultimately, I made the choice not to attend.

My second year, I met a few people in the College Student Personnel Association of New York State, the state division of ACPA, who convinced me to join. I headed to my first conference this past October, despite the high cost and missing a day of work and school. I tried to go into the conference, though, open-minded. Let me tell you, the conference was incredible and I am so glad I joined! CSPA’s conference “got my feet wet,” since it was smaller than a national conference. The guest speakers and sessions were informative and gave me a lot to think about and bring back to my school work, assistantship, and practicum.

I thoroughly enjoyed the opportunity to network with these brilliant people in the student affairs field. Being surrounded by professionals at all different levels committed to being the best at their jobs confirmed for me the professional I aspire towards. Everyone was extremely friendly and eager to share stories about their institutions, as well as, hear about others. In the matter of a day, I had a variety of robust discussions from learning about different higher education graduate programs to new online admissions initiatives and potential job openings!

I assure you, the conference was worth the money and the time to now feel even more connected to the field of student affairs and expanding the number of professionals I can call on in the future. I strongly encourage students to really think about the benefits of these memberships as you continue to develop professionally. Heading into my first national conference this Spring, I feel more confident and prepared knowing what to expect and look forward to seeing some familiar faces! If you have any questions please do not hesitate to ask! I would love to share my positive experience in CSPA with you!

Ropes Course 2009

BACK ROW (L-R): Rachel S., Rocco F., Joel H., Tim E., Michael K., Sam K., Trevor W., Justin M., Randy D.

MIDDLE: Dawn J., Kori J., Emma M., Clare J., Michael D., Christina S., Raphael R., Kyle R., Lauren H., Kerry F., Staci W.

FRONT: Bethany P., Jen A., Cathy E., Sudeshna M, Ashley H., Amanda J.
Bill Thieke (Ph.D.’94) After spending the last 10 years responsible for Instructional Technology, Bill was recently promoted to Director of Support Services for Information Technology at Le Moyne College. He is now responsible for the Technology Helpdesk, Classroom Technology and Support, Instructional Technology, and Hardware and Software support operations.

Bryan M. Custer (MS ‘08) has taken a new position at Arizona State University/Downtown Phoenix Campus. Bryan is a Community Coordinator, working directly with four residential colleges: Nursing, Cronkite, Barrett the Honors College and Explorers. He is also advising RHA, NRHH, First Year Advisory Board and working closely with the Director of Student Engagement to build the residential experience on the downtown campus, as it is only in its second year.

Parvez (Peji) Khan (MS ‘75) is currently assigned to Abuja, Nigeria, where he serves as the Senior Human Resources officer for the US Department of State.

Sally Barton Dingee (MS ‘01) and husband, Dean, welcomed a son, Connor Patrick, on February 21, 2009. He joins big sister, Anna, 2 years old. Sally works at Monroe Community College in Rochester, New York.

JoLynn (Hamilton) Kennedy (MS ‘04) and John Kennedy welcomed their first child, Margaret (Maggie) Muriel Kennedy on October 6, 2009. Maggie was 8 lbs 13.5 oz. and 19 inches long. Maggie was welcomed home by Stella, the family’s three year old Great Dane. JoLynn works as the Facilities Events Coordinator at Quinnipiac University in Hamden, Connecticut.

Lauren Taraska (MS ‘09) received a job as the Coordinator of Student Organizations & Campus Activities at SUNY Geneseo. Lauren is also engaged with a wedding date set for June 11, 2011.

Vanessa Dillman Green (‘05) recently accepted the volunteer post of Marlboro College Alumni Council President and member of the Board of Trustees. She continues in her role as Director of Higher Education and Diversity at the Center for Coastal Margin Observation and Prediction at Oregon Health & Science University, and would have great interest in hosting a HED student for a practicum. Please e-mail Vanessa at: greenv@stccmop.org if you are interested!

Thomas V. Wolfe (‘02) has been elected as a member of the Board of Trustees at Lycoming College in Williamsport, PA, where he received his BA in 1978.

Keith E. Shults (‘07) and Ashley M. Anderson were recently engaged to be married in the Magic Kingdom at Walt Disney World in Florida.

Heather Strine (‘06) married Brandon Patterson on October 10, 2009. Heather is taking Patterson as her last name and her email is now pattersonhj@gmail.com. Heather still works at James Madison University and is living in Buena Vista, VA with Brandon.

Dorado M. Kinney (‘96) Obtained a new position as the Dean of Student Services at Austin Community College, Eastview Campus.