From the Editors
To all CSP Alumni,

It has been our privilege to provide the first ever CSP Alumni Online Newsletter, a document which will hopefully help keep graduates of the program current with the latest events, news, and activities taking place in the world of College Student Personnel. This newsletter will provide updates in faculty or staff changes, university news, CSPA news and alumni updates. The purpose is to keep those of you, who have helped make this program what it is, up to date so you can see how the program is continuing to grow, making strides, and producing alumni that are capable of being high quality student affairs professionals.

Sincerely,
Andrew Watson, Lori Wineland & Aaron Jones

What’s Been Happening in Latest CSP Events?

Heart Walk
The CSPA has collected funds and participated in the annual Heart Walk held at Arkansas Tech on Oct. 24, 2009. The goal of the Heart Walk is to bring public awareness to heart healthy lifestyles while raising funds for the American Heart Association.

CSP and Fall Fest
Fall Fest at Arkansas Tech brings out many organizations to enjoy the lovely autumn weather on the Chambers Lawn. 23 campus organizations created booths and competed for funds for their individual organization. Booths were judged on creativity and student participation. We are proud to announce that CSPA won first-prize for the third consecutive year, which was worth $500! Second-place of $250 went to H.P.E.W.S. while ROTC and the Pre-Med Club tied for third and each earned $125.
Dr. Mary Gunter Named New Dean For Graduate College

Dr. Mary Gunter became the new dean of the Arkansas Tech Graduate College as of July 1, 2009. Gunter has been a part of the Tech family since 1998. Prior to becoming Dean for Graduate College, she served as head of Tech’s Center for Leadership and Learning from 2002-09.

Gunter succeeds Dr. Eldon Clary, who became the Dean of the Arkansas Tech College of Education on July 1.

“As we consider the future, I look forward to providing the leadership to expand the offerings in the graduate programs through our various colleges on campus,” said Gunter. “The expansion of graduate programs will be based on high-quality offerings that will ultimately impact the quality of life for our graduates as well as the quality contributions our graduates will make in a global society.”

Joe Watkins Elected President of CSPA

Joe Watkins has been elected as the new president of the CSPA organization. Watkins, who hails from Hamburg, N.Y. received his mathematics degree from Buffalo State in 2006. He currently oversees Baswell Hall on the Tech campus and also works with Greek Like and Student Organization.

Below is a letter from our new CSPA president:

Greetings Alumni,

I hope this finds you excelling in Student Affairs, and I just want to let you know what CSPA is doing and what the future may hold. Alumni are a key component for not only our organization, but for all graduate students in our program. We look to our alumni for leadership, experience, and guidance.

As of now, the CSPA is looking to reach out and be more inclusive with the graduates of our program. We have also participated in and, again, won Fall Fest this year. We have a cookout scheduled for January. For the future, we are looking to really give back to our fellow students by having “brown bags” a couple times a month. We are looking to have monthly socials, which will allow us to get to know one another outside of the classroom. We are looking to our fellow students to tell us what they want or are looking for from CSPA. Overall, we are looking to increase CSPA’s membership and looking to give back to not only our fellow students, but to the program as well. Please feel free to contact me if you have any information or advice you would like to share with the CSP students.

Sincerely,

Joe Watkins
CSPA President
CSP Alumni Spotlight: Kyle Harris

Ten years ago, a prosperous future in student affairs may not have been predicted by those who knew Kyle Harris or even by Kyle Harris, himself. However, upon receiving his master’s degree in College Student Personnel from Arkansas Tech in 2007, Harris accepted a position as an Academic Advisor in the Student Advisement & Career Planning office on the campus of the University of Arkansas-Fort Smith.

Some of his duties at UAFS include degree evaluation, registration assistance, graduation audits for all associate degrees, career planning for pre-professional and undecided students and other academic advising on all degree plans offered at UAFS. Harris is also responsible for handling the university compliance for all students required to take remedial coursework. Furthermore, his department also sees transfer students, returning students, and students on academic warning, probation and/or suspension.

Harris would be quick to point out that there is no such thing as a daily routine, however. “There is no such thing as day-to-day here,” said Harris with a laugh. “Everyday is a little bit different.”

In addition to all the duties previously listed, Harris has recently started a program at UAFS similar to the Bridge to Excellence freshmen mentoring program used at Arkansas Tech.

“Currently, I’m running a pilot program with over 350 freshmen and over 40 mentors from across the campus that I have trained to help with the transition from high school and/or the real world to university life.”

Harris is excited to see the GPA and return rates for freshmen who have been involved with their mentors versus those who did not participate in the program, which just started this fall.

The passion that Harris shares for his students and higher education has, without question, allowed him to be successful in endeavors during the early portion of his career. However, Harris will notably admit figuring out what his career was going to be wasn’t always an easy choice. Because he is so comfortable in his role now, it would be hard for anyone to see or realize, as well.

“What many people don’t know is that I was a college drop out for four years,” said Harris.

The hiatus from college was a key factor in Harris’ decision to pursue a career in higher education, however. Harris, who began his collegiate campaign at Idaho State, where he did not live on campus and admittedly did not get involved in campus life, started to determine that a career in higher education was imminent while attending Arkansas Tech.

“I was a senior history major at Tech and was in my second year of being a resident assistant. When I came to Tech, I became involved in Residence Life and intramurals,” said Harris. “I made life-long friends, had a 0.5 higher grade point average and I graduated.”

Upon graduation with a history degree in 2005, Harris sought guidance from his resident director, David Stevens, about plans for post-graduation. Stevens, who is a CSP alum himself, mentioned the CSP program to Harris.
CSP Alumni Spotlight: Kyle Harris

“I felt like it was a calling for me to stay involved in higher education and help students realize not to go down the same path I went down, being a college dropout or ‘stopout.’”

Self-experience and the passion for student-affairs makes it easy for Harris to preach to his clients about getting involved early in campus activities and garnering academic, career, financial aid and counseling assistance to help them be successful college students.

Now, Harris, who plans to go on to get a doctorate degree, would potentially like to teach in a college student personnel or higher education administration program. He noted he can also see himself becoming a “director of a larger institution’s Advisement Center, a Vice Chancellor of Enrollment Management or even a Dean of Students” in the future.

There is no question that Harris’ master’s degree from Tech has helped him so far in his young career, and he is quick to point out such a thing.

“My CSP degree has helped me tremendously,” Harris said. “I brought in a lot of knowledge of the big picture of a university when I came here [UAFS] and that has helped with the development of my pilot program of the freshmen mentoring program.”

Harris has also had the opportunity to chair a committee that wrote the division of Enrollment Management’s Mission Statement.

He went on to say that knowing different student development theories and counseling theories have helped tremendously in his job. However, he also noted that knowing there is no such thing as a black or white answer a lot of times in higher education can keep one employed in the field from going “crazy.”

As Harris continues to gain experience in the field of higher education, he tends to lend similar advice to those just graduating from the CSP program and those entering the program. It can be summed up in one word—passion.

“You have to be passionate about higher education,” said Harris. “You have to be passionate about your students. There are plenty of days that are not easy, but higher education is a job of high reward. In student affairs, there are so many students’ lives that you can touch in so many different ways and with the training and knowledge gained in the CSP program, you have the ability to have a positive impact on hundreds and thousands of students whether it is in residence life, academic advising, student activities, or even sports information. Every day is an opportunity to have an impact.”

Harris is one of many great ambassadors for Arkansas Tech and the CSP program, and his professionalism and early success speak wonders for how proper education and preparation can help those be successful as professional student affairs administrators. It should be noted, however, that the responsibility for those who pursue a career in higher education is of great magnitude and it’s not something that Harris takes lightly. It’s something that he wants others to understand as they move forward with their educations and careers.

“It is a humbling thought when I think about how great a responsibility has been laid upon all of us who graduate and stay in higher education,” said Harris. “I hope each of us realize that we have the opportunity to have a direct impact on students’ success in higher education and, ultimately, in life and treat it with the respect it deserves.”
UNIVERSITY NEWS

• Arkansas Tech University Celebrates 100 Years
Tech celebrated the centennial with homecoming on October 17, 2009. The Wonder Boys enjoyed a 63-20 pounding over fellow Gulf South Conference member West Georgia. Amidst the homecoming atmosphere were many fun-filled activities which included tailgating, live music in the plaza, inflatable games, food and more. The evening ended with a success...and a bang of fireworks.

• Centennial Plaza Dedicated
Tech dedicated Centennial Plaza, a pedestrian and tailgating area near Thone Stadium, during the homecoming festivities on October 17, 2009. The plaza was named in recognition of Arkansas Tech’s 100-year anniversary.

• New Building to Open in January 2010
The Arkansas Tech campus will open a new building in January of 2010. The site will be the new home for the College of Business and Academic Advising. The four-story facility is to be named Centenary Hall in recognition of being completed during the 100th year of Arkansas Tech University.

• Arkansas Tech Campuses are now Tobacco Free
The new Tobacco Free policy began August 1, 2009. This is one year earlier than the state-mandated ban on smoking on Arkansas’ public-supported university campuses, according to the Clean Air on Campus Act of 2009. Tech prohibits smoking and dipping or chewing tobacco. The Board of Trustees unanimously voted to adopt the policy during their May 2009 meeting.

LATEST CSP INFORMATION
• Enrollment in the CSP program is at 92 students this Fall, up from 69 students in the Spring.
• New curriculum is now in place. Our graduate students now have choices for electives.
• A new course has been added to the required courses for CSP, which is Administration in CSP (CSP 6143).
• The Fall semester has 21 sections of the freshmen transition course, CSP 1013. Most of the sections are being taught by 13 practicum students and/or CSP graduate assistants.
• The CSP faculty has changed the grading scale, effective at the beginning of the semester. In the past, some students have been dissatisfied with earning an “A” grade for their hard work, while other students earn the same “A” grade through minimal efforts. Therefore, the grading scale has been modified to challenge students to put forth more effort as well as to reward students for their hard work.
• A narrated orientation has been posted on the CSP web site for students who may be interested in our program, as well as for current CSP students to enhance their knowledge of the program.

LEAVE YOUR MARK
• In coordination with the dedication, Tech Development Office has created an opportunity for Tech Alumni and Friends to leave a lasting memory at Centennial Plaza. You can purchase a personalized brick for $100.00 (with 3 lines of text up to 15 characters per line). The bricks will be placed on the walk in Centennial Plaza as a permanent tribute to those who purchase them. You may contact the Development Office at (479)968-0400.

CSP ALUMNI UPDATES
What have our alumni been up to lately?
• Sabrina Billey, a 2009 CSP graduate, has been working as Resident Director at Texas State University-San Marcos since July and loves it. Congrats, Sabrina!
• Brandie Soar, 2009 CSP graduate, married Jason Griffin on Nov. 16, 2009 in a lovely Florida ceremony. She now works in the Admissions Office at Arkansas Tech as a Project-Program Specialist/Admissions Officer.

Let us hear from you! Share with classmates about promotions, marriages, and more. Contact us at the College Student Personnel office at (479)964-3251.

Remember to keep in touch with the Tech Alumni Office at www.techties.atu.edu.