Greetings to all. With our conference only a few weeks away, I want to say that I am looking forward to seeing many of you in Park City. Please don’t forget that the early registration deadline is this Sunday, September 17. For the first time you will be able to register and pay for your registration online (go to www.rmair.org and follow the link “Online Orders”). For those of you who will not be attending the meeting, you can use the same form to renew your RMAIR membership. For only $20, you can keep your membership alive in one of the best regional IR associations in the country.

If you have registered for the conference, or if you have looked at the preliminary program, you know that there is a whole stable of great pre-conference workshops available this year. This is possible because Gary Levy, our 2006 Park City program chair, was able to obtain a Building Institutional Research Capacity (BIRC) grant for RMAIR. This grant is for made available through the Association for Institutional Research (AIR), with support from the United States Department of Education and the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES). The purpose of the grant is to support institutional research professional organizations “in an effort to enhance the quality of institutional research in postsecondary education and provide professional development opportunities to individuals in the area of institutional research in the United States.” Given that this is a great chance to receive some valuable training at a minimal fee, I encourage each of you to take advantage of this opportunity.

It was announced during the RMAIR special interest group meeting (SIG) at the AIR Forum that RMAIR’s 2007 meeting will be in Reno, Nevada. Serge Herzog will serve as the local arrangements chair, and Kari Coburn will serve as program chair. I have been in conversation with Serge about local
arrangements, and it looks like the meeting will take place in one of the casinos in central Reno. This makes traveling to the meeting convenient and affordable. Serge will be contacting restaurants in the Tahoe area with the idea of holding our annual dinner at the lake. Thank you Kari and Serge for taking on the responsibility for the 2007 conference. We know you’ll put together a great meeting.

The nominations for vice president have closed, and Brian Shuppy should be opening up the election shortly. The results will be announced in Park City. This is my last Intercom before I pass the torch to Sue Koller, your incoming president. It has been an honor to serve you as president this year. Thank you. I wish you all the best and look forward to our annual meeting in Park City.

Letter from the Editor
Wendy Kappy

Greetings RMAIRians. I hope this finds you well. My apologies for the late arrival of this issue of Panorama. I know this summer and fall have been very busy here at the University of New Mexico, and I imagine this is the case for many of you in your own institutions.

I would like to welcome and thank Linda Heiss, of the Nevada System of Higher Education, for her new role as the Nevada state reporter. Tracy Viselli, of Western Nevada Community College, did a great job recruiting Linda to take over this role after Patricia Ann Casagranda resigned.

There is currently an opening for the Colorado state reporter position. Steve Chambers, who has been our Colorado state reporter for the past few years, has left Colorado and taken a position at Coconino Community College (CCC) in Flagstaff, AZ (see Transitions section). Thank you Steve for your great state reports. Steve, along with our other RMAIRians from Colorado, have been living through some pretty interesting times watching the intersection between Colorado state politics and higher education. Steve’s reports have always been informative and refreshing. If you are a member from Colorado interested in taking over as state reporter, please contact me at wkappy@unm.edu.

One issue introduced during the RMAIR special interest group meeting at the AIR forum in Chicago, and which will be on the agenda for our luncheon meeting in Park City, has to do with setting term limits on the length of time the RMAIR secretary/treasurer and Panorama editor serve. Rather than attempting to influence you on this issue, I would like to encourage you to think about the pros and cons of setting limits and to bring these ideas into our discussion in October.

I hope you all have a productive and sane fall.

RMAIR Annual Fall Conference is Fast Approaching
October 18-20
A Note from the Organizers

The Park City committee is looking forward to providing you an exceptional event that you don’t want to miss! A variety of workshops on Wednesday will be taught on site, as well as over twenty concurrent presentations. Afterwards, there will be time to explore historic Park City and dine with the renowned comedian Keith Stubbs. We have secured several sponsors and negotiated excellent rates, so we know
you’ll be impressed with the value. So, register today before the early registration deadline ends September 17th. The rmair.org site includes the program, online registration form, and hotel accommodations. See you there!

Gary Levy, Program Chair
Brian Shuppy, Local Arrangements

Early Registration Deadline September 17th

Please note that the early registration deadline for the Park City meeting is September 17th, only a few days away. You will find registration materials on the following page on RMAIR’s website: www.rmair.org/page.asp?page=1246. You will also find a link to hotel reservation information.

When registering, please note that some meals are included with the registration fee and some are not. Since the on-site restaurant will be CLOSED, meal purchases are highly recommended. If you are attending the Wednesday workshops, breakfast, breaks and lunch for participants and guests may be purchased for an additional $40 fee. If you recall, conference registration is now very simple with the online registration service.

If you have any local arrangements questions or concerns, please feel free to contact Valerie Stegeman by email at vstegeman@weber.edu, or by telephone at (801) 626-7437.

Minutes from the RMAIR SIG at the AIR Forum
Chicago, Illinois - May 16, 2006
by Ellen McGregor

Wendy Kappy opened the meeting with introductions. Gary Levy, program chair of the 2006 RMAIR conference in Park City, Utah invited our participation. (We found out at the Forum luncheon that RMAIR is a recipient of a 2006 BIRC Grant to support the conference). The total cost of attendance (registration, dues, and banquet) is $159 and will be payable by credit card on-line. The dues also can be paid on our web site. Dues for 2006-2007 are $20.00. The 2007 conference will be held in Reno, Nevada. Based on RMAIR’s conference rotation schedule, the 2008 conference should be held in Montana, but that will be discussed on our annual conference.

Ellen McGregor gave the treasurer’s report. We have a balance of $15,474.34, housed at the Wells Fargo Bank. When Ellen became secretary/treasurer and received the funds from Joe Curtin, it was decided that the funds should be held at a bank serving our region. Currently, Wendy Kappy, Brian Shuppy, Wendy Miley and Ellen have access to the checking account and debit cards. At the fall conference, Sue Koller will replace Brian and Wendy Miley on the accounts. We also have a CD and a savings account.

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Wendy Kappy, who also serves as Panorama (our electronic newsletter) editor, acknowledged the state reporters: Ellen McGregor (AZ), Steve Chambers (CO), Archie George (ID), Jim Rimpau (MT), Carol Bernhard (NM), Valerie Stegeman (UT), and Lisa Muller (WY). The Nevada state reporter position is currently vacant.
There was a lively discussion about the length of terms for two executive board positions that currently have no term limits according to the by-laws. These are the secretary/treasurer and Panorama editor positions. Ellen has been secretary/treasurer for five years. Wendy Kappy has been Panorama editor for the past five years as well. In addition, our listserv manager, Fred Lillibridge, has been handling that task for over ten years (and is happy to continue in this role). There is a need to codify the secretary/treasurer and Panorama editor positions. By having specific terms, there would be more opportunities for service among RMAIR’s membership. The exact length of the term is open for discussion and the by-law change will be discussed on the next RMAIR Conference. With the establishment of bank accounts (previously the funds tended to be housed in the college foundation of the treasurer), the changing of the treasurer would be less of a hassle than in prior year. The second by-law change concerned the schedule for dues payment. It needs to be tied to the conference registration otherwise, some institutions would not cover the costs. The meeting was adjourned at 5:40.


News from the States

ARIZONA
State Reporter: Ellen McGregor (Pima Community College)

Three Universities Cooperation on New ASU Campus in Phoenix

Arizona's three state universities are coming together with private industry in a massive collaboration at the new downtown Phoenix Biomedical Campus. The universities, which tend to have a competitive nature, are putting their differences aside to join in the dynamic new venture evolving in the heart of the city. Northern Arizona University's allied health program and University of Arizona's pharmacy program may join Arizona State University's nursing and biomedical informatics programs and UA's medical school on the Biomedical Campus at Seventh and Van Buren streets. Already on the campus are the Translational Genomics Research Institute and the International Genomics Consortium. And, just across the street is Michelle Hanna's P-Bio Accelerator, which houses a handful of biotech startups.

ASU Opens New Campus in Downtown Phoenix

ASU opened the doors to its Downtown Phoenix campus on August 15, 2006. Nearly 4,000 students were preregistered to take at least one course at the downtown campus, and 600 staff and faculty relocated downtown to their new offices and classrooms throughout the summer. The campus, situated in the heart of downtown Phoenix, provides an academically rigorous university experience in a vibrant, urban campus that is integral to the success of the community. To open the first phase, ASU relocated several colleges downtown, including:

- The College of Nursing & Healthcare Innovation
• The College of Public Programs (comprising the schools of Public Affairs, Social Work and Community Resources and Development)
• University College, which serves the university's exploratory majors and working adults.

ASU’s Walter Cronkite School of Journalism and Mass Communication and Eight/KAET-TV, Phoenix’s PBS affiliate, will move downtown in 2008. The location of the campus enhances students’ lives and college experiences. Unique to the ASU Downtown Phoenix campus is its geographic proximity to a full range of government, media, nonprofit, legal, medical, and business venues, where students can gain internships, receive mentoring, network with professionals, or obtain a full-time or part-time job while going to school. By 2020, the campus will have 15,000 students across 20 acres in downtown Phoenix. Once the campus is fully built, it will integrate academic, public, private, and residential development in a diverse and modern living and learning environment.

ASU had 3 other campuses, including the Tempe Campus, which last fall was the largest single campus based on enrollment in the US.

**Projected Increase in Freshman Hispanic Enrollment at UA**

The freshman class of 2006 has moved into residence halls at The University of Arizona, and preliminary enrollment analysis shows that this class will be as large as last year’s record-setting class, but more ethnically diverse than ever. In particular, Hispanic student enrollment has jumped, and the number of top Hispanic scholars has doubled in one year.

Approximately 6,000 students have moved in to the 21 residence halls on the UA campus. Each residence hall is filled to capacity this year. The dramatic increase in minority student enrollment is due mostly to a drastic jump in Hispanic students, which is expected to increase by about 20 percent over last year. Among top Hispanic scholars, UA is expecting the number of National Hispanic Scholars to double in one year, from 25 students to 50.

**New Laws and Ballot Measures**

One of the new laws in Arizona is that each classroom (including community colleges and universities) must have an American flag and copies of the Bill of Rights and the U.S. Constitution. Sometime between now and July 2007, Maricopa Community College has to come up with as many as 1,220 American flags made in the United States to comply with this state law. The cost would be $18,300 if early cost estimates of $15 are accurate, district spokeswoman Nicole Greason said. That's just for the red, white, and blue fabric alone. The Bill of Rights and the Constitution also must be posted alongside the flag in every classroom, according to HB 2583 recently passed by the legislature.

Several ballot measures may also impact higher education in Arizona. One measure calls for having English as the official language. Another relates to marriage and domestic partners and could be a problem for schools that recognize such partnerships. The public program eligibility would require that in-district tuition or in-state tuition applies not just to residents as currently handled but to legal residents or citizens. This would also apply to participation in adult basic education programs. There are court challenges to some of these measures.
COLORADO
State Reporter: Vacant

Colorado lost its esteemed state reporter, Steve Chambers, to Arizona. If you are interested in the Colorado state reporter position, please contact Wendy Kappy, Panorama editor, at wkappy@unm.edu.

IDAHO
State Reporter: Archie George (University of Idaho)

No report.

MONTANA
State Reporter: Jim Rimpau (Montana State University-Bozeman)

No report.

NEVADA
State Reporter: Linda Heiss (Nevada System of Higher Education)

Admissions

Nevada's Board of Regents approved a recommendation to move up the effective date for increased admissions standards from fall 2010 to fall 2008 for the University of Nevada, Reno and the University of Nevada, Las Vegas. The minimum GPA required for admission will be raised from 2.75 to 3.0. SAT or ACT scores may also be used when considering a student’s admissions qualifications if the GPA standards are not met. Beginning in fall 2007, NSHE staff will conduct a study of the impact of the new criteria that will determine if a disproportionate impact on minorities occurs.

Data Security

In light of recent security issues and theft of data in other states, NSHE is developing a data security policy for Board of Regents consideration in October. The storing and maintaining of sensitive data makes colleges and universities prime targets for identity theft. With continually emerging technology, institutions of higher education must have sufficient security procedures. The proposed data security policy states that “each institution must develop and maintain policies, standards, and/or procedures that describe and require appropriate steps to protect sensitive data that is maintained on an institution's computing devices or transmitted across a public network such as the Internet.”

Data Sharing

The Nevada System of Higher Education and the P-16 Council have been working on establishing data sharing with the Nevada Department of Education. The ability to do statewide longitudinal analysis would benefit institutions and the NSHE in both policy considerations and improving student performance. The success in college depends, in a large part, on the course selection and performance of students while in high school. Analysis of course-taking patterns in high school, as compared to performance in college courses, provides a valuable tool in setting admissions standards, course
placement policies, and advising. Improving the performance of students at the college level, as measured by performance in individual courses, retention, and graduation rates, are all directly related to the courses taken in high school. For this reason, many states are beginning to conduct longitudinal analysis on students through high school and college to determine the course taking patterns that are most likely to lead to success. The Washoe County School District and the University of Nevada, Reno have done studies such as this for math and English performance as well as AP course placement and advising, and the Nevada System of Higher Education would like to do the same statewide.

**NSHE Integrated Information System, "iNtegrate" Project**

The NSHE is in the process of considering proposals for the implementation of a web-based integrated information system. It will include financial, human resources, and student administration applications. Responses have been submitted and are being reviewed by several teams including Functional, Technology, and Data Administration. It is expected that by the end of the year a vendor will be selected.

**NEW MEXICO**
**State Reporter: Carol Bernhard (University of New Mexico)**

No report.

**UTAH**
**State Reporter: Valerie Stegeman  (Weber State University)**

No report.

**WYOMING**
**State Reporter: Lisa Muller (University of Wyoming)**

As I reported previously, the Wyoming legislative session will have long lasting impact for higher education in Wyoming over the next few years. Starting with fall semester 2006, the Hathaway Scholarship Program begins at community colleges, technical schools, and at the University of Wyoming. The goal of the scholarship program is to increase the percentage of Wyoming high school graduates entering college immediately after graduation.

For additional information on the Hathaway scholarship funding examples please go to:

University of Wyoming: [http://www.uwyo.edu/hathaway/eligibility.asp](http://www.uwyo.edu/hathaway/eligibility.asp)

Laramie Community College example: [http://www.lccc.wy.edu/hathaway/awarding.php](http://www.lccc.wy.edu/hathaway/awarding.php)

University and Community College employees received salary funding increases of approximately 3% overall and additional funding to maintain family insurance coverage at 85% of cost.
University of Wyoming

The University of Wyoming has begun offering Hathaway scholarships and is live on Banner student. As all of you who have been through major software and program expansions know, that has added lots of challenges and opportunities!

Building Projects

Capitol construction, renovations, deferred, and major maintenance projects are starting or being completed on the UW campus. The second phase of the privately funded central “Prexy’s Pasture” renovations is nearing completion. The second phase includes flat stone paving, a series of local boulders, seating benches, and amphitheater seating. The dormitory renovations continue to be completed as anticipated, and the classroom building renovation project has an expected completion date sometime in late 2006. In the meantime, classroom space is still in short supply! The Anthropology and Archaeological Resource Facility is expected to be completed sometime in summer 2007, at which point the library addition can begin. In addition, a business incubator is close to completion, and ground breaking has just occurred for the conference center, which will be built using funds donated to the university through the UW Foundation.

No Wyoming Community College Commission report for August 2006

Opportunities

Fulbright Scholar Opportunities in Education

Applications continue to be accepted for some Fulbright Scholar awards for U.S. faculty or professionals to lecture or research abroad in education for a semester or a year in 2007-2008. Visit their website at www.cies.org for descriptions of available awards and new eligibility requirements. Awards are closing daily, so please consult the relevant program officer before applying.

Transitions

STEVE CHAMBERS has moved back to Arizona after accepting the position as IR director at Coconino Community College (CCC) in Flagstaff, AZ. Steve helped start the college 15 years ago. CCC is 20% Hispanic, 20% Native American, and almost 100% are first-generation students. Steve is looking forward to helping expand educational opportunities for those who might not get much of a chance to realize their potential. We are all very happy that Steve will remain a “true blue” RMAIRian.

CHRISTINA DRUM, programmer analyst with the University of Nevada, Las Vegas, is happy to announce the birth of her beautiful daughter, Zoë Elizabeth, born April 19, 2006. Congratulations Christina!

BRIAN SHUPPY, Weber State University, has been promoted to budget director at Weber State University in Utah, replacing Chris Clark who retired. Brian will continue to be the director of IR until a replacement is hired (hopefully soon). He will still be actively involved with RMAIR and looks forward to hosting a memorable RMAIR conference in October.
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Colorado: Vacant  
Idaho: Archie George (University of Idaho)  
Montana: Jim Rimpau (Montana State University, Bozeman)  
Nevada: Linda Heiss (Nevada System of Higher Education)  
New Mexico: Carol Bernhard (University of New Mexico)  
Utah: Valerie Stegeman (Weber State University)  
Wyoming: Lisa Muller (University of Wyoming)