

**SOUTHERN  
ASSOCIATION  
FOR  
COLLEGE ADMISSION COUNSELING**

**State and Area Initiatives  
Handbook  
2007-2008**

*SACAC serves professionals  
who guide students to college.*

**October 2007**

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## THE HISTORY AND VISION

On April 11, 2002, a group of high school counselors (public and private), a college admission officer, and the SACAC executive assistant came together for lunch in the 100-year-old textile mill that housed Raleigh Charter High School in North Carolina's capital city. In a room with soaring 16-foot ceilings, exposed red-brick exterior walls, and loblolly pine floors, these colleagues created the North Carolina Leadership Team:

- Nadine Askins (Athens Drive High School)
- Pam Little (Fayetteville Academy)
- Glenda Atkinson (Raleigh Charter High School)
- Ann Murphy (Charlotte Country Day School)
- Anthony L. Clay (Raleigh Charter High School)
- Sara Paris (Cardinal Gibbons High School)
- Heidi Fletcher (Meredith College)
- Marrius Pettiford (Athens Drive High School)
- Pat Hawkins (SACAC)

The genesis of that gathering came from the preceding year's SACAC conference in Atlanta. After the President's Reception, with no other place to go, a group of North Carolinians—including Anthony L. Clay (Raleigh Charter High School), Pat Hawkins (SACAC), Pam Little (Fayetteville Academy), Linda McMullen (an independent counselor), and Dr. Jim Walters (former admissions director at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and at the University of North Carolina at Wilmington)—went across the street from the host hotel for an informal dinner together. They appreciated the connections they formed and wondered how to make such a huge conference more accessible and welcoming for newcomers. The April 2002 organizational meeting at Raleigh Charter and a formal North Carolina state dinner at the Fort Lauderdale conference that same month grew out of that dinner conversation.

The founders outlined their objectives in the 11 April meeting minutes [contained in the CD sampler given to each State and Area Initiative Co-Chair]:

*We would like to foster increased:*

- *SACAC membership*
  - *currently 181 in NC*
- *communication*
  - *about developments in the profession*
  - *about SACAC activities*
- *involvement*
  - *especially as a means of professional development*
  - *especially through local functions for those in the profession unable to participate in the annual SACAC conference*
- *collaboration*
  - *among and between high school counselors/college admission personnel and public institutions/private institutions*
  - *especially with the Carolinas Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers (CACRAO) through a presence at each other's meetings, conferences, and other functions*

The minutes from that inaugural gathering include a strong desire for an inclusive organizational structure:

*We hope, in particular, to represent a broad cross-section of the profession—high school and college, public and private, relative newcomers and experienced veterans, throughout the state.*

The founders articulated an expansive vision for their undertaking:

*We look forward to building an effective grassroots structure for SACAC in our state. We're excited about the possibilities here in North Carolina but also elsewhere because we believe we can create a model for other states in the regional.*

Indeed, Georgia would come on board almost immediately, with leadership from, among others, future SACAC presidents Nancy Beane of Atlanta's Westminster Schools and Bob Spatig of the University of

Georgia. Early efforts included a presence at the Georgia School Counselor Association, support for a NACAC fair in Atlanta, and collaboration with the ACT, the College Board, the Georgia Foundation of Independent Colleges, and other organizations.

As initiatives continued in Georgia and North Carolina and launched in Florida and in Tennessee, the SACAC Board as early as 2004 began to consider explicit ways to support the efforts, setting aside funds and including state and area initiatives in the Membership Chair's portfolio. With the April 2007 Board meeting at the Atlanta conference, the Board created a separate State and Area Initiatives Chair, and outgoing Membership Chair Anthony L. Clay filled the new position.

As of fall 2007, each state and the Caribbean have at least one person leading an initiative. The work remains challenging—the large size of some states and the dispersed geography of the Caribbean can make meetings and program delivery more complex, while some states with a relatively small SACAC membership may have fewer individuals and institutions from which to draw. Nonetheless, the Initiatives can help an association with a huge population and geography also be a nimble, responsive, grassroots organization serving members and non-members alike to the ultimate betterment of the young people who motivate our work.

The Fall 2004 *Southern Scope* includes this vision statement for State and Area Initiatives:

*While it would be nice to increase SACAC membership through programming and other efforts, the primary objectives are to 1) help members better connect with one another and with the Association and 2) offer professional development opportunities, including to underserved colleagues regardless of SACAC membership.*

Three years later, those same aspirations animate the work across our region.

### WHY STATE AND AREA INITIATIVES?

We want to recognize the inclusion of the Caribbean in our Association. We're also cognizant that some large states might eventually decide two or more freestanding initiatives might make more sense for their particular circumstances. Consequently, we've adopted the term State and Area Initiatives to reflect the broad nature of our constituencies.

## **THE SACAC CONTEXT**

*A group of 16 Board members and other Association members crafted this document at a February 2007 strategic planning retreat in Atlanta. It then went to the SACAC membership in the winter SOUTHERN SCOPE for review and feedback. In April, the Board adopted the plan as the basis for future SACAC initiatives.*

### **VISION STATEMENT**

The Southern Association for College Admissions Counseling will be the premier member organization and resource for professionals who build bridges between students and higher education.

### **MISSION STATEMENT**

SACAC serves professionals who guide students to college.

### **VALUES STATEMENT**

We believe that education is the cornerstone of broader opportunities and responsible citizenship for the individual and society. To this end, we dedicate ourselves to these nine core values.

**E** Ethics and Integrity: We uphold ethics and integrity in working with our colleagues and constituents. We honor our commitment to the professional code of conduct, NACAC's SPGP.

**D** Diversity and Inclusion: We recognize the need for and seek diverse personal and institutional backgrounds and perspectives within our membership so that we best serve the full range of students seeking higher education.

**U** Unity and Service: We unite counseling and admissions professionals in order to serve students in the college search and application process.

**C** Collaboration and Communication: We value partnerships with colleagues across institutional and organizational lines that promote effective discourse and meaningful programs related to college access and student success.

**A** Access and Equity: We champion opportunities and pathways to higher education for all students.

**T** Trust and Relationship Building: We are committed to a culture of trust and encourage relationship building among professionals and those they serve.

**I** Innovation and Excellence: We strive to be a model of excellence, embracing and pioneering innovative programs and services.

**O** Outreach and Advocacy: We are committed to reaching out to all counseling and admissions professionals to provide access to information services and programs that serve them and their students. We advocate for public and private initiatives that effectively support this value.

**N** Networking and Professional Development: We are dedicated to providing a range of learning and networking opportunities to meet the needs of counseling and admissions professionals.

## RESOURCES

### DOCUMENTS

- The State and Area Initiatives CD sampler for each co-chair contains minutes, programs, etc. from several states. These materials focus on organizational matters (e.g. team meetings), programs (including drive-in workshops, roundtable receptions, and school counselor association conference sessions), and the SACAC conference state dinner.
  - Co-chairs should share new such materials with their counterparts across the region through email exchanges.

### MONEY

- Each initiative has \$250 in seed money this year to spend on outreach and other programs, outside of any drive-in workshop funds from SACAC.
  - The required reimbursement form is downloadable from the Forms page of the SACAC website. You send it *within 30 days* of the expenditure to SACAC Treasurer Bill Dingedline [see State and Area Initiatives Directory]. He'll contact me for my authorization and then dispatch a check to you.

### SACAC LEADERS

- Don't forget, SACAC Human Relations Chair Malika Johnson wants to make a visit to each state this year, starting in late fall. Please be in touch with her [see State and Area Initiatives Directory] to discern how and when she can be of help to you.
  - I'm happy to try to visit you as well if you see a way my presence can be a help!
- If you would like to reinforce the value of your SACAC involvement in your home institution through a thank you letter copied to your boss from me or someone else at SACAC (including President Bob Spatig), please let me know. We can collaborate on an appropriate message and make sure it gets sent.
  - You might also offer to write this kind of note for the hardworking members of your Initiative.

# COMMUNICATION

## WITH CO-CHAIRS

- Make sure you communicate clearly and regularly with your co-chair, and that you're sharing the workload in your state or area. I don't want anyone becoming resentful from having to do too much and I don't want anyone burning out! This shouldn't have to be an "I" undertaking, but rather a "we" one. Yes, there's much to be done, but you have support—your co-chair, your counterparts leading the other initiatives, me and the other SACAC office-holders. Each state has bright, energetic individuals who, when asked, will do their best to step forward and contribute—give them the opportunity to get involved!
- The State and Area Initiatives Directory is designed to facilitate communication among all of us. It includes other SACAC chairs whose contact information might be convenient to have as you embark on particular project.
  - Do let me know if you see errors in your entry. As we have corrections and also new co-chairs, I'll send further updated versions.
- I'm counting on you all to communicate with one another frequently, sharing meeting agendas and program materials, questions and suggestions, and anything else you think might be helpful. For example, Tennessee meets 8 November—please share agendas, minutes, or anything else that emerges from this gathering.
  - Anne Edmunds from Tennessee asks in a recent email:
    - I would be curious to know how members of the other state initiatives committees accomplish their meetings with membership from across the state. We have had a few dedicated folks who have been able to either drive in to Nashville or call in via conference call from across the state. Are other states piggybacking on another meeting? In addition to regular email communication, how often do they meet. Tennessee has some eager and dedicated folks with great ideas to bring to the table and getting everyone around that table can sometimes be a challenge. When we have had large groups attend, we have had some great discussions and idea sharing that just doesn't really happen over email. So I'd love to hear what other states thoughts on this are.
- We'll gather for a co-chairs meeting at the annual conference in Little Rock and again at the NACAC conference in Seattle.

## WITHIN YOUR STATE/AREA

- I've asked web guru Rebecca Rutsky about creating a space for a SACAC website listing of the State and Area Initiatives Co-Chairs (name and email) so interested individuals can contact you directly. Please let me know ASAP if this public sharing of your name and email is a concern.
- The members-only section of the SACAC website has a broadcast email feature, a convenient way for you to communicate directly with SACAC members in your state (all of them, or by various categories). If you have difficulty making this work, please let me know and I'll try to help.
- The members-only section of the SACAC website also includes a handy online member directory. You can type in your state and return a list of all the members there—a great way to find names and contact information for potential Initiative members, program presenters, etc.
- Based on inquiries at our Austin co-chairs meeting, I'll inquire about availability of SACAC stationery. Alternatively, I may try to create a template that you all could modify with your own specific name and contact information. This wouldn't be as fancy, but would be more cost-effective and convenient.
- As Jan Feltham shared in Austin, the Florida Initiative has a table banner, business cards, and buttons. These promotional materials spark inquiries and spread the word at professional gatherings.

## WITH SACAC

- Don't be bashful about spreading the word about your good work! SACAC Communications Chair Lindsey Waite [see State and Area Initiatives Directory] would welcome blurbs or longer articles for the *Southern Scope* newsletter (you can see [past issues](#) at the SACAC website). Florida, for example, had a blurb in the Spring 2007 issue advertising the November 28<sup>th</sup> drive-in workshop at Florida Atlantic and soliciting volunteers. It'd be nice to see at least one State and Area Initiative piece in every issue.

## OUTREACH

### MEMBERSHIP

- Membership Chair Donnamarie Hehn and I will collaborate in the weeks ahead to determine how best to share with you the names and contact information of new and lapsed SACAC members in your state or area in hopes that someone in the initiative (notice I said someone, not necessarily the co-chairs!) can be in touch directly with that individual. Please look for details to come!
- If you need information about the benefits of SACAC membership, please visit the [Membership page](#) of the SACAC website, which includes the online application/payment option.
  - If and when a new, formal paper brochure is produced, Membership Chair Donnamarie Hehn and I will try to make sure you get some.
  - The one-page SACAC strategic plan [page four of this Handbook] can also serve as a nice introductory flyer.

### MENTORING

- I'll be communicating in the coming weeks with Vicki Englehart of Florida and Lori Zawistowski of Louisiana, both of whom have worked with the SACAC mentoring program. As I noted in Austin for those of you there, this responsibility is being turned over to the state and area initiatives for implementation at the grassroots level. Please keep this on your radar screens, pending more concrete information, and do let me know if you have ideas.

### PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS

- Spread the word about SACAC's professional development programs (details are available at the [Professional Development page](#) of the SACAC website):
  - Summer Seminar for high school counselors with less than three years experience is scheduled for June 18-21, 2008, with the South or North Carolina location to be finalized in early spring. The resident cost will be \$425, the commuter cost will be \$325.
  - The Advanced Counselor Institute took place this past June at Amelia Island, Florida and is next scheduled for summer 2009.
  - Dry Run for new college admission counselors will take place at Vanderbilt July 19-23, 2008.
- Please encourage high school and college admission counselors in your state to take advantage of the Counselor Participation Fund to support attendance at the SACAC conference in Little Rock. I believe November 15<sup>th</sup> is the deadline, and Chair Allene Niemeck [see State and Area Initiatives Directory] will likely be sending out reminders via broadcast emails. Some funds can also support participation in the Summer Seminar for counselors with less than three years experience and the Advanced Counselor Institute. See the relevant SACAC website [page](#) for details.

### SACAC LEADERSHIP, RECOGNITION

- Pay attention to the broadcast email from Nominating and Awards Committee Chair Phyllis Gill [see State and Area Initiatives Directory], probably in the early spring, soliciting nominations for SACAC awards. Then submit names of deserving members in your state or area. The [Awards page](#) of the SACAC website includes the criteria for and past recipients of the:
  - Larry West Award (Leadership)
  - William Starling Award (Mentoring)

- Garrett Klein Award (Mid-Level Service)
  - President's Award for Excellence
- Nominating and Awards Committee Chair Phyllis Gill also encourages nominations for SACAC offices. Please nominate yourself or other hardworking members in your state or area to serve SACAC as a Board officer, committee chair, or delegate to the NACAC Assembly.
  - NACAC also has opportunities for service at the national level.

## OTHER LEADERS, ORGANIZATIONS

- Jan Feltham of Florida offered at our Austin meeting to share via email the meeting talking points she used to solicit support for SACAC from superintendents and other school leaders. Thanks, Jan, whenever you're able to do this!
- Some initiatives have had a presence at the annual conferences of the school counselors' association, as an exhibitor and/or through session presentations.
  - North Carolina, for example, presented a well-received ethics case study session at the state's November 2002 School Counselor Association meeting [the CD sampler has the case study handout].
  - Georgia has a SACAC table at the School Counselor Association conference each year. Counselors give their business cards in a drawing for a free registration for the SACAC conference and a free SACAC membership. Members of the Initiative also propose sessions, promoting a greater focus on college admissions for high school counselors.
  - The North Carolina annual drive-in workshop is co-sponsored by SACAC and the School Counselor Association—a great way to share costs and volunteer responsibilities and to expand the audience.
- The ACT, the College Board, state Associations of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers, public school systems, city and area-wide school counselor groups, educational non-profits (e.g. the Georgia Foundation for Independent Colleges and the College Foundation of North Carolina), local governments, and businesses may also be helpful partner organizations.

## ACTIVITY/PROGRAM IDEAS

### WORKSHOPS

- Some of you are planning the drive-in workshop for your state, others of you may want to provide support to those who are.
  - The SACAC website has a helpful [page](#) about the workshops.
  - SACAC Drive-In Workshop Chair Linda McMullen [see State and Area Initiatives Directory] is the primary resource for you.
  - The CD sampler contains materials from several North Carolina workshops.
  - The North Carolina annual drive-in workshop is co-sponsored by SACAC and the School Counselor Association—a great way to share costs and volunteer responsibilities and to expand the audience.
- North Carolina pioneered the roundtable reception, a mini-drive-in workshop, but only two or so hours and organized around one topic. Held at a local college, we might get 50 or so people for the event (which included a box lunch, generally provided by the host institution). It's helpful to have admission deans as part of the program (as small group leaders, for example), in part to entice public school counselors. These can be a manageable way to reach lots of folks in a large state—we generally did two roundtables, with the same program and materials, on the same day at two different sites (one in the eastern part of the state, one in the western part). We could use the same promotional postcard for both, simply listing the colleges whose directors or other admission professionals would be represented among the two events; counselors could choose which was more convenient.
  - North Carolina Co-Chairs Glenda Atkinson and Heidi Fletcher have both been involved in these efforts in the past and could answer your questions and give you other information.
  - The CD sampler has some materials from past roundtable receptions.
  - Pages 4-6 of the Winter 2005 [Southern Scope](#) has a comprehensive article by Pam Little about a roundtable reception called *The Writing Revolution: What It Means to Colleges*.

### HUMAN RELATIONS

- SACAC Past President Phyllis Gill has an ambitious vision of a Camp College program in each state. This would be a tremendous outreach to underserved students in your area, as the description from the SACAC website suggests below.
  - SACAC Human Relations Chair Malika Johnson [see State and Area Initiatives Directory] can help with this or other human relations ideas.
  - SACAC Extending the Dream and/or NACAC [grants](#) may be available to help fund such an undertaking.
  - *With the help of funding from NACAC and the SACAC Extending the Dream project and with individual institution support, the committee has also been able to sponsor summer camp colleges in North Carolina, Tennessee, Georgia, and Alabama. The goal behind these Camp College programs is to provide high school and middle school students with the tools and skills necessary to become successful college applicants. Some of the Camp College sessions include essay writing, resume building, SAT and ACT preparation, interview skills, and the nuts and bolts of the college application.*
- Other Human Relations programs funded by SACAC include a Parents and Counselors Together (PACT) program in the Atlanta area; an Evening PACT program for middle school parents and others who work with at-risk students; and college tours for students of promise. Extending the Dream Chair Brandi Smith [see State and Area Initiatives Directory] can provide details beyond the [Grants](#) page of the SACAC website.

- You can also encourage your members who'll be in Little Rock to participate in the annual conference Human Relations Outreach Project/Camp College, tentatively scheduled from 9 am to 1 pm on Saturday April 15<sup>th</sup>.

## GOVERNMENT RELATIONS

- SACAC Government Relations Chair Phil Hooper would love to see each state represented in the March 9-12 NACAC legislative conference in Washington, DC. After extensive on-site training, delegates fan out to the offices of their members of Congress to lobby on important educational issues.
- Especially over time, such political activism in your own state may be a direction in which you decide to move. Phil [see State and Area Initiatives Directory] can be a big help.

## ANNUAL CONFERENCE

- Initiatives in states adjacent to Arkansas might consider organizing bus or van transportation to the April conference in Little Rock as a means of making the event more affordable and more collegial (especially for newcomers). Or, you might try to facilitate carpooling.
- On Sunday 16 April 2008, the college fair for students and counselors will run from 3 to 5 pm. The 5:30 to 6:30 pm block holds state meetings, an opportunity for conference attendees from each state to meet one another and to hear important information. One or more of the state's SACAC office holders and/or delegates will share information from the Board as briefly as possible. State and Area Initiative co-chairs will want to be prepared to facilitate the meeting, share news of upcoming activities, solicit new volunteers, etc.
- For those of you who've attended one, you know state and area dinners are a tremendous way to welcome individuals from your state attending their first SACAC conference and further to knit the members of your state together. North Carolina hosted the first in Ft. Lauderdale in 2002 and has consistently attracted around 50 people since. Florida and Tennessee have had 90 or more. South Carolina did an impromptu dinner in St. Pete's Beach in 2006 and garnered 26 people.
  - After the state meetings conclude at 6:30 on Sunday April 16<sup>th</sup> in Little Rock, all attendees are invited to the President's Reception from 6:30 to 8 pm. States and areas wishing to host a dinner (and I hope that will be each state/area) can meet to leave anytime beginning at 7:30 pm. Please do not schedule a gathering time earlier than 7:30 pm! We shouldn't compete with the bulk of the President's Reception and we also have certain food purchase requirements with the hotel for that event so we don't want to waste our resources.
  - Even though we have the time available in the schedule, we still face certain challenges. The area within walking distance of the Peabody Hotel has a limited number of restaurants regularly open on a Sunday night. Large states expecting a sizeable turnout may be able to persuade an otherwise-closed establishment to open for such a private party. States with a smaller conference attendance might want to collaborate on a joint dinner. Spacious enough restaurants might be able to accommodate two state dinners simultaneously. In other cases, some states may have to go by taxi or carpool to another restaurant hopefully not too terribly far away (North Carolina did this in St. Pete's Beach, going to a beautiful elevated waterfront restaurant some distance from the host hotel and still attracting a large crowd).
  - I suggest the co-chairs find one or two volunteers soon to coordinate the state dinner:
    - to secure a suitable restaurant
    - to work out menu and payment options (is it anything on the menu or is it a set menu for the group? Does everyone pay in advance or at the dinner? Is there a fixed price or does it vary depending on the order?)
    - to publicize the event (including through a targeted broadcast email from the

- SACAC website to all members in the state)
      - to handle RSVPs and, if necessary, payment.
  - To identify restaurants:
    - The concierge at the Peabody may also be able to make recommendations.
    - The Little Rock Convention and Visitors Bureau [website](#) has a listing of downtown dining options, generally with a brief description and a weblink; please note that not all of these choices seem to be in walking distance.
    - A Google search for “Little Rock restaurants” returns a number of helpful options.
  - As states solidify arrangements, please communicate that via email, perhaps along with the name, telephone number, and email address of your state dinner coordinator(s). In this way, folks can more fully collaborate and also avoid wasting time in pursuing dead ends.
  - The CD sampler has some resources.

## COLLEGE FAIRS

- Many of the states in our region host NACAC National College Fairs. You may want to support these events. See the [schedule](#) on the SACAC website and contact College Fairs Chair Sandra Patterson [see State and Area Initiatives Directory] for details.
- Sandra is also exploring pilot SACAC college fairs, a smaller scale version of the national fairs; if you’d like to know more, or if you have an area-wide fair that might be worth including if this program becomes permanent, please be in touch with her.

## **THANK YOU!**

Especially after the enthusiasm I saw in Austin, I can't wait to see what comes next in the respective states and areas of our Association! I know collaboration among the co-chairs will help you all immensely. At the same time, I believe you have to fill the needs in your area and do what works there. Your efforts are going to make a huge difference, and I'm so grateful to you all. Please let me know whenever I can be of help!

All the best!  
Anthony

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