Welcome back advisors!

The TennACADA Executive Board hopes that you enjoyed your winter break and are ready for spring semester to be back in full swing. We have a lot of exciting events happening this semester. You can anticipate a program on effective teaching strategies for first-year seminars, the Tennessee State Drive-in Conference, NACADA Region 3 Conference, PLUS TennACADA Executive Board elections and Annual Awards Ceremony. Be thinking about individuals who would make great TennACADA officers for our next election cycle. In addition, be ready to nominate outstanding colleagues that you want recognized at our Annual Awards Ceremony. Remember, these individuals will then be put forward for regional and national NACADA recognition.

As we look forward to these many professional development opportunities, don’t forget about the many at-risk and in-transition students that emerge in Spring semester. I leave you with a quote to keep in mind while working with such students: “Perhaps I can find new ways to motivate them.” Brought to you by the ever inspirational Darth Vader, featured in Star Wars.

Enjoy your semester,

Kirsten Pitcock
2015 TennACADA President
Get InVOLved at the Region 3 NACADA Conference

Submit a Conference Proposal:
Recently created a new initiative or completed research? Consider submitting a presentation proposal for the Region 3 NACADA Conference, a great opportunity to network, share knowledge and represent the University of Tennessee!

Volunteer at the Conference:
Volunteering at a regional conference is an excellent way to meet colleagues from other institutions and learn valuable professional skills. This year, many University of Tennessee-Knoxville employees are assisting in the creation and implementation of the Region 3 NACADA Conference. Of course, a conference of this size cannot succeed without the help of many great volunteers. Please consider joining our Volunteer Team for the Conference! A variety of positions are available. If interested, please email Sara Harp at sharp2@utk.edu

Conference Details
- Theme: “I Think I Can: Student and Professional Motivation”
- Date of Conference: April 20th-22nd, 2016
- Location of Conference: Chattanooga, TN
- Deadline to submit a proposal: January 29th 2016
- To submit a proposal, click here.

Keep Updated: Research and Theory

As we begin Spring semester, it’s important to remember to refresh and refocus your practice with recent research. Take a minute to review a few quick to read publications in the advising field, provided by Academic Advising Today.

- Identifying Barriers to Effective Intercultural Communication by Kathy McKeiver, here
- Race, Racism, and International Students in the United States by Yung-Hwa Anna Chow, here
- Students Benefit from Early Dual-Path Intervention by Kyle Bures and Sally Sudja, here
- College Student Bereavement: What Advisors Need to Know, by Janice Stapley & James Morecraft, here
Get to Know Your Colleague! Spotlight on Matthew Berry

How did you get into the academic advising profession?
I just completed my Master’s degree in Clinical Mental Health Counseling this year at ETSU. While at ETSU, I held a Graduate Assistantship in the University Advisement Center for two years. That experience helped me realize how much I enjoy working with undergraduate students, and helping them reach their goals.

Tell us about your proudest moment that has occurred while working with a student.
In my first semester here, I think I am most proud of the work I have done with one student in particular. I met with this student several times this semester, and each time we met she had a different career goal in mind. At first she wanted to be a Nurse, then a Physician Assistant, then a Physical Therapist. She was very stressed because she felt that she was just going through the motions of college without a true purpose. As we further discussed her interests, she explained that she really did not want to go to graduate school and she really doesn’t like her science classes. She explained that she was attracted to these careers because she wanted to be successful, and then we discussed what success really means. Through our discussions, we determined that a large part of success is doing something that you actually enjoy. The student then began researching two year programs and is now planning to apply to a Radiologic Technology program at a local institution. She is very excited that this program will be much more focused on hands-on learning, as opposed to taking traditional lecture based science courses. While I always hope to retain my students and see them graduate from UT, I am very happy that she has found a program that she can be excited about and that she feels is right for her. I got into this profession to help students meet their goals and to have a positive impact on their lives and I am very proud to have helped this particular student find a sense of purpose.

What is your favorite thing about working at UT-Knoxville?
I have always loved UT, and I feel very honored to work here. I am from the Knoxville area, and always wanted to attend UT. UT was the only undergraduate school that I considered as a high school senior, and I am very proud to hold a Bachelor’s degree from UT Knoxville. UT is a dream-like work environment for me, and I am also surrounded by fantastic co-workers. The people that I work with are not only extraordinarily good at what they do, but they are also the nicest people that you will ever meet. Everyone in the advising community has been very welcoming and friendly to me and I am very appreciative of that.

What is your favorite quote?
“The best way to predict your future is to create it” – Abraham Lincoln

Tell us one fun fact we wouldn’t know about you.
I have an unusual tendency to have accidents that cause me to break teeth. I have broken at least one of my front two teeth on five different occasions (that I can think of). The first time was in the fourth grade. We were doing some sort of dance in class, for whatever reason, and there was a great deal of hip swinging involved. I apparently got into the music a bit too much and hit my mouth on the chair in front of me, chipping my two front teeth. After that, my false teeth lost battles with a basketball court, a teammates head while celebrating a basketball victory (separate occasion), a fork, and an abnormally tough piece of bacon at the local Chili’s. I am quite possibility the youngest person that you will ever meet that has chipped his/her teeth so many times. This is probably a good spot for a PSA: No matter how many times you try, the tooth fairy stops coming when you become an adult.

Matthew Berry, Academic Advisor in the College of Education, Health, and Human Sciences
Get to Know Your Colleague!
Spotlight on Morgan Ridgell

How did you get into the academic advising profession?
I came from a Higher Education program that was heavily counseling based. During my time there, I had an assistantship in Multicultural Affairs where I served as an advisor and co-instructor for a minority male learning community for first year students. I really enjoyed the one-on-one and small group interactions with students and those moments seemed to have the most impact. It’s interesting because the initial stages of my job search were pretty narrow and it wasn’t until I expanded my search beyond First Year Experience and Multicultural Affairs that I began looking into more advising positions. Several applications and interviews later, I discovered that this is exactly where I’m supposed to be!

Tell us about your proudest moment that has occurred while working with a student.
The minority male learning community was unfortunately cut during my last year in graduate school. It was disheartening that it happened because not only did retention rates increase among minority males who participated in the program, these students formed a sense of community. The proudest moment for me was that even after the program ended, many students still wanted to meet with program staff and would randomly stop by to say hello. It was also encouraging when I would see those students interacting with each other outside of class and was able to witness the bonds created due to their participation in the learning community.

What is your favorite thing about working at UT-Knoxville?
The support and the endless amount of opportunities for staff to get involved is phenomenal! Coming in as a new professional and moving to a new city can be intimidating and stressful. I’m so glad that I have colleagues who genuinely care about my well-being and my development as a professional. I’m also appreciative of the opportunities to potentially partner and collaborate with colleagues across campus!

What is your favorite quote?
“Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life.”
Proverbs 4:23

Tell us one fun fact we wouldn’t know about you.
I can juggle...a little.

Have a wonderful Spring semester!
-Kirsten, Courtney, Ashleigh & Sara