

Sharing the Commonwealth

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An e-newsletter published by the Pennsylvania College Personnel Association

Navigating Title IX seminar to feature Dr. John Lowery

Dr. John Wesley Lowery will be the featured speaker at PCPA's July 22 drive-in Keystone Seminar, *Navigating Title IX*. Higher Education professionals from across the state are invited to attend the event, which will be hosted by Butler County Community College.



The seminar will also feature a panel of professionals who work directly with Title IX. Attendees will have the chance to ask questions and receive feedback that may be relevant to their own institution.

Registration can be completed by visiting www.pcpa.net. Questions may be directed to [David Zlockie](#).

Cost: PCPA members & students - \$25; Non-PCPA attendees: \$35

Date: Monday, July 22

Time: Registration: 8-9 a.m.;
Event: 9 a.m.-3 p.m.

Address: Butler County Community College, 107 College Drive, Public Safety Building, Room 202, Butler, PA 16002

Dr. Lowery is the department chair of the IUP Student Affairs in Higher Education program. For more information on Dr. Lowery, visit his [website](#).

Pennsylvania College Personnel Association's
2013 Annual Conference

Reimagining Student Experience



Annual PCPA Conference slated for Oct. 20-22 in Mechanicsburg, Pa.

Program proposals now being accepted

This year's conference planning committee has released the details for the 2013 annual conference. The conference will be October 20-22 at the Park Inn by Radisson in Mechanicsburg.

This year's theme is *Reimagining the Student Experience*. As committee chair David Greene explains, "Colleges and universities are under constant pressure to find new and meaningful ways to better engage students. Moreover, the need to justify funding and its usage is at an all-time high."

This year's theme challenges attendees to reexamine their policies and practices to ensure a robust student experience. With that in mind, the committee is seeking program proposals that reimagine the student experience through:

- Learning outcome development and assessment;
- Encouraging growth;
- Advocating change; and
- Delivering results.

Early registration opens later this month at a cost of \$155 for professional members of PCPA and \$105 for graduate students. More details are available on the PCPA [website](#).

Program Proposals
Deadline to submit your proposal is **Aug. 1**. Proposals may be submitted online using this [form](#).

Presenters who are selected will be notified by **Aug. 30**.

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Preparing a Proposal for the Conference?

At this year's PCPA Conference, there will be more than 30 different workshops and sessions for student affairs professionals to attend. And it all starts with a proposal.

Anyone may submit a program proposal for the annual conference, but not every program proposal is selected. Follow the ACPA Commission on Assessment's [advice](#), and you just might have a winning proposal.

1. You don't need to be an expert. Some of the best presentations are those that present real-life case studies as they relate to best practices or other hot topics.
2. Make sure your topic is interesting, engaging, and relevant. Always make sure your workshop connects to the conference theme.
3. Determine the outcomes of your workshop first. What do you want people to walk away with? Once you know these things, you can begin to lay the groundwork.
4. Develop a concise abstract that captures the essence of your workshop. Think of it as your elevator speech to promote your session.
5. Come up with a catchy title.
6. Think about your audience. What makes your workshop appealing to grad students and entry level professionals might not be true for mid-level or more seasoned professionals.

Think about your own professional development. Does it involve developing your own presentational skills? If so, consider submitting a proposal for this year's conference.

PCPA 2013 Conference Highlights

Although all details are not yet available, the conference planning committee is pleased to announce that this year's conference will feature:

- A day of activities for graduate students on Sunday. This will include an opening reception, various programs, a poster competition and mentor/mentee sessions.
- An opening keynote on Sunday by **Dr. John J. "Ski" Sygielski**, president of HACC, Central Pennsylvania's Community College.
- A plenary keynote on Monday by **Dr. Jan L. Arminio**, a professor and program director of the Higher Education program at George Mason University.
- An open PCPA business meeting and awards ceremony, both on Monday.
- Evening entertainment on Sunday and Monday.



Dr. Sygielski

About Dr. Sygielski •••••

Dr. Sygielski became the seventh president of HACC in July 2011. His previous appointments include president of Mt. Hood Community College in Gresham, Ore.; president of Lord Fairfax Community College in Middletown, Va.; and first vice chancellor for workforce and economic development of the Virginia Community College System.

He is a member of the American Association of Community Colleges (AACC)'s 21st-Century Commission on the Future of Community Colleges and the immediate past chairman of the

AACC Board of Directors. He also is a member of Harrisburg Rotary and serves as a director on the boards of MANTEC, York County Community Foundation, Pennsylvania's Workforce Investment Board and WITF, a public media organization.

He is an author, speaker and former adjunct business faculty member. He has a bachelor's degree in philosophy, two master's degrees and a doctorate. He is a native of Cleveland, Ohio, and comes from a working-class family.



Dr. Arminio

About Dr. Arminio •••••

Jan Arminio is a professor and program director of the Higher Education Program at George Mason University. Her scholarship focuses on multicultural issues, qualitative research, assessment, and campus programs and leadership. Her most recent book is *Why Aren't We There Yet: Taking Personal Responsibility for Creating an Inclusive Campus*. She is the 2011 recipient of the Robert H. Shaffer award for excellence in graduate teaching.

She served as chair in the Department of Counseling and College Student Personnel at Shippensburg University. She received her doctorate in College Student Personnel Program at the University of Maryland, College Park. From 2004-2008, she served as President of the Council for the Advancement of Standards in Higher Education (CAS).

She was appointed to and later chaired the Faculty Fellows of the National Association of Student Personnel Administrators and the Senior Scholars of the American College Personnel Association.

From the President's Pen

Dr. Racchini highlights latest PCPA happenings



Dr. Amber Racchini is PCPA's newest president. After serving on the PCPA executive board for many years, she has taken on the presidency, following in the footsteps of Amanda Ries, who finished her term earlier this summer. Amber has a variety of experience working in developmental education, disability services, housing and residence life, orientation, and student conduct, and teaching learning strategies courses. She is currently a faculty member at IUP and an adjunct faculty member at Seton Hill University. Learn more about Amber on [LinkedIn](#).

Greetings PCPA! I hope this newsletter finds you enjoying the summer months and getting re-energized for the upcoming year.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT: As you take time for yourself, I strongly encourage you to take advantage of two outstanding professional development opportunities that are being offered by PCPA. Please join PCPA and Dr. John Wesley Lowery as we host *Navigating Title IX* on July 22 at Butler County Community College.

In addition, you should consider submitting a program proposal for our 2013 Annual Conference in Carlisle, PA on October 20-22. This year's conference theme, *Reimagining the Student Experience*, is the perfect venue for you to share your expertise with colleagues from around the state.

GETTING INVOLVED IN PCPA: In early June, the PCPA executive board spent the day at our conference location setting goals and objectives for the 2013-2014 year. One of our goals is to encourage our membership to become involved in our various committees. Several of our Commission Chairs will be reaching out to the membership to solicit volunteers – I urge you to consider getting involved! I became involved in PCPA 10 years ago and it has proven to be a phenomenal way for me to gain transferable skills and network with our constituents throughout the state.

ANNUAL REPORT: If you are interested in reading about many of our accomplishments throughout 2012-2013, I encourage you to read the [PCPA Annual Report](#) (which was recently submitted to ACPA).

DUAL MEMBERSHIP: Speaking of accomplishments – we just signed the paperwork to offer dual membership through ACPA! What does this mean? When you renew your membership with ACPA, you will have the opportunity to renew your PCPA membership at the same time. You can still choose to renew your membership directly through PCPA, if that is your preferred method. We are excited to offer this opportunity to PCPA and ACPA members!

EXEC. BOARD CHANGES: I would like to recognize the hard-working and dedicated members of the executive board whose terms have ended. My sincere appreciation goes out to Ryan Cunningham, Amanda Gunther, Daniel Pretz, Tom

Steiner, and David Watters. In addition, I'm excited to welcome the following executive board members whose terms of office started at the end of May:

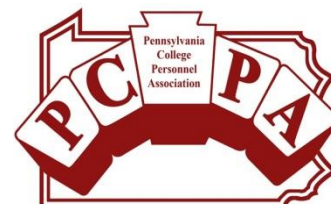
- **Katherine Curley** – Graduate Student Liaison (appointed position)
- **Craig Dillaman** – Member-at-Large (four-year, public, west)
- **Anna Elias** – Member-at-Large (two-year, west)
- **Michael Jones** – Member-at-Large (four-year, private, west)
- **Jenna Konyak** – Graduate Student Liaison (appointed position)
- **Cameo Pritchett** – Graduate Student Liaison (appointed position)
- **Morgan Rizzardi** – President-Elect
- **Brian Root** – Communications Commission Chair (re-elected)
- **Allison Shumar** – Membership Commission Chair
- **Charmaine Strong** – Recorder (re-elected)
- **Matthew Shupp** – National Board for Certified Counselors Chair (appointed position)

I look forward to serving as your president this year, and I encourage you to contact me should you have any questions, concern, or ideas for the good of the Pennsylvania College Personnel Association.

Sincerely,

Amber Racchini, Ed.D.
President, PCPA

Check out the 2012-2013 PCPA Annual Report online. Click [here](#).



What's all the #hype about Twitter?

Contributed by @amandaries

It's no secret that social media has exploded in popularity in the higher education world, but for those looking for a safe starting point, the sheer volume of options can be overwhelming. When I personally first jumped on the bandwagon, I played it safe. Twitter and its 140 characters seemed the least intimidating.

Looking to get on board? Twitter is rather simple. In fact, it's made for lurking. If someone has a public Twitter feed, you can read their Tweets without having a Twitter account yourself.

Need a brief tutorial? Ed Cabellon ([@edcabellon](#)), Director of the Campus Center at Bridgewater State University, has a few great blog posts on how to get started. Check out [this](#) one and then [this](#) one.

Twitter has a strong and vibrant network of Student Affairs professionals that network both as a group and in their specific functional areas. The best way to get "involved" is to check out [#sachat](#) – a weekly, one hour long moderated chat that focuses on a current event in the field. The weekly topic is chosen by popular vote and has ranged from navigating a work/life balance to serving our undocumented students. Information on the chat can be found [here](#). (NOTE: The weekly #sachat is on hiatus for the summer, but will return very soon.)

In addition to the weekly chat, you can follow the hashtag and find people posting questions (much like one would over a listserv), sharing articles and funny stories from the trenches.

Have questions? Two of your PCPA



A Twitter profile card for Amanda Ries. At the top left is a blue bird icon holding a white banner that says "FOLLOW ME". To the right is a square profile picture of a woman with brown hair. Below the picture, the name "Amanda Ries" is written in white, followed by the handle "@amandaries" and "FOLLOWS YOU". The bio text reads: "Asst Dean Res Life @westminsterpa @Zumba lover @SigmaKappa CPO @PCPA_Tweets Exec. Adaptability Arranger Harmony Positivity Responsibility. Opinions are mine Greensburg, PA · amandaries.wordpress.com".



A Twitter profile card for PCPA. At the top center is the PCPA logo, which features a red and white crest with "PCPA" and "The Pennsylvania College Personnel Association" below it. Below the logo, the name "PCPA" is written in white, followed by the handle "@PCPA_Tweets" and "FOLLOWS YOU". The bio text reads: "PCPA is the ACPA State Division for PA. Providing professional development & networking opportunities to the surrounding area. #sachat #highered #studentaffairs Pennsylvania · pcpa.net".

executive board members are very involved in the #sachat community, including myself. Your communications commission chair and newsletter editor Brian Root ([@beekayroot](#)) is also involved in the #sachat community. Connect with us on Twitter, and don't hesitate to ask questions!

No matter what functional area you work in, there is probably a hashtag that already exists on Twitter or a weekly/monthly chat that exists for your area. In fact, check out this detailed Twitter [directory](#) for Higher Education (via [@insidehighered](#)).

Get social with PCPA! Click an icon below.



A Reflection Piece

How we impact students' lives and they impact ours

Contributed by Matthew Shupp, Ed.D., NCC, DCC

Do we positively impact students' lives? If so, how do we know? I often ask myself these questions. Perhaps you do as well. After all, how profound of an impact can we truly have on the students we meet? Our paths cross for four – *let's be optimistic, shall we?* – short years and then students move, once again, onto the next chapter of their lives.

I am a new faculty member and former student affairs administrator and I believe that we, regardless of position, are in the business of educating students. But how do we know learning has taken place? Anecdotes reflecting upon stories of student engagement replace quantifiable data. "A-ha" moments that make us pause and say, "These are the reasons I do what I do," trump statistically significant outcomes.

Every moment – each interaction – is a teachable moment for our students. My passion for higher education as my profession and the desire to impact students' lives also comes with a self-admitted weakness. I often hope these teachable moments will resonate immediately, where change occurs instantaneously and the proverbial light bulb turns on in a student's head when he/she "gets it." I know, of course, that this is rarely the case, and even a series of teachable moments in students' lives may not initiate the immediate change we'd like to see. There are those moments – you know them when you see them – when learning happens. This was supposed to be a story of one of those teachable moments. This was supposed to be a story about a student named Charlie. What I had not anticipated was the indelible mark Charlie left on me, as well.

During my first year as a higher education administrator I was employed at a small, vocationally-focused hospitality institution. I oversaw the institution's student activity and residential life programs. The curriculum was quite selective; the instructors' expectations high. This resulted in students having very little time for outside interests or extracurricular activities. Most students focused on learning their particular trade; no more, no less.

However, the Student Affairs professionals were steadfast and tirelessly provided relevant and intriguing programs for



Matthew R. Shupp is an Assistant Professor in Shippensburg University's Department of Counseling and College Student Personnel. He received his Ed.D. from Widener University (Higher Education: Administrative Leadership) and his M.S. (Counseling/College Student Personnel) and B.A. (Psychology) from Shippensburg University. He is certified through the National Board of Certified Counselors (NBCC) as a Nationally Certified Counselor (NCC) and Distance Credentialed Counselor (DCC). Matthew is Past-President of PCPA and currently serves on the Executive Board as the NBCC Coordinator.

the student body. Several students showed interest in the extracurricular offerings and small inroads slowly enhanced their technical training in the classroom. It was at one of these extracurricular offerings where I met Charlie.

As we spoke, I found out that Charlie was struggling with his sexual identity. Yet, he was extremely passionate about starting a diversity club on campus. Although the institution resided in a large, multicultural, metropolitan city, Charlie believed that more diversity programming and education needed to occur on campus. Naturally, my face lit up when I heard such eloquent speech and excitement from a first-year student. With some guidance and encouragement, Charlie began the institution's first diversity club with me as its advisor. Slow to start with Charlie at the helm, the diversity club quickly grew in size. With its newly-recruited members, the club began providing a variety of wonderfully diverse programs.

After a few short months as the advisor of the diversity club, a wonderful professional opportunity presented itself. However, accepting the offer would mean resigning my current position. A plethora of emotions came over me – happiness for the new opportunity; relief from certain frustrations that came from my current place of employment; anxiety of the unforeseen in the new position; excitement in meeting new

Continued on NEXT page

people; and sadness to leave the current people that I had met and grown to enjoy.

After putting in my resignation I kept my departure somewhat low-key. This is not to say that I kept it a secret; however a trumpeter didn't announce my departure nor did I sky-write "I'm outta here!" in the clouds. I simply found it more intimate to share the news in person with those most important to me when the time was most appropriate. This was especially difficult when trying to maintain a certain level of programming excellence without the students feeling like I was letting them down by leaving without seeing many of the clubs' projects through to completion.

During my last week of employment, one of my final meetings was with Charlie concerning the diversity club. At the conclusion of our meeting, I told Charlie that I had important news to share with him. I consider myself a rather poised individual and pride myself on my strength of presence in front of people. However, nothing could have prepared me for Charlie's reaction. He stood up, crossed his arms, and said, "That sucks!" and he began to cry.

Clearly Charlie was unable to articulate his thoughts on my departure as eloquently as when he first spoke about starting the diversity club, yet it was not hard to figure out how he felt about my impending departure. Charlie explained that he saw me as someone who really cared about students. His message was getting through loud and clear. He was speaking from the heart and, needless to say, his words touched me.

I assumed my new position a short time later. In hindsight, I was not honest with myself when I promised that I would keep in contact with many of the people, Charlie included, at my previous institution. There is a beautifully poetic line in the award-winning film *Mr. Holland's Opus*. It states, "Life is what happens to you when you are busy making other plans." I like to think that I lost touch with Charlie and many others because life *happened* and I became extremely busy attending to new business in my own little pocket of the world. Or, perhaps I'm simply a poor communicator. Whatever the reason, I had not kept in touch with Charlie as often as I would have liked.

Years later, I received, of all things, a Facebook message from Charlie. He filled me in on what had transpired in his

life since we last spoke: He moved to Manhattan, started graduate school, and spent his free time volunteering in homeless shelters. Charlie also wrote to thank me for the support that I provided him all of those years earlier. He told me that it was because of me he stayed in school. At the time of our first meeting He was contemplating dropping out of school because he didn't feel like he fit in. My excitement about his idea of creating a diversity club gave him purpose, a reason to stay in school, and a project upon which to focus his attention. Charlie told me that I saved his life. *I saved his life.*

Students grow from intentional and individualized attention. Whether you attribute student growth to a student's development (theory) or to environmental factors (practice), the fact remains that we, regardless of our position or role on campus, truly plant the seeds. You know them when you see them; those teachable moments we create for students that allow them to gain greater insight into their development. It could be a conversation we have with a student after a class lecture, during a visit to the financial aid office, or while we chaperone a sporting event. Most students think nothing of these moments; yet for college and university professionals, we make a career from them. It's a daunting responsibility.

Likewise, there are fleeting moments through the daily fog and chaos of higher education that leave a lasting impression on us the same way we hope to leave our mark on students. We inadvertently touch students in unintentional ways. There are interactions where we think nothing of them; yet, for some students, these moments save their lives. Clearly this was the case with my initial conversation with Charlie.

Many of us plant seeds in students and are not around to see the flower that blooms. For most students, their development takes a great deal of time. Because of this, we rarely receive a Thank You or a note of gratitude. From Charlie, I received a "That sucks!" Years later, I received a "You saved my life." To that, I say, "Thank you, Charlie."

His comments meant more than he could ever imagine. Many of us often wonder the impact that we are making on students' lives. Never, for one second, doubt that change occurs. Charlie clearly taught me that important lesson. Thank you, Charlie. Your response has touched my heart, and it reminds me every day of why I do what I do.

PCPA

Pennsylvania College Personnel Association

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Newsmakers & Namedroppers

• **Dr. Amber Racchini** taught *The American College Student* as an adjunct faculty member for IUP's SAHE program during summer session one. She will begin her role as an Educational Advisor/Faculty member in IUP's Department of Developmental Studies this fall. In addition, Amber and her husband Jim welcomed Lucas James into the world on January 30, 2013.

• **Amanda Ries** recently accepted the Assistant Dean of Student Affairs: Res-

idence Life & Leadership at Westminster College.

• **Brian Root** was named the student organization "Advisor of the Year" at the University of Pittsburgh at Greensburg in April.

• **Allison Shumar** was hired as the Assistant Director for Student Life, Student Leadership and New Student Success in IUP's Center for Student Life. Additionally, Allison was the recipient of IUP's S. Trevor Hadley Out-

standing Student Award.

• **Dr. Matthew Shupp** recently accepted a position as an Assistant Professor in Shippensburg University's Department of Counseling/College Student Personnel graduate program.

• **Jason Wagner** and his wife, Elyse, welcomed their son, Nolan Thomas Wagner, on June 7, 2013. Jason is an Assistant Director of Student Services at Carnegie Mellon's Tepper School of Business.

Board Meeting Briefs

Submitted by Charmaine Strong

The Summer Executive Board Meeting was hosted by PCPA President Amber Racchini at the Park Inn by Radisson – Harrisburg West on Monday, June 10, 2013.

Following are the highlights:

- The annual conference will be Oct. 20-22, 2013 at the Park Inn by Radisson, Mechanicsburg, Pa. Early Bird Registration begins in early July.
- Goals, objectives and visions for the association 2012-2013 were revisited.
- The finalized Diversity and Inclusion statement facilitated the development of subcommittees, with chairs: Men & Masculinity (Ricardo Newell/CCP); Women's Issues (Dianne Villar/Rosemont); LGBT (Brian Patchoski/Dickinson); Multicultural (Claudia Curry/CCP); and Disabilities (Lyneyse Grace/CCP).
- Discussion on growing membership beyond the conference.
- Amanda Ries reported an update on the ACPA Dual Membership initiative. A. Ries will also pursue, with Dan Kennedy and Bryan Koval, tax-exempt status so that online payment capability (conferences, keystones, membership) is in place. Current PCPA members and PA ACPA members, who are not members, will be informed of the ability to join both the international and state organizations at the same time.
- Kelley Kenney reported on graduate student outreach initiatives she has planned. Board agreed on selection of three grad student liaisons.
- SAVE THE DATE for the Summer Keystone – Monday, July 22, Butler County Community College. Dr. John Lowery, IUP, will present on Title IX.
- Amanda Ries reported that she is submitting the ACPA Annual Report.
- Discussion on combining the positions of POAC and Historian.
- Treasurer Bryan Koval reported a current account balance of \$10,155.73. May/June expenses included a \$418.00 teleconference charge from Seton Hill University. May/June income included \$470.00 in membership fees. The PCPA savings account balance is \$3,395.43. Total PCPA assets are \$13,551.16.

The PCPA Newsletter is **for the members** and **by the members.**

Submit your news, articles, interesting stories, photos, personal & professional updates, etc. for publication.

All submissions should be emailed to Brian Root, Communication Commission Chair, at bkr5@pitt.edu.

Consider it a fabulous professional development opportunity.

Pennsylvania College Personnel Association Executive Board 2013

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Webmaster
Dr. Daniel Kennedy

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