

Region II: Kevin E. Keefe, Regional Director  
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It is good to meet annually with people who perform the same kinds of duties and to have the opportunity to share information about projects. But, what I enjoy most about attending the annual AIR forums is that I have the opportunity to talk to people without explaining what institutional researchers do and who they are! Thanks to NCRP for granting me \$800.00 to attend the 37th AIR Forum in Orlando. This year's forum had the largest number of attendees in the history of the AIR forums.

At this year's forum, Dr. Yankosky and I were the facilitators during a breakfast session entitled "Two Methods of Automating Your Campus Fact Book." In the past, I used to create a binder for all users of the *Fact Book* (about 100 persons). As data became available, I asked the subscribers to insert new tables in the appropriate section. This year, my *Fact Book* was created in WordPerfect 6.1, available in our collegewide network. By inserting hypertext links, the WordPerfect document is available through our Intranet to all faculty and staff. Users can find a specific chart, table, or text information quickly by clicking on hypertext links which are highlighted in green in the table of contents.

This method has several advantages. First, it is relatively inexpensive, requiring only the cost of the authoring software which, in my case, was available and some labor to markup the pages. Second, the IR office will no longer have to print, collate and distribute one hundred copies of the *Fact Book*

Regents, the State Board of Community Colleges, and the Independent Colleges and Universities of Florida. The Commission, established in 1980, serves as a citizen board to coordinate the efforts of postsecondary institutions and provides independent policy analyses and recommendations to the State Board of Education and the Legislature.

As part of this process, the Commission has scheduled three public hearings on access, outcomes and economic development and funding. The hearings will be held in Sarasota on May 22, in Gainesville on June 19 and Fort Lauderdale on July 17.

Further information about the *Master Plan* and the Commission, its publications, meetings and other activities may be obtained from the Postsecondary Education Planning Commission, Florida Education Center, Tallahassee, Florida 32399-0400; 904/488-7894.

The Southeastern Association for Community College Research (SACCR) will be meeting August 3-6, 1997, at the Omni Royal Orleans Hotel in New Orleans. The conference theme is "Institutional Research: Making Dollars with Sense."

In 1979, performance funding became a reality in Tennessee's higher education institutions. Since that time, more and more states have moved from mere accountability to performance funding, thus making institutional research activities essential to both continuous improvement and revenue generation. Such funding initiatives may have profound effects upon institutional effectiveness and quality. This year's conference goal is to identify and discuss such effects. View SACCR on the Web at <http://www.dcc.edu/saccr.html>

Region V: Gene Atkin, Regional Director  
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IL, IN, MI, MN, OH, WI, Ontario

The theme of last month's AIR Forum in Orlando was "Performance Indicators: Defining Measures That Matter." There were many excellent sessions on finding measurable indicators evidencing learning. Those of you who were unable to attend or participate in the discussions may still want to obtain recordings of key sessions or write to various authors for copies of their papers.

Since no single performance indicator is likely to stand as conclusive evidence of quality, and the North Central Association, which accredits most of us, looks for "patterns of evidence," I thought I'd share with you three sessions that stood out for me. These were:

**13-275**, John Bolt and Keith Roberts comparing indicators used in Handsworth College in the United Kingdom (lots of career programs) and at Milwaukee Area Technical College.

**17-512**, Patricia Windham, Raymond Hackett, and Sarah Carrigan on Florida's state-defined performance indicators.

**27D-805**, A panel on the final report of the NPEC working group on student outputs from a data perspective.

For the past two years, it's been my privilege to serve as your board member. As I move on to something new, I know you join me in welcoming a new director for our region, Garry Heberer, from Edison Community College in Piqua, Ohio. I look forward to his leadership for our region.

Region VI: David Preston, Regional Director  
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AR, LA, NM, OK, TX

Thank you Region VI for making my stint as the Director an enjoyable one. In the future, Region VI news will be done by your new director, Annmarie Shirazi, Dean of Research and Planning, Oklahoma City Community College. Please help her by providing information for *Parameters* and welcoming her as your

As always, I attended some very good sessions and was able to absorb some new ways of looking at data. I enjoyed the Forum.

You may want to look at the definitions for the data required on the Graduation Rate Survey. Some have been redone and others added. NCES has finally started to recognize the diversity of missions and students served by community colleges. Some issues remain, but we are much better off now than we were when this survey was first suggested. Thanks to those community college folks who have helped NCES realize this.

NCRP has some real formidable challenges for the future. Representing community colleges at such meetings as the AIR Forum is very important and should continue. Community colleges do so much and with the expanding role of the community college researcher, I can see a need for an NCRP Forum in the future.

Thanks to Dr. Scott Parke who worked so diligently leading NCRP to reach so many of its goals this past year. I enjoyed working with him. Thanks to all who work to make NCRP such a great organization. Katrin has some big shoes to fill and will do wonderfully in her new leadership role.

I hope to serve NCRP again in a leadership capacity in the near future. Happy data diddling!

Region IX: Lou Attinasi, Regional Director

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AZ, CA, HI, NV, the Pacific Trust

On April 3, Pima Community College (PCC) and the University of Arizona hosted the annual Arizona AIR Conference. Held on the new PCC campus in Tucson, the event drew nearly 70 participants from across the state. Dr. Robert Jensen, PCC Chancellor gave the keynote speech. Describing the diversity of the Arizona demographic, geographic, and political landscapes, Dr. Jensen called upon institutional researchers to provide leadership to Arizona's institutions of higher education in responding to this diversity. Other highlights of the conference were demonstrations by university representatives of the data warehouse approach to providing information for decision makers, a panel discussion focusing on higher education accountability within the context of state mandates, and a presentation on transfer readiness and post-transfer success presented by Dr. Ellen McGregor, a research analyst in PCC's Office of Institutional Research. Dr. McGregor's presentation was based on her recently completed AACC/Sloan Foundation sponsored study.

Institutional researchers from Arizona's community colleges and public universities met in Phoenix on May 1 to discuss student information sharing among the state's public institutions. The participants were in agreement that sharing would occur most expeditiously and most efficiently if a single statewide student data base located within a data warehouse were to be created and maintained at a single location. They also agreed that they needed to educate their CEOs as to the advantages of such a database and to urge them to provide support for the system. At the same meeting, the researchers initiated a discussion concerning how to respond to the statewide Transfer Articulation Committee's request for a research design to evaluate the state's new transfer articulation framework, which includes three new transfer degrees and other new transfer options.

At its 35th Annual Research Conference, the RP Group, the research and planning group for California community college researchers and planners, announced the following awards:

- James Barr and Richard A. Rasor at American River College for "Institutional Effectiveness," published every two years, covering access, survey findings, assessment outcomes and relationship with grades, student performance in subsequent courses, student success by demography, persistence, transfer productivity, and summary evaluations.
- Janis Cox Jones at Cosumnes River College for "Inside Out: Accountability and Performance in the California Community Colleges," a report examining three accountability/student performance models: 1) the AB1725 legislative model; 2) the internal or "CC FAMILY" model; and 3) the external or "CC CRITICS" model, containing a "cost per outcome" analysis for transfer, occupational and remedial outcomes. Performance-based funding is discussed as an option for improvement.
- Peter B. Geltner at Santa Monica College for "Class Success—Class Withdrawal," studying the success of students in classes and the withdrawal of students, for 16 variables.
- Janis Cox Jones and Brad Brazil at Cosumnes River College for "From Accountability to Effectiveness: The Student Flow Model Ten Years Later," a paper examining the development and change over time of the Los Rios District's Student Flow Research Model, and its uses at the district and college levels for strategic, academic and facilities planning. The report includes the Enrollment Potential Projection Model (EPPM) used in developing the successful proposal for the district's newest college, Folsom Lake.

Region X: Jack Bautsch, Regional Director  
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AK, ID, OR, WA, British Columbia

The Pacific Northwest Association for Institutional Research and Planning (PNAIRP) will hold its annual conference on October 23-24, 1997, at Portland State University in Portland, OR. Rather than feature a keynote speaker as has been the custom, this year's conference will center around a number of practical, "how-to" training sessions using a combination of lecture, discussion and hands-on exercises. The instructors for these sessions are recognized experts in their fields with experience in training, teaching or presenting workshops.

As of this writing (June, 1997), five workshops have been confirmed.

**Understanding MS Access.** Sylvia Sandoz (Lane Community College, Eugene, OR) This workshop presents an introduction to the basics of this database application.

**Using MS Access for Institutional Research.** Tod Massa (Williamette University, Salem, OR). Topics will include moving data from a transaction system to an analysis system, creating results tables for standard reporting, and creating reusable procedures to simplify standard reporting. Massa will also be holding this workshop at the AIR Institute in July.

**Building a Web Site.** Tom Gaylord and Maio Mazziotti (Center for Education Information and Standards, Victoria, BC). The topic is pertinent as an increasing amount of data is provided on the Internet.

**Statistics Refresher for Institutional Research.** Archie George (University of Idaho). Descriptive statistics, inferential methods, and new developing statistics that have begun appearing at AIR (logistic regression, for example) will be covered.

**Using Qualitative Methods in Institutional Research.** June Gordon (University of California, Santa Cruz). June has extensive experience doing ethnographic research in higher education.

Other workshop ideas are pending, including:

- Using ethnographic software to analyze qualitative data.
- Conducting market research using Perception Analyzer
- Data warehouse: theory, design, construction

