

## **Transforming the Future: One Student at a Time**

Region VII Conference, March 9-11, 2006, Holiday Inn Select, Little Rock, Arkansas:

Don't miss your chance to see the **Rolling Stones**, Thursday March 9. Early registrants will be entered in a drawing for tickets to the concert. Early Registration deadline, **February 15, 2006**.

Members of NACADA from Louisiana can apply for scholarships to attend the Region VII conference, for details contact Terri Blevins, Region VII chair, [terri.blevins@okstate.edu](mailto:terri.blevins@okstate.edu), or 918-594-8406.

## **Region VII Announces its 2006 Advising Award Winners: Outstanding Advisor, Primary Role**

Ms. Laura Cullen, University of Oklahoma, Senior Academic Advisor, University College

Laura Cullen, Senior Academic Counselor at the University of Oklahoma, is the 2006 recipient of the **National Academic Advising Association (NACADA) Region VII Outstanding Advisor-Primary Role Award**. Cullen will be honored at the annual NACADA Region VII conference this March in Little Rock, Arkansas.

Ms. Cullen is in her 6<sup>th</sup> year of advising for University College at OU, and she has an impressive list of accomplishments. In addition to her advising load of 450 students, Laura developed and implemented a special alcohol education program, which she presented to almost 60 different classes this semester alone. According to Alice Lanning, Director of Freshman Programs, this presentation is "captivating, informative, and thought provoking" and is well received by both students and faculty.

Laura also works as the University College liaison to the College of Engineering, where she maintains regular communication with the advising staff there to ensure that students receive accurate and current information. Lisa Schmidt, Assistant Director at the College of Engineering, states, "What I appreciate even more than our regular meetings are the times that Laura has anticipated a problem or possible miscommunication and immediately contacted me to begin problem-solving. Our students benefit greatly from her initiative, thoughtful consideration of all parties involved, and her unwavering commitment to high-quality advising and student success." She adds, "Finally, I just find her delightful to work with. She has a great sense of humor and an authenticity that I appreciate very much."

Laura is a favorite among her peers, her students, and their parents. She is a caring, sensitive advisor as is obvious by the comments of her students, who describe her as "awesome", "amazing", and "outstanding". As one student put it, "Laura is the best advisor. She knows EXACTLY what she is talking about. She believes in me and encourages me in my goal. OU is lucky to have an advisor like Laura Cullen."

Cullen is also active in the National Academic Advising Association, at the local, regional and national level, attending conferences and presenting workshops and has received the Region VII award for outstanding conference presentation in the spring of 2005. That same year, she also received the Oklahoma Academic Advising Association's Outstanding Advisor Award.

Terri Blevins, Region VII chair states, "It is with great pleasure that I present Laura with this Outstanding Advisor Award. I can't imagine anyone more deserving. She is such a terrific role model for all of us. She cares about her students and their success; she cares about her colleagues and THEIR success; she truly embodies what this award represents." The Primary Role Advising category recognizes individuals whose primary role at their institution is the direct delivery of advising services to students.

**Outstanding Advisor, Faculty**

Dr. Joel Freund, Associate Professor, Fulbright College of Arts & Sciences, Psychology  
Department, University of Arkansas

Freund has been a faculty member at the University of Arkansas since 1970 and has been the primary undergraduate academic advisor for the Department of Psychology since 1986. He has more than 30 years' experience as an academic advisor in one of the University of Arkansas' largest majors. He is accessible to students, interacts with them frequently and performs the job of advising with "patience, expertise and wisdom".

While Dr. Freund has been active on numerous campus-wide committees at the University of Arkansas, it is in his role as advisor the students in the department of Psychology where he has the greatest impact. He serves as an orientation advisor to both new students and transfer students, he works with their parents, he serves as the advisor for the Psychology club, and he publishes a newsletter dedicated to important information necessary to navigate successfully a degree in Psychology. "There is no doubt that Dr. Freund is the face, heart, and soul of the advising efforts of the Department of Psychology," says Dr. Douglas Behrend, Chair of the Department of Psychology.

Dr. David Schroeder, Professor of Psychology and Chair from 1986-2003 states that "the impact he has had on our program has been nothing short of incredible...he takes his responsibilities as an advisor, as a counselor, and perhaps most importantly, as a friend-of-the-students seriously" and he concludes by saying that he "cannot imagine another individual on this campus who has done more to promote the interest of his or her Department's students."

Terri Blevins, NACADA Region VII Chair stated, "I am pleased to be able to be able to honor someone like Dr. Freund who is truly a role model to students and faculty alike. Dr. Freund serves as a faculty advisor and mentor to more than 400 students, and he is devoted to making sure that students have the correct information and to making his department and his institution a welcome, friendly place for students to experience growth and personal success." Dr. Freund is not only actively involved in his department and on his campus, but he has also been very active in NACADA, having served on both the Executive Board and as Editor of the NACADA journal. NACADA is the national professional advising association. Its mission is to promote and support quality academic advising in institutions of higher education to enhance the educational development of students.

The NACADA Region 7 Faculty Advising Award is given annually to an individual from Region 7, which includes Arkansas, Texas, Oklahoma, Missouri, Kansas and Louisiana, who has demonstrated qualities associated with outstanding academic advising of students. This award goes to a faculty member whose primary responsibility is teaching, and who spend a portion of their time providing academic advising services to students.

## **News from Region 7 State Organizations**

Arkansas:

Kansas: The Kansas Academic Advising Network (KAAN) is looking forward to this year as opportunities for leadership involvement and participation grow. The KAAN website provides information regarding our Professional Development Fund, 2006 Logo Contest, and opportunities to serve on committees. Check us out online at: <http://www.nacada.ksu.edu/KAAN/index.htm>.

Mark your calendars now for the 2006 KAAN Conference and start thinking about what you want to submit for a presentation. The conference will be Friday, September 15, 2006 on the Washburn University Campus in Topeka. Conference information will be loaded online (<http://www.nacada.ksu.edu/KAAN/conference.htm>) as it becomes available. Questions should be directed to: [pamela.erickson@washburn.edu](mailto:pamela.erickson@washburn.edu). Best wishes for 2006 from the KAAN Steering Committee.

Louisiana:

Missouri:

Oklahoma: OACADA has planned its Spring Conference, February 19 at OSU-Tulsa. The theme of this years Spring Conference will be "Advising Professional Students and Transfer Students."

Texas: The Texas Academic Advising Network (TEXAAN) Conference at Holiday Inn in San Antonio, February 22-24.