



&gt;&gt;&gt; NEWSLETTER &lt;&lt;&lt;



# COLLABORATE & CELEBRATE

The Power of Higher Education

## A MESSAGE FROM PRESIDENT JADE IRVING

Greetings and welcome to the first edition of "Collaborate and Celebrate" – your go-to source for updates, initiatives, and exciting happenings within the West Virginia Student Personnel Administrators community.

In this issue, we extend a warm invitation to all student personnel administrators who share our passion, are considering WVASPA membership, and those committed to idea sharing. Our aim is to unite and strengthen our community to become the leading resource for professionals across the state. Building on the energy from our annual conference, we're thrilled to announce a heightened commitment to innovation, growth, and collaboration. Be prepared for an array of exciting initiatives throughout the year that you won't want to miss!



Our newly appointed board wasted no time in December, diligently planning initiatives that will shape our journey ahead. Leading the way is our 2024 WVASPA Speaker Series, we kicked off January with "Strategic Networking: The Power and Value of Partnerships." Stay tuned for more engaging topics throughout the year. Explore session details, timings, and access information [here](#).

Excitingly, the board has also finalized the details for our upcoming conference. Save the date and mark your calendars for October 29-30, 2024, as we gather at the picturesque Resort at Glade Springs for a memorable event. Each of you is an essential member of our organization, and this year, we aspire to strengthen our connections. Please take a moment to [fill out this form](#) so we can spotlight your achievements within our community.

Wishing you all a fantastic 2024! It is my privilege to lead us into this year, and I am eager to collaborate with our board in making our organization the best it can be for all of us to share and enjoy. Here's to a year of empowerment!

Best regards,

Jade

# WVASPA 101

Our reasons for working in student affairs are different for each person. However, there are a few things about our profession that unite us. Making a lasting impact on students' lives, contributing to their growth, and creating a positive and inclusive campus environment that prepares them for the challenges and opportunities that lie ahead.

## Here are the top eight reasons why we love what we do!

- 1. Student Development:** We play a crucial role in the holistic development of students. They contribute to students' personal, academic, and social growth, fostering skills and qualities that extend beyond the classroom.
- 2. Support System:** We serve as a support system for students, offering guidance, mentorship, and resources. This support is particularly vital during challenging times, helping students navigate academic, personal, and emotional hurdles.
- 3. Creating Inclusive Environments:** Student affairs professionals work towards creating inclusive and diverse campus environments. They actively promote equity, diversity, and inclusion, fostering a sense of belonging for all students, regardless of background or identity.
- 4. Community Building:** Through various programs and initiatives, student affairs teams facilitate community building on campus. They organize events, clubs, and activities that encourage social interactions and connections among students, contributing to a vibrant and engaged campus community.
- 5. Career Preparation:** Beyond academics, student affairs professionals assist students in developing skills essential for their future careers. This includes leadership, communication, teamwork, and problem-solving skills, preparing students for success in their chosen fields.
- 6. Wellness and Mental Health:** Student affairs encompasses services and programs that address students' wellness and mental health. Professionals in this field work to create a supportive environment and provide resources to help students maintain their well-being throughout their academic journey.
- 7. Student Advocacy:** Student affairs professionals often serve as advocates for students, ensuring their needs and concerns are heard and addressed. They work towards creating policies and practices that prioritize the well-being and success of the student body.
- 8. Preparation for Life Beyond College:** The skills and experiences gained through involvement in student affairs contribute to students' overall preparedness for life beyond college. Whether entering the workforce or pursuing further education, students benefit from the well-rounded development facilitated by these professionals.



**Good student affairs practice provides opportunities for students, faculty, staff, and student affairs educators to demonstrate the values that define a learning community. Effective learning communities are committed to justice, honesty, equality, civility, freedom, dignity, and responsible citizenship.**  
**--NASPA**



# Meet the WVASPA Board



Save the date for the NASPA  
Region II Conference.  
Additional details [here](#).



Learn more about our leadership team [here](#)!



Click  
here

Stay up to date with what's  
happening in our state legislature.

## Member Spotlight



Carla Blankenbuehler

Carla Blankenbuehler has left an indelible mark on the higher education landscape. Her stellar contributions have not gone unnoticed – in fact, she's a proud recipient of the 2020 NISOD Excellence Award, the 2021 WVASPA Mid-Level Professional Award, and the 2023 Innovation Program award for her groundbreaking work with the Mindfulness Institute for Emerging Adults.

We'd like to congratulate Carla for recently being named dean of students at BridgeValley Community and Technical College!

Join us in celebrating her achievements, dedication, and the inspiring impact she's making in the lives of students and colleagues alike.

# Check out these career opportunities



Davis & Elkins College™

