

Full Speed Ahead: Conference Advising

Compiled by Danielle A. Morgan, Salem State College; Updated for GLACURH, October 2011

The students are doing their thing, but still need you a bit. Here are a few tips!

Support Your NCC(s) and NRHH CC

Off they go to that unknown world of the boardroom. Check in with them at night and in the morning, visit the boardroom and pass them a nice note of encouragement or send fun things in to them. Ask them what is going on in there and how you can help. Keep them updated with what your delegation has been accomplishing so that they feel like part of the group and know that all their hard work has paid off!

Check In With Your Delegation

Eat meals with them. Ask them about the programs they are attending and the things they are learning. Make sure they are going to different sessions and fully partaking in the conference experience. Follow up with your new delegates. If they seem down, pump up the spirit!

Professionally Develop and Network

This conference can help you, too! Attend programs and socials or prepare a program for advisors or students. GLACURH/NACURH are filled with advisors going through similar experiences as you, so meet them and talk with them. They can help bring sanity to the crazy weekend!

Recognize Their Efforts

Conferences are a great time to see student leadership at its best: Delegates, NCCs, NRHH CCs and conference staff, all rise to the occasion. Make sure to let them know that you see them doing great things. Cute notes and surprise pieces of recognition such as flowers, cards or small gifts help them know it's all worth it.

Sleep

One of the roles of an advisor during conferences is to drive the van, so make sure you get plenty of sleep. Check in with your delegates, NCC(s) and NRHH CC, let them know how to reach you in an emergency, but also be sure to get some shut-eye. It will help you be the peppy role model you want to be in the morning, and also lead to a safe ending to your conference experience!

Be the Example

We all know that students look to other students to be role models, but at conferences, they also look to us as advisors to be setting an example. How can you encourage your delegates to meet new people if you sit in the corner without

socializing with others? Are you showing enthusiasm and excitement, participating and being part of the delegation? This doesn't mean that you should be front and center leading all the cheers, but it does mean taking an active and direct role in ensuring the type of conference attendee you are is one you wish your delegates to be.

It Isn't All About The Gold

Everything at a conference leads up to the banquet: the grand ending to a weekend full of learning and growing. Be sure to let your delegation know that you are proud of them before the banquet, and will continue to be proud of them whether their names are called or not. While we do a lot of work to be honored and recognized, sometimes we forget that it isn't what we are all about, and that it is more important to celebrate hard work than to be deemed the "winner."