

To: Faculty and Staff Development Fund Committee

From: Linda Fujitani

Re: Travel to NACAC National Conference in Boston, Massachusetts in September 2017

In September 2017 I attended the 73rd National Association for College Admission Counseling (NACAC) in Boston, Massachusetts. This was the first national conference I was able to attend and it provided me with an inspiring experience. I learned best practices and trends in admission counseling and networked with counselors from Hawaii and across the nation.

Tour of MIT and Harvard University campuses were part of the conference. Admissions Directors provided information on their admissions and recruiting policies. Although they are sought out prestigious institutions they actively are involved in recruiting students. MIT and Harvard special summer programs provide post-secondary exploration to empower underrepresented high school students to pursue careers in science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM).

It was difficult to choose from over a hundred sessions available. Sessions that stood out and I found that were most relevant to me were:

Leveraging the Community College/Four-year College Partnership: This session presented the best practices for creating pipeline strategies that results in a smooth transition for students transferring from two to four-year institutions. Other strategies include transfer fairs, visits to four-year institution, and workshops. They emphasize it is important for the institutions to develop a good and collaborative relationship.

The Growing Gap Year Phenomenon: The value of taking a gap year between high school and college is a growing trend. Colleges also recognize the benefits of enrolling students who have taken time off, since they bring maturity and focus to the classroom. The panel presented their institutional strategies they use to reach out and recruit those students who fall into this category. These students are indecisive of their career path and are not ready to commit to a traditional post-secondary education. Alternative programs for these gap students include travel opportunities to broaden their life experience and self-discovery, and provide work experience and career exploration.

The Evolving Relationship Between High School Counselors and College/University Admission Counselors: Panel presented the value of relationship between the high school and college. Good communication is essential to building understanding to meet the needs of the students. It is essential that colleges are sensitive to high schools' dates, activities, and schedules. College representatives should also participate in middle and high school parent nights.

Admission Counselors of the Future-What You Need to Know: The session presented data on the future of college enrollment including expected decline in enrollment, and change in student and admission counselor demographics. Discussed communication preferences and technology that counselors can use to support and track their students. Keys to make admission and advising effective including: Increase in person connection to deepen conversation & support, focus on financial aid and college knowledge, and connect with students when it's right for them.

Well over 400 vendors were present at the conference exhibition hall provided information regarding student recruiting and retention services. Participants reviewed the trends and resources available to meet their college and university recruitment and retention initiatives.

NACAC also provided a college fair with over 300 colleges participating. I was able to garner college information and programs for my resource library that I use for college exploration.

All the information and best practices I learned from the NACAC conference will be shared and discussed with my UH Maui College colleagues. We will review and discuss incorporating some of the ideas and strategies into the Counseling admissions and recruitment activities.

Thank you for supporting my professional development travel. This was an invaluable and awe inspiring experience that I will continue benefiting as a counselor and individual.