



## FOR A SAFE AND SECURE CAMPUS

BY TONY FANGEL - NEW YORK UNIVERSITY IRHC ADVISOR

In the aftermath of the horrendous Virginia Tech killings, many college campuses are analyzing their own safety regulations and crisis management scenarios. Safety and security is always a large issue in residence halls. However, there are stark differences between how campuses currently implement security regulations.

Most residence halls across the country have some sort of front desk area. While some are for checking out board games and cooking supplies, others serve as student-run security check-in desks. For example, at the University of St. Thomas in Minnesota, a student employee works the front desk from 10am to 1am on weekdays and 10am to 3am on weekends. After 8pm all guests must be signed into each building, so that if any incidents occur Public Safety will know who was in the building at the time. This also ensures that everyone who is in the building either lives there or is hosted by someone who does, minimizing the possibility that a stranger makes his or her way around the halls. After midnight on weekdays and 2am on weekends no guests may enter the building.

However, here at New York University the check-in desks are staffed by Public Safety officers 24 hours a day. All guests must sign in with the campus security officers, and anyone that looks suspicious is reported to the central office where the police can get involved if necessary. Many larger and urban universities employ this technique because of the potential for larger incidents, and because these schools have larger budgets.

Within the residence halls a varying number of security measures exist. For schools with communal bathrooms and/or showers, there have been reports of stolen belongings and even assaults. Some schools choose to lock their bathrooms so that only students who live on that floor can access the facilities. In addition, in a recent survey of thirty-six US colleges done by Blake and Associates, it was reported that 64% of residence halls have viewing devices (peep holes) on the doors so that residents can avoid opening the door if they see a threat.

As far as building security, in the same survey 92% of the schools locked the outer doors of their residence halls some of the time, while 36% locked the doors at all times. Fifty-eight percent of the institutions in this survey use a card swipe system to

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### SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST

- NACURH.org now publishes all of our newsletters online. Check out NBD publications for more information!
- See the back page for info regarding the Task Force at NACURH 2007!
- This is the second-to-last issue of Volume I!

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## FOR A SAFE AND SECURE CAMPUS (CONTINUED)




access the residence halls. This is growing very popular in residence halls across the country, requiring all residents to swipe their university ID to gain access to the buildings. Of the schools with this swipe system, 49% allow residents to access halls other than their own.

The almost unanimously-reported problem this survey highlighted was student apathy toward residence hall security. In addition, three institutions reported not checking their security devices to ensure they worked, while one school gives out \$50 fines for any security violation.

Outside of the resident population, many schools use the blue light system around campus as a measure of safety. If a student is in peril they can run up to one of many poles that have an illuminated blue light at the top. From there they press an emergency button which gives them immediate contact with campus security. Even some urban schools use a similar system, installing bright orange call boxes along the commonly traveled paths between residence halls and campus.

Further, a few schools have created emergency-response cell phone databases. Some schools collect the mobile numbers of students anyway (especially schools that do not provide phones in the residence hall rooms), and this database is used only in extreme emergencies. Should students opt in, campus security includes their mobile number in a database of students that are contacted via voicemail or text message should an emergency come up. Many students are supportive of such measures, so long as they are ensured they will not be contacted unless it is a serious matter.

These measures are just a few of the steps schools are taking to make themselves more safe and secure. If your school does not utilize any of these practices or if you feel unsafe in your residence hall, most of these changes can be started in your RHA. Public Safety and administrators will be happy to hear that students do care about their safety. It is important to remember that these techniques should not overburden students, but rather provide an environment that is safe. 

## A CHANGE IN DIVERSITY OFFICES


BY MATT MEHLHOFF - UNIVERSITY OF ST. THOMAS NCC

What exactly is the function of a diversity embracing group on campus? Many not-so-diverse campuses have an administrative group that tries to create programs aimed topic of embracing diversity. At the University of St. Thomas the Multicultural Student Services department tries to bring together all different cultures. They have made great strides forward in a new direction in the past few years.

Why should this group interest you and what can you learn from it? Well, the new turn it has taken has been that of trying to get white students to come to their events. But aren't they aimed at minority students? Groups like this exist at a lot of schools but they are typically looked at as places to go to if you are a minority that wants programs aimed at you. MSS has learned that in order to really be "multicultural" they must include their biggest race at St. Thomas: the white population.

This seems like something that is missed at a lot of diversity oriented programs and groups. Diversity is bringing in people of all backgrounds, even the most populous included. Most of the time diversity programs are made to look specifically at African-American backgrounds, Asian backgrounds, or GLBT students. Really though, if you want true diversity, you must look at all of the groups. That way, once you also embrace some such as the white European background then you truly will have an area where everyone feel like they are looked at as a diverse individual. Individual is the key, we may come from the same place but really cultures can vary throughout those of the same skin color or even the same background.

MSS as the University of St. Thomas has been going to large organizations such as RHA to ask not for their help in putting on an event, but rather simply encouraging them to come to their events. RHA is multicultural at UST. We all have different cultures and backgrounds and so to be able to find an environment that is not only welcoming to but specifically seeks out each and every background is pretty groundbreaking.

It is sometimes odd to look at planning something related to diversity and say, "What about this majority or that majority?" But moving forward with that frame of mind to incorporate everyone into diversity is something that could change the way we look at the definition of the word. Let's change it from embracing those that don't always feel welcome, to taking a good look at each individual and know that there's more to them than you can get from a glance. Redefine the word and let it start with you and the organization that can help to make it grow. 

## RELIGIOUS DIVERSITY AWARENESS

BY DARYL LAWRENCE - MACURH RCC FOR MINNESOTA AND SANDM

"Viterbo, a Catholic, Franciscan, ecumenical University prepares students for leadership and service by providing a student-centered, values-based, learning-focused liberal arts education rooted in the values of human dignity and respect for the world." This mission statement from a private college represents not only the importance of religion to this institution but also the importance of

respect for others. Looking past the religious aspects of this mission statement, Viterbo University's mission is similar to that of any other college. This brings up the question of what the religious differences there are between private and public schools, most particularly, the differences in the religious services offered.

There is still a difference between private and public schools in terms of the religious services they offer or allow on their campuses. This is especially true with religious private institutions, as they have a certain religious tradition to uphold. For example, a traditionally Catholic institution must adhere to its Catholic principles. However, this is changing. There is a greater amount of religious tolerance at traditionally religious private schools. The difference between public and private schools was a wide gulf only two decades ago, but much has changed.

Other religions are quickly being accepted on all campuses, be they private or public. In today's world of diversity, there seems to be a group available to every special population that could be thought of. This includes religions, too. Having a group to go to that understands where you are coming from is crucial to success anywhere- college or regular adult life. For many people, religion is their support system. Schools have recognized this fact and thus, have allowed greater freedom in terms of religious groups.

So while there is a difference between public and private schools, it is actually very small. Every college or university is in existence to serve its students, and if they fail to offer something that another school does, the students will take their business elsewhere. No matter where a student chooses to go to school, they are sure to find religious acceptance on some level.

Of course, it is a different story for atheists. Traditionally religious schools are understandably more hesitant to confront this issue. At many public schools, there are student groups devoted to atheists. These people who follow no religion are a bit of paradox for religious schools to even confront. However, as with other religions, they must come to terms with their student population. Most schools allow the free formation of student groups, and this is a way for atheists to have their own support system.

As said before, the gulf between public and private colleges and universities is quickly becoming a flat plain, with no difference whatsoever. It is possible for a college student to find religious acceptance in some way on their campus, whether it be through religious services or through an organization that has been formed to house these common interests. Though there are some differences still visible, the religious freedom allowed on campuses, both private and public, is something to be noted. 🏛️



## WHERE ARE YOU STANDING?

BY JESSICA KNOX - UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-GREEN BAY NRHH CC

Do me a favor and stand up. Take a step back if you've ever had to wear second hand clothes. Take a step forward if you have a parent who graduated from college. Take a step back if you have ever used food stamps. Take a step forward if you never shared a room with someone before college. Take a step back if you are a first generation college student. Take a step forward if you've never had to go a month without utilities in your home.

Where did you end up? Are you three steps forward, three steps back or somewhere in the middle? Chances are you are somewhere farther forward than where you started. 74% of college students in the United States come from the top quarter of the socioeconomic status (SES) scale. If you are farther back than where you started, you are among the few. Only 10% of college students come from the bottom half of the socioeconomic scale. And in comparison to the 74% from the top quarter, there are only 3% from the bottom quarter of the SES scale.

These statistics bring to light a minority on our campuses that is often ignored. Studies show that socioeconomic status directly affects a person's achievement level. Even though students who are from lower social classes are less likely to graduate and are less likely to keep their grades at a competitive level with their peers from higher social classes, very few campuses put a focus on helping out these groups.

A student's SES is mostly out of that individual's control. It is commonly measured in his or her parent's education and occupation. Though this is out a student's control, SES still plays a significant role in not only success, but also student identity and involvement. Many SES students do not have the financial support outside of their own income to pay for school, so they are forced to spend their free time working rather than becoming involved in campus activities.

When is the last time you heard about social class on campus? This unvoiced issue affects 10% of our college students. The students who do manage to make it against odds and obtain a degree are then put into a new struggle. They are forced to live in multiple social classes at once to stay connected with their family. Low SES students face their own unique struggles as a minority, but are not given the attention that many other minorities are given to help with these struggles.

Take a look at where you ended up again. If you are one of the people who ended up a couple of steps forward from where you started, take the time to look behind you. Don't forget that your peers who are a couple of steps behind you can use a helping hand every once in a while. How you help is up to you. There are several outlets. You can encourage training about this division within your campus for your campus leaders or you can program to bring knowledge to the general public of your university. However you choose to make the difference will help create an end to this social struggle that has remained unacknowledged for so long. 🏛️

## LINKS

### How good is your professor?:

<http://www.ratemyprofessors.com>

### Want program ideas?:

<http://www.residentassistant.com>

### NACURH on Wikipedia:

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/NACURH>

### NACURH 2007 Website:

<http://www.mio.uwosh.edu/nacurh>

## RHA WEBSITE SPOTLIGHT

### New York University:

<http://www.nyuirhc.org>



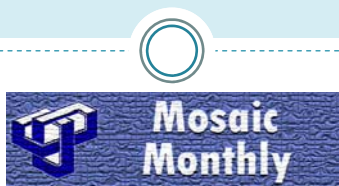
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If you have any suggestions,  
comments, or criticisms feel free to  
contact us. If you would like to get  
involved, please e-mail the Task Force  
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## IN A DIFFERENT LIGHT ONE SMALL STEP AT A TIME

BY VAL ERWIN - MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY NCC

I remember one specific moment from NACURH 2005: the moment I heard NACURH 2006 was going to be at the University of California Berkley. I jumped up and down and screamed at the top of my lungs because I was going to the birthplace of the Disability Civil Rights movement. As a student with a disability in Michigan, all I had heard from my mentors in the Disability Rights Movement were stories about Ed Roberts and the Rolling Quads of Berkeley and how they had changed Disabilities Rights as a whole by forming a college cultural group. It was the inspiration for the disability group I am currently in, which started as a cross disability group twenty years ago when the first student with a disability entered MSU. As a student with a disability I had these dreams of walking on the streets where Ed Roberts rolled, of going to Berkeley, of going home.

After a bumpy ride to Berkeley, I found there was something so emotional about being at the college whose first student with a disability created the Centers for Independent Living and the Independent Living Movement. Ed Roberts is akin to a Martin Luther King Jr. or a Malcolm X for Student with Disabilities. Every single part of me wanted to be at Berkeley and see it in a disabled lens of my own. I was going to be giving a disability program and a roundtable about disabilities. I came out of my roundtable with an excitement I hadn't known before. For the first time my conference presentation had become a Disability Civil Rights discussion instead of a disability pity discussion. I felt like I was on the top of the world.

After that I wasn't sure if I had a second roundtable so I went to check, and found out that the disability group from Berkeley was giving the presentation instead. I got to talk with them one on one and learned some enlightening things. Yes, they had some stuff we didn't, like someone in their disability office that specifically worked with student organizations and social experiences. However the Mecca I pictured in my head wasn't exactly there. In learning about the problems they faced I discovered that some of the problems we face at State are really disability group wide problems, like dying and starting up again, being small, and having disability accommodations collide. It gave me strength to come back and work on disability work again. As the current NCC I look forward to going to Wisconsin Oshkosh for many reasons one of them being I don't have to take a plane to get there. However I think that going from "A Different Light" to "One Small Step" makes sense because while you learned how to look at things differently at Berkeley you didn't learn the next step: how to put these new ideas into action. At Oshkosh you are going to start to learn how to do just that by slowly taking one small step into the future. 

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### **Intersections of Diversity: Stepping Beyond Superficiality**

*We will change the way you think about diversity and engage in a spectacular conversation about the concept of diversity and how it affects us! Also,*

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