

## **Rewriting the Anthology: Challenging White Privilege in Student Affairs**

Anthologies are created by those with the power and influence to determine what is worthy of study and reflection for present and future generations. The "anthology" of student affairs has been written mostly by white men and women in the last 50 years. As our profession and institutions become more diverse, we must examine our multiple social identities, particularly our racial identities and patterns of privilege, so that we can write broader texts that speak to and echo the voices of many different perspectives and identities.

This presentation seeks to share research findings regarding the path of white student affairs educators who are (or who aspire to be) allies for racial justice. This research was conducted in the Spring 2011 as part of a dissertation study. Ten white student affairs educators, who were nominated by a colleague of color as a racial justice ally, were interviewed regarding their white identity development, racial consciousness, and ally development

Traditional-aged college students often experience their first substantial interracial contact when they arrive on campus (Rankin & Reason, 2005). These interactions are often facilitated and planned by student affairs educators, more than 75 percent of whom at the director and senior levels are white (NASPA Salary Survey, 2008).

Society relies heavily on college, and therefore the work of white student affairs educators, to disrupt racial segregation patterns by operating as a socializing agent that transforms students' ideas about race and ethnicity (Astin, 1993; Chang, 1999; Gurin, 2002; Tatum, 2007). While the student affairs profession has engaged in discussions regarding multicultural competence and social justice within our work, relatively few researchers (Edwards, 2006; Landreman, 2007; Pope and Mueller, 2005 and 2001) have addressed the role of student affairs educators. None of them have focused specifically on white student affairs educators and the particular role we can play as racial justice allies. This study attempts to address this gap.

The Western Regional Conference of NASPA presentation will include a summary of the study and a discussion of preliminary findings.

For more information about this research or this presentation, please contact  
Courtney Young-Law  
Doctoral Candidate at Mills College  
[Courtney@alumni.utexas.net](mailto:Courtney@alumni.utexas.net)  
415.336.1298 phone