



## President's Message - Suzanne Simpson, 2020-21

Several weeks have passed since our first ever Virtual Conference. I hope that you found the conference to be a valuable learning experience with the content that was provided for plotting your course into the future. This year was like none other in which you logged in virtually to connect with colleagues from across the region. Unlike recent years, unfortunately there were no cookies and tea or buffet style breakfast to get our day going and to connect with colleagues. We did not get to experience the opening session as we have in the past or relax at the Monday night event. Although we were not face-to-face, we met challenges this year that we will take with us for many years to follow. I hope that you were able to make connections via the chat feature within the online environment and or through other forms of communication throughout the year. If you registered for the conference, you are now able to access the recorded sessions through the [Cvent engagement hub](#) and you can access the slide decks [here](#).



I am very proud of our SAIR Board and the volunteers that assisted in ensuring the success of the 2020 conference "Plotting the Course into the Future". It is my honor to have served as the conference program chair and I have definitely gained an appreciation for former program chairs of the SAIR organization. We had roughly 80+ sessions that were presented within pre-conference workshops, concurrent sessions, and post conference workshops.

Due to the nature of the delivery format, we had a record total of 550 registrants for the virtual conference. I am very pleased with this number and I hope that we can continue to build and grow our organization by providing timely virtual learning sessions and also face-to-face in the near future. This year showed us what we are capable of doing as an organization and I hope we can continue to expand on these learning opportunities.

I am very pleased that I get to pass off the program chair responsibilities to Emily Campbell. She is already running full speed into planning mode. Along with Emily, we have gained additional members on the Board, Meaghann Wheelis will take over registration, Will Miller will convene workshops, and we welcome Jennifer Moore as Secretary, and of course our Nominating Committee who will be hard at work selecting and proposing new SAIR leadership. We have already met a few times and I am pleased with the energy of the Board and the goals that we have set before us. We hope to expand our forms of communication and professional learning environments virtually over the next year. I am excited about the dedication of the Board and what is yet to come for 2020-2021. I am sorry to see past members of the Board leave, as I have grown to admire them as colleagues and as friends, Susan Lounsbury, Susannah Livingood, Barrie Fitzgerald, and Matthew Campbell. They served the Board well and have left a lasting impression on me and I am grateful for their service to the organization.

Last but not least, Rick Burnette moves into the role of Past President. He has been a huge asset to the organization and to the Board and I will lean on his leadership as we move through the next year. He will oversee the nominating committee, but my best guess is that he will provide much more needed leadership to the Board besides that role.

We have an exciting year ahead of us and I invite you to reach out to us and let us know your thoughts and ideas as we continue to move SAIR into the future. We expect wonderful things from our organization and we can only do those things with your help. Thank you for everything that you do for the organization. You should be very proud. Please stay safe and healthy!

Suzanne Simpson

SAIR President

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**SAIR**

SOUTHERN ASSOCIATION  
FOR  
INSTITUTIONAL RESEARCH  
<http://sair.org/about-sair/>

*President*

*Suzanne Simpson*  
*University of Alabama in Huntsville, AL*

*Vice President*

*Emily Campbell*  
*Louisiana Community & Technical  
College System, LA*

*Treasurer*

*Kristy Neal*  
*Louisiana State University, LA*

*Secretary*

*Jennifer Moore*  
*Mississippi University for Women, MS*

*Past President*

*Rick Burnette*  
*Florida State University, FL*

*Members-at-Large*

*Meaghan Wheelis*  
*Baylor University, TX*

*Will Miller*

*Jacksonville University, FL*

*James Hunt*

*Florida State University, FL*

*G. Marc Turner*

*Texas State University, TX*

**Awards and Recognition - James Hunt, Member-at-Large, 2019-21**

It is hard to believe we are already deep into fall and moving closer to a much-deserved holiday break! Despite the ongoing challenges the COVID-19 pandemic has presented us, 2020 has been a remarkable year so far for SAIR Membership and Awards, and there is much to look forward to. Despite not being able to meet in person this year, our first ever virtual conference broke the all-time participation record for a SAIR conference! And because SAIR conference participation comes with a year of association membership, SAIR is now, officially, the largest it has been in its history! For some of you reading, this is the first SAIR newsletter you have received as a member, and I am pleased to join the chorus of SAIR Board members and others in welcoming you!

Speaking of new SAIR members, we had a wonderful group of attendees join us for the first ever virtual Newcomers Workshop. Typically, the Newcomers Workshop is a full-day, preconference experience at our annual conference venue, and the workshop is designed for professionals who are new to the IR and assessment fields. We were determined to continue hosting the Newcomers Workshop, and this year we adapted it to a four-hour, virtual event. In total, we had 29 participants from across the region, and I especially appreciate the commitment of Dr. Lynne Crosby of Austin Peay State University in co-facilitating this year's workshop. Lynne and I hope to be able to connect with these Newcomers in person at SAIR next year!

The Virtual Conference also provided an opportunity to recognize the winners of the 2020 Annual Best Practice Awards. SAIR recognizes outstanding work in Interactive Reports, Print Reports, and Websites. There is some exceptional work happening on all our campuses, and in total we had 36 nominations for this year's awards. Thanks to a team of dedicated reviewers, we were able to recognize these institutions as winners. You can find more information about the Best Practice Awards on the SAIR [web-site](#). Please join me in congratulating these institutions!



**Awards and Recognition - James Hunt, Member-at-Large, 2019-21 (continued)****Best Interactive Report**

*1st Place: Oklahoma State University*

*2nd Place: Clemson University*

*3rd Place: Florida State University*

**Best Print Report**

*1st Place: Winston-Salem State University*

*2nd Place: Florida State University*

*3rd Place: University of Tennessee-Knoxville*

**Best Website**

*1st Place: Florida State University*

*2nd Place: Augusta University*

*3rd Place: University of Tennessee-Knoxville*

In closing, please stay tuned for information on submitting a 2020 Best Paper application, which will be distributed later this fall. In the meantime, I hope to “see” you soon on the SAIR Group on LinkedIn. Until next time, may your data be clean and your reporting deadlines met!

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## Rick Burnette, Past President, 2020-21

We did it! I was so glad that our SAIR 2020 Virtual Conference was a success. I am proud to say that it wasn't even my doing. Other than calling meetings and herding a few cats, my role was minimal. Your Board did a great job figuring out the technologies and still putting together over 50 presentations. Suzanne Simpson was a wonderful Program Chair and I am sure she will continue to advance our organization as SAIR President.

I hope you were part of the record crowd that attended the conference this year. I know that Denise Gardner will be asking for an asterisk in the record book since we broke her all-time conference attendance record, but a win is a win! More importantly, I think the success of having online sessions opens the door to year-round professional development. We have discussed it for years, so maybe it will become a reality.

After a couple exciting years as President, I have gladly embraced the role of Past-President. But rather than sit on the sidelines making irreverent quips in meetings (although I am sure I will be doing that), I would like to finish off our position descriptions, get the code of conduct and Board procedures started, and try to institute some version of a mentoring program.

I am certain my role as Past-President will be less productive than that of Matthew Campbell. You may remember that I asked him to serve a second term as Past-President. I regret that we did not have a face-to-face meeting to send Matthew into SAIR retirement. He has been invaluable to me, and the organization, in the turmoil of the past two years. Matthew has become a great friend, mentor and sounding board for me. Before we served on the board, I knew of him from conferences and thought, "who is this guy" (cautionary tone intended). I now know that he is someone who is intensely dedicated to our organization and a fount of wisdom.

Susan Lounsbury, Susannah Livingood and Barrie Fitzgerald have also rolled off the Board. Thank them for their service through these challenging times. We welcome three new members and those are three more people I will come to know a lot better than I did before. Service has its benefits. Key among them is networking. Get involved and here is to a better year in 2021!



## Vice President and 2021 Program Chair, Emily Campbell, 2020-2021

WOW! That is all I can say about SAIR's 2020 (first ever) Virtual Conference. Suzanne Simpson truly plotted a course into the future (with hundreds of registrants in tow). Thank you, Suzanne and the SAIR Board, for breaking the mold. Our organization is now more agile and resilient because of you.

We now turn our eyes toward SAIR 2021, and your SAIR Board is in full planning mode. Get your fancy hats, seer sucker suits, and mint juleps ready- SAIR is going to Louisville, KY! Be sure to save the date (October 9-12, 2021) and meet us in Louisville!

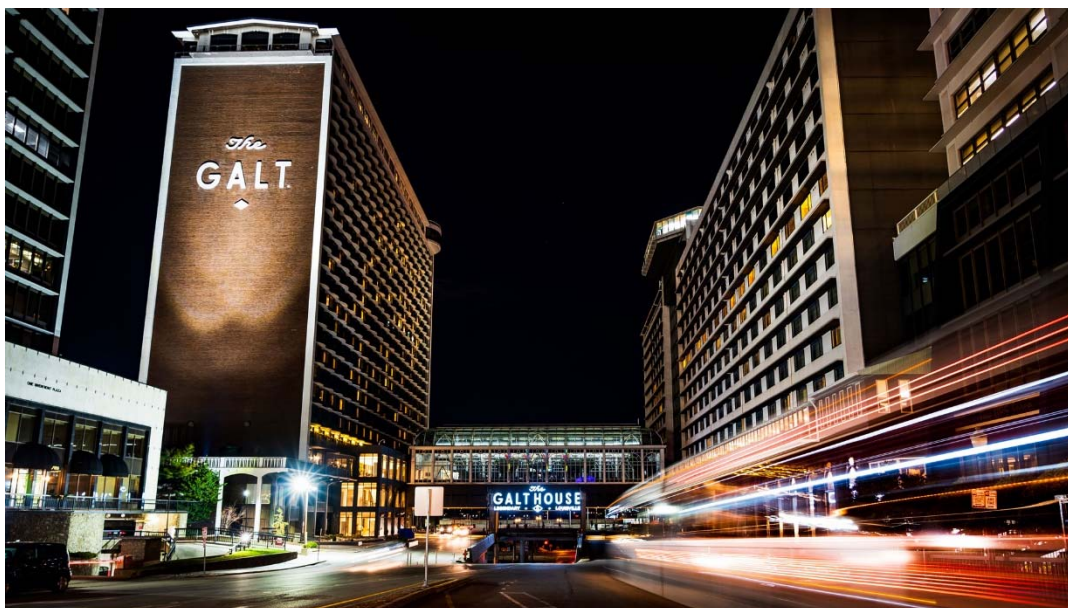


### Five Fun Facts about Louisville:

- ◆ 90% of the United States' disco balls are produced in Louisville each year.
  - ◆ The Old Fashioned is Louisville's official cocktail, which is not to be confused with the Mint Julep that is the official Kentucky Derby cocktail—where over 100,000 Mint Juleps are served.
  - ◆ There is a replica of Babe Ruth's baseball bat in downtown Louisville.
  - ◆ Louisville has the largest annual pyrotechnics show in the country, called "Thunder over Louisville."
  - ◆ Louisville is home to the oldest Mississippi-style steamboat in existence. The Belle of Louisville turned 100 years old in 2014!
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**Vice President and 2021 Program Chair, Emily Campbell, 2020-21  
(continued)**

[The Galt House Hotel](#), the only hotel in Louisville on the Ohio River, is ready to welcome SAIR. With 1,310 guest rooms, the Galt House Hotel is the largest hotel in Kentucky. It has 130,000 square feet of meeting space, six restaurants, a fitness center, a spa, a salon, a barbershop, and several retail shops.



**Coming soon:**

- Conference Theme: The theme for the 2021 conference is currently being developed. Be on the lookout for emails and social media posts announcing the theme and logo in early 2021.
- Call for Proposals: The call for proposals will go out in early 2021. Start planning your pre-conference workshops and concurrent session proposals now.
- Registration: To give the SAIR Board ample time to plan, we hope to open registration for the 2021 Conference earlier than ever

**Got Ideas?**

If you have ideas that will make the SAIR 2021 Conference the best conference SAIR has ever had, I want to hear from you. You can email me directly at [emilycampbell@lctcs.edu](mailto:emilycampbell@lctcs.edu)

In closing, I am humbled to serve as your Vice President and 2021 Program Chair. This organization was the first professional organization I joined when I began my career in higher education over a decade ago. The friends I have made through SAIR are truly special to me, as is this organization.

See you in Louisville,

Emily Campbell

Vice President and 2021 Program Chair

**Southern Association for Institutional Research**  
**Balance Sheet**  
**Accrual Basis As of September, 2020**

<b>ASSETS</b>		
Current Assets		
Checking/Savings		
Bank		
PayPal Account		565.65
Vanguard Mutual Fund	69,619.33	
Wells Fargo Account	84,253.88	
Wells Fargo Savings (Cap. One) Account	26,594.94	
Total Bank	181,033.80	
Total Checking/Savings	181,033.80	
Total Current Assets	181,033.80	
<b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>	<b>181,033.80</b>	
LIABILITIES & EQUITY		
Equity		
Net Assets	172,021.53	
Retained Earnings	6,371.65	
Net Income	2,640.62	
Total Equity	181,033.80	
<b>TOTAL LIABILITIES &amp; EQUITY</b>	<b>181,033.80</b>	

**Southern Association for Institutional Research**  
**Profit & Loss**  
**Accrual Basis, July through September 2020**

Ordinary Income/Expense		
Income		
Bank Interest	3.16	
Change in Mutual Fund	2,499.18	
Conference Sponsorships	6,750.00	
Direct Public Support		
Individual Business Contributions		25.00
Total Direct Public Support		25.00
Member Conference Fees	14,900.00	
Membership Fees	650.00	
Total Income	24,827.34	
Gross Profit	24,827.34	
Expense		
Accounting	700.00	
Conference	23,184.81	
Elavon Merchant Account Fees	119.91	
PayPal Merchant Account Fees	22.10	
Total Expense	24,026.82	
Net Ordinary Income	800.52	
Net Income	800.52	



## Professional Development - Will Miller, Member-at-Large, 2020-22

Hello, everyone!

After record attendance for workshops during the conference in September, we are examining ways to build a continual learning opportunity for SAIR members throughout the year! While we continue to determine whether to attempt monthly lunch and learns or a more formalized credentialing opportunity, please reach out with any suggestions or ideas!

Also, planning has already begun for the 2021 SAIR conference. I am hoping to offer some of our best attended topics (data visualization, Power BI, Excel, faculty credentials, and Tableau—for example) while adding some new themes (such as operating in a new normal, organizational culture in today's higher education institution, etc.) Again, please reach out with any ideas here!

Reach me at [wmiller5@ju.edu](mailto:wmiller5@ju.edu)

Will Miller  
Member-at-Large, 2020-2022

The words "Thank You" are written in a highly decorative, black cursive script. The letters are thick and feature elaborate flourishes, including long, sweeping loops and intricate swirls that extend from the main text. The overall style is elegant and formal.

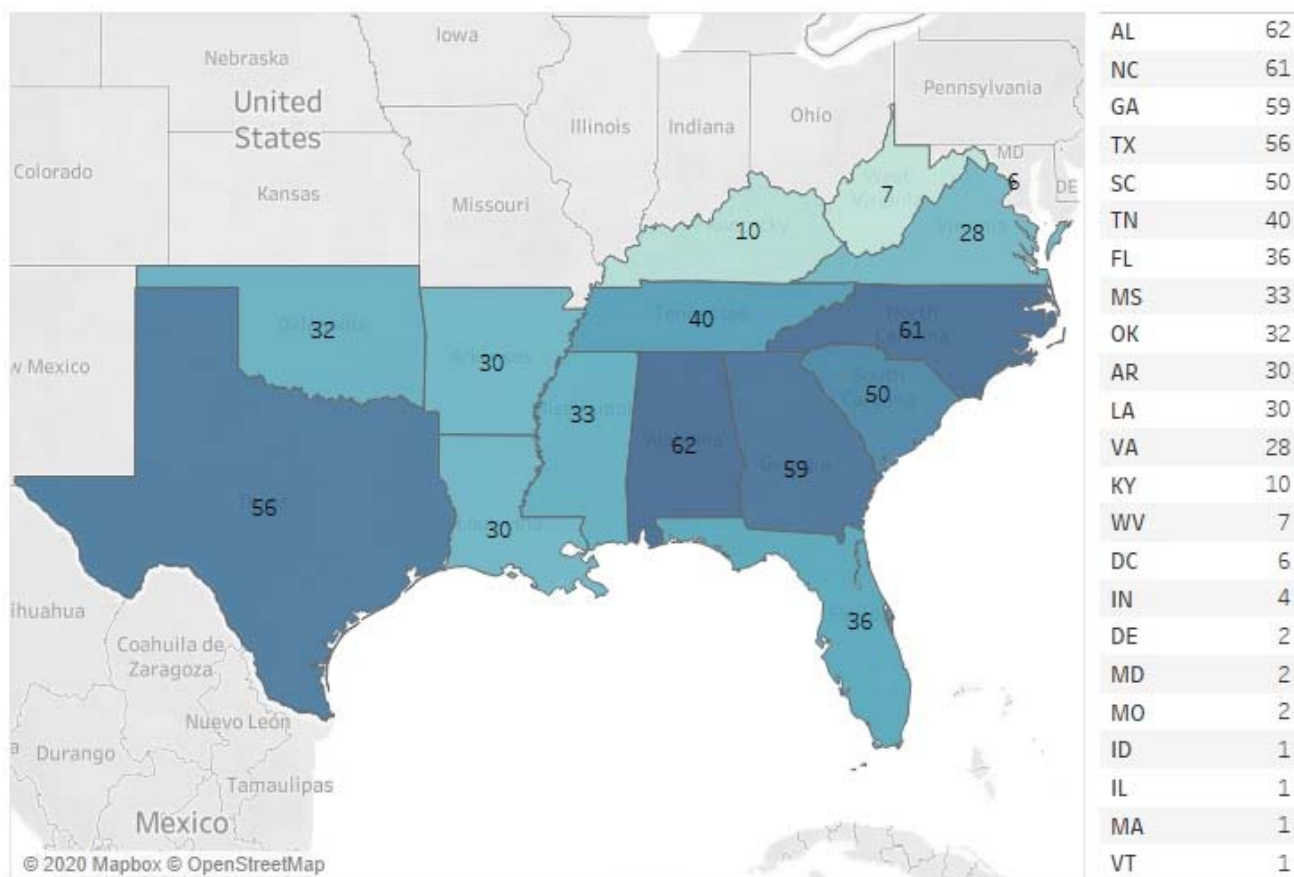
### Membership - Meaghann Wheelis, Member-at-Large, 2020-22

I want to start by recognizing Susannah Livingood for all of her work to quickly pivot and setup the online platform for the first virtual SAIR conference this year. By now I am sure we have all experienced one or two “challenges” with virtual formats, and Susannah made this transition painless for our members. Please join me in giving her a (virtual) round of applause!

One of the benefits of the online platform is that it allows us to see more data than ever on conference attendance- an institutional researcher’s dream! Conference registrations totaled a record 550 this year, no doubt due to the exciting topics, virtual format, and affordable conference fee. Without room capacity constraints, concurrent sessions had an average attendance of 54 with a high of 159 participants- no standing required! Leadership and data visualization were two hot topics this year, which is no surprise given the rapidly changing landscape and need for more and more data to inform decisions.

Thank you to everyone who presented, attended, and contributed to the SAIR 2020 virtual conference. We are busy preparing for next year’s conference and hope to see you in Louisville!

2020-21 SAIR Conference Membership by State



**Sponsors and Exhibitors - G. Marc Turner, Member-at-Large, 2019-2021**

The SAIR Board and members are highly appreciative for the support and generosity of our amazing sponsors and exhibitors. Their contributions to the SAIR 2020 Annual Conference allowed the association to provide a quality experience to our members. Exposure to their innovations and networking opportunities with representatives continue to be valuable experiences for our members enhancing both the effectiveness and efficiency of our offices. We look forward to seeing them again next year along with many more!

**GOLD**



**SILVER**



**BRONZE**



**EXHIBITORS**



## A WORD FROM SAIR AFFILIATES...Updates on State AIR Conferences



The annual conference of the **Mississippi Association for Institutional Research (MAIR)** will take place *March 25-26, 2021* virtually.



The **2021 TAIR Annual Conference** will take place *February 28 - March 3, 2021*, at the Embassy Suites, Denton, Texas.

### **SAIR Affiliated Regional, State, and Interest Groups**

The Southern Association for Institutional Research is officially recognized as an affiliated group by the Association for Institutional Research (AIR). The following associations/groups are recognized as constituent groups by SAIR for the purpose of program planning and service:

**Please check out the following links for updates on upcoming conferences and webinars!**

[Alabama Association for Institutional Research \(ALAIR\)](#)

[Arkansas Institutional Research Organization \(AIRO\)](#)

[Florida Association for Institutional Research \(FAIR\)](#)

[Georgia Association of Institutional Research, Planning, Assessment, and Quality \(GAIRPAQ\)](#)

[Kentucky Association for Institutional Research \(KAIR\)](#)

[Louisiana Association for Institutional Research \(LAIR\)](#)

[Maryland Association for Institutional Research \(MdAIR\)](#)

[Mississippi Association for Institutional Research \(MAIR\)](#)

[North Carolina Association for Institutional Research \(NCAIR\)](#)

[Oklahoma Association for Institutional Research \(OK-AIR\)](#)

[South Carolina Association for Institutional Research \(SCAIR\)](#)

[Southeastern Association for Community College Research \(SACCR\)](#)

[Tennessee Association for Institutional Research \(TENNAIR\)](#)

[Texas Association for Institutional Research \(TAIR\)](#)

[Virginia Association for Management Analysis and Planning \(VAMAP\)](#)