



Southern AIR

NEWSLETTER OF THE SOUTHERN ASSOCIATION OF INSTITUTIONAL RESEARCH

1984 SAIR TO FOCUS ON ANALYTICAL SUPPORT

The Theme of the 1984 Conference of the Southern Association for Institutional Research, which will be held in Little Rock, Arkansas, October 24-26, is **Analytical Support: Contributions to Institutional Planning and Management**. The Keynote Speaker, Dr. Raymond Haas, University of Virginia, and the Moderators of the Conference's two Theme Panels, Dr. John Moore, Old Dominion University, and Dr. James Firnberg, new Chancellor at LSU-Alexandria, will consider how analytical support contributes to the decision-making

process. The Call for Participation is being prepared and will be distributed in late April. Efforts are being made this year to contact SCUP members from the region and invite them to attend the SAIR 1984 Conference. The members of the Program Committee—Bob Lewis, Local Arrangements; Maryann Ruddock, Contributed Papers; Charly Bryson and Peggy Moore, Publicity; Carol Kayla, Workshops; Gerry McLaughlin, Proceedings; Tim Sanford, Evaluation; Kay Staub, Finance; and Liz Fox, Chair—urge you to plan to participate in the Little Rock Conference. A stimulating program, opportunities for renewing professional contacts, and the special events being planned by the Local Arrangements Committee should make this Conference especially worthwhile.

Liz Fox

Little Rock To Host 1984 SAIR Conference

October 24-26 is not far away! With this time frame in mind, your Local Arrangements Committee is laying the foundation for a successful SAIR '84 Conference in Little Rock. Bill Parker, Coordinator of I.R. at Arkansas Tech, is chairing the Exhibits and Sponsors subcommittee, while McKinley Newton, V.P. for Government Relations at Philander Smith College, is planning for your creature comforts as Chairman of the Hospitality Subcommittee. Joanne Branscum, of the Arkansas Department of Higher Education, is making sure everything goes as scheduled by serving as your Registration and Program Support subcommittee Chair. In fact, negotiations are being carried out this very minute to secure for you the lowest rates and best fares to Little Rock.

Special events are also being planned. They will include the 2nd Annual SAIR Round Robin Tennis Tournament and the Annual SAIR Fun Run with Joe Marks, Charlie Brown, Liz Fox, and Rich Howard defending their "titles". (See related story on Page 4.) In addition, the Hilton is planning to lay out one of the best Wine and Cheese spreads that you have ever seen. And just for your added enjoyment, several exciting activities (e.g., the Mineral Baths in Hot Springs and the Ozark Highland Games in Batesville) are being lined up as Post Conference activities. As Monte Hall might say, **COME ON DOWN! WE WANT TO SEE YOUR FACE IN OUR PLACE — LITTLE ROCK.**

Bob Lewis

AIR FORUM To Be In Fort Worth

Advances in technology, the use of information in decision making, and a new set of emerging challenges are changing the manner in which colleges and universities function. The nature of these changes will be explored at the 1984 AIR FORUM in Ft. Worth, Texas at the Hyatt Regency on May 6-9. Richard Van Horn, Chancellor of the University of Houston, will deliver the keynote address on the theme of this year's FORUM: **The Revolution in Administrative Roles in Higher Education**.

A special emphasis of the FORUM will be placed on assessing the role of the state and other external agencies in higher education. Also, as a new venture, the FORUM will feature a vendors/demonstration/applications track that will provide interested attendees with "hands-on" experiences with personal computers, new software, tutorials, and other technological advances for the institutional researcher.

SAIR MEETING AT AIR FORUM
Monday Morning, May 7, 1984
7:30 - 8:30 a.m.
Texas Ballroom C
Hyatt Regency Fort Worth

Numerous and exciting activities have been planned by the local arrangements committee for those who wish to encounter the Old (and the New) Wild West. Just a few of the activities are: Saturday evening "Taste of Texas" reception; FORUM Banquet at the Stockyards National Historic District, featuring barbeque, shoot-outs, surrey rides; and a new "wind-up party" at Joe T. Garcia's Fiesta Garden. Ya'll do come see us!

Don Norris
 Horace Griffitts

From The President's Desk

In last Spring's issue of the SAIR Newsletter, Gerry McLaughlin developed the hypothesis that the future of SAIR will ultimately reside "in our willingness to work with each other to develop our skills." I believe this was a primary reason that SAIR was formed and has, over the past five or six years, through workshops and paper presentations at the annual meeting provided a medium for this to happen.

Expansion of the SAIR annual meeting during this time period reflects a second reason for the growth and success of SAIR: the need of the individual members to meet colleagues and develop contacts or a "support network." If one were to examine the mix of responsibilities associated with institutional research offices in the south, it

seems that each of us holds a unique job. And, if your experience is anything like mine, you are asked periodically to examine issues which have never before crossed your desk and require skills or techniques that you have not studied. It's in situations like this that a well-developed support network of colleagues will most likely be able to provide quickly the insights needed to obtain the information you have been asked to find.

All of this is a prelude or justification to urge you to continue or become a participant in SAIR. It is not my intent to downgrade the value of the workshops or papers that are presented (and most likely they will be the successful justification for you to attend the meeting) but to suggest that the more valuable component of the

meeting will be the informal contacts you will make. Care is taken each year by the program committee to provide opportunities for this to happen during the meeting. All it takes is your attendance and a willingness to meet your colleagues and share your experiences.

The continued success of SAIR's ability to provide opportunity for meaningful exchanges among institutional research professionals in the south depends solely on your willingness to participate in its annual meeting. The "call for participation" for this year's meeting in Little Rock, Arkansas, should be reaching you soon. I urge you to take full advantage of the opportunities for professional growth that will be available at the meeting.

Rich Howard

SAIR NEWS ROUND-UP

Florida SCIR

The 17th Annual Florida State Conference on Institutional Research is in the planning stages for its June 20-22, 1984 meeting. This year FSCIR will be meeting in Daytona Beach at the Surfside Holiday Inn. Wayne Bottomley and Jackie Scott are planning the conference, organized around the theme of Strategic Planning Issues in Florida: Staying "One Jump Ahead" in I.R. Other areas to be discussed include interinstitutional cooperative agreements, testing, legislative developments, budget strategies, and other management techniques. The call for papers is now out and further information will be forthcoming throughout the state. We are looking forward to a very good and useful conference, and we look forward to seeing all of our colleagues from Florida in Daytona Beach in June!

Wayne Bottomley

Arkansas AIR

The first of what is expected to be an annual event was held September 15 in North Little Rock, Arkansas, when 22 institutional researchers from 13 institutions gathered for a one-day conference. Dr. Joe Sutton, Executive Director of the Alabama Commission on Higher Education, was the featured speaker. Sessions included a workshop on the theme of "Strategic Planning Issues in Florida: Staying One Jump Ahead in I.R." Other areas to be discussed include interinstitutional cooperative agreements, conference in Little Rock in 1984." Those attending the meeting voted to continue meeting on an annual basis, but decided not to create a formal organization. For further information on upcoming Arkansas meetings, please contact Richard Hudson at (501) 785-4241.

Richard Hudson

Maryland CCRG

The Maryland Community College Research Group, which has been meeting monthly for the past ten years for coordination of statewide research, sharing of resources and ideas, and professional development of its members, will hold a spring work retreat. Special workshops will focus on personal computer software, advanced statistics, technical report writing, labor market projections, and elaboration of the analyses which have been conducted on the statewide surveys. John Quinley, Harford Community College, and Margaret French, Chesapeake College, are the President and Vice President, respectively, for 1983-84.

In the past, MCCRG has been instrumental in the community college system's effort in conducting standard follow-up surveys, developing computerized data systems, and conducting economic impact studies.

Dan McConochie

Mississippi AIR

The Annual meeting of the Mississippi AIR was held at William Cary College on October 18, 1983. The meeting was held in conjunction with the 50th Annual Mississippi Junior Senior College Conference and was attended by approximately sixty institutional researchers and other higher education representatives. The keynote speech on this year's theme, "Striving for Excellence in an Era of Declining Resources," was delivered by Dr. James McComas, President of Mississippi State University. Two seminar presentations focused on academic and financial responses to conditions currently impairing public and private institutions in the state. Officers elected for 1984-85 were: Bobby Sharp, President; Sidney McLaurin, Vice President. The next meeting of MAIR will be held on May 8, 1984, in Fort Worth in conjunction with AIR.

Dick Gruetzemacher

North Carolina AIR

The NCAIR held two workshops during the past year and has scheduled its annual meeting for April 4-6, 1984, in Burlington. The theme will be "The Ever-Changing Role of the Institutional Researcher." The keynote address will be delivered by Dr. William Lasher. Other topics to be covered include a president's view of institutional research by Dr. John Weems, President of Meredith College, computer applications in institutional research, and an update of state reporting matters by Gary Barnes and Ralph Byers.

On a personal note, Dr. Lillian Lehman, Registrar and Director of Institutional Research at the University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill, retired. NCAIR wishes to express its appreciation of her support and involvement with NCAIR and wishes her the best in her future endeavors.

LaRose Spooner

Texas AIR

In keeping with a young but thriving tradition, the Sixth Annual TAIR Conference on February 16-17 at El Paso, was well attended and enjoyed by all. Despite some concern with the distance of this site from most cities, some 55 "saddle-worn" institutional researchers from all over the state attended.

The program dealt with various topics including integrated data bases, changing roles of institutional research, as well as concurrent special interest group sessions. The participants also heard a light-hearted but insightful presentation by President Haskell Monroe of UT-El Paso on the perils of the college presidency. Other activities included a preview of the plans for the AIR Forum and the election of William Nylin to the post of 1984-85 TAIR Vice President and Program Chair.

Joseph Szutz

GUEST EDITORIAL

(Editor's Note: At the SAIR Business Meeting, Jim Montgomery raised several points regarding the future of SAIR. I have asked him to elaborate upon these points with the hope of stimulating some thought and potential discussion at our Little Rock conference. I would also like to receive your reactions and comments so that they may be published in the next SAIR Newsletter. Please address your comments to: Dennis Hengstler, Office of Institutional Research, University of North Carolina-Asheville, Asheville, N.C. 28804-3299.)

ASSESSING SUCCESS Thoughts by Jim Montgomery Virginia Tech

The years have flashed by since the Southern Regional Education Board in 1960 sponsored a session on institutional research. That conference, together with efforts of the Commission on Colleges of the Southern Association and the American Council on Education, helped create a climate that caused many colleges and universities to organize offices of institutional research. The individuals in these offices sought the exchange of ideas, procedures, and methodologies through the Association for Institutional Research, state groups, and the Southern Association for Institutional Research. At the same time, the rapid development of state councils and state systems and the call for accountability caused the need for institutional research activities in state agencies while causing campuses to add staff to answer their questions and to support internal management needs. As a consequence, colleges and universities developed a wide array of individuals studying and reviewing higher education—far broader than an institutional researcher and what staff he/she had. Soon institutions acquired associate and

assistant vice presidents or deans engaged in budget analysis and preparation, systems analysis, and other studies that could be considered institutional research in nature.

The old institutional researcher on large campuses became a small part of the large infrastructure required to complete reports for state and federal agencies, develop facts and figures, and conduct institutional research. Meanwhile, the institutional researcher at the small institution faced much the same problem and if resources were scarce might disappear altogether as a separate entity; the functions, however, continued.

The new breed of institutional researcher (some of whom had been "old institutional researchers") had staffs that at times subsumed what had been institutional research—sometimes absorbing it by name; at times performing its functions regardless of name. But this new breed of institutional researchers did not necessarily see themselves as institutional researchers; rather, they were often a part of middle management in functions such as finance or academic affairs.

The term "institutional research" can be and is used in a generic sense. But many individuals still hold that title, and what they do or fail to do is at times interpreted as the standard of the field. Moreover, even those who still hold the title appear to be moving toward planning and certainly some budget analysis. The question that SAIR needs to face is whether we attract this "new institutional researcher," that is those who perform such activity regardless of title or position.

Two years ago the Association for Institutional Research decided to review its directions and purposes and appointed a blue-ribbon committee for that purpose. Its report will be before that Association in May of 1984. Last fall, at our business

meeting in Orlando, I suggested that SAIR also needed to review whether it effectively served the men and women associated with higher education who undertake management studies or who teach students the techniques for the study of higher education (regardless of title). I am not certain, for example, whether SAIR attracts the "new institutional researchers" sufficiently to bring their participation in SAIR. But such persons are now engaged in institutional research functions (generically speaking). Moreover, I am not certain that officers in state coordinating boards consider themselves institutional researchers—their titles are far different, even though the duties may be in the arena of institutional research.

In my opinion, SAIR needs a Conference program that appeals to those who perform the functions of IR whether their title be planner, budget analyst, Statistician, institutional researcher, or professor of higher education. Yes, we have been giving programs to accommodate such individuals, but we may need new ways to package them. Given travel restrictions, it may be time to have meetings of SAIR back to back with planners or business officers wherein there is some overlap on programs of mutual interest while each group still can focus on its own individual program. It is time to think about a change of name? In Virginia, we have a committee reviewing the by-laws of the Virginia Association for Institutional Research. That group is proposing to change the name of the Virginia Association for Management Analysis and Planning (or VAMAP). Whether the SAIR is ready for a name change remains to be seen; however, it seems to me that we are ready for an assessment of how better to serve those in management who are engaged in that elusive activity of institutional research.

SAIR News Round-Up (Continued)

Virginia AIR

The annual meeting of the VAIR was held on November 14-16, 1983 at Virginia Beach. The conference program was organized around three symposiums which addressed the conference theme "How Will Post Secondary Education in Virginia Respond to the Challenge of the Next Decade?" The three symposiums dealt with "Planned Change in the Implementation of New Administrative Information Systems," "Decision Support Systems in College and University Administration," and "The Role of Institutional Research in the Budgetary Process of the Institution." At the business meeting, President William Fendley appointed a committee to revise the constitution; Edith Carter and Jean Keating were elected President and Secretary-Treasurer, respectively, for 1983-84.

The 1984 annual meeting will be held in Fairfax, Virginia with Charles Render serving as Conference Chairman.

Edie Carter

West Virginia AIR

The Seventh Annual West Virginia Conference on Institutional Research and Planning was held December 1-2 at Marshall University. The theme of the conference was "Planning in a Time of Uncertainty." Keynote speakers were Dr. Cameron Fincher of the University of Georgia, who discussed different approaches to planning, and Dr. W. Kevin Hunt of Tidewater Community College, who discussed the changing computer technological environment and its impact on higher education.

Other highlights of the conference included an unforgettable demonstration of beer cans by Gary Graff—sorry, the cans were empty. A surprise party was also given for our "fearless leader" Rich Howard, who was leaving West Virginia University for North Carolina State University. We all wish him success.

Diana Joseph

TBCU

During the past year, the major work of the Traditional Black Colleges and Universities has been assigned to the following committees: Program, Nominations, Constitution, Membership, Liaison, Awards, Newsletter, Professional Development, Data Base Development, Joint Research, and Financial Affairs. All TBCU members serve on at least one committee.

To assist the Program and Professional Development committees, the TBCU membership was surveyed using a modification of Don Reichard's Professional Development Questionnaire. The findings proved to be valuable in identifying members who have expertise to address those needs. A clearinghouse has been established through which members in need of assistance in some area of IR can receive a list of TBCU members with the skills and experience to assist them.

A number of plans are scheduled for the AIR Forum in Ft. Worth including: a special presentation of papers by female members of TBCU, increased participation in the SIG:FAIR, an awards presentation, and a special social hour.

John Baker

1983 SAIR Conference Evaluation

It should come as no surprise to anyone who was at Daytona Beach that the conference evaluations showed an overwhelming satisfaction with the local arrangements and the less formal conference activities. Apparently, discussing institutional research matters on a Florida beach in October agreed with many of the participants.

Other areas in which the 37 respondents agreed that the conference excelled were the quality of the contributed papers, the pre-conference workshops, the luncheon and keynote address, and the opportunities to develop and maintain contacts with colleagues.

Major reasons for attending the conference produced a first place tie between developing and maintaining active professional contacts and gaining new information about institutional research. Learning how people have handled similar IR problems and social aspects of the conference were listed as other reasons for attending

the conference.

On a humorous note, Rich Howard has identified several "firsts" at this conference. It was the first time that: 1) a race was held as a scheduled activity at a SAIR meeting (if we do this again, he suggests that Wayne Bottomly not be asked to organize it until he assures us that he understands about finish lines); 2) the President and Vice President ran past the finish line and didn't realize it until several miles later; 3) the President took office dressed in a warm-up suit (having just completed an endless race with the Vice-President).

Rich has also identified several important traditions that were carried on. At the Business Meeting, Jim Montgomery told another of his infamous jokes from the hills of southwestern Virginia. Joe Sutton chaired his annual Thursday afternoon SIG meeting—Joe has yet to publish an agenda for this SIG meeting.

There were many other events which will be remembered by those attending the meeting; however, some of those events are simply unprintable. It is hoped that those who attended the meeting found it professionally rewarding and that you truly enjoyed yourselves.

Greg Litaker

A Banner Year for SAIR Membership

A review of last year's accomplishments indicates that 1983 was a banner year for membership. The roles have reached a high of 208, due in part to the excellent conference held in Daytona Beach, but also due to the hard working State Contact Committee. Through the efforts of this group, some 1,000 names were added to our mailing list. Our top priority now is to review and improve this resource. The second challenge is to work out a schedule and process for communications from your Board of Directors which will ensure timely receipt of mailings. Charlie Bryons, Liz Fox, Denny Hengstler, and Peggy Moore will be working together to achieve the desired results.

REMEMBER! Tell a friend about SAIR, its objectives and activities, and use the handy tear-off membership application. Furthermore, don't be shy about writing with your questions, suggestions, or concerns.

Peggy Moore

SAIR Membership Application

Please mail the completed form and check to: SAIR

Ms. Kay Staub/Institutional Research/P.O. Box 6255/University, Alabama 35486

October 1983 to October 1984

Name _____

Position: _____

Institution: _____

Telephone _____

Department _____

City/State _____ Zip _____

SAIR Membership

Regular

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NEWSLETTER

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