

**Western Regional Honors Council Business Meeting
Friday, November 8th, 2019. Sheraton New Orleans
Minutes**

Officers present: Jayci Bash (Southern Utah University), Vice-President, Daniel Villanueva (Nevada System of Higher Education). Secretary/Treasurer, Kim Andersen (Washington State University), At-Large

Officers excused: Ilse-Mari Lee (Montana State University), President - represented by Logan Schultz, Carmichael Peters (Chapman University), Past President - represented by Ashley Cosgrove

Member institutions present: 28. A quorum therefore existed to conduct business.

The meeting was called to order at 4:00 PM by *Logan Schultz* (Montana State University), representing WRHC President *Ilse-Mari Lee* who was excused.

After the draft minutes of the March 2019 WRHC business meeting were distributed (also made available online prior to the meeting), *Schultz* asked if there were any additions or edits, and then entertained a motion to approve the minutes as presented. *Ashley Cosgrove* (Chapman) so moved, and *Carol Johnson* (Central Arizona College) seconded the motion. Hearing no discussion, a vote to approve was taken and was unanimous in the affirmative.

Schultz then provided the President's Report, which consisted of final attendance and budget figures for WRHC 2019, available in full at wrhcouncil.org/conferences. *Schultz* highlighted the number of attending Honors Programs and Colleges (43) and paid registrations (267). The conference netted a surplus of \$4,847.15, which will be deposited to WRHC along with the \$1500 seed money for the conference. All present applauded *Schultz* and his Montana State University organizing team for a great event, in particular the good variety of presentation types, the Yellowstone excursion, and the afternoon of performing arts presentations which, it is hoped, future conference hosts will also take time to build into the program.

Daniel Villanueva (Nevada System of Higher Education) next distributed copies of the current (November 4, 2019) financial and membership report. Copies are also directly available from *Villanueva* upon request.

114 institutions renewed their WRHC membership or became new members in 2019, while 23 2018 member institutions have not been in communication to renew despite repeated reminders or have indicated to *Villanueva* they will not renew membership in 2019. The most oft-cited reason was the cost of membership in times of declining budgets at the respective institutions. The current account balance is \$58,896.89, down some \$6,000 from March 2019 and about \$2,000 from last year at this time. Factors contributing to this include a lower 2019 membership renewal rate, \$380 in payment processing fees – the first year WRHC has accepted electronic payments - as well as a lower WRHC conference surplus relative to previous years. Regular recurring costs (website renewal, Scribendi subsidy, travel stipends, etc.) have remained stable. *Villanueva* does expect that once the WRHC 2019 surplus noted above as well as two promised outstanding dues payments are received, the 2019 ending balance will be closer to \$60,000 once those are deposited and regular fall expenditures (intern and travel stipends) are subtracted.

Villanueva also noted that – assuming the number of members remains the same– revenue from dues will be lower by about \$2,000 in 2020 and \$1,300 in 2021 due to the fact that 12 institutions paid this year for 2019 and 2020 dues, and 9 institutions paid 2019, 2020, and 2021 dues in advance this year.

Villanueva entertained a motion to approve the financial report as submitted to the Board and distributed to the membership, which was so moved by *Cosgrove* and seconded by *Greg Lanier* (University of New Mexico). No further discussion was heard. The vote was unanimous in the affirmative to approve the report.

The membership next heard from Vice President *Jayci Bash* (Southern Utah University), coordinator of the WRHC 2020 conference (“20/20 Perspectives”) to be held in Cedar City, UT March 27-29, 2020. She noted that it was great that it was just around the corner given that planning for the conference has been going on now for a number of years. One can either fly into Las Vegas and rent a car to travel to Cedar City, or drive from one’s home institution if it’s closer or easier. The *Scribendi* reception will be held at the Southern Utah Museum of Art and the keynote speaker is confirmed to be Troy Williams, Executive Director of Equality Utah, on the topic of civic engagement. An excursion to Kolob Canyon is also planned. The Call for Papers and website link should be ready within the next week or so, with an expected submission deadline of the first week of January, and full information will then be sent out to the membership and posted on the WRHC Facebook page and website as well.

At-Large Board member and WRHC 2021 conference coordinator *Kim Andersen* (Washington State University) then reported on plans for “Planet and Peoples: Conservation and Coexistence,” from March 26-28, 2021. There are several transportation options to get to Pullman, whether flying directly there or to Spokane or Lewiston. There are on-campus hotels but there will also be shuttle service given the terrain at WSU. An excursion to the Nez Perce Historical Museum is planned, which affords magnificent natural views both in traveling there and once there. The Executive Director of the Nez Perce Tribe, Rebecca Miles, will be the conference keynote speaker, and the organizers welcome papers especially on climate change issues (though of course other general topics will also be considered.)

In conjunction with *Bash’s* conference update, *Villanueva* entertained a motion to vote to approve the WRHC 2020 conference registration fees as presented by *Bash*. These are: Early bird: \$160 (students), \$180 (faculty/staff); Regular: \$180 (students), \$200 (faculty/staff). WRHC 2020 organizers will communicate to the membership when the early-bird registration date begins and ends. *Schultz* noted that these fees have remained unchanged since 2013.

A motion to approve the WRHC 2020 fees as listed above was made by *Schultz* and seconded by *Maria Jerinic* (UNLV). No discussion was heard. The motion was approved unanimously by all members present.

Schultz then invited representatives from the University of New Mexico and the University of Montana, Missoula to introduce their institutions for consideration as WRHC conference sites.

Greg Lanier (University of New Mexico) spoke about Albuquerque’s natural beauty (Sandia Mountains) and the renowned red/green chiles (and food in general) as positive reasons for hosting, in addition to UNM’s rich history as a founding WRHC member and prior conference host several times. He took up the idea suggested in a previous discussion of having an Honors professional development seminar during the conference, joking that it could be called “Breaking Good” rather than “Breaking Bad.”

Kaetlyn Cordingley (University of Montana, Missoula) then introduced her Honors College as a potential host. Since WRHC 2019 was just held in Montana, she hoped members would remember the wonderful scenery and climate at the time in Bozeman which should be similar in Missoula. UMT’s Honors College has about 700 students and the infrastructure to host, and Glacier National Park would be an ideal excursion.

Schultz then asked if other institutions wished to have their sites considered. Hearing no further nominations from members present, *Villanueva* then entertained a motion to approve the University of New Mexico Honors College’s proposal to host WRHC 2022. *Schultz* so moved and was seconded by *Tim Nichols* (University of Montana, Missoula). There was no discussion thereafter and the motion passed unanimously. *Schultz* then moved to approve the University of Montana at Missoula’s proposal to host WRHC 2023, which was seconded by *Christopher Syrnyk* (Oregon Institute of Technology). There was no discussion thereafter and the motion passed unanimously.

After the votes, *Dan Bedford* (Weber State University) suggested WRHC think outside the box to address carbon emissions concerns as a result of our regional conferences, and to perhaps re-think the way WRHC has meetings and conferences to reduce our carbon emissions in our academic activities. *Megan Hughes-Zarzo* (MSU Denver) suggested the goal of a zero-waste conference, while *Schultz* suggested a session or workshop on this during WRHC 2020 in Utah. *Andersen* noted WRHC 2021 is especially interested in soliciting proposals and workshops on climate change issues, while *Cordingley* mentioned that her institution has a climate studies minor and that activities involving such students could be included in WRHC 2023. *Bedford's* own suggestions included installing a carbon emissions calculator on upcoming conferences' websites, as well as building in pop-ups on conference registration pages that would suggest ways to explore lower carbon emissions in travel to the conference. *Bash* will report back on the potential of such options.

Amaris Ketcham (University of New Mexico) gave the following *Scribendi* updates: There were 553 total submissions this year, slightly up from last year but nearly double those from 2017. She noted that this past year, some errors crept into the final version due to staff's attempts to have the print edition ready by the end of March for the WRHC conferences. With more WRHC's being scheduled in March including the next two years, it may be hard to guarantee that the print edition will be released by the given conference date. In any case, a *Scribendi* reception will be held at each conference and the edition's winners can be announced and celebrated. *Ketcham* then introduced this year's student editors: *Faith Montano*, Editor in Chief, *Tirzah Reeves*, Managing Editor, *Bettyjane Hoover*, Digital Editor, and *Rowan Roberts*, Office Manager.

Next, *Villanueva* reminded the membership about the WRHC website and Facebook page, and renewed a call for any interested students to assist in WRHC social media projects. *Ketcham* suggested, and *Bash* confirmed, that the WRHC 2020 organizing team should/will "take over" official WRHC social media channels for conference publicity and updates. Due to several requests, he will send out the links to the WRHC Facebook page and website in an e-mail to all members.

News and Announcements

NCHC: *Richard Badenhausen*, NCHC President, was present to encourage members to thank conference chair *Elaine Torda* (SUNY Orange) and the entire conference planning and hosting team for a great NCHC 2019. He recounted several important developments over the past year at NCHC, namely creating a new strategic plan, a diversity and inclusion statement, and a balanced budget for the national organization. He and NCHC VP *Suketu Bhavsar* (Cal Poly Pomona) also followed up on a discussion raised by WRHC members at NCHC 2018, namely the issue of some states not allowing public funds to be used to travel to or attend NCHC 2020 in Dallas, TX. The NCHC Board and legal counsel investigated the possibility of moving next year's conference but found it to be cost-prohibitive to break existing contracts. *Susan Cannata* (Central Arizona University) asked why it was not possible to change or select appropriate sites for the near future, and how decision-making would be conducted moving forward.

Badenhausen noted that an ad hoc committee on principled decision-making was created on which *Bhavsar* sits and which is chaired by *François Amar* (University of Maine) to address this and related issues, and that a full statement regarding NCHC's position is on their website. The statement was also distributed during the business meeting. *Bhavsar* expressed his willingness to research alternative options for travel funds (such as use of Foundation funds) for NCHC 2020 and convey potential options to interested members upon request. He also noted that – intellectual property and technical issues permitting – he hopes to have many NCHC sessions available online for those who cannot attend.

Kristine Miller (Utah Valley University) and *Christopher Syrnyk* (Oregon Institute of Technology) stood to be recognized as candidates for the NCHC Board of Directors. *Keith Miller* (University of Denver) is also a candidate from the WRHC region but was not able to be present to be recognized.

WRHC announcements: *Villanueva* announced that *Andersen* will become WRHC VP in March 2020 upon WSU becoming the upcoming host site. Nominations for a new At-Large member are now being solicited and a vote will be held at our March 2020 business meeting. Those interested should contact *Villanueva*, *Lee*, or *Schultz* with any questions. A description of the qualifications and duties of the At-Large member is in the WRHC by-laws at our website.

Villanueva, *Andersen*, and *Badenhausen* were present at a regional Board breakfast earlier that morning at which increased regional cooperation was discussed, and how this could be supported by NCHC. Some of the ideas suggested were regional council member exchanges (visiting each others' conferences, a listserv for increased cooperation, use of a shared Grenadine account for conference program apps, interregional collaboration on service projects, undergraduate Honors journals, and general communication regarding topics of interest that transcend a specific region. Since this is not an undertaking just for one Board, one region, or one year, the WRHC Board will solicit more input from those who originally proposed the idea (the Northeast Regional Honors Council), discuss it at Board level, and solicit general member interest in supporting and sustaining such efforts. The NCHC staff members present generously offered their website as a collaboration platform and are supportive of increased regional collaboration in general.

WRHC travel stipend reports: *Bash* reported on behalf of her student *Madison Green* (Southern Utah University) how grateful she was for having received a travel stipend to support her participation in Partners in the Parks, Costa Rica. *Bash* confirmed that the funds were put to good use in a life-changing experience for *Madison*. *Joanne Clark Dillman* (UW-Tacoma) also expressed her gratitude for having received a faculty travel stipend to attend this year's NCHC. As an Honors instructor for many years but one who had not yet had the opportunity to attend a national or regional Honors conference, she appreciates the stipend very much, which has allowed her to pick up many valuable ideas at NCHC 2019.

Ketcham noted these WRHC stipends can also be used for NCHC faculty institutes in which she herself participated (Barcelona, 2017) earlier. This dovetailed nicely with *Cannata's* earlier distribution of flyers promoting upcoming faculty institutes and other NCHC seminars including Partners in the Parks.

Regional Honors Program/College News:

New Honors Directors and Deans present were introduced, including *Cherstin Lyon* (Southern Oregon University), *Tim Nichols* (University of Montana, Missoula), *Diana Polley* (Air Force Academy), and *Rennie Schoepflin* (Director), and *Allison McCurdy* (Associate Director), Cal State University Los Angeles. *Christopher Hebein* (University of Nevada, Reno) introduced new UNR Honors Director *Matt Means* in absentia.

Lyon introduced the idea of developing student leadership at the WRHC level via a student advisory board and/or creating a student Board member position. Ideas can be researched to present to the membership at WRHC 2020, and then to inaugurate Board action at NCHC 2020. Those interested in assisting her in developing a proposal can contact her between Board meetings at lyonc1@sou.edu.

Finally, some members suggested the Board revisit investing some of the WRHC surplus given that our surplus has been stable for many years but could be productively augmented. *Villanueva* noted, and former WRHC President *Richard Cardullo* (UC Riverside) confirmed, that this had been discussed a few years ago and the WRHC did not have a legal basis/ability to do so then. However, the Board will discuss options and report back at the WRHC 2020 business meeting.

The business meeting was adjourned by *Schultz* at 5:00 PM. We will reconvene in Cedar City in March 2020.