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Welcome to *College Student Affairs Leadership*

Donald Mitchell, Jr., Grand Valley State University, Grand Rapids, MI

On behalf of Lindsay Greyerbiehl '14, inaugural editor in chief, the M.Ed. in Higher Education program, and the College of Education at Grand Valley State University (GVSU), welcome to *College Student Affairs Leadership* (CSAL), a peer-reviewed journal for graduate students in student affairs and higher education. The mission of CSAL (n.d.) is to highlight “the professional interests of student affairs and higher education practitioners, as well as current national and international student affairs and higher education issues, while giving budding scholars the opportunity to present their work to an international audience” (para. 1). The launch of CSAL was made possible through the support of GVSU’s Office of Graduate Studies, University Libraries, and the Center for Scholarly and Creative Excellence. For their support we say, “Thank you.”

As the higher education landscape increasingly diversifies, those who study and work within higher education contexts must be equipped to communicate with and be inclusive of those that are different. Within the M.Ed. in Higher Education program at GVSU, we are training our students to do just that through coursework, graduate assistantships, and practica. For example, Dr. Jay Cooper, associate professor of education and program coordinator for the M.Ed. in Higher Education program, asks students to create a student development theory in his “Theories of College Student Development” course, which has been adopted as an assignment in my section of the course as well. In sum, we ask students to reflect on existing student development theories used in student affairs and to build on these theories to create theories of their own. In this inaugural issue of CSAL, we highlight some of the theories that our students created over the past two years.

First, Jane Marsman '15 explores the college experiences of female non-traditional students in her article, “Between a Rock and a Hard Place: Role Dissonance in Female Non-Traditional Students.” Next, Theresa Lyon '15 theorizes the ways in which identifying as an undocumented student affects development in her article, “Understanding the Undocumented College Student Experience: Proposing a Conceptual Model of Cognitive and Psychosocial Development.” Kyle Matin '14 introduces considerations for cultural misunderstandings of White fraternity men in his article, “Racial and Cultural Awareness in White Fraternity Men: Contributors to Misunderstanding.” Finally, Suzanne Schooler '15 explores the experiences of Native American colleges students’ transitions in her article, “Native American College Student Transition Theory.” While course assignments—which should not be confused with fully developed theories—these papers challenge readers to reflect on the college experiences

of these diverse populations in new ways, while encouraging our students to expand in new ways as well.

In subsequent issues, we look forward to presenting empirical and theoretical works, literature reviews, editorials, and book reviews written by graduate students across the nation; we consider CSAL a “low-risk, high reward” publication for graduate students interested in sharing their research and scholarship. Student affairs and higher education graduate preparation programs must train students to link theory/research to practice, stay abreast with current best practices, and to critically examine current issues within student affairs and higher education contexts. What better way to do this than through a venue where graduate students share, critique, and produce scholarly publications for an international audience? Welcome to *College Student Affairs Leadership*.

Reference

College Student Affairs Leadership. (n.d.). *About this journal*. Retrieved from <http://scholarworks.gvsu.edu/csal/about.html>