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Editor's Note: HESA: Privilege, Transition, and Support

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EDITOR'S NOTE

HESA:
Privilege, Transition, and Support

Over the past few years of my burgeoning student affairs professional career, I have noticed how much “support” is emphasized in our field. Whether it is supporting (and challenging) our students, colleagues, or ourselves, we are in a helping profession where giving and receiving support is incredibly important. How do we learn when, how, and what support is needed?

At the beginning of our Capstone course entitled, “Ethics, Values, and Meaning Making in Higher Education,” Robert Nash looked around the quiet room and noted how much of a privilege it was for us to be able to sit in a classroom and discuss such topics. There is so much chaos going on in the world and in our lives, while we temporarily put our lives on pause (at least we try) to be fully present and engaged in our coursework. In class, I took a deep breath and pushed my to-do lists, worries, and outside thoughts aside. It was the first time I felt like it really hit me: we were in our last HESA class together as a cohort.

Reflecting while writing my comps, *TVC* article, and this Executive Editor's Note, looking through pictures, job searching, and being in the Capstone class, I have realized how it has been an absolute privilege to be in HESA. If you were to ask alumni/ae and current students about what the HESA program means to them, you would hear a different answer from each individual. Yet I believe every person would agree that they appreciate(d) the opportunity to be paraprofessionals: to ask questions, make mistakes, and practice skills (like support) during this unique transition point in their lives.

Nancy Schlossberg's “Transition Theory” (1981) cited the need for a supportive environment to foster development during transition. The HESA faculty, student affairs staff, and all other members of our community contribute to the program's uniqueness and intimately supportive nature, while providing a challenging and extremely rewarding experience. We are able to see wonderful models of student affairs educators, practice these skills with our students, colleagues, and cohorts, and have a better understanding of what we need in order to support ourselves.

For the 30th Anniversary of *The Vermont Connection*, we wanted this volume to reflect on the past 30 years, gain an appreciation for where we are now, and to envision our presence in the future. The following articles are exemplary examples of the quality of our program and breadth of interests and talents of current and past HESA students. From gaining a better understanding of the identities of our students, to a deeper examination of campus culture and the institution of higher education, *TVC* continues to be a venue in which to showcase our abilities and an opportunity to learn more about our field from our colleagues. Reflections from *TVC*'s first, 10th anniversary, and 20th anniversary editors and our esteemed Jackie Gribbons were invited to give context to how far we have come and lessons they have learned along the way. I hope that *TVC* lives on to educate and show the world what we are capable of for several more decades.

I would like to thank our dedicated Editorial Board who powered through the planning and implementing our fundraising, production week, and receptions. It is because of them and our Full Board, who spent many nights editing, that you are able to view and hold this thick journal in your hands. I appreciate that we remained optimistic, always laughing, and supportive throughout; I feel so much closer to each of you after this experience and will never forget the time we have spent together. I am very grateful for our staff advisors, Tricia Rascon '06 and Alissa Strong '07, who enthusiastically invested so much time and effort throughout the year. Thank you to our faculty advisor, Deb Hunter, who shared her time and wisdom and provided much needed historical context. Lastly, thank you to our donors and far-reaching Vermont Connection; it is because of you that this journal has its scholarly reputation and longevity. This journal and our national connection are only possible through the support of our HESA community. Please remember to be appreciative of the present and find and give support whenever you can.

Happy 30th Birthday, *TVC*!

Lorri Anne Alvarado