



## Comments from the Editor

### *Chaos, Content, and Changes*

My editor's notes for Volume 19 (2019) last year opened with the line "Welcome to something new for the *NYJSA*." We announced happily that we were going to a new publishing strategy where articles were published when completed ("First published online . . .") for the benefit of the authors, readers, and the volunteer reviewers that our previous fixed date format did not allow.

What a difference a year has made for our authors, readers, editor, and volunteer reviewers – and the world – as Volume 20 (2020) is published. Somehow publishing student affairs articles seems insignificant as we struggle through a world altering pandemic and the impact of social distancing to save lives; unprecedented academic and economic disruption; the necessary soul searching, action, and pain to again address inequality because Black Lives Matter; and major electoral decisions looming. As an optimist and an "old timer" in student affairs, I believe that we will meet these challenges however long it takes, the world will never be the same and will change and improve, and student affairs professionals will help lead our students and our institutions because that is what we do so well.

And publishing must continue for the good of our students, institutions, and profession.

In the first article in this edition the team of **Megan Scribner, Pietro Sasso, and Laurel Puchner** of Southern Illinois University report on a qualitative interview study which explored the experiences of nontraditional and traditional undergraduate students, examining their current stressors and the coping strategies that they developed to manage stress developed. They present



the major themes that emerged about the students' coping strategies and suggest implications for practice by student affairs professionals.

The second article took a research path not always taken in our research; using quantitative research using tools like multivariate logistic regressions to look at a very practical concern. The Texas research team of **Newman Chun Wai Wong** (Del Mar College), **Isabel Araiza** (Texas A&M University – Corpus Christi), and **Michael T. Mills** (Midwestern State University) looked at a nuance in the broad assumption of increased persistence and graduation rates of undergraduate students by living on campus. They focused on the impact of apartment design. While the original data indicated greater success with communal versus traditional apartment housing, a more sophisticated level of quantitative analysis found stronger predictors were in play. Beyond the architectural focus of this study, they make an important observation on research strategy for student affairs research.

Our third article provides a new lens for research on student retention. It begins by providing a tutorial on self-determination theory (SDT) as a foundation for what follows. With this foundation, **Agnieszka Zak-Moskal** and **Mark Garrison** use SDT as an overlay lens to do a focused literature review of 12 retention research articles. Their research suggests that meeting or failing to meet key psychological needs suggested by SDT may explain the results of the earlier research and the potential that strategies based on this will increase student retention.

With this volume we are making leadership changes for the journal. The editorship is transitioning from Logan Hazen as Editor and Amy Wilson as Managing Editor to wonderful new co-editors Julia Davis and Rob Mangione. Logan will stay on as Technical Editor and to assist with the transition for a while.

We hope that you enjoy this edition and we appreciate that you are visiting the *New York Journal of Student Affairs*. We invite you to check out our website for the latest articles as they are published online. As always, we encourage you to consider doing research on student affairs topics important to you, and of course submitting them to NYJSA!



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