



ALAIR NEWSLETTER

Alabama Association for Institutional Research

July 1995

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE...from Sam Lowther

Much has occurred since our Annual Conference in Dothan last April (not all of it related to state appropriations). In May, ALAIR had a very large contingent in attendance at AIR's Annual Forum in Boston. It was difficult to get everyone to take a break from sightseeing in Boston for a definitive count, but our best estimate was that more than 20 members were there.

Subsequently, the outgoing and incoming ALAIR Executive Committee membership met on June 16 for our annual transition meeting. Leaving us are members-at-large Paul Darring (South Alabama) and Myrtes Green (Stillman), immediate past-president Harriott Calhoun (Jefferson State), and treasurer Brenda Bryant (Alabama State). (We'll really miss imposing on Brenda to host meetings at the Acadome. She always feeds us.) Joining us are members-at-large Cathy Tanner (Bishop State) and Debbie Fortune (Troy State), treasurer Ellen Haulman (ACHE), and vice-president/president-elect Judy Rogers (Montevallo). Continuing members include member-at-large Vicki Hawsey (Reid State), immediate past-president Judy Miller (Enterprise State), secretary Mary Beth Adams (UAB), and president Sam Lowther (Auburn).

At this meeting, the executive committee adopted the following goals for the 1995-96 year:

Involve a greater percentage of the membership in ALAIR activities.

We see an excellent opportunity to expand active participation beyond the usual dedicated core that is common to any organization. There seems to be an abundance of enthusiastic and capable new and continuing members, and we want to make use of them in our many activities. Expect to hear from us.

Improve communication among IR professionals in the state.

We are examining all sorts of ways to keep in touch with you, including e-mail, listservers, phone trees, questionnaire surveys, informal communication, and many more. We're not going to leave you alone, so again, expect to hear from us.

Provide additional professional training opportunities for members and other interested individuals.

We want to be more than an affiliation organization. There are plans to increase training activities in the near future, including regional workshops (read about this topic elsewhere in this newsletter), pre-conference workshops, and possible restructuring of the annual conference format.

Prepare for hosting SAIR/SCUP 96 in Mobile.

SAIR will offer a great opportunity for those of you who normally are unable to attend out-of-state conferences. It also is an excellent chance for us to show off Alabama and

continued on page 2

from page 1

ALAIR to our colleagues. However, these events don't just happen. Every one of us will have to contribute to make it a success, so once more, expect to hear from us.

Continue to improve the administrative functions and services of ALAIR.

We are still working on a comprehensive ALAIR policies and procedures manual. We also want to improve the quality and timeliness of services that we can offer you. Expect to be asked about this, as well.

Maybe we can make this the unofficial "Year of the Member," both by providing you with more, while asking more of you. If you have any comments or ideas on the topics presented above, or if you wish to volunteer your service in any capacity, don't wait for us to get in touch with you. Any member of the executive committee would be thrilled to hear from you. If you have colleagues who could benefit from ALAIR affiliation, have them call an executive committee member, or tell us how to contact them.

We'll be in touch...

ALAIR 1995 CONFERENCE A SUCCESS

Approximately 55 participants attended ALAIR's ninth Annual Conference at Troy State University at Dothan, April 20-21, 1995. Two pre-conference workshops and social activities were held on the 20th, with the main body of the conference taking place on the following day. The conference theme, "The Changing Face of Institutional Research: New Responsibilities and New Techniques," was carried through in the opening address, "Cyberspace and Common Sense: Positioning Institutional Research for the Future," delivered by AIR president-elect Trudy Bers. Eight concurrent sessions covered a wide variety of topics, as did five "Tools and Techniques" presentations. The luncheon, annual business meeting and awards presentation were enhanced by the performance of "The Entertainers" from Enterprise State Junior College. The final session gave participants the chance to question the persons involved in developing the state's new articulation system.

In addition to those of us from Alabama, we had participants from Georgia and Florida. We were especially honored to have Terry Russell, Executive Director of AIR, in attendance, as well as Joseph T. Sutton and his wife Frances. Dr. Sutton presented his namesake distinguished service award to Kay Staub (UA), who was accompanied by her husband Stephen.

The people from TSUD, including but not limited to President Thomas Harrison, Barbara Alford, and especially Shane Stonesifer, were generous hosts. The facilities and services were excellent, and we couldn't have asked for more. Many thanks to all who made the Annual Conference possible.

1995 ALAIR EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Clip this section and tape it to your desk or in your phone directory. Contact you executive committee often with questions, comments, and suggestions. Find out how you can be involved.

President	Sam Lowther, Auburn Univ. 334) 844-4765
VP/President Elect	Judy Rogers, U of Montevallo 205) 665-6392
Secretary	Mary Beth Adams, UAB 205) 934-3254
Treasurer	Ellen Haulman, ACHE 334) 242-2229
Past President	Judy Miller, Enterprise State 334) 347-2623 ext. 310
Members-at-large	Debbie Fortune, Troy State 334) 670-3113 Vicki Hawsey, Reid State 334) 578-1313 Cathy Tanner, Bishop State 334) 690-6455

A NEWCOMER'S FIRST AIR FORUM

The 35th AIR Forum was held May 28-31, 1995, in Boston. Theresa Hamilton (Calhoun State), a relatively new institutional researcher and a first-timer at AIR, was asked to provide her perceptions of the national conference.

Being new in the field of institutional research, I was advised that the "best thing for a newcomer is the AIR Conference." Therefore, I looked forward to the meetings that would get me started on the right path, bring me up to date, and set the course of my work for the next five or ten years.

The conference in Boston was indeed excellent for a newcomer, as it would have been for one with years of experience in the field. The concurrent sessions were numerous. It was tricky to make a decision on which one to attend and which ones I would miss. Then I got a tip from Debbie Dailey: Go early to each session you would like to attend and ask for a copy of the paper; if there is not a paper available for one of the sessions, go to that one. The topics varied, which only reinforced to this newcomer-staff-of-one researcher that the field of institutional research may not be as narrowly defined as I had hoped.

There were many other newcomers mixed in with the crowd of veterans. A particular thrill was meeting and hearing Ernest Pascarella and Patrick Terenzini. Their book, How College Affects Students, was used as a text in one of my graduate classes.

The folks running the conference were most helpful and patient. Only a group of institutional researchers could so thoroughly graph, map, and plot the layers and layers of concurrent sessions and their spread-out locations.

AIR represents itself well as an available and supportive organization for all its members. For those of you who heard Trudy Bers at our ALAIR Annual Conference in Dothan, she was just as down to earth and communicative in speaking to the national membership as she was with us.

As we left the general session on the last morning of the conference, we were offered fortune cookies. I don't know if it was planned that we all get the same fortune or a perfect coincidence, but mine read: "We have a plan; everything is getting better."

ALABAMA WELL REPRESENTED IN BOSTON

Several of the Alabama folks who attended the AIR Forum in Boston contributed to the program in a variety of capacities.

Bill Fendley, UA - Forum Chair
Harriott Calhoun, JSCC - paper presenter, moderator, facilitator
Debbie Dailey, UAB - paper presenter, facilitator
Teresa Hall, AU - paper presenter, facilitator
Billy Hughes, UA - paper presenter, facilitator
Larry Jones, U of Georgia - moderator, Publications Committee chair, facilitator
Mike O'Rear, UA - roundtable, facilitator
Hannelore Delbridge, UA - facilitator
Myrtes Dunn Green, Stillman - facilitator
Willie Jackson, Tuskegee - facilitator
Sam Lowther, AU - facilitator
Al Searway, JSU - facilitator

DATES SET FOR ALAIR 1996

According to newly elected vice-president/president elect and 1996 conference program chair Judy Rogers (Montevallo), the tenth annual ALAIR conference will be held Thursday and Friday, April 11-12, 1996. Details about the location are being finalized and will be announced in the next edition of the newsletter.

In the meantime, Judy asks that any suggestions for conference themes or sessions be sent to her at rogersj@montevallo.um.edu or Station 6392, University of Montevallo, Montevallo, AL 35115.

ALAIR TRAVEL GRANT APPLICATION
for the SAIR Annual Conference

Name/Title

Institution

Address

Please provide a brief statement describing your financial need for the travel grant and the ways in which this conference will contribute to your professional development.

How long have you been a member of ALAIR? _____

Please indicate any ALAIR offices you have held or any committees on which you have served.

Indicate any positions you have held in SAIR and/or any responsibilities you have at the next conference. (Note: Prior involvement in SAIR is not a criterion for eligibility for the grant.)

Return this form by **August 25** to:

Sam Lowther
Executive Director of Planning and Analysis
Auburn University
203 Samford Hall
Auburn University, AL 36849-5111

1995 SAIR/SCUP CONFERENCE SET FOR ROANOKE

What: SAIR/SCUP Conference, *Bridging the Gap: Public Perception and Higher Education Reality*

When: October 21-24, 1995

Where: The Hotel Roanoke, Roanoke, Virginia

ALAIR has always been well-represented at each fall's SAIR/SCUP conference. This year should be no exception, but there's even more incentive as our own Debbie Dailey (UAB) is in charge of the program, and we need a good turnout to promote the 1996 SAIR conference which will be held in Mobile. Conference registration materials should arrive in your mail in early September.

Given that most of us will be facing limited resources this year, it may be a propitious time to work together to save money. So, if there is interest, ALAIR will attempt to put together car-pools of various sizes to assist in reducing expenses. Roanoke should be an 8-10 hour drive from most places in Alabama, and at 25 cents per mile, round-trip cost per vehicle should be around \$300--about the same as the lowest round-trip air fare that we were able to find. With 3-4 people sharing the cost, this could be a considerable saving.



If you would like to car-pool with someone or if you have spaces in a car to offer (particularly if you or your institution can provide a van), please contact Vicki Hawsey at Reid State Technical College, 334) 578-1313. Let's make our presence known in Roanoke.

PROGRAM SUPPORT GRANT

ALAIR has been awarded a \$300 program support grant by the External Relations Committee of the Association for Institutional Research (AIR). The grant was in support of a proposal submitted to the

Committee for ALAIR to offer a series of one-day "hands on" regional workshops around the state.

In the award letter, Sandy Johnson, AIR Secretary and External Relations Committee Chair, noted ALAIR's intention to build the workshops around ALAIR members who have gone through AIR's "Train the Trainer" program. She stated that this program might become a model upon which other state and regional groups could build.

Anyone interested in hosting one of the workshops, suggesting topics, or volunteering to teach a session should contact Sam Lowther at 334)844-4765 or lowthgs@panda.auburn.edu.

MEMBER NEWS

Congratulations to Ron and Karen Freeman (UAH) on the birth of their daughter, Kaitlin Marie, on March 16

and to Webb and Mary Beth Adams (UAB) on the birth of their son, Whitson Edwin, on May 9.

Don Kelley is now director of management and analysis at the Alabama Department of Postsecondary Education.

HALL RECEIVES AIR TRAVEL GRANT

In the middle of all the activity at ALAIR's Annual Conference, we neglected to announce the recipient of our 1995 AIR Travel Grant. The \$300 stipend went to Teresa Hall (Auburn), for use in attending the Annual Forum in Boston. Teresa also represented ALAIR in the Best Presentations from State/Regional Conferences session, with her presentation on "Analysis of Core Curriculum: 1988-89 - Fall 1993."

**Please note the application form for
ALAIR's 1995 SAIR Travel Grant inserted
in this newsletter.**

Have you renewed your ALAIR membership for 1995-96? To continue to receive the newsletter, conference registration materials, as well as materials from other groups using our membership list, you should be a current member of ALAIR. If you did not attend the annual conference in Dothan or renew your membership at that time or since then, please complete the brief form below and mail it along with \$15 to Ellen Haulman, Alabama Commission on Higher Education, P.O. Box 302000, Montgomery, AL 36130-2000. An institutional membership is available for \$25 and covers 2 individuals.

Name _____ Title (circle one) Mr. Mrs. Ms. Miss Dr.

Position _____

Institution _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ ZIP _____ - _____

Telephone _____ FAX _____

E-mail _____

ALAIR Newsletter
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