May 1, 2018

Diana's Conference Takeaways



What were your thoughts on transfer initiatives and how did they change with your conference exposure?

Before attending the NISTS conference, I imagined every school had similar transfer student programs. I quickly found out that this is not the case; some schools have more programs and resources than other institutions. It was shocking to see that there isn't a national curriculum when it comes to addressing transfer students. Instead, it is up to each and every school to create programs without having a common foundation to work off.



What did you hear that particularly sparked your interest/inspired you?

Being able to see the passion that the professionals in attendance had about their service with transfer students was definitely one of the most inspiring aspects of the conference. Their push to create services to better transfer students' educational experience was refreshing to see. As a student, it is easy to think that individuals in administration may not understand one's struggles, especially as a transfer student. It seemed that every professional in attendance had some sort of frustration with how tied their hands are in what they are able to do at their institution due to red tape or lack of support and funding. It is important for students to be able to work with professionals in order to bring more resources to underserved communities like transfer students.



What was your biggest take-away?

My biggest takeaway was seeing the positive effects that transfer students have on their institutions when they are involved! Many programs and services that were started at institutions were due to having transfer students leading the efforts or being a part of the strategic planning. This shows the power that students have when they have a goal and determination, leading to student mobilization that makes changes happen. This effectiveness makes it important for administration and professionals to include students in critical conversations, regardless of how long they will be at their institution. For transfer students, the urgency to want to be involved and create positive change is present and ready to be put to use.



What are you going to do next in regard to transfer based on something you learned at the conference?

The notion of communication was definitely reinforced during the conference. It is important for collaboration to be fostered, as it will only make it easier to achieve a goal when people band forces. One institution had a student council—much like a round table of clubs and organizations that serve transfer students—so that they can plan on how to better represent their community but help one another out in their respective programming. This is something that I hope to help build at my university, as there is already inter-organizational communication that can be improved and made more formal.

Coming back to school after the conference, I had a renewed sense of pride in being a transfer student. Looking back at events that my Transfer Student Center has hosted for NISTS Transfer Pride Week in the fall sparked the idea to want to host similar events again but during the spring. Because why not host another Transfer Pride Week? What makes it better is that this week full of fun and empowering events will be co-hosted by multiple clubs and organizations that focus on transfer student issues and representation. We will be hosting this exciting week in May!

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