

**21st Annual Conference of the Alabama Association for Institutional
Research (ALAIR)
April 12-13, 2007
Alabama A&M University, Normal, AL**

“Institutional Research: Is it Rocket Science?”

On April 12-13, 2007, the Alabama Association of Institutional Research (ALAIR) will have its 21st annual conference. Institutional researchers and other higher education professionals from throughout the state are invited to join us for two days of presentations, workshops, and tools/techniques all focused on the work we perform as IR professionals. Enclosed you will find a description of the conference events and also registration materials. **Please return materials by Monday, March 26th.** We look forward to seeing you in Huntsville!

**Yardley Bailey
2007 Conference Chair**

Newcomers' Workshop

If you are new to institutional research, then this Thursday's workshop is for you. Kris Mascetti from UAB will guide you through the key elements of the profession. This will be a wonderful opportunity to meet other newcomers and also gain insight from a dynamic Alabama IR professional. Members with three years or less of IR experience are welcome.

Conference Special Programs and Special Interest Groups (SIG)

On Thursday, we will be offering two special conference programs and two SIG discussions:

Program A – **“Introduction to Microsoft Access for Institutional Researchers”** – Using Microsoft Access in an Institutional Research setting is not “rocket science.” Microsoft Access offers many useful tools that enable Institutional Researchers to quickly analyze and report on large amounts of data. This workshop will highlight tools and techniques that have been found most useful in an IR office where Microsoft Access is central to its data analysis and reporting functions. Topics that will be covered during the workshop include table operations, such as importing, modifying and exporting tables; query design and different uses of queries; and report writing. The target audience of this workshop includes beginner and early intermediate users. Presenter: Regina Eady, Auburn University.

Program B – **“Migrating from Static to Dynamic Reporting”** – While many institutional web sites contain an abundance of static information, end users desiring ad hoc data reports must still make their requests directly to the IR office. Kennesaw State University has migrated many of those ad hoc reporting mechanisms to drill-down tools in a self-service model delivered over the web. The KSU Fact Book, while conveying “static” data, has become a standard of delivering information to users and by undergoing programming changes, allowed the document to be published earlier than ever before. This presentation will examine why and how they developed their own reporting tools and will look at the technical challenges and corresponding solutions. They will also explore the impact of these reporting tools on their business practices and the way they deliver data to their end users. The discussion suggests ways to provide just-in-time data, but also opens the doors to many more possibilities in terms of getting more and more data presented more and more quickly to the end users. Presenters: Debbie Head and Paul Hearn, Kennesaw State University, GA.

SIG 1 – **“Banner Discussion/Roundtable”** -- This special interest group will be moderated by Jason Ferguson, Account Manager, SunGard Higher Education. Mr. Ferguson will open the session by

discussing what's going on around the state of Alabama with regards to Banner and the direction SunGard is heading as a company. Participants will then be invited to share information, relate experiences, and ask questions. If anyone has any specific SunGard related topics they would like more information about or if there are topics or issues of interest, email those to Mr. Ferguson prior to the conference at jason.ferguson@sungardhe.com. These issues will then be addressed during the discussion.

SIG 2 – “Compliance Assist!” – Patrick Rhode, President, Dataliant, will be present to discuss [Compliance Assist!](#) Many colleges and universities are looking for solutions to improve communication and collaboration, as well as help with their accreditation or reaffirmation. In this session, you will learn about the innovative solutions Dataliant has provided Gwinnett Technical College, including Compliance Assist! and a customized web portal using Microsoft SharePoint Services. Compliance Assist! was launched at the 2006 SACS-COC Annual Meeting in Orlando and is an online solution which helps colleges and universities streamline their reaffirmation process. Microsoft SharePoint Services is a powerful collaboration tool which helps teams and departments stay connected by providing easy access to the people, documents, and information they need, whether across campus or around the world. **Note: This is a sponsor presentation.**

Thursday Night Special Event – “Hors d’oeuvre’s at the Jazz Factory”

Our special event on Thursday night will take us to the Jazz Factory. Located less than one mile from the conference hotel, in downtown Huntsville on Washington Square, the Jazz Factory provides one of Huntsville’s casually elegant dining experiences. We will be upstairs in the martini room which features seven, handcrafted mahogany, pool tables. The “heavy” Hors d’oeuvre menu will feature: Dungeness Crab Cakes, Baked Brie on Cristini Canapés, Chicken Skewers with Thai Peanut Sauce, Penne with Tomatoes, Spinach, and Artichoke Hearts, Sweet & Spicy Wings w/Lime-Chili Glaze, Grilled Vegetables w/Fresh Herbs, Crunchy Fried Spring Rolls, and a Fruit and Cheese Platter. For those that choose to imbibe alcoholic beverages, the Jazz Factory presents a full service bar with Martini’s, etc. Beginning at 9:00 p.m., there will be live music. The cost for this event is \$25 per person.



Keynote Address – “A Life in IRlands” Lorne Kuffel, Associate Provost for Institutional Research, The College of William & Mary, will be delivering our keynote address on Friday morning.

One of the most curious aspects of institutional research professionals is that we come from a wide variety of educational and/or work experiences. Very few of us grow-up intending to be institutional researchers. Most of us fall into this profession by chance. The IR function in higher education requires us to be generalists, while existing in an academic world of specialists. The result is a high turnover rate among institutional research professionals. Each year at SAIR and AIR, approximately one third of the participants are new members. How is it that we find our way into, and some of us subsequently succeed, at this profession? The speaker will share his thoughts and musings on this compound question and provide suggestions about critical concepts to the retention of young institutional research professionals within the field.

Concurrent Sessions

This year’s conference will feature concurrent sessions on Friday. We will also have a “Tools and Techniques” session on Friday, which is an opportunity for informal presentations of reports, analyses, or software demonstrations. You can also display your fact books, planning documents, and other materials at our publications booth. There is still time to submit a session proposal. The deadline is March 9th and the Call for Participation can be found at the ALAIR website www.alair.org.

Conference Location

Conference registration, pre-conference workshops, the opening session, and concurrent sessions will take place at the Joseph F. Drake Memorial Learning Resource Center (LRC), on the campus of Alabama A&M University. **Travel directions will be sent before the conference.**



Accommodations

The official hotel of the conference is the Holiday Inn Huntsville Downtown. We have rooms blocked for April 11th, 12th, and 13th at the rate of \$75.00 plus tax. When you call for your reservation, mention our group code **DAC**. You can call Monday – Friday, 8 – 5 pm at 256-533-1401, ext. 604 or 605 to make your reservations or go online to www.holidayinn.com/huntsvilleal. Again, to get the conference rate, our group code is **DAC**.

Business Meeting and Luncheon

Our business meeting and luncheon will be held on Friday in the Knight Center. This facility is located within walking distance of the conference location. Bus transportation will also be available.

Conference Contact Information

Should you have any questions about the 2007 ALAIR Conference, please contact Conference Chair Yardley Bailey at 205-348-8350 or ybailey@uasystem.ua.edu.

2007 ALAIR Conference Preliminary Program

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| Thursday, April 12, 2007 | 1:00-5:00 | Registration (LRC) |
| | 1:15-2:00 | Newcomers' workshop (Members with three or less years experience are welcome): Kris Mascetti, The University of Alabama at Birmingham |
| | 2:30-4:00 | Conference Special Programs: <i>Program A - "Introduction to Microsoft Access for IR"</i> <i>Program B - "Migrating from Static to Dynamic Reporting"</i> |
| | 4:15-5:00 | Special Interest Groups: <i>SIG 1 - "Banner Roundtable/Discussion"</i> <i>SIG 2 - "Compliance Assist!"</i> |
| | 6:30-9:30 | Special event – <i>"Hors d'oeuvre's at the Jazz Factory"</i> |
| Friday, April 13, 2007 | 8:00-8:30 | Registration (LRC) |
| | 8:30-9:30 | Keynote Address: Lorne Kuffel, Associate Provost for Institutional Research, The College of William & Mary |
| | 9:40-10:25 | Concurrent Sessions |
| | 10:25-10:55 | Tools and Techniques (LRC) |
| | 10:55-11:40 | Concurrent Sessions |
| 12:00-1:45 | Luncheon/Business Meeting/Door Prizes (Knight Center) | |



ALAIR 2007 Annual Conference Registration Form

Name: _____ Preferred Name: _____

Institution: _____ Title: _____

Address: _____

Telephone: _____ Fax: _____ E-mail: _____

Please indicate the year OR location of the first ALAIR Conference you attended: _____

Conference Registration Fee (Includes ALAIR membership until 2008 annual conference)

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|---|---------|---|---------|
| Amount through March 28 th _____ | \$65.00 | Student/Emeritus through March 28 th _____ | \$60.00 |
| Amount after March 28 th _____ | \$75.00 | Student/Emeritus after March 28 th _____ | \$70.00 |

I will be attending (mark all that apply):

- ____ Newcomers' Workshop
- ____ "The Jazz Factory" (This \$25 per person fee is in addition to your conference registration fee and it must be received prior to the event. Personal checks are accepted.)
- ____ Conference Special Program A - "Introduction to Microsoft Access for IR"
- ____ Conference Special Program B - "Migrating from Static to Dynamic Reporting"
- ____ Special Interest Group 1 - "Banner Roundtable/Discussion"
- ____ Special Interest Group 2 - "Compliance Assist!"

I will need a vegetarian meal at lunch: _____

Send Registration and Payment by March 28th. Make checks payable to ALAIR.

Mail or email registration to:

Ms. Linda Lunsford
Director of Institutional Effectiveness & Development
Faulkner State Community College
1900 U.S. Hwy. 31 South
Bay Minette, AL 36507
E-mail: llunsford@faulknerstate.edu

Should you have any questions about the 2007 ALAIR Conference, please contact Conference Chair Yardley Bailey at 205-348-8350 or ybailey@uasystem.ua.edu.