

23rd Annual Conference
of the
Alabama Association for Institutional Research (ALAIR)
March 30-31, 2009
Auburn/Opelika Marriott Hotel and Conference Center
at Grand National

“Making Difficult Decisions in Challenging Times”

On March 30-31, 2009, the Alabama Association of Institutional Research (ALAIR) will hold its 23rd annual conference. Notice the conference is on Monday and Tuesday this year to facilitate convening at the beautiful Marriott Grand National in Auburn/Opelika, Alabama. Please come and enjoy the scenic grounds, beautiful facilities and get in a round of golf if you like. (Please notify the Marriott Grand National immediately if you plan to play golf.)

The conference agenda is almost complete and I'm excited about several special sessions that will be offered this year. In addition to great presentations by our own IR staff from Alabama institutions, we'll also have Jane Wellman, Executive Director of the Delta Project on Postsecondary Costs, Productivity and Accountability, a research and policy organization located in Washington, DC, who will serve as our keynote speaker. Jane's research is widely respected and her presence at our conference is very timely as we focus on making difficult decisions in challenging times. At our luncheon on Tuesday, Dr. Pamela Arrington, Director of Instruction, Planning, and Special Services for the Alabama Commission on Higher Education, will present the Statewide Planning Advisory Council (SPAC) process to date. We'll also have presentations by Tableau and Dataliant who have both agreed to be conference sponsors. There will be Special Interest Group (SIG) sessions focused institutional decision-making and Alabama Statewide Student Database Reports. I hope we have something for everyone and I'm encouraging everyone to not only attend this year's conference, but also to bring others who might also benefit from these sessions.

Knowing that funds are tight, the executive committee chose to keep registration fees the same as last year (\$75 if you register by March 13th) and room rates at the Marriott Grand National will be \$70 per night. **Please make your reservations before Friday, March 6th to ensure this rate for Monday, March 30, 2009. Please make your reservations today if you intend to stay in the hotel Sunday, March 29, 2009.** Institutional researchers and other higher education professionals from throughout the state are all invited to join us for two days of presentations, workshops, and discussions 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 registration materials by Friday, March 13th.** We look forward to seeing you in Auburn/Opelika!

Alicia Simmons
2009 Conference Chair

Newcomers' Workshop

If you are new to institutional research, then this Monday workshop is for you. Led by Patricia Pratt and Linda Caldwell, this will be a wonderful opportunity to meet other newcomers and also gain insight from two dynamic Alabama IR professionals. It is recommended for members with three or fewer years experience.

Sponsored Sessions

On Monday we will be offering sessions led by Tableau's Kevin Brown and Dataliant's Patrick Rohde.

Monday Night Special Event

For those ready to have a great night out on the town, Monday evening ALAIR has arranged for a private dining room and bar at the Amsterdam Café in Auburn, AL. Known as an Auburn tradition to both students and residents, the Amsterdam Café's relaxing atmosphere will welcome you and give you the perfect atmosphere for meeting old and new ALAIR friends. Appetizers, dinner and drinks are on your own. See the menu and highlights at their website <http://www.theamsterdamcafe.com/>. Hope to see you there!

KEYNOTE SPEAKER



Jane Wellman

Jane Wellman will be our Keynote Speaker on Tuesday morning. Jane Wellman is the Executive Director of the Delta Project on Postsecondary Costs, Productivity and Accountability, a research and policy organization located in Washington, DC. The Delta Project's mission is to improve productivity in higher education through more effective management of resources without compromising student access or quality. Wellman is widely recognized for her work in public policy and higher education, at both the state and federal levels, with particular expertise in state fiscal policy; cost analysis; strategic planning; state and federal regulation of higher education; accountability metrics and performance reporting; and quality control including accreditation. Jane has also agreed to host a Special Interest Group on Tuesday that focuses on methodologies for measuring effectiveness in higher education.

In addition to research and writing, she consults with national and international organizations including the National Center for Public Policy and Higher Education, the State Higher Education Executive Officers, the Association of Governing Boards, the American Council on Education, the National Governors Association, the U.S. Secretary of Education, and the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development. She is a member of the Board of Directors for the Association of American Colleges and Universities, and a member of the Board of Trustees for Argosy University.

Prior to beginning the Delta Project in 2007, Wellman served as a Senior Associate with the Institute for Higher Education Policy in Washington, D.C., was Vice President for Government Relations with the National Association of Independent Colleges and Universities, Deputy Director of the California Postsecondary Education Commission, and staff director of the California Assembly Ways and Means Committee. She began her career in higher education finance and planning at the University of California office of the President, and obtained her Master of Arts and Bachelor of Arts degrees from the University of California at Berkeley.

Special Interest Groups (SIG)

Special Interest Groups (SIGs) will be available on Tuesday, with discussions currently set to focus on using data for decision-making and the Alabama Statewide Student Database. If you'd like to suggest another session, please contact Dr. Alicia Simmons at 256-782-8144 or asimmons@jsu.edu.

Concurrent Sessions

This year's conference will feature concurrent sessions on Monday and Tuesday. Please submit a session proposal. The deadline is March 6th and the Call for Participation can be found at the ALAIR website www.alair.org.

Conference Location and Accommodations

All sessions will be held at the Marriott Hotel and Conference Center at Grand National. A block of rooms is reserved at the Grand National at the \$70 state rate. **Rooms will be held at this rate through Friday, March 6, 2009. If you plan on staying Sunday evening, please make your reservations today.** Please call 1-800-455-9261 and reference *AU Inst for Research Group Block* to make your reservation.

Business Meeting and Luncheon

Our business meeting and luncheon will be held on Tuesday at the Grand National. Dr. Pamela Arrington, of the Alabama Commission on Higher Education, will present the Statewide Planning Advisory Council's work on the five-year plan. We will also review the results of the Experience and Expertise Survey.

Door Prizes

Please plan to bring door prizes from your home institution. A drawing for door prizes will take place at the Business Lunch on Tuesday. (Hopefully, not in the basement.)

Conference Contact Information

Should you have any questions about the 2009 ALAIR Conference, please contact Conference Chair Dr. Alicia Simmons at 256-782-8144 or asimmons@jsu.edu.



ALAIR Conference Preliminary Program

Monday, March 30, 2009	12:30-5:00	Registration
	1:00 - 1:45	Newcomers' workshop (Recommended for members with three or fewer years experience.)
	1:45 – 2:45	Concurrent Sessions
	2:45 – 3:00	Break
	3:00 – 4:00	Tableau Presentation- Kevin Brown, Vice President, Alliances and Partnerships Datalient Presentation – Patrick Rohde, President
	4:10-5:00	Concurrent Sessions
	6:00-9:00	Special event – Amsterdam Café-Auburn, Alabama
Tuesday, March 31, 2009	8:00 - 8:30	Registration
	8:00 - 8:30	Continental Breakfast
	8:30 - 8:45	Welcome, Dr. Mary Ellen Mazey, Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs, Auburn University
	8:45 - 9:45	Keynote Speaker: Jane Wellman, Delta Project on Postsecondary Costs, Productivity and Accountability, Washington, DC
	9:45: - 10:50	Special Interest Groups
	10:50 - 11:00	Break
	11:00 – 11:40	Concurrent Sessions
	11:45 – 12:30	Concurrent Sessions
12:30 - 2:00	Luncheon/Business Meeting/Door Prizes	

Travel directions will be sent before the conference.