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2019 Winner: Michael Zangl

New Professional Award

Michael Zangl has demonstrated a deep and abiding passion for Housing and Residence Life that I have not seen in an entry level professional in some time. He has shown a thirst for learning as much as he can about the profession, taking on multiple roles both operationally as well as educationally. He has a keen sense of logistics and continual improvement and has turned his efforts to sharpening our performance in training, mentoring new staff and students, selection, and social justice education. Michael is a vocal advocate for his staff and students, often being willing to suggest new ways forward or highlighting concerns regarding how students might be impacted by our processes. This has been invaluable as we have dialogued about significant practices such as gender inclusive housing and LGBTQ+ living-learning options. I have been continually impressed with how Michael approaches his work and feel that he is well deserving of recognition for his contribution to the profession, including his continued work with NWACUHO.

Though the housing operations unit and residence life unit are under the same department umbrella, the two function relatively independently of one another. On several occasions, Michael has stepped in to help with different room assignment processes. The department decided to change how residents picked rooms in a way that preferred residents who were selecting a room with a roommate. In order to help ensure residents had a roommate, Michael worked with a staff member in our housing operations unit to design an event where students could come and meet other students looking for roommates. The event had to be planned very quickly, but turned out to be highly attended with a significant number of students finding their roommate as a result of that event. Another example of Michael going beyond the expectations of his role to aid the housing operations team was his support during the room selection process. Michael stayed late each night of the lower division sign-up night to help answer calls of both residents and parents. Housing operations staff explained that his involvement was helpful because of his background living in or overseeing some of the less desirable building, which helped with some difficult conversations in a way unique to those in the RD position.

Michael has been engaged in a number of initiatives in the campus community sponsored by Gonzaga's Center for Diversity, Inclusion, Community, and Equity (DICE). For two years, Michael served as a mentor to two first-year students who identified as queer students of color through DICE's mentorship program geared towards students who identify as students of color, first-generation, and/or queer students. Michael was awarded LEADs Mentor of the Year for his service. Michael has also been a part of two staff/faculty learning circles where faculty and staff engage in dialogue around issues related to equity and social justice. This year, Michael is an intergroup dialogue facilitator, a role that required nearly twenty hours of training over a weekend in the fall semester and meets with a consistent group

of students for two hours a week, over ten weeks, to engage in dialogue around race. Michael's consistent engagement with diversity and inclusion on campus can also be seen in being requested to be a table facilitator at GU's first Town Hall, a meeting to address campus climate as it pertains to students, staff, and faculty of all identities.

Michael has not only mentored students, he has mentored staff as well. Several staff members know Michael as their go-to person for policies, logistics, or advice. Michael always provides a listening ear to these folks and their professional (and personal) lives have been the better for it. One colleague has stated, "as a colleague Michael challenges me to think beyond the immediate moment." This is something crucial for new professionals that show wisdom beyond their few years in the field.

Michael has maintained consistent involvement in NWACUHO for the past three years. He has served on the NWACUHO Programming Committee for the past three years, helping review and select programs for the annual conference, in addition to helping moderate sessions and select "Best Of" awards. Michael has been on the Diversity and Inclusion Committee for the past two years, providing feedback on different goals and helping with the affinity social.

In conclusion, Michael has not only done an exemplary job in the requirements of his position, but he has gone above and beyond in many ways previously stated. Michael is very deserving of the NWACUHO new professional award.

Drew Satter

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