



Letter from President Mary Barton



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We are a few months away from the next TAIR conference, and I cannot wait to share some sneak peeks at what the Program Committee has planned! But first I would like to update you on the activities of your Executive Committee.

We completed a review of TAIR's Constitution and Bylaws. Recommended changes will be sent out for review by the membership in December. The changes will be voted upon by at the annual business meeting to be held during the TAIR conference in San Antonio.

After careful review of TAIR finances and projected conference costs, 2016 conference registration fees will increase slightly this year. Please note, the annual membership fee of \$25 is included in the conference registration fee. The 2016 fee structure will be \$200 for early registration (through January 13, 2016), \$250 for regular registration (January 14, 2016 through February 5, 2016), and \$300 for late registration (beginning February 6, 2016). We will cutoff online registration on February 18, 2016!!! Pre- and post-conference workshops are \$60. TAIR is your best bargain for professional development!

The Awards Committee led by Immediate Past President Lincoln Holmes was approved to revise criteria for the Outstanding Professional Practice Award. This year the committee will consider nominees for Outstanding Professional Practice Award Best Visual Display of Information. See Page 5 for details about awards criteria and how to nominate your institution or another for consideration.

Lisa Haynes, TAIR Secretary, reports we now have 348 TAIR members, a slight decrease from last year's all-time high of 350.

Once again, Member-at-Large for Professional Development David Brown and his Professional Development Committee delivered a great summer workshop in late July. If you were not there, you missed a great opportunity to learn a new skill or brush off some rust, plus network with TAIR friends (see Page 10 for details).

I hope you are ready for the 2016 conference in San Antonio at the Omni San Antonio Hotel at the Colonnade! Vice President/Program Chair Soon Merz and her Program Committee have planned a terrific conference that offers something for everyone. Those of you who have attended TAIR conferences for a while may notice that there are some differences this year! We have implemented some changes based on feedback from previous conferences and we are trying some new things just to keep things fresh! For example, we have added post-conference workshops. More details about the conference and the link opening registration can be found in Soon's letter and elsewhere in this newsletter.

We understand that some of you may be faced with tight budgets, and even though the conference fee has increased only slightly, they may still be a factor. Please remember, TAIR offers some assistance in the form of Travel Grants. See Page 2 for more information and application instructions.

Finally, it takes a village to keep TAIR running smoothly. Besides your elected officers and committees, there are many others appointed to accomplish a variety of tasks behind the scenes. There are so many opportunities to get involved, and we would love to have some more help!

If you have ever wondered what you could do to get involved with TAIR, you can get answers at this year's conference. A panel of "seasoned" and experienced TAIR members will share their experiences and present information about opportunities for service to your organization; look for it in this year's schedule and attend if you can.

I hope to see you in San Antonio!

Mary





A Note from Soon Merz Vice President/Program Chair

Are you ready for the 38th annual TAIR conference in San Antonio? The conference is shaping up

to be a great one! I can't wait to see y'all in February. Your program committee has been hard at work to ensure that you have a wonderful conference experience filled with excellent professional development and networking opportunities.

The TAIR 2016 conference will be held February 28-Mary 2, 2016 at the Omni San Antonio at the Colonnade in San Antonio, TX. This location is on the northwest side of San Antonio and is a beautiful facility with many restaurants within walking distance. I hope you are making plans to join us in the celebration of our profession.

The theme for this conference is "Viva la Data!" In keeping with our tradition of soliciting ideas from the membership for themes reflecting our host city, this theme was selected from many wonderful ideas submitted by the membership.

The TAIR program committee has been working to offer you a wide range of professional development opportunities to assist you in developing professional knowledge and skills through concurrent sessions, special interest groups, and pre-/post-conference workshops. Workshops and concurrent sessions are organized around six tracks: Assessment and Effectiveness, Current Issues in Higher Education, Planning and Organizing, Reporting and Decision Support, Research, and Technology and Training.

This year, due to the news that the Texas A&M Assessment Conference would not be held again, we have added additional workshops and concurrent sessions, focused on assessment, to provide the assessment community an opportunity to engage in professional development activities.

The pre-conference workshops will be offered on Sunday and Monday, February 28 and February 29. We are also offering two post-conference workshops on Wednesday afternoon, March 2. Be sure to review the workshop schedule on the TAIR website before completing your registration and making your travel arrangements so that you can take advantage of the great workshops being offered.

The Special Event will be dinner at Casa Rio on the River Walk and a river tour on a river boat. Marc Turner, our Local Arrangements Chair, has more information about the special event on page 7. Marc has done a fantastic job with the arrangements for the conference so I'm sure the special event will be fun-tastic.

We are very fortunate to have as our general sessions' speakers, **Dr. Anne M. Kress, President of Monroe Community College in Rochester, NY** and **Ben Miller, Senior Director of Postsecondary Education for the Center for American Progress.** Dr. Kress will be our opening keynote speaker and her topic will be on data presentation for decision makers and leadership. Mr. Miller, our closing keynote speaker, will be speaking about the HEA reauthorization and what to expect from policymakers in 2016 and beyond.

Registration for the TAIR conference is now open on the TAIR website at <http://www.texas-air.org/conference/2016/>. At the conference website you can find information about the pre-/post-conference workshop schedule and the conference program, lodging and travel information. For hotel reservations, please ask for the TAIR conference rate, if calling, or use our group web page at, <http://www.omnihotels.com/hotels/san-antonio/meetings/texas-association-for-institutional-research>, to get the conference rate and to ensure that TAIR receives credit for the room count. The deadline for room reservations at the conference rate is January 28, 2016; however, I encourage you to make your reservations early, as we expect another record attendance at this conference.

As always, we rely on sponsors to support some of our conference activities. If there is a vendor you think should be represented at the conference, please send them a note about sponsorships and also let us know so that we can reach out to them. This conference is a good opportunity for the companies who make the products to make an appearance and get some exposure.

I think we have a really great conference lined up for you. Two full days of workshops and many concurrent sessions to help you learn about the higher education landscape and to prepare for future changes. I hope you will look over the conference schedule and register to attend. TAIR is a member organization and needs your active support to provide services that improve and sustain the profession. So come on down to San Antonio and meet with your colleagues from around the state and network, learn, and work together in a relaxed and fun setting.

I look forward to seeing you in San Antonio! Viva la Data!

Soon

TAIR Travel Grants

TAIR is committed to providing professional development and networking opportunities for everyone who is involved in institutional research, planning, evaluation, and policy analysis in Texas higher education.

For individuals who may not otherwise be able to attend the annual conference, travel grants at **\$350** are available to help cover travel expenses. These grants are available to active members and those who become new members for 2015. The deadline to apply for a travel grant is **December 20, 2015.**

The TAIR Travel Grant Application and directions are available at [Here](#)

Meet the Executive Committee:



President:

Mary Barton

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Immediate Past President:

Lincoln Holmes

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Vice President:

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Secretary:

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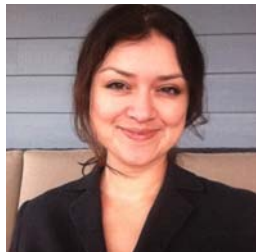
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Treasurer:

Cathy Delgado

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(512) 579-5055

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Appointments:

TAIR-L Manager:

Kate Proff, Texas State University

Web Developer:

Todd Moon, Austin Community College

Historian:

Maryann Ruddock Brown, Retiree

Liaison to AIR:

Mary Barton, University of North Texas

Newsletter Editor:

Cassie West, University of North Texas

TAIR Payment Address

Those of us who work at institutions with accounting information systems may have an outdated TAIR address on file, and when payments are mailed to that outdated address it creates extra work for the Treasurer. In some cases, this may result in a payment that gets lost during the forwarding process.

Cathy Delgado is our Treasurer. This is a good time to ensure that the address you have on file for TAIR is up-to-date. Please take a moment to check or to ask your administrative assistant to verify the TAIR payment address on file with your institution. The current payment address is:

TAIR
Attn: Cathy Delgado
UT System Office of Strategic Initiatives
210 W. 6th St. Suite B140E
Austin, Texas 78701

If you have any questions about TAIR payments or other financial concerns, please contact Cathy Delgado at cdelgado@utsystem.edu

TAIR 2016 Program Committee:

Program Chair:

Soon Merz, Austin Community College

Concurrent and Discussion Sessions:

Joe Baumann, Blinn College

Evaluations:

Velda Villarreal, Alamo Colleges

General Sessions:

Jessica Shedd, University of Texas System

Local Arrangements:

Marc Turner, Texas State University

Program Brochure:

Daniel O'Hanlon, Austin Community College

Session Coordinators:

Chantel Perry, Texas A&M University-
Corpus Christi

Special Interest Groups:

Patricia Rehak, Victoria College

Sponsors:

Amanda Kay Moske, University of North Texas

Elected Committee:

Nominating Committee

Lincoln Holmes, The University of Texas at Austin

Amanda Clark, Blinn College

Faron Kincheloe, Baylor University

Marcelo Parades, University of Texas-
Pan American

Tracy Stegmair, Texas Woman's University

Appointed Committees:

Data Advisory Committee

Carol LaRue, Southwest Texas Junior College

Lisa McCarty, Abilene Christian University

Colby Stoeber, University of Texas Health Sciences Center

George Gonzalez, San Jacinto College

Rachelle Barron, Texas State Technical College-Waco

Morgan Carter, Tarleton State University

Dean Williamson, Prairie View A&M University

Karen Laljiani, Cedar Valley College (DCCCD)

Financial Review Committee

Jim O'Donnell, Mountain View College (Chair)

Historian

Maryann Ruddock Brown, TAIR Emerita/Past President

Professional Development Committee

David Brown, North Central Texas College (Chair)

Jimmy Roberts, Temple Community College

Marcelo Paredes, University of Texas-Pan American

Phil Rhodes, McLennan Community College

Awards Committee

Lincoln Holmes, The University of Texas at Austin (Chair)

Bill Dabney, university data consumer (UT Austin)

Kathy James, general public consumer

Al Walser, The University of Texas at Austin

Elizabeth Chivers, Navarro College

Mary Barton, University of North Texas

TAIR Membership Update

Welcome to our TAIR members, new and returning; we are strengthened as an organization by your participation! Benefits of a TAIR membership include: 1) a subscription to TAIR-L, TAIR's discussion list, where members can share information and solicit advice on projects; and 2) valuable personal time at the annual conference with leading vendors and expert presenters in higher education. The newest TAIR benefit is the TAIR Level I Certificate of Completion. The certificate is for professionals in institutional research who take advantage of TAIR professional development workshops. Truly, your decision to spend \$25 on your TAIR annual membership gives you a remarkable value.

Membership in TAIR is maintained on an annual basis, with the annual TAIR conference marking the start of the membership year. Currently, TAIR has 348 members representing institutions and agencies statewide.

TAIR 2015 Membership by Institutional/Organizational Category		
Category	Count of Members	Percent of Members
4 Year Public	128	37%
2 Year Public	144	41%
4 Year Private	51	15%
Association	21	6%
2 Year Private	0	0%
Technical	4	1%
Total	348	100%

TAIR 2016 Outstanding Professional Practice Award

Best Visual Display of Information

Each year, TAIR awards the Outstanding Professional Practice Award(s) to recognize excellence in our work. Categories of work to be recognized are determined by the Awards Committee and may vary from year to year. For the 2016 conference, the Awards Committee has chosen to recognize the best visual display of information.

Submissions may include an infographic, table, chart, illustration, PowerPoint slide, or some other means of visually representing data or information that helps connect data with decision-making in a visually appealing way. The submission must fit on a single printed page or a single web page in order to be considered; images that are linked in a series – such as a set of tables or charts in a dashboard – may be submitted but will be judged individually as single submissions.

In order to be eligible for consideration, the visual display's creator must be a member of TAIR at the time of submission. If more than one person is credited with creation of the visual display, at least one of the creators must be a TAIR member.

To be considered for the 2016 Outstanding Professional Practice Award, submissions must include the following:

- Name, title, and institution of person submitting item for consideration
- Context for the display (limit of 250 words; briefly describe for what purpose the display was created, who is the intended audience, how the display was used in decision-making and any other pertinent information)
- PDF of visual display or link to display's web page

Submissions should be sent via e-mail to Lincoln Holmes, TAIR Immediate Past President and Chair of the Awards Committee, at j.l.holmes@austin.utexas.edu no later than December 16, 2015. Late submissions will not be accepted. The winner will be announced at the TAIR Annual Conference to be held in San Antonio, Texas, February 28 – March 2, 2016.

Submissions will be judged on the following criteria:

- ◆ Topic (clarity, relevance)
- ◆ Content (level of detail appropriate for audience, timeliness)
- ◆ Format (clarity, composition/craftsmanship)
- ◆ Detail (accuracy, documentation)
- ◆ Attractiveness (visually appealing)
- ◆ Ability to tell a story





TAIR 2016 Conference Schedule

Hotel Arrangements for the 2016 TAIR Conference – Book Early!

TAIR 2016 will be held at the **Omni San Antonio Hotel at the Colonnade**. Located in the Medical Center area of San Antonio, this hotel is 8 miles from the San Antonio International Airport, 6.5 miles from Six Flags Fiesta Texas, and 11 miles from downtown and the beautiful San Antonio River Walk.

TAIR has arranged a block of rooms for the conference at the rate of \$120 per night for single occupancy in a King Deluxe Room and \$131 for double occupancy or a Queen Deluxe Room. The room rate includes wireless internet access for the duration of your stay. Reservations can be made by calling the Omni Reservations line at 1-800-THE-OMNI and asking for the TAIR conference rate or via our group web page located at:

<http://www.omnihotels.com/hotels/san-antonio/meetings/texas-association-for-institutional-research>

We are expecting another record year for attendance, so be sure to make your reservations as soon as possible. **Our block of rooms is being held until Thursday, January 28, 2016 so be sure to make your reservation by then.**



Sunday, February 28th

9:00am - 12:00pm Preconference Workshops
Noon - 1:00pm Preconference Workshops Luncheon
1:00pm - 4:00pm Preconference Workshops

Monday, February 29th

7:30am - 10:30am Preconference Workshops
10:45am - 12:00pm General Session 1
12:00pm - 1:00pm Lunch
1:00pm - 1:45pm Concurrent sessions A
2:00pm - 2:45pm Concurrent Sessions B
3:00pm - 3:45pm Concurrent Sessions C
4:00pm - 4:45pm Legislative Update and
Concurrent Sessions D
5:30pm - 7:30pm Meet, Munch, & Mingle

Tuesday, March 1st

****8:00am - 5:00pm Vendor Exhibits in Foyer outside
of Grand Ballroom****
7:30am - 9:30am SIG Breakfast
9:30am - 10:15am Concurrent Sessions E
10:30am - 11:15am Concurrent Sessions F
11:30am - 12:30pm Plated Lunch
12:30pm - 1:15pm Concurrent Sessions G
1:30pm - 2:15pm Concurrent Sessions H
2:30pm - 3:30pm Vendor Fair with Dessert Reception
3:30pm - 4:15pm Business Meeting
4:30pm - 5:15pm Concurrent Sessions I
6:30pm - 9:30pm Special Event on the SA River Walk
*Buses leave at 6:00pm

Wednesday, March 2nd

7:30am - 9:15am Networking Breakfast
8:00am - 9:15am Past Presidents Breakfast
8:30am - 9:15am Concurrent Sessions J
9:30am - 10:15am Concurrent Sessions K
10:30am - 11:45am General Session 2
12:00pm - 1:00pm Post-Conference Workshop Luncheon
1:00pm - 4:00pm Post-Conference Workshops
1:00pm - 5:00pm Executive Committee Meeting

TAIR 2016 Special Event



Dinner and Tour of the San Antonio River Walk

By popular demand, the special event for TAIR 2016 will take place on the scenic and historic San Antonio River Walk.

We will begin with an amazing meal at Casa Rio, one of San Antonio's longest running restaurants, and the first business to open on the River Walk. Founded in 1946, the restaurant sits on land first titled in 1777 by the King of Spain. At the core of the restaurant is a Spanish Colonial period hacienda which can be seen in the heavy cedar door, fireplace, and thick rock walls. Following dinner, we will board River Cruising Barges to take a fun and informative narrated tour of the River Walk. Lasting around 40 minutes, this tour covers over a mile and a half of the beautiful San Antonio River Walk and recently won a TripAdvisor Certificate of Excellence award.

Tickets for the event are \$40 and include transportation to and from the River Walk, dinner, and the boat tour.

Be sure to add tickets to your conference registration so you don't miss this wonderful experience!



MENU:

Combo Appetizers

Carne Asada Dinner (*Gluten Free*)

Assorted Mini Desserts

Vegetarian option will be available



Only in San Antonio!

For the TAIR 2016 conference, we travel to the exciting and rapidly growing city of San Antonio. Ranked as one of the top 10 largest cities in the US, San Antonio is truly a big city with a small town feel.

Founded over 300 years ago during a Spanish expedition, San Antonio is now home to over 30 higher education institutions (including the University of Texas Health Science Center at San Antonio, the University of Texas-San Antonio, Our Lady of the Lake University, Trinity University, Texas A&M University-San Antonio, and the Alamo Colleges). San Antonio also boasts a vibrant art community which reflects the special cultural experience which is San Antonio.

The city's unique blend of Mexican, German, and Old West cultures combine to create an "only in San Antonio" experience. Although the Alamo is perhaps one of the most visited sites in the city, it is actually only one of five historic Spanish missions in the city which were recently recognized as the first UNESCO World Heritage Site in Texas. Just a few blocks from the Alamo sits the San Fernando Cathedral, the oldest operating cathedral in the nation. For those wanting to explore even more history and educational sites, there are several tours around town and a multitude of museums to explore in addition to the San Antonio Zoo, the San Antonio Botanical Gardens, and the Japanese Sunken Garden.

But we cannot exist on art alone, so the unique combination of cultures in San Antonio provides a culinary landscape that is truly one-of-a-kind. Obviously known for several of our popular Tex-Mex restaurants, the city also features traditional Mexican cuisine along with German, French, English, and Italian eateries. In addition to formal and casual restaurants, San Antonio has a thriving and rapidly growing food truck scene featuring everything from the standard street tacos to amazing Philly Cheesesteaks, gourmet grilled cheese, and much more.

For those looking for outdoor activities, the city's great year-round weather and gently rolling terrain have made San Antonio and the surrounding Hill Country a top golf destination with more than 50 courses covering a wide range of styles and prices. San Antonio is also home to multiple theme parks including Six Flags Fiesta



Texas, Seaworld San Antonio, and Morgan's Wonderland, a theme park designed especially for children with special needs.

With TAIR 2016 occurring at the first of the week, it would make a great opportunity to come early, or stay late, to explore the unique combination of cultures and attractions that you can find only in San Antonio.

For more information, please visit the website of the San Antonio Visitor Center at: <http://visitsanantonio.com>

- Sources: The San Antonio Visitor Center

Letter from the Member at Large for Professional Development



I want to thank everyone for the past two years at Round Rock. Last year we had the largest turnout ever with over 100 participants. This year we had the largest paying group ever of over 70 attendees (Note: last year we had 45 free IPEDS enrollees). The summer workshops in Round Rock have been a fantastic time, and had plenty to offer the members of TAIR in the area of professional development. As the Member-at-Large for Professional Development I would like to thank everyone who made Round Rock a success. I would also like to extend thanks to our workshop presenters, without your work those workshops would not be possible. I want to thank you all for making the Annual Summer Workshops one of the best ever!

Annual TAIR Professional Development Pre-Conference Workshops

Scheduled for Feb 28th - Feb 29th, 2016

This 38th Annual TAIR Conference will provide opportunities for learning in several subject areas. The cost of each workshop includes a continental style breakfast and a box lunch. For TAIR members the price for each half-day workshop will be \$60 per workshop.

To register, go to <https://www.regonline.com/joinTAIR>

If you have been in IR for over two years and want credit for the Newcomers workshop, the last day to be grandfathered in is coming up. Please go to <http://www.texas-air.org/development/certificate.php> and email me a pdf of the signed document before the Annual TAIR Conference.

Annual TAIR Professional Development Post-Conference Workshops

Scheduled for March 2nd, 2016

Another great offering on March 2, is an opportunity to participate in Post-Conference Workshops for the first time at TAIR. These workshops will cover Assessment topics to help offices that have responsibilities in these areas. Please feel free to contact me if you need further information. My office phone number is (940) 668-3331, or you can send me an email inquiry at dbrown@nctc.edu.

Remember the Data Flow!

David

Member-At-Large-Professional Development

Personal note: Overall, the success the TAIR Professional Development has seen the past two years has been very rewarding. Not only have we had the largest total participants, and most paid attendees at summer workshops ever, we also brought IPEDS training back to Texas for the first time in 4 years and we did it twice. We also started Post-Conference workshops for the first time ever. All of these have been really exciting to be a part of, but the accomplishment I'm most proud of is we finally have a Level-one certificate of completion. TAIR's first certificate completers will be awarded in March of 2016, just one year after implementation. We are also working on having the course list ready to vote on the Level-two Certificate of Completion this spring, as well. I'll be leaving office very proud of our past, and excited about our future. Thank you for the opportunity to serve this incredible group. You all make such a difference!



TAIR-L Listserv Update

The TAIR-L listserv is a valuable member benefit and currently serves as the primary form of communication among members. With ever-improving technology, I recognize that there may be better methods available to promote discussions. As TAIR Member-at-Large: Technology, I am currently evaluating several options to replace the current functionality of TAIR-L. One option is to move to a hosted forum on our website that would allow for notifications via email. Another would be to utilize an existing social media platform such as LinkedIn or Facebook. As always, important information about TAIR will be sent to members via email from the Executive Committee. I would like to receive feedback from the membership prior to rolling out a new solution. If you are interested in participating in a pilot, please email me at kproff@txstate.edu.

Until a new method of member communication can be vetted, the current listserv will maintain its same functionality. Since this is a member benefit, only active TAIR members may post messages to TAIR-L. Below are some technical tips intended to improve the use and function of the listserv:

- To post a message, send the message to tair-l@texas-air.org. Avoid putting other recipients in the to: or cc: fields of your message as this may prevent your message from being posted.
- Compose your message in plain text format. If you include fancy formatting and/or images in your messages, the listserv will convert your message to plain text and attach the images undoing all of the time and energy you put into the creation of a beautiful message.
- The next time you register for the TAIR conference or renew your membership, try to use the email address that your email system reports as your "sender" address. For example, if you use an email alias like tm01@tairu.edu but your messages are sent as tair.member@mail.tairu.edu, then register for TAIR using the longer email address. This is important because the listserv is populated using your TAIR membership address. But, if the listserv sees your post as coming from the longer email address, it does not recognize you as a listserv member and your message will not be posted until it is manually released by the listserv administrator.
- A significant number of TAIR-L messages are blocked by SPAM filters. If you feel you are missing messages, ask your IT department if they can add tair-l-bounces@texas-air.org to their list of approved addresses. You might also try adding this to your email address book. However, if you do, make some designation on the entry to remind you not to post messages to this address because messages sent to this address will not get posted.

Feel free to contact me with questions/comments/funny jokes at kproff@txstate.edu.

Thank you! *Kate*

TAIR Member-at-Large, Technology



Hold the Dates!!! Future TAIR Annual Conferences

TAIR 2016: February 28-March 2

Omni Hotel at the Colonnade, San Antonio

TAIR 2017: February-March

Hilton NASA Clear Lake, Houston

TAIR 2018: February-March

Omni Corpus Christi, Corpus Christi