

## Moving Forward, Together

*New American Colleges & Universities Summer Institute Highlights Strength of Consortium*

The Summer Institute has always afforded [NAC&U](#) members with the opportunity to share best practices with like-minded institutions, and this year's conference was no different in that respect. But in many ways, the 2010 Summer Institute, whose theme was "Sustaining Community, Renewal, and Meaning in our Work," prompted the 145 attendees to examine what lies ahead for higher education and determine how to best use the tools and opportunities available – whether the consortium's collective strength, social media, or data on student trends – to remain viable while staying true to what they do best.

Prior to the official start of the Institute at Wagner College in New York, presidents, provosts/CAOs, CFOs, and vice presidents for Enrollment Management gathered for an Executive Summit to discuss fiscal sustainability and institutional positioning in response to a changing demographic and economic climate. Executives also discussed how to leverage NAC&U to better position both their own institutions and the consortium. Following the Executive Summit, Alexandra Tilsley, reporter at *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, [interviewed eight NAC&U members about the consortium and its plans to increase collaboration.](#)



*Executives discussed leveraging the consortium as a way to stay competitive.*

The official start to Summer Institute kicked off on Wednesday with a luncheon, the first of many delicious meals that showcased Wagner's gracious hospitality. Following that, Charles Blaish of The Wabash Center at Wabash College gave a presentation on the [Center's national study](#) of 49 institutions that identified practices and conditions that promote liberal education and growth within students. Blaish asserted that it was essential to listen to student feedback if an institution were to be successful at attaining positive outcomes in student retention and student achievement.



*Annmarie Dowling-Castronovo, nursing professor at Wagner, discusses sustainable civic engagement.*

Throughout the institute there were sessions of concurrent panels. Topics included Educating and Retaining the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Student, Piloting a K-16 Early College High School, and Literacy across the Curriculum, among others, presented by faculty and administrators from member campuses and guest speakers.

John Lawlor and Lynsey Struthers of [The Lawlor Group](#), specialists in education marketing, discussed social media for colleges and universities. The presentation outlined the reasons why institutions need to be on social media, redefined the four Ps of marketing, and provided a concrete game plan for setting up a presence on popular sites. To conclude the Summer Institute, George Dehne of [George Dehne & Associates](#) kept with the forward-looking theme of the conference with his vision of higher education in 20/20, including the changing demographics of students and what colleges and universities need to do to stay competitive.

From the Institute's "base" at [Wagner College](#) in Staten Island, many conference participants took full advantage of the free ferry ride to Manhattan. Also, NAC&U organized educational expeditions to the Lower East Side Tenement Museum, Ellis Island and the Statue of Liberty, and a tour of Staten Island.

Photos from the Summer Institute are posted on the NAC&U Facebook page <http://www.facebook.com/pages/New-American-Colleges-Universities/146608813915>.

Next year's Summer Institute will take place at [North Central College](#) in Naperville, Illinois. Officials from North Central agreed that their work was cut out for them as Wagner College provided such a memorable experience -- the comprehensive, educational program; creative meal planning (authentic hot dog carts at lunchtime!); and sweeping views of the NYC skyline; to name a few highlights. Located just 29 miles west of Chicago, however, North Central is certain to put its own regional flair on next year's conference.



*Natalie Johnson, second from left, of Wagner College with a group from The University of Scranton visiting the Chinese Scholars Garden in Snug Harbor on Staten Island.*