**IARP Illinois Social Media and Student Involvement Initiative**

**Utilization of Social Media**

IARP Illinois has developed a LinkedIn page and currently has 46 members. We utilized this page to communicate information about our Annual Seminar that took place in September 2013 and plan to update our members regarding the 2014 Annual Seminar when information is finalized. Discussion has begun among the IARP Illinois Board regarding the posting of employment opportunities, internship requests by students, networking events, mentoring and other ways to connect students with rehabilitation professionals via LinkedIn. We have also developed an IARP Illinois Facebook page which currently has 9 likes from IARP Illinois Facebook users. Within the Facebook page are several announcements regarding student member benefits and IARP Course of a Lifetime Interviews. This page was developed for IARP Illinois members to connect with other rehabilitation counseling professionals, share resources, discuss conference news, and to network regarding potential job opportunities. Student members are encouraged to share information, weblinks, or any other resources and news with other rehabilitation professional members and student IARP members through the IARP Illinois page. Links to the IARP Illinois page have been posted several times on IARP’s official Facebook page. The development of clear guidelines on the utilization of Social Media within IARP would assist with our initiative to streamline communication among our members, provide valuable resources for employment and internship opportunities for students and professionals and allow access to current events and the latest trends in the Rehabilitation industry.

**IARP Illinois Student Committee 2014 Update**

A survey was sent out to all 32 Illinois IARP student members and yielded responses from 10 members.  The 5-item survey contained questions designed to determine the most appropriate monthly telephonic meeting times, and gauge student attendance at IARP conferences and level of interest in participating in future conferences. The survey asked questions regarding ranking the level of knowledge one has in IARP and private case management rehabilitation areas of practice. The majority of respondents stated they are interested in the scope of private rehabilitation, excited to learn more about the field, but have a somewhat minimal understanding of IARP areas of practice. The leading areas in order of level of interest: (1) Vocational Case Management, (2) Forensic Expert Witness Testimony, (3) Disability Management, (4) History of IARP, Private Case Management, and NARRPS, and (5) Life Care Planning.

The findings of aspects that would make student members become more involved in the IARP community ranked by level of interest: (1) Professional Networking, (2) Job Board for New Graduates, (3) Student/Professional Networking Events, (4) Counselor (CRC) Mentors, (5) Volunteer Opportunities, (6) Internship Opportunities, (7) Job Shadowing Possibilities, and (8) Career Development Activities.

A networking event night is to be tentatively held on June 25, 2014 at IARP’s headquarters in Glenview, IL and social media task force initiatives involve ways to approach gaining more student interest and contribution to IARP IL’s student section and to encourage maximum student attendance at the event. As a face-to-face approach is also very worthwhile, IARP IL Student Chair Christopher Mathis will create handouts explaining the many benefits of student membership and provide small presentations to universities with rehabilitation counseling programs within the Chicago-land area. Northern Illinois University is our first university visit and is scheduled for 4/17/14.

We will look to speak with newer graduate students who may not have a clear understanding of rehabilitation counseling in the private sector and explain IARP’s student benefits. We will also begin conducting monthly telephonic meetings outside of traditional work hours. Future meetings could be held at 6 PM to enable more student contribution. These efforts will maximize student participation within the section and elicit high attendance for the IARP IL professional/student networking event evening.