January 12, 2009

SEAHO Awards Committee

To Whom It May Concern:

It is a pleasure to recommend Jonathan Lucia for the James C. Grimm Outstanding New Professional Award. He is most deserving of being recognized. Jonathan joined our Student Affairs staff in June, 2007 and has shown from the outset that he is a dedicated professional who goes above and beyond the boundaries of his job description.

After a month and a half of his assuming the newly created position of Coordinator of Residence Life at Birmingham-Southern College, our Director of Residence Life, who is his supervisor and the only other professional staff member in Residence Life, began maternity leave. Jonathan took over all director responsibilities including preparing for the opening of the Fall Term, training a staff with which he had no former relationship, and developing and implementing a commuter student program. He accomplished all of this extremely well through his dedicated efforts.

At the beginning of January we began to plan for the absence of our Dean of Students, who would leave at the end of March for maternity leave and would be away for the remainder of Spring Term. I asked Jonathan to step in and assist me in handling our student judicial matters during the Dean’s absence. Jonathan accepted this new responsibility of assisting me with our campus judicial affairs, eager to learn more about this aspect of Student Affairs knowing that it would be an opportunity to further his professional development. He attended the Association of Student Judicial Affairs Conference in February in order to prepare for this role, while also using it as an opportunity to become more aware of methods of managing behavioral issues within the residence halls. He was invaluable in his handling of the additional judicial responsibilities he was given, remaining the committed residence life professional at the same time. The value of this commitment was compounded due to the unexpected illness of the Director of Residence Life during February which required surgery and her absence for an extended time. During all of this, Jonathan never skipped a beat, never loss enthusiasm, never waivered in his dedication. He met the challenges in ways that make us all proud to say that we work with him. Even at this stage of being new in his career, he proved to be a role model for all of us.

In addition, I want to highlight one particular program for which he has shown outstanding leadership. Our commuter students program had long been an area we wished to develop, but other priorities frequently seemed to take precedence. He was given the responsibility of creating this “new” program for us. He was creative, enthusiastic, practical, and successful. Most of all, he created enthusiasm, a sense of ownership, and a sense of community within our commuters students who comprise 8% of our students on a highly residential campus. The programming effort in addition to the increased commuter student involvement on campus that Jonathan and the commuter students achieved was so impressive that last year I awarded the

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Dudley Long Leadership Award to the Commuter Student Union, an organization that had only existed on our campus for one year. This award was established by our Student Government Association and enables me every year to select the group or person who enhanced student life the most and had the greatest positive impact on our campus during the year. The opportunity that has been bestowed upon me to make this selection is one of the greatest honors I have received in my career and the selection of the recipients is a responsibility I take very seriously.

Overall, Jonathan’s ability to add stability and professionalism to any and all situations, and his willingness to always take on new projects speaks well of his strength as a student affairs professional. His concern for not only our students, but also for his co-workers speaks volumes of his character. He is always kind and caring no matter the situation, and he works well even under difficult circumstances. He is diplomatic and always has a positive outcome as his goal. We all know how challenging this can be and he has shown his affinity for this time after time.

I strongly urge you to give Jonathan Lucia your strongest consideration for the James C. Grimm Outstanding New Professional Award. While he has been a new professional on our campus this year and last, his performance has been that of an outstanding, well-seasoned professional.

Sincerely,

Dudley Long

Vice President

for Student Affairs

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