Dear SEAHO Award Selection Committee,

I am writing this letter of nomination on behalf of Ann Morgenstern for the SEAHO 2010 James C. Grimm Outstanding New Professional Award. Ann’s contributions to student housing and residence life on the Ole Miss campus, as well as the housing profession as a whole, can be summed up as mold-breaking and visionary. When Ann moved from a part time graduate assistant hall director to the full time Assistant Director for Marketing Services in the Department of Student Housing and Residence Life on the Ole Miss campus I had the privilege to be the first graduate assistant directly under her supervision and now am able define myself as her colleague in the department and it has been through those two roles that I have gotten the chance to know Ann.

Some housing professionals may have a hard time seeing how Ann’s daily activities relate to the traditional roles of the student housing department, but that is what makes Ann a revolutionary force within housing administration. When Ann became the assistant director, her passion for marketing, housing and higher education became one entity and she was able to change the way student housing was utilized by other areas of campus as a resource. Ann started her full time career with a clear mission to improve the quality of cooperation between the housing department and other departments on campus specifically the admission office. She was able to utilize her past experiences with marketing and admissions and fuse those concepts with housing to construct and support the revolutionary idea that housing can be used as a recruitment tool on the Ole Miss campus. As Ann’s first graduate assistant, I was able to experience her unique supervisory style of challenge and support that includes a resolute belief in trusting those you work with to do the right thing. Ann’s work ethic is unwavering; she embraces the idea that she would not ask something of someone that she herself would not be willing to do including 7am Saturday morning college visit days to 5 day hall director recruitment trips.

Ann has not only committed herself to housing, but also to teaching. Balancing her housing professional commitments with teaching freshmen courses on campus, she has become a respected voice on the teaching of our freshmen studies seminar often being asked to be involved in brain storming sessions for possible new freshmen programs outside of the housing office. Her reach into other student affairs areas and academic areas is immeasurable for a professional still classified as “new” in years of experience. Ann is able to break through the housing professional stereotype and yet remain true to field and committed to the profession. Her involvement in the housing profession steps outside the Ole Miss box, steps outside the Mississippi box and will step outside the SEAHO regional box. Whether it is stepping in as MAHO interim president or spearheading the 2011 SEAHO planning team, Ann offers to the housing profession a unique point of view, a fearless philosophy that you should try anything at least once and a professional belief that change and challenge is okay in the workplace.

Ann exhibits the kind of work ethic and professionalism that anyone would wish were characteristic of all housing professionals in their field. Ann defines what a successful housing professional will be in years to come; one who focuses on interdepartmental missions and projects, who balances local campus commitments and activities with larger regional and national projects and one who is not afraid to challenge and change the system through all the right channels. I believe the time has arrived to formally acknowledge and celebrate Ann’s significant and visionary contributions to her campus and profession through receipt of the SEAHO 2010 James C. Grimm Outstanding New Professional Award.

Yours Truly,

Ashley Guinn Taylor

Department of Student Housing and Residence Life

The University of Mississippi