While this nomination can “officially” be credited as being submitted by an individual, if there were the opportunity to list those who would second, third, affirm, etc., on this document, the list would be extensive. Patricia Smith (Tricia), is quite simply a superior professional in residence life and student affairs, and is the epitome of what might be considered an archetype for our profession.

Since her arrival at Virginia Tech five years ago as an Area Coordinator, the department of residence life, the students and staff, and the university as a whole has benefitted a great deal from Tricia’s attention to advocacy, mentorship, and orientation to social justice, all of which impact her practices as an administrator and educator. Despite her high level as a performer in her position(s), she continually strives to improve herself and her methods, role modeling to her colleagues that no matter how accomplished you might be there is always room for improvement. Tricia continually shares new research and resources that she comes across with her colleagues with the aim of maintaining intellectual engagement and professional development. Each year she engages her professional and student staff with new and creative developmental activities aimed not only at their vocational competency, but their personal growth as well.

Tricia has also shown thoughtful talent towards the recruitment of both student and professional staff. She created a model of semester long internship opportunities for undergraduate student staff members interested in student affairs to be exposed to the field that proved so successful that more students are pursuing the opportunity. As chair of the RA selection committee, she has taken an already successful process to new heights, working with her committee to revamp the process to focus not only on the strengths candidates bring to the position, but how those strengths match the needs of the department and the evolving RA position. As a consequence, we anticipate this orientation to impact our training and performance appraisal processes.

Tricia has also taken numerous opportunities to be involved throughout the university, and in state, regional and national organizations. She believes it is her responsibility to then share the benefits of that involvement with her colleagues. She is sure to offer presentations to her colleagues upon her return from conferences and institutes so they might benefit from exciting programs and initiatives from around the country. Other university departments consistently request for her to present to their staff on various topics as well.

Tricia is truly a model professional; I hasten to say not only for entry level and fellow mid level, but for all professionals. Her conscientious orientation to her vocation, and persistence in capitalizing on opportunities for herself and those she works with should be emulated. It is our pleasure and to our benefit that we are able to nominate Mrs. Patricia Smith as the SEAHO Outstanding Mid-Level Professional for 2010.