**James C. Grimm Outstanding New Professional Award:**

Jordan Luzader

Community Director

North Carolina State University

When one hears the name Jordan Luzader, the following works quickly come to mind: Thoughtful, Reflective, Passionate, Student learning focused and Caring. As you meet Jordan and watch him interact with students, serve on committees or take part in a conversation, it is obvious that not only does he encompass the words listed above, but he is also innovative, forward thinking and excited about learning himself. As the inaugural Community Director for the Honors Quad at NC State University, Jordan has proven that he can traverse the politics of a newly created, jointly funded position, all while impacting the students and professionals with whom he interacts and works.

Supervising 25 student staff, advising 15 student leaders, co-leading a Learning Community Advisory Board for the Honors Village (a community that serves approximately 300 students), coordinating assessment for the Honors Village, and assisting with the coordination of graduate staff recruitment for all of University Housing, are not easy tasks for any professional, let alone a new one. The Honors Quad Community Director position was created as a duel position funded by both University Housing and the University Honor program at NC State University. When we were recruiting for this position, it was crucial that we could find a staff member who would be able to balance both the demands of a traditional housing position and with the needs of the academic side of the house. Right out of Graduate School, Jordan Luzader has proven to be the perfect fit. Not only has he excelled in completing the daily functions of his job, overseeing a residential community of 420 students, but he also consistently works to improve his community, the campus that he works for, as well as the Village that he is taking to the next level.

Jordan excels in many areas. There are of course a few key examples which exemplify his work as a new professional. Jordan consistently looks for ways in which to take part in experiences that will enhance his own **Student Interactions** that tie closely to **Student Engagement**. This past December, Jordan served as a Co-Advisor for the 3rd Annual Honors Village Yellowstone Research trip. As an Advisor, Jordan was responsible for assisting with the coordination and implementation of the trip. During the five days away from campus, Jordan was an active participant alongside students where he challenged students to step outside comfort zones and set up personal challenges. He was integral in initiating a hike to a Native American Wikieup, overseeing the safety during a 5 mile hike to a boiling river hot spring, and demonstrating the ability to laugh at himself during the numerous falls he took while cross-country skiing. Throughout the time spent on this trip, Jordan not only connected with students individually, but was also able to help them connect what they are learning in the classroom to one awesome experience outside of the classroom.

Jordan has a clear passion for **Assessment and Program Development** and has shown this through his many contributions to both the Honors Village and also his residential campus. East Campus at NC State, took up a new initiative this year – Multicultural Competence. As the backbone for practice on East, programming and training for both students and staff has been geared towards intentional awareness, knowledge and skill development in the area of multicultural competence. With previous knowledge and skills in the area of assessment, Jordan stepped up to help lead the charge in determining direction and next steps with this initiative. During the course of this year Jordan has assisted with the creation of assessment tools that have been used with professional staff, student staff as well as over 2200 residential students. Jordan has been the driving force in coordinating, leading and analyzing data from student staff focus groups. The information gained from these focus groups has been able to help our professional staff better train and work with their staff. Most impressively, Jordan has also acted as a teacher. Jordan helped to create an intervention log which allowed staff to take data obtained from a student survey and create manageable and tangible learning outcomes and interventions. His work is not only impacting the students on East Campus, but he is also teaching our Graduate Staff how to produce, utilize and analyze assessment data in order to create solid learning outcomes.

**Student Learning** in times of struggle can often be a difficult task for even the most seasoned professional to grasp. Rather they shy away from difficult conversations, Jordan embraces every opportunity that he can in order to challenge the thinking of his students, and ensure his own learning along the way. This past November, right after the Presidential election, a bias related incident occurred on campus at NC State. Students chose to write derogatory and hate filled statements about the African American community in the campus’ Free Expression Tunnel. The incident not only garnered the attention of the NAACP and ACLU but also created a rift in the NC State community. A wound was opened that we filled with fear, mistrust, hurt and disgust. Students, Faculty and Staff alike were on many different sides of the issue, and many did not know where to turn for support or to have their voices heard. Jordan used this incident as a way to not only provide support to the members of his community, but to also begin a dialogue. Below is an outline of response that Jordan (and his staff) provided:

***Staff Goals:***

*- Engage students in dialogue, not just the social ones or students who feel targeted, all of them.*

*- Monitor student reactions and respond appropriately and quickly.*

*- Host community meetings to let residents talk and share their reactions.*

*- Educate residents on protected classes and discrimination.*

*- Provide facts/information/questions to help residents process the incident.*

***To fulfill these goals we have taken these steps:***

*Posted on each floor of the Quad are large red posters that read: What is the difference between Free Speech and Hate Speech? The posters are left blank, all paper has markers by it, and residents are encouraged to write their own thoughts for their entire floor to have a forum.*

***In addition to this posting we also have****:*

*Within the Bathroom Shower Stalls (one of the following is posted in each shower)*

*- Technician article with Blog responses (laminated)*

*- N & O article with Blog responses (laminated)*

*- Jay Dawkins letter to the student body (laminated)*

*- University Policy on discrimination and the Chancellors statement (laminated)*

*Within the toilet stalls (one of the following is posted in each toilet with questions)*

*- McCain and Obama statements calling the country to unite behind the president elect*

*- Comic on the social construct of discrimination as it has changed over time*

*- Definition of free speech and hate speech*

*- Definition of censorship*

*Also posted along each floor are a series of quotes on the topics of racism, hate speech, and freedom of speech and questions for the residents to consider that will help students deal with the larger social construct issues and help educate on the universities decision.*

***As well as these passive methods we also****:*

*-Created a Facebook Group: Quad Unity the goal of the group is to talk about the posting in the Free Expression Tunnel*

*- Emailed every resident about the purpose of all of the additional postings in the hall and provide resources and assistance*

*- RAs will be going door to door to engage residents in the conversation, the questions posted on the hall will serve as springboards.*

*- Will host three community meetings Monday @ 7pm, Wednesday @ 9pm, and Thursday @ 7pm.*

*- Paint the Free Expression Tunnel with our own messages after Mondays community meeting.*

Even in times of struggle and mistrust, Jordan worked to provide support and a venue for dialogue, all of which strengthened his community of learners.

Jordan’s interest in learning does not stop with his students. Jordan has consistently looked for ways in which to grow himself. Whether through conversations about the field of Higher Education with other professionals, constant reading of the relevant literature or attending and presenting at conferences such as NCHO and SEAHO, Jordan recognizes the need for on-going

**Professional Development.** Although clearly a strong professional, Jordan is also modest and humble in all that he does. He looks for feedback along the way and grasps at every piece of feedback that he receives. As the Associate Director for East Campus it is my great pleasure to nominate Jordan Luzader for the **James C. Grimm Outstanding New Professional Award.**  The words in this nomination do not even do justice to the caliber of professional that Jordan is. To meet him and work with him is to know that one day Jordan Luzader will be a leader in our field. Perhaps it only takes one word to sum up Jordan Luzader: AMAZING!