

ADVISOR OF THE YEAR
No Frills 2006

Dr. Ruth Davison
Spalding University

In addition to serving in an advisory role for Spalding University's Residence Hall Advisory Council (RHAC), Dr. Ruth Davison has also lended her knowledge and expertise in student life to this year's Kentucky Association of Residence Halls (KARH) state conference. She's been a part of Spalding's Student Life faculty since the summer of 2002 and also served from that point on as Morrison Hall's Director until the fall of 2006 when she was appointed to the position of Associate Dean of Students. Even while serving full-time on the university staff, Ruth was able to enhance her credentials a little more when she completed her Doctorate in Philosophy (with an emphasis in Education Administration) in May of 2005. So that is why, when in the planning and 'dreaming' stages for writing the bid to host KARH 2006, Ruth was the obvious first choice for our conference advisor. Despite some initial wariness from other school officials, when we approached her with the idea, her response was an immediate and enthusiastic "Yes!"

And from day one, whether it was long tables or round tables for the banquet, six sessions of programming or seven, Ruth was there to back up our chairs in each decision they made. When those on the various KARH committees needed guidance in a particular area, or advice on what the next step should be, Ruth was always there with both an open ear and mind, ready to gently push in the right direction. Her dedication to the KARH conference and its success not only the surface, but in the hearts and minds of all those attending, was outstanding.

With so much on her plate, one could easily understand her taking on a more supervisory role throughout the past year, but her involvement through the entire process was completely hands-on. From printing out request forms to calling in favors from some old friends, she went the extra mile every step of the way and for every three or

four hours a week she might've spent with one conference chair, she was spending that much time or more with four or five others. With her many ties to the outside community, Ruth also managed to steer us through doors for the conference that we may have never even dreamed of *trying* to open. Her ideas and creative input throughout the planning and execution process of the entire symposium provided each member of the organization with the confidence needed to truly make the event a triumph - and triumph it did. For the second year in a row, Spalding's RHAC won NCC of the Year and School of the Year, and Dr. Davison was also awarded with Advisor of the Year for the state of Kentucky.

But, as I mentioned before, conference advisor for KARH 2006 was not Ruth's only responsibility. Her many other positions on campus are of equal importance to her and the time and devotion she's shown to each of them display the characteristics of a genuine leader. Whether it's a meeting on budgetary planning for the dining services or a one-on-one conference with someone seeking spiritual advice, Ruth is a solid rock and a pillar to Spalding University as a whole. She is well-respected by the entire faculty and staff, and many times is sought after for counsel, no matter what the situation. Her door is literally always open.

For many students, especially incoming freshman, the occasional (and expected) homesickness may emerge. But at Morrison Hall, she has done her best to create an environment where everyone feels like they've got a family - no matter how many miles they are from their roots. Among some of our residents, the tandem of Ruth Davison and Chris Hart (our former Assistant Residence Hall Director) has come to be affectionately known as 'Mom and Dad,' and they definitely fulfill the roles. They have provided a

support system for both the collegiate and personal life, as well as been a source of solid advice on just about any topic. With such a small on-campus community (approximately 70 students), it's probably been an easier task to undertake than it would be on some larger campuses, but no matter what the size, with Ruth's passionate attitude and comfortable demeanor, it's almost impossible to not feel at home while living in Morrison Hall. And whether she's dealing with the president of the university or the newest hire on the janitorial staff, Ruth shows the same amount of respect to each individual, enforcing Spalding's strict belief of community and family, not just by words, but by actions as well.

The most wonderful thing about Ruth is that she has an uncanny ability to know when to step back. She's there when she's needed, providing reliable advice at precisely the right moment, yet, she can sense when a student needs to make their own decisions, cultivating the much-needed characteristics of independence and self-assurance among her students. She has a favorite saying about herself that goes something like "I just write the checks" when referring to all the work that Spalding's RHAC does and has done in the past, but you shouldn't let her humble attitude fool you. She means so much more to this group than simply a source of funds. She's the backbone of this organization whether she realizes it or not, and each of the achievements we've garnered over the past few years carry her own stamp on them as well. She's pointed us in the directions we need to go and hasn't lead us wrong yet.

And despite all the roles in her professional life, Ruth has also managed to make time for those closest to her. She has brought a new member into the Spalding 'family' this past year - one that's been accepted with open arms. 'Grandma,' or the 'Grand

Baller' as we've newly-anointed her, is Ruth's mother and came to live with her in the residence hall last spring when her husband (Ruth's father) passed away. Even through the face of that tragedy, Ruth has shown tremendous courage, continuing on in her numerous roles at the university.

Ruth has also been a key player in the rebuilding of Spalding University's RHAC - from the rewriting of our organization's constitution to the increased participation in conferences (on *every* level). Even when circumstances arrive that prevent her from attending some of those conferences, she's always gone out of her way to make arrangements so that we'd be taken care of - and she's always with us in spirit (or on the cell phone). Under Ruth's tutelage, our RHAC has managed to literally rebuild itself from the ground up. Every Spirit and Roll Call Award, every programming recognition, and each of the individual awards that our organization has brought back to campus in the past few years have been a direct result of not only the hard work of the delegation itself, but also of the excellent guidance we've received from this woman. I'm sure you are all familiar with the phrase 'behind every great man is an even greater woman.' Well, behind every great RHA is an even greater advisor, and in this case, Ruth Davison certainly fits the bill.

Even when some of the ideas we've come to her with might seem too big to take on (like hosting a state conference!), her support of our small, yet mighty RHAC has been unfailing. Her enthusiasm for students and student life is contagious, making it impossible for anyone around her to keep from dreaming as big as she does, and that is why, without hesitation, the Spalding University Residence Hall Advisory Council would like to nominate Dr. Ruth Davison for the Advisor of the Year Award.

Involvement with Conferences and On-Campus Organizations/and Awards and Recognition (Organizational and Personal)

Conference Attendance in an Advisory Role

KARH (2004, 2005, 2006)

SAACURH (2004, 2005)

No Frills (2005)

Organizational Conference Awards While Advisor

Most Spirited delegation (KARH 2002, 2003, 2004)

Best Small School Spirit (SAACURH 2005)

Best Roll Call (KARH - 2002, 2003, 2004)

Diversity Program of the Year (KARH 2004, 2005)

Educational Program of the Year (KARH 2005)

NCC of the Year - *Heather Drake* (KARH 2005)

School of the Year (KARH 2005)

School of the Year - 2nd place in regional competition (No Frills 2005)

Bid to host KARH 2006

School of the Year (KARH 2006)

NCC of the Year – *Michael Dreggors* (KARH 2006)

Personal Awards While Advisor

Advisor of the Year (KARH 2006)

Best of the Bluegrass (KAHO 2005)

On-Campus Awards (Organizational and Personal)

Most Improved Organization (2005)

Most Outstanding Organization (2004)

Letters of Recommendation

February 25, 2006

To Whom It May Concern:

I am pleased to have the opportunity to nominate Ms. Ruth L. Davison, Ph.D. for the No Frills 2006 *Advisor of the Year*.

Throughout her professional career at Spalding University, Ruth has consistently demonstrated a genuine interest in fostering a sense of leadership among students and within student organizations. Under her guidance, Spalding's *Residence Hall Advisory Council* (RHAC) developed a comprehensive (and ambitious) plan to host KARH 2006 – despite the fact that Spalding has one of the smallest on-campus residential programs in the state! Ruth's "can-do" spirit and enthusiasm, coupled with her ability to recognize and celebrate individual accomplishments has contributed not only to the development of RHAC, but the creation of several initiatives and partnerships within the Spalding community.

As is the case with many professionals in Student Life/Student Affairs, Ruth is serves many roles – leader, director, advisor, counselor, disciplinarian, mentor, and friend. Student encounters fuel her desire to make a difference in the world, touching individual lives in a personal way.

It is without hesitation that I recommend Ms. Ruth L. Davison, Ph. D. for No Frills' *Advisor of the Year*.

Sincerely,

Christopher B. Hart
Associate Director of Admissions
Spalding University

January 20, 2006

To Whom It May Concern:

This letter is for the nomination of Dr. Ruth Davison for Advisor of the Year. Ruth has had a huge impact on my life not only concerning residence life, but personally as well. I first met her when I moved into Morrison Hall my freshman year. She was serving as the Resident Director at the time and she immediately embraced me. She invited me to attend the RHAC (Resident Hall Advisory Council), that meeting, to try to get me involved in campus life.

Ruth has been the advisor of our organization ever since. She has continually worked to get people involved in RHAC, and has influenced us to create and host many events and activities. Ruth also was one of the main leaders to get us to bid to become host of KARH 2006. In addition to RHAC, Dr. Davison also oversees several student organizations on campus as the Associate Dean of Students.

Personally, Ruth has had a major influence on my life. During my four years at Spalding University I have watched as she has pursued her doctorate degree. I have witnessed her work for several hours a day on her dissertation. Watching her work has influenced me to pursue my on educational endeavors much more seriously. Seeing her work showed me how serious one must be to achieve what they want in life, and how hard work can lead to greater things. I have worked one-on-one with her on several occasions and she allowed me to realize the potential I possess and has showed me how to focus on my greatest traits to achieve anything I want.

During the past year, her attributes as a leader have shown more brightly than ever. She has served as the advisor of the KARH 2006 conference and has kept us from going crazy. She has been the calming influence in our group and has kept us on track. With everything going through her in planning the conference she must have a million different things going on. Yet, throughout this time, it is Ruth who hasn't stressed out, and it is Ruth who has kept us under control to finish the many tasks in front of us.

Ultimately, without Ruth Davison, Spalding University would not be the same. She has been the guiding light as our organization has grown into what it is today. Dr. Davison has provided leadership and structure to our organization in its most important time of need. Personally, she has shown to me what it takes to achieve every goal in your life. Dr. Ruth Davison definitely deserves to be named Advisor of the Year in 2006 for her hard work and continued influence over our organization.

Thank you,

Michael Dreggors
Spalding University
Registration Chair for KARH 2006
NCC