

# CAMPUS ADVOCATE



**THE ROAD**

**TO SUCCESS**

*Campus Advantage team members gather in Estes Park for 15th annual experience conference. [pg 4](#)*

## CAMPUS ADVOCATE FALL 2019

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*Once again, it's the time of the year when we begin gearing up for the holiday season and take a moment to reflect on all that we are thankful for — both the present and the past. While I am, of course, thankful for my family and friends, I am just as thankful for the opportunity to be part of a constantly evolving industry, alongside the hardest working people in the business.*

*For us in the student housing industry, this time of year also means move-in season. All of us here at Campus Advantage enjoy being part of, and making an impact on, this exciting time of our residents' lives and helping create that sense of community that sets us apart from other student housing providers. It's our goal at Campus Advantage to make our residents' time at our properties an enjoyable and successful one, and I personally thank everyone for the time and energy they put into making move-in a positive experience for our residents earlier this fall.*

*As you'll see in our latest Campus Advocate, the fun didn't stop at move-in. It's been an exciting past few months at Campus Advantage as we had the pleasure of hosting two leadership conferences in September and October — both aimed at equipping our team members with the education and training needed to continue to create and deliver the best experience in student housing. These events generate so much inspiration as opportunities for our team members to learn from one another and bring fresh, creative ideas to the table that help continue to make our residents' experiences positive and rewarding.*

*In tandem, we recently rolled out our Campus Advantage Competencies and Values in Action leadership program that's aimed at providing our team members with a proven path for continued growth and development. This new research-driven framework provides the understanding, tools, and strategies to help grow and develop team members as we continue to work toward achieving our purpose. To serve and inspire our employees and residents to achieve their full potential. I couldn't be more excited to watch the implementation of these competencies and help make our employees successful leaders at Campus Advantage.*

*We're gearing up for even more exciting months ahead. I wish everyone the very best as we begin to close out 2019 and look ahead to 2020. Thank you, again, for your dedication and hard work, and for making Campus Advantage the place to be.*

*Thank you,*

**Mike Peter**  
**President and CEO**

# EXPERIENCE CONFERENCE



In September, Campus Advantage team members from around the country came together for the 15th annual Experience Conference in Estes Park, Colorado. During an intensive week of learning, networking, and planning, participants connected with team members and took part in more than 30 educational sessions — all culminating in an action plan customized for each of their communities. With a theme of “Serve and Inspire,” participants were equipped to raise the bar for the prospect, resident, and team experiences.

Campus Advantage’s Chief Learning Officer, Dan Oltersdorf, started this conference to support the Campus Advantage residence life program and build company leaders. Since then, it has expanded to become a collaborative event also focused on leasing, marketing, customer service, and operations.

As a follow-up to the conference, participants worked with their site teams and regionals to refine and implement the action plans they developed at the event. We are proud to be able to offer the Experience Conference to our team and can’t wait to see how the plans created at the event are utilized to the success of our communities.



I am beyond grateful for the overall experience. Every single team member never ceases to amaze me and truly inspired me to live in the moment, work hard each and every day, and coach my team members to be able to replace me. I’m thankful for all the friends I’ve made, advice I heard, and all the laughter and smiles that went on during that week. Campus Advantage is more than just a company, it’s a stepping stone to your future.”

— Ella Narvasa, Leasing Manager, The Soto

“The Experience Conference was an amazing opportunity to learn and grow as an employee of Campus Advantage and as a person. I gleaned knowledge from not only the sessions, but from every person I talked with at the conference. It was an inspirational and motivational five days that has changed my attitude and outlook to this day.”

— Hope Claus, Leasing Manager, Launch Social Living



# LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE



In September, Campus Advantage hosted various leaders from operations and support departments at our home office in Austin, Texas, to embark on the critical exercise of setting our 2020–2021 annual plans. The group worked together to review supply and demand for each market, and set property-specific leasing goals. Members of Catalyst, Leasing and Marketing, the Experience Team, and Human Resources teamed up with operations leaders to discuss the timing of software enhancements, as well as companywide initiatives that will be deployed to ensure the continued success of our on-site teams.



# LEADERSHIP SERIES

Since our inception in 2003, we have built the success of Campus Advantage around our Core Values of Integrity, Intelligence, Passion, and MOJO, using them as guiding principles in our day-to-day operations and overall direction. In an effort to continuously inspire our employees to achieve their full potential, we recently introduced the Campus Advantage Competencies, which are built around these core values. Our team worked in coordination with top leadership and performance experts to build this research-driven framework, which gives our valued team members a proven path for continued growth and development, and helps make our employees successful leaders at Campus Advantage and beyond.

We are excited to hear stories from our employees about how they're using Campus Advantage Competencies to grow in their careers. If you know a dedicated, driven individual that's interested in student housing, send our [open positions](#) their way!

## EMPLOYEE'S TAKE ON WORK-LIFE BALANCE

WRITTEN BY RYAN SHAUL, REGIONAL MANAGER



Work-life balance to me means having the time and energy to accomplish what's important in my professional life and my personal life. It's never easy, but it can become manageable if you work for a company that shares this value set. Campus Advantage has been great in understanding that balance is everything. My direct supervisors also have families, hobbies, and commitments outside of work, like all of us do, and so they understand and are committed to seeking the best possible balance for myself and my employees.

Asking why work-life balance is important is like asking the question, "What's more important: leasing or residence life?" The answer is that they are both equally important. Without leasing, we don't have residents to take care of, and without residents feeling taken care of, we won't have a successful leasing year. It's the same with work-life balance. One can't be more important than the other — they are equally important. If we don't perform at work,

we can't provide for our family, but if we don't make time for our family and enjoy that time, no amount of money will be worth it.

I manage a healthy relationship between my professional life and personal life by trying my best to not work after 7 p.m. Even on days I know I might have to work late, I still make time to have dinner with my family, or when traveling, I set aside time to Facetime them and feel connected. I have a 14-month-old at home, so my favorite thing to do is spend time with her and my wife — watching my daughter grow and develop her awesome personality! Additionally, communication is everything. If I have a personal commitment in a given week, I am nearly always able to meet it as long as it's communicated to my supervisors. The same goes with my family. If I communicate a professional commitment and they understand the "why" behind it, everything else is easier.

## PROMOTIONS AND CONGRATULATIONS

### Campus Advantage

- Rebecca Snyder — Learning and Development Coordinator
- Melissa Hinton — Regional Manager
- Alex Hildebrandt — Director of Financial Systems,
- Gino Blanco — Director of Marketing for the L&M Department
- Paige McCarthy — Regional Leasing Specialist/Director of Corporate Leasing Support for the L&M Department
- Tamesha Walker — Corporate Finance and Accounting Supervisor
- Eric Te — Senior Business Intelligence Analyst
- Peter Iannone — Director of Revenue Management
- Brittany Ashley — Accounting Manager
- Blake Carver — Accounting Manager
- Allie Skelton — Corporate Leasing Specialist

### Catalyst

- Katie Degutis — Director of Operations
- Thomas Demiranda — Director of Business Development

### Congratulations

- Congratulations to Alex Hildebrandt for completing her master's degree in accounting and information technology from Texas State University's McCoy College of Business while working full-time at Campus Advantage!



Are you or is someone you know interested in an opportunity to invest in student housing? Campus Advantage specializes in all aspects of student housing, from operations, marketing, and consulting to development and acquisition, and has delivered excellent returns for more than a decade. To learn more, contact our [Acquisitions and Development Team](#).

# OUR LATEST BLOG POSTS

## LEASING UP A DEVELOPMENT IN A MARKET WITH MULTIPLE DELIVERIES

[Read more.](#)

As the student housing space continues to attract more investors and enrollment continues to grow at most universities, developers are racing to locate the best development sites in tier one markets to yield the highest returns. Leasing in a market with multiple new developments can be very challenging. However, with proactive planning and by deploying the steps discussed in this white paper, you will be able to differentiate your project in a very competitive environment.

## HOW TO RECOVER FROM A POORLY PLANNED TURN

[Read more.](#)

As many say, "Life happens." We, in the student housing industry, often find ourselves saying something else: "Turn happens." Whether it's losing staff, having a sub-par vendor, not preparing proper communication with future residents, or many of the other failure points that can be associated with this process, many can find themselves at wits' end when it comes to a poorly planned and executed turn. Luckily, not all hope is lost — there are ways to get back on track.

## FROM A TOP STUDENT HOUSING MANAGER: WHY SERVICE IS EVERYTHING

[Read more.](#)

In the student housing industry, customer service plays a significant role in influencing a resident's perception of the property and their likelihood to not only renew their lease, but refer your property to someone else. Your student housing property management company's ability to engage and make connections with residents can also directly impact the perception of your property. That's why it's imperative that your company has a proactive, focused learning and development program that will help your staff to deliver a consistent, positive resident experience time after time.





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**ROWAN**

# EMPLOYEE SPOTLIGHTS

Our team is the Campus Advantage. Check out our most recent employee spotlights to learn how Campus Advantage staff supports our clients and keeps our residents happy.



## GINO BLANCO

*He's Got a Passion for People*

Gino was in college when he first fell in love with Campus Advantage as a resident at one of our properties. It wasn't long after that when he joined our team and began working as a Resident Director in Gainesville, Florida. After serving in that position, he moved up to work as a Corporate Leasing Specialist, followed by serving as a Regional Leasing Specialist, then Director of Leasing. Seven years later, Gino now serves as the Director of Marketing across all Campus Advantage properties. Even now, he fondly recalls the relationships he formed while working with students on campus. [Read more.](#)



## KATY SMERKO

*She's Dedicated to Her Team*

Katy Smerko is far from new to Campus Advantage — in fact, she's been here for 11 years! She started out as a Regional Manager and worked her way up to her current role as Vice President of Operations, and she plays an instrumental role on the Campus Advantage team. Not only is she passionate about and dedicated to her work, she's also committed to the people around her. We got the chance to sit down with Katy to learn more about the personal motivators that drive her success and what's kept her hooked on Campus Advantage all these years. [Read more.](#)

# WELCOME TO THE TEAM

**CAMPUS ADVANTAGE RECENTLY WELCOMED THE ROWAN — A STUDENT HOUSING COMMUNITY LOCATED IN COLUMBIA, SOUTH CAROLINA — TO OUR PROPERTY MANAGEMENT PORTFOLIO.**

Previously known as The Southern @ 1051, The Rowan consists of 1,002 beds and will undergo capital improvements to revamp the community amenities and upgrade unit interiors to include new flooring, appliances, furniture, and fixtures — drastically modernizing the townhome-style units.

Campus Advantage, in partnership with Catalyst, worked with ownership to design a strategy to rebrand and reposition the property within the market to coincide with the owner's value-add strategy. This rebrand included new naming development, logo creation, brand guidelines, marketing collateral, and a brand reveal campaign. The Rowan's new brand captures the essence of the University of South Carolina's Gamecock spirit with its new name as well as with a brand color that is a nod to USC's palette of garnet, black, and white. The brand was released over the summer months to excite the market about the upcoming property renovations.

# IN THE NEWS

*Rebusiness Online*

**HOW DEVELOPERS IMPLEMENT SERIOUSLY SMART AMENITIES IN STUDENT HOUSING**

[Read more.](#)

*Property Management Insider*

**LENDING A HELPING HAND WITH STUDENT HOUSING TURN**

[Read more.](#)

*Student Housing Business*

**CAMPUS ADVANTAGE AWARDED MANAGEMENT OF 1,002-BED COMMUNITY NEAR THE UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH CAROLINA**

[Read more.](#)

*Student Housing Business*

**SERIOUSLY SMART AMENITIES**

[Read more.](#)

*Student Housing Business*

**ABOVE AND BEYOND**

[Read more.](#)

*The Daily Texan*

**STUDENT APARTMENT COMPLEX MOONTOWER SET TO OPEN IN WEST CAMPUS IN 2020**

[Read more.](#)





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