

Holmes Partnership Program Report

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Co-Vice Presidents for Programming
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Our major program event for the 2008-2009 academic year was the national conference that took place February 26 – 28, 2009 at the Crowne Plaza Jacksonville Riverfront Hotel in Jacksonville, Fl.

What did the annual conference look like?

The conference was organized around the theme *The Next Generation of Partnerships: Closing the Achievement Gap*. Three keynoters included:

- Kristien Zenkov and Jim Harmon who opened the conference on Thursday evening by sharing their “Through Students Eyes” project
- Beverly Tatum, our Judith Lanier lecturer who delivered a talk on Friday entitled “Wake Up Running: Education Beyond the Achievement Gap”
- Mike Feinberg, founder of the KIPP (Knowledge is Power Program) Foundation, who closed the conference on Saturday.

Surrounding the keynote speakers were four concurrent sessions delivered by Holmes Partnership members that reflected best practices in each partnership and various work being done across the nation to close the achievement gap. There was a total of 34 concurrent sessions. Each session contained two related presentations and was facilitated by a discussion leader.

In addition, there were pre-conference sessions for Holmes Scholars, an Equity and Urban Initiative Think Tank on Thursday afternoon, and two general sessions:

- Barnett Berry and Marsha Levine discussing Urban Teacher Residencies
- Nancy Dana and Fran Vandiver facilitating an interactive experience entitled “Sharing Best Practices That Give Us All Hope,” where conference attendees were provided the opportunity to reflect on Beverly Tatum’s talk and apply what they learned to their local context).

City of Jacksonville Mayor John Peyton provided opening remarks on Friday morning of the conference.

Meetings of different sub-groups were also distributed throughout the three-day experience including:

- Board of Directors meeting
- Newcomer Breakfast
- Holmes Scholars Business Meeting and Regional Work Sessions
- Holmes Partnership Feedback Sessions
- Business Meeting
- Dean's Discussion of Holmes Scholars Program
- Holmes Scholars Job Fair
- Teacher Leadership Network
- Local Partnership Meetings

Continental breakfasts were provided on Friday and Saturday mornings. There were two receptions (Thursday evening and Friday evening), and lunch on Saturday. In addition, there was a pre-conference luncheon with the Holmes Scholars and Holmes Partnership Board of Directors featuring Holmes Scholar Alum Speaker Diane Rodriguez.

What were some changes made in the program this year?

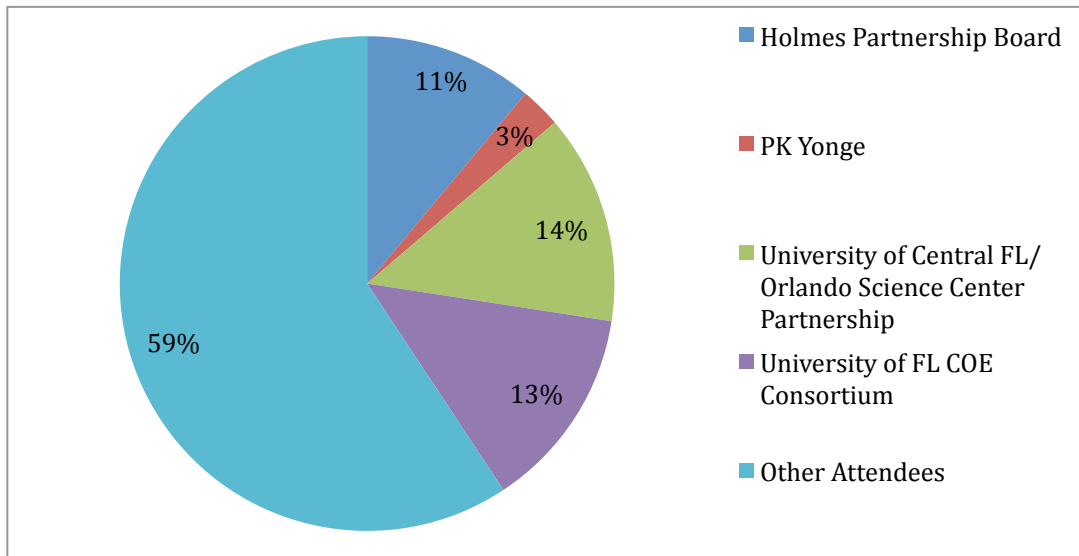
- New conference schedule beginning on Thursday evening with the opening keynote (so participants could travel and arrive on Thursday) and ending on Saturday with a luncheon keynoter (so participants could enjoy the local area on Saturday afternoon and depart on Sunday or get home Saturday night)
- One guaranteed program slot for each partnership (Highlighted Proposals)
- New format for concurrent sessions. Each concurrent session was 75 minutes in length and contained two related presentations. Presentations were followed by audience discussion that was run by a session facilitator. Session facilitators received detailed instructions so each session would be consistent (See Appendix A). Change made in order to guarantee everyone an audience
- Holmes Scholars' sessions and activities better integrated throughout the conference
- Instituted session evaluations (in addition to overall conference evaluations) and sent to presenters and facilitators after the conference (Appendix B)

Who attended the conference?

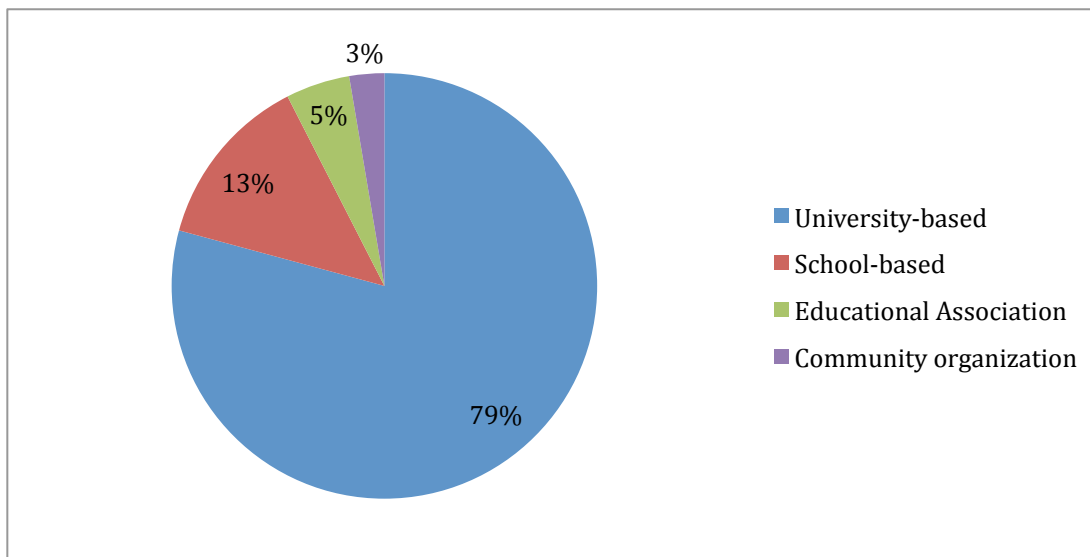
239 people registered for the conference (total attendance = 226). Of this total:

- 25 participants were board members
- 6 participants were from P.K. Yonge Developmental Research School
- 31 participants were from University of Central Florida/Orlando Science Center Partnership
- 30 participants were from University of Florida College of Ed Consortium

The pie-chart below summarizes participants in the 2009 National Holmes Partnership meeting:



The affiliations of the conference participants are represented in the pie-chart below:



What did participants think about their experience?

Overall conference evaluation forms appeared as the last two pages in the program. All participants were encouraged throughout the conference to complete the conference evaluation prior to leaving the event or to email the completed form to Chris Cook, Operations Manager, after the event. 65/226 forms were completed and handed in. The results of these evaluation forms are summarized below:

Conference Evaluation Summary

Please identify yourself (circle all that apply):

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|-----------------------|
| 16- Member of a Local Partnership | 11- Faculty |
| 5 - National Partner | 3- Teacher |
| 10- Holmes Scholar | 11- Administrator |
| 5- Holmes Scholar Alumni/NAHSA Member | 0- Superintendent |
| 1- Invited Guest | 1- Union Rep |
| 1- Other | 1- Community Advocate |

What was your role in this year’s conference? (circle all that apply):

- 0- Keynote Speaker
- 21- Presenter
- 9- Facilitator
- 24- Participant

Overall Quality of the General Sessions	Excellent				Poor
	<u>5</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>1</u>
Opening Keynote - Through Students’ Eyes	25	10	3	0	0
The Promise of Urban Teacher Residencies	14	8	5	2	0
Judith Lanier Lecture – Wake Up Running	24	13	13	1	1
Sharing Best Practices That Give Us All Hope	11	8	5	0	0
Closing Keynote – KIPP: Beyond Z	15	11	5	0	1

Overall Quality of Concurrent Sessions	Excellent				Poor
	<u>5</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>1</u>
Choices Offered	21	17	6	0	0
Content	21	16	7	0	0
Format	21	14	6	2	0
Presenters	23	17	2	0	0

Quality of Service	Excellent				Poor
	<u>5</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>1</u>
Holmes Partnership® Staff	37	8	1	0	0
Hotel Staff	30	13	4	0	0
Meeting Facilities	32	12	3	1	0
Hotel Accommodations	25	15	3	2	0

What about The Holmes Partnership Annual Conference did you enjoy the most or find beneficial?

- I especially liked the opening session about the kids and I enjoyed the session that Fran and Nancy did related to the speaker's book.
- The choices and the range of subject matter addressed in the concurrent sessions. The topics were great and it was a challenge to decide which ones to attend. The opportunity to collaborate and converse with colleagues from across the country and the exchange of ideas.
- Interacting with Scholars.
- Through Students' Eyes was amazing and very relevant to the topic. Beverly Tatum was very instructive but a little dry and not practical enough.
- The most enjoyable aspect of the conference was engaging in conversation, research agendas and emotional support from my fellow Holmes Scholars.
- I really enjoyed the Holmes Scholars Breakout Sessions. They were extremely beneficial.
- Sessions that were presented by school staff. Great location.
- The interactions between doctoral students and professors from the different universities were very beneficial. Many were willing to share insights about the professorate and higher education. Though this was the "informal" part of the conference, the interactions cemented all that we had learned. As a Holmes Scholar I was able to identify, professors who I can call or write to if I needed some sort of help in my field.
- I most enjoyed the various opportunities to engage in conversation with other scholars. I was also able to talk informally with faculty and deans from various institutions. That was a plus. The time allotted to ask questions at end of presentations was very helpful as well.
- Workshops related to completing the dissertation; Workshops related to navigating academia into the professorate; Networking with scholars and professors from different universities.
- Dual presentation improved attendance at concurrent sessions and stimulated discussion. Very helpful to provide facilitator guides.

- The Holmes Scholars lunch and sessions lead by Holmes Alumni for the Scholars.
- It was a very good conference.
- The focus on achievement gap.
- Very organized.
- Keynote speakers.
- The keynotes.
- Scholar Session and Diane Rodriguez.
- I have a clear understanding of the purpose of the Holmes Partnership now. I enjoyed the conversations I have had with the participants based on the topics of the concurrent sessions. The topics were good, relevant and well presented.
- Networking time!
- The Holmes Scholars breakout sessions.
- The general session speakers. The presentations were very good, focused. Overall format. Appreciated the food. Staff very professional.
- Keynotes were great topics. I wish Beverly Tatum had more interaction...listening and sitting still for 1 hour is too long.
- Breakout sessions.
- The discussions of speakers and attendees. Wonderful participants at this conference.
- The feeling of being with “family.” The opportunity to meet “real” people and hear “real” stories about experiences in the academy.
- More sessions that dealt with programs that are being implemented rather than the straight theoretical. Some of the Holmes Scholars’ presentations on programs they are involved in or have carried out.
- The networking and learning on concurrent sessions.
- The format of having two sessions under the same topic – what a great idea.

- Tatum's talk. Feinberg's talk.
- Conversation with others during sessions. Opportunities to renew partnership because of time available to do so.
- Dr. Tatum's presentation. The way the sessions were structured, and good facilitators.
- I really like the set-up of the presentations and concurrent sessions.
- Guest speakers were great. Enjoyed dual workshops.
- Beverly Tatum was amazing as was the opening Keynote. Focus on student achievement!
- I am thankful that we seem to have a focus – closing the Achievement GAP. This conference was obviously planned around that theme/mission. The presentations were reflective of the theme.
- The feedback session was receptive to the concerns of the scholars and the ability to meet with Deans, Department Heads and Holmes Alumni.
- The networking opportunity for scholars. Every thing was so organized.
- Connection with scholars and alumni.
- The focus on achievement gap.

What do you believe would enhance this conference for continued successful partnerships?

- Continue with sessions that focus on joint school university presentations and that show teacher educators working in the schools. If speakers are not working in the schools, even if they have great ideas or writings, try not to select them. Have teacher strands.
- I understand the need to combine sessions, however; I think the conversation would have been richer if more time had been allotted to each presentation.
- More emphasis on the importance and full inclusion of NAHSA members in conference events.
- Different strategies, esp. for concurrent sessions. Suggest less sessions with more facilitators, and more sharing of projects-perhaps roundtables.

- I believe that the Holmes breakout sessions should somehow be turned into a workshop and attendance should be planned in advance (if possible). For example, one of the sessions was on the dissertation and the first three chapters. It seemed as if everyone wanted that one on one attention and feedback on their first three chapters.
- I did not enjoy the dense session format. Some sessions.
- We need to integrate more practitioners in the field to the conference; teachers and principals, to enable us to work better on the relationships between schools and universities. The relationships needed to be work on. The school-university divide is sometimes an impediment to building relationships that in turn help us to have successful partnerships.
- I would like to see there be a working session where faculty come prepared to meet with prepared scholars to work on collaborative publication partnerships. Maybe several faculty members (or school administrators, etc.) who are invited guest editors of journals, or have some other publication connections, can work throughout the year and touch base at the annual conference with scholars who need a publication in their vitae. In other words, I would like to see groups of faculty members and scholars come together in person and virtually, to help scholars get published.
- I did not enjoy the double session format. Some sessions flowed together, others did not. Not enough variety of sessions for those that are not in the university setting. Description of sessions didn't always match what was presented.
- More interaction between the scholars and various partners.
- Some focused technical assistance for partnerships seeking to improve their work. Participants like to do some work when they come to a conference, and this should not be limited to time to meet with their own colleagues. Perhaps identify workshop areas and facilitators and let conference attendees sign up in advance for those.
- Role of the federal government in supporting partnership work could have been highlighted with session on the administration agenda and funding opportunities.
- More explicit focus on what is meant by the next generation of partnerships to set the tone and agenda for the conference.
- Avoid double schedule for Holmes Scholars events and conferences plenary sessions.

- Adding a string of presentations that reflected the needs and interests of K-12 practitioners and administrators.
- Networking.
- Opportunity for general session whereas similarly themed partnership could exchange ideas and improve their outcomes. Varying the invited speaker to represent all disciplines at the conference.
- A wider variety of topics centered in the concurrent sessions, more interaction presentations / Q & A sessions.
- Fewer concurrent sessions.
- Vendors.
- Sessions seemed rushed, too much for the time slotted – delay more time for each session so the presentations don't seem rushed.
- Fewer number of sessions at one time. More presenters in a room (3). More interaction among participants like Nancy and Fran's session on Saturday.
- There were too many concurrent sessions, too little to offer teachers. A lot of superficiality due to time constraints. Through students' eyes – excellent keynote – then offer a session how to get started, or how many kept promise of graduation, etc. Offer only 4-5 sessions 1 hour in length period. Beverly Tatum – excellent. Have people who want to access Ms. Tatum's wisdom to read a selected book of hers. A concurrent session could be a book talk or how other schools/districts have used her book to initiate discussions. Be centered on teachers/students.
- Cut the contact hours – be over at 4:00 so others can enjoy the locale they are in. The schedule is hard for diabetics eating after 7:30pm, raises blood sugars. Instead of receptions, do one night a reception, then a lunch on terrace, etc. Lenten fasts for some mean no meat. Be aware of that. The concurrent sessions were superficial – people running through material way too quickly so the next group could start – it was not productive – more or less a waste of time. The Keynotes were wonderful. It is disappointing that a speaker from KIPP was selected. It is racist to assume black children need this type of a program.
- Maybe varied sessions – some longer while others paired.
- More time for Holmes Scholars presentations. More food.

- Have more teachers discussing what worked for them in terms of the university/community/research connections and how that research played out in the school environment.
- More of them. More regional and/or state conferences or institutes in between the national ones.
- More teachers at the conference.
- Continue the session as designed this semester but facilitate conversation by 1) adding more time for talk, 2) have facilitators meet with presenter(s) prior to session.
- More time for “discussion” around the sessions.
- Participation. Gain more participation from those in the field.
- Tables for breakfast.
- Organize around strands – main theme, partnership work and scholar/NAHSA Research. Avoid having so many like sessions going concurrently. Design a joint effort between Holmes Scholars and Scholars Alumni (NAHSA) to put forth the research on 3 levels: a) research with faculty, b) individual research, 3) research with colleagues.
- An increased representation of departments across the Colleges of Education.
- I think having a large poster/roundtable session where people could go to a number of places during a session, home period would be helpful and meaningful.

Additional Comments:

- By the way, I thought the conference was great...very well organized. Congratulations to Catherine, you, Nancy and Fran.
- Just wanted to let you know that as I walked around last week in JAX I heard many positive statements about the conference. People were very pleased with the keynote speakers and noted vast improvement over last year’s conference. They felt presentations were strong (though most noted they wished more people had attended them). I know how hard you all worked and how hard it is to move an organization forward in quality and rigor. You made major steps forward this year and I think people noticed—I know I did.
- Even though I turned in my conference evaluation, I just wanted to send you a note to say how much I enjoyed the Holmes Partnership Conference. This is

the first time I have attended/presented and I found it a great opportunity to dialogue with others around the country about issues related to diversity and to our partnerships. The conference was well organized and the sessions provided the right amount of time to present and then to engage in discussion. I look forward to the conference next year in Charleston.

- Everyone that I have heard from thought the conference was great!
- Thank you for a very well organized meeting. Bravo to you.
- I won't say this was the best conference, but I can't recall a better one for the design, speakers, and interactions. Great job.
- I would suggest that the large luncheon be scheduled for the second day of the conference not the last day when people have already scheduled their travel home.
- Many Holmes Scholars asked the question; "Is this what we can expect in terms of treatment by the partnership when we complete our programs?" This was in reference, mostly, to the fact that NAHSA members were seated in a separate room from others in the grand ballroom during the scholar's luncheon on Thursday.
- I thought the conference was a 9 out of 10-the plenary speakers were exceptional, the new formats very good. The accommodations were great, and your team of meeting people was wonderful. Kudos to you and the UFL team! The only thing I would think about changing (I'm still filling out the form...) would be the concurrent sessions. In the past few years, the attendance has been very poor for these sessions-just a handful of people at each. With ten concurrent sessions, it exacerbated the problem. I would suggest having maybe 3-5 concurrent sessions, and include more partnerships in each (again, 3-5)-something like the morning coffee formats. Session facilitators could be at round tables, and have a station format where people move around to interact.
- I think the idea of putting scholars' CVs on a CD was a great idea. I really appreciated what the Holmes Partnership has done to help scholars on the journey toward the Ph.D. And I look forward to participating in many more years to come as a NAHSA member! The food was fabulous and the service, hospitality and all around friendliness of the hotel staff was the best I've seen in a long time!
- Keynote speakers were not very motivated. I actually thought the Mayor of Jacksonville was better than some of the others.

- Provide seating for breakfast (tables). Hotel staff reservation. Better communication.
- Excellent!
- The hotel accommodations were far less than I expected.
- Always hang the HP Banner in the grand ballroom where majority of sessions are held. New members sessions not very substantive, paste copies of the general session presentations on the HP website.
- I was highly offended by the final speaker – KIPP. He had no clue that this is a conference of individuals who are well informed about issues in schools and are working hard to make changes – hence PDS Partnerships.
- Thanks for a fantastic opportunity.
- I was a little taken aback by KIPP.
- Great workshops.
- Organizers should consider non-meat eaters as they plan.
- Thanks.
- Well organized and enjoyable conference.

What's up for next year?

Mark The Date: 2010 Holmes Partnership Conference – January 28 – 30, 2010
Francis Marion Hotel
Charleston, SC

Conference Chair: Angela Cozart, College of Charleston

Conference Planning Committee: Nancy Dana, Faye Hicks-Townes, Charissa Marrah,
Fran Vandiver

Conference Theme: Closing the Achievement Gap -- Continuing the Work

Conference Keynoters: Pedro Noguera, Eugene Garcia, Terry Peterson

APPENDIX A

Instructions For Session Facilitators

National Holmes Partnership Conference

In order to facilitate dialogue among membership and assure that every presenter has an audience, this year at the Holmes Partnership Conference, each concurrent session will consist of two separate presentations. The session facilitator plays a critical role in helping each individual session run smoothly and helping presenters and audience draw connections and engage in meaningful conversation related to our conference theme, “Closing the Achievement Gap.” As session facilitator, you will have the responsibility to:

1. Help the session presenters feel comfortable and get set up.
2. Introduce the session and the presenters.
3. Keep time for the presenters, signaling them at the 5 minute mark and 1 minute mark of their presentation’s time allotment. (Each presenter has been asked to prepare a 25 minute presentation followed by 5 minutes for questions, so they have 30 minutes TOTAL)
4. Facilitate a discussion that helps the audience connect the content of the two presentations to each other as well as to the conference theme “Closing the Achievement Gap” and/or Holmes Partnership goals.
5. Handout session evaluation sheets at the close of the session. Ask participants to fill them out and collect them as they leave the session.

To accomplish these tasks, please follow the instructions below during your assigned session:

- Prior to the start of your session (as “audience” are entering the room), introduce yourself to the main presenters, sharing that you will be the facilitator for their session. Explain that you will both introduce each presenter as well as keep time, and share that you will signal to the presenters at the 5-minute mark and 1-minute mark by holding up 5 fingers when they have five minutes left to their presentations and 1 finger when they have 1 minute left to their presentations.
- Present/Preside at Your Session Using the Model Below (Note: The times listed in this example are for Concurrent Session I on Friday, Feb. 27 from 10:15 – 11:30. If you are facilitating at a different session, adjust the times accordingly)

10:15 Welcome Everyone To Session (1 minute maximum)

“I’d like to welcome you to Concurrent Session I of the National Holmes Partnership Meeting entitled: (Fill In The Name of Your Session). My name is _____ and I will be serving as the session facilitator which includes introducing each of our speakers and keeping time, as well as facilitating a discussion across our presentations and collecting session evaluations at the close of the session. We have two presentations at this session. The first presentation is entitled, (Fill In Name of Presentation I) by (Fill in name(s) of presenters).

10:16 – 10:45 Presenter One (Approximately 30 Minutes Total – 25 for presentation and 5 for questions/answers)

Watch the clock and at 10:35, hold up 5 fingers to indicate to the presenter that he/she has 5 minutes left. At 10:39 hold up 1 finger. At 10:40 say, “Our first presenter will now take questions for five minutes as our second presenter sets up.” (You may want to ask presenter two if he/she needs any help to set up).

10:40 – 10:45 Questions for Presenter One; Presenter Two Sets Up

At 10:45, or when there are no more questions, introduce the second speaker, “And now, it is my pleasure to introduce our second speaker(s), _____ whose presentation is entitled _____.**”**

10:46 – 11:15 Presenter Two (30 Minutes Total – 25 for presentation and 5 for questions/answers)

Watch the clock and at 11:05, hold up 5 fingers to indicate to the presenter that he/she has 5 minutes left. At 11:09 hold up 1 finger. At 11:10 say, “Our second presenter will now take questions and then we also have some time for general discussion.”

11:10 – 11:15 Questions For Presenter Two

11:15 – 11:25 General Discussion Led By Session Facilitator

Lead a discussion that helps the presenters and the audience synthesize the presentations and analyze them in relationship to what they have learned about closing the achievement gap and/or Holmes Partnership work from listening to what has been shared. Some questions you might consider posing:

- What programs, practices and policies in these partnership presentations show promise to help close the achievement gap?
- How did or how might these presenters collect specific evidence that their work is helping to close the achievement gap?

- In what ways does the work shared by our two presenters relate to work you (audience members) are doing at your home institutions?
- What commonalities exist across these two presentations?
- What insights have you gained about closing the achievement gap and/or Holmes Partnership work from listening to what was shared at this session?

At 11:25, end the session by handing out the session evaluations, and thanking everyone for attending. Request that they complete the evaluations and hand them to you as they exit the session.

APPENDIX B: SESSION EVALUATIONS

13th Annual Holmes Partnership Conference
 Concurrent Session Evaluation Sheet
 Session # _____

Presentation I:

Strongly Agree (5)	Agree (4)	Neutral (3)	Disagree (2)	Strongly Disagree (1)
The quality of the presentation was high.				5 4 3 2 1
The presenters were knowledgeable on the topic of their presentation.				5 4 3 2 1
The presentation was engaging.				5 4 3 2 1
I gained valuable information from this presentation.				5 4 3 2 1

Presentation II:

Strongly Agree (5)	Agree (4)	Neutral (3)	Disagree (2)	Strongly Disagree (1)
The quality of the presentation was high.				5 4 3 2 1
The presenters were knowledgeable on the topic of their presentation.				5 4 3 2 1
The presentation was engaging.				5 4 3 2 1
I gained valuable information from this presentation.				5 4 3 2 1

Facilitator: _____

The facilitator assured that both presenters stayed within their allotted time.				5 4 3 2 1
The facilitator helped the presenters and audience engage in pertinent discussion and dialogue in relationship to both presentations and/or the conference theme.				5 4 3 2 1