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## ***Letter from the Editor***

Dear Colleagues,

As we welcome a new academic year, we continue to face increasingly tough economic times across our nation and within our institutions. Given this current financial crisis, it is important to reflect upon the intrinsic value of developing *spiritual capital* within our campus communities. According to Danah Zohar, “spiritual intelligence is the need for and access to vision, values, and a sense of higher purpose [and] spiritual capital is putting these visions, values, and higher purposes into practice.”

So how can we play a significant role in developing spiritual capital in our faculty, staff, students, and overall campus climate? This edition highlights many perspectives on enhancing spiritual capital in higher education. An interview with internationally recognized speaker and author, Danah Zohar, introduces the related concepts of spiritual intelligence and spiritual capital. She shares her insights into how educators and administrators can implement these concepts within their institutions in order to inspire transformational change on campus.

In addition to understanding these important concepts, it is also crucial to explore the avenues where spirituality can be integrated into our institutional cultures to transform our current campus climates. To this end, I have authored a piece that guides individuals through a series of action steps to create a personalized Spirituality Action Plans. Similarly, Mary Ellen Giess and Eboo Patel share about developing interfaith cooperation within higher education through the work of the Interfaith Youth Core. They detail how creating a campus vision and ecology of interfaith cooperation is essential to moving this work forward within our institutions.

As we approach the close of the *Spirituality in Higher Education* Project, Alexander Astin, one of the Project’s Co-Principal Investigators shares his reflections about the Project and its contributions to the higher education field. Astin also offers additional suggestions for future research around spirituality in higher education and related topics to encourage others to continue this important work.

While this is our final edition of the Newsletter, we are excited to inform you of two publications that will be available later this fall. Alexander Astin, Helen Astin, and

Jennifer Lindholm have written a groundbreaking book called *Cultivating the Spirit: How College Can Enhance Students' Inner Lives* (2010) that details the longitudinal findings and implications of our Project. We are also publishing a companion institutional guidebook called *Promising Practices* (2010) that provides examples of current spiritual practices that are happening across the country. This guidebook also will serve as a resource to help individuals consider how to create and implement their own spiritual practices within their campuses to continue this work.

Over the past seven years, much knowledge has been gained through our longitudinal findings, academic dialogues, conference presentations, and Newsletter contributions, among other venues. The variety of perspectives and topics covered over the years in this Newsletter is a testament to the necessity of this work and its continuation. We hope that the community that has been created through the shared interest and understanding that spirituality is an essential component of student development will continue to grow beyond the lifespan of this Project.

Thank you for your continued readership and support. We wish you the best as you continue to inspire positive growth and development in the lives of your students and colleagues.

Leslie M. Schwartz  
Editor