Another month, another letter to my favorite regional association members! Here in Eugene, between bouts of torrential spring rain, summer has been giving us sporadic, glorious previews: clear blue skies, lush greenery, spectacular blooms, and temperatures in the 70s. With just a handful of days or weeks left until summer break at most quarter schools and spring term already but a memory at semester schools, we aid administrators forge ahead with our never-ending work for the summer. (Don’t you find it hilarious when people ask if we get summers off? I know I do.) Speaking of which: how about that year-round Pell? We eagerly await speedy, straightforward guidance so we can begin answering our students’ and colleagues’ questions.

When this issue of the WASFAA newsletter hits your virtual newsstand, we’ll be wrapping up the 2017 Sister Dale Brown Summer Institute in Reno, Nevada, our popular weeklong intensive training program now available in beginner, intermediate, and advanced tracks. We’ll also be finishing up our June Executive Council meeting, where we discuss the association’s goals, accomplishments, activities, and finances. So what are we bringing to our members next? Well, I hate to break the news to you, but fall will be here before you know it, and with it: WASFAA Fall Training! Our Training Committee works hard each year to plan a series of events to every state in our region, providing well-priced face-to-face training as close to your doorstep as possible. Stay tuned for more details in upcoming newsletters!

The Jerry D. Simms Management and Leadership Institute will take place in November in Portland, Oregon. We’re zeroing in on exact location and dates, so again, stay tuned as details become available. If you’ve considered this event in the past, don’t delay any longer—this will be your last chance to be taught by Doug Severs, Director of Financial Aid and Scholarships at Oregon State University and all-around financial aid legend, since he’s announced his plans to retire this December. In addition to having a spectacularly impressive dossier, Doug is also one of the loveliest people I know, and he’s been hard at work assembling an all-star faculty team to help you find your leadership mojo.

I look forward to checking in with you again in July! Until then, enjoy the beauty and energy of the start of summer, both on- and off-campus. If you have any thoughts or ideas about how WASFAA can better serve you, please don’t hesitate to email me at faith@lanecc.edu or give me a ring at 541-463-5266.
This year is just flying by! This is now our 5th monthly newsletter and I hope to continue to enjoy receiving news from WASFAA each month. We always appreciate any feedback you have and are always looking for ways to make improvements. If you have any feedback you can reach out to me directly at david.downing@wsu.edu. I am excited to announce our WASFAA Communications Committee for the 2017-2018 year. I would like to welcome our new members: Eli Herr from Portland Community College, Wendy Olsen from Whitworth University, Dana Pride from University of Washington, and Adrienne Garcia-Specht from Cal Poly. I would also like to welcome back our veteran committee members: Ashley Coleman from the University of Oregon, Nicholas Dehaan from the University of Phoenix, and Sun Ow from Great Lakes Educational Loan Services. Each of these committee members brings a wealth of knowledge and talents to the Communications Committee, and I am excited for what we can accomplish together over this next year!

If you would like to contribute to the newsletter please send your articles or submissions to communications@wasfaa.org by the 20th of each month. Please also feel free to continue to send us your feedback on the newsletter!
What does student success mean? Wow! When my colleague and friend, George Covino, asked me to write a blog on that topic, my first thought was graduation! Yes, graduation is a high point for a student and for me as a financial aid professional. The student completed her/his academic goal. Graduation night, Pomp and Circumstance, academic regalia, and the ceremony - conference of the degree; such a special night, the air is electric with pride and purpose.

Then, as I thought further, from a community college perspective, it also is a high point for those students who have completed transfer programs, returned to college for retraining, to complete a certificate, or for professional licensure. The students who come to a community college for basic skills or remediation, or for English as a Second Language? These are also a measure of success that is overlooked and not used in our completion ratios or accountability measures by state and federal governments. These areas are huge measures of student success but also indicators of community involvement and preparation of students who transfer to universities.

How sad and discouraging, the “community” portion of community college is not included in success measures. By community, I’m referring to those in our communities that rely on the community colleges for continuance and enhancement of their education, not just the degree- or transfer-seeking student. Business leaders look to the community colleges to provide industry-specific training - not just an A.A. or A.S. degree; community colleges are building economies thus improving our communities. This is the largest measure of our success.

In my mind, student success is not the academic or accountability measures currently used, but defined by the impact that an institution has on the lives of its community members. See you all next year in Boise, Idaho.
WHAT ARE YOU DOING TO HELP YOUR TRANSFER STUDENTS SUCCEED?

by David Wuthrich
Student Connections

If school, state and national goals related to college completion are to be met, higher education needs to do a better job with helping transfer students succeed. Like their full-time, first-time counterparts, transfer students report a high commitment to attending college and finishing school; however, fewer than one in seven community college students who transfer complete a degree.

Choosing a pathway
Deciding how to get to their education goals from where they are today can be difficult. Ruffalo Noel Levitz’ 2013 report on The Attitudes and Motivations of College Transfer Students found that up to 62 percent of respondents at four-year public institutions, 58.7 percent at four-year private schools and 49.7 percent at two-year public schools wanted help in preparing a written academic plan for graduation.

Funding College
In the same study, more than half of all transfer students indicated they do not have the financial resources needed to finish their programs of study. More than half also reported they have financial problems that will interfere with their studies.

Boosting Productivity
Even though they have some college experience behind them, transfer students noted in the study that they would like to receive help with student skills, such as time management, taking notes and exam strategies.

Getting Hired
The majority of respondents in the study wanted the opportunity to explore advantages and disadvantages of their chosen career. Across all institution types, they also wanted help in identifying work experiences or internships related to their major. There is a lot of activity helping students transfer from public two-year to four-year institutions. A January 2017 study by the Community College Research Center suggests that in the state of Texas, state policy needs to address three primary issues in order to strengthen transfer student success in the state: create stronger transfer pathways, help students choose and stay on a transfer pathway, and build momentum for regional community college-university collaboration to improve transfer outcomes.

Schools are responding to these needs in many ways. Orientation programs specifically designed for transfer students are either required or optional at many institutions. Ruffalo Noel Levitz recommends making these programs required in order to reach a larger number of students. I also noted dedicated advising staff for transfer students at many institutions. You may want to look at what you are doing to help your new students in the areas of choosing a pathway, funding college and getting hired. Are your current offerings helpful to your transfer population? Do they have the same opportunities to participate as your new students? Are they offered in such a way as to be convenient to your transfer population? Are there institution-specific barriers to transfer-student success that you can address?

FACTS ABOUT JEFF BAKER

The federal update in Seattle by Jeff Baker, Director of Policy Liaison of the Department of Education’s FSA office, was his last one for a WASFAA Conference. After more than 40 years in the field of financial aid, he has decided to retire and begin a new life chapter. We honored him with a WASFAA Special Recognition award for his many years of service to WASFAA and the financial aid community. Here are some facts you may know or may not know about Jeff that were extracted from an article in a recent FSA Newsletter:

- He was born in Rhode Island and has four siblings, including a twin sister.
- His career went from being a public school teacher in Port Washington to almost 20 years as the financial aid director at San Francisco State University.
- His car license plate is “FINAID”.
- One of his favorite quotes is, “If it were easy, anyone could do it.”
Jeff announced at the WASFAA conference that he will start a new career as a Peace Corps volunteer later this year in Macedonia. He jokingly told the attendees that he would give a free pass from a program review to anyone who knew where this country was. There were no takers. The answer is that it is a country in southeastern Europe. We will miss Jeff providing our federal update, answering our questions in a clear and simple manner, and taking our concerns or questions back to the FSA. Best wishes for his new chapter in life!

The latest news in Washington State is that the legislature entered a special session in April to hash out the budget. Significantly, the results of this special session will affect the implementation of two bills that passed the deadline during the regular legislative session: SB 5100 (Requiring live financial literacy seminars for students at institutions of higher education) and SB 5022 (Providing information to students about education loans). Both of the bills related to state-mandated efforts to increase financial literacy for financial aid recipients attending colleges in our state. Despite any mixed feelings about the efficacy of these bills, there is no doubt that the legislature will need to provide significant funding to ease the administrative and technical programming burden that it will place on our institutions of higher education.

In addition to legislative happenings, WFAA’s executive council is busy planning some wonderful training events during this coming year. These include one-day summer trainings for FAAs that are interested in obtaining NASFAA U credentials, as well as our annual conference, which will be held October 11-13 in Vancouver, WA. We always welcome attendees who reside both inside and outside our state (including educational professionals that are interested in learning more about financial aid but not currently work in aid administration offices). If you are interested in learning more about one of these events, please visit our website at www.wfaa.org for registration information and updates!
are passionate about what they do
• I get to learn about other schools and segments (from ATB to MCS, BOG to GE)
• I get a broader perspective on Financial Aid and student service issues
• I get to learn about all the amazing things CASFAA does for California (more than just an annual conference!)
For these reasons, and many more, I hope you are inspired to join in leadership in your state organization or through WASFAA this coming year! It does take some extra work, and will pull you from the office a few days of the year, but it is well worth the investment. If you or your supervisor have any questions about the commitment or importance of these roles, please reach out to your state organization representatives, and they will be happy to guide you into the level of involvement that works for you.

Thank you for serving our region’s students every day. And for those in California, I’m looking forward to seeing you in Monterey for this year’s annual conference: Finding Your Voice!

THANK YOU!

Thank you so much for honoring me with the regional NASFAA Leadership Award. It has been such a pleasure serving and being part of the WASFAA community. So many wonderful people. I miss you as I have begun my new career in Institutional Research and wish you all well as you weather the winds blowing from Washington, DC.

Wendy Olson
Director of Institutional Research
Office of Institutional Effectiveness
Whitworth University
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CORRECTIONS

Our apologies, but we had a typo in the May newsletter. One of the Conference Scholarship Winner’s essays was incorrectly printed. Here is the correct essay:

The Annual WASFAA Conference 2017, this year in Seattle, Washington, was a success! Thank you to the WASFAA Ethnic Diversity Action Committee Scholarship committee for giving me the opportunity to learn and network with other financial aid professionals. The theme of the conference, May the Access be With You, was evident throughout the sessions. The sessions on more effective communication with students and new techniques for handling difficult conversations helped us in our daily work with students. The panels on accessing your financial aid career provided valuable insight for new and longtime professionals alike. I had the opportunity to volunteer as a moderator during the “Assets in Need Analysis” session. Robert Weinerman’s presentation was informative and engaging. We had a great time trying to pick the correct answers to his questions; even if the “easy” questions were not that easy! Volunteering was a great addition to my WASFAA conference experience. Finally, I enjoyed the newcomers’ lunch to welcome first time conference attendees. WASFAA’s leadership truly strives to create a warm and welcoming environment for financial aid professionals. This was my first annual conference, but I certainly hope it is not my last!

Adrienne Garcia-Specht
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