Welcome to our spring edition of the WASFAA newsletter. As the 2008 WASFAA membership year comes to a close, I would like to thank the Executive Council, the other committee chairs and their members for their support and contributions to the newsletter this year. In particular thanks to our WASFAA newsletter committee; Renee Davis, Jean Russell, Judy Saling, Corinne Soltis and co-chair Edgardo Cornejo.

As the new WASFAA year starts I encourage you to renew your WASFAA membership and to volunteer to serve on a WASFAA committee, we need you!
A WORD FROM THE PRESIDENT

In two months my term as President will sadly come to an end. A year goes by faster than one thinks, but everybody is working very hard to achieve their goals that were set at the beginning of the 08-09 term. The Executive Board has accomplished so many goals, but there are still a few items that need attention.

This year we started to see how our economic situation was taking a toll on us. We took a serious look at our budget and decided where to cut funds. We did not want our reduced funds to affect our services to our members. We looked for locations that would be very affordable to have our trainings, we decided not to raise our membership fees for 08-09, and kept our training fees as low as possible.

Gayle Northrop, our consultant, was called upon to assist us with our Strategic Planning. We are very proud of our organization and we want to continue to provide the best for our members. We will be analyzing the overwhelming responses that we received from you. We will keep you posted on the results.

Now is the time to start planning for our future and see if we can develop stronger partnerships as all the state associations and WASFAA are facing the loss of revenue. During the Oregon Conference I had the privilege of spending some time with Marianna Deeken, from the Department of Education. We talked about how her budgets have also been reduced and her travels are limited. Some of the states have felt the absence of the Department of Education. Training is the main ingredient to our jobs, and Marianna was offering different ways that we can receive the training in electronic formats. Electronic formats are fine, but of course the preferred method is to have her in person. It just isn’t the same without her.

I have also been talking to the other Regional Presidents and gathering ideas to propose to NASFAA and the Department of Education. We have had one conference call and another one is being planned for the near future. If you have any ideas you would like to share, please do not hesitate to let me know. I will become WASFAA’s Past-President and will continue on this crusade.

I want to THANK all individuals who assisted me this year. The Executive Council was a great mixture of new and seasoned individuals. They made a great team and worked really hard together. Committee Chairs were awesome. They did not hesitate in getting their hands dirty. They jumped right in with their goals and assignments. When you have a group of individuals you can trust and are passionate in what they do, it makes your job a lot easier. We all shine together. There were also 72 WASFAA volunteer members. These volunteers also dedicated a lot of their time to the committees they volunteered for. We could have not done it without you.

Please continue to volunteer for WASFAA. WASFAA is made up of all volunteers, so we need you. Mindy Bergeron will be your new WASFAA President and she will be looking for people to assist her. Just go to www.wasfaa.org and sign up to be a volunteer. It will be an experience you will treasure forever. Being WASFAA President is probably one of the scariest things I have done in my life, but every person that I talked to and met had one thing in common; they had the passion to assist students in getting the education they deserve. We can sit down and talk about what our students do and the excuses they come up with these days. Some are pretty darn good and we get a chuckle and our regulations seem to get more complicated every year, but we keep hanging on.

I have loved every minute of being President. It isn’t easy but it has lots of rewards and I encourage you to be President one day. I am pretty sure you will treasure it like I will.

Like Swil Kanim, a guest speaker at several conferences, mentioned “even a tree leaves its mark during the hardest of times.” So will WASFAA.

Thanks to everybody and my moose who made this year very successful!
With the reauthorization of the Higher Education Act (HEA) in August we have heard a lot about utilizing negotiated rulemaking to implement the new regulations included in the reauthorization. We speak a lot about this negotiating process, but what is it and how does it work?

Unless the Secretary determines the practice would be impractical or unnecessary, the Department of Education must go through the negotiated rulemaking process when proposing changes that will affect Title IV regulations (aside from needs analysis). Negotiated rulemaking is a collaborative process in which the Department of Education works to develop proposed rulemaking language with input from representatives of the financial aid community. These issues can originate from three sources including newly enacted laws, the Department of Education, and the public. Once it has been determined that changes are going to be proposed and which areas will be affected, the Department sends out a Federal Register Notice explaining their intent and requesting representatives to form negotiating committees. We have recently seen this in the Federal Register Notice requesting negotiator nominations for five committees to discuss proposed rulemaking to implement the reauthorized HEA, or the Higher Education Opportunity Act (HEOA).

- Team I – Loans – Lender/General Loan Issues
- Team II – Loans – School-based Loan Issues
- Team III – Accreditation
- Team IV – Discretionary Grants
- Team V – General and Non-Loan Programmatic Issues

All negotiators are nominated by the public and selected by the Department. Committees usually consist of 25 members or less. They can include a variety of individuals from colleges and universities (including students), collection agencies, state agencies, accrediting agencies, guaranty agencies, lenders, and servicers. The Department tries to select members who will be especially affected by the regulation changes. This is the reason that the HEOA negotiating Team I, dealing with rulemaking affecting lenders, consists of members from the lending community.

Those individuals not chosen to serve as negotiators may still play a role in the negotiated rulemaking process. As with all members of the public, they may express their views and represent their constituents in communication with committee members. All negotiated rulemaking sessions are open to public viewing and (at the discretion of negotiators) members of the public may take part in working groups that gather between sessions to discuss rulemaking issues.

Generally, negotiated rulemaking committees meet for three sessions at monthly intervals. Each of these sessions spans three days. During this time, it is the duty of the committee to try to come to a consensus on rulemaking language. As we are all well aware, language becomes the most important component of a new regulation. It is imperative that negotiators carefully consider all possible interpretations that can be assumed from rulemaking language. During the negotiated rulemaking process, all committee members have equal say in the development of language. They must come to a complete consensus, meaning that no member can disagree, before any regulation language can be finalized. If the negotiating committee cannot come to a consensus, the Department will take over the development of the rulemaking language. They may utilize language developed during the negotiated rulemaking process or they may develop completely new language.

Once it is final, the newly crafted proposed rulemaking language is sent out in a Federal Register Notice. At this time, the public may submit comments relating to the new proposed regulation. In accordance with the Master Calendar provision of the law, final regulations published on or before November 1st are effective July 1st of the following year.

Information for this article was taken from The Negotiated Rulemaking Process for Title IV Regulations – Frequently Asked Questions published by the Department of Education.
The NASFAA National Conversation Initiative (NCI) is a NASFAA sponsored project that is seeking input and insight from financial aid professionals to address the issues regarding the future of student financial assistance and access, and how the financial aid system can be reformed to better serve students and families. NASFAA has held listening sessions in 28 states and heard from many of us. The ultimate goal is the enactment of real, workable solutions. NASFAA has already met with the Obama transition team and to let them know that NASFAA expects to compile a list of recommendations during the first 100 days of our new President’s term.

Three listening sessions were held at the recent CCCSFAAA and CASFAA conferences in Anaheim, CA. There were some common themes in the comments brought forward and recorded.

* Simplification of the FAFSA is needed for the truly low-income students and families but for some the Adjusted Gross Income (AGI) does not give a true representation of family economic strength. One suggestion was to have two FAFSA systems to address both populations.
* ACG/SMART are programs that have good intentions but are so complex and difficult to administer that it stretches the limited staff time we have, maybe we should get an administrative allowance for additional staffing. The merit aspect should be removed and apply funds to the basic Pell Grant program which takes into account financial need only.
* For some schools the PLUS loan level of up to cost of attendance presents a problem with the 90/10 rule being applied to all schools now.
* We need to have a needs analysis system that takes into account the large numbers of non-traditional family households.
* We need to support both Stafford programs, FFELP and DSL for the benefit of all students.

The listening sessions will end before we have our WASFAA Annual Conference in Anchorage but we will be able to input to NASFAA our opinions on the formation of the final recommendations.

Did You Know WASFAA Has a Research Grant for You?
WASFAA has set aside funding for a research grant program to help facilitate research activities in areas of interest to WASFAA and its membership. Grants can be utilized to assist recipients in covering project costs, including temporary personnel, printing, postage, data entry, computer time, and preparation of papers and reports. Grants are not intended to provide a salary or stipend for the grant recipient. WASFAA members are eligible to apply; non-members must be sponsored by a WASFAA member to apply. Grants are not awarded for program start-up expenses. Projects that involve experimental activities and new initiatives should emphasize evaluation of program effectiveness. Go to www.wasfaa.org/docs/research/intro.html for more information about the grant process and grant application forms. The spring application deadline is March 1st and the fall grant application deadline is October 15th.
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Results of the 2008 Membership Services Survey

In WASFAA’s continuing effort to evaluate the needs and interests of its members and to assess progress on its current five-year Strategic Plan (2005-2010), the association administered a Membership Services Survey in 2008. The online survey instrument was administered between December 5, 2009 and January 14, 2009 with separate survey instruments used for school and vendors/agency respondents. The previous Membership Services Survey was conducted in 2004.

WASFAA’s 2008 Membership Services Survey enjoyed a very good response for the school survey (201 respondents or 35%) but a less impressive response rate for the vendor survey (20 respondents or 8%). Overall, the total number of respondents was higher in 2008 than in 2004.

Key findings from the survey include the following:

- Most respondents feel WASFAA has done well communicating information to them, slightly better in fact than in the previous survey. The importance of communications was rated high as well, particularly via electronic vehicles.
- While all trainings were considered effective by respondents, trainings were rated as less important in 2008 than they had been in 2004. Training topics showing the greatest increase in interest since 2004 were Title IV programs, Financial Literacy/Debt Management, FFELP Loans, and Federal Direct Loans. Over three-quarters (76%) of the respondents are interested in web-based training.
- Respondents gave high ratings to both the effectiveness and importance of Volunteer opportunities and Research, reflecting the efforts that WASFAA has put into those areas since the last survey was conducted.
- The top reasons that members have not volunteered in the past five years were that they are unable to take time off from work, have never been asked, and feel it would be too time consuming.
- Most respondents had not applied for a scholarship, primarily because they thought others should receive it or because they did not think they were eligible.
- Most benefits and services of WASFAA are highly valued by its members, particularly staying current on key issues, networking with colleagues, and attending the annual conference.
- Projected attendance at the Anchorage conference is much lower than when tested in 2004 for Portland and could reflect the change in our economic environment which affects funding for travel and training.
- The economic situation for vendors is especially uncertain. Many may have difficulty committing to supporting WASFAA in the coming year and beyond.

A new element of this survey, a SWOT analysis (Strengths-Weaknesses-Opportunities-Threats), was conducted to gather information to be used in updating the association’s five-year Strategic Plan. Respondents felt that the greatest strength of WASFAA was in its broad, diverse membership,
including the ability to network and share information among members. Members without strong state associations found special value in their WASFAA membership. Respondents commended WASFAA’s training, particularly the annual conference, the SDB Summer Institute and the JRS Management Leadership Institute. Respondents appreciate communication on current issues and trainings and find WASFAA’s communication informative and very effective.

In terms of challenges and external threats, the vast majority of comments centered around the economy, shrinking budgets, and funding concerns, particularly the impact of state budgets restrictions and the possibility of more limited vendor support. Respondents also shared concerns about duplication of training among a number of organizations, especially as the economy forces members to make more choices about the training they choose to attend.

A number of respondents used this part of the survey to congratulate WASFAA on its good work, noting that they feel well served by the organization. Other respondents made specific recommendations on training, communications, membership, and other services, including moving more training and services online and finding ways to make training more affordable for members. Members also recommended enhancing communications efforts, noting that WASFAA could communicate more frequently, specifically citing the work of the Executive Committee as an area of interest.

The survey results, in general, indicate that WASFAA continues to respond effectively to member needs and interests and has done a good job in implementing its Strategic Plan. The primary adjustments that the association must make in response to the survey are in addressing concerns regarding the current economic situation and climate. The financial circumstances the association’s members face place even greater demands on WASFAA to identify new and additional sources of revenue to offset reductions in vendor support, identify new and meaningful ways to provide value for members who are not able to travel to training events, and to enhance its web-based capabilities.

Results from the survey have provided WASFAA leadership (officers, committee chairs, and others) with the information needed to respond to the changing external conditions and make well-informed decisions in serving the organization’s membership. You’ll be glad to know that at the November 2008 council meeting the WASFAA leadership cut back their operating budget drastically and our training chairs proposed how we could provide electronic training. So now that we have heard from you, we know that we were on the right track. Thanks for sharing and thanks for caring.
Last week tickets went on sale for the 92nd Annual Nenana Ice Classic where Alaskans wager thousands of dollars yearly on the day and time of the break up of the Tanana River (this is Alaska’s version of the lottery!). The prize is worth it - $303,895 in 2008! Large grooves are cut into the frozen Tanana River ice about 300 feet from shore and volunteers lend their muscles to pull on ropes to stand a wooden tripod upright. Holes are drilled in the ice, allowing water to seep upwards, filling in the grooves to freeze the tripod in place. A Watchtower erected next to the tripod holds the official clock of the most recent breakup, and provides a “photo opportunity” for visitors while they wait for the ice to move. Once the ice has thawed to the point where walking on it is no longer safe, a wire is attached from the Watchtower on shore to the top of the tripod, and rigged up to a clock mechanism so that the clock will be stopped when the tripod moves 100 feet. Watchmen monitor from the time the clock is activated until the ice has gone out. A siren will alert the townspeople to the tripod’s first movement.

When the tripod trips the clock, spring has officially arrived, and Interior Alaska’s rivers are once more navigable. And someone is a lot richer (or, as in most cases, a group of people are richer. Last year, the prize of $303,895 was won by one person—Colleen Cloutier of Anchorage became the richest winner in Ice Classic history when she took home the entire $303,895 jackpot — about $218,000 after taxes — for being the only one who guessed the ice would go out on May 6 at 10:53 p.m. Alaska Standard Time. It was only the 10th time in 92 years there was only one winner.

If you are interested in finding out some more about the Nenana Ice Classic you can visit the official website at http://www.nenanaakiceclassic.com.
Catherine King-Todd, Director of Financial Aid, Thunderbird School of Global Management, Segmental-At-Large

You are probably asking, “What in the world is this article about?” We all know what a CD is. It provides us music, a recorded book and other wonderful memories and records. It also has another definition in the financial aid world! I’m going to give you a glimpse into what is called a CD or Commission Director for the National Association of Financial Aid Administrators (NASFAA).

Commission Directors are a key component in the volunteer structure of NASFAA and are accountable for many facets of their activities.

What a Commission Director is responsible to do is:

• Coordinate the activities of the various committees under its jurisdiction
• Serve as the liaison to the National Chair and Board of Directors;
• Attend committee meetings, conference calls, etc. and take minutes at meetings; assist committee chairs in getting activities and projects done for the Association and represent the National Chair at committee meetings;
• Facilitate work with the designated NASFAA staff person; Keep the National Chair informed of progress of committees;
• Serve on the Board of Directors as non-voting members and report on the activities and accomplishments of committees;
• Assist committee chairs with orientation information for committee members;
• Help the National Chair develop committee membership using volunteer information from current and prior years;

How might one become a Commission Director? I’m glad you asked! It all begins with VOLUNTEERING! Begin by getting involved at the state level, moving on up to the regional level followed by the national level. There are a variety of ways to do this. You may participate as a committee member for awhile and then become a committee chair, be it at the state or regional level. From there, take the plunge; run for an office and you may get hooked! State Presidents usually represent their state by sitting on the WASFAA Executive Council. This may pique your interest in continuing your involvement at the regional level. As you learn more about your financial aid associations, you gain experience and network. Before you know it, you are running for a regional office position – secretary or vice president to begin the trek. From that point, why not run for President-Elect? As President of WASFAA, you sit on the NASFAA Board of Directors and serve as a representative of the region. If that isn’t exactly what you have in mind, you can still volunteer to participate on committees at all levels – state, regional and national – and gain exposure and increase your network.

As your network grows, the opportunity to sit on as well as chair a NASFAA committee provides you the potential to be asked if you would be willing to serve as a Commission Director. It truly is an honor to be asked and to serve in such a role.

Commission Directors are selected by the National Chair-Elect. Their bios are presented to the NASFAA Board of Directors for approval. CD’s have between 3 and 5 committees under their jurisdiction, depending on the anticipated activities for the year. Interest, background and experience all come into play when determining which committees will fall under which Commissions.

I am currently one of three CD’s and oversee four committees: Awards, Graduate & Professional Issues (GPIC), Institutional Program Management (IPM) and NASFAA Student Access & Diversity (NSAD).

The year began with an orientation for all committees led by National Chair Dave Gruen and first committee meetings for IPM and NSAD. The IPM Chair was unable to attend so I led that meeting for about 45 minutes and then sped over to the NSAD meeting where they were well into their discussions of activities for the year. After that, several committees held conference calls and scheduled their fall
The annual October WFAA conference, A New Landscape, A New Vintage, held at the Marcus Whitman hotel in Walla Walla, was a great success. Our overall membership has decreased, and in relationship to that, it was well attended, even though there were fewer participants than usual.

At the conference we had many excellent sessions providing important information and networking opportunities. We honored several retired or soon to be retired WFAA members who have devoted many years to our organization and our profession.

Please plan to attend next year’s conference at the Seattle Airport Marriott, October 28-30, 2009.

The WFAA Executive Committee (EC) meeting was held in Olympia, the state capital. We attended a Senate hearing with the Higher Education Coordinating Board and two of us from the EC (Janet Cantelon, VP of Legislation and Kathleen Koch, President) testified regarding SB 5044. This bill prohibits Washington non-resident students from being able to use state work study, a valuable student employment program.

Washington College Goal Sunday (CGS), headed up by NELA and 400 volunteers, was another huge success this year. CGS helps students across the state access financial aid opportunities by assisting them with completing the FAFSA in a high school or college setting.

The WFAA EC and committees and members continue to give their valuable time, energy and passion to support our profession. We always encourage more participation from our members in our state, regional and national organizations and look forward to continued success in our ever changing financial aid environment.
“Going the Distance: Working Together Through Challenges” was the theme of this year’s OASFAA conference. Although the attendance was down from recent years, I could feel the enthusiasm of those who were fortunate enough to attend OASFAA’s 41st annual conference.

Keynote speaker, Swil Kanim, kicked off conference with his stories and violin playing. Swil’s amazing stories and beautiful music captivated the audience. He shared with us how we, like a tree, can make it through the toughest of times and make our mark on the world.

Two other presenters provided inspiration and humor. Susan Beegle, an amazing woman who has overcome poverty to earn a PhD, shared her personal story and educated us on how poverty affects people. Leigh Anne Jasheway-Bryant, a humorist from Eugene, taught us the importance and benefits of laughing.

Another session included the kickoff for OASFAA’s new mentoring program. Sue Shogren and Dina Birmingham provided an exciting session that gave an overview of our new mentoring program. Applications were handed out for individuals interested in participating as either a mentor or protégé. Watch for updates of this program in the months to come.

There were other many valuable breakout and general sessions, too. The attendees will no doubt share what they learned with their colleagues.

I would like to thank the annual conference co-chairs, Melinda Dunnick and Anna Manley, and the conference committee for putting together this awesome conference. The conference could not have happened without the efforts of the conference committee. My thanks, also, to the conference presenters and our corporate donors.

The participation of all those involved in making the conference a big success clearly illustrates how OASFAA will continue “Going the Distance: Working Together Through Challenges.”

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Did you know that you have the opportunity to apply and potentially receive scholarships funded by WASFAA? Each year, our association funds scholarships so that member—just like you—can take advantage of in order to enhance your professional skills and knowledge. The training opportunities include attending the annual conference, the Sister Dale Brown Summer Institute or the Jerry R. Sims Management and Leadership Institute.

The winners of the 2008 WASFAA Conference Scholarships are:

- NFAA - Nicole Ferguson
- OASFAA - Matthew Sagayama
- PacFAA - Adam Hatch
- ALASFAA - Pam Doerner
- AASFAA - Ana English
- CASFAA - Robert Sedillo
- WFAA - Jeannie VanHove

(Unfortunately, we did not receive any applications from the IASFAA association.)

Who and How are the Scholarship Recipients Selected?

Scholarship opportunities are promoted through the WASFAA listserv and also sent to each state association’s scholarship and awards committee representative to promote within their state. Once the application period closes (60 days prior to the event it is for), the applications are sent to each state designee who then works with the committee within his/her state to select the recipient for that state. This ensures coordination with state scholarship opportunities to maximize membership benefits. The state designees then forward the information back to the WASFAA Scholarship chair who then notifies all applicants of the results.

For a complete list of the Awards and Scholarship Committee members, please visit the WASFAA website at www.wasfaa.org.

EDAC Scholarship awards are determined by the Ethnic Diversity Action Committee and notifications are sent separately.
Once again, WASFAA will be conducting one of the premier training events in the country in Reno, Nevada, from June 7-12. The Sister Dale Brown Summer Institute (SDBSI) is a 6-day intensive residential training program designed to teach fundamentals of the Federal Student Aid Programs and provide participants with an understanding of regulations and provisions that govern them. The curriculum is structured towards providing “new” aid administrators (those with two years or less of processing experience) with experiential training while also providing an opportunity for experienced aid administrators to receive refresher training on the financial aid delivery process.

Training Format
At the SDBSI, training is conducted in interactive lecture-style presentations designed to introduce topics and provide subject matter experience. Additionally, participants take part in faculty-lead small group discussion sections to reinforce the daily training topics through examples, exercises and dialogue amongst the group members. The week’s training activities culminate as each group collaborates on a case study taking a hypothetical family through the financial aid application and delivery process, reinforcing the instructional material and drawing upon knowledge gained by the participants.

Summer Institute Faculty
Thirteen experienced WASFAA members from throughout the Western region make up the 2009 SDBSI faculty, including a US Department of Education representative and two industry training specialists. Public and private colleges and universities are represented as are both two- and four-year institutions. Several members have even received formal training as a previous summer institute participant. The diverse faculty helps ensure participants are exposed to a broad variety of financial aid philosophies, processing structures, and policies & procedures.

Networking Opportunities
The SDBSI is more than a week-long training event. It also provides ample opportunity for participants to interact with colleagues and establish or expand professional networks. Additionally, the week is packed with social activities to help participants relax after a long day of intensive training.

For the latest information on the 2009 SDBSI, including updated registration information, the tentative agenda for the week, and travel suggestions and tips, visit the WASFAA website. I hope you or your staff are able to join us this summer in Reno. Should you have any questions, please feel free to contact one of the co-chairs. Nick Valdivia can be reached at nvaldiv2@csulb.edu and Andy Promsiri can be reached at andy.promsiri@anderson.ucla.edu.
You probably noticed a few years ago when you started getting mailings from your banks and credit card companies telling you how they safeguard your personal information. This campaign began after Congress passed the Fair and Accurate Credit Transactions Act of 2003 (FACTA) to help protect Americans against identity theft. When the Federal Trade Commission finally published the rules in November, 2007, the definitions of “financial institution” and “covered account” were so broad that any college that provided any loans (such as Federal Perkins, Institution as Lender or institutional), provided tuition payment plans, or extended credit in any way, suddenly came under the authority of this law. For example, a “financial institution” is pretty much any entity that holds a covered account. A “covered account” is an account used mostly for personal, family, or household purposes and involves multiple payments or transactions.

Not surprisingly, many colleges and universities were unable to meet the effective date of November 1, 2008, and the effective date was subsequently postponed until May 1, 2009. How does FACTA affect us? FACTA requires that each institution has an Identity Theft Prevention Plan. The written plan that must be approved by the institution’s governing board “is designed to detect, prevent and mitigate identity theft.” Central to the plan is a program that finds and tracks “red flags” -- patterns or activities that indicate the possible existence of identity theft; determines if there was fraudulent activity; and the actions to be taken upon the determination of fraud. Since identity theft prevention is a university-wide responsibility, adequate support and training of all staff is an important element of the plan.

In preparing the plan and submitting it to the institution’s board, leadership has been taken by various functional areas including the institution’s legal counsel, the business office, and the financial aid office. Perhaps you have been directly involved in writing your institution’s policy. If not, do you know who is taking the lead at your institution? Since the plan must be in place by May 1, you may want to ask how your office and operations will be affected and what your role is in training staff to monitor and process any “red flags” that are discovered.
IASFAA has been working with the Idaho State Board of Education to organize and host several FAFSA Completion Activities throughout the state. The idea is similar to College Goal Sunday. Saturday, February 21, was the date selected for this year. Nichole Franklin, IASFAA's President-elect, is preparing to attend the NASFAA Leadership Conference in March.

As part of the State Presidents' Exchange, Laura Hughes, IASFAA President, was a guest at the Oregon State Conference. The Conference was held at the Salishan Resort and Spa. While OASFAA reported that conference attendance was smaller, it was still almost three times as big as IASFAA. The agenda was loaded with great sessions, networking activities and FOOD. Overall, the conference was a wonderful experience.

Cindy Pollard
Director of Student Financial Services,
Warner Pacific College
Co-Chair Training Committee

The WASFAA Training Committee is hard at work. The behind the scene activities include debriefing from Fall 2008, planning and providing for spring training 2009, analyzing and proposing additional training opportunities in the near future for WASFAA members, and looking ahead to Fall training 2009.

If you are interested in serving on the WASFAA Training Committee, please contact Sue Shogren at susan.shogren@nela.net or Cindy Pollard at cpollard@warnerpacific.edu. There is room for you to join the team! Be sure to fill out the volunteer application on the WASFAA website and indicate you are interested in training.

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Donna San Miguel, a Financial Aid Advisor, from California State University San Marcos is training for her first Marathon. She is scheduled to run The Rock ‘N’ Roll Marathon on May 31, 2009. While training she is raising money for the Leukemia & Lymphoma Society through Team in Training. People can make donations on her website as well as check on her progress. 

Marilyn Riles joins American Student Assistance - as a Regional Account Executive serving the California market. Marilyn is no stranger to WASFAA and can be remembered from her service at National Education, Wells Fargo, EdFund, ALL Student Loan Corp and ACS Education Services. She is looking forward to re-connecting with WASFAA friends and colleagues in the industry.

Mindy Bergeron, Director of Financial Aid at John F. Kennedy University (JFK) announces staff additions. Amy Odom has joined her staff as the Assistant Director of Financial Aid and Loraine Pagayonan as joined JFK as a Financial Aid Counselor.

Linda Powell is retiring as Director of Financial Aid at Oregon College of Oriental Medicine after approximately 30 years in financial aid. She also worked at Lewis & Clark College and Northwest Christian University.

Raymond Yee of NELA and his wife had second son Brandon Damon born on January 31.

Former WASFAA members Don Black, Sam Collie and Tami Trover Crosson have begun their own consulting firm of Black, Collie, and Trover Consulting, LLC. to help Financial Aid Offices across the western states.

American Student Assistance®, the student loan guarantor, has promoted longtime employee Robert (Bob) Cole to managing director of business development. In this new role, Cole will be directly overseeing the activities of the organization’s entire 28-member business development team as they reach out to potential clients to talk about the value that ASA provides. He can be reached at 617.728.4640 or rcole@amsa.com.
Cindy Pollard the Director of Student Financial Services at Warner Pacific College (WP) has been promoted to Director of Student Financial Services. She is also teaching a Leadership and Supervision course for WP. Also at WP, Bryan Cook was promoted to Associate Director of Student Financial Services: Operations and Jennifer Proehl was hired as part time SFS Representative. Jen worked in financial aid a few years ago at WP, and has returned. She is assisting Bryan Cook with his duties.

Tracy Myers joins Warner Pacific College as a Senior Counselor and Rachel Geiger is a new SFS counselor. Rachel was most recently in the mortgage industry.

Also at Warner Pacific College in the Adult Degree Program Financial Aid Office, Brooke Mitts has moved on to fulfill her personal career objectives. Lance Chamberlain recently received a promotion to Senior Financial Aid counselor for ADP.

### Conference Committee Report

On January 13, 1969, the proposed WASFAA Constitution was adopted, the Constitution of NASFAA was ratified, and officers and delegates to the National Council of NASFAA were elected at the San Francisco Hilton. WASFAA had a strong and energetic beginning, one that provided a standard of excellence that has been evident in its forty years of growth and development. On April 26-28, 2009, WASFAA celebrated its 40th Anniversary at the “BIG Wild 40” WASFAA Conference in Anchorage, Alaska.

As the premier training event for the association, the WASFAA Conference provided essential training through relevant sessions to enhance participants’ professional development. Barbara Burnett, the Conference Program Chair, created a schedule with a broad range of training topics from the core training like “SAP Doesn’t Just Come from Trees” and “Veterans Administration & Financial Aid” to topics on new or changed financial aid programs, such as “Income Based Repayment” and “New ACG/SMART Grant Regulations.”

While the conference program promised to be educational and thought-provoking, we also had the opportunity to hear what is happening on the national level when our key note speaker, Dr. Philip Day, NASFAA President, addressed our group at the general session on Monday, April 28th. Also, conference attendees had a taste of Alaska. Mr. Whitekeys, a humorist, author, and entertainer based in Anchorage, opened the conference with his brand of Alaskan commentary and native lingo. Father Michael Oleska, a Russian Orthodox priest, distinguished scholar and storyteller based in Alaska, spoke about diversity in order to foster greater understanding across boundaries of race and culture. In addition, the conference included demonstrations of some traditional Alaskan Native Games, which teach balance, cooperation, strength, agility, concentration, endurance and speed. Each state association in the region competed in modified Alaskan Native Games.

For more information on the conference, go to http://www.wasfaa.org, and click on “conferences” for the appropriate links.
The word “change” has been in the news a lot lately. I know our country is looking towards some huge changes to get us out of this recession. People are looking towards the new Administration to make these changes. Change is a good thing when done correctly. You don’t want to do anything too radical which scares some people away and you don’t necessarily want to throw out all of the old and start new again, either. Some people like the adrenaline rush that goes along with constant changes. That’s probably why so many of us stay in the financial aid field for so long. Some people fear any change whatsoever. They feel comfort in the sameness of a routine. I fall in between. You need to “honor the past but prepare for the future.” In a sense, my presidency is starting at an opportune time. We have a five-year strategic plan that is coming up to its final year. For the past four years WASFAA has been tracking and evaluating the outcomes to its goals to see what has been effective and what has not. We also have the results from the recent WASFAA Membership Services Survey which tells us what we’ve done well, what we need to continue doing well and what we need to change. The results have given us lots of ideas in planning the upcoming 2009-10 WASFAA year. One of my first goals is to keep WASFAA members informed. I will communicate to you throughout the next year on a regular basis via the newsletter, listserv, or website. If you have not signed up to be on the WASFAA listserv go to-- WasfaaL@wasfaa.org.

To subscribe send a request to subscribe@wasfaa.org. (current membership is required)

To unsubscribe please send a request to remove@wasfaa.org.

You must be a member to post a message.

If you need assistance, contact support@wasfaa.org.

Your Fund Development Committee has been hard at work to get funds generated for WASFAA this year. Although it was a rough going, in early February 2009 we were finally able to get the 2009 Partnership Opportunities posted and live on our website. If you are interested in viewing the opportunities available to our partners, please go to http://www.wasfaa.org/docs/toc_pved.html. A special THANK YOU goes to our tremendous partners in their understanding and patience during the delay of getting this information to them. Your support is very important to WASFAA and we appreciate that very much.

We are also working hard at creating a special opportunity for all to support WASFAA during our 40th Anniversary Year. 2009 marks an important year for WASFAA as it will be celebrating 40 years of existence ~ 40 years of providing outstanding services and support to all of our member institutions. To help celebrate this milestone, we are extending the opportunity to all members of WASFAA, past and present, to support YOUR Association by submitting your “toast” to the Association. We encourage all to consider this opportunity as the support of all members is needed during these times of financial concerns. Be as creative as you would like ~ poem, cartoon, picture ~ or as simple as you like ~ greeting or tribute ~ and tell EVERYONE about your favorite memory, story, photo or thought from the many activities WASFAA has celebrated over the past 40 years that is near and dear to your heart. The cost will be $40 per submission and must be paid by credit card. All submissions will be posted online, at the conference, and at our many activities brought to you throughout 2009. Please go to http://www.wasfaa.org/docs/forms/memAnniversary2009.html to consider this unique opportunity and support WASFAA as we only celebrate 40 years of outstanding service once.

Lastly, this committee could use a few good individuals in assisting them with the many partnership opportunities. If you would like to volunteer for this committee, please contact Jean M Russell at jrussell@amsa.com.

Thank you for your support of this committee. We have enjoyed serving WASFAA over the past year.
TOP TEN
Things to Do With Your 2008 Tax Return

✓ Take your significant other on a weekend-getaway.
✓ Start shopping for holiday presents/put it in your holiday gift fund.
✓ Give it to your favorite charity and write it off on your 2009 taxes.
✓ Buy something you’ve been saving for (new furniture, new clothes, new car, etc.).
✓ Pay down your student loans.
✓ Pay down your mortgage.
✓ Pay down your high-interest credit card.
✓ Open a Certificate of Deposit at your bank.
✓ Put it in your child’s college fund.

And the number one thing to do with your 2008 tax return is: *Put it in your IRA or 401K and watch the money grow for your retirement!
Working
Among
Student
Focused
Amazing
Associates
The first was to urge delaying the implementation of the parent PLUS auction pilot program. The second was to allow consideration of restructuring or creation of an efficient national student loan program before making a hasty decision to eliminate FFEL program as called for in the administrative FY 2010 budget proposal.

Both issues have had positive developments. The House has passed H.R. 1777 which will postpone for a year the planned Parent PLUS auction. The poor economic environment continues and many major loan providers announced that they would not participate in the state-by-state auctions. Next steps will be for the Senate to pass their bill and for President Obama to sign it as expected. As the Chronicle states, “The House’s budget blueprint isn’t all bad news for lenders”. The House Committee on the Budget introduced a spending plan that instructed the education committee to create $1 billion in savings from the programs under its jurisdiction which many assumed would come from the elimination of FFELP. However, the report language urges lawmakers to “review options for the student-loan program that will maintain a role for FFELP lenders in the student loan program, and to look to ways to achieve savings that capitalize on current infrastructure and minimize the disruption to students and the employees of FFELP lenders who currently serve 75% of loans at American colleges, universities, and community colleges”. The House and Senate are debating their versions of the 2010 Budget Resolution this week.
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