Greetings all. Since the last newsletter, my travels have taken me to the Oregon state conference, San Francisco (not too far) for a WASFAA Executive Council meeting in February and to Tampa, Florida, in March for a NASFAA Board of Directors meeting (in that order).

Over the years I have heard so much about OASFAA’s annual conference and the yearly return to the Salishan Lodge and Golf Resort. So I was really excited about the opportunity to attend. Note to non-Oregonians, the Salishan Lodge is about a two hour drive from Portland. About half way there, I was saying to my windshield, WHY AND WHERE THE HECK AM I? But as soon as I pulled into Lincoln City, I knew immediately why. It has to be one of the most peaceful and relaxing locations where I have ever attended a conference. Maybe I am bias as I do love the ocean. It was a great conference with lots of energy and excellent sessions. Loved the theme of “Financial MasquerAID” and they actually had a Masquerade Ball and costume contest. I want to thank all of the attendees but especially Donna Fulton, Russell Siedelman, Michelle Holdway and Kathy Campbell for their warm hospitality.

As previously mentioned in the last newsletter, the 2012-13 WASFAA EC has been spending a great deal of time on renewing WASFAA’s Strategic Plan. I want to thank the entire 2012-13 Executive Council and members of the Strategic Planning Committee, especially Kay Soltis, Tami Sato and Steve Herndon for all of their efforts. It has been an amazing experience being on this project. At the next EC meeting to be held at the conference, Kay will present the final results to the EC for the 2014-16 WASFAA Strategic Plan. Good job folks.

Kay Soltis and I recently attended the NASFAA Board of Directors meeting in Tampa, Florida. Typically the board meeting is two full days. This meeting was extended for one additional full day as there was a very extensive agenda. I again raised WASFAA concerns regarding the new verification item, “Identity and Statement of Educational Purpose” and the requirement of a notary signature on the documentation. NASFAA leadership has recommended that we provide names of students being impacted by this new verification item and issues securing a notary signature. I have asked the state presidents to reach out to their membership and let me know of names of individuals who have been selected for verification tied to “Identity and Statement of Educational Purpose.” So, if you have names of students facing this issue, please let your state president know. Hopefully, we can provide information on this at the WASFAA annual conference in May.
Next up, I will be heading to the PacFAA Conference, April 22-23, 2013 in Honolulu, Hawaii. I am so looking forward to having the opportunity to meet folks from all the schools represented in the PacFAA region. Their conference committee has put together a great agenda with lots of sessions for everyone. Ron Day, NASFAA National Chair will also be attending and this will be his first visit to Hawaii.

Just a reminder that we have the WASFAA annual conference, May 19 – 21, 2013 at the Pointe Hilton in Phoenix, Arizona. The Conference chairs and entire committee have been working hard all year long to put together an amazing conference. I so look forward to seeing many of you there. Additionally, I do want to mention that the Sister Dale Brown Summer Institute will held June 23 – 28, 2013 at Portland State University in Portland, Oregon. This will be the first time SDBSI has been held in Oregon. I know that Nichole Doering, Chair for SDBSI is really excited and has put together a great group for faculty. Also, she has added a third track for Clock Hour schools.

This year WASFAA was well represented with four of our outstanding members being on the NASFAA ballot for Representative-at-Large; Kay Lewis, Assistant Vice President for Student Life/Director of Financial Aid at University of Washington, Bert Logan, Director of Financial Aid & Veteran Services, Portland Community College, Tami Sato, Director of Financial Aid, Southern California College of Optometry and Leonard Walker, Assistant Director of Financial Aid, University of Nevada – Reno, School of Medicine. Congratulations to all of you for being nominated and a big congrats goes to Kay Lewis for being elected NASFAA Representative-at-Large. I look forward to serving next year on the NASFAA Board of Directors with her.

As many of you might know, Peter Miller is transitioning off the Executive Council after serving as WASFAA Treasurer for I think the past 8 years and prior to that he was the Electronic Services Chair for some time. I wanted to take a minute and thank Peter for his dedication and years of volunteering for WASFAA.

Lastly, even though my term as president does not end until I pass the gavel at our annual business meeting on Tuesday, May 21, to Frank Green our 2103-14 WASFAA President, I would just like to take the opportunity to thank everyone who has served on the 2012-13 Executive Council and all the committee members for volunteering to serve. You all are amazing people and have made this year a wonderful experience for me.
Greetings from your editor!

Were you expecting to hear from Zack Duffy? You will have to check out the Transitions section on page 7 to find out why I’m baaaack.

Please take the time to read about what your WASFAA members have been doing and some very thoughtful articles on issues of diversity.

Lots of training sessions are available for you, make sure you register and mark your calendars. It’s not too late to get the Early Bird conference fee, but you must hurry, it ends April 19th!

Also, note the many ways your WASFAA Exec Board and other members are trying to communicate with you. Pick your favorite method or pick them all, but please do not miss out on information and opportunities because you didn’t sign up for one of the many ways WASFAA is trying to keep you in the loop.

Hope to see you in Phoenix at the conference.
In a few short months, you could be attending the WASFAA Annual Conference in Phoenix, Arizona. The Conference Committee has been hard at work throughout the fall to make this conference a success.

Justin Draeger, the NASFAA President, and Ron Day, the NASFAA National Chair, will present several sessions and provide an update on NASFAA. The Department of Education will have trainers and presenters available for sessions as well. We have many tracks for you to choose from, compliance, default prevention, tribal issues, graduate professional issues, proprietary schools and professional development. It’s not too late to propose a session of your own.

Go to http://www.wasfaa.org/docs/toc_conferences.html to do so.

No matter what school you work at, or what your experience level is, we will have sessions tailored for you!

Between and after sessions, you can explore the Point Hilton Resort. The Conference Committee has reserved rates for a studio, suite or detached casitas. The studio room rate is $99 per night and internet connectivity is included, so this is a very affordable resort! The amenities are spectacular and include a miniature golf course, tennis courts, Children's activity camp and acres of pools, including waterfalls, a lazy river and waterslide. With this much to do, you can bring your family with you!

Registration is now open!

Take advantage of early bird rates and register online at www.wasfaa.org today.

Subscribe to the WASFAA Water Cooler Blog by visiting http://wasfaa.org/b/ and you can receive regular updates on sessions, registration and fun activities to do while you are in Phoenix. With so much nearby, you could use your family’s summer vacation with us and end with a southwest adventure!

We’re looking forward to seeing you on May 19th.
We’ve been busy in Alaska this year! Last fall, we accepted a new set of by-laws. This winter, the Executive Council has been working on finalizing a new Policies and Procedures Manual. We’re excited to have it nearly completed! As part of the updates, we have added a new position to our Executive Council: a Representative-at-Large. The position is appointed by the elected officers and can be held by an Associate Member of ALASFAA. We’re hoping that the Rep-at-Large will provide the Executive Council with information and training opportunities that would benefit our Associate Members and would provide additional support from our non-voting members. Our first Rep-at-Large was appointed at our March meeting and will be Fred Tolbert from the Alaska Commission on Post-Secondary Education. The rest of our Executive Council will take office on May 1 and will include:

**Phong Moua** (Alaska Pacific University), President;
**Cindy Baldwin** (University of Alaska Fairbanks), President-Elect;
**Ashley Munro** (University of Alaska Fairbanks), Past-President;
**Jeni Macomber** (University of Alaska Fairbanks), Treasurer;
**Janelle Cook** (University of Alaska Southeast), Secretary.

We’re looking forward to a Transition Meeting in May when we can meet face-to-face.

Now that we’re getting more settled, we’re anxiously waiting for the ice to melt. And “anxiously” is not an exaggeration. The Nenana Ice Classic officially started in March. A tripod was placed on the Tanana River in Nenana, Alaska (55 miles south of Fairbanks). Little red buckets are placed in nearly every store, where Alaskans can buy tickets to guess when the ice will go out on the river. The person (or people) with the closest guess will receive the pot of money. The ice usually goes out late April or early May, which will cause the tripod to shift and a clock to stop. Past winners have split a pot of over $325,000. A few of us have even helped lucky students try to account for their winnings on the FAFSA!

Not only are we watching ice melt, we’re enjoying dog races, ice sculptures and out house races. We’re also counting down the days when we can join with our friends and co-workers from warmer states at the WASFAA Conference. We can’t wait to see you in Phoenix! we’ll be the sunburnt ones!
WASFAA STATE REPORTS

AASFAA Report

Howard Fischer
Director, Ottawa University
AASFAA State President

We’re getting excited to be the host city for the upcoming WASFAA Annual Conference. The weather should be fantastic; the sessions look like they are going to be meaningful and the hotel is top notch and great for families. We hope that many of you come and encourage you to try to extend your stay to enjoy some of what Arizona has to offer.

At about this time each year, the AASFAA Association holds a one day Symposium in lieu of a Spring conference. This year, since WASFAA is going to be in our own back yard, we are planning to kick off our Symposium with the WASFAA Fed Update. Not only will this be a great opportunity for our Symposium participants to hear the Fed Update, but it will give many of them a good introduction to WASFAA and all that WASFAA has to offer.

See you in May for the WASFAA Conference!
Pointe Hilton
Phoenix, Arizona
May 19 - May 21, 2013

IASFAA Report

Kevin Jensen
IASFAA President 2012-13
Director of Financial Aid
College of Western Idaho

As always, things have been interesting in Idaho for the past few months. In Idaho, our legislators are part-time, they participate in a legislative session that is usually 3-4 months long. During those months, there are flurries of activity, research, and meetings all in support of the legislative initiatives moving their way throughout the various committees, votes, etc. During this year’s legislative session, there have been two notable pieces of legislation the IASFAA membership has worked to support.

The first, a significant effort on the part of our State Board of Education and other education stakeholders to restructure our state funded scholarship programs was successful. This legislation will consolidate a number of smaller scholarship programs into a single new scholarship program - the Idaho Opportunity Scholarship - with the goal of supporting the State’s college completion initiatives.

The second, a very important technical correction to Idaho statute clarifying the status of many of Idaho’s career colleges also passed. This legislation ensures that Idaho career colleges (which outnumber Idaho public and private colleges/universities combined) are classified as post-secondary schools and protect Idaho career colleges’ ability to participate in Title IV financial aid programs.

Also, our work to reinvigorate the IASFAA membership continues! We’ve continued to update our web content, are now posting IASFAA job announcements, have called for leadership nominations and just completed our IASFAA elections. Congratulations to the 2013-14 IASFAA Executive Council!

- Roxanne Merle (Idaho State University), President
- Laura Hughes (Lewis-Clark State College), President-Elect
- Kevin Jensen (College of Western Idaho), Past-President
- Rebecca Mattucci (Boise State University), Vice-President
- Alex deGolia (North Idaho College), Secretary-Treasurer
- Barbara Warnick (University of Idaho), Secretary-Treasurer-Elect

As we all wind down the 2012-13 year and continue our preparations for 2013-14, we’re looking forward to seeing you at the WASFAA Conference in Phoenix, the NASFAA Conference in Las Vegas!
TRANSITIONS

Departure
Zack Duffy left University of Oregon and financial aid for Oregon Health Sciences University Department of Hemophilia. Happy for Zack, sad for those of us in financial aid. A good sport to the last minute—see him wearing his going away gift.

Relocations
Donna Fulton, Past OASFAA President and Director of Financial Aid at Klamath CC is now at Western University of Health Sciences at the Lebanon, Oregon, campus
Lisa Ormond has been named assistant director for Client Services for the Office of Financial Aid at Washington State University. She previously served as Scholarship and Financial Aid Counselor and assumed her new role on March 18.
Breena Conlin is now Senior Director of Business Services for Delta Education Corporation which has 38 campuses nationwide. She was previously NAFAA President and worked for Prospect Education.

Arrivals
Luhui Whitebear, WASFAA Vice President and Advising & Scholarship Coordinator for the Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde, is back in the office after her daughter, Salamasina Fa’auila, was born December 27.
Rod Dunn is now a consultant with Evans Consulting. Rod was previously an Assistant Director at University of Idaho.
Kendyl Marie Weigle joined sisters Brynn and Ashlyn on February 27. Mom, Jessica, and Dad, Dan Weigle of FedLoan Servicing, are proud of their new beauty.

WASFAA Communications Options

Judy Saling
Interim Communications Chair
Assistant Director, University of Oregon

WASFAA wants to keep you informed about what the organization and its members are doing as well as information we feel will help you in your life in financial aid. We provide several opportunities for that and hope you will find them all valuable.

Listserv: as a member you are automatically signed up for the listserv and will hear about updates, trainings, and be advised of job postings on our JobLinks.
Newsletter: a quarterly electronic Newsletter is published and sent out to members with articles of varied topics from federal, association, states, conferences, training, professional development, scholarship opportunities and member transitions. This is also an area where vendors can advertise.

Blog: The WASFAA Water Cooler is a place where you can post articles in some way related to the world of student financial aid, updates, or topics to promote discussion. We welcome you to take a look and Register to join.
Linkedin: Because we are a professional organization, this is a format that we especially like. If you don’t already have an account, you can sign up for free and then link to us at WASFAA-Western Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators.
Facebook: Like us on Facebook (WASFAA-Western Association of Student Aid Administrators) where we not only share up to the minute information, but also photos of events, locations, and members.
Twitter: Same information as Facebook without the pictures. Locate us @WASFAA_org.
Wendy Olson  
Director, Whitworth University  
Fiscal Planning Committee Chair

On Thursday, February 28, 2013, the Fiscal Planning Committee had their quarterly meeting. Here are some of the items that were discussed:

Treasurer-Elect, Mindy Bergeron, provided the Treasurer’s report. WASFAA now has all of its financial records on line through QuickBooks. This allows WASFAA to have the security of ongoing access to our records despite a stolen or broken Treasurer’s laptop. It also allows the WASFAA President to be able to monitor our financial activities in real time. Mindy reported that she has been reconciling accounts monthly and all appears to be in order.

- WASFAA ended our fiscal year with a balanced budget. Thanks to the generosity of our supporters, the success of our Fund Development Committee and the good stewardship of our committees, we did not need to access our asset reserve funds as we have done in the past.
- We are in the process of reviewing and updating our policies and procedures for the committee. The fiscal investment policies were recently updated and approved. The fiscal management policies will be updated next.
- Fiscal Planning affirmed that WASFAA will continue to offer an annual Jerry R Sims Management and Leadership Institute. Training is our main mission and the institute is a valuable training experience for our members.

The Fiscal Planning Committee has and will continue to work hard to make sure that WASFAA remains fiscally sound and continues to serve its member well into the future.

WASFAA’S ASSET RESERVE POLICY

The WASFAA Fiscal Planning Committee works to keep WASFAA a fiscally sound organization. Towards that end, an asset reserve policy was established years ago to assure that WASFAA would be able to continue to provide quality service and support to its members. At the time the policy was established there was concern about how WASFAA would manage were we to lose the support of our generous donors/vendors. That day came when we all were required to convert to the Federal Direct Loan Program. Fortunately, through the foresight of Steve Herndon and other previous Fiscal Committee chairs, we were able to weather the storm. Also, I am pleased to say that generous donors are once again stepping forward to help us provide services to our members.

The policy is to maintain 2 years of the most recent 3-year average of operating expenses plus contractual obligations in asset reserves (for rainy days etc.). As of February, that amount was valued at $603,300. I am pleased to report that we are right on target and are able to maintain the required asset reserves. WASFAA continues to be a healthy, vibrant and fiscally sound association.

If you have any questions about our asset reserve or other fiscal policies, please contact me, Wendy Olson, at wolson@whitworth.edu.

CHARTER ONE TRUFIT STUDENT LOAN®
FINANCING THAT FITS.

The Charter One TruFit Student Loan® can help your students borrow the full cost of their education with a choice of fixed or variable rate, no fees and flexible repayment options that fit their life.

FEATURING:
- Low fixed and variable interest rate options
- Available nationwide at all eligible schools
- Loan forgiveness
- ACH benefit from any checking account

Charter One also offers the TruFit Good Citizen Scholarship®, designed to reward students for community service. For more information, please visit www.charterone.com/trufitstudentloan or call our dedicated school services team at 1-888-333-0248.
Take note WASFAA members, we are in good company. Just a few weeks ago, many leaders from state and regional associations nationwide gathered together in Washington with NASFAA staff to train, share, collaborate, and bring our ideas to our elected leaders on Capitol Hill. I attended representing WASFAA and was both pleased and proud to look around the room as we shared stories, lessons learned, best practices, fears, triumphs, and accomplishments from our respective state or region. At times it seems that the challenges we face in our states or in our regions must certainly be unique, but . . . we are not alone and again we are in excellent company!

We are just a few members of a nation of dedicated, passionate, and resilient professionals. Our issues are not ours alone, our challenges are not ours alone, and most importantly our futures are ours together. I was amazed at the whole of the group - many old friends, many acquainted for the first time, all joined together as family by our profession. In so many ways it was as if there were no states and regions; it seemed at times we could complete one another’s sentences, finish each other’s thoughts. We - volunteers every one - spoke the same language and shared the same passion. It was powerful and we representing our members were focused.

This is the best part - our focus was on supporting, teaching, learning and equipping. The dedication to our financial aid family was remarkable! As I reflect on the experience, I took note of the details of each of my days at the conference. I recall that, as I was learning from the conference faculty and from my peers, I was also in regular contact by email and text with many, many leaders in our WASFAA states. Looking back through my emails, I’m certain that no fewer than 8 former or current WASFAA or WASFAA state presidents as well as many others supported me by answering questions or providing me with information in near-real-time. This wasn’t planned ahead of time, it just happened. What an amazing, dedicated family of volunteer leaders we have in WASFAA!

Our NASFAA Legislative and Leadership Conference concluded with visits to our lawmakers on Capitol Hill and I was privileged to be with six other WASFAA members as we met with staffers from the House Education Labor and Pensions (HELP) committee. As we shared our thoughts, concerns and ideas, I was again so impressed by the talent, passion, and dedication of our own leaders in the WASFAA region. So, for those of you who have thought about getting involved in your state, in WASFAA, or in NASFAA but haven’t had the opportunity yet - let me give you a word of encouragement. I know that you too, just like I have, will find that your state and our region are full of wonderful individuals who are ready to welcome you to the family!

Get involved, volunteer for a committee, use your passion! You will be inspired by the volunteers you meet and I can say from experience, your WASFAA, your state association, our members, and of course our students need your help. Believe me - your financial aid job will be “just a job” until you get involved!

The West is the Best!
The White House shines in the distance, and a smattering of old and new office buildings line the area. Hundreds of busy suits and skirts bustle about, each containing a passionate individual with intimate knowledge of his and her own cause, and each on its way to plead a case to our Nation’s Representatives. It’s a daunting idea. Why should the big important legislators listen to us, the lowly workers from the field? But this is by design: the first Amendment gives us the right and responsibility to bring comment and “to petition the Government for a redress of grievances.” This is purposely woven into the fabric of democracy; US citizens have a voice, and we should express it!

NASFAA’s Leadership and Legislative conference provided this opportunity for financial aid administrators from across the nation. I was honored to contribute to this Advocacy event, along with Melissa Moser, the current CASFAA President, and Lynne Garcia, the President-elect. Working with the Federal Issues Committee (a team of 20 volunteers, with representatives from each California segment), and in collaboration with CCCSF AAA and WASFAA, we created a Position Paper to speak from and leave with Legislators. This paper is posted on CASFAA’s Website http://www.casfaa.org/segmental-resources-federal, under the Federal Issues Resources. We scheduled three meetings ahead of time, each with the Congressional staffer responsible for Higher Education. The NASFAA staff encouraged us that it is often more effective to meet with the staffer than the Congressman, as they are generally more knowledgeable on your specific issues and will be the Congressman’s resource for the details of a Bill. We met with staff members for Representative Kline (R-MN, District), Representative George Miller (D-CA, District 11), Representative Duncan Hunter (R-CA, District 52), Senator Tom Harkin (D-IA, HELP Chairman), and Senator Lamar Alexander (R-TN, HELP Member), and also left the position paper with the offices of Juan Vargas (D-CA, District 51) and Senator Barbara Boxer (D-CA). For the most part, these meetings went well. The staff was friendly and very receptive to the ideas we put forth, even responding with questions of clarification and practical scenarios. While it was not our role to say where funding for specific programs should come from, it was our responsibility to communicate the needs of California’s students. From advocating for the renewal of ATB eligibility and celebrating over a Pell Grant surplus to addressing student loan indebtedness and permanent solutions for interest rates, conversations were open and honest. These interactions were not nearly as intimidating as they had sounded! We were able to give voice to our concerns and to the needs of our students, and to have this heard by people who can actually do something about it!

This was the point. If we do not speak out for our students, for access, choice and clarity, how can we expect anything to improve? Decisions made purely by budgetary concerns will continue unless we fight for the programs that work, and fight to change that which is inefficient, unnecessary or overly complex. But you don’t have to fly out to the Hill to accomplish this – though you can! You can find the information for your Senators here and for your Representatives here. Write them, email them, call them, invite them to your school when they are in town – they are your elected officials, and they want to hear from you. So whether at their desk or from yours, make sure to speak up for the programs that help us to meet the educational dreams of our students.

Your WASFAA Representatives on NASFAA Committees

Tami Sato
WASFAA Volunteer Development Chair

Did you know that NASFAA tries to have a representatives from each region on their committees? There are six regions: EASFAA, MASFAA, RMASFAA, SASFAA, SWASFAA and WASFAA. If you have been active on your state and regional associations, you might consider taking some of your added skills and experience to the national level if your institution is a NASFAA member. If you have been thinking of volunteering for a WASFAA committee, this is a reason to start on this leadership pathway.

We thought you might be interested in knowing who your WASFAA Representatives are that are presently serving on a NASFAA Committee:

- Access & Diversity – Deb Barker Garcia, Corinthian Colleges
- Association Governance & Membership – Jim Brooks, University of Oregon
- Awards – Tami Sato, Southern CA College of Optometry
- Finance Affairs – Mindy Bergeron, John F. Kennedy University
- Graduate & Professional – Linda Bisesi, UC Hastings College of Law
- Leadership & Professional Development – Susan Murphy, University of San Francisco
- National Conference – Maureen McRae, Occidental; Sandi Guidry, University of Nevada, Reno
- Nominations & Elections – Jim White, Gonzaga University
- Publication Editorial Board – Eileen Scully Brzozowski, University of Southern California
- Reauthorization Taskforce – Pat Harley, Glendale Community College; Georgette DeVeres, Claremont-McKenna College; Kay Soltis, Pacific Lutheran College
- Research – Doug Severs, Oregon State University; Christa Seagren, University of Phoenix
- Technology Initiatives – Thomas McWhorter, University of Southern California
- Training & Professional Development – Yvonne Gutierrez-Sandoval, University of La Verne

These representatives from our region will serve until the July 2013 conference in Las Vegas. The deadline to submit a volunteer form for the 2013/2014 year has passed, but keep this in mind next year when NASFAA call for volunteers in March. Great volunteers from the WASFAA region are needed for each committee.
The Western Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators (WASFAA) is a professional organization whose mission is to promote student financial aid and educational opportunities for students. We represent members who are student financial aid professionals from Alaska, Arizona, California, Idaho, Nevada, Oregon, Washington, Hawaii, Guam, the Northern Marianas Islands, American Samoa and the Freely Associated States of the Pacific.

We understand that our nation’s economy is still struggling but are concerned about recent federal financial aid programs changes and proposals that will impact our neediest students and their ability to pursue higher education.

**Restore Program Changes Made to Address Projected Deficit in Pell Grant**

This program benefits the 2,036,357 students* in the WASFAA region that receive Pell Grants. New reports show that the funding in the Pell Grant program is healthier than projected. The lifetime limit was reduced from 9 years to 6. We believe students who complete 6 college units of college degree applicable coursework should again be able to satisfy the requirement of a high school diploma or GED completion. Also the “year-round” Pell Grant which allowed students to continue their studies in the summer and facilitate faster completion was eliminated. This provision should be restored so it can be determined if “year-round” Pell Grants can increase completion.

**Direct Loan Needs a Permanent Interest Rate Fix**

The Direct Loan needs a permanent interest rate fix, not one that is debated annually. The interest rate should not be arbitrary but reflect changes in interest rates in the economy. One rate should be available to both undergraduate and graduate borrowers. The New America Foundation suggests Direct Loans be at an annually set interest rate based on the 10-year Treasury note plus 3.0%. For the current 2012/13 school year this formula would create a 4.9% interest rate. We believe this would be a fair rate for all students.

**Consumer Disclosures and Transparency**

Award letters can be improved and parents and students need to have information to make good decisions about planning and paying for college but the present litany of consumer disclosures required and proposed, amounts to just more confusion and complexity. Present required materials need to be analyzed to assure that a repetition in disclosures are avoided. Preliminary review by students of the Shopping Sheet or College Scorecard did not result in opinions of clarity.

**Allow Colleges to Set Direct Loan Limits Less Than the Maximum Annual Limits**

To ensure the financial stability of the federal loan programs, and to promote responsible borrowing, Financial Aid Administrators should have the authority to limit borrowing for across the board for all students, or for groups of students while still allowing, using professional judgment on a case-by-case basis, allows students to borrow up to the federal annual limits. This authority can deter unneeded borrowing or too much borrowing before program or degree completion. Institutions can control student loan indebtedness by avoiding loan maximums based on actual costs and specific student demographics.

In summary, we feel these recommendations will assist in the goal of increasing access for low-income students; keep debt levels down and graduating more students.

Questions or Additional Information? Please contact Jack Edwards, WASFAA President at Edwards_Jack@gsb.stanford.edu or Pat Hurley and Barbara Bickett, WASFAA Federal Issues Co-Chairs at phurley@glendale.edu and bbickett@devry.edu

* Data from NAICU State Data Reports for 2011-2012
Many of you might be wondering what exactly does the Electronic Services and Historical Archives Chair do? Well...I actually am kept quite busy with various requests from other committee chairs. When I’m working in my Electronic Services world I am mainly facilitating updates to the WASFAA website. It is my role to ensure the website is kept up to date. I work behind the scenes to assist the Conference Committee, the MLI Committee, the Summer Institute Committee and the Training Committee to post updates to their individual events as well as help facilitate the registration process. I also work closely with the Awards & Scholarship Chair and the Ethnic and Diversity Action Chair to post the scholarship applications as well as the awards presented at the annual conference.

A lot of work goes on behind the scenes as information is being sent to the company that houses our website and back to ensure proper information is being posted. At the end of each year, the Electronic Services Chair is then in charge of updating the website to reflect the new council and committees, which means a lot of lists, emails and pictures are forwarded as updates to the website. In addition to maintaining the website, I also help to facilitate conference calls for various committees by utilizing our Go To Meeting service. I also am responsible for those pesky job announcements that pop up every so often. The job announcements come through me, I evaluate the position to ensure it fits the realm of WASFAA and if approved, it’s posted and sent to the membership!

In my world as Historical Archives Chair, it is my job to ensure the secured archiving of anything and everything regarding WASFAA. This includes but not limited to; event contracts, committee reports, meeting minutes, official documents, etc. I also maintain the WASFAA storage unit where older event shirts and bags are housed and used at later events. I can be called upon at any given moment to pull a document from the archives to meet the need of the requester or to send items from the storage unit to an upcoming event, causing me to constantly be on my toes. After an event, when the items return to the storage unit, it is also my duty to count every item sent back and keep a living record of the total amount of items held within the storage unit. This includes, counting hundreds of name badges from a given event!

At the end of each year, the chair of Electronic Services & Historical Archives presents to the upcoming Executive Council. I mainly go over the features of the website that will assist the committee chair in managing their committee and where it is they should be posting their committee minutes and reports. I show them how to add people to their committee, how to see the volunteers for their committee as well as contact the members of their committee.

My position may not be the most glamorous or recognized but I enjoy what I get to do on a daily basis. I get to work with some great people and I am an important piece in communicating with the membership. Electronic Services and Historical Archives is always looking for volunteers—keep us in mind next year!

Actual emails from students this spring:

I am following up about a scholarship I just received. It is the R******* B**** Scholarship which was awarded through AAA. I am a adultery student, an MFA in printmaking. The award was for $910 and was recently paid out. Please let me know if there is anything else I can do. Thanks for your help!

I didn’t see that major in the course catalog!!

I would like my unsubsidized student loan turned back on for the Spring quarter of 2013 if possible. Please confirm, my school email is *************. edu.

Sure, just let me flip this little switch right over here.
Terri Eckel  
Conference Co-Chair  
Director of Financial Aid, Yavapai College

The Annual WASFAA conference is slated for May 19 – May 21 in Phoenix, Arizona at the Pointe Hilton on N. 16th Street. This year’s WASFAA conference promises to not only be informative and full of fantastic networking opportunities, but it is also relatively inexpensive! Early Bird Conference Registration is only $275 plus your $50 WASFAA membership fee. We have a great deal on the rooms at the wonderful resort as well. Currently the conference room block is full, but you can check with the hotel to see if spaces have opened up.

While you’re thinking about the hotel, can we entice you a little more? Check out these pictures! Can you imagine floating on the Lazy River on a hot summer day in Arizona? (after you attend sessions, of course!)

We have great sessions planned for Leadership & Professional Development, Communications & Technology, Financial Literacy & Student Loans, Regulations & Compliance, Best Practices and Customer Service. As a matter of fact, there are so many great sessions, that it’s going to be hard to choose which ones to go to.

Conference registration, room reservations and the conference agenda can be accessed at the WASFAA website: http://www.wasfaa.org/docs/toc_conferences.html.

For periodic updates regarding the conference, as well as advice on vacation opportunities in sunny Arizona, you are highly encouraged to subscribe to WASFAA’s new blog, The Water Cooler. Subscribe here and do it soon: http://www.wasfaa.org/index.html!! Why not plan your family summer vacation right in your own backyard?! Arizona has many fabulous scenic attractions—from the Grand Canyon to beautiful Sedona to the history of Tombstone and everywhere in between. The WASFAA Conference Committee is committed to posting to the blog routinely, in addition to posting to the WASFAA listserv, so that our membership is continually informed about conference activities and Arizona vacationing and site-seeing opportunities….so stay tuned to The Water Cooler.

On behalf of the WASFAA Conference Committee, I hope to welcome you to Arizona this May. Should you have any questions regarding the conference, please contact me directly at 928-776-2129 or via email at terri.eckel@yc.edu.

Register by April 19th to get the early bird rate of $275!
Here's the Scoop:

The Inside Dish on Financial Aid
Sister Dale Brown Summer Institute 2013

✓ Do you have employees that have less than a years' experience in financial aid?
✓ Do you have counselors that might move into a leadership role in your office?
✓ Do you offer any clock-hour programs?

The Summer Institute Basic Track runs Sunday-Friday, and comprehensively covers the core basics of all aspects in Financial Aid.

The Summer Institute Intermediate Track runs Wednesday-Friday, and goes into more detail on topics like R2T4, SAP, and Verification to name a few.

We are excited to pilot a Clock-Hour Track this year that will run Wednesday-Friday. It will address financial aid procedures and processes specific to clock-hour programs.

What should I expect at Summer Institute 2013?

Summer Institute offers both financial aid training content, as well as an opportunity to network with your peers in the financial aid profession. Holding the training on a college campus setting is a fun reminder of the “good ‘ol days”, and friendships amongst your peers are formed that will last even after you leave Summer Institute.

Summer Institute will be held at Portland State University in Portland, Oregon, June 23-28, 2013 pending finalized contract.

Intermediate & Clock-Hour Tracks will run June 26-28.

If you have any questions or would like more information, please watch the WASEAA website or contact Nichole Doering, 2013 SDBSI Chair atndoering@razzledazzlecollege.com or call 208-465-7660.
Graduate/Professional (GP) Conference Tracks!
- Be sure to attend the May WASFAA Conference in Phoenix and the July NASFAA Conference in Las Vegas and support the GP session tracks. It is always very helpful to have relevant sector sessions and information, so please attend these GP sessions that the WASFAA and NASFAA Conference Committees have put together for us!
- We need your involvement to help establish a GP Track at the FSA Conference in December – please contact Tony Sozzo, NASFAA GPIC Chair, at SOZZO@NYMC.EDU with ideas and suggestions for conference interest sessions for him to pass on to the FSA Conference Committee. Let’s make it happen there too!

Research
- Ever wonder about the number of undergraduate vs. graduate/professional students in the U.S.? A recent NCES preliminary report gave these numbers: 7,000 colleges receiving financial aid; 18.62 million UG students and 2.93 million GP students.
- Data Sources: Graduate Student Loans and Debt, by Nathan E. Bell, Director, Research and Policy Analysis, Council of Graduate Schools. See: http://www.cgsnet.org/data-sources-graduate-student-loans-and-debt-0

GP Notes of Interest
- NASFAA clarified that we must resolve unusual enrollment history edits for graduate students in accordance with GEN-13-09.
- NASFAA indicated that in an email, the Department of Education (ED) has reaffirmed its guidance that the retaking coursework provisions found at 668.2 of the General Provisions regulations apply only to undergraduate students. ED stated that it will issue a Dear Colleague Letter for the purpose of stating the current policy in a more official manner.
- NASFAA is preparing a helpful pamphlet to use when advocating for GP students at legislative visits in DC or with your congressional leader when they are in town.
- Mr. Joel Harrell from the Department of Education is our GP community contact. You may reach him at joel.harrell@ed.gov or 404.974.9307.
- Check out the WASFAA GPIC website! It has instructions to sign up for GP listservs, along with GP related resources and information: http://wasfaa.org/docs/toc_gradprof.html

GP FSA Publication
The Department of Education offers a new brochure titled “Financial Aid for Graduate and Professional Degree Students” (EN177P). It’s a great resource for the GP student as a handout or to put in packets. You may order here: http://www.fspubs.gov/ or download the PDF: https://studentaid.ed.gov/sites/default/files/graduate-professional-funding-info.pdf
So You Want To Be A Financial Aid Director!

Having Vision for the Best

Doug Severs
Financial Aid Director
Oregon State University

At one of my prior schools the president of the university had a question and answer session with staff and faculty during each semester. A staff member once asked him what his vision was for the school. He responded that he was a bureaucrat who really did not have a vision. Maybe he was being facetious or maybe he was being honest about his perspective. I really felt saddened as I believe having a vision about where a school or a department is heading is very important to being a director.

My vision as a director has been centered on the thought of having the best financial aid office possible. This pushes the question on defining what would be considered “best” in the various financial aid operations and with customer service. These definitions set up our goals and give us direction for improvement. It also allows me to educate my boss on where we need to go to best serve our students. It is surprising that once you define how you can improve, you begin to find resources that can help you get there.

When I was director at Idaho State University we believed that to be one of the best financial aid offices we needed to participate in the Federal Quality Assurance (QA) and Experimental Site initiatives. This allowed us greater leeway with the federal regulations and with designing our verifications process. Doing this greatly improved the office operations, verification, and award process flow. At Oregon State University (OSU) we are also participating in both QA and Experimental Site. Like using QA and Experimental Sites, we are also maximizing our Banner computer system to make ours a very efficient and effective financial aid process.

At OSU each Student Affairs department must do an assessment each year of what they have done to enhance student learning. We have been able to shift the assessment throughout various operations in the office. One of those was in regard to customer service. We did a survey of other large state universities in regard to the various customer service areas like answering the phone, responding to email and taking appointments. This survey really gave us an idea of how we are doing in regard to our peer schools. We now know what being the best means in that area and can work to reach it.

So having a vision to be the best has been a tool for improving what we do. Will we ever be the best financial aid office? That’s the goal, but I will just end by saying that being the best is an ongoing process that will never end!

"Doing the best at this moment puts you in the best place for the next moment."
Oprah Winfrey

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Inceptia
Support for Undocumented Students

Washington State University Leads Statewide Coalition to Support Undocumented Students

The Students
Attitudes run the gamut on immigration. That’s fine… we all have the right to our personal opinions. As college and university staff, we have a responsibility to serve our students. In higher education, there is no “legal” or “illegal” student. For our purposes, they are all simply “students.”

Many undocumented students do not realize they are undocumented until they apply to college. Each year about 65,000 undocumented students who were raised in the United States are eligible for college. However, college enrollment for undocumented students remains low. These students face multiple barriers to higher education—financial insufficiency, lack of support before and after high school graduation, parental opposition and psychological hurdles. Most entering college students experience some type of challenging situation their first year, but undocumented students find it even more difficult because there are few college retention programs that target undocumented students and address their specific needs.

Undocumented students are ineligible for state or federal financial aid, on-campus work, paid internships or fellowships, or for careers that require licensure, background checks or Social Security Numbers. Life for an undocumented student is much more difficult than for a student in any other under-represented group.

In 1982, the United States Supreme Court ruled that undocumented children be allowed access to a public (K-12) school education. Today, undocumented children in Washington public schools are indistinguishable from their native-born counterparts. Most arrive as infants or small children and America is the only home they know.

On May 7, 2003, House Bill 1079 was signed into law by Washington Governor Gary Locke. This law allows undocumented students to pay resident tuition rates & fees at Washington colleges and universities. To qualify, students must have earned their high school diploma/GED from a Washington high school, attended school for three years prior to graduation and lived in Washington State continuously since that time. Students are required to sign an affidavit verifying that they meet these requirements and that they will seek permanent residency when legally permitted to do so.

The Coalition
The Coalition is a partnership of faculty and staff from colleges, universities and other interested organizations around Washington State. It was initially funded with a three year grant from College Spark Washington with the objective to educate families, providers and policymakers about the issues facing these students in higher education. Their vision is to help Washington State become a leader in serving the academic needs of all its students.

The Training
Over 30 participants from the Vancouver area met with trainers at WSU Vancouver on March 19th. Marcela Pattinson, a bilingual/multicultural Financial Aid Counselor from WSU and Mateo Arteaga, Director of Central Washington University’s Educational Outreach Services, presented the training on behalf of the Coalition.

The training educates participants on evolving immigration laws, the challenges impacting undocumented students and their families, creating a safe environment for undocumented students and supporting their adjustment to campus life. The training covers the history behind the law, common misunderstandings, guidelines for working with undocumented students and videos of undocumented students’ success stories.

Although the Coalition deals with an inherently political topic and conducts studies that could potentially shape future public policy, the trainers avoid personal politics in order to keep the focus on students. Pattinson focused on the psychological challenges facing students while Arteaga presented facts and statistics.

According to Pattinson, resources are often not available to undocumented students during high school. Students have limited financial support from their families and may even be expected to contribute financially to the family. Complicating this issue, many undocumented parents discourage their children from applying to college for fear of deportation. No federal law specifically prohibits any student from attending college. State laws do vary on the issue, but undocumented students in Washington State cannot be deported for applying to college.

Once on campus, students face other barriers such as limited information about campus resources, cultural insensitivities and micro-aggressions. Basic accommodations frequently go unoffered because faculty and staff simply do not know what is available. Undocumented students are hyper-aware of language subtleties and often assume that if not specifically listed, services are not available to them.

The Future
The training concluded with an overview of Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA). Individuals who have deferred action status can apply for employment authorization and are in the U.S. under color of law. However, there is no direct path from deferred action to lawful permanent residence or to citizenship, and it can be revoked at any time.

For the Coalition, DACA comes as a welcome change that will influence the way the public perceives undocumented students and how undocumented immigrants view their own identity.
Does Your Campus Value Diversity?

Luhui Whitebear
WASFAA Vice President & EDAC member
College Advising Scholarship Coordinator,
Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde

“Of course.” That is the answer that generally pops up when asked if a campus values ethnic diversity. To really evaluate this question, think of the support services in place that your campus has. Does your office know where to refer students of color for support? Understanding why ethnic diversity on campus is important will help you become a better advocate for students of color. The Ethnic Diversity Action Committee will be holding an interactive discussion at the annual WASFAA Conference titled “Beyond Barriers – creating and promoting cultural awareness in financial aid.” We hope to see you there to learn tools that will help strengthen your office’s support of students of color.

Some things to ponder as you think about how your campus prioritizes diversity:

- Our nation is changing, and our higher education institutions need to reflect this diversity. More than half of all U.S. babies today are people of color.
- While communities of color have made great strides in closing the education gap, disparities in higher education remain prevalent. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, in 2009 about 28 percent of Americans older than 25 years of age had a four-year college degree. That same year only 17 percent of African Americans and 13 percent for Hispanics had a four-year degree.
- It’s in our national interest to invest in our future workforce. People of color today make up about 36 percent of the workforce. As our nation becomes more diverse, so too does our workforce.
- Studies consistently show that diversity drives innovation and fosters creativity.
- Diversity on campus benefits all students. Diversity on college campuses isn’t just a benefit for the brown and black students. Learning with people from a variety of backgrounds encourages collaboration and fosters innovation, thereby benefitting all students. Research shows that the overall academic and social effects of increased racial diversity on campus are likely to be positive, ranging from higher levels of academic achievement to the improvement of near- and long-term intergroup relations.
- Admission policies that do not consider race are predicted to decrease representation of students of color at the most selective four-year institutions by 10 percent. Given that our future workforce is projected to be nearly half people of color, it is necessary that universities create a fair process for expanding opportunities to all students.

*as taken from writings of Sophia Kerby, Center for American Progress
Communicating more effectively with Spanish Speaking Families

Andrés Cordero, Jr.
TG Senior Writer/Editor

As a Latino, a former first-generation college student, and now a volunteer outreach ambassador for a public nonprofit, I’ve been on both sides of the college exploration process. I can appreciate the obstacles faced by students who want to go to college but who may be challenged by language, by a lack of family legacy in college attendance, and by the sometimes intimidating process of finding ways to finance a higher education.

And let’s be honest — it isn’t exactly easy to get to college even if you aren’t hindered by these factors. Figuring out the path to college can be difficult, even in the best of circumstances.

So when I can help families and students find their way, I enjoy doing it.

If you, or others on your team, are planning an outreach event or activity and you anticipate interacting with Spanish-speaking families, here are a few things to consider.

Recognize that college exploration can be a family affair
Because of factors that include the level of financial commitment, relevance to a student’s future, and the possibility that the student will soon be separated from the family unit, many Latino families will explore the college-going experience together. Parents/guardians and siblings are likely to join the student as they attend events to learn more about college. Grandparents or aunts or uncles may participate as well. Because of this, you will want to be prepared to share information based on the perspectives and needs of others besides the student. For the student and his or her family, the event may be a shared experience, so be sensitive to these informational needs.

Be courteous, open, and friendly — your body language will signal your approachability
Learning something new can be intimidating to anyone, so pay close attention to the way you dress, to your body gestures, to your movements, and to your facial expressions. You will want to be approachable, without making people uncomfortable; casual glances and reassuring smiles are often subtle ways of inviting conversation. Some students and their families may look confused or overwhelmed; a simple “how can I help?” and an appreciative smile may be enough to get the conversation going. When it comes to clothing, business casual or casual wear is often best; avoid dressing in formal business wear that can imply you are selling something or are “too important” to be interrupted.

Be respectful of and acknowledge adults and parents
Many Latino cultures emphasize respect for older generations. Even if it’s clear that the student will be the one “conducting business,” be sure to recognize or acknowledge the student’s elders. A simple greeting will do, but neglecting this acknowledgement can be seen as a signal of disrespect, making it more difficult to establish rapport and trust. If you are speaking Spanish with the family, some Spanish-speaking parents may eagerly jump in once they realize you can answer their questions as well.

Be an active listener
When you invite a question or a conversation, stay with it through its conclusion as much as possible. Generally, students’ questions are the easiest to answer; parents and other elders may pose more complex and thoughtful questions. Avoid staring directly at the questioner; it is considered disrespectful and confrontational. Instead, glance slightly away, but shake your head back and forth, and give verbal cues that you are listening. Repeating what you are being asked is a good way to demonstrate that you understand, and gives others nearby a second opportunity to listen to the question before you provide the answer.

Demonstrate you relate to their situation or circumstances
Families in many cultures can feel that they are alone in not understanding a process or knowing the answer to a specific question. For families of first-generation students, this sense is often even more prevalent. To help families be more open to your responses, listen to their situations, as these often set the stage for their questions. Acknowledge their circumstances, restate their question, and, when possible, share similar examples. This “storytelling” approach to answering questions helps many remember what was said.

Ask about a family’s needs before you begin
Even if you determine that a family needs information in Spanish, avoid making assumptions about their situation. Spanish-speaking families are as diverse in fluency, level of acculturation, socioeconomic status, and other factors as English-speaking families. You may be dealing with a family that has recently arrived from another country and is unfamiliar with the U.S. educational system, or you may be dealing with a third- or fourth-generation Spanish-speaking family that simply has not assimilated fully to U.S. culture. Spanish speakers can come from many different countries, and so their choice of terms, tone, pitch, and pronunciation may differ dramatically. They may have been highly educated in their country of origin, or they may be struggling to build a new life in the United States.

Know that many Spanish speakers appreciate your efforts — and they aren’t expecting perfection
As with other segments of the population, professionals and volunteers who help students and families understand the college-going process have varying levels of Spanish-language proficiency. Some may understand Spanish, but may not be comfortable speaking it. Others find that they can speak it, but are uncomfortable writing in the language. Often, what is most important, and most valued, is the effort. Just as with English, Spanish is often spoken in a manner that is not strictly correct, and there is considerable license to modify language in whatever way is necessary to make it easiest to understand. Except in rare circumstances, most Spanish speakers are forgiving when it comes to minor errors. Their goal in these situations isn’t to grade your fluency; it is simply to gather whatever information they can to make the important decisions related to attending college.

As you prepare for the busy season of educating students and families about going to college, recognize that your efforts do make a difference. These simple tips can help you better support those who are reaching out to Spanish speakers. Ultimately, any effort you and your institution can make in communicating this information will be appreciated by those seeking to build a better future for themselves and for those they love.