

President's Highlights- March

In February, I had the opportunity to attend the OASFAA conference, my final Executive Council meeting and the NASFAA Leadership Conference.

After a few months break from state conferences, I thoroughly enjoyed learning from my colleagues in Oregon. I appreciated the opportunity to visit with future state and regional leaders. I also loved the competitiveness of a very exciting evening of bingo, in which I made it to the final round before losing the bingo-off for the grand prize.

The 2018-2019 Executive Council met for the last time in Las Vegas and the 2019-2020 joined us for orientation. It snowed! In Las Vegas! Despite the excitement that the weather brought (and some travel challenges), we had a productive meeting that lead to some exciting decisions. Over the next few months, the executive council will be reviewing plans for additional services and support we can provide WASFAA members.

From Las Vegas, I flew to Washington D.C. to participate in the NASFAA Leadership Conference. On the last day, I had the privileged to accompany many WASFAA members on Hill Visits, where we advocated for student financial aid. From my perspective, the group visits were positive. Staff from both the Senate and House education committees were receptive to our perspective. I met with my state Senator's staff and was tasked with reviewing some concerns on homelessness, particularly on the ability to qualify as an independent student. I'll be doing some research over the next few weeks and sending her information and recommendations. If this topic interests you, I would love to hear your thoughts and ideas and would be happy to coordinate a group document to send in- Contact me at akmunro@alaska.edu if you're interested.

Being able to focus on various forms of leadership over the last few weeks seemed fitting to me. A few weeks ago I learned of the loss of Rebekah Salcedo, from University of Arizona. Rebekah served on the Executive Council this last year as the Arizona association president. She was a strong advocate for leadership opportunities for financial aid administrators, showing a particular interest in the leadership pipeline WASFAA has been researching. In her memory, WASFAA would like to support an Arizona financial aid administrator to attend our conference in Tempe in May. You can apply for a scholarship to cover registration and lodging through our [general scholarship application](#). Rebekah's enthusiasm for leadership topics and her willingness to volunteer can serve as inspiration to all of us. My thoughts have been with her family, friends and colleagues for the last weeks. I hope as we continue to build future leaders within this profession, we can continue to honor her memory.