

October 2017 WASFAA President's Letter

Hello, everyone! It's finally fall! I don't know about you, but I've hardly had a moment to breathe lately. I changed jobs about six weeks ago . . . and I've been holding down the fort as Director of Financial Aid and Interim Registrar while learning the ropes of my new role as Dean of New Student Transitions. This is a new position at Lane Community College that emerged from a reorganization of the Student Affairs Division that is intended to provide optimal support for student success. In my new role, I oversee admissions/outreach, financial aid, and placement testing, and I am charged with helping prospective students transition successfully into college with an eye toward overall enrollment growth. Being the first person in a new leadership position within a new configuration of student affairs is exciting, if a little disorienting at times. I imagine that first-generation students feel similarly excited and disoriented in their first weeks and months of postsecondary education, whether they're attending a commuter college, an online program, or a traditional residential college or university. It's a good reminder to be kind and encouraging to everyone pushing outside of their comfort zone, including ourselves.

Anyway, enough about me! What I really want to talk about this month is what WASFAA is preparing for you. Every fall, WASFAA has two big opportunities for you: Fall Training is one, and the other is the Jerry R. Sims Management and Leadership Institute. I'll let our wonderful co-chairs, Sara Everitt and Thalassa Naylor, will be sending out information very on the Fall Training front, and I'll tell you a little more about MLI myself—I'm excited to be part of the faculty! This event is designed for financial aid administrators in management roles: directors, associate directors, assistant directors—if you're running a financial aid office, if you manage staff, if you have budget authority, this event is for you. I attended MLI in 2006, just months after beginning my first financial aid director position, and it was exactly what I needed—believe it or not, I still draw on what I learned there all the time. Portland is always one of WASFAA's favorite destinations—it's a vibrant, fun city with amazing food and easy transportation, and the Benson hotel is a genteel establishment tucked right into the heart of downtown. Visit the MLI web page at https://wasfaa.org/docs/toc_MLI.html for details on our faculty and agenda!

The WASFAA Jerry R. Sims Management and Leadership (MLI) conference will be held November 7th and 8th at the Benson Hotel in downtown Portland, Oregon. You're invited to join four seasoned faculty members representing all sectors of financial aid administration. I will be there to represent community colleges, Scott Cline represents non-profit schools, Lauren Patterson represents proprietary schools, and Jim Brooks represents four-year public schools. Doug Severs from Oregon State University is the committee chair coordinating this year's MLI. MLI will cover a wide range of management and leadership training with emphasis on guiding attendees to the next management level, whether it's helping prepare an assistant director to become an associate director, or an associate director who aspires to become a director. Some of the other areas covered will include working

with a school's institutional culture, human resource and personnel challenges, ethical challenges in financial aid administration, building trust between offices, and working with the media and other external parties. I hope to see you there—space is limited, so sign up soon!

I look forward to chatting with you more next month—in the mean time, please feel free to give me a call at 541-463-5266 or send me an email at faithh@lanecc.edu to share your ideas, thoughts, feedback—WASFAA exists to serve you, and I'm all ears.

Happy fall!

Warmly,
Helen Faith
WASFAA President