

Editor's Embellishments

Submitted by: **Gary Spoales, Editor, Bank of America**

Welcome to the Summer issue of the VASFAA Voice – the last issue of 0506 and a farewell issue for President Brad Barnett, as well as a Welcome issue for President Erik Melis. We hope that you will join the Editorial staff of the VASFAA Voice in congratulating Brad on a productive year. It has been a personal pleasure to work with Brad this past year. It has been a very productive year for VASFAA and fulfilling year for me personally. I'd like to publicly thank Brad for his personal support of me at a critical period in my family's history.

This issue is a Transition issue between the incoming and outgoing VASFAA Board's. It has been a personal period of transition for me and my family in many ways as well. My wife's battle with cancer is going better and we hope to see the light at the end of the tunnel as her last chemotherapy treatment is scheduled for August 15th and then on to the transition of radiation therapy. We would like to thank everyone for your good wishes and particularly to that one member who sends her a wonderful card of encouragement each and every week. We are in another transition with a move to a new home just completed and the settlement scheduled of the old home. We moved to New Market, just two doors from our son, his wife, and our grandson. That has been a wonderful transition. I hope that your personal transitions and your school transitions with the incoming Fall class are positive and successful.

Well are you ready for the Wild Man? Or didn't you attend the VASFAA conference in May and know what I mean? Our incoming President was in full bloom. It looks like a no-holds-barred leadership style, or is that an all "hands" bared leadership style? As I wasn't able to attend the board retreat personally, we'll all have to wait and see.

This issue will list the new incoming board and committee chairs along with reports about year-end efforts and plans for the coming year. Now is a great time to volunteer to participate on a committee and get some exposure to a great organization. Contact any member on the list and volunteer today!

The Newsletter Committee is still seeking a willing participant from the Private Career School sector to join our committee. If you are interested, please contact me directly at 301-942-9525 or via my email address below.

The next issue of the newsletter is scheduled for publication on Oct 1st. Please send your input by Sept 1st to me at gary.a.spoales@bankofamerica.com.

Advertising is now a part of the Sponsorship program. Thank you once again to everyone who provided material for this newsletter. The entire association appreciates your efforts. As always, this issue's contributors are listed at the end of the newsletter.

Article Guidelines

The Editorial staff will review all articles submitted for publication. Submissions should be of a professional interest to the association and not include marketing and/or advertising of products, services, websites or personnel.

Full articles should be no longer than two typed pages single spaced. It is requested that all submissions be provided in 10 pt size with Arial font type to save our publishing editor time and energy.

AD and Picture Guidelines

The online newsletter flows best with graphics submitted in .jpeg or .gif format. An ad should not be larger than 6" in width. You may submit it in either full color or black & white according to your preference.

(Note: Ads are only accepted from Sponsors who chose an ad in the issue of their choice, based on availability.)

[Table of Contents](#) | [Next Article](#)

Survival Knowledge From... Brad Barnett, Outgoing President

**Submitted by: Brad Barnett, VASFAA President 0506, barnetbd@jmu.edu
Communication, Continuity, and Commitment**

"The Business of Leaders, of heroes, is tricky. Leadership is not something that is done to people, like fixing your teeth. Leadership is unlocking people's potential to become better." – Bill Bradley, U.S. Senator

It is hard to believe that the 2005-06 VASFAA year is over. This has been an absolutely incredible year and I have thoroughly enjoyed serving you as VASFAA's 2005-06 President.

When I look back at this year I will have fond memories that I will carry with me for the rest of my life. Professionally, we accomplished a lot and I believe the association is in great shape due to the hard work of the Board, committee chairs, and committee members. I am proud to say that VASFAA is over 500 members strong, we stayed within our overall association budget, and we saw a lot of firsts this year.

The new committee reporting format seems to have worked well. This made reporting easier for committee chairs and provided a single document summary of the committee activities throughout the year. The last of the Committee Descriptions are being finalized following the Transition Retreat. Completion of this project will enable VASFAA to more effectively advertise our committees.

While all of the committees did an excellent job this year, I think it's worth highlighting in my final report a few of the firsts and/or exceptional services that were provided.

The Awareness Committee set a Super Saturday record with 27 sites, 1,298 people in attendance and 233 volunteers. That's a lot of FAFSA's! Several of the additional sites were secured with the help of our friends at the Commonwealth College Access Network (CCAN).

The Electronic Services Committee implemented electronic voting for the very first time at this year's conference. The New Century Fund President's Council awarded professional development grants to three VASFAA members.

The Diversity committee was extremely active in planning and outreach, resulting in the fabulous events you saw at the annual conference. They coordinated the Leadership Symposium held on Sunday at the conference, secured the wonderful general session speaker Mr. Harvey Alston, and implemented one of the best "diversity experiences" we have ever seen at a conference with their program for people to use disability devices throughout the conference.

We saw an increase in our High School Guidance Counselor Workshop sites because of the diligent work of our Secondary School Relations Committee, and the Research Committee has been gathering data in response to one of the concerns brought up at the sector meetings at the 2005 annual conference. I am happy to say that President Melis is keeping the Research Committee in 2006-07 to continue the work they started this year.

The Public Relations committee enacted two new projects that had a positive impact on the

Submit articles to
Gary Spoales,
Newsletter Editor

membership. The “thank you” letters to the supervisors of VASFAA volunteers gave the volunteers recognition with their employers that was long overdue, and the “VASFAA Survivor Vignettes” were a great way to learn more about our colleagues around the state. I have heard several positive comments about both of these projects.

In response to requests from the membership, the Training Committee hosted our first New Aid Officer Workshop not associated with a conference. This stand alone event was done in the fall and the feedback we received regarding this is that it was a tremendous success. Actually, “stand alone” may not be a good description because the Membership Committee worked with the Training Committee to host our first New Member reception outside of a conference setting in conjunction with this training event. This also proved to be very successful.

VASFAA would not be where we are today without the contributions and support of our vendors and sponsors. As of the conference, vendor/sponsor contributions reached \$93,750, with 5 Platinum sponsors, 3 Gold, 10 Silver, 10 Bronze, and 9 sponsors at the Vendor level, for a total of 37 vendors and sponsors. This, along with their continued involvement on VASFAA committees, shows a clear dedication to our association’s goals and mission.

The year culminated with a conference that will be remembered for years to come. I heard several comments from people like, “this is the best conference I ever attended” and “that old VASFAA feeling is back again.” The Conference, Membership, Diversity, Training, Electronic Services, Vendor/Sponsor, Photography, and Public Relations committees worked seamlessly to pull off a fabulous event. All of the committees did an exceptional job staying within our “Survivor” theme and in creating an atmosphere where members could network, receive training, and have fun. While the Yellow Team won the Survivor Challenge, I think it’s fair to say that everyone who participated in these events had a great time and probably met someone they might not have otherwise had the chance to meet. I am extremely grateful to everyone who worked so hard to pull off this conference.

I am also happy to say that we raised \$3,972 through the silent auction at the conference for our friends and colleagues in Alabama (AASFAA) and Mississippi (MASFAA) who were affected by Hurricane Katrina. I will be presenting a check for \$1,986 to each of those two state presidents at the SASFAA Board Transition Retreat in June.

The association held its annual election of officers during the conference. I would like to thank everyone who ran for office this year and am looking forward to working on the Board with those who were elected. The results of the election are as follows:

President Elect:	Pat Kelly , The College of William & Mary
Treasurer Elect:	Zita Barree , Edamerica
Representative at Large:	Melissa Barnes , Norfolk State University
Representative at Large:	Michael Poma , SunTrust

Personally, I will never forget the support that was given to me by the VASFAA membership throughout the year. Additionally, my family was forever touched by the kindness and generosity of the membership at the conference by the \$250 in food pantry donations my children received and the 300 people who sang them happy birthday at the Tuesday night event. We may not have been able to hold the annual Barnett Boys Birthday Bash this year because of the conference, but the boys got even more out of their birthday this year than in years past. In prior years they have only been the couriers in dropping off the food they collected at their birthday party; however, this year they also got to buy it due to your donations. They had the best time shopping for the food when Sara and I took them grocery shopping.

It takes a certain amount of Communication, Commitment, and Continuity to be a “Financial Aid Survivor,” and it has been a pleasure to watch VASFAA members demonstrate these 3 C’s throughout the year.

Thank you for having faith enough in me to give me the opportunity to serve you as VASFAA’s 2005-06 President. I am looking forward to working with President Melis and the 2006-07 Board as

we “Trek Boldly Into New Frontiers.”

Sincerely,

Brad Barnett

VASFAA President 0506

Psalm 118:24: *This is the day which the Lord hath made; we will rejoice and be glad in it.*

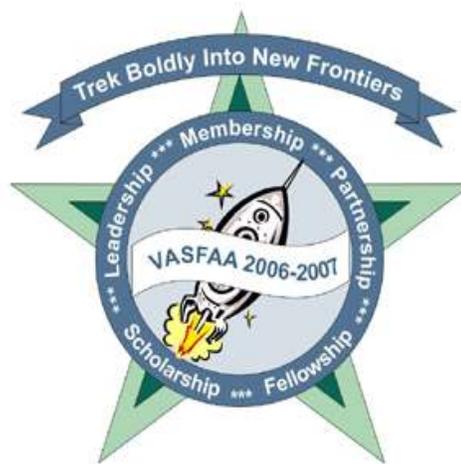
[Previous Article](#) | [Table of Contents](#) | [Next Article](#)

Trekking Boldly Forward With... Incoming VASFAA President, Erik Melis

Submitted by: Erik Melis, VASFAA President, 06-07

Trek Boldly Into New Frontiers VASFAA Mission Briefing From... Erik Melis, Incoming President

Submit articles to
Gary Spoales,
Newsletter Editor



The VASFAA Transitional Board Retreat took place from May 22 - 24 at the Airfield Conference Center in Wakefield, and we have had a successful launch to our bold trek for 2006-2007. We also managed to leave the retreat with a balanced budget for the upcoming year.

The theme for 2006-07 is to "Trek Boldly Into New Frontiers" which will be accomplished by launching five special "ships". These ships are: MemberSHIP, PartnerSHIP, LeaderSHIP, ScholarSHIP, and FellowSHIP. Each of these ships will have specific mission objectives to help ensure the success of our VASFAA trek. The mission objectives are:

MemberSHIP

1. Increase overall membership in the association by encouraging those that used to be members and are no longer active to become active once again, and by reaching out to those institutions that are eligible to have members in the association but for whatever reason have chosen not to be active;
2. Ensure broad sector representation in association membership by reaching out equally to all sectors.

PartnerSHIP

1. Increase volunteerism and involvement in the association by providing opportunities for new members and those not previously involved to step forward and get actively involved in committee work;
2. Enhance the relationships VASFAA has with external partners and entities like SCHEV,

the newly formed Commonwealth College Access Network, SASFAA, NASFAA, and state and federal legislators;

3. Reach out to legislators at the state and federal level to provide information about VASFAA and advocacy on financial aid and college access issues.

LeaderSHIP

1. Provide development opportunities for new leaders within the association using mechanisms such as the Leadership Symposium, committee chair opportunities, etc;
2. Encourage membership to work with Past President and Nominations and Elections committee to have, at a minimum, two highly qualified candidates for each position on next year's slate of candidates.

ScholarSHIP

1. Provide high-quality training to the membership at the annual conference in 2007;
2. Provide additional high-quality training opportunities for our members beyond the annual conference to include a series of fall training events targeted at all levels of training needs.

FellowSHIP

1. Provide additional opportunities to foster networking and sharing of ideas within VASFAA and between VASFAA and external groups such as SASFAA, NASFAA, and other state associations;
2. Provide increased opportunities for members to provide feedback and input to the association utilizing a series of "away missions" during which the President and other members of the board will go to various parts of the state and see feedback through several hosted roundtable discussions.

I am extremely pleased to say that we have committee chairs and co-chairs for all of the VASFAA committees we will have in 2006-07, and most of these chairs were able to attend the retreat. There are also several people in committee chair positions who have not previously served in VASFAA leadership positions. This is a great way to get the missions of LeaderSHIP and PartnerSHIP started.

VASFAA had a year of great accomplishments in 2005-06 and the new Board is going to carry some of those initiatives forward and build on them as we strive towards achieving our trek. For example, we decided to have another series of training opportunities in the fall to include training for all levels including Experienced Aid Officer training, New Aid Officer or Mid-Level Aid Officer training, and Support Staff training.

We will also strive to prepare an annual conference in May 2007 that will rival all before it. All the VASFAA committees involved in putting together the annual conference have already set sail on the ScholarSHIP and have begun the hard work involved in carrying out this most important mission.

The Board and committee chairs are working on ways to improve the in-depth committee descriptions for each of the VASFAA committees that were started last year. These will help those desiring to enlist onboard the PartnerSHIP and do volunteer work with VASFAA to identify just the right committee position for their expertise and commitment level. The descriptions, which will be posted to the web, address questions like what type of tasks need to be done, what time or travel commitment is involved, what expenses are involved, etc.

I am extremely excited about the upcoming year and look forward to the journey we will experience together as we "Trek Boldly Into New Frontiers." This trek would not be possible without the efforts and commitment of all those that graciously volunteer their time and resources for VASFAA. The list of crew members continues to grow and I am sincerely indebted to all those that have stepped forward already and those that will still step forward as we begin the new VASFAA year.

Survival Knowledge From... VASFAA Committees

Committee	0506 Chair	0607 Chair
Archives	Holly Rison, RMC	Holly Rison, RMC
Awards & Nominations	Tom Morehouse, TNCC	Brad Barnett, JMU

Awards Committee – 0506 Summary

Chaired by Tom Morehouse

Life Member:

The recipient of this award must have rendered truly outstanding service to the Association or the financial aid profession. Outstanding service demonstrated through state, regional, or national Association officer or committee leadership, authorship of professional publications, professional training, efforts to secure financial support for the work of Association goals and objectives for furthering the opportunity of Virginia's post secondary education population might be used as a basis for identifying life member nominees. This reference does not preclude consideration of those outside the membership of VASFAA. The Plaque is inscribed as follows:

THE VIRGINIA ASSOCIATION OF STUDENT FINANCIAL AID ADMINISTRATORS
PRESENTS THIS LIFE MEMBERSHIP WITH ALL OF ITS PRIVILEGES TO (Name of Recipient)
IN RECOGNITION OF _____ YEARS OF SERVICE TO THE FINANCIAL AID PROFESSION AND THIS
ASSOCIATION, CHARACTERIZED BY OUTSTANDING LEADERSHIP IN THE DEVELOPMENT AND
IMPLEMENTATION OF NUMEROUS PROJECTS, CREATIVE THOUGHT, A KEEN AWARENESS OF THE ISSUES,
AND UNTIRING SUPPORT OF (HER/HIS) COLLEAGUES, THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS PROUDLY BESTOWS
THIS HIGHEST HONOR THIS 6th Day of May, 2006.

For 05-06, the Awardees are:

- **Michael Barree**, Retiring from Longwood College after 33 years of Financial Aid Service
- **JoAnn Carreras**, Retired from SunTrust after 22 years in the Financial Aid Industry.
- **Gail Catron**, Retired from Wytheville Community College as Financial Aid Director after 16 years of Financial Aid Service

New Professional of the Year:

This award is given in recognition of exceptional and enthusiastic service to a person who has been a member of VASFAA from one to four years and to encourage other new members to take leadership roles in VASFAA. The plaque reads:

VASFAA NEW PROFESSIONAL OF THE YEAR AWARD
PRESENTED TO (Name of Recipient)
For exceptional and enthusiastic service to the
Virginia Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators

For 05-06, the recipient is:

- **Daniel Hewitt** , Associate Director Edward Via College of Osteopathy

Committee(s) of the Year:

- Training, Awareness, State Relations

Special Recognition:

- Experienced Aid Officer

Awareness	Zita Barree, EdAmerica	Mary Gore, Danville CC
		Robin White, UVA
Budget and Finance	Bobby Clemmer, BRCC	Bobby Clemmer, Blue Ridge CC
Bylaws	Tom Morehouse, TNCC	Brad Barnett, JMU
Conference	Jolene Burke, CLC	Vera Riddick, ODU
Diversity	Liza Bruce, ECMC	Hope Jackson, ECMC
Electronic Services	Daniel Hewitt, VA Tech	Daniel Hewitt, VA Tech
		Jane Moore, GMU
Experienced Aid Officers	Lisa Tumer, JMU	Ed Irish, W&M
Federal Relations	Marilyn King, VA Tech	Marilyn King, VA Tech
Membership	Mike Poma, Suntrust	Angela Long, Miller-Motte TC

Membership Committee – 0506 Summary

Michael Poma, Chair 05-06 and Angela Long, Chair 06-07

Congratulations VASFAA! We have set some record numbers for VASFAA membership for the 2005-2006 year. As of May 26, we have 517 paid members of VASFAA. This is our largest membership since 1999.

We hope to continue success with improvement of registration for the 2006-2007 year. Membership plans to continue with our yearly mentor reception in the fall of the year to expose new members to an exciting year at VASFAA.

This past year has been successful for the membership committee. In December 2005, we organized a mentor/new member reception that took place in Richmond. We had a great crowd of new members and mentors in attendance. This event took place the evening of the new member training and was a great introduction for the new members into VASFAA.

At the conference, we had a great showing for new member orientation and also the new member/mentor reception. This was the second year for the reception and the reception has grown to a new level. We look forward to a stronger showing next year at the conference. Although people don't like getting their picture taken, the new member buttons have been a hit among the association.

We hope conference registration was easy for you this year. With registration in the main foyer, it made easy access for everyone and hopefully was a smooth process for you. We made a few minor changes from the previous year and strive to make this a seamless check-in.

By the time you read this, RENEWAL registration will already be in place. Remember to Renew your membership as training activities, LISTSERV postings and other functions rely on your paid membership. Help us get these great numbers again. We look forward to working with all new volunteers for the 2006-07 year.

Thanks for a great year!		
New Century Fund	Sherrye Ward, SunTrust	Bobby Clemmer, Blue Ridge CC
Newsletter	Gary Spoales, Bank of America	Gary Spoales, Bank of America
Photographer	Gerene Carter, Citibank	Gerene Carter, Citibank
Public Relations	Jeanne Holmes, Suntrust	Liza Bruce, ECMC
SCHEV Liaison	Lee Andes, SCHEV	Lee Andes, SCHEV
Secondary Schools	Sheila Nelson-Hensley, Bluefield	Pam Ramob, ACCESS
Sector Coordinator	Erik Melis, GMU	Pat Kelly, W&M
Site Selection	Erik Melis, GMU	Pat Kelly, W&M
State Relations	Michael Barree, Longwood U	Barry Simmons, VA Tech
		Yvonne Hubbard, UVA
Strategic Plan	Vern Fairchilds, Bridgewater	Lefter Daku, VA Tech
Sue D. Ross Fund	Bobby Clemmer, Blue Ridge CC	Bobby Clemmer, Blue Ridge CC
Support Staff Training	Karen Gilliam, VCU	Donna Taylor, VA Tech
Training	Donna Taylor, VT	Jolene Burke, ECMC
		Brenda Burke, VA Commonwealth
		Jeanne Holmes, SunTrust
Training Committee – 0506 Summary Submitted by Donna Taylor, Chair		
<p>This year’s training committee was tasked with providing a fall New Aid Officer Workshop and providing topics and speakers for 18 concurrent sessions at the 2006 conference.</p> <p>The New Aid Officer training was held in Richmond and was a great success! Approximately 30 aid officers attended and a variety of presenters from various sectors. The Membership Committee hosted a new member reception following the first half-day which allowed more time for the group to network. We offered New Aid Officer Training again on the opening day of conference. The workshop was again well attended and had a variety of presenters.</p> <p>As the committee began brainstorming about possible sessions for the conference, we all agreed we wanted a diverse slate of topics dealing with procedural issues, personal and professional development. With that goal in mind we forged ahead securing speakers to cover the various topics that the membership helped us identify. Then February came in with a storm called HERA. Realizing the need for training regarding the new regulations, we juggled sessions and secured speakers to help address some of changes. The sessions were well attended and the speakers were complimentary of the participants.</p>		
Vendor/Sponsor	Biz Daniel, National Education	Biz Daniel, National Education

- ▶The First Word
- ▶Committee Updates
- ▶People and Places
- ▶Reflections Did You Know?
- ▶Interesting Stuff
- ▶FinAid Shell Game
- ▶Planning Your Life
- ▶Special Features
- ▶Support Group

Submit articles to
Gary Spoales,
Newsletter Editor

Committee Plans for 2006-07

Awareness	<p style="text-align: center;">Mary Gore, Co-Chair mgore@dcc.vccs.edu</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Robin White, Co-Chair rcw4n@virginia.edu</p>
<p>Committee Goals for 2006-07</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To develop a Best Practice format/guide for Super Saturday sites and leaders in order to increase workshop participation and volunteer cohesiveness. To implement partnerships with post-secondary access groups and the Commonwealth College Access Network to increase VASFAA membership, facilitate good fellowship, and to enhance leadership skills. 	
Budget and Finance	<p style="text-align: center;">Bobby Clemmer, Chair clemmerr@brcc.edu</p>
<p>Committee Goals for 2006-07</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Oversee the financial management of the Association. Serve as a management source of the Sue D. Ross Scholarship Fund and the New Century Educational Trust. 	
Conference	<p style="text-align: center;">Vera Riddick, Chair vriddick@odu.edu</p>
<p>The VASFAA conference committee is committed to providing an awesome annual conference for the entire membership by offering educational opportunities as well as a time of fun and networking. We are committed to working hand-in-hand with Training, Vendor/Sponsor, Membership and the Electronic Service committees to ensure that all needs are met through effective communication. Plans are currently underway—we look forward to you being aboard the ship (Membership, Partnership, Leadership, Fellowship or Scholarship) as we "TREK BOLDLY INTO NEW FRONTIERS". Mark you calendar and plan to join us May 19 - 23, 2007, at the Virginia Beach Hilton Oceanfront Hotel.</p>	
Diversity	<p style="text-align: center;">Hope Jackson, Chair hjackson@ecmc.org</p>
<p>Committee Goals for 2006-07</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote awareness among VASFAA members and outside audiences on issues relevant to diverse student populations. Serve as a resource to the Association in addressing the concerns of diverse populations. Plan sessions/activities for the Conference that address these relevant issues. Develop training for current and future leaders through the Leadership Symposium. 	
Secondary School Relations	<p style="text-align: center;">Pam Rambo, Chair prambo@accesscollege.org</p>
<p>Members</p>	

- Carolyn Ward, Rappahannock Community College
- Renee Davis, Thomas Nelson Community College
- Nicole Derry, Medical Careers Institute
- Joanne Forbes, Norview High School
- Barbara Porter, Radford University
- Jennifer Allman, Virginia Community College System
- Bill Wendle, University of Virginia at Wise

Committee Goals for 2006-07

- Recruit professionals from VASFAA in June, 2006 to serve on a committee to recruit hosts and develop a regional training schedule for fall high school counselor workshops.
- Print flyer of regional training opportunities in July 2006 and mail to all public and private high schools in the commonwealth in August 2006.
- Send evaluation materials and sample agendas to all hosts.
- Analyze evaluations for site, content and attendance.

Electronic Services	Daniel Hewitt, Co-Chair dhewitt@vcom.vt.edu
	Jane Moore, Co-Chair jmoore7@gmu.edu

Committee Goals for 2006-07

- Review the VASFAA website and coordinate updates and improvements from other committees.
- Support the online database resources for other committees, such as Membership and Conference.
- Catalog all VASFAA hardware and write a Policies and Procedures entry for the handling of old or damaged hardware.

Public Relations	Liza Bruce, Chair lbruce@ecmc.org
-------------------------	--

Erik Melis, the VASFAA President for 2006-07, has asked that the Public Relations Committee continue the initiatives that were started in 05-06. The initiatives that were considered successful and that have been requested to be continued in the upcoming year are: the recognition of VASFAA volunteers by sending letters of appreciation to the supervisor of each volunteer at their institution; and vasfaa vignettes through which Financial Aid professionals tell their personal story of how they got here, why they stay and what role did VASFAA play.

Additionally, as part of Erik's "Trek Boldly Into New Frontiers" theme, the Public Relations Committee will be exploring what are financial aid best practices. We will solicit this information from Financial Aid administrators and share these on the VASFAA website or in some other public forum.

Finally, in an effort to promote awareness of the role of the Financial Aid Office and to help others to understand the work that is done by Financial Aid administrators, the Public Relations Committee will work to develop a concurrent session or a roundtable discussion at a regularly scheduled VASFAA training event or conference. The goal of this is relationship building between financial aid and the Business Office and Admissions.

The following VASFAA members have generously offered to volunteer their time on the 2006-07 Public Relations Committee: Jeanne Holmes, Hope Jackson, Linda Mashack, Margaret Murphy and Beth Parker. The Commissioner for Public Relations is Angie Hawkins. If you would like to be a part of our committee, please contact Liza Bruce at lbruce@ecmc.org or 804-267-7126.

Support Staff Training	Donna Taylor, Chair dtaylor@vt.edu
-------------------------------	--

Committee Goals for 2005-06

- Hold multiple 'drive-to' training sessions in regional areas of the Commonwealth.
- Identify possible topics for training and survey the membership to see which attracts the most interest.
- Coordinate with Training and Experience Aid Officer Committees on a time and date in the fall for a multi-level training workshop in a central location.

Vendor/Sponsor

Biz Daniel, Chair
bizdaniel@aol.com

Standard Objective: To work with all existing and potential vendors, sponsors, and committees to achieve their understanding of the sponsorships policies, procedures and benefits.

Objectives:

- Update the vendors/sponsors section of the P & P and post it when all updates are posted
- Secure financial support for VASFAA through sponsorship commitment from vendors and sponsors -- old and new
- To add a Junior Vendors/Sponsor Chair that has a grasp on the vendors/sponsors lottery.

VASFAA Opens Door to Increased Sponsorship Opportunities

A well known fact is that VASFAA, like most other non-profit organizations, is heavily dependent on sponsorship dollars to help fund its activities each year. As the association moves from one fiscal year to the next, it continually assesses the manner in which sponsorship opportunities are managed to help ensure that the association is giving its sponsors the best opportunities available.

As a special initiative of the 05-06 Board, President Barnett created a special team for this task that included Jolene Burke, Tom Morehouse, Zita Barree, Biz Daniel and Randy Craig. The task assigned to the team was to review existing policies driving sponsorship of association activities and, if needed, amend the procedures to ensure that VASFAA is maximizing opportunities for existing and new sponsors to gain exposure to the membership and the communities it serves.

Working from things learned from past experiences with the sponsorship process and utilizing the overall objective to identify ways to enhance the process for future use, a number of enhancements are being made to the existing sponsorship policies and procedures. To highlight some of the main changes:

- A mechanism is now in place to allow committees or the Board to add items to the list of things that may be sponsored throughout the year.
- Provisions were put into place to allow new sponsors (sponsors that come to us after the Sponsorship Lottery has been held) more opportunities to select items to sponsor.
- Provisions were made to allow existing sponsors to pick up additional sponsorship items as they become available, either through using unclaimed points or by increasing their sponsorship funding.

Updated policies will soon be added to the on-line version of the Policies and Procedures Manual and we encourage both existing and potential new sponsors to review these at their leisure, keeping in mind that the sponsorship drive begins very shortly after the planning retreat.

As the Association moves through another year of service, the Vendor/Sponsor Chair and the Board will both continue to review the Association's policies affecting its sponsors, seeking further ways to give our sponsors the recognition they deserve. Anyone having ideas about how to improve upon our current policies and practices should feel free to offer them directly to the Vendor/Sponsor Chair or to a member of the 06-07 VASFAA Board.

Thank you to ALL who offer their financial support to VASFAA.

Experienced Aid Officers

Ed Irish, Chair
epiris@wm.edu

- Working as a team, this committee will coordinate with the Training Committee to present a multi-level training workshop in a central location. The session will likely be three days and two nights.
- This committee will convene in person and on site 2 or 3 times for planning purposes.
- We will contract a site, contact & secure presenters, plan logistics and deliver our product sometime in October.

Training	Brenda Burke, Co-Chair blburke@vcu.edu
	Jolene Burke, Co-Chair jburke@ecmc.org
	Jeanne Holmes Jeanne.Holmes@SunTrust.com

Committee Goals for 2006-07

- Plan sessions for conference which includes topics, knowledgeable and interesting presenters, room set-up, and evaluations.
- Coordinate with presenters/speakers individual session requirements.
- Coordinate with Training and Experience Aid Officer Committees on a time and date in the fall for a multi-level training workshop in a central location.
- Coordinate New Aid Officer's Training in the spring.

- ▶The First Word
- ▶Committee Updates
- ▶People and Places
- ▶Reflections
- ▶Did You Know?
- ▶Interesting Stuff
- ▶FinAid Shell Game
- ▶Planning Your Life
- ▶Special Features
- ▶Support Group

Survival Knowledge From... People and Places in the News

From JMU:

Linda Miller, a member of the Newsletter committee, retired from the state of Virginia. We wish her well.

From UVA:

Michael Farris, financial aid administrator, graduated in May 2006 from Lynchburg College with a Masters of Education degree.

Submit articles to
Gary Spoales,
Newsletter Editor

[Previous Article](#) | [Table of Contents](#) | [Next Article](#)

Survival Knowledge From... The VASFAA Archives

Submitted by: **Holly Rison, VASFAA Archivist, Randolph Macon College**

The VASFAA Archivist is on a much needed break. In place of the normal report from VASFAA's history, we have a history lesson of another kind. Read on in commemoration of our Memorial Day and 4th of July celebrations recognizing our freedom in the United States of America.

Tomb of the Unknown Soldier

1. How many steps does the guard take during his walk across the tomb of the Unknowns and why?

21 steps. It alludes to the twenty-one gun salute, which is the highest honor given any military or foreign dignitary.

2. How long does he hesitate after his about face to begin his return walk and why?

21 seconds for the same reason as answer number 1.

3. Why are his gloves wet?

His gloves are moistened to prevent his losing his grip on the rifle.

4. Does he carry his rifle on the same shoulder all the time and if not, why not?

He carries the rifle on the shoulder away from the tomb. After his march across the path, he executes an about face and moves the rifle to the outside shoulder.

5. How often are the guards changed?

Guards are changed every thirty minutes, twenty-four hours a day, 365 days a year.

6. What are the physical traits of the guard limited to?

For a person to apply for guard duty at the tomb, he must be between 5' 10" and 6' 2" tall and his waist size cannot exceed 30." Other requirements of the Guard: They must commit 2 years of life to guard the tomb, live in a barracks under the tomb, and cannot drink any alcohol on or off duty for the rest of their lives. They cannot swear in public for the rest of their lives and cannot disgrace the uniform (fighting) or the tomb in any way. After two years, the guard is given a wreath pin that is worn on their lapel signifying they served as guard of the tomb. There are only 400 presently worn. The guard must obey these rules for the rest of their lives or give up the wreath pin. The shoes are specially made with very thick soles to keep the heat and cold from their feet. There are metal heel plates that extend to the top of the shoe in order to make the loud click as they come to a halt. There are no wrinkles, folds or lint on the uniform. Guards dress for duty in front of a full-length mirror. The first six months of duty a guard cannot talk to anyone, nor watch TV. All off-duty time is spent studying the 175 notable people laid to rest in Arlington National Cemetery. A guard must memorize who they are and where they are interred. Among the notables are: President Taft, Joe E. Lewis (the boxer) and Medal of Honor winner Audie

Submit articles to
Gary Spoales,
Newsletter Editor

Murphy, (the most decorated soldier of WWII) of Hollywood fame. Every guard spends five hours a day getting his uniforms ready for guard duty.

ETERNAL REST GRANT THEM O LORD, AND LET PERPETUAL LIGHT SHINE UPON THEM.

In 2003, as Hurricane Isabelle was approaching Washington, DC, our US Senate/House took 2 days off with anticipation of the storm. On the ABC evening news, it was reported that because of the dangers from the hurricane, the military members assigned the duty of guarding the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier were given permission to suspend the assignment. They respectfully declined the offer, "No way, Sir!" Soaked to the skin, marching in the pelting rain of a tropical storm, they said that guarding the Tomb was not just an assignment, it was the highest honor that can be afforded to a serviceperson. The tomb has been patrolled continuously, 24/7, since 1930.

God Bless and keep them.

[Previous Article](#) | [Table of Contents](#) | [Next Article](#)

Did You Know?

Submitted by: **Erik Melis, VASFAA President**

US DOE Post HERA Training Presentations

Greetings,

The U.S. Department of Education has posted the presentations that are being used with the series of training sessions for HERA changes to financial aid, including the ACG and SMART grant, student and institutional eligibility issues, and loan provisions.

If you're going to be participating in one of the training modules, or even if you're not able to do the modules, you will find much of the information in these presentations interesting and useful.

The presentations are presented for the following modules:

- Presentation Title: Module 1 – ACG and SMART Grants
- Presentation Title: Module 2 – Student Eligibility, Institutional Eligibility, Need Analysis and R2T4
- Presentation Title: Module 3 – Loan Provisions

All three modules can be found by going to IFAP then clicking on Conference Presentations and then clicking on Additional FSA Presentations.

Good hunting...

Erik Melis, VASFAA President

Interesting Stuff for You!

Submitted by: Linda Spoales from parts unknown

You have to be either old enough to remember Abbott and Costello, too old to REALLY understand computers, or one of my favorite "Alice, can you help me" people to fully appreciate this. For those of us who sometimes get flustered by our computers, please read on...

If Bud Abbott and Lou Costello were alive today, their infamous sketch, "Who's on First?" might have turned out something like this:

COSTELLO CALLS TO BUY A COMPUTER FROM ABBOTT

ABBOTT: Super Duper computer store. Can I help you?

COSTELLO: Thanks. I'm setting up an office in my den and I'm thinking about buying a computer.

ABBOTT: Mac?

COSTELLO: No, the name's Lou.

ABBOTT: Your computer?

COSTELLO: I don't own a computer. I want to buy one.

ABBOTT: Mac?

COSTELLO: I told you, my name's Lou.

ABBOTT: What about Windows?

COSTELLO: Why? Will it get stuffy in here?

ABBOTT: Do you want a computer with Windows?

COSTELLO: I don't know. What will I see when I look at the windows?

ABBOTT: Wallpaper.

COSTELLO: Never mind the windows. I need a computer and software.

ABBOTT: Software for Windows?

COSTELLO: No. On the computer! I need something I can use to write proposals and track expenses. What do you have?

ABBOTT: Office.

COSTELLO: Yeah, for my office. Can you recommend anything?

ABBOTT: I just did.

Submit articles to
Gary Spoales,
Newsletter Editor

COSTELLO: You just did what?

ABBOTT: Recommend something.

COSTELLO: You recommended something?

ABBOTT: Yes.

COSTELLO: For my office?

ABBOTT: Yes.

COSTELLO: OK, what did you recommend for my office?

ABBOTT: Office.

COSTELLO: Yes, for my office!

ABBOTT: I recommend Office with Windows.

COSTELLO: I already have an office with windows! OK, let's just say I'm sitting at my computer and I want to type a proposal. What do I need?

ABBOTT: Word.

COSTELLO: What word?

ABBOTT: Word in Office.

COSTELLO: The only word in office is office.

ABBOTT: The Word in Office for Windows.

COSTELLO: Which word in office for windows?

ABBOTT: The Word you get when you click the blue "W".

COSTELLO: I'm going to click your blue "w" if you don't start with some straight answers. What about financial bookkeeping? You have anything I can track my money with?

ABBOTT: Money.

COSTELLO: That's right. What do you have?

ABBOTT: Money.

COSTELLO: I need money to track my money?

ABBOTT: It comes bundled with your computer.

COSTELLO: What's bundled with my computer?

ABBOTT: Money.

COSTELLO: Money comes with my computer?

ABBOTT: Yes. No extra charge.

COSTELLO: I get a bundle of money with my computer? How much?

ABBOTT: One copy.

COSTELLO: Isn't it illegal to copy money?

ABBOTT: Microsoft gave us a license to copy Money.

COSTELLO: They can give you a license to copy money?

ABBOTT: Why not? THEY OWN IT!

(A few days later)

ABBOTT: Super Duper computer store. Can I help you?

COSTELLO: How do I turn my computer off?

ABBOTT: Click on "START".....

Survival Knowledge From... Three Special Thank You Notes to the Association

Dear Eric and VASFAA Members:

It was only on Saturday when Anita Aymer handed me the beautiful plaque that I learned that I was awarded a coveted Life Membership in VASFAA at the Virginia Beach meeting. I had no idea about this. I was very humbled and overwhelmed that my colleagues that would recognize me in such a way. I was so sorry to miss the meeting, but, I must admit we had a great time in Spain and Portugal. Please accept my heartfelt thank you. I miss all of you terribly and I will look forward to seeing you soon.

Gail S. Catron, Ph.D.

Hello VASFAA—gee you must think you would never hear from me again after getting that beautiful award. Well, I did send a wonderful thank you to you all, however it didn't reach anyone because my computer had crashed for the third time. I've been going around with this problem for 8 months, finally they agreed to give me a new one. I am so embarrassed that it has taken this long to get this message to you good folks. Here it is:

I was never so awe struck and surprised as when you bestowed upon me the honor of the Distinguished Service Award and life time membership. I always admired those who won it, and never thought of myself in that category. When Jeanne, Vern and Beth called and told me and read it to me, the tears flowed. I could not believe it. As I always told Sherry Ward, 'I was just doing my job.' And you all made it so easy for me to do.

I thank you all for the wonderful friendships, the times we spent together, working, playing and 'eating'. I will never forget VASFAA and being a Board member and serving you great folks. Do not hesitate to call on me if there is anything I can do for the association. I hated that I could not come to the conference to receive the award in person, but I had my grandson's confirmation and I was his sponsor, (another great honor), and so I couldn't get back in time if I had come out to the beach.

Again, thanks for the memories and keep up the great work, VASFAA is an organization to be proud of and I am proud to have been a small part of it.

JoAnn Carreras

I want to thank everyone who was involved in selecting me for this award, but also to all of the wonderful people that have encouraged me and worked with me through my few years with VASFAA. I've certainly enjoyed getting involved with VASFAA. I feel like I'm probably the poster child for getting involved, without being visible. I've never been one that loved the spotlight, so Brad's assignment for me to the Electronic Services Committee turned out to be perfect. Thank you again to all of you that have made VASFAA so great for me in such a short period of time.

Daniel Hewitt

Special Report Update

Submitted by: **Submitted by Brad Barnett, VASFAA Past President,**
barnetbd@jmu.edu

for Greg Martin, Training Officer, Region III, US Department of Education

Federal Update Correction (R2T4)

I am posting this on behalf of Greg Martin in response to the federal update he provided at the VASFAA conference last month. The text below is from Greg.

During the federal update at this year's VASFAA conference, I was asked about the new HERA provision requiring that a student for whom a post-withdrawal disbursement of loan funds is due be contacted prior to the making of that post-withdrawal disbursement in order that loan obligations may be explained and confirmation that loan funds are still wanted by the student obtained.

In response, I incorrectly stated that it did not appear as if schools would not be required to document the borrower's response. As of July 1, 2006, schools are not only required to contact the borrower but also to document that contact and the final outcome wherein the borrower either confirms that he or she still wants the loan funds.

I apologize for any confusion my remarks may have caused.

Submit articles to
Gary Spoales,
Newsletter Editor

Summary of Changes

2007-2008 Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA)

Submitted by: Glenn Shumpert, SCASFAA

- **Colors** – The 2007-2008 FAFSA colors are yellow for student information and purple for parent information.
- **Year References** – All year references have been incremented by one year.
- **Design** – The design and layout of the FAFSA have changed. The application pages are numbered one through four. Notes pages are numbered six through ten, and the “Tips” information formerly on a separate insert page is incorporated as the back page of a booklet. The application form and return envelope are placed inside the booklet.
- **Data Elements deleted** – Four data elements were deleted to allow the addition of three new questions required by the Higher Education Reconciliation Act of 2005 (HERA). Deleted are 2006-2007 questions 27 and 28, asking if the student is interested in loans or work-study; and two college and housing choices (2006-2007 questions 94-97).
- **Data Elements added per the HERA** – A new dependency question 59 allows a student serving on active duty in the U.S. Armed Forces for purposes other than training to be considered independent. Two questions (five separate elements, questions 31-35 and 75-79) for students and for parents, ask whether they received benefits from any of five federal means-tested benefit programs in 2006. A student/parent who receives such a benefit and has an income at a certain level may qualify for a simplified EFC calculation or an automatic zero EFC calculation.

Application Pages

Page 1

- **Question 25** – We moved 2006-2007 question 98 regarding the student’s expected enrollment status to become new question 25, for space and formatting reasons and for a more logical flow of questions.
- **Question 30** – We revised question 30 asking whether a student had a conviction for possessing or selling illegal drugs to reflect changes made by the HERA. Convictions are to be counted only for offenses that occurred during a period of enrollment for which the student was receiving federal student aid (grants, loans and work-study).

Page 2

- **Questions 31-35** – We added new questions asking students whether they received benefits from five federal means-tested benefits programs at any time during 2006, reflecting new provisions in the HERA.
- **Question 49** – We revised the second sentence to read “For a family farm or family business, see Notes page 7,” referring students to new instructions regarding reporting the value of a small business to reflect changes made by the HERA.

Page 3

- **Question 59** – We added a new question allowing students serving on active duty in the U.S. Armed Forces for purposes other than training to be considered independent for purposes of applying for federal student aid.
- **Questions 75-79** – We added new questions asking whether the student’s parents received benefits from five federal means-tested benefit programs at any time during 2006, reflecting new provisions in the HERA.

Page 4

- **Question 93** – We revised the second sentence to read, “For a family farm or family business, see Notes page 7,” referring to new instructions regarding reporting the value of parents’ small business to reflect changes made by the HERA.
- We deleted 2006-2007 questions 94 through 97 to allow space for the addition of new questions.

Notes Pages

Page 5

- We moved instructions and abbreviations for states that did not have specific deadlines to the top of the page.
- We deleted the phrase “File Online and File On Time” for space considerations, and because this information is already provided in the left-hand column.

Page 6

- **Notes for questions 31-35** – We added new instructions for dependent and independent students about answering new questions about receipt of benefits from five federal means-tested benefit programs, as provided in the HERA.

Page 7

- **Notes for questions 47-49 and 91-93** – We added instructions specifically for questions 48 and 92 regarding net worth of investments, to clarify that the value of education savings accounts and prepaid tuition plans should be reported as an asset of the parent and not of a dependent student, reflecting changes made in the HERA.
- We added instructions specifically for questions 49 and 93 about reporting the net worth of a family’s business and/or investment farm. The HERA excludes the value of a small business that the family owns and controls and that has 100 or fewer full-time or full-time equivalent employees.

Page 8

- **Notes for question 71 and 95** – We split the instructions for reporting the number in the family who are attending college into two separate instructions, one for the parents’ household and one for the independent student’s household.
- **Notes for questions 75-79** – We added new instructions for the parents of dependent students regarding how to answer new questions (reflecting HERA provisions) on whether they received benefits from five federal means-tested benefit programs.

Page 10

- We incorporated the most critical information from the former FAFSA insert into a single page “What is the FAFSA?”
- We added information reminding students how they could add more colleges to receive their FAFSA information by calling the Federal Student Aid Information Center.

AGENCY: Department of Education

SUMMARY: The Secretary of Education requests comments on the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) that the Secretary proposes to use for the 2007-2008 award year. The FAFSA is completed by students and their families and the information submitted on the form is used to determine the students' eligibility and financial need for financial aid under the student financial assistance programs authorized under Title IV of the Higher Education Act of 1965, as amended (Title IV, HEA Programs). The Secretary also requests comments on changes under consideration for the 2007-2008 award year FAFSA.

DATES: Interested persons are invited to submit comments on or before July 31, 2006.
Note: Date is unconfirmed but based on issuance date of memo – check with DOE.

ADDRESSES: Comments may be submitted electronically through e-mail to FAFSAComments@ed.gov.

Written comments and requests for copies of the proposed information collection requests should be addressed to Kathy Axt, Department of Education, 400 Maryland Avenue, SW., Potomac Center, 9th Floor, Washington, DC 20202-4700.

In addition, interested persons can access this document on the Internet:

1. Go to IFAP at <http://ifap.ed.gov>.
2. Scroll down to "Current Publications".
3. Click on "FAFSAs and Renewal FAFSAs".
4. Click on "By 2007-2008 Award Year".
5. Click on "Draft FAFSA Form/Instructions".
6. Scroll down and select "2007-2008 Draft Form in PDF Format".

Please note that the free Adobe Acrobat Reader software, version 4.0 or greater, is necessary to view this file. This software can be downloaded for free from Adobe's website – www.adobe.com.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION: Section 483 of the Higher Education Act of 1965, as amended (HEA), requires the Secretary, "in cooperation with agencies and organizations involved in providing student financial assistance," to "produce, distribute and process free of charge a common financial reporting form to be used to determine the need and eligibility of a student for financial assistance..." under the Title IV, HEA Programs. This form is the FAFSA. In addition, Section 483 authorizes the Secretary to include non-financial data items that assist States in awarding State student financial assistance. On February 8, 2006, President Bush signed the Higher Education Reconciliation Act of 2005 (HERA), Pub. L. 109-171. The HERA made changes to the HEA that affect student eligibility and need analysis. The HERA changes impact the FAFSA in the following ways: 1) New questions are added for a student (and spouse) or a student and parents asking whether they received benefits from any of five means-tested Federal benefit programs in 2006. Receipt of means-tested Federal benefits during the preceding calendar year (2006 for the 2007-2008 award year) is an alternative to the current question about whether the student or parent filed or was required to file an IRS 1040 Form as one of the criteria used to determine who qualifies for an automatic zero EFC or a simplified needs test. 2) A new dependency question is added to ensure that a member of the U.S. Armed Forces on active duty for other than training purposes is considered an independent student. 3) The question regarding a student's convictions for drug-related offenses has been modified. A student is ineligible for Title IV, HEA financial assistance only if the conviction for a Federal or State offense involving the possession or sale of a controlled substance is for conduct that occurred during a period of enrollment for which the student was receiving Title IV, HEA financial assistance. The ineligibility period is provided in the HEA. 4) New instructions have been added to clarify that Coverdell savings accounts, 529 college savings plans, and the refund value of 529 or State prepaid tuition plans should be reported as an asset of the account owner (unless the owner is a dependent student). 5) In addition, the FAFSA instructs applicants to exclude the value of a small business that the family owns and

controls and that has 100 or fewer full-time or full-time equivalent employees.

The following data elements have been deleted from the FAFSA because of space constraints on the paper form: questions 27 and 28 regarding the student's interest in student loans or work-study and questions 94-97 representing a fifth and sixth college choice. Question numbers refer to the 2006-2007 FAFSA.

The Secretary requests comments on these proposed changes to wording, as well as suggestions for ways to further simplify the application for students, parents, and schools. In particular, the Secretary is interested in comments regarding the best manner in which to construct a simplified form for applicants who qualify for an automatic zero or simplified needs test EFC calculation, including applicants who now qualify based on receipt of benefits from a Federal means-tested benefit program. The Secretary is publishing this request for comment under the provisions of the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, 44 U.S. C. 3501 et seq. Under that Act, ED must obtain the review and approval of the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) before it may use a form to collect information. However, under procedure for obtaining approval from OMB, ED must first obtain public comment of the proposed form, and to obtain that comment, ED must publish this notice in the Federal Register. In addition to comments requested above, to accommodate the requirements of the Paperwork Reduction Act, the Secretary is interested in receiving comments with regard to the following matters: (1) is this collection necessary to the proper functions of the Department, (2) will this information be processed and used in a timely manner, (3) is the estimate of burden accurate, (4) how might the Department enhance the quality, utility, and clarity of the information to be collected, and (5) how might the Department minimize the burden of this collection on the respondents, including through the use of information technology.

Angela C. Arrington, IC Clearance Official, Regulatory Information Management Services, Office of Management

[Previous Article](#) | [Table of Contents](#) | [Next Article](#)

▶The First Word
▶Committee Updates
People and Places
Reflections
Did You Know?
Interesting Stuff
FinAid Shell Game
Planning Your Life
▶Special Features
▶Support Group

Submit articles to
Gary Spoales,
Newsletter Editor

Survival Knowledge From... The Financial Aid Shell Game

Submitted by: Submitted by Pat Rambo, ACCESS College Foundation

ACCESS College Foundation has openings for full-time advisors for the 2006-2007 academic year.

ACCESS advisors work in the local school systems of South Hampton Roads helping students go to college. Inquiries as well as resumes with cover letters should be sent to prambo@accesscollege.org.

[Previous Article](#) | [Table of Contents](#) | [Next Article](#)

Survival Knowledge About...

What You Already Know Can Help You Streamline Your Loan Processing

Submitted by: **Gretchen Bonfardine, Wellness Services Consultant**
American Student Assistance

Background

As you might know, I spent many years in Financial Aid Offices before moving to the “other” side. While in the Financial Aid Office, my primary responsibility was loans – for the first few years at the undergraduate level, and then my final five years were at a law school. As you can imagine, after 8-9 years of working with student loans from the school perspective, I felt like I had a pretty good handle on the way loans worked. I understood the functions of the lender, the guarantor and the servicer. I had helped to create an automated process that worked beautifully at my school. I could compare loan terms pretty well and felt that I was recommending loans that were the best value for my students. I knew that for the lenders on my preferred lender list, loans for lender X were sent to the lender, while loans for lender Y were sent to the guarantor, and loans for lender Z were sent to the servicer – but I never knew WHY! I just figured that this was the way it had to be... Little Did I Know!!

Once I moved on to the “other” side (first a software company, then to a guarantee agency), I began hearing terms such as “lender flow”, “guarantor flow”, and “full service” being used as if they were common everyday words. I knew they must have to do with loans, but I had no idea what they meant. This is when I began to realize that I may not know as much about the loan process as I had thought! Well... kind of... Let me explain.

What I’ve come to find out is that I did actually ‘know’ what these terms meant, I just didn’t “KNOW” what they meant. I had a general understanding of the processes because I actually used them everyday in the Financial Aid Office, I just didn’t realize that there was a name for these processes and that there was actually a method behind all of the madness. Once I figured it all out, I realized that I would have done things much differently had I known then what I know now. I hope this article will help some of you to better understand why you are doing some of the things that you are doing, and that it gives you insight into ways that you could potentially streamline your loan processing.

Definitions

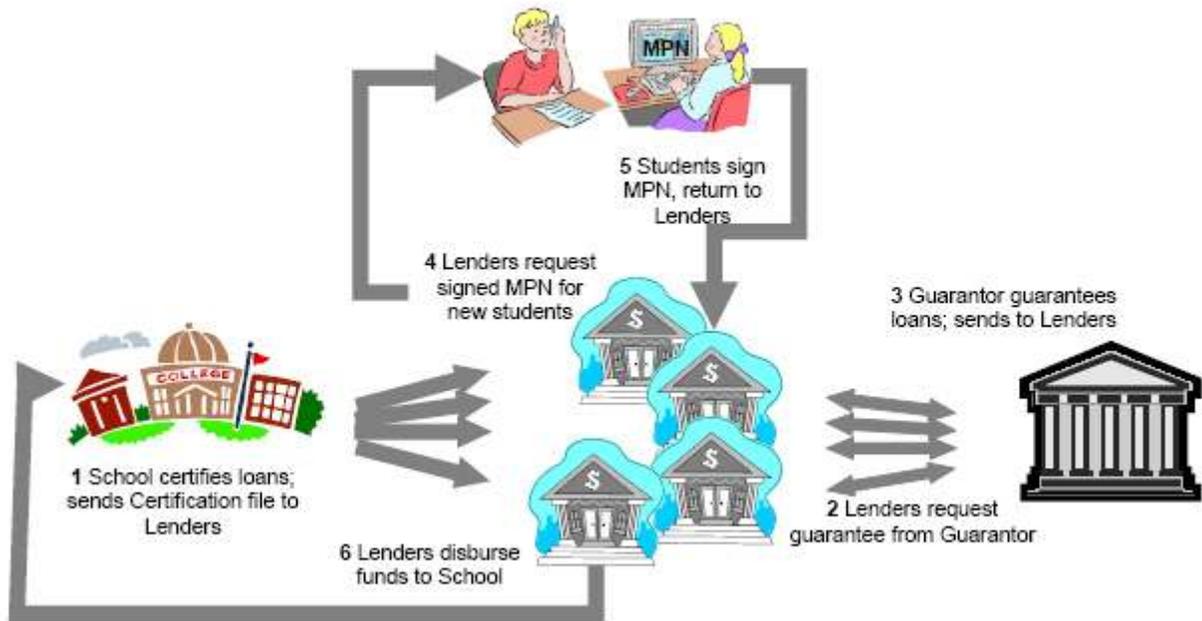
Lender – A national or state chartered bank, mutual savings bank, savings and loan association, stock savings bank, or credit union. They provide the loan funds.

Guarantor – A state or private nonprofit organization that has an agreement with the U.S. Secretary of Education to administer a loan guarantee program under the Higher Education Act. They basically insure the loans.

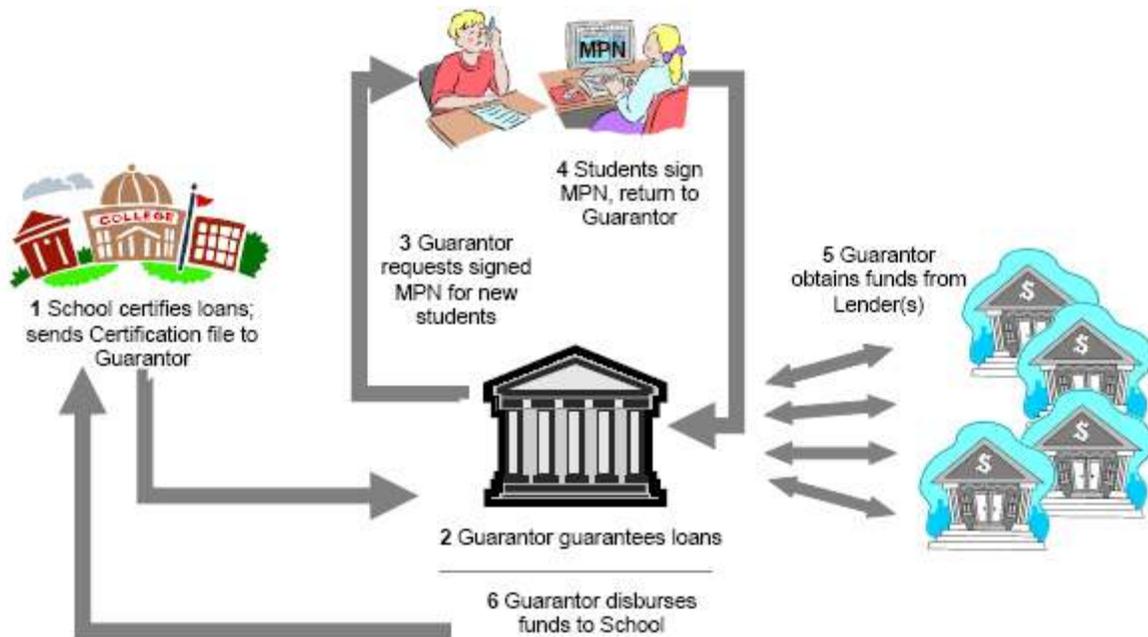
Servicer – An entity that enters into a contract with a program participant to administer any aspect of its participation in a Title IV program.

Process Flow – The process by which a loan goes from certification to disbursement; the path a loan follows from beginning to end.

Lender Flow – Loan data is first sent to the lender. The lender will obtain/confirm a valid mpn is on file, obtain a guarantee from the guarantor, and will disburse the funds to the school.



Guarantor Flow - Loan data is first sent to the guarantor. The guarantor will obtain / confirm a valid MPN is on file and guarantee the loans and disburse the funds to the school, obtaining those funds from the lender(s).



Servicer Flow – Loan data is first sent to the servicer. The servicer will obtain/confirm a valid mpn, obtain the guarantee from the guarantor, obtain the funds from the lender, and disburse the funds to the school.

Full Service – You are considered to be 'full service' with whichever entity is obtaining the MPN, school certification, and disbursing funds. So, referring to the flows above, if you are using the 'guarantor flow', then you are 'full service' with the guarantee agency.

Lender Code – Identifies who the players are (lender, guarantor, servicer) and the agreed upon flow.

Discussion

After reviewing these flows, think about how you currently process. Are you using one or more of these flows? Know that many of your partners can accommodate each of these processes. They may prefer

one over the other, but most can do all. So, think about why you process the way you do. Is it because “that’s the way it’s always been done”, or “that’s how they told me to do it”? If so, know that it doesn’t necessarily have to be this way. You can decide which process works best in your office and make changes accordingly. Work with your partners to create the process that works best for your school. Always keep in mind though, that some of your smaller partners may not be able to accommodate every possible process. If they can’t do your preferred process, you’ll need to make the decision as to whether you are willing to keep that partnership and process differently with them, or whether the streamlined process is more important to you. You, the school, are the only one who can make this decision.

Conclusion

The above information is very basic. Many additional options in loan processing can complicate things. Features such as ‘borrower initiated’ and ‘school initiated’ flows; e-sign vs. wet signature; your financial aid management system (i.e. Powerfaids, PeopleSoft, etc.); your loan processing system (i.e. ELM, OpenNet, ScholarNet, etc.) all create added layers of complexity to loan processing. It is important to understand the basics (provided in this article) first. Once you’re comfortable with the basics, it will make it much easier for you to determine a process that works best for your school.

[Previous Article](#) | [Table of Contents](#) | [Next Article](#)

▶The First Word
▶Committee Updates
People and Places
Reflections
Did You Know?
Interesting Stuff
FinAid Shell Game
Planning Your Life
▶Special Features
▶Support Group

Submit articles to
Gary Spoales,
Newsletter Editor

Survival Knowledge About... A Conference Perspective

For this issue, we asked for your comments on the conference this past May. I never realized how shy our members were. We received one feedback notice and it is exactly what we were asking. Congratulations, Wendy.

"I just wanted to share my thoughts on the conference. I am a new member and wanted to say how much I enjoyed myself in Virginia Beach. I was greeted warmly by all. The new member breakfast and reception were great. I am a little scared though since I was informed that my mentor is Brad Barnett. I hope I will be able to "survive" that. Thanks to everyone who helped at the conference and what a great group of people to be a part of." – Wendy Meehan, Assistant Counselor, University Scholarships & Financial Aid, Virginia Tech

[Previous Article](#) | [Table of Contents](#) | [Next Article](#)

Survival Knowledge About... Another Conference Perspective

Submitted by: **Liza Bruce, 2005-06 VASFAA Diversity Committee Chair**

VASFAA Conference Attendees Make Diversity Initiatives a Success

The 2005-06 VASFAA Diversity Committee wanted to challenge the VASFAA membership to think outside the box and to give them an opportunity to experience some of the many facets of Diversity. At the recent conference in Virginia Beach, VASFAA members were invited to attend a Leadership Symposium presented by Dr. Zeb Davenport. The symposium was full of good information and it was also energizing and fun. Zeb kept the group interested and involved, and he shared with us some great ideas about both Leadership and about Diversity.

Throughout the conference, VASFAA members were given the opportunity to experience what it might be like to have a disability. Through the "Walk A Mile In My Shoes" experience, conference attendees could check out and use various types of equipment that would enable them to simulate having a disability. Through the use of wheelchairs, crutches, a variety of walkers, vision distortion glasses, blindfolds, canes and ear plugs, members could experience mobility, vision and hearing impairments.

This initiative was a huge success with numerous VASFAA members participating. One VASFAA member who experienced a mobility disability stated "Just getting around in general was difficult." Another person said they were "Very tired—just in the first few minutes of walking." Yet another person who simulated a mobility impairment said, "My opinion has always been that people with disabilities are very driven and I have great respect for them all—but now I know first-hand how challenging it is to have a disability." Furthermore, another person discovered that participating in this experience "has helped me to see that I need to slow down sometimes and pay attention to those who may not be able to move out of my way."

Some VASFAA members found that the meeting rooms were not set up to handle the needs of people with disabilities. One member stated, "I realized life could be much harder at times when others are not thinking about those with disabilities. This experience helped me to better understand the general needs of the disabled."

One member said they had "difficulty maneuvering between people and chairs without falling. I was tired and frustrated and I had to rely on others. I will be much more considerate." And yet another member stated, "I will try to be more sensitive to others' physical needs."

While one person said, "I felt excluded," the positive result of that feeling is the determination that "I will be more inclusive."

One of our members who experienced a vision disability stated, "While I would hope that I am sensitive to the needs of people with disabilities, I have a much deeper appreciation for people who have visual problems." Someone else stated, "It's now easier for me to understand the situation and be more tolerant of others." And after the experience, yet another member said, "I will be more empathetic."

Finally, for those who experienced a hearing disability, one VASFAA member recognized that "I was not able to hear the ocean" and another realized that "I couldn't communicate with others."

Submit articles to
Gary Spoales,
Newsletter Editor

Someone told us that people with disabilities are “very brave” and “I have much respect and empathy” for them. One member said they were worried when walking in the parking garage because they could not hear cars coming and they had to be very careful. This person said, “I was annoyed and fearful at times in the parking garage. I have heightened sensitivity to needs and possible danger and potential for harm.”

The Diversity Committee is very appreciative of each and every person who was willing to “Walk A Mile”. Although it was a scary thing to have to try to maneuver in a large crowd with these newfound disabilities, our committee believed that members would learn a lot from experiencing a disability, and the comments from VASFAA members attested to that.

Additionally, we hope that members became aware of communication options for people who are deaf and hard of hearing through being able to watch the Interpreters at the general sessions. Harvey Alston impacted us all with his words of wisdom at the general session sponsored by the Diversity Committee on Tuesday morning. And we hope the Financial Aid Survivor teams were able to learn about ways of accommodating and working with people with disabilities through the Diversity Factor in the Tuesday afternoon team building event.

Special thanks go to Gail Baker, Sarah Brown, Hope Jackson, Lisa Jackson and Michael Morgan for their tireless efforts in making these initiatives such a success!

[Previous Article](#) | [Table of Contents](#) | [Next Article](#)

Survival Knowledge About...

“How We Got Here, Why We Stay. What Role Did VASFAA Play?”

Submitted by: Hope Jackson, ECMC

Financial Aid Survivors

Greetings VASFAA members!

Your 2005-06 Public Relations Committee is pleased to present our next group of stories in the series, “How We Got Here, Why We Stay. What Role Did VASFAA Play?”

The Public Relations Committee is very interested in hearing from others in our membership as well. Please share with us the ‘how’ you came to choose financial aid as your vocation, the ‘why’ you continue to devote your time, energy and talent to the field and the role your involvement in VASFAA played to help you reach your professional goals. Sharing your personal success story will motivate others to become more active in our organization as well as show how vital VASFAA can be in one’s professional development. To help you write your story here are some questions for you to answer:

1. How long have you been in Financial Aid?
2. How did you get started in Financial Aid?
3. What has kept you in the profession?
4. What do you enjoy about your work?
5. What are your hobbies outside of Financial Aid?
6. What role has VASFAA played in your career?

Please mail your story to either Jeanne Holmes at Jeanne.Holmes@SunTrust.com or Pam Rambo at prambo@acesscollege.org or Hope Jackson at hjackson@ecmc.org.

Thanks and hope to hear from you soon!

-
- **Erik Melis**
 - **Margaret Murphy**
 - **Vern Fairchilds**
 - **Joe Barden**
 - **Mary Neal**
 - **Linda Woodley**
 - **Annette Howard-Jones**
 - **Brad Barnett**
-

Survivor #5 Erik Melis – Associate Director of Student Financial Aid, George Mason University

After a very fulfilling 14 years in the U.S. Navy where I got to travel the world, receive some high

Submit articles to
Gary Spoales,
Newsletter Editor

quality vocational training, and most of all, where I met my wife of now 18 years, I decided that it was time to dust off the old 'college education ambitions' and, as Larry the Cable Guy would say, 'Git er done'.

Going back to school full-time when you're looking at being a 33-year old freshman and having to retake the SATs as an adult can be a little intimidating. Trying to figure out how you're going to give up a decent salary and go to school full-time with no job can be downright petrifying. That's where my exposure to financial aid begins.

When I started at George Mason University, pursuing my degree in Physics (yes, I know it sounds strange that someone who would ultimately end up in financial aid would have a background in Physics but, trust me, it helps make the regulations make sense), I received part of my college financing through the Vietnam Era GI Bill. The Veteran's Affairs Office at Mason was, at the time, part of the Financial Aid Office. Not only did they help me get my paperwork in order so that I could start receiving my GI Bill benefits, they also helped me complete the application for financial aid and even offered me a Veteran's Work Study position. While working with the Veteran's Office, I got some great exposure to the nuts and bolts of the financial aid process...important pieces like filing, envelope stuffing, and answering the phones. It wasn't long though before I came to realization that the regular work study students were getting paid significantly more than I was so I got myself switched over to a regular work study job in the Financial Aid Office. Over the 4 years that I did work study, I got to work closely with a lot of folks you all might know: Rita Bodie, Gary Spoales, Jennifer Douglas, etc... These wonderful folks afforded me the opportunity to get more and more involved with the actual financial aid process to the degree that, by the time I got ready to graduate, I was doing loan certifications and working directly with students and parents on student loan issues. I got a true sense for how the aid office helps students achieve their education goals. It was difficult for me to leave the aid office when I graduated, but luckily a full-time position as a Financial Aid Counselor opened up not long after and I jumped at the chance. I was thrilled when they actually hired me back as a full-time staff member and started me on my official career in financial aid.

Right after I started my role as a counselor, Jennifer, my boss at that time, told me that she was taking me to a VASFAA conference. I was excited and nervous about that prospect; excited because it was something new, and nervous because I was going to be around financial aid folks that had a LOT more experience than I did, and was worried that I just wouldn't fit in. Needless to say, my fears were totally unfounded. When I attended that first conference in Roanoke (the 25th anniversary conference), I felt immediately welcome and at home. Lots of folks came up to me, introduced themselves, introduced me to others and offered themselves as resources to me should I ever need any help or had any questions about VASFAA. Of course, little did I know that they were also going to ask me right away to get involved with the association by volunteering for committee work. Since I knew that Jennifer placed great importance on being involved, I think I said 'yes' initially more out of a sense of duty than a desire to get involved, but that perspective changed VERY quickly. I saw the benefits of involvement right away—networking, professional development, leadership development, exposure for my institution, contributing to the success of the association, and among others things, FUN. The first committee that I served on was Public Relations. I knew nothing about Public Relations but that's one of the great things about involvement in VASFAA committee work—any skills you have can be put to use working with the committees and you get to learn a whole new set of skills in return. It wasn't long before I was hooked. I went from serving on Public Relations to working with other committees in the association like Training, Electronic Services, etc. It was while working with Electronic Services that I had the opportunity to co-chair which began my leadership path in VASFAA. From that co-chair position, I went on to chair Electronic Services for several years during which time I got working closely with the other committees and the Board. From there I went on to serve as Rep-at-Large and now am on the doorstep of my year as President of VASFAA.

The association and all the wonderful people in it have provided me a venue to utilize and develop my skills and to facilitate my desire to help students, my institution, and VASFAA, and in return have helped me to grow, personally and professionally. Work with VASFAA has also led to my involvement with SASFAA and NASFAA and has led even to talking directly with legislators about the association and student aid. I've made a lot of lifelong friends and have had a lot of fun and look forward to being part of VASFAA for a LONG time to come.

Survivor #6 Margaret Murphy – Director of Financial Aid, Southern Virginia University

Wow! How did I get started in Financial Aid? I was introduced to financial aid through filing for my daughter. In March, 1992, I met with Sarah Talbot at Mary Baldwin College before I completed the FAF (how our acronyms have changed). She managed to relieve my anxiety and helped me through the application process. My life changed in August, 1992. My daughter entered Mary Baldwin College's Program for Exceptionally Gifted at the ripe old age of 14, and my 20-year marriage ended. In picking up the pieces, my daughter and sister urged me to relocate to Staunton. I applied for a legal assistant position (my former life's work) and an administrative assistant position in the financial aid office at MBC. Well, we know which one I took.

My first day on the job, October 19, 1992, was a lonely one. No one else was there—they were all at VASFAA! Over that first year, I enjoyed the work and helping families. I attended the spring VASFAA and the June SASFAA New Aid Officers' Workshop at Agnes Scott College. I learned before long that I had found a new calling – do any of us ever say at 3 that we want to grow up to be an aid administrator?

Over the past 14 years (and my, how they have flown), I have learned that the only sure thing about financial aid is change! If you can't handle change, you are in the wrong profession. I have learned that there are times you will be working long hours (we're not in this profession for the money). I have also learned that throughout the changes from reauthorization, reorganization and reevaluation of self, VASFAA has been an ever present rudder for my course through these sometimes murky waters.

Over the years I have found the training I needed to expand my professional horizons. And just as important, I have found friends that I can call on for support. Sometimes that support is only once a year now when we gather at conference. But the other lesson I have learned is that VASFAA is a caring organization. Whether through our mission of delivering aid to students and helping them achieve their educational dreams, or caring for each other through our own personal trials and tribulations, the members of VASFAA are there to offer their support to each other.

For the past three years I have been serving as the Director of Financial Aid at Southern Virginia University, and I still love what I do. What do I love about this job? I love the times students have stopped to hug me and say "thanks," that I made a difference in their lives. I save every little thank-you so that when I am feeling tired or discouraged I can pull them out to read again. I love to cheer at graduation for those same students (okay, and sometimes those I'm glad to see leave). And, let's face it—what we do helps our institutions survive and keep the doors open for all students.

What do I do outside of financial aid? I enjoy home improvement projects, ballroom dancing, puttering in the yard, and oil painting (mainly landscapes). Currently, I am working to complete a quilt that my daughter's great-grandmother pieced in the 1930s. I also enjoy spending time with my daughter. It is hard to believe she's having her tenth reunion at MBC this year!

Survivor #7 Vern Fairchilds – Director of Financial Aid, Bridgewater College

Contrary to what Mike Hawkes, Sherrye Ward, Randy Craig, Mary Neal, Jeanne Holmes or Lisa Tumer might tell you, I was not invited to the White House by President Lyndon Johnson for the signing of the Higher Education Act of 1965. I was a needy student at Bridgewater College with a National Defense Loan in my financial aid package. I mention this to set the record straight before sharing my story for the series "How We Got Here, Why We Stay and What Role Did VASFAA Play?"

I first heard of VASFAA from my colleague Mrs. Alice Wages, Director of Financial Aid when I was Director of Admissions for Bridgewater College. She shared many stories about VASFAA and her friendships with Sue Ross, Ellen Holtz, Priscilla Light, Buddy Johnston and Jim Humphries. In June of 1978, Alice had a stroke and I was asked to be director of both admissions and financial

aid until Alice could return. Unfortunately, she did not regain her health and I became Director of Financial Aid on July 1, 1979 and left my career in admissions.

I do remember the excitement of the Middle Income Student Assistance Act of 1978, better known as the acronym MISSA. It was the first of many that have become part of my vocabulary. The Basic Educational Opportunity Grant (BEOG) later became the Pell Grant. The Guaranteed Student Loan (GSL) has become the Federal Stafford Loan (FSL). Financial aid will always have its own language.

From day one as a VASFAA member, I sensed the same feeling of family that Alice had shared with me. Unlike admissions where competition for students is ever present, I have always felt that VASFAA operated in a unique environment where our ultimate concern has been to assist the student and parents realize the dream of education beyond secondary school. Our budgets for cost and attendance continue upward while our resources have fallen behind and it becomes increasingly more difficult to provide choice along with access. Yet, we continue to find ways to make educational dreams a reality.

While organizations such as NASFAA and SASFAA are larger harbors, VASFAA is and will always be a safe harbor and my port of call. I have always been able to ask questions and get answers from the membership regardless of sector designation as public, private or private for profit. Our strength and ability to survive is found in our membership. While I have received the honor of being designated as a life member, all of VASFAA will be part of my family for life.

I have been fortunate to survive the past 28 years for many different reasons. First and foremost has been Ms. Cindy Garletts, Associate Director of Financial Aid, who has been my right hand for the past 23 years. For all of us who have the title of Director, it has been and will continue to be imperative to have a Cindy on your staff. While there are days that I wonder why I am in financial aid, I see my job as having potential for good in the lives of others.

As a biology major who continues to be intrigued by the evolution of man, I see some parallels for financial aid. There are certain basic instincts for survival, and I consider VASFAA as my food and shelter. Technology is comparable to clothing. I have survived fashions from carbon paper to ink jet printers, ledgers to excel spreadsheets, and first class letters to e-mail. The next round of legislative amendments to the Higher Education Act will bring new changes and challenges for survival. I will continue to count upon my VASFAA friendships, sense of humor, enjoyment of music and dancing, fondness for vegetable and flower gardens and love for my family, which now has me as the oldest of three generations of Fairchilds, to guide me in the future as they have in the past.

Survivor #8 Joe Barden – Account Executive, Sallie Mae

I have been in financial aid since 1985. After working for 6 years on a Title III grant for enrollment services at Florida A&M University, I officially started my career in financial aid as an assistant director with the State Council of Higher Education for Virginia (SCHEV). Despite some of the political challenges, I have stayed with this profession because it has afforded me the ability to be a servant leader for those who are most in need of access to a post-secondary education. As a result, I most enjoy identifying opportunities that provide students with the means to enhance their lives. VASFAA has enabled me to work with professionals across sectors in a variety of roles to support student access. These relationships have contributed to advancements in my career. When I am away from the financial aid scene, I prefer bicycling, jogging and reading books by Walter Mosely.

Survivor #9 Mary Neal – Director of Financial Aid, Randolph- Macon College

I have worked full-time in financial aid administration for 32 years (I know I don't look it, but I have!). I got my start as a federal work-study student at The Catholic University of America in

Washington, D.C. After graduation, I was not sure what to do and took a job as a secretary at CUA working for the Director of Scholarships. A year later when the director decided to go to law school, she recommended me for the job. Since that time I worked as Coordinator of Financial Aid at George Mason University, and have held my current position as Director of Financial Aid at Randolph-Macon College. I am pleasantly surprised that I have stayed in this profession so long, but having the opportunity to work with families who otherwise would not be able to attend college is a blessing and very satisfying. It's an opportunity to give back because I was afforded the same opportunity to complete my education – too many years ago – with the help of the aid administrators and generous donors who did not mind in the least shaking loose some funds for me. I enjoy most finding lost dollars for that student whose family cannot locate another penny to pay the tuition bill and hearing the joy in their voice when you tell them that an unpaid balance will not keep them from graduating. It is these students who make it worthwhile and silences the voices of all the families who want more and give you a hard time even though they have the resources to pay. Although I am not currently active in VASFAA, I have done my duty having served as President, conference chair, presenter, moderator, newsletter editor, state relations, etc. Through my involvement with VASFAA, I was afforded the opportunities to meet many new people in Virginia as well as the southern region, and developed many skills that I use in my position today. Financial Aid for private colleges has gotten to be so much more complex, time-consuming, and in many ways frustrating – so I have not had the time to continue my VASFAA involvement at the level before. On the other hand, I do believe in sharing the wealth and have no problems stepping aside to allow others the chance to step into leadership roles.

Outside of financial aid, I enjoy my family, reading (almost anything, except horror books), church activities, and keeping track of Tiger.

Survivor #10 Linda Woodley – Coordinator for Private & Out-of-State Postsecondary Education, State Council of Higher Education for Virginia

My life in financial aid started on July 11, 1985 when I was hired as the Financial Aid Assistant at Kee Business College in Richmond. This was my first job out of college and I was excited about the possibilities. In a few short months, I was promoted to Financial Aid Director.

I left Kee in May, 1986 to accept a supervisory position at the Virginia Education Loan Authority (VELA). Over the years, I held several positions at VELA, including Customer Service Supervisor, Collections Supervisor, Credit Supervisor, Records Management Supervisor and finally Quality Assurance Reviewer. After the merger of VELA and the State Education Assistance Authority (SEAA), I was promoted to Compliance Specialist, a position I held until August, 2004. During that time, VELA closed, and SEAA was absorbed by the Educational Credit Management Corporation (ECMC). (We love our alphabet soup—more to come!).

I became a member of VASFAA while working for SEAA, although I cannot remember the exact year. I do remember working the phone lines, then called Crestar, during Financial Aid Awareness month. The first committee I joined was the Diversity Committee under Marcia Boyd and Tim Freeman. They were the first persons I met at VASFAA and they have continued to be role models for me. Others whose devotion to VASFAA that have influenced me to continue to be active in the organization include Jeanne Holmes, Randy Craig, Brad Barnett and Estherine Harding.

My experience in financial aid has taken me from a school, to a lender, to a guarantor. Now I work for the State Council of Higher Education for Virginia (SCHEV), which is the coordinating body for higher education in the Commonwealth of Virginia. Since coming to SCHEV in August, 2004, I have moved from Certification Manager to Coordinator for Private and Out-of-State Postsecondary Education (POPE). POPE is responsible for the certification of certain private and out-of-state postsecondary schools operating in Virginia, which includes over 300 for-profit, non-profit, diploma-, certificate- and degree-granting schools.

Although I am no longer directly involved in financial aid, SCHEV has allowed me to continue participating with VASFAA. For the 2004/05 year, I served as the Awareness Committee chairperson and successfully hosted 12 Super Saturday locations. It was a blast to see that 12

expand to 26 locations this year. As this activity receives more state recognition, I am sure it will grow to the point we have a Super Saturday site in every major city and county in Virginia. That's my vision at least!!

Through all of my positions, I have remained committed to access to postsecondary education for everyone. Currently, I am active in the development of the Commonwealth College Access Network (CCAN – another acronym), a statewide college access network that will strive to eliminate some of the barriers to higher education faced by the citizens of the Commonwealth of Virginia. CCAN was created from the Awareness Summit hosted by VASFAA, ECMC and SCHEV in the fall of 2003. We held our first annual conference in Charlottesville in December, 2005.

I have enjoyed the experiences I have had with VASFAA and believe that those experiences have helped me be a better me. In addition to telling everyone I know, and don't know, that college is possible, and here's how, I also enjoy reading, singing, organizing trips (I have a bus going to New York to see "The Color Purple" in August, seats still available) and my favorite past-time of all—SHOPPING! I reached one life goal of visiting the Mall of America in Minnesota a few years ago. It was like heaven right here on earth. Now I'm working to get Value City to open a store in Richmond, VA. Keep your fingers crossed!!!!!!

Survivor #11 Annette Howard-Jones – Director for Financial Aid, Southside Regional Medical Center, Petersburg, VA

How I got stated in financial aid.....Without thinking long at all, I would say, on a wing and a prayer.

I've been in a financial aid setting since June, 1978 (Virginia State University).....(yes, I'm that young—smile).

- I started as a Clerk Stenographer;
- Then I became the Office Secretary;
- Then I became the Production Control Technician;
- Then I became a Financial Aid Counselor/Work Study & Athletics;
- Then I became the Assistant Director of Student Services;
- Then I became the Assistant Director of Technical Services;
- Then I was called to another site, so I left;
- Then I became the Director of Financial Aid at another school;
- So, you could say that I've been all over financial aid, and loved every minute of it

I have a total of 28 years in a financial aid setting. Believe it or not, I love financial aid!!! It has afforded me the opportunity to meet many, many people—some with good attitudes and some with not so good attitudes. My philosophy is, I treat people how I want to be treated. I put myself on the other side of the table when talking to students and parents. Communication is always the key!! Listening is even more important. I listen to parents and students. I really listen. I consider myself unique in what I do because I have a compassion for helping and giving. After all, this is a helping profession. I am an advocate to people succeeding in life in all that they do. You only get one chance in life.....my philosophy, make the best of it. Take God and Take Care! If you're going to be a care-giver, then be the best care-giver you can be. If you're going to be a Secretary, then be the best Secretary that you can be. If you're going to be the Director of Financial Aid, then make yourself shine and be the best Director you can be! Nobody does it better than you.

My advice to newcomers of financial aid.....Stick with it! When you assist students and parents through this process and they walk across the stage to graduate, it's a great feeling. I know this for a fact. When one of my students graduated, his parents gave a graduation luncheon for him. Little did I know it was for him and me. I was totally surprised. They invited me to his celebration. I went, but when I got there, they had somehow invited my family—including my children, and presented me with a plaque that read....."An Ode to Annette Howard-Jones". I could do nothing but cry. It was wonderful.

My connection with VASFAA has afforded me other opportunities. I get to meet people such as you, and I love coming to VASFAA. I call it my financial aid conference/vacation. On this vacation, I learn what other schools are doing. I learned that it's ok to be frustrated—it's how you handle the frustration that will get you through. I learn that I'm not in this by myself. I learn that there are others like me. Your lenders are wonderful people—I suggest you get to know them. They know things that you think they may not. Get to know the folks at ECMC. In my opinion, I think they are awesome.

When I'm not doing financial aid, I dream about it on occasion. (Smile). Other times, I love reading novels (western, romance and highlanders). I love playing softball. I love going to church. I enjoy being with my family (even though sometimes, it seems they don't enjoy being with me—I wonder why, maybe financial aid on the brain (Smile).

I love financial aid—I could go on and on, but time won't permit with all the years I have. In this business, you've got to laugh. You can cry if you like, but when you're finished, the situation is still there, so you may as well laugh to keep from crying. Do what you've got to do, but be the best that you can be at it. There were many people who assisted me in my ladder of success, but I have two mentors who really stood out—my power of higher being...God, and Henry DeBose, Director, Financial Aid, Virginia State University. Thank you GOD and Thanks Henry!

Survivor #12 Brad Barnett – Associate Director of Financial Aid, James Madison University; President of the Virginia Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators

I have been full-time in the financial aid profession for the past 9 years, but I also worked part-time in a financial aid office as a graduate assistant for about 1½ years. I became involved as an undergraduate student at Southern Arkansas University where I was a member of a student organization called "Student Ambassadors". Part of our charge was to visit high schools and talk with students about going to college. We covered everything from student life to financial aid. There was something very appealing to me about this type of work. As a financial aid recipient myself, I felt like I had a good background for talking about this process with potential college students. When I began graduate school, I was presented with an opportunity to be a graduate assistant in the financial aid office at Virginia Commonwealth University. Of course, I immediately submitted my application and soon after I was hired. I spent about 1½ years in that office and had the chance to work for some wonderful supervisors who put a great deal of trust in me. I felt like I was being groomed to be a financial aid officer by some of the responsibilities that were given to me.

Upon graduation from graduate school, I went to work in the "real world" in a field directly related to my degree. About 2 years later, a financial aid counselor position opened at VCU and I decided to apply for it. While I enjoyed what I was doing at the time, I found that I missed working in a financial aid office on a college campus. I got the job and the rest is history.

I have often said being a financial aid officer is a little like being a guardian angel...of sorts. We are all working behind the scenes to make college affordable. We are finding new dollars, advocating for increased funding in legislative arenas, modifying our packaging philosophies to maximize the packages we can offer needy students, teaching students how to be financially responsible adults, and generally spending numerous hours processing aid in a timely fashion so students can concentrate on their studies and worry a little less about their finances. Of course, that just scratches the surface of what we do. The point is that, much like a guardian angel, we are watching out for our students, and most of the time, they don't have a clue we are doing it. It's an awesome feeling to know you have helped someone achieve their goals and dreams.

Financial aid is a strange combination of a lot of things I really enjoy doing. This profession provides me with the opportunity to teach and train, counsel students and parents, interpret regulations to create the policies and procedures necessary for processing aid in a compliant fashion, and work as part of a team. I enjoy the "puzzle" that is financial aid. It is a complex system that requires a lot of analysis to understand what can and can't be done, as well as a certain set of skills to effectively articulate that to students, parents, campus administrators, and other financial

aid professionals. I also thoroughly enjoy the people I work with. Our office at JMU is filled with fabulous individuals who have a heart for helping students and each other, which makes coming to work an enjoyable experience.

Of course, I also can't imagine being in this profession without my VASFAA friends and colleagues.

VASFAA has meant a great deal to me throughout my financial aid career. I have made friends that I will have for life. Many of these VASFAA friends are the same individuals who saw something in me early in my career and pushed me to get more involved in the association. As a result, I have learned a lot that has helped me to grow professionally, as well as personally. It is hard to imagine how anyone can be successful in financial aid without being involved in their state association. This involvement has also afforded me the opportunity to develop relationships on the regional and national level. This has helped to enhance my knowledge base, as well as given me a new set of relationships that I would have missed out on had I not been involved in the associations.

My life outside of financial aid is spent primarily with my wife and children. My oldest son is on the ski team at Massanutten in the winter and also does Kung Fu twice a week during the year. My youngest son has been playing soccer and is going to start t-ball this year. My wife and I teach a 3 & 4 year old class at church on Monday nights during the school year. Between all of those activities we have something going on almost every night during the week and both days during the weekend. However, I could not dream of having it any other way. It's an awesome life and I'm happy to say my primary hobbies outside of work revolve around family activities. However, if I have time myself, I enjoy skiing, golfing, doing projects around the house, and playing a variety of other sports.

VASFAA is one of the main reasons that I am where I am today. The relationships I built early on are what fueled me to get more involved. I was challenged by several people to do more and given the encouragement and support to do so. I feel like I have many informal mentors within the association. I can't imagine where I would be without VASFAA. I can literally trace my career to this point back through VASFAA...it's been one of the most influential reasons for my career turning out the way it has.

I look at the association and see hundreds of people dedicated to the same cause—the cause of making higher education more accessible and affordable for all. Sure, we all have our individual agendas for our schools and companies, but we can put those aside for the greater good when necessary as well. Working with many of my colleagues within VASFAA is very motivating for me. It energizes me to see people so passionate about what they do and so willing to help others in need.

- ▶The First Word
- ▶Committee Updates
- ▶People and Places
- ▶Reflections
- ▶Did You Know?
- ▶Interesting Stuff
- ▶FinAid Shell Game
- ▶Planning Your Life
- ▶Special Features
- ▶Support Group

Submit articles to
Gary Spoales,
Newsletter Editor

Calendar Guide

2006	
July 5-9	NASFAA Conference Seattle, WA
2007	
February 11-14	2007 SASFAA Conference Renaissance Hotel, Nashville, TN
2008	
February 17-20	2008 SASFAA Conference Hyatt Regency, Arlington, VA
2009	
February 7-11	2009 SASFAA Conference Myrtle Beach Convention Center

*****Materials should be sent as a Word attachment, New Times Roman font, 10 pitch, and third person.**

2005-2006 VASFAA VOICE Article, Ad, Photo Submission Windows

Issue	Submission Deadline	Publication	Focus
Fall 2006	September 10	October 1	Leadership Development
Winter 2007	December 15	January 10	Training
Spring 2007	March 20	April 10	Conference
Summer 2007	June 1	July 1	Transitions

Send all submissions to Gary Spoales, Newsletter Editor, via email @ gary.a.spoales@bankofamerica.com.

Survival Knowledge From... Association Sponsors

Submitted by: Biz Daniel, Chair

Special Thank You to our Vendors & Sponsors from Biz Daniel

I would like to thank all of our vendors and sponsors one more time for their generous contributions in supporting VASFAA.

This year's vendors and sponsors contributed at total amount of \$93,750 in support of VASFAA and all the activities and workshops that took place over the past year. Without the support of our vendors and sponsors, many of the training events that take place across the state as well as the annual conference would not be possible.

VASFAA recognized four levels of yearly sponsorship for 0506. We acknowledge the Platinum, Gold, Silver and Bronze Sponsors in each issue of the newsletter. Sponsors are identified below by category. They deserve your support in a manner reflecting their support of your efforts in VASFAA.

VASFAA Sponsorship List 2005-06

Platinum Sponsors

College Loan Corporation

Ed America

ECMC

SunTrust

Gold Sponsors

Bank of America

Nellie Mae

USA Funds

Silver Sponsors

AMS

American Student Assistance

Chase Education Finance

CFS

Citizens Bank

National Education

Submit articles to
Gary Spoales,
Newsletter Editor

NSLP	
Sallie Mae	
TG	
Wachovia	
Wells Fargo Bank	
Bronze Sponsors	
AES	
Campus Door	
Citibank	
ED Fund	
Key Bank	
Nelnet	
PNC	
Sallie Mae Education Trust	
Student Loan Express	
TERI	
Sponsors	
Access Group	
College Board	
Ed Financial	
ELM	
Great Lakes	
Next Student	
Total Sponsorship Dollars	\$89, 750

Sponsored Items by Vendor for 0506	
SunTrust	Conference Welcome Bag, Tuesday Morning Break
ECMC	Conference Program, Tuesday Afternoon Break
CLC	Name Badge Holders, Board Meeting Luncheon
Ed America	Banquet & Entertainment, President's Appreciation Reception
NSLP	President's Reception
TG	Monday's General Session Speaker & Lunch
National Education	Opening Key Note Speaker, New Member Networking Reception
Bank of America	Conference Survival Kit, Team Building Event
USA Funds	New Member Photos, VASFAA Baseball Cap
Sallie Mae	Survivor Bandana, New Member / Mentor

	Reception
Wells Fargo	New Aid Officer's Workshop Breaks / Breakfast / Lunch, Executive Board & Conference Committee Lunch
Wachovia	New Aid Officer's Training Material Workbook, Continental Breakfast on Tuesday
AMS	New Member / Executive Board Breakfast, Nomination Committee Luncheon
Sallie Mae	Tuesday's General Session Speaker, Monday's Afternoon Break
ASA	Wednesday's General Session & Breakfast, Monday's Morning Break
Citigroup	Support Staff Workshop - 1 location
Campus Door	Support Staff Workshop - 1 location
Citizens	Support Staff Workshop - 1 location, Advertising VASFAA Voice Spring Issue
CFS	Conference Meeting Room
PNC	Conference Meeting Room, Newsletter Article Incentive Winter Issue 2006
TERI	Conference Meeting Room, Newsletter Article Spring Issue
Student Loan Express	Conference Meeting Room, Newsletter Article Incentive Fall Issue 2006
Sallie Mae Trust	Conference Meeting Room, Newsletter Article Incentive Summer Issue
AES	Conference Meeting Room, Early Morning Walk at Conference

- ▶The First Word
- ▶Committee Updates
- ▶People and Places
- ▶Reflections
- ▶Did You Know?
- ▶Interesting Stuff
- ▶FinAid Shell Game
- ▶Planning Your Life
- ▶Special Features
- ▶Support Group

Track Managers

Committee Members

Gary Spoales	Bank of America	Editor
Stephanie Clements	Radford University	Feature Writer
Tanya White	Old Dominion University	"News" Detective
Holly Rison	Randolph Macon College	Feature Writer
Linda Miller	James Madison University	Special Reports
Tina Bergstrom	Old Dominion University	Special Reports
Angie Hawkins	Virginia Wesleyan	Commissioner

Submit articles to
Gary Spoales,
Newsletter Editor

Contributors

Brad Barnett	James Madison University
Tom Morehouse	Nelnet
Michael Poma	Suntrust
Biz Daniel	National Education
Donna Taylor	VA Tech
Bobby Clemmer	Bluefield CC
Vera Riddick	ODU
Pam Rambo	ACCESS
Daniel Hewitt	VA Tech
Patricia Kelly	College of William & Mary
Jolene Burke	ECMC
Ed Irish	W&M
Zita Barree	EdAmerica
Liza Bruce	ECMC
Erik Melis	George Mason U
Robin White	UVA
Gail Catron	Wythe Bland Community Fndtn
Hope Jackson	ECMC
Jo Ann Carreras	Retired
Linda Spoales	

Glenn Shumpert	SCASFAA
Gretchen Bonfardine	ASA
Wendy Meehan	VA Tech
Jeanne Holmes	SunTrust

[Previous Article](#) | [Table of Contents](#)