

VASF^{AA} VOICE

VASF^{AA} HOME

Winter 2004 2003-2004 Year, Issue II

Sherwin Hibbets, VASF^{AA} President
Gary Spoales, Editor

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A PRESIDENT'S PAUSE

On Track for "Going the Distance"!

by Sherwin Hibbets, Regent University
2003-2004 VASFAA President

"Happy New Year!" to all as we start the 2004 calendar year. I trust all had a safe and merry holiday season! But, now it is back to doing what we all do so well...getting those students registered and their financial aid processed for bill payment...thereby ensuring continued access and progress toward fulfilling their education dreams!



As we move on along the track and round the corner that is the middle of the school year, we can look over the shoulder briefly to see the progress made as we pick up speed to finish 2003-2004 in peak form!

The VASFAA Fall Conference has been completed. Indications are that we had the second largest attendance of registered attendees in the last seven years! Kudos again to the Conference Committee (chaired by Leslie Thomas of George Mason University), the Training Committee (chaired by Gail Catron of Wytheville Community College), and the Vendor/Sponsor Relations Committee (chaired by Tanya White of Old Dominion University), all the presenters, moderators, and everyone who had a part in making the conference a great success.

The half-day New Aid Officers Workshop (NAOW) preceding the Fall Conference was under the direction of Representative-at-Large, Brad Barnett of James Madison University. This year, for the first time, we offered a "day rate" for those who wanted to attend the NAOW, but were not able to attend the entire conference. This proved to be a positive offering and we had 38 new colleagues register for this session. The possibility of a full-day expanded version of this workshop preceding the Spring Conference in May has been proffered.

On November 9-10, 2003, VASFAA co-sponsored an Awareness Summit in conjunction with SCHEV and the Education Credit Management Corporation (ECMC) in Richmond, VA. The theme was Virginia Partnerships for College Access. The Summit was attended by more than 100 invited guests from around the Commonwealth and neighboring states. Christina Milano, Executive Director of the National College Access Network and Chief Executive Officer of the Ohio College Access Network was the keynote speaker. Her address highlighted access issues ascertained from a review of the demographic data of various geographical areas of the state and how it relates to enrollment at Virginia institutions. The goal to foster a cooperative effort to centralize Virginia's college access services and to coordinate a network of service providers was validated as a need. As a result of the Summit a listserv has been established for those interested in networking on college access issues in the state. (If you are interested in subscribing to the listserv, please see the information here.) The originating committee of this event met on December 11, 2003 to define the next steps to address issues covered in the Summit. The key outcome of this subsequent meeting was the establishment of a steering committee to formalize a proposal for an ongoing organizational structure to carry on and enhance the work began through this original Summit. There are seven people on this committee, including Dr. Barry Simmons of Virginia Tech, Lee Andes of SCHEV, and Linda Woodley of ECMC. We look forward to further updates on this new entity!

VASFAA's Secondary School Relations Committee, chaired by Anita Aymer, is in the process of completing the second month of a comprehensive schedule of High School Guidance Counselor Workshops at 13 sites around the state this year. Some comments received to date indicate that the session attended was the best one ever. VASFAA is glad to be able to assist in meeting this annual need for training of High School Guidance Counselors.

Thanks to the support and initiative of our colleagues at James Madison University's Student Work Experience Center, VASFAA co-sponsored a Job Location and Development (JLD) Forum on December 12, 2003. The purpose of this session was to provide representatives from Virginia public and private institutions of higher education with the opportunity to discuss their current JLD programs or their interest in establishing a JLD program. This forum provided student employment professionals with the opportunity to learn from one another and acquire new ideas for providing services to their constituents. Topics of discussion included, among other things:

Applying for a JLD Program

ABCs of JLD

Job Posting Methods

Marketing to Students and Employers

Federal Regulations

Tracking Requirements

Some of the early feedback from this forum indicates a very positive response, as indicated in this sample:

"I know what I need to do to get started and the risks involved. I also have a better understanding of the benefits of the program."

"It was helpful to see how it is being used in reality as opposed to just reading the regulations."

We believe that this initiative has provided a greater understanding of the JLD opportunity and will increase participation interest.

The Awareness Committee, chaired by Angie Hawkins, is pushing forward with significant plans for January, 2004. At the time of this writing the efforts are to include call-in shows on television stations in the Richmond and Tidewater area as well as the Super-Saturday event. Watch for more information in your e-mail box!

We could go on with additional details of other Association work that is underway, e.g., the Experienced Aid Officers' Workshop that is being re-worked, the Strategic Plan for the Association being prepared for updating and extending, the Policies and Procedures Manual being updated, and of course, the Spring Conference details that are being ironed out for another great professional development experience. But, at this point I would like to end by encouraging you to ensure that you have reviewed the Strategic Plan and made suggestions on the various parts that were distributed in November and December. Your input is vital to ensure that the Association reflects who we are and where we want to go. If you have not yet done so, please review the Strategic Plan online and give your feedback as soon as possible. The committee is working diligently to update it for discussion at our Winter Board meeting.

As a final note in this segment of the 2003-2004 course, please keep the following dates in mind:

- VASFAA Winter Board meeting – January 28-29, 2004 at the Virginia Beach Resort Hotel and Conference Center in Virginia Beach.
- SASFAA Annual Conference – February 15-18, 2004 at the Birmingham Sheraton in Birmingham, AL
- VASFAA Spring Conference – May 2-5, 2004 at the Founders Inn & Conference Center in Virginia Beach.
- SASFAA New Aid Officers’ Workshop – June 20-25, 2004 at the University of South Florida, Tampa, FL
- NASFAA Annual Conference – July 18-21, 2004 in Minneapolis, MN

Thank you for your efforts in championing our Association as we “Go the Distance” in this New Year!

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Editor's Embellishments

by Gary Spoales, Bank of America
VASF AA Voice Editor

What a Fall! We've had virtually every type of weather already and as I write this it is only the second week in December. We have had hurricanes, tornados, snowstorms, thunderstorms, floods, and earthquakes – yes earthquakes. Welcome to East California – they had wildfires and our area had arsonists.

By the time you see this, you will have celebrated a variety of December holidays and New Years' Eve to welcome in 2004. The Newsletter Committee would like to extend our sincere wish to each of you for a very Happy and Prosperous 2004.

Welcome to the second edition of the newsletter for 2003 - 2004. We hope you enjoy the content and again welcome your suggestions for future issues. Send any comments, suggestions or submissions for publishing to me at: gary.a.spoales@bankofamerica.com or call me at 301-879-8008 with questions.

In this issue, there are articles of special interest to stimulate your thinking as you continue planning and implementing your 2004-05 office strategies. SASFAA is promoting its' upcoming conference in Birmingham, AL and other important dates are listed in the calendar section, including the Spring VASF AA conference dates. The President's message provides important and up to date information on Association activities which warrant your review. In addition, several committees provided updates for this issue while additional committee activity continues to be available on the VASF AA website. Visit it often to keep up to date with the latest information.

As we continue a second year under the new format, the committee would like to provide you with concrete submission guidelines to better serve the membership and potential contributors.

The **purpose** of the newsletter is to keep the membership informed and up to date on association supported activities, and items and/or articles of general interest to the financial aid community. Careful steps are being taken to meet your needs professionally while resisting the temptation to accept articles simply to fill space. Consequently, we have developed an editorial policy to accomplish this task.

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. Other options should be reviewed with Joe Dobrota, Publishing Editor, prior to sending. An ad should not be larger than 6" in width. You submit it in either Full

color or black& white according to your preference.

We are seeking Gold Sponsors to possibly submit vertical ads this year (to enable us to get them further up in the page & have text wrap around the ad). A vertical ad would be about 2" wide x 4-5" high. An example of the size of traditional ads may be found at: <http://www.vasfaa.org/docs/newsletters/fall2002/page1.htm>. We had one sponsor submit an animated gif. ad which can be viewed at: (<http://www.vasfaa.org//docs/newsletters/summer2003/page6.htm>)

(Note: Ads are only accepted from Sponsors at the Gold level who receive a free ad in the issue of their choice based on availability)

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All-American Dreams From Edamerica



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2003-2004 Sue D. Ross Endowed Scholarship Fund Recipients

The students at Hampton Roads School of Technology would like to say thank you. We wanted as many students as possible to receive part of the Sue Deaton Ross Scholarship fund. The school awarded 15 students a \$100.00 scholarship. The students were very thankful of the award and wanted VASFAA to know that they appreciate the scholarship. The following students received the Sue Deaton Ross Scholarship fund.

Avery Barnes – Barber/Stylist
Shannon Brown – Cosmetology
Shawnte Cassell – Cosmetology
Terry Cheeks – Barber/Stylist
Felicia Coverson – Cosmetology
Iverson Davis – Barber/Stylist
James A Davis – Barber/Stylist
Jerry Glasper Barber/Stylist

Ricky Godette – Barber/Stylist
Fabian Jackson – Barber/Stylist
Jarvis Johnson – Barber/Stylist
Kevin Lewis – Barber/Stylist
Keli Lucas - Cosmetology
Rachel Ricks - Cosmetology
Willie Tucker - Cosmetology

Submitted by Tim Freeman
VASFAA Past-President

Help Comes Too Late

Originally published July 8, 2003, in the Baltimore Sun

I've just finished awarding \$10 million in financial aid to students who otherwise couldn't afford to attend the [Johns Hopkins University](#).

You'd think that would be a tremendously gratifying moment, an opportunity to reflect with satisfaction on the good we're doing for people who really deserve it. And it is.

But it's also a tremendously frustrating moment. I'm frustrated because there is a large group of deserving people I haven't been able to help.

It's tough for financial aid officers to assist families who have never before sent a student to college. Why? Because, however unintentionally, the system in some ways is stacked against them.

At selective colleges, most of our students and families have always regarded post-secondary education as the obvious, if not the only, next step after high school.

Helping these families find ways to pay for college is relatively easy. They know, from experience, what college is all about and what to expect. They have realistic ideas about how an investment in education repays the student, what that investment costs and, most importantly, how that out-of-pocket cost can be reduced through long-term savings and financial aid.

Working with first-generation college families is a different story.

Unfamiliar with arcane, complex and expensive aid application procedures and with other options, these students and families may make bad decisions. Those decisions may, in the end, prevent students from attending the school that is the best match for them.

Maybe the dinner-table conversation goes something like this: "You can't even think about Johns Hopkins. We can't possibly afford it." Or like this: "You can go, but we can't pay for it, so you'll be in debt for the rest of your life."

Often, these talented students and their families are so discouraged, before they even begin, that they don't fill out free federal financial aid forms or don't file them on time. They miss out on institutional aid, state grants and federally subsidized loans. Recent research suggests that unmet need prevents 60,000 talented and capable high school graduates from attending college each year.

These are not unintelligent people. Here's one example: A young woman from the Bronx. Her mother is dead and her father is imprisoned. Her high school teachers call her "brilliant." But how can we expect her, at 18 and without family support, to navigate through a sea of forms, requirements and deadlines?

We eventually were able to help. She will start at Johns Hopkins this fall. But she is, I fear, an exception.

There are new private scholarships that attempt to help to mitigate this lack of sophistication. I applaud these philanthropic efforts. But they are flawed: The awards simply are not made soon enough to lift the hopes and aspirations of these potential "first in their family" college students.

The Gates Millennium scholarship program, for instance, notifies winners in April of their senior year of high school. That's after colleges mail their acceptances and months after most colleges' application deadlines.

The deadline for a new Sallie Mae program for Hispanic-Americans is April 15; that's too late

for Sallie Mae to notify winners by May 1, when seniors have to choose among the colleges that accept them. Some state grant scholarship agencies do not notify winners until May.

The question: How can we - colleges, state agencies, private benefactors, the federal government - work together to raise the goals and aspirations of less sophisticated but no less capable students?

As the Advisory Committee on Student Financial Assistance wrote to Congress recently, the forthcoming reauthorization of the Higher Education Act provides us with an excellent opportunity to make changes, both in federal programs and in the activities of colleges, private philanthropists and state agencies.

Earlier information about federal and state aid eligibility would help. So would awarding scholarships in the junior year of high school. There are too many students who conclude that the door is closed to them. Our job is not just to open the door, but also to get them to the threshold.

Submitted by Ellen Frishberg, Director of Student Financial Services at the [Johns Hopkins University](http://www.jhu.edu).

PLUS Loan Questions to Consider

As parents explore ways to finance their children's higher education, many consider borrowing through the Federal PLUS-loan program. As they decide whether to pursue a PLUS loan, parents of dependent undergraduate students should be advised to consider the following questions:

Have I exhausted other sources of financial aid? Before applying for a PLUS loan, parents should thoroughly research all forms of financial aid — especially grants and scholarships — and turn to the financial-aid office for information about sources of financial assistance.

What if I don't pass the credit check? Parents who fail the PLUS-loan credit check should be advised that they still have options, including the following:

- A parent still may obtain a PLUS loan if a friend or family member who can pass the credit check agrees to endorse the loan application and assume the debt if the parent fails to repay the loan.
- A lender still may approve a PLUS loan if parents can demonstrate extenuating circumstances, such as updated credit information showing that they have brought their accounts up to date or have made satisfactory arrangements to repay their debts.
- The student may qualify to borrow additional sums under the unsubsidized Federal Stafford-loan program.

Parent or child — who pays? While many children agree to pay their parents' PLUS loans, parents should be advised that if the child fails to make the loan payments, the parent who signed for the PLUS loan is legally obligated to repay the debt.

How can I make the loan payments and pay tuition at the same time? With PLUS-loan repayment beginning within 60 days after the loan is disbursed, some parents may face cash-flow difficulties as they make PLUS-loan payments. Financial-aid administrators should encourage parents facing this problem to consider the following repayment strategies:

- *Forbearance.* Lenders may grant forbearance to PLUS borrowers while their children are still attending college. Forbearance allows a borrower to postpone or reduce their

monthly loan payments temporarily; however, interest continues to accumulate during the period of forbearance.

- *Graduated repayment.* The graduated-repayment option provides lower monthly payments initially.

Submitted by: Richard Burt, USA Funds Services

FAFSA Analysis – Line 74

A common error on the FAFSA is when parents enter an incorrect figure on line 74. This is the line that reads: "Enter the total amount of your parents' income tax for 2003. Income tax is on IRS Form 1040—line 54;.....etc. Now, while I do not have a suggestion that will help parents' enter the correct figure I would like to point out how some recent tax law changes that have a large impact on "your parent's income tax for 2003".

There was much in the news this summer about the tax package (actually, "The Jobs and Growth Tax Relief Reconciliation Act of 2003) passed by Congress in August. Mostly the news was about the \$400 per child tax credit check many families were to receive. But more significantly for taxpayers these other changes took effect:

- 1) The standard deduction for Married Filing Jointly increased from \$7,850 in 2002 to \$9,500 in 2003, an increase of 21%.
- 2) The 15% tax bracket applied to incomes from \$12,000 to \$46,700 in 2002. For 2003 the 15% bracket was extended to include incomes between \$14,000 and \$56,800. These two changes effectively did away with the 'marriage penalty'.
- 3) Businesses may now expense qualified purchases up to \$100,000. This is up from \$25,000 in 2002. This means that a business may 'write-off' up to \$100,000 of business equipment in one year rather than depreciate it over many years. This has the potential to make a dramatic change in the amount of tax due for a self-employed person. You may have recently heard radio ads or seen newspaper ads telling business owners they may now purchase a high end SUV and write off the entire amount from their income. Also, 'bonus depreciation' rates increased from 30% to 50% for 2003.
- 4) Tax rates for higher income earners dropped. For example, in 2002 income between \$46,700 and \$112,850 was taxed at 27%, for 2003 income between \$56,800 and \$114,650 is taxed at 25%. You can see that not only did the tax rate drop but the income taxed at that lower rate expanded.
- 5) The tax on most capital gains and dividends fell from regular rates to 15%.
- 6) The maximum Lifetime Learning credit, the child and dependent care credit, the adoption credit, the child tax credit, the health coverage tax credit, the Earned Income tax credit and the self-employed health insurance deduction all increased for 2003.
- 7) Finally, the deferral amounts for retirement savings increased for 2003. These include the amounts that may be contributed pre-tax to IRA's, simple IRA's, SEP's, 401(k)'s and 403(b)'s.

O.K., what does this mean for the FAFSA? All of the above changes will lower an individuals tax owed. Many more families will receive a refund this year, and that refund can be significantly higher. A larger refund means less tax paid which will translate into lower financial aid awards (families will have more discretionary income). So it is more important than ever to be sure that the amount entered on the FAFSA line 74 is not the amount from

box 2 on the employees W-2 but is in fact the amount of actual tax paid.

Mike Szydowski, mike_szydowski@woodberry.org

Scholarships are Available for College Students

If your students think scholarships are only available *before* college starts, they should think again. Many post-secondary scholarships exist, and if your students make an effort to apply for them, they can ease their college expenses. Here are a few of the many awards available to your current students.

Association for Women in Science Educational Foundation (Ruth Satter Award)

www.awis.org/resource/scholarships.html

Deadline: January 27, 2004

Open to a graduate student who interrupted her education for at least three years to raise a family.

Barbara Wiedner and Dorothy Vandercook Memorial Peace Scholarship

www.grandmothersforpeace.org/scholarships/

Deadline – March 1, 2004

Open to college freshmen.

OP Loftbed Scholarship

www.oploftbed.com/scholarship/index.php

Deadline – July 31, 2004

Open to undergraduate and graduate students.

Students can also check out these free scholarship search resources:

www.fastweb.com

www.fastaid.com

www.scholarships.com

Encourage your students to visit your financial aid office and ask about other scholarships to help them pay for college.

by Juan Perez, Regional Director, National Student Loan Program

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Committee Updates

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TRAINING COMMITTEE

Spring is just around the corner...

Don't forget that the Training Committee would like to have your suggestions for programs for the May 2-5, 2004, Conference in Virginia Beach. I am attaching an Interest Session Form. Thanks for all of your help and hope you all had a Happy Holiday break.

Gail S. Catron, Ph.D.
Coordinator, Financial Aid/Professor
Wytheville Community College
1000 E. Main Street
Wytheville, VA 24382
VOICE: 276-223-4766
FAX: 276-223-4778
gcatron@wcc.vccs.edu

NOMINATIONS & ELECTIONS COMMITTEE

VASFAA OFFICER NOMINATION

This is the official notice calling for nominations for VASFAA offices for which elections will be held at the spring 2004 conference terms beginning July 1, 2004.

The following offices will be open

President-elect
Treasurer-elect
Representatives at large

Please submit your nominations by 1/16/04...I would appreciate it if nominators would consult with the potential nominee regarding their willingness to serve and include a brief resume. Preferred method of submission is Word format via email.

Simmons@vt.edu

Submitted by Dr. Barry W. Simmons Sr., Director, Office of Scholarships and Financial Aid Enrollment Services
Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University

AWARDS COMMITTEE

VASFAA RECOGNITION & AWARDS NOMINATIONS

This is the official notice calling for nominations for those awards and recognitions listed in Section 11 of the [VASFAA Awards and Procedures Manual](#) as:

Life Member Award
Excellence Award
Service Award
New Professional of the Year Award

Additionally, we'd like to be aware of any retirements so we can recognize those too.

While such nominations may be submitted at any time, to provide for the orderly consideration of nominees, please submit the nominations to me by 1/16/04 in preferred Word format via email to Simmons@vt.edu

Submitted by Dr. Barry W. Simmons Sr., Director, Office of Scholarships and Financial Aid Enrollment Services
VASFAA Information Services Commission:

INFORMATION SERVICES COMMISSION

Getting the Word (and Pictures) Out

Did you know that VASFAA had an entire commission dedicated to information dissemination and collection and community outreach? That's right, the Information Services Commission is tasked with ensuring that the VASFAA membership is kept aware of important information and events, collecting information from the membership as needed, identifying community outreach opportunities and keeping the community aware of VASFAA activities, providing venues for information sharing, and collecting and archiving photographic documentation of VASFAA and its membership activities. There are four committees that make up the VASFAA Information Services Commission.

The Newsletter Committee, chaired for 2003-2004 by Gary Spoales (Bank of America), publishes the VASFAA Voice, VASFAA's official newsletter. The newsletter, usually published quarterly, contains articles and updates from committee chairs and board members, professional interest articles from members, sponsors and vendors, ads from our sponsors, information about upcoming elections, important dates and events for the calendar, and other interesting tidbits of information about the association and its members.

The Public Relations Committee, chaired for 2003-2004 by Beth Parker (ECMC), is tasked with finding creative means to inform Virginians about VASFAA and the benefits the Association has to offer. They work closely with the Awareness and Secondary School Relations Committees to support any media needs for promotion of VASFAA Activities throughout the year. The Public Relations Committee usually establishes a philanthropic activity in association in conjunction with the VASFAA conferences. The committee also provides written documentation about VASFAA for use by the membership, various VASFAA committees, and eternal contact.

The Photography Committee, chaired for 2003-2004 by Gerene Carter (CitiBank), is

responsible for maintaining photos and relationships necessary to photograph all VASFAA events as requested, make photos available to the membership, make photos available to state and regional newsletters and other publications, and may arrange a photo journal for presentation to the President. This photographic history is also provided to the VASFAA archivist for inclusion in the VASFAA archives.

The Electronic Services Committee, chaired for 2003-2004 by Joe Dobrota (Regent University), takes steps to enhance the breadth, depth, and effectiveness and efficiency of VASFAA electronic communications with our membership and other interested parties. This committee reviews the needs of the Association for computer hardware and software applications to ensure their smooth and reliable functioning. As equipment deteriorates, this committee recommends equipment purchases. This committee works cooperatively with other VASFAA committees and the VASFAA Board to fulfill the VASFAA purpose and mission. And, last but by no means least, the committee is also responsible for coordinating the maintenance of and updates to the VASFAA web site.

If you're the type of person that likes to spread good news and likes to be in on the latest and greatest breaking events within the association, you should consider volunteering for one of the committees within the Information Services Commission.

Submitted by Erik Melis
Information Services Commissioner

NEW CENTURY EDUCATION ENDOWMENT FUND COMMITTEE

VASFAA's NEW CENTURY EDUCATIONAL ENDOWMENT FUND SEEKS PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT APPLICATIONS

The innovative professional development program provides financial assistance to members!

Applications are now being accepted for financial awards from the New Century Educational Endowment Fund. This fund was created four years ago with a \$50,000 grant from the VASFAA general fund. The "Buddy Awards", named after VASFAA Past President and Life Member Buddy Johnston, offer support for the professional development of VASFAA members and their sponsoring institutions.

Past recipients received awards to fund a study to improve retention, pay tuition for the SASFAA summer workshop, and fund a staff retreat to improve services through new technologies. Most recently, the Fund has supported a two-year professional development grant for a state university in supporting their new "all-inclusive" student employment program. The Fund has also committed to providing financial support to a future experienced financial aid officers' summit.

The application for a 2004-2005 award is posted on your VASFAA home page (www.VASFAA.org) under "Forms Bank". Do you have a creative idea for a professional development activity for which you or your staff could use some funding? Awards typically are granted for \$50 to \$1000 per recipient. Applications may be made at any time and grants awarded anytime throughout the year.

Applications will be reviewed and recommended by the Funds' President's Council, which is appointed by the VASFAA Board of Directors. The President's Council for 2004-2005 includes: John Crowley (VASFAA Treasurer), Betty Diamond, Vern Fairchilds, Sherwin Hibbets (VASFAA President), Mildred Jackson, Buddy Johnston (Chair), Rod Moore, Tom Morehouse (VASFAA President-Elect), and Sherrye Ward.

Please submit your application by April 1, 2004 to:

H. S. "Buddy" Johnston
USA Funds Services
4580 Mallard Point Way, Unit 3
Dublin, VA 24084
Phone number: 540-674-4801; Fax number 540-674-6265

Awards will be announced at the 2004 Spring Conference at VA Beach!

Submitted by H.S. "Buddy" Johnston

STRATEGIC PLANNING COMMITTEE

VASF AA LOOKS TO THE FUTURE

VASF AA and I have the advantage of expert and thoughtful guidance from Brad Barnett, Randy Craig, Sid Dugas, Guy Gibbs, and Tom Morehouse. I am fortunate to have this experienced group of volunteers join me on the Strategic Planning Committee this year.

A strategic plan guides an organization as it moves into the future. Your Strategic Planning Committee is in the process of updating VASF AA's strategic plan to position our organization to be successful and thrive over the next five years.

We have utilized the ListServ to solicit input from you, the membership, on each section of our current plan. Thanks to Randy Craig for his stewardship of this portion of the project, and to all of you who responded with comments and suggestions.

The current plan is available at www.vasfaa.org. Please e-mail me at sclough@khec.com if you have any last minute contributions to our discussions.

The committee will be meeting soon to review the current plan, consider the membership's input, and discuss challenges and opportunities which may confront our organization over the next years. We will draft a plan to guide VASF AA toward continued success as an organization, which we will submit to our Executive Board for review and approval.

Submitted by Sharon H. Clough
Chair, VASF AA Strategic Planning Committee

DIVERSITY COMMITTEE

During the Fall Conference held in Richmond, the VASF AA Diversity Committee conducted a survey concerning diversity practices within our various organizations and institutions. There were a number of participants, and as promised, this article summarizes our findings.

Our member organizations employ a variety of ways to promote diversity. Publications, workshops and retreats are some of the ways diversity is promoted within our member institutions and organizations. Some institutions actually have formed their own diversity committees while others have made diversity part of the institutional goals and initiatives. Finally, one of the main ways member organizations promote diversity is in their hiring practices.

VASF AA members promote diversity among their customers first and foremost by ensuring that services are provided to all, regardless of individual differences. Publications, workshops, fairs and community events are used to facilitate service to our

diverse consumer base.

There are a variety of individuals and offices with primary diversity responsibility within VASFAA member organizations. The range includes outside organizers, Alumni Associations and even the President's Office. Public Relations and Human Resources Offices tend to have primary diversity responsibility at the majority of the reporting organizations.

Organizations that reported defined policies and procedures in dealing with diversity issues indicated a variety of ways to handle their concerns. The Human Resources Offices and EEO Offices were typically responsible for defining the policies and procedures. Some organizations included diversity policies and procedures in their staff handbooks or as part of the Organizational Mission Statement.

Diversity tools included tool kits, handouts and award certificates upon completion of workshops or seminars. Human Resource videos and articles appearing in trade magazines were also used as diversity tools.

The Diversity Committee would like to thank those who completed surveys. This information will also be available at the Spring Conference. There will be a follow-up contest during the Spring Conference for member institutions to showcase their Diversity Tools. Prizes will be awarded for (1) Most innovative and (2) Most creative. Please consider sharing your tools with the VASFAA membership through this contest.

Submitted by Kerrie Roth, Chair, ODU

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SPECIAL REPORTS

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GRADUATE/PROFESSIONAL SCHOOL PERSPECTIVES

This section is normally written by Judith Cramer of the VCU School of Medicine, however she has been very busy lately. A brief news item explaining her column's absence follows:

"I will be happy to share what information I know. She adopted a 2-year-old boy by the name of Max from Belaruse, a little country under the Russian government. His new name is Sidney Mark Cramer. He became legally theirs on October 22, 2003 (in which the process was very long and stressful). He warmed up to them immediately upon meeting them in person. He was also able to recognize them as mama and daddy and seemed to be very secure with the fact of now having a family. Since then, they have been at home adjusting very well to family life; bath time, naps, his laughter, and all the things that little bundles of joy brings. He was able to pick up on English very easily and is adjusting to his new life in the US very well. He is very happy with his new life and to let Judy say it "he has never looked back"."

Submitted by Crystal Fordham
Financial Aid Counselor, VCU School of Medicine



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PEOPLE & PLACES IN THE NEWS



From James Madison University - We recently hired Steven Cox as our Assistant Director for Grants. Steven began working with us on 11/17, and he recently found out that he and his wife are expecting their first child in May.

From DeVry University - Roberta McDevitt, DFA at DeVry University in Alexandria, gave birth to a baby girl, Elizabeth, weighing 10 lbs, 12 oz, she was 21 inches on 9/24 at 2:13 AM. Roberta and the baby are doing fine. Roberta had to have a C-section, after 26 + hours of labor.

From Bank of America: Please join us in welcoming Jennifer Hulvey as a new associate in Virginia. Jennifer is best known for her previous work with JMU and ELM Resources. Jennifer joins Gary Spoales in providing over 40 years of financial aid experience on behalf of Bank of America in Virginia.

THEN AND NOW: REFLECTIONS ON THE PAST & PROFESSIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

From the VASFAA Archives Winter 1980-1981

What an exciting time for VASFAA!!! Buddy Johnston, Director of Financial Aid at Radford University and VASAA Chair of the Student Financial Aid Awareness Week (SFAAW) Ad Hoc Committee announced that the Governor of Virginia, John N. Dalton, proclaimed the period of February 1-7, 1981 as Virginia Student Financial Aid Awareness Week. This was the very *first* proclamation of awareness week. Buddy had several VASFAA past presidents to help him on this committee. They were Marie Bennett (NOVCC), Phil Brunson (Va. Union), John McRae (JMU), Ron Balance (ECP) Duke Eldridge (UVA) and Bill Miller (ODU).

VASFAA President, Sue Ross of Hollins College praised the co-editors of the VASFAA Newsletter Julie Kaplan (UVA) and Jim Ramsey (UVA), for the creation of VASFAA's new logo. This triangular logo is still in use today!

President Ross appointed John McRae (JMU) to work closely with the Program Committee to implement a plan whereby meeting site selection will be decided well in advance of scheduled conference dates to assure the best possible rates and locations.

Speaking of conferences, the fall 1980 conference was held September 24-26 at the Ramada Inn in Charlottesville and the spring 1981 conference was April 29-May 1 at The Chamberlin in Hampton. Our own Marvin Ragland (Longwood College) was program chair. Room rates at the Ramada were \$28.00 single/\$37.00 double. The spring conference registration fee was \$15.00.

President Reagan proposed many budget cuts to the higher education budget line. President Ross expressed the while the education committee was willing to bear its fair share of the reductions, she was concerned that higher education, with only 1 percent of the budget, should absorb 7 percent of the cuts! She urged all to write their representatives.

At the end of this full year, it was clear that VASFAA was on its way to being a vital part of the higher education committee!!!

Submitted by Holly Rison, VASFAA Archivist, Randolph Macon College

PROFESSIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

Director of Finance for a Private Post Secondary Career College in Chesapeake, VA.

Please forward resume to: maureenolive@earthlink.net with salary history and relocation

preferences if any. Or you may call Maureen Olive at 480-556-0631.

Excellent benefits and relocation package available.

Duties:

- Train, Develop and Manage Financial Aid department and representatives
- Title IV funding administration
- Ensure federal & state guidelines for student enrollment and financial aid eligibility are met
- Counsel students to determine financial aid needs / options
- Perform student "Needs Analysis"
- Review student files to ensure accurate funding
- Ensure compliance with federal & state policies
- Answer financial aid questions with students and/or parents
- Coordinate training of financial aid representatives
- Conduct "Entering / Exit" Loan video orientation with students
- Responsible for reviewing Satisfactory Student Academic Progress
- Coordinate with campus bookkeeper to ensure proper disbursements of federal funds to students
- Monitor student account payments
- Interact with outside agencies including the DOE and loan processing companies
- Monitor & maintain electronic data entry, retrieval & reconciliation for 3rd party lender
- Maintain required federal & state certifications for self & staff to ensure employment eligibility
- Responsible for Accounts Receivable, Student Status & SSCR reports

Position Requirements:

- Bachelors degree **REQUIRED**
- **3-5 years experience as a Financial Aid officer / representative**
- Knowledge of Federal & State loan programs
- Experience with work-study, scholarship & campus based federal funding programs
- Experience with refund issues
- Hands on knowledge of crossover issues / financial aid packages
- 2+ years of management experience
- Ability to interact with all levels of individuals involved in financial aid process
- Computer skills including MicroSoft Office Suite
- Excellent communication and interpersonal skills
- Detail oriented & Problem solver
- Ability to Multi-Task & Research skills
- Accounting background helpful

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DID YOU KNOW?

Did you ever wonder how many members are subscribed to our listserve and how many organizations they represent. As your editor, I was concerned that we reach a sufficient % of the membership with the newsletters. Selfishly, I was also concerned that I was reaching you with my requests for information to publish. Why, you ask? Simply put, very few VASF AA members take the time to share information so that it can be published in the newsletter.

The good news is that we have 417 members on the listserve, representing 165 email domains or organizations. We know that we are reaching you, but we don't know if you read what you receive. Barry Davis at J. Sergeant Reynolds CC is the keeper of the listserve and I'd like to thank him for providing the statistics for this news brief.

The Editor



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NASFAA NEWS

The NASFAA listserv provides members with updates on a daily basis on important news around the country. This section will provide both a few of these tidbits and official press releases from NASFAA.

NASFAA'S BEST PRACTICES SYMPOSIUM SCHEDULED FOR 2004

Washington, D.C. (December 9, 2003) - For the third year, the National Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators (NASFAA) will host a training opportunity to explore critical issues facing financial aid professionals. "In Search of Best Practices - A NASFAA Symposium" will be offered as a day and a half symposium at three sites in 2004.

Boston, MA, February 27-28

Boston Logan Airport Hilton, (617) 568-6700

Day 1 - Friday, 12 p.m. to 5 p.m.; Day 2 - Saturday, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

San Diego, CA, March 19-20

Sheraton San Diego Hotel & Marina Complex - West Tower, (619) 291-2900

Day 1 - Friday, 12 p.m. to 5 p.m.; Day 2 - Saturday, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Dallas, TX, April 16-17

Sheraton Grand Hotel at Dallas/Ft. Worth Airport, (972) 929-8400

Day 1 - Friday, 12 p.m. to 5 p.m.; Day 2 - Saturday, 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Symposium topics will include *Student Speak: How to Speak Their Language*, *The Data Driven Financial Aid Office*, and *Promoting the Financial Aid Office on Campus*. The subject matter will be targeted towards intermediate and advanced financial aid administrators and other senior level campus administrators, including chief enrollment management officers and chief student affairs officers.

The cost per registrant is \$175 and includes one meal. Registration is available to NASFAA members only. For more information, including hotel rates, and a registration form, visit

<http://www.NASFAA.org/BestPractices.asp> or contact Connie McCormick at 202-785-0453 ext. 148 or mccormickc@nasfaa.org.

NASFAA ENCYCLOPEDIA OF STUDENT FINANCIAL AID HAS MOVED TO THE WEB

Lower price, easier access, and no installation required

Washington, D.C. - The National Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators (NASFAA) is pleased to announce the release of the NASFAA Encyclopedia of Student Financial Aid on the Web, a fully integrated and searchable resource library for financial

aid professionals.

The Encyclopedia pulls together Title IV information from law, regulation, and dozens of other government documents, and organizes it by financial aid program. Areas covered include: General Program Administration, Federal Pell Grants, Federal Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grants (FSEOG), Federal Work-Study (FWS), Federal Perkins Loans, Federal Family Education Loans (FFEL), and Direct Loans.

In addition to the Encyclopedia text, which is written by NASFAA's technical staff, the Encyclopedia includes reference documents such as: Compiled Regulations, the Higher Education Act, Federal Student Financial Aid Handbooks, the Blue Books, Dear Colleague Letters, Preambles to Selected Federal Registers, and more.

Featuring an expanded search function and more frequent updates, the Encyclopedia on the Web helps financial aid professionals answer their student aid questions. The new Web format builds on previous versions of the Encyclopedia. Originally developed in 1984 as a paper product, the Encyclopedia became electronic in 1995 when it was published on floppy diskettes, and subsequently on CD-ROM. These versions allowed users to search for topic phrases, as well as link directly from the Encyclopedia text to the reference documents. The new Web version expands the search function dramatically by allowing users to narrow their search by document category or type. Also, the Web version uses an individual's Internet browser, eliminating the need to install the product or wait for updates.

Subscriptions to the Encyclopedia are available for NASFAA members and non-members. For more information or to subscribe, visit <http://www.NASFAA.org/Encyclopedia.asp>, email encyclopedia@nasfaa.org, or call (202) 785-0453 ext. 1.

Submitted by Mindy Kaplan Eline, NASFAA

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INTERESTING "STUFF" FOR YOU

Visit the VASF AA website today for all the interesting stuff you can handle. Get "On Track" with your association via the website at: www.vasfaa.org

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VIRGINIA IN THE NEWS

This section is reserved for new and breaking information to bring to your attention. The holidays appear to be in the news as Santa Claus was dressed up as the Grinch in the Virginia legislature during education funding deliberations. The only question is whether that classic line from the movies will ever be repeated again"Virginia, there really is a Santa Claus!"

Stay tuned for 2004 developments!

SASFAA NEWS

Conference News

Thanks to SASFAA's new web site, registration for the 2004 conference is available on-line this year! Please go to www.sasfaa.org and register for the conference now.

Additional information about the conference has been posted, including a tentative agenda and travel information, so that you can start making your plans now to join your colleagues in Birmingham February 15 - 18, 2004. You will not want to miss it!

Zita Barree
SASFAA 2004 Conference Chair

As financial aid administrators, we are devoted to helping our students obtain an education that will allow them to reach their goals and to follow their dreams. Every day we provide our students with "Access – the Key to Brighter Futures" and we invite you to join us in the "Magic City" on February 15 – 18, for the 2004 SASFAA Conference to do just that.

Our conference will begin with the SASFAA Community Service project – providing "access" through FAFSA Workshops for high school seniors who live in the Birmingham area. If your school budget and travel plans will allow you to be in Birmingham on Saturday, please plan to join the Diversity Committee in helping at these workshops as it promises to be one of the most rewarding professional and personal experiences of the conference.

As for educational experiences, the Conference Committee worked diligently to develop informative sessions that will appeal to the new, as well as the not-so-new financial aid administrator. Sessions will range from the beginner level with the New Aid Officer's Workshop to the seasoned professional level with the School Roundtable for Senior Administrators. A multitude of sessions that fall between these two experience levels will also be offered.

From a cultural standpoint, our host city has much to offer SASFAA as well. The President's Reception will be held at the Birmingham Museum of Art and the Diversity Committee has scheduled an informative speaker coupled with a tour of the Civil Rights Institute.

The 2004 SASFAA Conference promises to be educational, enlightening, and entertaining. Please visit the SASFAA website at www.sasfaa.org for all the conference details including hotel information, session details and conference registration. We'll see you in Birmingham!

Elections News

Nominations, Nominations, calling for all Nominations!!!!!!!!!!

It is that time of the year where the NASFAA Nominations and Elections committee seeks candidates to run for Chair-Elect, Representatives-At-Large and Nominations and Elections Representatives.

My tenure on the Nominations and Elections Committee runs out at the end of this year and thus SASFAA will need nominees to be presented on the slate. It is a wonderful opportunity to get involved on the National level and meet your colleagues from around the nation. The same is true for the Rep-at-Large positions. Both require a two-year commitment.

The Chair-Elect works closely with the current Chair to prepare themselves for representing our National Association at all functions and meetings. It is a three-year commitment, BUT one of the most rewarding ones you will ever experience.

SO let me hear from you!!!!!! Let me give some great SASFAA names to the committee for these positions. Complete the attached form TODAY!!!!!! We are blessed to have so many great folks in our region, so it should be NO PROBLEM getting me some names, RIGHT?!

I have attached the info from the NASFAA site.

NOMINATIONS SOUGHT FOR 2004-05 NASFAA ELECTED OFFICES

<http://www.NASFAA.org/publications/2003/n2004nominations112403.html>

NASFAA invites nominations for the 2004-2005 program year for the positions of National Chair-Elect (who becomes National Chair for 2005-2006), four national Representatives-at-Large to the Board of Directors, and three members of the Nominations and Elections Committee representing SASFAA, RMASFAA, and WASFAA. This article explains the nomination and election process and informs potential candidates of the roles and responsibilities that come with each office. The deadline for receipt of nominations is January 16, 2004. See <http://www.NASFAA.org/publications/2003/n2004nominations112403.html> for complete details.

Janet D. Sain , Provost/Financial Aid Director , ECPI College of Technology
