

VASF AA Support Staff Training Committee  
January 2008 Board Report

The VASF AA Support Staff Training Committee conducted a total of five training workshops throughout the Commonwealth during the last week of October and the first two weeks of November. Approximately 130 VASF AA members participated in the workshops. Wytheville Community College, Mary Baldwin College, Liberty University, Riverside School of Health Careers and University of Mary Washington served as the workshop sites. The fall training was conducted by financial aid professionals with extensive knowledge and expertise, but they did not charge VASF AA for their services. The total cost to put on the five workshops was \$1320. However, because workshop participants paid \$15 each to attend the training, the workshops brought in that amount plus additional revenue. So far, \$1500 in revenue has been collected, with additional payments still outstanding. Therefore, the fall Support Staff Training workshops were actually held at no cost to VASF AA.

The Support Staff Training Committee would be interested in conducting spring training because we received very positive comments about the fall training and we received requests for additional training whenever possible. We have considered the possibilities of either having three workshops across the state or trying something new and conducting web based training. While workshops at sites across the Commonwealth would produce revenue, there is a tremendous amount of time and energy required to go this route. Having web based training would not only require substantially less physical effort for committee members and trainers, but it would also be a fresh and innovative idea for VASF AA as it has not been done before in this association. The Support Staff Committee is exploring the cost of Webex training and the possibility of having a guarantor or lender friend allow VASF AA to use their training at no cost but without recognition. If the Support Staff Training Committee still has the \$1000 it was allocated for this year, then the committee may be able to use its own budgeted funds to pay for this training. Or, if the Board thinks it appropriate, the Support Staff Training Committee could ask to be considered for New Century funds for the innovative web based training.

The Support Staff Training Committee received numerous requests from participants in the fall training for topics to be covered if a spring training is held. Many of the topics are related to Financial Literacy and counseling students, and we are considering the following topics: Debt Management for Students; How to Give Entrance and Exit Counseling for Financial Aid Administrators; Scholarship Searches and Scams; Completing and Filing the FAFSA; Basic PowerPoint Presentation Skills; and Effective Presentation Skills.

Our questions to the VASF AA Board are:

- 1) Is spring Support Staff Training something the Board would like us to pursue?
- 2) Do we still have the original \$1000 budget allocated to us to use for an in-person committee meeting and/or for Webex training this spring?
- 3) Would it be appropriate for the Support Staff Training Committee to request funds from the New Century fund for web based training for VASF AA members?

4) If a lender or guarantor is willing to provide their Webex service for VASF AA training at no charge and without recognition, is the Board comfortable in allowing this?

Thank you for your consideration.

Respectfully Submitted,

Liza Bruce  
2007-08 VASF AA Support Staff Training Committee Chair