



April 2016 Edition

## President's Corner

**Greetings fellow VASFAA Members!**



As we prepare for another wonderful spring conference, I wanted to take a few minutes to check in and let you know how things are going with our organization. In short, memberships are up, our finances are strong, and conference registrations are climbing!

Speaking of the conference, I'm super-excited about all of the events happening in and around the conference in Williamsburg. I'd like to invite you to visit our dedicated conference site at: <http://www.vasfaa.org/page-1705067> . Here you will see the full lineup of all of the activities surrounding this event!

Registration is still open, and rooms are still available, so be sure to register and book your room while there is still space!

Again, I wish you all the best, and I look forward to seeing you all in May at Kingsmill!

**-Michael**

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## ***NASFAA Leadership and Legislative Conference 2016***

This past February 22-24, NASFAA hosted its Leadership and Legislative Conference in Arlington, Virginia. Financial aid administrators and state and regional association leaders from all across the country and abroad were in attendance. I had the honor of representing VASFAA at this event.

The first two days participants attended conference sessions of which we had a choice of three pathways: New & Aspiring Aid Directors, Enrollment Management, or Association Management. I mainly attended Enrollment Management sessions and ducked into a couple of the Association Management sessions. As I am sure many of you know, enrollment management continues to be a buzz phrase in higher education, and at institutions across the nation we see more and more of an emphasis placed on enrollment management. As financial aid administrators it is important that we know and understand our roles in the enrollment management framework. Enrollment management roles likely vary from college to college but they also share certain common concepts: focus on institutional mission, commitment to student success, enrollment optimization, providing high quality service, promoting financial health, and making data-driven decisions. Financial aid administrators are in a unique and strong position to take on and excel at roles in the enrollment management framework as we have a long standing commitment to the concepts listed above.

On the third day of the conference, participants took to Capitol Hill to meet with senators and representatives from their respective states. The VASFAA contingent included Christina Russell from Christopher Newport, Kendra Allen from Northern Virginia Community College, and myself. We met with staffers from both Senator Warner's and Senator Kaine's offices as well as staffers from the offices of Representatives Goodlatte (VA-6) and Rigell (VA-2). We received warm welcomes at each of the offices. Our main goal for the visits was to convey to staffers our willingness as members of VASFAA and as the people who work in the field every day to be a resource for them as the reauthorization of the Higher Education Act ramps up. We also spoke with the staffers about issues such as continued efforts at simplification of both the FAFSA process and loan repayment options, different options for summer Pell eligibility, and administratively burdensome policies like R2T4 that keep financial aid officers from the business of working with students.

Reauthorization of the Higher Education Act is still a ways off, but with reforms to K-12 laws on the books the Senate Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions Committee and House Education and Workforce Committee can focus on HEA reauthorization sooner rather than later. The folks in the know in DC are all certain that no decisions or votes of consequence will occur the remainder of this year. In fact, this was the message we heard as we visited with staff members. Once we have moved through the election season, a new president has been inaugurated, and a new session of Congress has begun, we should see some movement on reauthorization in 2017.

***-Chad Sartini, VASFAA President-Elect***

***Left to Right: Christina Russell, Rep. Bob Goodlatte, Kendra Allen, Chad Sartini***



## ***Spring Non-Conference Workshop March 2016***

The Spring Non-Conference Workshop was held on March 24th at University of Mary Washington with 84 in attendance! Topics included: 2016-2017 Verification, Conflict in a Diverse World, Professional Judgment and Satisfactory Academic Progress.

Special thanks to UMW for hosting and to our speakers: Aeysha Ishtiaq, Jackie Cottom, Joan Zanders, Lisa Branson and Tom Kinback.



# ***Leadership Pre-Conference Training***

## ***May 22-23, 2016***

***Leadership Pre-Conference Training*** will be held Sunday, May 22, through Monday morning, May 23. The \$20 registration fee covers lunch on Sunday. Participants are asked to complete Strengths Finder 2.0 (available on Amazon or through most book stores for \$10-15) and bring with them Monday their Strengths Insight Reports and Action Planning Guides, available upon submission of the evaluation tool. The agenda is as follows:

**“If your dreams don’t scare you, they are not big enough!”**– Ellen Johnson Sirleaf

### **Sunday, May 22, 2016**

Welcome and Introductions	Joan Zanders, Chair, VASFAA FOCUS Committee; Director of Financial Aid, NOVA
What is Leadership: The Good, the Bad, and the Ugly	Brett Lief, Chief Strategic Alliance Officer of NSLP/Inceptia
Communication: Your 30-Second Elevator Speech	Billy Ray Davis, Jr., Associate Director of Communication and Enrollment Support, NOVA
Teamwork: Broken Squares Activity	Joan Zanders
Ethical Leadership	FOCUS Committee
<b>Lunch</b>	
Conflict in a Diverse World	Joan Zanders
Frogs & Alligators Activity	
Power 1, 2, 3, 4 Activity	
Grow Your Career	Joel Harrell, Senior Advisor, Customer Experience Group, U.S. Department of Education
Work/Life Balance	Joan Zanders
Day 1 Wrap-Up	

### **Monday Morning, May 23**

Hide Not Your Strengths!	Joan Zanders, Certified Strengths Coach
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Do you have the opportunity to do what you do best *every day*? Chances are you don't. All too often, our natural talents go untapped. From the cradle to the cubicle, we devote more time to fixing our shortcomings than to developing our strengths. Working within your top 5 strengths can assist you in developing your potential as an individual and in maximizing your impact within a team. **Participants must take the Strengths Finder 2.0 evaluation (available on Amazon or in most bookstores for \$10-15) and print off and bring their Strengths Insight Report and Action-Planning Guide to the workshop.** Each of us is unique; Strengths Finder 2.0 provides your “fingerprint”!

## ***New Aid Officer Workshop***

### ***May 22, 2016***

*New Aid Officer Workshop* is a pre-conference event prior to the 2016 VASFAA Conference on May 22nd from 10AM-5PM. The New Aid Officer Workshop is designed for the newer Financial Aid Professional - those with 5 years or less of experience - but all active members of VASFAA are welcome to join.

This year, we will dive into the world of financial aid with a combination of instructional presentations, hands-on exercises, and some financial aid games!

Topics of focus include:

- **FAFSA & Application Process**
- **EFC & Need Analysis**
- **Basic Packaging & Awards**
- **Verification**
- **Tools & Resources**

### ***2015-2016 Sue D. Ross Scholarship Recipient***

*Tarik Boyd, our immediate VASFAA Past-President, had the honor of selecting a recipient for this year's Sue D. Ross Endowed Scholarship. While working at ECPI University this fall, he chose Pamela Beck, who was working towards a Bachelor's of Nursing degree, for our \$1,000 scholarship. Ms. Beck graduated from ECPI in December and was very thankful for VASFAA's support.*

### ***VASFAA Buddy Award***

*Apply for a VASFAA "Buddy Award"! VASFAA members, would like to be partially reimbursed for professional development activities related to financial aid? Or have you wanted to take part in a professional development activity related to your profession but not had the funding support from your school to do so? Then go to the VASFAA website's forms bank page and apply for a New Century Buddy Award! Details available on the application so visit [www.vasfaa.org](http://www.vasfaa.org) now!*

**[VASFAA Buddy Award form](#)**

# Annual VASF<sup>AA</sup> Conference, May 2016



Featured Speakers and Sessions:

- New Aid Officer Pre-Conference Workshop
- Leadership Pre-Conference Workshop
- Amber Johnson U.S. Department of Education – Federal Update and Breakout Sessions
- Mr. Joel Harrell Special Advisor with the U.S. Department of Education
- Mr. E. T. Winzer Department of Education
- Brett Lief Washington Update and Breakout sessions

**MAY 22-25 2016**

See Agenda at:  
<http://www.vasfaa.org/Agenda>



Conference Rates:

Full Conference Attendance: \$245  
 Monday Day Rate: \$150  
 Tuesday Day Rate: \$150

**Join your colleagues on Sunday May 22, 2016, from 10:00am - 5:00pm for your choice of two pre-conference workshops!**

Registration is NOW OPEN for the:  
**VASF<sup>AA</sup> New Aid Officer Workshop**  
**VASF<sup>AA</sup> Leadership Workshop**

Monday, May 23, 2016

StrengthsFinders Workshop  
 in conjunction with  
 Leadership Workshop



# 2016-2017 VASFAA Elections

## Candidates for President-Elect



**Elizabeth “Biz” Daniel**  
*Senior Marketing Associate, Great Lakes*

It is with great passion and enthusiasm that I respectfully submit my statement of candidacy for the position of President-Elect of the Virginia Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators. VASFAA has been a part of my personal and professional life for the past twenty three years and I am proud to be a part of this organization and stand behind its mission to “promote the professional growth and collaboration of our members in order to serve fairly the needs of students, families, and institutions in matters related to financial and informational resources that support students’ postsecondary education goals.”

I have over twenty-three years of experience in the financial aid industry helping to make college a reality for students and promoting the advancement of student education. As an employee of Great Lakes Educational Loan Services, Inc. my responsibilities are to develop and maintain positive customer relations with students to help them understand the responsibility of loans and provide support in repayment, support financial aid professionals at institutions offering tools and resources to help make the most of their time on the job with their students, and organizations within higher education to produce efficient and effective ways to promote a successful student experience. I have been involved with VASFAA on many levels starting as a committee member where I learned the value and dedication of volunteers in promoting this association as well as having

chaired several committees and am currently serving as this year’s Conference Chair. In addition to committee work I have served in the elected positions of Secretary, Representative-At-Large, Treasurer-Elect, and Treasurer.

Serving in these capacities, I have acquired knowledge and value of volunteerism through committee work, the responsibilities of leadership, importance of communication and transparency with the membership, the significance of representation from all sectors, and the responsibility of protecting the fiscal operations to maintain and keep this Association sustainable.

If elected, I promise to continue to promote the mission of VASFAA, represent the Association to the highest level, and continue to foster new ideas in ways that we as an Association can make a positive impact on the lives of students and our institutions. Thank you for this opportunity.



**Heidi Hunter-Goldsworthy**  
*Director of Financial Aid, University of Mary Washington*

It is an honor to be considered for the President-Elect position for VASFAA and I am looking forward to the opportunity to serve the membership. VASFAA is a dynamic organization with a wealth of experience, commitment and comradery that exemplifies the mission of VASFAA to serve the families of Virginia. I came to Virginia over two years ago from Pennsylvania where I served as President of PASFAA and bring with me experience with advocacy, budget management, mentor/training programs and volunteerism that I want to share with VASFAA. Improving the value of VASFAA membership is critical for our membership numbers but we also need to attract more volunteers to continue to make a difference in Virginia. Volunteers are needed to fill committee and council positions, for expansion of our FAFSA completion, Financial Aid awareness, professional development and lobbying efforts in either state or federal advocacy arenas. Our financial resources have been limited, so it is important to examine our financial stability to improve our income stream to insure the future of our organization. The only constant is that the world of financial aid is going to change, so why not be the organization that people look to for guidance and information. VASFAA can, should and will continue to make a real difference in so many lives. Thank you again for this opportunity to serve.

### Relevant Service record:

- PASFAA President-elect 2010-2011
- Chair, PASFAA Strategic Planning Committee 2010-2011
- Member, PASFAA Budget and Finance Committee 2010-2011
- Member, PHEAA State Grant Advisory Committee 2010-2013
- PASFAA President 2011-2012
- Chair, PASFAA Membership and Governance Committee 2011-12
- Member, PASFAA Government Relations Committee 2011-2013
- PASFAA Past President 2012-2013
- PASFAA representative to EASFAA Council 2012-2013
- Member, SASFAA Government Relations Committee 2014-2015
- NASFAA Task Force for Program Integrity 2014-2015
- NASFAA Rapid Response Team 2015-2016
- VASFAA Membership Chair 2015-2016

## Candidates for Representative-at-Large



**Thom Brashears**

*Director of Financial Aid, Virginia Military Institute*

As I have continued to grow in the Financial Aid profession I have become enamored with what we are able to do for students as they work to achieve their educational goals. My life's passion is helping people and with that I possess a strong desire to serve this profession and offer my knowledge and experience gained from working with a variety of students. I look forward to this opportunity with great anticipation.

Thomas A. Brashears became the Director of Financial Aid on 1 December 2015. Prior to this, Thom had served as the Associate Director of Financial Aid at VMI since July of 2013. Thom came to VMI in 2013 from Health Net, Inc. where he served as the Deputy Program Director & Director of Operations for the Military & Family Life Counseling (MFLC) Program, a very large government program designed to supplement the mental and behavioral health support for the military and their families.

Prior to Health Net, Thom worked at Ideal Innovations, Inc. where he served as a Training Integrator responsible for shepherding new training initiatives through the acquisition process of the Joint Improvised Explosive Device Defeat Organization (JIEDDO). Prior to that, Thom was a Senior Military Analyst with Alion Science & Technology in Washington, D.C.

As a former Army Artillery Officer, Thom served 10 years, 11 months on Active Duty including a 15-month tour in Baghdad and a 7-month tour in the Balkans. Thom deployed to Iraq with the 1st Armored Division in April of 2003 as Battery Commander for Charlie Battery, 2nd Battalion, 3rd Field Artillery. After a couple months in country, Thom transitioned to assume command of Headquarters & Headquarters Company (HHC) 1st Armored Division. Thom's final assignment on active duty was as the MS-III Branch Chief and Cadre Operations Officer for the VMI Army ROTC Department.

Thom graduated from VMI in 1995 with a Bachelors of Arts Degree in History, with a Minor in English. He earned a Master of Arts Degree in Management & Leadership from Liberty University in 2013 and will complete a second Master's Degree from Liberty in Executive Leadership in 2016. Thom also holds a Certificate in Executive Education from the Anderson School of Management at the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA). He is married to the former Bethany "Jill" Glick of Dayton, Virginia and they have two children, a daughter Alanah and son Blake.



**Billy Ray Davis**

*Associate Director, Northern Virginia Community College*

Thank you for the nomination for VASFAA Representative-at-Large. I welcome the opportunity to serve and pledge to do my best if elected.

Billy Ray is a retired Navy Public Affairs officer with over ten years' experience in Student Aid. He is an experienced communications team member, participating in and managing various aspects of corporate and crisis communications including the gathering, production, and distribution of news and media to all organizational stakeholders. I consider myself to be a seasoned communications program manager for strategic communications, internal communications, external media engagement, community relations, as well as outreach coordination.

Since joining the staff at Northern Virginia Community College, or NOVA, Billy Ray has spearheaded the internal and external communications efforts for the College Financial Aid Office. Our office communicates with our NOVA constituents via various mediums including social media, web content virtual documents, and print products. As the Assistant Director for

Communications it is my mandate to effectively engage and inform the current and future students on the, process, procedures and benefits of financial aid as they pursue the American Dream here at NOVA. Billy Ray also served as the Public Relations Committee Chair for VASFAA. I am excited to have this opportunity to provide greater support and leadership within our state organization.

Outside of NOVA, Billy Ray is an engaged and enthusiastic father who lives with his family in Burke, VA. Additionally, he is pursuing his Doctoral degree in Higher Ed. at George Mason University. Billy Ray loves to play golf, and enjoys spending time outdoors. He has been fortunate to have visited six of the seven continents of the world (he has not yet made it to Antarctica!) and lived in both Europe and Asia.

Billy Ray is excited to be a part of NOVA as both faculty and staff; and he is looking forward to a very rewarding career doing what he loves— Teaching!

## Candidates for Representative-at-Large (cont.)



**Shaune Gregg**

*Financial Assistance Advisor, ECPI University*

It is an honor to be nominated for VASFAA's Representative-at-Large position. I would like to thank VASFAA for considering me for this essential position. I have had the pleasure of serving in the following VASFAA capacities:

- Newsletter Committee Chair, 2015-16 (currently serving)
- Non-Conference Committee Member, 2015-16 (currently serving)
- Conference Committee Member, 2015-16 (currently serving)
- Newsletter Committee Co-Chair, 2014-15
- Conference Committee Chair, 2013-14
- Public Relations Committee Chair, 2012-13

I am detail-oriented, organized and determined and I believe these characteristics would help me to serve as your Representative-at-Large. I have also earned a Bachelor of Science in Finance from ODU. I have been in the financial aid field for 9 years (Bryant & Stratton College and ECPI University) and 8 years in overseeing grant budget spending at Norfolk State University which totals over 17 years in the Education Industry.

My professional membership in VASFAA began in 2005. The training and professional development opportunities offered has been a valuable and intricate part of my success as a financial aid administrator. It was in 2010 that my VASFAA volunteerism began and you can say that I've been bitten by the VASFAA Bug. I have also served on numerous community-related committees such as: NSU Baseball Booster Club, Bethany Baptist Church (BBC) New Members Banquet Committee, and BBC Pastor's Anniversary Committee.

If I am elected as Rep-at-Large, I pledge to give it my all. I welcome the opportunity to serve as the Representative-at-Large for VASFAA!



**Stephanie Walden**

*Financial Aid Counselor, Old Dominion University*

My name is Stephanie Walden and I consider it an honor and a privilege to be your Representative-at-Large nominee. I hold a Bachelor of Science in Interdisciplinary Studies and I am currently seeking a Master in Public Administration both from Old Dominion University. I was given the opportunity to enter the exciting field of financial aid at ECPI University where I began as a Student Financial Advisor. Since then, I have transitioned to Old Dominion University where I am currently a Financial Aid Counselor. Having exposure to the public sector as well as the private sector will increase my efficiency and effectiveness to serve as your representative. I began volunteering with VASFAA a few years ago where I saw a glimpse of the many benefits, resources, knowledge and networking opportunities associated within our great

organization. I have previously served as the Public Relation Chair for VASFAA, as well as served on the Conference Committee. I also volunteer with various church ministries and events as well as volunteer with The UP Center. I eagerly welcome the opportunity to expand my service and am obligated to do my best. Thank you for your consideration, I will not let you down!

## Candidate for Treasurer-Elect



**Debra Johnson**

*Director of Financial Aid, Jefferson College of Health Sciences*

It is certainly an honor to be included in the nomination as VASFAA Treasurer. I have worked on the VASFAA Conference Committee and enjoyed being a part of the team. I have also been a part of the Secondary School Relations Committee. I believe that the position of Treasurer would allow me to continue learning while serving the association and supporting the mission of VASFAA. I am currently the Director of Financial Aid at Jefferson College of Health Sciences, where I have served since 2000. I earned a Bachelor's Degree from Bluefield College in Organizational Management and Development and a Masters Degree from Averett University in Business Administration. I am the mother of three children, 2 adult sons and a daughter, who is currently attending a Virginia College.

I look forward to expanding my professional involvement in VASFAA, and I am eager to have an opportunity to serve in this capacity.

*"Tell me and I'll forget. Show me and I'll remember. Involve me and I'll understand." -Confucius*

**Voting will begin shortly before the Annual Conference held at Kingsmill Resort in Williamsburg, VA.**

## ***Awareness/FOCUS Corner***

April:

Concept 4: "No One Has a Corner  
on All the Good Ideas."

## VASFAA on the Move

Chad Sartini, Michael Farris, Ashley Reich & Tarik Boyd



*The many faces of our VASFAA presidents: Past, Present and Future at SASFAA 2016.*



**SASFAA Board Meeting  
Greensboro, NC**

## **Coming Soon:**

- ♦ **May 2016 Conference Information**
- ♦ **Next Newsletter Publication Date: May 13, 2016**

**This Editions featured destination in Virginia.**

## **Kingsmill Resort**

- ♦ **Picture: Aerial view of the resort**
- ♦ **May 2016 VASFAA Conference Site**
- ♦ **Site of the Woman's LPGA Championship May 16-22, 2016**
- ♦ **Nearby attractions: Busch Gardens, Water Country USA, Colonial Williamsburg**

**Have questions or submissions?**

**Contact the Newsletter Chair:**

**Shaune Gregg**

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