



## Letter From The President

### Greg Gearhart, PASFAA President

I want to start out by saying that I am very excited to be writing the President's Letter in the first issue of our new electronic newsletter, the PASFAA Post. I've supported this idea for a number of years and I think that Newsletter Editor Keri Neidig and her committee, in cooperation with a number of other persons within PASFAA, have created something that we can all be proud of.

Did you ever wonder how a PASFAA President decides what to write about in these articles? As I was trying to decide on the topic for my first message, I kept thinking about the show *Seinfeld*, which is often referred to as the 'show about nothing'. What if all I can write is an article that says nothing? Well, I certainly don't want to do that, especially in the inaugural issue of the PASFAA Post. So I approached this task by first asking myself what I want to tell the members of PASFAA. Do I want to talk about what a great organization we have and how we are fiscally sound despite the challenges our industry has faced recently? Do I want to mention what a great job the conference committee did with the recent conference in State College, and talk about how the conference committee for next year is already hard at work on what I know will be another great conference? Or do I want to talk about the slate of events that PASFAA will undertake this coming year? All of those things are well worth mentioning, but you'll hear more about all of them in various ways throughout the year.

Instead, I want to use this first article to do something a little different. I thought I would simply introduce myself. I've been a financial aid administrator in Pennsylvania for 23 years, so many of you know me quite well. But every time I attend a PASFAA conference or other event, I meet someone new. So I thought you might like to know a little more about the person who will lead your association for the coming year.

At the PASFAA Council meeting held right after our recent conference, I handed out a document entitled '*Things to know about Greg*'. Here's a slightly edited version of that document which should serve to give you a little bit of an idea of who I am.

- I am not Captain Kirk.
- I do not always think of every detail that needs to be considered. I rely on each of you for help with this.
- I do not immediately know the answer to every question. I will often tell you that I don't know and that I need to investigate.
- I cannot usually make immediate decisions on any issue. I often need time to review the information and consider.
- I often say stupid things.
- Let me know if I can do something better, but be willing to listen if I don't think your way is better.
- You cannot judge me by your perception of my attitude. If I tell you I am thinking or feeling a certain thing, that is really what I am thinking or feeling, even though you might perceive me differently.
- I pretty much tell it like I see it. I will usually tell you just what I think of something. Please understand that is just a circumstance of my personality and nothing else. It is never my intention to offend anyone.
- I do not have a cell phone. I know most of you are staring in shocked disbelief at that statement. Yes, I can live without one of those pesky little devices.
- My family is very important to me. If you attended our recent conference and were at the business meeting at 9:30 on Tuesday night, you might have heard my speech, in which I jokingly referred to my wife as the first lady of PASFAA and mentioned her suggestion that my acceptance speech focus on reindeer. Well, aside from that particular comment, my wife is one of my most trusted advisors and she almost certainly will be providing advice on some aspect of PASFAA business this year.

Hopefully you got a little laughter and a lot of insight from those points.

The main thing I want you to know is that I and all the members of PASFAA Council are here to work for you. Several of you have already taken the opportunity to contact me with your thoughts on various issues and I encourage each of you to let me, or any member of Council, know if you have questions, comments, or concerns.

We have an excellent group of leaders on PASFAA Council this year and I'm really looking forward to working with Council and all of the members of PASFAA as we carry out the Association's work. Several past PASFAA Presidents have told me how quickly this year will go by and it already feels like the year is flying past. Please work with me to make it a great year.

Respectfully,

*Greg Gearhart*

PS - The First Lady says, 'Did anyone see the reindeer in December?'

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## Naming The PASFAA Post

El McClelland, Newsletter Committee

Congratulations to Megan Jones, a financial aid counselor at Central Pennsylvania College whose entry was selected as the new name for the PASFAA Newsletter. Megan has a background in finance and has worked in retail and government banking. She is happily married with a beautiful little girl, Athena, who is 22 months old. When asked what her inspiration was, she responded by stating it's her enjoyment of word play, alliteration and rhymes (probably influenced by all the children's books she reads to Athena).

Megan says, "I was very excited to come to PASFAA this year. I heard wonderful things about what had happened in previous years and was very interested to see what was in store. I met so many wonderful people and learned so many new things that help me do the best job I can. I was especially happy to be able to participate in the naming of the newsletter. I had originally thought of PSST! PASFAA Post, since I enjoy catchy, quirky humor that my husband refers to as "Megan Humor". I liked the idea of something that was easy and quick-witted and I am glad I wasn't the only one who agreed. Thanks to everyone that voted!"



Megan Jones

## PASFAA Post: The Logo Is Unveiled

Michael DeGroft, Co-chair Technology Committee

During the 2009 PASFAA Conference, the association came together and the winning newsletter name was born: "PASFAA Post". In an effort to create this new identity, freshman students at Thaddeus Stevens College of Technology, majoring in Graphic Communications and Printing Technology were given a project to create a logo. The Newsletter Committee, Technology Advisory and Electronic Initiatives Committee, and Executive Council voted on the student submissions. There were nearly 100 logos submitted!

Congratulations to Megan Fisher, a 2006 graduate of Cocalico High School. As the winner, PASFAA will be awarding a \$500.00 scholarship for her accomplishment.

Megan began working for TeddyBear Sportswear and Promotions as a Service Support Specialist immediately upon graduating from high school. With the instruction and guidance of her boss she learned the basics of Graphics. Megan enrolled at Thaddeus Stevens College of Technology to enhance her knowledge of varying software systems and gather the experience to be successful. She will be engaging in an internship with the Vanity Fair outlets shortly. Megan enjoys her current job and is looking to maintain her position upon graduation in the spring of 2010.



**Michael DeGroft, Director of Financial Aid at Thaddeus Stevens College of Technology presents Megan Fisher, Graphics Communications major, with her scholarship check. Congratulations to Megan for designing the PASFAA Post logo!**

# 2008 Conference...That Was One Amazing Journey!

Cheryl De Paolis, 2008 Conference Chair



<i>Fee for the 4 Day 2008 PASFAA Conference</i>	<i>\$200</i>
<i>Lodging and Food per Day</i>	<i>\$246</i>
<i>Sharing Laughs, Learning &amp; Eating Too Much</i>	<i>Priceless</i>

The 2008 PASFAA Conference was a true celebration of our association's 40 year amazing journey. Four hundred and twenty-five PASFAA members journeyed to the Penn Stater Hotel and Conference Center in October for four days of networking, learning and, of course, fun!

The new Community Area was the hub of activity on Sunday as members arrived. The jukebox rocked while PASFAA members enjoyed the continuously rolling pictures taken over the last 40 years. There was something for everyone; the First Timers Welcome Table, the Charity Baskets, and the Cyber Café. Inside Dean's Hall, our Business Partners welcomed us with new updates.

The summer-like day was an indication of how perfect the week would be. It allowed the President's Welcoming Reception to be held outside in the courtyard where friends relived old memories while munching on hor d'oeuvres. Anticipation grew as Dwight Horsey presided over the Opening Business Meeting for our 40th year kick-off celebration. After dinner, we were led in a joyous rendition of "Happy Birthday PASFAA" by the Promissory Notes and Jerry Sandusky, founder of The Second Mile and retired PSU defensive coordinator, entertained the crowd with football anecdotes.

Networking opportunities were present all day but never more than after dinner. While being entertained by DeeJay Eric, the Corn Hole Tournament began under the direction of Rick Sparks. Winners of the first tournament were Duquesne University's Rich Esposito and Dana Staudt. They did not retain their championship crowns long as they were unseated in the second tournament by Jeanine Lawn and Joni Trovato from the University of Pittsburgh at Johnstown.

Monday morning began bright and early with a Boot Camp for Beginners and Intermediates, led by motivational speaker, Tracy Dorsey, a cancer survivor who went on to win Mr. America. He challenged our members to some early morning exercise and smiles.

One of Dwight's priorities was to welcome our First Timers. MaryKay Klara had organized a contact list so each newcomer had someone to personally greet them. They were also treated to a welcoming gift and special invitation to the First Timers Breakfast. The Monday breakfast mingling was so successful that speeches had to be cut short. We hope that our First-Timers felt the excitement of being a part of the PASFAA family.

Another Monday highlight was the Sector Ice Cream Challenge. What a close competition! Each Sector

Representative chose an ice cream flavor from the famous PSU Creamery. Members were treated to a taste of each and asked to vote for their favorite. Our Sector Reps revealed their competitive instinct as Annette Kelly from the Public Two-Year Sector dressed as a giant banana with her sidekick, a giant M&M. Kudos to the winning State-Related Sector led by Brandi Darr who squeaked ahead of the competition with Death by Chocolate ice cream and whipped crème topping.

Each year our members comment that by Monday afternoon, they are mentally exhausted. This year was no exception as our presenters offered timely and intriguing sessions. To remedy that, special Self-Improvement sessions were planned to close the day. PASFAA members enjoyed cooking with Chef Colleen, scrap booking, self defense, ballroom dancing, stress reduction and retirement advice.

After a wonderful buffet dinner, the much anticipated

***"The Monday breakfast mingling was so successful that speeches had to be cut short. We hope that our First-Timers felt the excitement of being a part of the PASFAA family."***

Amazing Quest began. Led by Matt Stokan, Rick Sparks and Mary Jo Phillips, PASFAA members enjoyed another networking opportunity, this time with lipstick and hand clappers! When voting ended in a tie, our illustrious leader Dwight issued an edict that all groups must perform. Let me just say that The Wizard of Oz has been forever changed in my mind and if you skipped off to bed early...you missed truly amazing performances by our colleagues. The day's fun wasn't over yet. Some members took advantage of the transportation downtown to stroll through State College. Those that stayed at the hotel were invited to enjoy a relaxing evening of board games and cards.

Tuesday began with the Amazing 2K Charity Race. Nearly 100 racers participated to raise funds for The Second Mile. The highlight of the day was the Membership Luncheon with 22 Past Presidents in attendance. The Promissory Notes entertained us again and received the largest applause of the week with Matt Stokan's rendition of the 1968 hit "I Say a Little Prayer". The presidents of NASFAA and EASFAA also attended to address our members.

***2008 Conference...That Was One Amazing Journey (continued from page 4)***

Tuesday dinner was followed by the Closing Business Meeting when Dwight Horsey reluctantly passed the gavel to Greg Gearhart. The evening's entertainment began after Keynote Speaker, Ronald Smith addressed our membership. Back by popular demand, Corn Hole was dragged out again for informal play while we danced to the music of Velveeta. PASFAA members dressed in full 1968 regalia. Tie dye, granny glasses, mini skirts and hippies...what a tough decision to choose the best costume. Dancing lasted throughout the night and the biggest mystery...Where did JoePa go?

The conference concluded on Wednesday after the very informative AES/PHEAA updates. Many people reluctantly said good-bye, but with promises to meet again at next year's conference in Valley Forge.

I would like to thank everyone who made this conference the "Best Conference Ever". To our presenters - your contribution was the key to the success of the entire Conference. The vendors - who cheerfully offered products and services to meet our needs. To Mike Byers for coordinating Cyber Café, AV needs in each session room and the PowerPoint presentations at each meal. To PHEAA for providing laptops and projectors. To Dwight Horsey and the entire PASFAA Council for their support and Mysti Dinger for coordinating The Promissory Notes. Thanks to everyone who stepped up to the plate every time I asked for another favor. And finally (and most importantly), the 2008 Conference Committee. You are an amazing group of individuals.

**Cheri Kramer  
Kyle Mosley  
Mary Jo Phillips  
Julie Salem  
Rick Sparks**

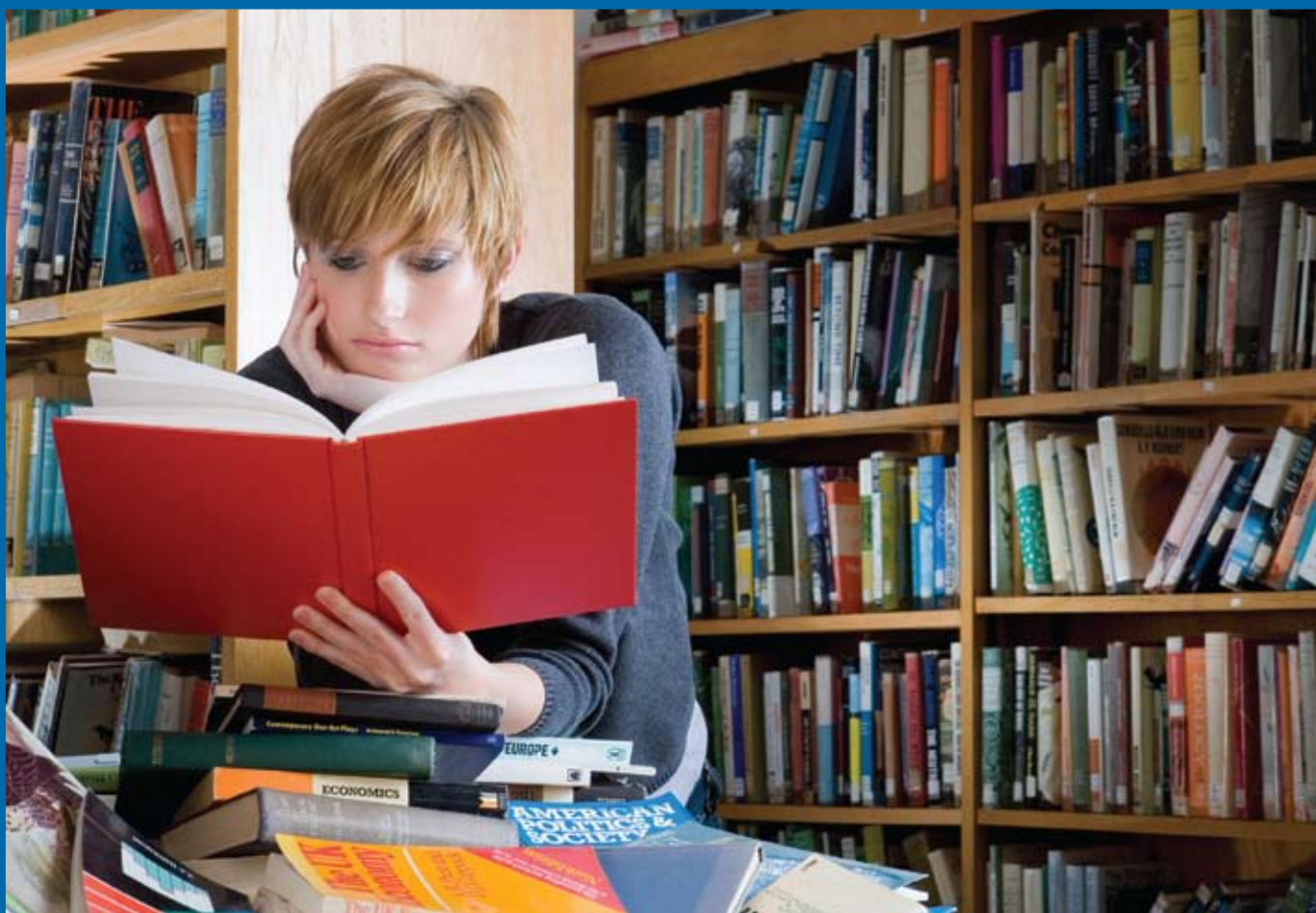
**Matt Stokan  
Dana Suter  
Joni Trovato  
Jynhae Tyler**

So much to celebrate: the past, the present, the future...the amazing journey!

**VIEW PHOTOS**







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# PASFAA Does It Again!



**Cheryl De Paolis, Chair Conference Committee**

This year PASFAA adopted the charity, The Second Mile. The Second Mile challenges young people to achieve their potential by giving them opportunities to develop positive life skills and self-esteem. It also provides education and support for parents.

We were privileged to have founder, Jerry Sandusky, speak on Monday evening. The Second Mile had been his dream for many years. The agency was an outgrowth of his home, which included six adopted children, foster children, and fresh-air kids. Today, with the help of a small staff and hundreds of volunteers and donors, The Second Mile provides nine prevention, early intervention and community-based programs to more than 100,000 children across Pennsylvania.

Mr. Sandusky entertained PASFAA members with anecdotes from his years as defensive coordinator for the Penn State University football team where he spent 32 years stopping national championship-caliber teams. Many considered him to be the leading candidate to succeed Head Coach Joe Paterno. Upon his retirement, he explained his departure from football was due to his yearning to spend more time with the children who benefit from The Second Mile. PASFAA was happy to present this deserving agency with a check for \$5347 plus a dozen boxes of supplies.

A special thank-you goes to our golf outing organizer, Patty Peterson and to our golfers. It was another perfect fall day on the links. The leaves were at their height of glory and the sun was blazing. The Penn State White Course was in its usual superb condition, but it was the camaraderie that was amazing. The golfers donated \$210 to our cause.

Tuesday morning began with a 2K Amazing Race organized by Cheri Kramer. Donned in neon green shirts, almost 100 participants took to the track in the early morning dew. The Amazing Racers donated \$1215 to The Second Mile. Winners of the Race were:

Male Runner

Mike Byers

Female Runner

Kelly Fox

Boldest Runner

Jim Anderson

Male Walker

Jason Van Sickle

Female Walker

Cindy Magdinec

As successful as the other events were, it was the Charity Basket Raffle that proved just how generous PASFAA members are. Unbelievably, we doubled 2007's proceeds. The Conference Committee created most of the baskets with donations from Giant Eagle, Target, The Techs, and Pampered Chef. PELA also donated a very popular basket containing gift certificates valuing \$250. This year the gloves came off for The Amazing Sector Basket Challenge. Each Sector created a basket and the winning basket was determined by the number of tickets submitted for it. Congratulations to Linda Ebel and the Private Sector. Thanks to everyone who helped make the raffle a huge success.

Golf Outing	\$ 210.00
Amazing Race	\$ 915.00
MetLife Donation	\$ 250.00
Basket Raffle	\$2972.00
PASFAA Match	<u>\$1000.00</u>
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$5347.00</b>

Thank you again to all who so generously donated this year.



THE  
SECOND  
MILE

October 31, 2008

PA Association Student Financial Aid Administrators  
Mr. Dwight Horsey  
Millersville University  
PO Box 1002  
Millersville, PA 17551

**State Office**

1402 S. Atherton Street  
State College, PA 16801  
(814) 237-1719  
FAX: (814) 237-4605

**Southcentral  
Regional Office**

3607 Rosemont Avenue,  
Suite 501  
Camp Hill, PA 17011  
(717) 763-4614  
FAX: (717) 763-4616

**Southeast  
Regional Office**

Parkview Tower  
1150 First Avenue,  
Suite 150  
King of Prussia, PA 19406  
(610) 491-9440  
FAX: (610) 491-9441

[www.thesecondmile.org](http://www.thesecondmile.org)

Dear Mr. Horsey:

Last year, The Second Mile served more than 100,000 children statewide – tens of thousands with our prevention programs in the elementary and middle schools and another 5000-plus through early intervention and community-based programs like our Challenge camps; our Friend, Friend Fitness, and Foster Family Support Programs; and the Children's Fund. How is it possible to reach so many with a staff so small? YOU are a huge part of what makes that outreach possible!

We could not provide . . .

caring adult mentors,  
safe places and activities,  
healthy choices,  
marketable skills, and  
service opportunities for the children we serve

without special projects such as yours, which provide us with the means to support these programs and to train volunteers. Many of the youngsters we serve have experienced the disappointments of broken promises, but donations such as yours ensure continued services and promises kept.

Thank you for caring enough to make the difference in the lives of children, for helping The Second Mile provide the opportunities of today and the building blocks to a successful tomorrow. We are thrilled that you chose to invest your time and energy in raising funds for The Second Mile, and we thank you for your contribution of \$5097.31.

With our thanks for providing help and hope,

*Katherine E. Genovese*  
Katherine E. Genovese  
Vice President, Program

*Thank you for helping of  
us make dreams of  
post-secondary education  
for Second Mile  
youth! True*



## From The Editor's Desk

Keri Neidig, Newsletter Editor

"Wow" - that's about all I can say about the process of going electronic with the PASFAA Post. I would like to thank everyone, including Council, the Technology Committee and certainly the Newsletter Committee for coming through when I needed them most.

We hope you enjoy the first stage of the e-newsletter and look forward to collecting your feedback shortly. Be on the lookout for a quick, online survey so we may focus on items that are important to each of you in future issues.

### Newsletter Committee Members:

Yolanda Beattie, PSU - York Campus  
 Colleen Coudriet, DuBois Business College  
 Peter D'Annibale, Shippensburg University  
 Mysti Dinger, IUP, Culinary  
 Vince Frank, Harrisburg University  
 Linda Gaston, Mt. Aloysius College  
 Cindy Heaton, Lock Haven University  
 Manny Loera, Edfund  
 El McClelland, Citizen's Bank  
 Jennifer Miller, Members 1st Federal Credit Union  
 Denise Nuccio, Montgomery County Community College  
 Cathy Poiesz, Messiah College  
 Liz Rihl-Lewinsky, Arcadia University  
 Amanda Scheler, PNC Bank  
 Melissa Wisniewski, Harrisburg Area Community College

Best Regards and Happy New Year!

Keri Neidig  
 Newsletter Editor



**Members of the Newsletter Committee begin planning the year's articles**

### **Addendum to the "I'd Like to Thank" article in the Fall 2008 PASFAA newsletter:**

Melissa Walsh, Director of Financial Aid at Rosemont College shared that Robyn Barto may not have "necessarily planned" on working in financial aid, but that the "knowledge could assist her when counseling students in other areas." Robyn Barto, Assistant Director of Financial Aid at Bryn Mawr College, has been working in financial aid now for 11 years. Robyn attributes her career path to the inspiration bequested by her mentors in the Student Affairs in Higher Education grad program at IUP: Fred Joseph, Chris Zuzack, Bill Srsic, Patti McCarthy, Aileen Bowman, Alisa DeStefano and Vonnie Hunter.



## 2008 Association Awards

Each year, PASFAA Council presents the Association's awards at the Membership Recognition Luncheon. Congratulations to this year's recipients.

### EMERGING LEADER AWARD

This award is made to an individual who, within approximately five years of entering the profession, has demonstrated consistent service to and involvement in PASFAA and its projects.

This year's recipient is Michael DeGroft, Director of Financial Aid and Registrar at Thaddeus Stevens College of Technology. Michael stepped up this year to take on the responsibility of Co-Chairing the Technology Committee. He has worked throughout the year to help keep PASFAA on track with its technology needs. Although only in the profession for five years, he has risen to the level of Director and taken on leadership of both the Registrar and Financial Aid Offices.

### PASFAA LEADERSHIP AWARD

The Leadership Award provides recognition to an individual who has provided outstanding leadership to the Association.

The recipient of this year's Leadership Award, Brandi Darr, is a familiar face to most of us. She's not one to stand out... but stands up when needed. Brandi is the State-Related Sector Representative and although she has been dealing with some difficult issues this year, she didn't hesitate to accomplish additional tasks within the Association. I personally want to thank her for demonstrating the qualities I value in a leader. Brandi is the Director of Financial Aid at the University of Pittsburg-Greensburg.

### PRESIDENT'S AWARD

The President's Award is given to an individual who has provided exemplary leadership and or service to PASFAA in the last year and whose actions have helped to advance the goals and objectives of the Association.

As President, I had the opportunity to work with many talented individuals. Kathryn Griffiths, former Training Manager at AES, was one of those people. From the beginning, Kathryn was there to provide information and handle many details that arose, enabling me to focus on larger issues. A phone call here, an email there...these communications allowed for my smooth transition as President. It was the 'little things' that kept me and PASFAA on track. For this reason, I chose Kathryn to receive the President's Award.

### DISTINGUISHED SERVICE AWARD

The Distinguished Service Award is given to an individual who has made significant contributions to PASFAA through leadership activities and or research. This award recognizes service to our Association over a period of professional involvement and not a single event or activity.

This year's recipient is known to every member of the Association. You've seen her name, you've seen her work,

but you may not have seen the dedication and years of behind-the-scenes work she has done. Her work is in some ways the glue that has held PASFAA together. It's hard to think of PASFAA and not think of our Distinguished Service Award winner, Joan Holleran, Associate Director of Financial Aid at Kutztown University.



## WE'VE BEEN IN COLLEGE FOR OVER 35 YEARS (WITH NO PLANS TO GRADUATE).

After 35 years in the college funding business, we're still committed to helping students plan and pay for college. To strengthen that commitment, we've introduced the Education Investment Planner.<sup>SM</sup> It makes calculating college costs easier for your students and their families. Take a few minutes to try it at: **[SallieMae.com/TryThePlan](http://SallieMae.com/TryThePlan)**



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## Award Recipients Express Thanks

I would like to thank those individuals who nominated and voted for me as this year's recipient of the **Emerging Leader Award**. This award came as a complete surprise and I am honored to have received it. I know that there are other deserving individuals within PASFAA and I'm flattered to have been the 2008 recipient. This award has rejuvenated me in pursuing future involvement within the organization. Someday, I hope to be an inspiration for new members as so many individuals have been for me.



Michael DeGroft, Director of Financial Aid/Registrar,  
Thaddeus Stevens College of Technology

Dear Dwight and PASFAA Council:

I am both touched and honored to receive the PASFAA **President's Award**. Thank you so much!

I had such a good time working with the PFAT committees and it was a job I believed in 100%. I was impressed training events are entirely developed by volunteers who devote many hours of their own time to ensure its success. Training opportunities are easily accessible, affordable, and sends participants away with more than just handouts; but contact information of seasoned pros to answer your questions anytime. You get the information, the tools AND the contacts to take back to your office.

Above all, I was impressed that PASFAA members work together to make sure the next generation of financial aid professionals succeeds. They share information, resources, and advice. The support network within the financial aid community is astounding. I've never seen anything like it. They are like family and I am privileged to have been a part of it.

Supporting the PFAT committees has been a thoroughly enjoyable, rewarding experience. Each committee was unique and fun in their own way, and all were hardworking and enthusiastic. Working with PFAT & PASFAA gave me an opportunity to learn many aspects of the financial aid profession as well as make many lifelong friends.

Thank you for recognizing my work with this award and thank you for including me in your family for the past couple of years. I enjoyed every minute!

Kathryn Griffith

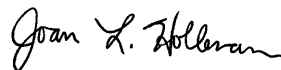
Dear Dwight and the 2007-08 PASFAA Council:

Thank you for selecting me as the recipient of this year's **Distinguished Service Award**. What an unexpected honor! I am humbled to be recognized for my contribution to our association and to be in the company of prior award winners whose service and commitment to our profession I so much admire.

Working along side other PASFAA volunteers has afforded me so many opportunities to grow, both personally and professionally. I am grateful to be part of an organization whose strength and pride is the people who are in it. During my many years of service as the newsletter editor, I cannot recall even once when I reached out to a fellow PASFAA member who turned down my request for help. In challenging times like these, this speaks volumes about how much we support and lift each other up. I cannot imagine not being a member of PASFAA.

Thank you again for recognizing me with this most prestigious award.

Sincerely,



Joan L. Holleran, Associate Director of Financial Aid,  
Kutztown University of Pennsylvania



*Award Recipients Express Thanks (continued from page 12)*

Dear Council, Friends, and Colleagues,

Surprise...Shock...I can not describe my feelings when I heard my name announced as the recipient of the PASFAA **Leadership Award**. My first thought was "me?" Why me, when there are so many people deserving of this award?

PASFAA is an "amazing" organization made up of "amazing" people. I am proud to have the opportunity to be a part of PASFAA and be able to share my passion and enthusiasm for our profession. We make a difference...in students' lives...within our organization...and within the financial aid community.

I am humbled and truly honored to be this year's Leadership Award recipient. Thank you for this special recognition.

*Brandi S Darr*

Brandi Darr, Director of Financial Aid, University of Pittsburgh - Greensburg

## Fundamentals Training Gives Basic Overview to New Aid Administrators

**Dr. James Theeuwes, Chair Fundamentals Training**

The Fundamentals Training session was held at the Penn Stater hotel on October 11th & 12th, immediately preceding the annual 2008 PASFAA conference. The 18 registered participants consisted of aid officers representing many a variety of school sectors including four year private, two year community college, and business, trade and technical schools.

Thank you to the presenters: Gary Means, Westmorland Community College and Joan Hock, Delaware Valley College. They did a wonderful job! We discussed the application process, EFC, Cost of Attendance, NSLDS, Professional Judgment, Satisfactory Academic Progress and much more. The session materials were right on the mark and the opportunity for questions existed throughout the training.

New for this year was a voluntary evening session. This session provided participants an opportunity to 'bond' with each other and their instructors, heightening their understanding about the PASFAA organization and the financial aid industry.

On day two, a visit from Past-President Dwight Horsey highlighted the association and what it means to be an active member. This was well received by the group.

I would like to thank all committee members: Joan Hock, Gary Means, Reggan Walker, Julie Hofmann, Maryann Hubick, Shannon Stump and Heather Sperratore for all the hard work and

input. Special thanks to Karen Fooks, Henry Chance and Julie Salem of AES for their support. Also, a special thanks to Kathy Griffith formerly of AES for helping out another 'newbie' with the task of being a committee chairmen and answering all of my questions.

This year's participants included:

AVA BLACKWELL  
KATIE BOWERS  
ERIN BRATTON  
MAK CHHOEUNG  
KRYSTAL COOKE  
EUGENIA DELEON  
JESSICA GANGEMI  
MELISSA JENKINS  
MEGAN JONES

CHRISTINE MCFERREN  
ANGELA MOTTO  
CHRISTOPHER MOWL  
DEBORAH OLIVIER  
REBECCA RUTKOWSKI  
BRENDA SHOCKEY  
PETER TERESA VAGE  
TAMMY WATKINS  
AMBER ZICK



**Fundamentals Training 2008 Class Picture**



# Leadership Development Takes Hands-On Learning to the Next Level

**Amanda Scheler, Co-Chair Leadership and Development Committee**

The Leadership and Development Committee did something a little bit different this year. They took advantage of the resources that State College has to offer and took the Leadership participants outside – to Shaver’s Creek.

Shaver’s Creek is the PSU Environmental Center located about fourteen miles south of State College. Not only is it used for PSU student courses, but also to provide programs for schools, children and teachers, and Teambuilding / Leadership training for adults.

Held on Saturday prior to the annual PASFAA Conference, participants enjoyed a beautiful day outside. They benefited from challenging outdoor activities, like the balance wheel, that allowed participants to put their “indoor” learning into practice. There was a large amount of laughter as the group enjoyed getting to know each other in a hands-on environment.

The following morning, participants were back “in class” at the Penn Stater, where guest speaker, Dr. Barbara Denison from Shippensburg University, built upon the programs from the day before. While working in small groups, participants discussed leadership and change. Then, they put their knowledge to the test as they related it to changes in the financial aid world.

The program ended with a discussion on becoming a leader, not only in their workplace, but also within the PASFAA organization. Overall, it was a great way to kick-off the 2008 PASFAA conference.

PASFAA members that would like to participate in the future should look for announcements for the 2010 conference.

## Leadership Committee:

Chair	Tracey Wyrwas
Co-Chair	Amanda Scheler
	Jamie Kosh
	Mysti Dinger

## Thank you to the following participants:

Melissa Albert	Carolyn Julian
Linda Ebel	Jeanine Lawn
Linda Gaston	Denise Nuccio
Christine Gilchrist	Cathy Poesz
Joanna Hastings	Laura Rup
Lucy Huffman	Andrea Stauffer
Heidi Hunter-Goldsworthy	Melissa Wisnewski
Christine Kolenda	





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# The Promissory Notes: The Story Behind the Music

Mysti Dinger, Promissory Note and Newsletter Committee Member

How many of you love music? Ever sing in the car, church, an occasional wedding...at PASFAA? When Cheryl DePaolis, 2008 Conference Chair, began her search for singers, many thought she was crazy. Was the Conference Committee simply looking for cheap entertainment? After some consideration, PASFAA members responded and the "Promissory Notes" were born. The group consisted of the following members: Diane Fegely and Bernard McCree from Kutztown University of PA; Ryan Hannigan and Cathy Poiesz from Messiah College; Rick Heckman and Ruth Cramer, Dickinson College; Andrea Stauffer and Ray Randall, Bucknell University; Linda Ebel, Carnegie Mellon University; Maryann Dudas, Seton Hill University; Robert Thorn, California University of PA; Colleen Coudriet, DuBois Business College, and Mysti Dinger, IUP Academy of Culinary Arts. There now was a group...but they needed a song.

PASFAA's celebration of its 40th Anniversary inspired the group to use a song from 1968 - "I Say a Little Prayer for You". Matt Stokan, the 'lyrics man' and conference committee member began work on catchy lyrics, just right for the aid industry. "DRUGS & ALCOHOL" was the response he gave when asked how the incredible lyrics were created. While relaxing at his home, Matt and his wife had "FUN" with the idea and "But Here's Another Loan For You" was born. He has since agreed to write lyrics for next year's song.

After initial introductions and a little practice, The "Promissory Notes" debuted at the Membership Luncheon. After what seemed to be the last line was sung, PASFAA members stood and roared with applause. Unbeknownst to the crowd, the song wasn't quite over. Because the noise created by the applause kept group members from hearing the CD, the song was cut short.

When not singing at PASFAA Conferences, the "Promissory Notes" are singing at their churches as cantors, in choirs, community plays, weddings, various events at their colleges, and even Karaoke. One member was a back-up singer for famous artists such as Pam Tillis, Barbara Mandrell and Barry Manilow (Why are you doing Financial Aid, Bernard?). Music continues to play a large role in each of their lives with varying degrees of taste. Perry Como, Whitney Houston, James Taylor, Celine Dion, Faith Hill, Josh Groban, R&B, classical and gospel are just some of their favorites!

When asked, "Where is the most outrageous place you have ever sang?", the responses were telling. Some agreed the PASFAA conference won that vote. Bob Thorn, however, sang with a choir in college that ended up doing an impromptu performance in Bulgaria at a former gladiator amphitheater where prisoners had once battled. "Our voices echoed for nearly five seconds after we finished. It was a spooky, yet overpowering experience that I will never forget," he said. Colleen Coudriet joined a strolling

choir in high school and sang throughout the town during the holidays. One particular evening, they encountered a large snow drift. Not able to block the street, they came up with another solution. "So, without a better option, 20 people proceeded to bury themselves in the drift," Colleen described. "We all sang for about 45 minutes in snow up to our chests! We received thunderous applause from those who saw us that night." I guess after these experiences, singing at PASFAA seems like a pretty normal thing.

The "Promissory Notes" agreed singing at PASFAA was a great experience and hope to do it again. If you thought it was entertaining this year, imagine what can be done with sheet music and additional practice!

## **"But Here's Another Loan For You!"** By Matthew Stokan, Waynesburg University

**Your FAFSA leaves no doubt  
That gift aid is all out  
But here's another loan for you  
You dreamt of a Pell grant  
And prayed for a state grant  
But here's another loan for you**

**Forever and ever, you'll pay back forever  
your loans come due,  
Forever and ever, you'll write checks forever  
you'll feel so blue,  
Together, together, that's how school will be  
there's no aid for you  
Would only mean less work for me.**

**Your file is now verified,  
And we know that you lied,  
But here's another loan for you  
You filed independent  
But Daddy still pays your rent  
But here's another loan for you**

**You're busted, you're busted, you'll pay back forever  
your loans come due  
Forever and ever, you'll write checks forever  
you'll feel so blue  
Together, together, that's how school will be  
there's no aid for you  
Would only mean less work for me  
(Repeat above)**

**Mr. Cuomo believe me  
They gave me nothing free  
Just let me be!**



*The Promissory Notes... (continued from page 16)***The Promissory Notes In Action!**

## **Teleconference To Wade Through The “Federal Forecast”**

**Ken Grugel, Chair Teleconference Committee**

The Teleconference Committee is hard at work planning the annual Teleconference, scheduled March 6, 2009. “Federal Forecast” will focus on upcoming new regulations effective July 2009. A discussion on dependency questions and the ever-popular Washington update provided by Scott Miller are just a few of the topics to watch for. Stay tuned for details!

## **Technology Committee: 2008-2009 Initiatives**

**Heidi Hunter-Goldsworthy, Chair Technology Committee**

The 2008 Conference was an exciting time for the Technology and Electronic Initiatives Committee. The launch of “PASFAA 101 Training” was showcased at the Tech Booth during the annual conference. A variety of comments and suggestions were provided and the final version is expected live on the website in December 2008.

The newsletter name was unveiled during the “Newsletter Naming” contest, which allowed conference attendees to vote for their favorites. The PASFAA Post is the new electronic newsletter. Thank you to all who submitted names for consideration. Keri Neidig and her committee have worked hard to select a logo created by students from Thaddeus Stevens College and worked with ATAC to insure this timely release you are reading today.

The upcoming year will prove to be a challenge as the committee continues working on PASFAA 101 and other training suggestions. We will be reviewing new electronic storage options for PASFAA historical documents and reviewing the PASFAA website to insure the accurate and timely delivery of information for PASFAA members.

Michael Degroft will be serving in the role of ATAC representative along with Dwight Horsey to divide and conquer the duties assigned in maintaining PASFAA's relationship with ATAC. Heidi Hunter-Goldsworthy will serve as the Committee's Chair and keep the electronic initiatives moving forward.

Thank you to the committee members who have served so diligently in the past and for those who have remained on the committee to serve another year. If you are interested in serving on the Technology Committee, please contact Heidi Hunter-Goldsworthy via email [hhunter@wpahs.org](mailto:hhunter@wpahs.org).



# Finance And Development Committee Thanks Its Amazing Business Partners

**Ruth Cramer, Chair Finance and Development Committee**

We would like to offer our most sincere THANKS to our 2008-09 exhibitors and advertisers. Your continued partnership with PASFAA in our support of families' higher education financing is greatly appreciated.

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USA Funds Services

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## Committee Update:

The PASFAA Finance and Development Committee, in cooperation with the PASFAA Council and committee leaders, are proud to report another successful year. This committee solicits conference exhibitors and advertisers, develops PASFAA's budget, and manages the Association's investments. Ginny Kopko, the 2007-08 Finance and Development Committee chair, spearheaded several important initiatives during a year of substantial changes in our industry. As a result, business partners now have updated exhibiting and advertising opportunities, for which they can sign up via a web-based process via PASFAA's website. Looking ahead, we are already making plans for a successful 2009-10!

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# Financial Aid Awareness: Volunteers Needed!

David Pearlman, Chair FA Awareness Committee

## FASFA Completion Season

You may be wondering: what happened to FAFSA Completion "Day"? To bolster the program and increase PASFAA involvement, the FAFSA Completion "Day" will now become a Completion "Season" running from **January 15th to April 15th**.

Because of this change, we are encouraging all PASFAA members and institutions in Pennsylvania to host one or more FAFSA completion day (or night!) workshops. PHEAA is working feverishly on completing the registration forms for participants and the ability for PASFAA members to sign up on-line. More information will be sent once the system is in place.

Jamie Kosh said it best: "We really want to streamline the process and make it a new and exciting program for PASFAA members - forget about the past and move forward in what is sure to be continued tradition of partnership between PHEAA and PASFAA!"

## College Fairs



**Marguerite Borst, far left, Mary Ellen Duffy and Joan Holleran speak with students at the Berks County College Fair at Albright College October 2008**

Many thanks go out to the PASFAA members that volunteered for the fall college fairs.

There is still time to volunteer! Spring college fairs are underway. If you are interested in volunteering for either fair below, please contact me at [dpp1@psu.edu](mailto:dpp1@psu.edu).

### Northeast Regional Fair

Wachovia Arena at Casey Plaza in Wilkes-Barre  
Monday, April 27, 2009  
9:00 am - 12:00 and 6:00 pm - 8:00 pm

### Main Line Regional Fair

Villanova University  
Tuesday, April 28, 2009  
6:30 pm - 9:00 pm

# TEACH Or NO TEACH - That Is The Question!

Liz Rihl-Lewinsky, Newsletter Committee

It's not unusual to hear a long moan or prolonged sigh when you utter the phrase "TEACH Grant" in a room of financial aid administrators and frankly, who can blame us? Some of us may have sat in federal training sessions where the federal trainers either blasphemed the program or cynically stumbled through the regulations governing it themselves. On the flipside, for institutions offering teacher preparation programs, denying students the opportunity to receive a fairly significant amount of grant funding (after they read the small print of course), can be seen not as ethnically challenging, but tough to defend to higher-level administration. So, what's an aid administrator to do? First, learn the facts to see if becoming a TEACH Grant participant is right for your institution:

1) **What is TEACH?** TEACH stands for Teacher Education Assistance for College and Higher Education Grant Program. Per NPRM (73 FR 15336) published March 21, 2008, the TEACH Grant program is a non-need-based grant program that provides up to \$4,000 per year to students who are enrolled in an eligible program and who agree to teach in a high-need field, at a low-income elementary or secondary school for at least four years within eight years of completing the program for which the TEACH Grant was awarded. If the grant recipient fails to complete the required teaching service, the TEACH grant is treated as a Federal Direct Unsubsidized Stafford Loan. Undergraduates can receive up to four years of TEACH funding; graduate students up to two years. To qualify, students must either score in the 75th percentile in at least one battery of an admissions test (such as the SAT, ACT or GRE) or have a cumulative GPA of a 3.25 or better.

2) **Is my institution eligible to participate in TEACH?** Under section 686.4 of the regulations, a TEACH Grant-eligible institution that offers one or more TEACH Grant-eligible programs may elect to participate in the program. An institution would be "TEACH Grant eligible" if it offers a teach preparation program at either the baccalaureate or masters level and provides supervision and support services to teachers, or assists with such services and has a program accredited by a specialized accrediting agency or approved by the state for pre-service clinical experience. A school that doesn't have a teacher preparation program but: a) provides one or more two-year programs of study that are acceptable for full credit to either a baccalaureate teacher program or a baccalaureate degree program in a high-need field at another TEACH eligible institution with which it has an agreement, or b) offers a baccalaureate degree that, when combined with other training will prepare students to teach in a high need field and has an agreement with a school that offers a teacher preparation

program, or c) offers a post-baccalaureate program that will prepare a student to teach but doesn't offer a baccalaureate teacher preparation program is also eligible.

3) **How do you present TEACH to the appropriate personnel at your school?** Present TEACH with caution. Non-financial aid folks might be enticed to focus on the "\$4,000 annual non-need-based grant for four years of undergraduate study and up to two years of graduate study" piece of the conversation. Educate them on the fine print, cautioning them that it might be difficult for an undergraduate student, particularly freshmen and sophomores, to make the type of commitment TEACH requires. Additionally, if your school has a large population of elementary education majors, to meet the service requirement, the majority of the courses they teach have to be in a high need field. Thirdly, consider the admissions requirements for any teacher education programs at your institution. For example, if students apply to the education program separately after completion of sophomore year at your institution, do you even want to offer TEACH to freshmen





**TEACH Or NO TEACH...** (continued from page 20)

and sophomores? Reach out to faculty within the education department at your institution to gauge the interest level of students in the program and inform them about the program first. They will no doubt get questions if you move forward with TEACH. Set low expectations of overall usage among the finance people (curtail the dollar signs they may be seeing!). You may be surprised at the small yield of actual recipients you will have despite a substantially large number that may have expressed an initial interest in TEACH on their FAFSA. Many students will de-select themselves out based on the service requirements even before they go to complete the ATS (Agreement to Serve) which is required of all TEACH recipients.

**4) How does one go about signing on for TEACH?** The DOE has established an interim process for schools to join the TEACH Program. It requires that an institution update their Title IV Participation Agreement at <http://eligcert.ed.gov>. Click on "Update Information" and choose "Add TEACH Grant". Don't forget to mail the signature page! A few weeks later notification of approval should come via email or snail mail.

**5) Most importantly, how do you adequately inform and counsel students about the obligations of the grant?** Developing a TEACH Grant webpage with your own application/awarding process, with link to other critical pages ([www.teachgrant.ed.gov](http://www.teachgrant.ed.gov), [www.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ope/pol/tsa.doc](http://www.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ope/pol/tsa.doc) (Dept. of Ed's annual directory of teacher shortage areas), [www.tcli.ed.gov/CBSWebApp/tcli/TCLIPubSchoolSearch.jsp](http://www.tcli.ed.gov/CBSWebApp/tcli/TCLIPubSchoolSearch.jsp) (Dept. of Ed's annual directory of low-income schools), <https://teach-ats.ed.gov/ats/images/gen/factsheet.pdf> (What You Need to Know Before You Get a TEACH Grant) and detailed explanations of the service requirement is a great first step. Make sure the page has an easy-to-remember url like [www.abcschool.edu/teachgrant](http://www.abcschool.edu/teachgrant). Sign up for Mapping Your Future entrance and exit counseling ([www.mappingyourfuture.com](http://www.mappingyourfuture.com)). You'll get email notifications when counseling is complete and you can appropriately flag your FAM system. Plan a mechanism for the "subsequent" counseling required with each new award. Put together an internal FAQ sheet for other staff in admissions and financial aid. Do an email blast to those with comment code 281 on their FAFSA inviting them to investigate TEACH via your webpage and the helpful sites listed there. Before you know it, you are off to the races!

**Miscellaneous things related to TEACH I've learned along the way from a sundry or webinars or frantic calls to the DOE:**

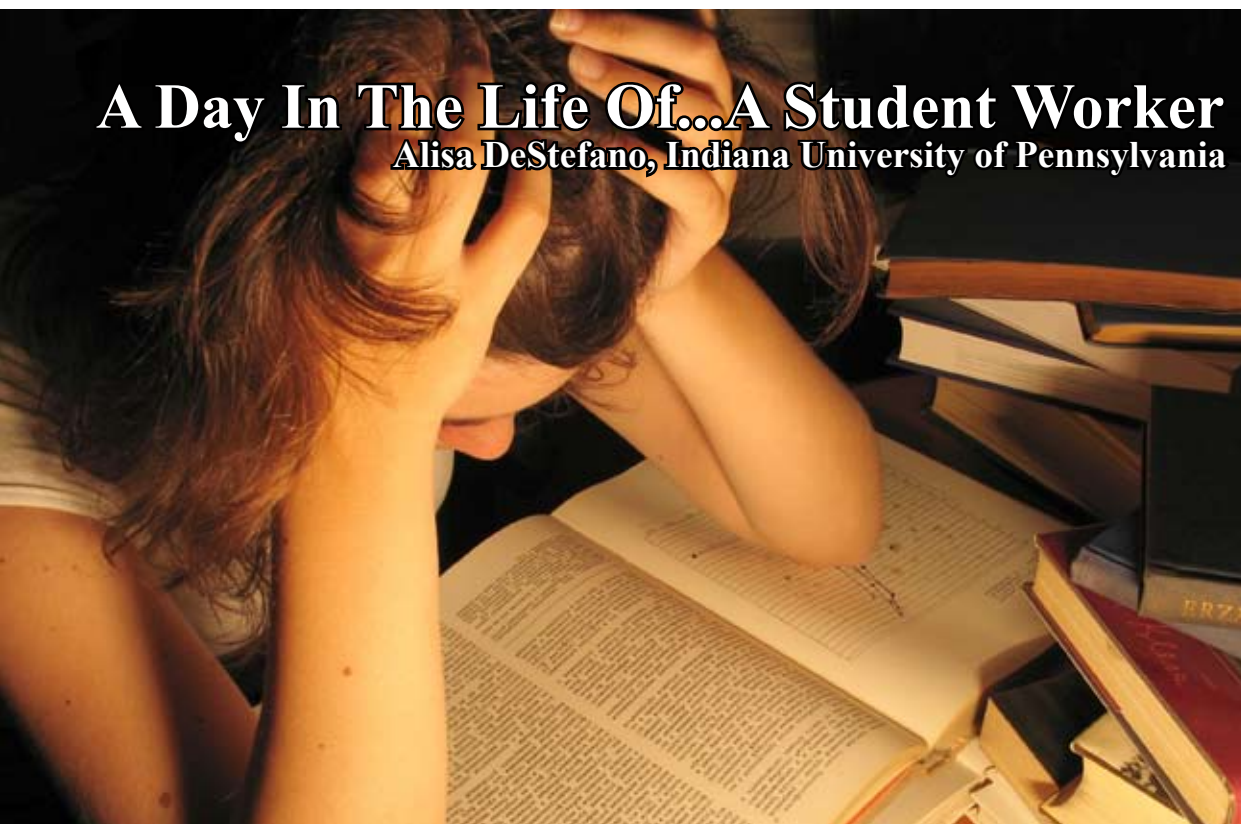
- TEACH can't be awarded to students enrolled in a doctoral teacher education program.



- If you use the 75th percentile on an admissions test requirement to determine students are academically eligible, you are not required to monitor GPA after each payment period.
- If a TEACH Grant converts to a Federal Direct Unsubsidized Stafford Loan, it would not be counted against the recipients annual or aggregate Stafford Loan limits.
- You cannot offer it to a post-baccalaureate student in a teacher certification program if you offer an undergraduate teacher preparation program at your institution.
- TEACH amounts are pro-rated based on enrollment status.
- Once TEACH disburses and a student changes their mind about teaching, they need to contact the Direct Loan Servicing Center.
- When awarding it to a first-year graduate student who has no prior GPA at your institution, you can use their undergraduate cumulative GPA to make the determination of academic eligibility if they did not take the GRE or other applicable standardized admissions test.
- Part-time teaching does not meet the service requirement.
- Once the grant is converted to a loan, it can't go back to a grant.
- Periods of allowable suspension of the required timeframe for completion of service exist.
- Students can get ACG/SMART and TEACH funding at the same time.
- Schools can choose the starting year for the program (i.e.-an institution may choose to designate the program as beginning in the second semester of sophomore year, or at the beginning of the junior year).

# A Day In The Life Of...A Student Worker

Alisa DeStefano, Indiana University of Pennsylvania



So, how do parents and students respond to our student workers as they answer the phone and greet walk-in's? Most of the time the reaction is positive, according to Renea Burkart, student worker at Butler County Community College. While parents often feel more comfortable talking to a staff member, students seem more comfortable talking to student workers. According to Eric Manley, student

*Student Worker: "Good morning, Financial Aid Office."*

*Caller: "Am I talking to a real worker or is this a student worker?"*

*Student Worker: "I am a student worker. How may I assist you?"*

*Caller: "Oh...nothing against you, but could I talk to a person who is not a student?"*

Thus begins a typical day of the financial aid office student worker. Due to the complexity of the financial aid process, it is often understandable why a person would rather speak to a financial aid staff member rather than a student worker. However, as many a staff member can tell you, our student workers are invaluable and often provide above-and-beyond service that assists the application-weary student or parent with accurate and helpful information.

Many campus offices have student worker job descriptions that entail answering the phone, greeting walk-ins, incoming mail distribution, faxing, filing, copying, imaging, etc., and the financial aid office is no different. However, the difference between student worker jobs in financial aid offices and some other campus offices lie in the additional duties that often require a basic knowledge and understanding of the financial aid process and needs analysis (i.e. why do we need to include parents' information if a student lives on his own). Additionally, financial aid student workers require a skill to interact more with the parent and student population about a delicate subject: money.

worker at the University of Scranton, this could be because "we know their situations better and students listen more to student workers." Burkart also noticed that students "seem more comfortable relating to students than administrators" and that student workers are "going through the same thing and understand."

With every job there are pros and cons. What student workers seem to enjoy the most about their jobs is the interaction with the office staff and other student workers. And financial aid student workers enjoy getting special projects - those special assignments that require some thought. On the downside is the paperwork, the argumentative caller, and the stress of being on phone duty during the busiest time of the year: summer.

Like most students, financial aid student workers had a perception of the financial aid office before they started working in one. Renee Trout, student worker at Indiana University of Pennsylvania, was surprised to find that she had the opportunity to work directly with the directors of the office and received more responsibility than she imagined (something she liked). Manley was surprised by the humor in the workplace and how easy it was to talk with everyone. And Burkart was surprised by the many particulars and details there are in processing a student's financial aid, and admits students are not aware how much is done for them to get their aid paid to their accounts.

So why do our student workers stay with us and not work elsewhere on campus? For the most part, it's the staff and other student workers in the office that keep them from moving on, and the desire to stay busy. The hours are also



*A Day In The Life Of...(continued from page 22)*

attractive (standard business hours and no weekends or evening hours for the most part), and it's a chance to meet a lot of people since so many visit the financial aid office.

Working in a financial aid office is more than just a job. It's a chance to gain valuable skills that translate into future opportunities. Patience is a skill that Burkhart and Trout both feel they have gained through their employment, along with the ability to understand others' needs and to be flexible (especially with all the computer processes that are learned and changes in financial aid regulations). Phone skills, computer skills, and customer service skills are also abilities that will give students an edge when looking for a job after graduation.

With all these acquired skills, do financial aid student workers want to become financial aid administrators? Although Burkhart, Manley and Trout are not committing to working in a financial aid office, there are many student workers who have gone on to be financial aid administrators. Maybe you'll recognize some of these names:

**Student Position**

**Current Position**

Walter Acevedo	University of Puerto Rico	Ass't Dir. of Std. Fin. Serv., EDMC Online Higher Ed.
Tiffany Aloï	Indiana University of PA	Assistant Director, Slippery Rock University of PA
Jennifer Behmer	Millersville University of PA	Financial Aid Advisor, YTI Career Institute
Aileen Bowman	Indiana University of PA	Assistant Director, Indiana University of PA
Peter D'Annibale	SUNY Brockport	Director of Fin Aid, Shippensburg University of PA
Michael DeGroft	Thaddeus Stevens College of Tech	Director of Financial Aid and Registrar, Thaddeus Stevens College of Tech
Kendra Feigert	Millersville University of PA	Director of Financial Aid, Lebanon Valley College
Mary Gazal	Westmoreland Co. Comm. College	Assistant Director, University of Pittsburgh
Gianna Gresko	California University of PA	Assistant Director, California University of PA
Cindy Haney	Indiana University of PA	Director of Fin Aid, Montgomery Co. Comm. College
Janice Hetrick	Trenton State College	Director of Financial Aid, Holy Family University
Stacy Hopkins	Indiana University of PA	Assistant Director, Indiana University of PA
Tonya Hsiung	Indiana University of PA	Financial Aid Counselor, Millersville U. of PA
Gizelle Jones	Glassboro State College	Associate Director, Westchester University of PA
Annette Kelly	Delaware Co. Comm. College	Financial Aid Advisor, Delaware Co. Comm. College
Mary Kosin	King's College	Director of Fin Aid, Luzerne Community College
Jeanine Lawn	Univ. of Pitt at Johnstown	Director of Fin Aid, Univ. of Pitt at Johnstown
Mary Miller	Indiana University of PA	Sr. Vice President, Education Services Group, AES/PHEAA
Sharon Platt	University of Pittsburgh	Director of Financial Aid, La Roche College
Thelma Ross	St. Augustine's College	Assoc Dean, Std. Services, Dir of Fin Aid, Lincoln Univ.
Stacy Schenk	Mt. Aloysius College	Director of Financial Aid, Mt. Aloysius College
John Schodowski	Reading Area Comm. College	Financial Aid/Records Office, Reading Area CC
Caroline Siravo	Cabrini College	Financial Aid Advisor, Delaware Co. Comm. College
Donna Wilkoski	Bucks Co. Comm. College	Director of Fin Aid, Bucks Co. Comm. College
Natalie Wilson	University of Pittsburgh	Director of Financial Aid, Carlow College
Melissa Wisniewski	Millersville University of PA	Fin Aid Specialist, Harrisburg Area Comm. College



Change, the mantra of Barack Obama's successful campaign for the Presidency, is the buzzword in Washington, DC these days. And, to be sure, Washington is "abuzz" these days!

Change is likely to come in many forms. The most visible signs of change are the people that President-elect Obama is currently selecting to form the core of the White House and Executive Agency staffs that will help guide the new Administration. These are the people who will be charged with developing new policies and designing the legislative and regulatory changes that will be needed to implement those new policies. They will also be the chief sales force for the new Administration as it explains its plans to the Congress and to the American people. Importantly, they will be the people who will help forge compromises so that the Administration's agenda does not become the most recent victim of the gridlock that seems to plague attempts at policymaking in Washington, DC.

It isn't worth my speculating on who those new faces will be, because by the time you read this column many of these positions may have already been filled. We know we'll have a new Secretary of Education and a new assortment of Under and Deputy Secretaries. But we also know that many of the faces we deal with at the Department of Education will remain the same. The career employees that we've come to know and rely upon over the years are likely to be the same folks with whom we continue to work. The expertise of individuals like Jeff Baker and Greg Martin will still be available to us. They will also be relied upon to brief the new political appointees on the programs they will be managing and the issues they will be confronting. It is the career employees who provide stability in times of change and transition.

So, what will change mean for higher education and, specifically, for the federal student financial assistance

programs? Will we see major tectonic shifts or just some small tremors of policy movement?

Judging by the Democratic platform and by the statements made on the campaign trail by President-elect Obama, we know the areas that may get attention in the early months of 2009. The central tenet of candidate Obama's higher education message was providing a \$4,000 tax credit to offset postsecondary expenses, contingent on the student's performance of some form of community or military service. A program of this sort would need billions of dollars in new federal expenditures, which may be a difficult hurdle given the bleak national economic picture and the prospect that the annual federal deficit could approach or exceed \$1 Trillion.

A less costly initiative endorsed by candidate Obama is simplifying the FAFSA. This is an issue that has achieved great currency and which has been endorsed by the outgoing Secretary and Undersecretary of Education – thus giving it bipartisan appeal. As we all know, FAFSA simplification is not as "simple" as it sounds and its implications for schools and states could be wide-ranging. However, it is also "simple" for Members of Congress and the President to explain to their constituents. Those constituents will be able to see the result, as the number of questions on the form is reduced. This is a legislative train that could very well be on the fast track. Thus, it is very important that you contact your Members of Congress to ensure they understand any concerns you may have with such a simplification effort and any alternative approaches that might, in your view, be more sensible.

Perhaps the biggest question is whether the Obama Administration will attempt to rapidly transform the federal student loan programs. While President-elect Obama does not appear to have strong personal views on moving from two loan programs to a single direct loan program, some of his advisors have pressed that case since their days in the Clinton Administration. In all honesty, it is not clear at all, today, whether this issue will be priority for President-elect Obama, or where exactly on his agenda it may fall. Again, now is the time to weigh in with your Members of Congress if you have strong views on such a policy shift or specific suggestions that could be viewed as alternatives to a wholesale shift to direct lending.

So, while it certainly is the season of change in Washington, the exact form of those changes is still left to the imagination. What we can hope for is that any change in the arena of student financial aid will be done thoughtfully and with full consideration of the views and expertise of those who manage these crucial programs every day. That is a challenge for the Administration and the new Congress, but it is also a challenge to you to make certain your voice is heard loud and clear on these important issues.



# Spring Training to Tackle The “Season of Change”

Cindy Heaton, Chair, Spring Training Committee

**April 2, 2009 – Four Points By Sheraton, Pittsburgh North, Mars**

**April 8, 2009 – Holiday Inn Harrisburg/Hershey, Grantville**

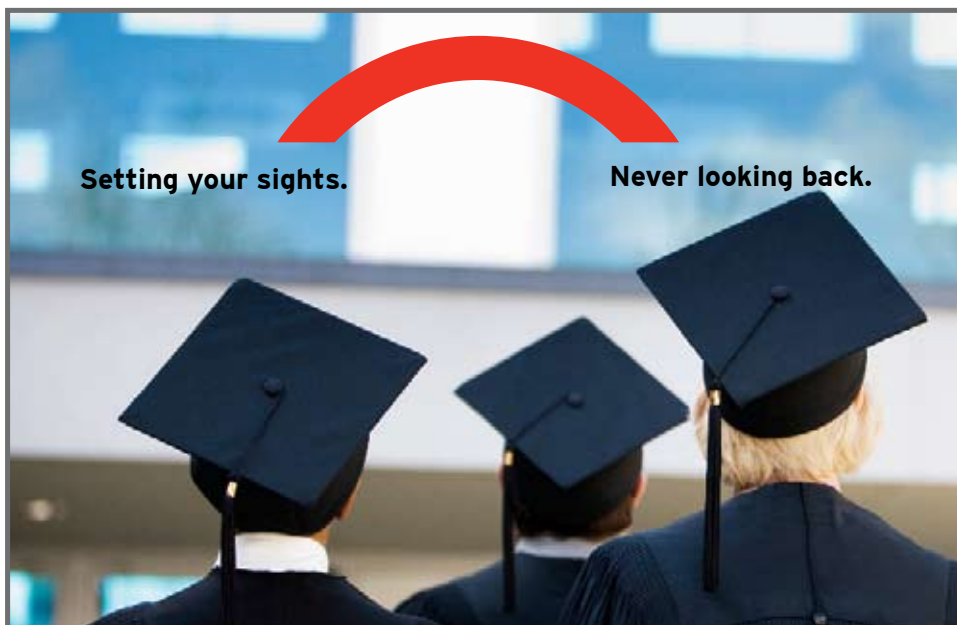
Greetings from the PASFAA Spring Training Committee! I'm pleased to report that plans are well underway for a great day-long conference to be held at the above locations. Mark your calendar now!

This year's committee members are: Jim Anderson – Sallie Mae; Peter D'Annibale – Shippensburg University; Linda Gaston – Mt. Aloysius College; Robin Gorini – HACC/Lebanon campus; Ryan Hannigan – Messiah College; Cindy Heaton – Lock Haven University; Matt Stokan – Waynesburg University; and Joni Trovato – University of Pittsburgh/Johnstown.

The theme for the 2009 conference is 'Season of Change', which seems most appropriate given the many changes that have affected our profession of late. Conference sessions will include:

- FAFSA Changes
- Financial Aid Outreach
- Garnering Support for the Financial Aid Office
- Future of FFELP
- Making your Website Work Harder for You
- Doing More with Less
- How America Pays for College – Sallie Mae's Annual Survey
- NCAA
- Getting your Money's Worth from FWS

Watch for a formal Spring Training announcement to come from PASFAA in March. The Spring Training Committee looks forward to delivering a program that's sure to be both enjoyable and informative. We hope to see you there.



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## 2009 PASFAA Conference Planning Begins

Cheri Kramer, 2009 Conference Chair

**MARK YOUR CALENDARS: 2009 PASFAA CONFERENCE  
VALLEY FORGE CONVENTION CENTER OCTOBER 4-7.**

"Valley Forge, Pennsylvania, was the site of the camp of the American Continental Army over the winter of 1777-1778 in the American Revolutionary War. This was a time of great suffering for George Washington's Army, but it was also a time of retraining and rejuvenation." (Wikipedia).

Two hundred thirty-two years after George Washington chose his Valley Forge encampment site for its strategic location, our PASFAA family will come together for our time of retraining and rejuvenation. **Mark your calendars today!**



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## "I thought I heard it all until..."

Linda Gaston, Newsletter Committee

Thanks to Matt Stokan at Waynesburg University for this gem:

A few years ago, while working at Duquesne University, I did my best to explain that a family is accountable for all assets at the time of FAFSA filing. The following example was used: if a \$100 balance is in an account on the date of FAFSA filing, \$100 should be the reported asset value. If, however, the lottery jackpot was won the next day, a family is not obligated to correct the reported asset figures on the FAFSA. Come to find out a call was made to the Vice President's office from an angry mother. She complained that I advised if she needed additional financial aid, she should play the lottery!



## PASFAA Bulletin Board

Our sympathy goes out to **Brandi Darr**, University of Pittsburgh - Greensburg and her family on the passing of her mother, Joann Cassidy, on Sunday, October 19, 2008.

Condolences to **Heidi Hunter-Goldsworthy** of Citizens School of Nursing on the passing of her father, Charles Gruber in August after a long illness. A longtime supporter of Gettysburg College, Charles was moved to his final resting place in Gettysburg, PA in November.

Congratulations to **Tonya (Anthony) Hsiung**, Millersville University. Tonya and Danny Hsiung on were married September 19 in Lancaster, PA. They honeymooned in Aruba. (FYI - Tonya's new last name is pronounced Shung.)

**Sue Behan**, Assistant Director of Financial Aid at Pitt-Bradford, is now **Sue Gleason** - please congratulate the beautiful bride on her October 11th wedding. Sue and husband, Greg honeymooned in St. Augustine, FL and reside with their combined six children in Bradford, PA (sounds a bit like the Brady Bunch) .

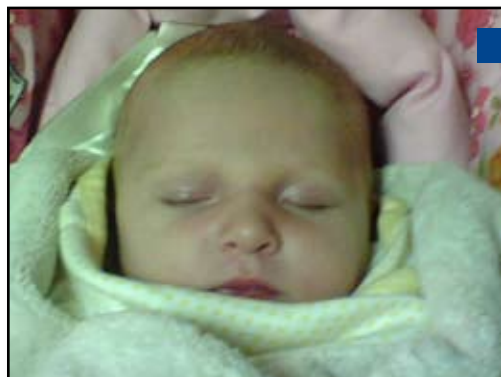
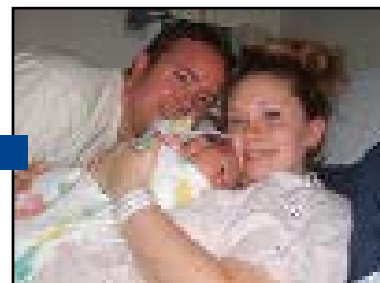
Congratulations to **Ed Gonzalez**, USA Funds on the birth of Selina Nicole Gonzalez in the early hours of October 9th. She weighed in at 9 lbs. 2 oz. Mom, baby and big sister Sofia are doing fine!

Bucks County Community College is happy to announce that **Kristal Karl (Potts)** has given birth to a baby girl. Laci Jacklyn Potts was born September 27 and weighed in at 9lbs. 3oz. All are doing fine. Congratulations Kristal and Tom!



Congratulations to grandfather, **Bernard McCree**, Kutztown University on the birth of his new grandson, born Friday, September 19th weighing 7 lbs, 5.4 oz.

Warm congratulations to **Christopher Mowl**, new Financial Aid Counselor at Elizabethtown College on the birth of his daughter, Addison Olivea. Addie was born the morning of 11/03/08 and was 8 pounds 8 ounces, 19.25 inches long. Mom, Christina Mowl, and baby are doing well!



Lillee Marie McGeehan, born 10/28/08, is the first grandchild for **Lori "Grammy" Williams** of Cedar Crest College. Congratulations Lori!

Welcome **Kim Boyer** as a new Financial Aid Counselor at Pitt-Bradford. Kim is brand new to the business!

**Linda Ebel** received a certificate of recognition during the Andy Awards at Carnegie Mellon University for outstanding university citizenship in September. Congratulations!

**Tracie Patrick** and **Diane Ross** have been promoted to Financial Aid Counselors and **Valerie Rennell** was promoted to Director, Student Financial Planning at Juniata College

*PASFAA Bulletin Board...(continued from page 27)*

Brian and **Kathy Shepard**, Financial Aid Director at Central Penn College, announce the arrival of their twin boys on October 5. Aden Mitchell arrived at 5:25 am weighing 5 lbs 14 oz, 18" long and Evan Matthew arrived at 5:36 am weighing 5 lbs, 18" long

**Heidi Hunter-Goldsworthy** was named Director of Financial Aid at Citizens School of Nursing, New Kensington, PA. After working with the school for six years as a financial aid consultant, Heidi permanently joined their staff in August 2008. She continues to work with other small schools through her consulting firm.



**Charles Scheetz**, formerly of Alverina University, is now Assistant Director at Ursinus College in Collegeville, PA.

Welcome to **Liane Lonergan** who was hired as an Assistant Director at Kutztown University.

**Candace Baran** has joined the Pennsylvania College of Technology's Financial Aid Office as Director in October, 2008. Candy has worked for the College for a mere 19 years in the Workforce Development Office.

**Dug Salley** has left Philadelphia University to join the admissions team at Immaculata University.

**Jamie Lowthert**, formerly Director of Financial Aid at Lycoming College has joined the Financial Aid office at Bucknell University as Associate Director on November 1st.

**Dziem Nguyen** has been hired as the new Director of Financial Aid at Lancaster Bible College. She previously worked in Payroll for the school. She will replace Sharon Early who is relocating to Florida.

**Chanel Greene**, formerly Director of Financial Aid at DeSales University, assumed the position of Director of Multicultural Life at DeSales.

**Dan Weigle**, AES/PHEAA was promoted to AVP Automated Loan Services.

## Institutional At-Large Sector Report

**Dottie Brehm, Institutional At-Large Sector Representative**

The 13th century Muslim Sufi poet Rumi told his followers, "Be a lamp, a lifeboat, or a ladder." It seems to me we can draw on this philosophy in our chosen profession.

It was wonderful to see so many PASFAA members volunteering in so many different capacities at our most recent conference at the Penn Stater. Not only were numerous presentations available to share useful information, but if you looked closely, you could see those having the most fun were those who had made the most connections. It is likely those connections were made as a result of volunteering in some way. The decision to step outside typical day-to-day routines can prove valuable in many ways.

Opportunities to make connections, while making a contribution are not limited to the annual conference, but continue throughout the year. When volunteer forms are

available, look over it, choose something that interests you, and volunteer!

You'll likely meet someone new, forge a friendship, and then find yourself with more connections when the next conference rolls around. It's those contributions that make our association stronger. A strong organization will provide support for our profession and we can continue to "be a lamp, a lifeboat, or a ladder" for the students we all serve.

Thank you to Marykay Klara, the outgoing At-Large Sector Representative, for the great contribution she made in this position during the past two year term and for the guidance she has shown me during the transition.

If you have questions or ideas you may call me at 717-867-6188. You may also reach me by e-mail at [brehm@lvc.edu](mailto:brehm@lvc.edu). I'll be happy to take your concerns to council meetings.



## BT&T Sector Report

### Debra A. Woodcock, Business Trade and Technical Sector Representative

Hello fellow BT&T Sector members!

It was good to see those of you who could make it to the PASFAA Annual Conference Sector meeting where our discussion focused on NASFAA's new initiative "Starting a National Conversation". This initiative was created to ensure every voice is heard.

Dr. Philip Day, Jr., NASFAA President and CEO, held a session prior to the sector meeting to explain the association's plan includes gathering and compiling as much input from Financial Aid Professionals as possible and then taking the information to our representatives in Washington. As you are well aware, the changes we have all experienced over the past few years with the implementation of the CCRA, the ECASLA and now the new HEA have seemed to make financial aid more

confusing to understand and more difficult to process.

During Dr. Day's session he solicited input from all attendees. One of the largest themes heard over and over again was "Simplification" of the financial aid process. If you have any ideas on what types of changes could be made to make the financial aid process simpler, please forward your ideas to me and I will be sure to get them to Dr. Day. LET YOUR VOICE BE HEARD!

Always remember that if you have any questions or concerns you would like to share with your fellow BT&T Sector members you can forward them to me and I will share with everyone. My e-mail is [dwoodcock@lccctc.org](mailto:dwoodcock@lccctc.org).

Respectfully submitted,  
Debra A. Woodcock

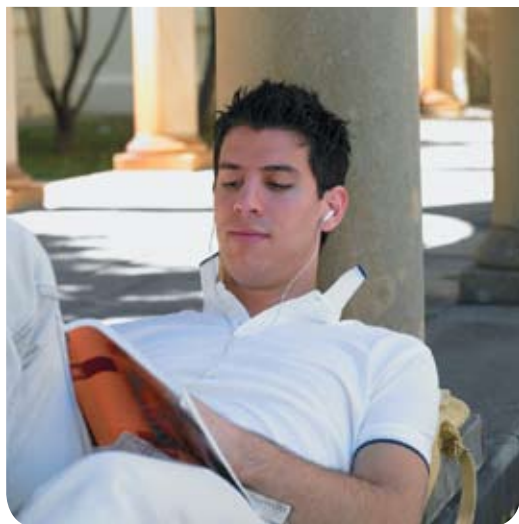


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## Institutional Support Sector Report

**Ken Shutter, Institutional Support Sector Representative**

I wonder if President-Elect Obama understands we've already got "change" in our Sector. It continues to be a challenging time for each of us, but we are resilient! As in the past, the Institutional Support Services Sector (ISS) of PASFAA has every intention to continue a high level of support to our Association. We met as a group during the recent annual Conference and it was abundantly clear that this Sector is as committed to our Association as ever before.

Institutions supporting PASFAA will continue to provide as much in-kind voluntary service as possible. ISS representatives are eager to continue participation in many of the PASFAA Committees, partake in as much training

and development as possible, and continue to working to keep our association strong and vibrant.

PASFAA Council is discussing the expansion of ISS Sector Associate member roles, including potential Committee Chair positions. Stay tuned for more!

I plan to communicate any and all issues discussed at the PASFAA Council meeting that is relevant to this group via e-mail. PASFAA Council will meet early December 2008.

If you have any issues you would like brought to Council please do not hesitate to contact me directly at 717-720-3551 or e-mail me at [kshutter@aessuccess.org](mailto:kshutter@aessuccess.org).

**Happy Holidays to all!**

## Nursing Sector Report

**Connie Hake, Nursing Sector Representative**

Greetings to all! It was great seeing all of you at the conference. What a great conference it was. Cheryl and her crew did an excellent job. For those of you who were not able to attend, there was an abundance of good information shared, especially regarding the tremendous amount of changes coming our way. Our Nursing Sector meeting was a success. I want to thank Joe Manotti from AES/PHEAA for presenting. As usual, he did a great job keeping us current on Nursing Programs.

My goal again this year is to keep each of you informed to the best of my ability. If you have issues that need resolution, let me know. I will put it out to the rest of our group for input. In this field, networking can be our best source. Hope to see you at the sector meetings.

## PASSHE Sector Report

**Bob Foults, PASSHE Sector Representative**

Hello PASSHE Folks!

I can't believe it is time for my first newsletter report already. Thanks to Diane Fegely for her past service, and for hosting a great sector meeting at Penn State (Go Lions!). We had approximately thirty members in attendance, and spent some time on TEACH grant, VA concerns, NASFAA listening sessions, and sundry other topics.

As regards the conference in general, it was a great job all around. Attendance was down by about a third, but the gift basket raffle was well received and a nice sum of money was raised for our charity. Vendors were sparse compared to prior years, but the scenery in State College was typically beautiful. Both Greg Martin and Scott Miller were in rare form for their presentations given all they had to update us on. Most importantly for this column, our own Joan Holleran (Kutztown) was recognized for her many years of service to PASFAA and the newsletter.

Also, as a friendly reminder, if you did not attend the conference and you wish to continue as a member you must renew your membership.

As your sector representative, I am available to you for any issues you feel need to be raised. I look to forward to your input and constructive suggestions. I would like to thank Dana Parker and the entire WCU staff for allowing me this opportunity.

I will be following up regarding the (next) spring sector meeting in April in State College. We will be at the same hotel as last year. I suspect that by then we will have quite a few things to talk about.

Please contact me at (610)436-2130 by phone or email me at [rfoults@wcupa.edu](mailto:rfoults@wcupa.edu) with any concerns you might have.



**REMEMBER TO RENEW  
YOUR MEMBERSHIP!**

## Private Sector Report

**Linda W. Ebel, Private Sector Representative**

Hello Private Sector Folks,

It was nice to meet so many new professionals at the PASFAA Conference. Well, 2008-2009 has proven to be an interesting financial aid award year especially as we approach the end of 2008. Now that we are back on our individual campuses, it is easy to feel isolated. I don't want you to feel alone. We will meet again as a group on Thursday, February 26, 2009 at Carnegie Mellon University, McKenna/Peter Rooms at the University Center - 2:00 to 4:00 pm. Refreshments will be provided.

This timing allows an opportunity to meet prior to spring training in April. An agenda is being developed and expected in January 2009. Please inform me of topics or concerns you would like addressed. During upcoming PASFAA Council meetings, I hope to gather ideas and insight from others to develop a compelling agenda. Potential focus: the future of financial aid and how best to serve our students and parents. Please contact me at [ebel@andrew.cmu.edu](mailto:ebel@andrew.cmu.edu) or at (412) 268-8377 if you want to discuss anything specific.

All the best and let's look forward to another good sector meeting in the future.

## Public Two-Year Sector Report

**Annette T. Kelly, Public Two-Year Sector Representative**

Greetings Everyone,

Are your heads still spinning? Well you are not alone; this has been another year of uncertainty, confusion and disappointment. We continue to search for answers and guidance and hopefully these items are on the horizon. We held our fall meeting in Harrisburg November 13 & 14 and were able to present questions and concerns to AES/PHEAA in regards to the future of FFELP vs. Direct Lending. Those answers brought about more questions, which likely spur additional discussion.

I am asking each of you to get involved - attend upcoming meetings and make sure your voices are heard. Although we are in the same boat, we each interpret situations differently and should share our ideas and concerns.

Save the date! We will be holding our next meeting April 23&24, 2009. If you have any items that you wish to have addressed, please let me know and I will forward to group. Thanks to all of you for the support and I hope you have a great Holiday Season.

































