



AASFAA Newsletter

Summer 2001 Edition, June 14, 2001

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

by Dee Talley

I want to express my sincere appreciation to the members of AASFAA for providing me with the opportunity to serve as president for the 2000-2001 year. It has been a pleasure to serve the association in this capacity. I am grateful for the confidence that each of you placed in me, and I hope I have served you well.

The committees and volunteers do the real work behind the scenes. They spend countless hours working on association business with the only reward being the knowledge that the association will be better because of their efforts. I want to thank each committee chair and committee member that served this year. This is a big time commitment on the part of each individual that serves, but the benefits of serving are plentiful.

I have worked with a great group of individuals this year. My executive board was always there when I needed them, and they provided excellent support. It was a pleasure to work with the board in carrying out the association's business.

I have many fond memories that I will cherish as I end my year as president. I will carry these memories with me forever. I truly feel that there is no greater honor than to have been elected by my colleagues to lead our state association. Unlike many of the past-presidents of AASFAA that have come before me, I am not breathing a sigh of relief that my term is over. I truly enjoyed serving the association this year, and I regret that my time in office will end this month. I have learned so much during this past year, and have made so many new friends within the state. This has been a wonderful experience, and I have grown both professionally and personally. I want to thank each of you for your support and cooperation; words cannot express how much it has meant to me.

I look forward to next year when Dot Wilkinson will lead our association as president. I am sure Dot will do an excellent job, and will receive as much support as I have. Please consider serving as a volunteer during this next year. AASFAA continues to be as great as it is because of the untiring efforts of its volunteers, so, please volunteer to work with Dot and her board during the 2001-2002 year.

Finally, I would like to thank my boss, Janet B. May, and the staff of the Financial Aid Office at UAB for all their support and cooperation during the year. I want to express my appreciation to the staff for taking on the extra work while I was out of the office carrying out my responsibilities as president. Without their support, I could not have done this. I would like to express special thanks to Jan for graciously allowing me to develop professionally by being actively involved in AASFAA.

I hope everyone has a great summer!

PRESIDENT'S ANNUAL REPORT

by Dee Talley

Some of the goals AASFAA had for 2000-2001 and an evaluation of those goals are as follows:

Increase Membership and Involvement

Efforts were made to solicit new members and generate involvement by those who had not been active in AASFAA committees. I feel this was accomplished by a majority of the committees, with the most successful being the Bylaws and Conference committees. Both had several new and previously uninvolved members serve during the year.

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In addition, executive board members visited the *New Aid Officers Workshop*, and welcomed new attendees at each the conferences. Also, a luncheon was provided for participants of the *New Aid Officers Workshop*. Board members and committee chairs attended the workshop to meet and speak with new members.

AASF AA membership increased during the 2000-2001 year. Membership increased from 216 for 1999-2000 to 242 for 2000-01.

Enhance Electronic and Traditional Communications Among AASF AA Members

AASF AA completely revamped the website, and moved it to a new location. KHEAA agreed to build and maintain a the new website. Jennifer Cosens, KHEAA, agreed to maintain and update the website on a timely basis. Anthony Richey, AUM, and Tommy Dismukes, KHEAA, serve as contacts for the site. It is a very professional looking website, and we are very grateful to KHEAA for taking on this project.

Each edition of the newsletter for 2000-2001 was provided in electronic format to all AASF AA members via the website and/or the listserve. Anthony Richey, Newsletter Editor, did an excellent job with the newsletter this year. His hard work and dedication is very much appreciated.

Improve Training Activities

AASF AA continued to provide training by offering two major conferences during the year. Both conferences included a *New Aid Officers Workshop*, a session for users of FAM software, and a session for users of ACCESS software. Also, during the spring conference, three NASFAA decentralized training sessions were offered. We will continue to offer these training sessions in future years.

Also, this year AASF AA sponsored two executive board members' attendance at the NASFAA Annual Leadership Development conference held in Washington, D.C. AASF AA Vice-President, Mike Reynolds, also attended the NASFAA Trainers Workshop in preparation for presenting decentralized training in the state. AASF AA will continue to provide these opportunities for current and prospective leaders of the association.

Conferences

October 18-20, 2000, AASF AA held its annual fall conference at the Radisson Hotel in Birmingham, AL. The theme was "*Cast Your Vote for Higher Education*". The Honorable Mayor Bernard Kincaid welcomed AASF AA members to the city, and our opening session speaker was "Mr. Education", the Honorable Pete Turnham, retired member of the Alabama House of Representatives. President-elect Dot Wilkinson, and her

conference committee did an excellent job of providing a great conference for AASF AA members. Local Arrangements Chair, Cindy Massey, did an excellent job with local arrangements and entertainment. The Cedars Club was a big hit, and the band was wonderful. Everyone wore green ribbons during the conference in honor of our dear friend and colleague, Theresa Duke. A special candlelight ceremony was held during the banquet in memory of Theresa.

The annual spring conference was held in Gulf Shores, AL on May 8-11, 2001 at the Holiday Inn-White Sands Resort. The theme for the conference was "*Reflections of the Past, Directions for the Future*". Our guests of honor for the banquet were the family of our former friend and colleague, Theresa Duke. A special tribute was held in Theresa's memory at the banquet, and the family was presented with special gifts from AASF AA. Other guests included SASFAA President Bill Cox, SASFAA Treasurer Karen Koonce, SASFAA Vice-President Rosemary Stelma and SASFAA Secretary Guy Gibbs.

Recognition

The AASF AA membership and I are greatly indebted to the Executive Board and Committee Chairs for 2000-2001 who "carried on the AASF AA tradition" in fine style:

Executive Board

President-elect _____ Dot Wilkinson
Vice-President _____ Mike Reynolds
Secretary _____ Lisa Aitken
Treasurer _____ Buddy Jackson
Past-President _____ Dorenda Adams

Committee Chairs

ACHE Liaison _____ Bill Wall
Awards & Recognition _____ Dorenda Adams
Bylaws _____ Vanessa Kyles
Conference _____ Dot Wilkinson
Legislative Relations _____ Jim Bradsher
Lender Liaison _____ Linna Alcoser
Local Arrangements (Fall) _____ Cindy Massey
(Spring) _____ Jonna Moses
Membership _____ Joan Waters
Newsletter/Publications _____ Anthony Richey
Nominations _____ Dorenda Adams
Policies & Procedures _____ Bill Wall
Professional Development _____ Mike Reynolds
Program _____ Dot Wilkinson
Site Selection _____ Andy Weaver
Two-Year College Concerns _____ Wanda Emfinger
Vendors & Sponsors _____ Lora Kiser
Webmasters _____ Eric Dossey
_____ Jennifer Cosens

Respectfully submitted,

PRESIDENT-ELECT'S REPORT

by Dot Wilkinson

"Reflections of the Past and Directions for the Future". What an excellent title for the spring conference. As I reflect on the past year, I have such a warm feeling of camaraderie toward all my AASFAA friends. You have made my year as president-elect a wonderful experience. I have learned so much and gained so many friends. I know that this year has helped prepare me for the future. I look forward to serving as your President next year.

I hope everyone enjoyed the spring conference. For those of you who had to stay home because of proration, you missed one of the best conferences ever. David Bartnicki, from the U.S. Department of Education, did an outstanding job with the federal update. It's hard to think of a federal update as fun, but David was able to accomplish that task. The bells and whistles he added to his presentation were very entertaining as well as informative. We were very fortunate to have four representatives from the Department of Education at our conference. Laura Hall arranged this training. We are grateful for the Department's input and the training they provide.

Mike Reynolds arranged for the NASFAA decentralized training to be a part of the spring conference. All the NASFAA sessions were excellent and the materials provided can be used as resource materials to do the necessary job in our offices. A special thanks goes out to Mike and his staff for their work at the spring conference.

There were several other sessions that were very good. The session on *Return of Title IV Funds* was very informative and I sincerely appreciate the input from the business offices at Auburn University, Southern Union, and the state Auditor's Office, as well as our financial aid experts who served on the panel. The session on *Unparalleled Customer Service* received excellent comments. For those of us who missed that session, we may want to have it again. The evaluations were outstanding for all sessions.

I would like to personally thank all the vendor sponsors for their help in making AASFAA the strong organization that it is. We could not provide the excellent training and grow professionally without your assistance. Also, I would like to thank everyone who assisted with the fall and spring conferences. All of you are to be commended for the wonderful job you did.

Jonna Moses of Regions Bank was spring conference chair, and as always, she did an excellent job. Both laughter and sadness came from our special tribute to Theresa Duke. Reflections from the past will always bring back good memories of Theresa. A special thanks goes out to Tommy Dismukes and his team for compiling the video.

I would like to give Lora Kiser a special thanks for all the work she has done to prepare programs, purchase

conference door prizes, prepare bags for both conferences and not to mention how much she helped me on several conference issues. Thank you Lora.

Dee has provided a good path for me to follow for next year-*Directions for the Future*. I ask for the support of every AASFAA member to help make 2001-2002 a great year. If you have concerns or need assistance, please let me know.

NOMINATIONS & ELECTIONS REPORT

by Dorenda Adams

New AASFAA Officers Elected

The ballots were cast, the votes were counted, and the association has new officers for the 2001-02 year. Mike Reynolds, Auburn University, was elected President-Elect; Deborah Byrd, Calhoun Community College, was elected Vice President; Lora Kiser, KHEAA, was elected Treasurer-Elect; and Keith Saulsberry, Troy State University, was elected Secretary.

Congratulations to our new officers.

AASFAA Members Honored for Service

The two highest awards bestowed annually by AASFAA were presented at the spring 2001 annual conference in Gulf Shores, AL. Cindy Massey, Southtrust Bank, was presented the John H. Buchanan, Jr Distinguished Service Award for her significant contributions to student assistance programs in higher education in Alabama. Jim Bradsher, Auburn University Montgomery, was presented the M. Cecil Padgett Outstanding Achievement Award for his significant contribution to higher education and student assistance programs in Alabama during the year,

Congratulations honorees.

AASFAA NEWS

by Dee Talley

Congratulations

Joan Waters, Chattahoochee Valley Community College, on the recent birth of her grandson. Austin William Cato was born on May 16, 2001, and weighed 7 lb. 10 oz. - 21 in. long. Congratulations to the parents, Stefanie and Jason.

Bill Wall, ACHE, on the recent graduation of his daughter, Nancy. Nancy received her master's degree in criminal justice from the University of Alabama on May 19, 2001. She has accepted a

position with The Winston Group, political analysts and consultants in Alexandria, Virginia.

New Positions

William H. Wall, Director of Grants and Scholarships at ACHE, has assumed new responsibilities due to a recent retirement. He is now the Director of Student Assistance Programs.

Retirements

Shirley Roberson, Director of Loan Servicing at ACHE, retired on May 11, 2001. She plans to travel in her new RV, and go ice skiing wherever she can find snow.

Pat Thorne, Assistant Director for Loan Servicing (SAILS), has announced her retirement effective August 1, 2001. She plans to travel with her husband, Eric, who has already retired.

LENDING MATTERS

by David Long

Online Debt-management Tools, Planning Brochure Now Available

USA Funds® offers a new online resource to enhance campus default-prevention and debt-management efforts, as well as an informative brochure aimed at helping families plan and pay for college.

Debt-management Tools are on the Web

USA Funds has introduced a comprehensive set of online tools to assist schools in their debt-management and default-prevention efforts.

By visiting the USA Funds Web site — www.usafunds.org — and selecting *Financial-Aid Professionals* and *Debt-Management Information*, financial-aid professionals can access a significant collection of debt-management resources. Developed as a joint effort of the USA Funds Default-Prevention Council and the USA Funds Debt-Management Team, the site provides resources and tools that schools can immediately download and easily incorporate into their debt-management and default-prevention programs.

A key component of the site is the online *Best Practices Manual*, which offers tactics drawn from schools that have implemented successful student-loan default-prevention programs. The manual contains training materials; sample forms, letters and checklists; and proven default-prevention techniques that financial-aid administrators can use throughout the entire student-loan life cycle. The manual provides specific debt-management tools for use during student-loan-

origination, in-school, grace and loan-repayment phases.

For more information about USA Funds' online debt-management resources or its overall default-prevention efforts, contact your USA Funds debt-management consultant, Mae Dunn-St. Julien, at 770-472-7102; toll-free at 800-551-1353, ext. 7880; or by e-mail at estjulie@usafunds.org.

College-preparatory Help Available for Families

Financial-aid professionals now have a handy reference to help families through the process of planning and paying for higher education.

Paying for College, a booklet available from USA Funds, covers topics that include the following:

- Estimating current and future college expenses — A look at how to determine direct and indirect college costs.
- Planning ahead — An examination of the importance of early preparation for college, including a description of some college-funding options.
- How to apply for financial aid — Background about the financial-aid process, financial-aid terms and education-loan programs.
- Student-loan repayment — An explanation of repayment options and the importance of good repayment habits.
- Time line for applying for college and for financial aid — An outline of essential steps to take before beginning college.

For more information about USA Funds' *Paying for College* booklet, contact your USA Funds Services representative, David Long, at 205-444-9113; toll-free at 800-428-9250, ext. 2661; or by e-mail at dlong@usafunds.org. You may order the booklets online by visiting www.usagroup.com/schools/forms/suppliesrequest.asp and scrolling to Section 2, *Information for Borrowers*.

USA Funds to Sponsor \$3-million Scholarship Program

USA Funds® will triple funding for its scholarship program beginning with the 2002-03 academic year. The USA Funds Scholarship Program will award up to \$3 million in new, need-based scholarships to help narrow the gap between college-participation rates of low-income and higher-income students.

The 2002-03 program will assist students whose families report annual adjusted gross incomes of \$35,000 or less

by offering scholarships of \$1,500 to full-time students and \$750 to part-time students. Each of these scholarships will be renewable for up to an additional three years.

"Access Denied," a report from the Advisory Committee on Student Financial Assistance, discloses that, while access to higher education has improved for students at all income levels since 1970, the gap in college-participation rates between low-income students (those from families with incomes of less than \$250,000) and higher-income students (whose families earn more than \$75,000 annually) remains roughly the same as it was 30 years ago. The committee is an independent group of student-aid-policy advisers to Congress and the U.S. Secretary of Education.

The USA Funds Scholarship Program will award up to half of its 2002-03 scholarships to applicants who, in addition to demonstrating financial need, are members of ethnic minority groups or are physically disabled. "Access Denied" points out that, during the next 15 years, non-white young people will account for 80 percent of the growth in the traditional college-age population.

USA Funds' Web site — www.usafunds.org — will offer information about applying for the scholarships in fall 2001. For more information, contact your USA Funds Services representative, David Long, at 205-444-9113; toll-free at 800-428-9250, extension 2661; or by e-mail at dlong@usafunds.org.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

by Dan Brent

An activity often done at customer-service workshops (mine included) is to ask participants to recall an incident of poor service that has recently victimized them. The stories are usually quite funny – at least in retrospect. And it is easy to construct from them the list of what not to do when you are working with your customers.

I recently did a series of workshops at a resort hotel in the Catskill Mountains. The program was for a New York area college. The people from several of their offices, including the Financial Aid people, were spending three days in a well-planned business retreat. I arrived by car in this lovely old resort setting. The grounds included about eight buildings (elegant I'm sure in their day), a golf course, tennis courts, volleyball courts, dining rooms, meeting rooms, and a night club.

There was an initial problem. I could not find the check-in lobby. I followed the signs to where the parking was and left the car, but there was no clue where I was to go from there. I found a house phone and asked for directions to the lobby. "What building are you in now?" I gave her the name from the front of the building. "What do you see as you look out?" "I see a large two-story white building standing on green stiltpillars." When she replied, "We don't have a building

that looks like that," I thanked her and decided to do the search alone.

I found the lobby and checked in. "What's the rate?" I asked. "I don't know." "Do any of these other people know?" "No." "Could you find out?" "Yes, of course," and she disappeared. In five minutes she returned and had the figure. She gave me the plastic room key in an envelope with the number 3904 on it. "Where will I find this room?" I asked. "On the ninth floor of the next building down." I thanked her.

In the next building I got off the elevator on the ninth floor and found eight rooms – numbered from 987 to 994. Toting my luggage, I returned to the check-in lobby and waited in line again. "There is no room 3904 nor 904 on the ninth floor of that building," I explained. The lady got out a large notebook and flipped pages until she found the information she needed. "3904 is the new phone number for the room. The number on the door will be 994," she explained. If this were a game, the resort would be winning 3-0.

The next morning the hotel bill had been slipped under the door. I checked it. It was for 75 cents. Back to the check-in lobby. "There seems to be some mistake here," I explained handing the lady the bill. "I'm Brent from room 994 or 3904 depending on the count." She played with the computer for a while. "I'll have to check with the supervisor," she said finally. "Could you come back in a half hour?" They weren't kidding the afternoon before. Nobody at the front desk did know the room rate!

I returned in a half hour. "Hi again!" "Yes, good morning Sir," she replied. "How may I help you?" "Brent," I said. "You're getting me a bill." "Oh yes. It's not ready. Could you come back in a half hour?" I couldn't but when I did get back, the same lady was there. "Hi again!" "Yes, good morning Sir," she replied. "How may I help you?" "Brent," I said. "You're getting me a bill." "Oh yes." She vanished behind the Wizard of Oz's curtain and returned by and by with the bill.

So what's to learn? The beauty of the bad-service exercise is that the setting specifics make no difference. The list will apply not only to the resort but to what you or I do for our customers as well. Try it. This is the list of "Don'ts" from my recent experience.

- Don't be illusive in your availability to student customers.
- Don't be unable to answer the obvious questions.
- Don't give them bad information.
- Don't send them on wild goose chases.
- Don't make it more complicated than it needs to be.
- Don't foul up the paper work.
- Don't make promises you can't keep.
- Don't be oblivious to the pain that your mistakes create.
- Don't pretend you've never seen your problem customers before.

There. That's off my chest!

SASF AA NEWS

by Rose Mary Stelma, and Lynne Reinstadtler

Summer 2001 SASFAA New Aid Officers Workshop

If you are a financial aid administrator with three or less years of experience or have a colleague who fits that description, then this is the workshop for you! This week long workshop is an intense professional development activity designed to provide you with a working knowledge of the federal student financial aid programs, as well as an understanding of the laws and regulations that govern these programs. The workshop runs from June 17 – 22, 2001 and will be held at Furman University in Greenville, SC. Visit the SASFAA website – www.sasfaa.org for more information. Carlos Clark from Alabama A&M will serve as an instructor for the workshop this summer. Next year's SASFAA Vice President, Ron Day from Birmingham Southern College will also assist with the workshop. See you there!

UPCOMING EVENTS

SASF AA New Aid Officers Workshop ----- Greenville, SC	June 17-22
AASF AA Transitional Meeting ----- Sterrett, AL	June 28-29
NASF AA Conference ----- Nashville, TN	July 22-25
AASF AA Fall Conference ----- Auburn, AL	Oct 16-19
AASF AA Spring Conference ----- Gulf Shores, AL	May 7-11

**2001-2002
Application for Membership**

General Information (please print):

Name _____

Title _____

Institution/Agency Name _____

Street Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Telephone Number _____ Fax Number _____

*E-mail Address _____

*Your e-mail address will automatically be added to the AASF AA List Serve. If you do not wish to be included on List Serve, please circle: **NO**

Institution/Agency Type (check one):

_____ Less-than-two-year _____ Vocational/Technical

_____ Two-year _____ Lending Agency

_____ Four-year _____ Other

Control Type (check one):

_____ Public _____ Private Career School

_____ Private _____ Other

Membership dues for 2000-2001 are \$15.00. Please make check payable to AASF AA.
Mail check to:

Buddy Jackson
Director of Financial Aid
5345 Atlanta Highway
Montgomery, AL 36109

2001-2002
AASFAA Volunteer Form

AASFAA hopes that you will volunteer to help the association serve you and others more effectively by giving of your time and talents. **Get Involved.** You will find that your participation in the association will be very much appreciated and you will find it to be very beneficial to you. Please select areas that you may wish to serve and return the form to:

Dot Wilkinson, Director of Financial Aid
Southern Union State Community
College
P. O. Box 1000
Wadley, AL 36276
FAX (256-395-2215)

- Local Arrangements (Fall 2001) Auburn
- Local Arrangements (Spring 2002) Gulf Shores
- Professional Development (*New Aid Officer's Training*)
- Membership
- Public Relations
- Site Selection
- Legislative Relations
- Mentoring
- Program Committee
- Two-Year Concerns
- Long-Range Planning

Name _____

E-Mail Address _____

Phone _____ FAX _____

Institution _____

Position _____

Mailing Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Years of Experience _____