



# AASFAA Newsletter

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

Winter 2002 Edition, December 20, 2002

## PRESIDENT'S REPORT

by Michael Reynolds

As most of you know, the Fall Conference at the Mountain Brook Inn was a record-breaking success. It was the largest Fall Conference in AASFAA history and many thanks go out to Cindy Massey, Deborah Byrd and Carlos Clark for making it happen. Also thanks to Charles Markle for helping to assure that the funds were there to pay for it, along with the generous assistance of our lenders and vendors. AASFAA also owes a big "Thank You" to Dr. Roy Johnson for his coordination of the two-year system's attendance at the Fall Conference. I feel certain that the attendees received a tremendous amount of beneficial information to take back to their campuses. I am sure that you all join me in sending my utmost sympathy to Dr. Mike Malone, Executive Director of the Alabama Commission on Higher Education, in the loss of his daughter. As you will remember, Dr. Malone was our guest speaker at the Fall Conference.

As most of you know, the SASFAA Conference in February will be in Jacksonville, Florida and AASFAA will have a booth there to encourage attendance at the 2004 SASFAA in Birmingham. We will need AASFAA member volunteers to help "man" the booth during the conference. Please let me know if you will be attending and I will schedule time for you to assistance in this project. Our very own Ron Day will be President of SASFAA when we host SASFAA so we really want to make him proud to have SASFAA in his home state. We want all of the SASFAA members to "Come see why stars fell on Sweet Home Alabama!"

With Reauthorization in the wings, I am sure that we will all be busy trying to get our wish lists in to the Department of Education. I wish all of you a very safe, prosperous and happy holiday season and look forward to working with you in 2003!

## PAST PRESIDENT'S REPORT

by Dot Wilkinson

As you plan your holidays, please remember that it will soon be time to select the nominees for the M. Cecil Padgett Award and the John Buchanan Award. Please send your nominations to me at [dwilkinson@suscc.cc.al.us](mailto:dwilkinson@suscc.cc.al.us).

## VENDOR/SPONSOR REPORT

by Charles Markle

Season's greetings! The Spring Conference is next on the agenda. The program committee will meet Jan/Feb 03 to begin making plans. Tonya Till and I are excited about the future conference. I will send information out to the vendor/sponsors the week following our meeting. Until then, I hope everyone has a great holiday season in peace and happiness.

### Contents

	<u>Page</u>
Reports .....	1-2
SASFAA News .....	2
Department of Education .....	2
Lending Matters .....	3-4
Professional Development .....	4-6
Upcoming Events .....	6
2003 SASFAA Absentee Ballot .....	7

## LOCAL ARRANGEMENT'S REPORT

By Cindy Massey

Our Fall Conference was held at the Mountain Brook Inn, October 16-18, 2002.

This conference boasted the largest number of attendees at any AASFAA conference. And, we did it at the smallest hotel we have ever utilized for an AASFAA conference! Wow! But, as always our members pulled together and made the best of it! I want to extend my sincere thanks to each of you for your support and good nature during our "tightly packed" conference. I hope you all found the program informative, the facility to your liking and the after hours events fun. Especially the "swan dance" at the end of the program Thursday Night!

The Sales and Catering staff at the Mountain Brook Inn welcomes us back with open arms. They told me this was one of their largest groups to come through the hotel in a 3-day period and that we were an "exceptional" group! But, we knew that.

Glad to see so many of you join us and look forward to seeing everyone at our Spring Conference in Gulf Shores!

## SASFAA NEWS

by Clark Aldridge

### SASFAA NOMINATIONS & ELECTIONS COMMITTEE REPORT

The Nominations and Elections Committee met at the Adams Mark Hotel in Jacksonville, FL. On October 12, 2002. SASFAA Past-President, Clark Aldridge, chaired the committee. Other members present were Brenda Paganelli, Mississippi; Dot Wilkinson, Alabama; Nathan Basford, Florida; Sandy Neel, Kentucky; Lisa Mitchem, Georgia; Margaret Hunt, South Carolina; Brent Tener, Tennessee. The North Carolina and Virginia members of the Committee were unable to attend but did forward nominations for the Committee to consider.

The duties of the Committee and the elections procedures were reviewed for member. Afterwards members began to review the bios of each of the individuals nominated for each of the respective offices.

The following were selected for recommendation to the SASFAA Board:

Treasurer	Lester McKenzie-NC Marvin Ragland -VA
Vice President	Freda Jones-GA Michael Morgan-KY

President-Elect

Guy Gibbs-VA  
Janet Sain-NC

## DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

by Laura Hall

### New Training from FSA University

FSA's new training series, "Student Eligibility Basics" and "Delivery System 2003-04," is scheduled to occur nationwide between December 2002 and April 2003. The workshops are designed to help financial aid professionals manage various aspects of student eligibility. The training combines lecture, group discussion and individual case studies. Each workshop will be one day long.

#### Who should attend?

Day One-*Student Eligibility Basics* covers eligibility criteria, need analysis and verification and is designed for FAAs interested in a basic course that reviews fundamental principles of these topics.

Day Two-*Delivery System* discusses changes and enhancements to the 2003-04 delivery system and is for all financial aid professionals.

You are free to attend both days but must register for each day individually. Please bring a three-ring binder to hold your copy of the Participant's Guide and other handouts.

Scheduled training in Region IV:

January 8-9	Florida International University, North Miami FL
January 14-15	Atlanta Regional Training Facility, Atlanta GA
January 29-30	Eastern Kentucky University, Richmond KY
February 12-13	D.G. Erwin Center, Tampa FL
February 19-20	University of West Florida, Pensacola FL
March 4-5	Atlanta Regional Training Center, Atlanta GA
March 11-12	UNC Charlotte, Charlotte NC

Many other sessions are scheduled across the nation. For a listing of all sessions, locations, dates, and registration information, visit FSAUniversity's Training Registration site at <http://www.ed.gov/offices/OSFAP/sfau/>

## LENDING MATTERS

by David Long, Lori Powers

### Scholarship applications available in January

Applications will be available beginning January 2003 for the USA Funds® Access to Education Scholarships™ for the 2003-2004 academic year. Applications will be available for downloading after Jan. 1 on the USA Funds Web site, [www.usafunds.org](http://www.usafunds.org). The application deadline is March 15, 2003.

Financial-aid administrators will receive information about the program by mail.

The program will assist eligible students in achieving their higher-education goals by awarding a total of up to \$3 million in renewable scholarships to qualified students demonstrating financial need, according to the following criteria:

#### Eligibility

USA Funds Access to Education Scholarships are open to high-school seniors, currently enrolled college students or incoming college students who:

- Plan to enroll or are enrolled in full- or half-time undergraduate or full-time graduate coursework at an accredited two- or four-year college, university or vocational/technical school. Eligible applicants include students attending or planning to attend law school, medical school or other professional-degree programs. GED recipients also are eligible. Students must plan to enroll or be enrolled beginning with the fall 2003 term through Feb. 1, 2004.
- Have an annual adjusted gross family income of \$35,000 or less, as documented on a 2002 federal income-tax return on which the applicant is claimed as a federal tax exemption.
- Are U.S. citizens or eligible non-citizens.
- Are not currently in default on a federal education loan.

Up to 50 percent of the scholarship awards will be targeted to applicants who are members of an ethnic-minority group or have a documented physical disability.

#### Awards

The program will award scholarships worth \$1,500 for full-time students and \$750 for half-time undergraduate students. The scholarships may be renewed annually, if the student maintains a 2.5 grade point average on a four-point scale, until the continuously enrolled student receives a final degree or certificate, or until the total award to the student reaches \$6,000.

#### Selection of recipients

Scholarship awards also will be based on the applicant's:

- Past academic performance and future potential.
- Leadership and participation in school and community activities.
- Work experience.
- Career and educational aspirations and goals.
- Unusual personal or family circumstances.

#### For more information

More details about USA Funds Access to Education Scholarships for the 2003-2004 academic year are available at [www.usafunds.org/borrowers/access\\_to\\_education\\_scholarship.html](http://www.usafunds.org/borrowers/access_to_education_scholarship.html) on the USA Funds Web site. Questions may be sent by e-mail to [scholarship@usafunds.org](mailto:scholarship@usafunds.org).

### Alabama Student Loan Program—KHEAA AASFAA Newsletter Article

#### Web Site News



The Alabama Student Loan Program—KHEAA has created a new Web site, [www.alstudentaid.com](http://www.alstudentaid.com), specifically for Alabama students, parents, borrowers, lenders, and colleges and universities. The site was unveiled at the Alabama Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators (AASFAA) Conference in Birmingham, Alabama, in October.

#### Projects in Planning and Development

KHEAA is in the early planning stages of developing a comprehensive Financial Aid Delivery System. From a high-level perspective, we envision the use of the Common Record as the basis for data exchange between KHEAA and the school. The Common Record would include Federal Family Education Loan, Direct Lending, and Pell Grant information, thereby providing continuity and simplicity. In order to anticipate your

needs, we are interested in gaining further knowledge on how you plan to implement the Common Record on your campuses; the software you will be using, if any; and your timeframes for implementing the Common Record. Please forward your thoughts and suggestions to Karen Haney at [khaney@kheaa.com](mailto:khaney@kheaa.com).

KHEAA is currently working on the implementation of PLUS Loan MPNs. Included in this implementation will be the ability for borrowers to electronically sign their PLUS MPN. KHEAA is making a push to move all of the online processing to Web screens; therefore, the online screens supporting the PLUS MPN will only be developed for KOL+ via the Web and will not be developed for use through Interlynx.

#### **Meteor**

In early January, KHEAA will provide its FFELP data through Meteor, the National Council of Higher Education Loan Programs (NCHELP) network. Meteor is currently designed to provide the following benefits to financial aid professionals:

- Ability to access timely, student-specific financial aid information from multiple sources (i.e., a list of loans for each student borrower researched).
- A one-stop, common, online customer service resource for schools.
- Enhanced ability of participants to provide Web-capable products.

Meteor will initially provide information on FFELP loans. Over time, Meteor will include Federal Direct Student Loans, Perkins Loans, Pell Grants, state grants and alternative loans. Additionally, Meteor will be made available as a "one-stop shop" for students to obtain information about financial aid they have received.

#### **KHEAA maintains low student loan default rate**

Efforts to help our students avoid defaulting on their student loans are working. KHEAA's latest cohort default rate is 5.3 percent—lower than the national default rate of 5.74 percent for the Federal Family Education Loan Program and 6.9 percent for the state of Alabama.

#### **Student Loan Amnesty**

KHEAA provided a new amnesty program for borrowers who defaulted on their KHEAA-guaranteed student loan during August and September. KHEAA forgave all collection charges for these borrowers who paid their entire interest and principal. A total of 383 offers of \$1,250,841 in principal and interest were accepted. To date, \$630,414 of that amount has been received. This program was far more successful than our original expectations.

#### **Servicing Agreements**

Servicing agreements with Alabama Higher Education Loan Corporation and SunTrust of Alabama have been finalized. All of these loans are guaranteed by KHEAA, and conversion of the \$33 million in loans to The

Student Loan People servicing system was accomplished early in November.

Eight servicing staff members from the Alabama Higher Education Loan Corporation are being hired by The Student Loan People. They will work in KHEAA's Montgomery office.

## **PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

by Grady Collins, Tom Rebstock, Dan Brent

### **Gearing Up for the 2003 FAFSA: Assisting Students and their Families for the Coming Year**

Every financial aid officer knows one of the bigger challenges each year is helping new students and their families complete the FAFSA for the first time. Although most of us in the financial aid community know that the FAFSA has been simplified considerably from years past, many students and their parents are still intimidated by the process. Most of them seek additional help, and are most comfortable when they are guided step-by-step.

Here are some useful tips to help students and their parents accurately complete the FAFSA:

- Remind and encourage students and their families to use FAFSA on the Web if possible. Logic checks and other features in the web interface reduce the possibility of errors.
- Emphasize how to distinguish the current form from previous forms. Make sure students and families understand which form is appropriate for the current year.
- Emphasize the importance of keeping copies of the FAFSA and all future correspondence.
- Prepare a one-page reference sheet for families and students, listing deadlines, important web sites, phone numbers, and relevant sources of information.
- Host an evening event when counselors, families, and students can come together and learn about finalizing tasks in high school, preparing the FAFSA, and exploring post-secondary education opportunities.

To assist students and their families in overcoming their apprehension about the FAFSA, TG, in collaboration with financial aid administrators, school counselors, librarians, and other community-based organizations, offer a program entitled "Applying for Financial Aid: The FAFSA Process." Available at no cost in both English and Spanish, the teleconference program provides an effective way to deliver important information to students and their families in completing

this critical step to realizing their educational and career dreams. This year the TG Teleconference will take place on Thursday, February 6, 2003.

The program is offered in two formats: as a satellite teleconference broadcast for host sites that are able to receive such signals, and as a videotape for sites with no satellite reception capabilities. Host sites receive several useful tools to organize and promote their local events, including posters, fact sheets, and a press kit—all free of charge. In addition, host sites are listed in a directory on *Adventures In Education*, TG's public awareness web site located at [www.AdventuresInEducation.org](http://www.AdventuresInEducation.org).

If you are interested in hosting a FAFSA Teleconference event on your campus or in your area, complete and return the form located at <http://www.adventuresineducation.org/Events/Teleconference2003/registrationform2003.pdf>, or contact Richard Sapp, TG's Director of Awareness Programs, at (800) 252-9743, ext. 2865 or [awareness@tgslc.org](mailto:awareness@tgslc.org).

## Principles of Customer Service in Financial Aid

At the fall conference held in October, I worked with approximately one hundred AASFAA members to customize principles of customer service from the business world within the context of financial aid. What follows are the principles identified by the group, with very slight editing. We wanted to document and share these with all AASFAA members—in hopes they will benefit the operations of your financial aid office:

- Create an inviting and relaxed atmosphere
- Keep informed on policies and regulations
- Provide individualized attention
- Make students self sufficient from application to repayment
- Process data in a timely manner
- Be empathetic
- Treat every student the way you would want to be treated
- Accommodate privacy issues
- Always be willing to go one step beyond
- Offer prompt attention and a response to phone questions
- Don't patronize
- Remember—honesty is the best policy.

Thank you for sharing your expertise in this forthright and collaborative activity. I plan to continue to work with other financial aid offices and conferences in conducting this exercise and to compile the results in a database of "best practices" for customer service in financial aid. Feel free to contact me if you would like to be kept abreast of this research or would like to have this exercise conducted at your organization.

## "Generation Y Goes to College"

I recently gave a talk on "Gen Y" at one of the state financial aid conferences. I nearly created a riot! It was unintentional; I was attempting to pass along the good news that social psychologists have discovered in the Generation Y codery.

There was no problem as I cruised through observations on three earlier generations. There are the "Veterans" (born 1922 up to World War 2). They coped with the Great Depression, then fought World War 2, the Korean War, and (with help from the Boomers) the Vietnam War. Sociologists describe them as focused, loyal, respectful, hard-working. No one in my audience had a problem with the description of these qualities. Tom Brokaw entitled his book about them *The Greatest Generation*.

Next, the sociologists say, came the Boomers (born from World War 2 up to 1960). Their generation was characterized by can-do optimism, a focus on their jobs, and a commitment to cooperation, consensus, and teamwork.

After the Boomers came the famous "Generation X" (born 1960 to 1980). The sociologists characterized them as informal, self-reliant, tech savvy, cynical, and in many ways alienated. My group had no objection so far. The trouble started with the way sociologists characterize the next group—Generation Y (born 1980-now).

The first-born of the "Gen Y" group are now arriving in college. I asked my audience whether they've seen a shift over the last couple years in the type of student they are dealing with. They told me, "Definitely yes." "How so?" I asked. I was not prepared for what came next. "They are lazy. They are surly and demanding. They expect to be waited on. They expect coolie service from us. They want everything yesterday. They want to be CEO when they graduate but they can't decide on a major. They want the maximum loan so they can make the payments on their Ford Explorer. Many of them resent even being in college."

I was stunned. There I was prepared to present data that 90% of them wanted to attend college and almost half of those expected to get at least a masters degree. I'd read a large volume of the literature on "Gen Y" and social psychologists are enormously optimistic about the group. There is promise that this generation will combine the best of the previous three generations. I was told that they have the can-do attitude of the Veterans, the work ethic of the Boomers, and the tech savvy of the Gen X group. I was told by the gurus that this generation is responsible, goal driven, patriotic, and tolerant of diversity. They value their family relationships and friendships – although they have what may be a healthy wariness about trusting adults. Products of working or single parents, they are self-reliant and resourceful.

Or are they?

In the time available to us at the conference session, we were not able to resolve the vast disconnect between the people I was told are being met in financial aid offices and the people being described by the social psychologists. Had I depended on a single source for my data, I would have been ready to concede that some study had left out representation from the clients my audience is dealing with. But the optimistic assessment of Gen Y people is universal. It's in every source I was able to access.

So here is the food for thought. Has there really been a generational shift in the last twenty years and, if so, how is the new generation different? Are the new Gen Y students beginning to arrive at your office in the last couple years more focused and purposeful (as the sociologists expect) or less so (as at least some FA practitioners seem to find them)? If there is validity in what the social science people think they are seeing, take heart. You will be able to use your mentoring and coaching skills with a receptive audience. If there is little or nothing to their optimism, then - well - life goes on. Sorry about that!

### UPCOMING EVENTS

SASFAA Conference .....	Feb	23-25
Jacksonville, FL		
AASFAA Spring Conference .....	May	11-14
Gulf Shores, AL		
NASFAA Conference .....	July	9-12
Salt Lake City, UT		

## 2003 SASFAA ABSENTEE BALLOT

I certify that I am a 2002-03 member in good standing with the Southern Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators, Inc. (SASFAA). I am submitting this absentee ballot because I do not plan to attend the annual conference in Jacksonville, Florida in February 2003.

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Typed or Printed Name

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Signature

Date

**Members who vote by absentee ballot and who subsequently attend the conference cannot vote in the general election; however, the member may vote in the case of a run-off election.**



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**Instructions:** Print this page from the newsletter. With scissors, cut the certification statement from the ballot. Sign the certification statement above. Cast your vote (one for each elected office), then, fold your ballot in half so that your selections are concealed. Staple or tape your ballot closed. Staple the certification statement to the outside of the ballot. Prior to counting ballots, your membership will be confirmed. Your certification statement will be detached from your sealed ballot before your vote is recorded.

Insert both the certification statement with your ballot in the envelope. Mail it to the address listed below: ***YOUR BALLOT WITH THE CERTIFICATION STATEMENT MUST BE RECEIVED BY FEBRUARY 14, 2003 IN ORDER TO BE COUNTED.***

### VOTE ONCE FOR EACH OFFICE

**President-Elect**

- Guy Gibbs  
 Janet Sain  
 Write in: \_\_\_\_\_

**Vice President**

- Freida Jones  
 Michael Morgan  
 Write in: \_\_\_\_\_

**Treasure:**

- Lester McKenzie  
 Marvin Ragland  
 Write in: \_\_\_\_\_

**Mail your completed ballot to:**

Clark Aldridge  
SASFAA Nominations and Elections  
Director of Student Financial Services  
University of Montevallo  
Station 6050  
Montevallo, AL 35115