

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF STUDENT FINANCIAL AID ADMINISTRATORS

ANNUAL REPORT

2018–19

NASFAA

is the largest postsecondary education association with institutional membership in Washington, DC, and the only national association with a primary focus on student aid legislation, regulatory analysis, and training for financial aid administrators in all sectors of postsecondary education. No other national association serves the needs of the financial aid community better or more effectively.

Inside NASFAA’s 2018–19 Annual Report

A Message From Our President and Our National Chair	2
Governance and Leadership	4
Policy and Federal Relations: Advocacy, Research, and Grants	6
Blue Icon Advisors	8
The Standards of Excellence Peer Review Program	9
The 2019 NASFAA National Conference.....	10
NASFAA Awards	13
Leadership & Legislative Conference & Expo.....	14
Communications	15
Professional Development and Institutional Compliance	18
Membership	20
Diversity Leadership Program	21
Volunteers	23
The Dallas Martin Endowment.....	25
Finance	26

A Message From Our President and Our National Chair

Former President Harry S. Truman said, "Progress occurs when courageous, skillful leaders seize the opportunity to change things for the better." In 2018-19, the NASFAA Board of Directors embodied exactly that sort of visionary leadership.

Following a series of listening sessions NASFAA conducted in all six regions across the country, the Board took steps toward creating a new strategic long-range plan while fulfilling the challenges for progress and growth set out in the 2017-20 plan.

In terms of fulfilling the strategic goals, NASFAA launched two major initiatives in 2018-19, which both represent years, if not decades, of thoughtful deliberation and strategic planning by the Board:

- With the launch of the Certified Financial Aid Administrator™ (CFAA), financial aid professionals now have a way to advance their careers and both enhance and demonstrate their knowledge of Title IV aid administration. Designed to complement on-the-job expertise, this voluntary certification brings a valuable benchmark to our community, providing the foundation for continued professional development and career growth.
- And, with the launch of Blue Icon Advisors, a new consultancy wholly owned by NASFAA, the association can now provide the valuable consulting, leadership support, and compliance services that institutions want and need, while generating non-dues revenue and defraying future membership dues increases.

As NASFAA embarks on these two major initiatives, we remain focused on our mission to serve the financial aid profession. Among the many outstanding and dedicated committees and task forces that gave their time and talent to NASFAA this year, the Higher Education Reauthorization Task Force presented the Board with a new set of recommendations to guide the future reauthorization of the Higher Education Act of 1965 to ensure access and success for students, and to reduce unnecessary burden on aid offices. Under the guidance of our members, NASFAA also offered a new track for the Leadership & Legislative Conference & Expo this year: Advanced Topics in Financial Aid Leadership.

Last, but certainly not least, this year NASFAA proudly announced the inaugural class of the Diversity Leadership Program (DLP). The Board of Directors was thrilled to receive nearly 100 applications from across all six regions for the DLP, which provides selectees from a wide range of diverse backgrounds with a robust portfolio of benefits, mentorship, and guidance on how to develop as a financial aid association leader at the state, regional, and national level. Each year, a group of NASFAA members select six institutional members of NASFAA — one from each region — to participate in the DLP.

Progress can be daunting, but also invigorating. This year, NASFAA energized our membership with new offerings and a galvanized commitment to our mission and core ideals. We thank you for your dedication to your association as we look forward to building on that progress in the coming year.



Justin Draeger, NASFAA President

Lori Vedder, 2018-19 NASFAA National Chair

Governance and Leadership

In 2018-19, NASFAA's Board of Directors — which provides governance, strategic direction, and oversight for all association activities — concluded the second year of its 2017-20 Strategic Long Range Plan. This Board-approved plan sets the course for the association, and NASFAA staff and the Association Governance Committee (AGC) regularly review progress and provide updates to the Board.

The Board of Directors met in person three times in 2018-19 and otherwise communicated on an ongoing basis throughout the year. Significant actions taken by the Board appear below.

November 2018 Board Meeting in Scottsdale, AZ

- **Audit Approval.** The Board approved the clean audit conducted by independent auditor RSM McGladrey, as brought forward by the Financial Affairs Committee (FAC).
- **Orlando Conference 2019 Budget.** The Board approved a budget for the June 2019 Orlando National Conference, as presented by FAC.
- **Leadership & Legislative Conference & Expo 2019 Budget.** The Board approved a budget for the February 2019 Leadership Conference, as presented by FAC.
- **Updated Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Transition Plan.** At the recommendation of the Association Governance Committee (AGC), the Board approved a motion to update the existing CEO Transition Plan to clarify the order of events and reporting in the case of a planned or sudden presidential departure.

- **CFAA Commission Proposal and Proposed Commissioners.** The Board approved a plan presented by the AGC to (a) create the Certified Financial Aid Administrator™ (CFAA) Commission, which would award the CFAA credential and be responsible for setting policy and standards related to the CFAA Program, and (b) approve the proposed list of commissioners.
- **Blue Icon Line of Credit.** The Board approved a request from FAC to extend a line of credit to launch Blue Icon Advisors and to provide an operating budget for start-up.
- **Closed Schools Recommendations.** President Justin Draeger presented to the Board a paper, authored by NASFAA's policy and research staff and funded by Lumina Foundation, titled "Recommendations for the U.S. Department of Education to Improve Student Experience in Navigating School Closure." The Board voted to accept the recommendations of this paper.

March 2019 Board Meeting in Washington, D.C.

- **Volunteer Approval for 2019-20.** The Board approved National Chair-Elect Paula Luff's selectee, Emily Osborne, as 2020 National Conference program chair, and approved Andrew Hammontree, Brent Shock, and Francisco Valines as 2019-20 commission directors.
- **Blue Icon Board Policies and Procedures Manual.** The NASFAA Board approved a policies and procedures manual for the Blue Icon Advisors' Board of Managers. The manual outlines policies, practices, and expectations regarding the governance and oversight of the new company.

- **CFAA Representation to the Ethics Commission.** At the recommendation of AGC, the Board approved adding CFAA Board representation to the existing NASFAA Ethics Commission and approved related edits to NASFAA's Ethics Commission Charter.
- **Awards Committee.** Awards Committee Chair Billie Jo Hamilton presented the Board with the 2019 list of award recipients, which the Board ratified.

June 2019 Board Meeting in Orlando, FL

- **NASFAA President's Board Service.** Per Board policy, the Board reviewed and approved the president's service on external boards.
- **Reauthorization Task Force Recommendations.** The Board approved the recommendations of NASFAA's Higher Education Act Reauthorization Task Force.
- **Task Force on Modernizing Title IV Aid to Encourage Innovation in Higher Education.** The Board approved the recommendations of this task force, which aim to both expand the U.S. Department of Education's tool set to foster innovation and revise regulations to better support emerging educational programs and maintain adequate protections for students and taxpayers.
- **Blue Icon Management Agreement.** Following extensive accounting, tax, and legal review, as well as prior Board vetting, the Board approved the Blue Icon Management Agreement. The agreement details the policies and procedures for Blue Icon's financial and operational relationship with its sole owner, NASFAA.
- **Blue Icon Budget/Spending Plan.** The Board approved a detailed budget and spending plan for the launch of Blue Icon Advisors, as requested in November 2018.
- **Board of Managers Composition.** The Board voted to ratify the members of the Blue Icon Board of Managers, whose terms began July 1, 2019.
- **2019-20 Operating Budget.** At the recommendation of FAC, the Board voted to approve a balanced 2019-20 Operating Budget with no increase in membership dues.
- **Board Funding Requests for 2019-20.** At the recommendation of FAC, the Board voted to approve Board Designated funding requests for 2019-20.
- **Three Grants.** The Board approved NASFAA's acceptance and administration of three grants — one officially approved and two pending approval — with amounts totalling more than \$625,000.

The 2018–19 NASFAA Board of Directors

Officers

National Chair: Lori Vedder, University of Michigan - Flint

National Chair-Elect: Paula Luff, DePaul University

Past National Chair: Billie Jo Hamilton, University of South Florida

Treasurer: Lianne Masterson, Blue Ridge Community College

Regional Representatives

EASFAA: Kristi Jovell, Champlain College

MASFAA: Nicholas Prewett, University of Missouri

RMASFAA: Ken Kocer, Mount Marty College

SASFAA: Sharon Oliver, North Carolina Central University

SWASFAA: Shannon Crossland, Texas Tech University

WASFAA: Helen Faith, Lane Community College

Representatives at Large

Rachelle Feldman, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

Brenda Hicks, Southwestern College

G. Michael Johnson, Columbia Gorge Community College

Marian Dill, Lee University

Douglas Levy, Macomb Community College

Kelly Morrissey, Community College of Rhode Island

Commission Directors

Karen Krause, University of Texas at Arlington

Aaron Steffens, Luther College

Arthur Young, Utah State University

Ex-officio

President: Justin Draeger, NASFAA

Board Executive Secretary: Beth Maglione

NASFAA CFO: Mitchell Weintraub, NASFAA/Cordia Partners

Special Advisor to the Board

Diversity Officer: Craig Slaughter, Kenyon College

Policy and Federal Relations: Advocacy, Research, and Grants

A large part of achieving NASFAA's mission to eliminate financial barriers to higher education involves effective, ongoing legislative and public policy [advocacy](#) on Capitol Hill and with the U.S. Department of Education (ED). Our involvement in rigorous [research](#), often funded by generous grants, informs and supports both our own and others' advocacy efforts while creating a foundation for further research and discovery. This year, we achieved several goals, saw significant headway on legislative and regulatory issues, and made valuable contributions to student aid research.

Advocacy

Capitol Hill

- **Improving Aid Offers.** To promote improving aid offers, the Board of Directors approved an [official policy position](#) that calls for standardized terms, elements, and definitions, while still allowing institutions to develop aid offers that meet the needs of their unique student populations. In addition, we conducted consumer testing and a membership survey to inform our recommendations on ED's beta [College Financing Plan](#). In May 2019, we used member feedback to update our 2012 [Glossary of Terms for Aid Offers](#).
- **Data-Sharing "Win" in Spending Bill.** The fiscal year (FY) 2019 [appropriations bill](#) included new, expanded data-sharing language allowing an institution to share FAFSA data — with students' written consent — with an organization "assisting the applicant in applying for and receiving Federal, State, local, or tribal assistance, that is designated by the applicant to assist the applicant in applying for and receiving financial assistance for any component of the applicant's cost of attendance." NASFAA had [advocated heavily](#) for this expansion, urging congressional leaders to include this provision in the final spending bill.
- **Momentum Grows for Eliminating Origination Fees.** Eliminating federal student loan origination fees, a longtime NASFAA advocacy push, is now a bipartisan, bicameral higher education legislative priority. Sens. Mike Braun (R-IN) and Krysten Sinema (D-AZ) [sponsored a Senate bill](#) to eliminate origination fees in June 2019. A few weeks later, Reps. Susan Davis (D-CA) and Lloyd Smucker (R-PA), the top Democrat and Republican on the House Subcommittee on Higher Education and Workforce Investment, [introduced a bill](#) to eliminate origination fees, reflecting the most bipartisan support for eliminating the hidden student loan tax to date. [NASFAA original research](#) showing students and parents paid more than \$1.7 billion in origination fees in 2017-18 factored prominently in both the House and Senate press releases. The broad bipartisan support bodes well for origination fee elimination to be included in whatever final Higher Education Act (HEA) reauthorization bill we see out of Congress in the coming year(s), but sustained advocacy will make the difference.
- **Congress Agrees to Education Spending by the Deadline for the First Time in Two Decades.** In June 2018, [NASFAA sent Congress a letter](#) outlining the effects of delays in passing final education appropriations. In September 2018, for the first time in 22 years, Congress passed the fiscal year appropriations bill for education programs before the October 1 start of the federal fiscal year (FY). The [FY 2019 package](#) (funding award year 2019-20) included a \$100 increase in the Federal Pell Grant maximum award, expanded FAFSA data-sharing language, and added a new provision to provide interest-free deferments for borrowers undergoing cancer treatment. In June 2019, [NASFAA sent Congress a letter](#) encouraging leaders to fix some of the errors in the adopted language for the new cancer treatment deferment.

U.S. Department of Education

- **NASFAA Advocacy Leads ED to Reconsider the Federal Perkins Loan Recall Process.** NASFAA joined with the American Council on Education in a [letter to ED](#) in July 2018 and a [follow-up letter](#) in October on the Perkins Loan recall process. The two letters urged ED to provide funds to schools for unreimbursed cancellations in the recall process for the now-expired Perkins Loan program, or, at a minimum, to delay requiring institutions participating in the Perkins program to return any funds until the issue of cancellation costs is resolved. Although ED had originally intended to announce the recall process in fall 2018, it [delayed the process](#). Following months of pressure from the higher education and financial aid communities, ED in September 2019 [announced its intention](#) to release guidance by the end of 2019 on how it will reimburse colleges and universities more than \$400 million for canceled loans.
- **Work on Verification Continues With a Short-Term Win on Documentation.** NASFAA's multi-year [efforts to improve the verification process](#) for families and students continued in 2018-19. In January 2019, [ED announced](#) flexibility on required verification documentation, and in November, a bipartisan group of senators introduced the [FAFSA Act](#) — a bill to reduce verification through ED and Internal Revenue Service data sharing — with NASFAA's support.

Research and Grants

- **The Higher Education Committee of 50 (HEC50) Released Its Recommendations.** In late 2017, NASFAA was awarded a grant to convene a group of forward-thinking campus leaders tasked with developing policy solutions to help surmount obstacles preventing students from enrolling in, paying for, and graduating from college. Known as the [HEC50](#), the NASFAA-facilitated group included college presidents, enrollment managers, admissions staff, financial aid and bursar leaders, members of governing boards, students, and other leaders from all postsecondary institution sectors. The HEC50 spent more than a year discussing prominent issues, developing practical solutions, and reviewing public feedback before it released its [final report](#) of 36 practical recommendations for Congress in March 2019.
- **NASFAA Continues to Assist Displaced Students.** In 2015, Corinthian Colleges, Inc. abruptly shut down, leaving many of its students with debt but no degree and no idea where to turn for counsel. Since then, NASFAA has worked to assist students displaced by college and career school closures. Originally

launched as a collaboration among NASFAA and four other entities, this work has led to the creation of [NextStepsEd](#), a ticketing portal where affected students can submit requests for help with financial aid questions and more. The participating organizations and funding sources have changed since the project's inception, however with the help of a committed volunteer network, NASFAA has been unwavering in its dedication to connecting students with seasoned financial aid administrators. This project has assisted more than 5,000 students to date in navigating their options regarding [closed school federal loan discharge](#), [Universal Borrower Defense](#), and [Federal Pell Grant eligibility restoration](#). Thanks to generous additional grant funding, we will be able to continue this effort until December 2020.

- **Exploring the Effects of a One-Time FAFSA.** In collaboration with the Center for American Progress (CAP) and the American Community College Trustees (ACCT), NASFAA provided data from 27 colleges across the country — nearly a quarter of a million students — for use in a report examining whether a one-time FAFSA could be implemented and who it would help most. The final report, [One and Done: Modeling a One-Time FAFSA](#), showed that students most likely to see a significant expected family contribution (EFC) change as a result of a one-time FAFSA had started college with an EFC too high to qualify for need-based federal aid. In such cases, the change may have no effect on the aid they receive. This suggests that a one-time FAFSA could be implemented for all students and yield universal benefits to students and colleges.
- **Expanded Data Included in the 2019 National Profile.** NASFAA updates the National Student Aid Profile each year to examine the state of the Title IV programs. We added two new sets of data to the 2018 [National Student Aid Profile](#). The first is from the Office of Federal Student Aid's "[FSA Data Center](#)," which includes data on repayment status, loan status, delinquency status, and the Public Service Loan Forgiveness program. The second is from the [2015-16 National Postsecondary Student Aid Study](#) (NPSAS:16), which is a comprehensive, nationally representative survey of the characteristics of undergraduate and graduate students in postsecondary education with a special focus on student financing. The data include the characteristics of students who receive specific types of federal financial aid and analyses of the distribution of aid recipients. These new data allow for rich, creative analyses that help NASFAA members and congressional offices throughout the year.

Blue Icon Advisors: Customized Solutions for the Challenges You Face

One of NASFAA's most exciting achievements this year has been the launch of [Blue Icon Advisors](#), our new, comprehensive consulting service. Blue Icon delivers high-quality, customized consulting, leadership support, and compliance services performed by proven experts in the student aid field. We support universities, colleges, and career schools with compliance and operational evaluations; writing and reviewing policies and procedures; developing and delivering customized staff training; interim leadership; coaching and assistance for staff at all levels; consulting on financial aid and enrollment management issues; and more.

Blue Icon leverages NASFAA's unparalleled resources, the expertise of seasoned student aid professionals who have worked in director- to presidential/cabinet-level positions, and the association's more than 50 years of dedication to student aid administrators.

NASFAA President Justin Draeger explains, "Sometimes you need an outside, trusted advisor with specific expertise to help clarify an issue and create a path forward. Blue Icon offers financial aid administrators that extra layer of support however they need it."

The name "Blue Icon Advisors" reflects NASFAA's iconic blue logo, which symbolizes financial aid administrators standing behind a graduating student. Both NASFAA and Blue Icon help our members support students and achieve the overarching goal of opening doors of educational opportunity.

Blue Icon is part of NASFAA's Business Services suite, which also includes the Standards of Excellence (SOE) Program. Both SOE and Blue Icon rely on the expertise of highly experienced and knowledgeable financial aid leaders, but they each address distinct needs. SOE uses a formalized review structure to assess an institution's financial aid delivery operations and compliance, while Blue Icon's broader range of services deliver solutions customized to meet the specific challenges faced by the institution. Although independent, these two programs also perfectly complement one another. For example, SOE may identify omissions in the policies and procedures manual while Blue Icon can help write the missing pieces.

We organized Blue Icon as a separate limited liability corporation wholly owned by NASFAA. This arrangement, common among nonprofit organizations, protects the association from potential liability issues while also protecting its nonprofit tax status. NASFAA will use profits earned through Blue Icon Advisors to defray future membership dues increases.

Blue Icon already has consultants out in the field working with schools on policies and procedures, coaching new directors, and developing custom training programs, and we are currently accepting projects for winter/spring 2020. To engage the Blue Icon team or request a cost estimate, contact Mandy Sponholtz, director of operations, at (202) 785-6953 or via email at blueicon@nasfaa.org.

The Standards of Excellence Peer Review Program



In the past 21 years, more than 270 schools have leveraged their strengths, reduced compliance risks, and maximized performance with the help of NASFAA's [Standards of Excellence \(SOE\) Review Program](#). SOE reviews deliver a comprehensive evaluation of financial aid operations and help ensure compliance at every level. Members who have completed an SOE review say it mirrors a federal program review, but it's friendly and collegial. An SOE review delivers an action plan that partners nicely with the consulting and implementation services provided through [Blue Icon Advisors](#).

Breaking all previous records, SOE performed 26 reviews from July 1, 2018, to June 30, 2019. Twenty schools received a full SOE review, which includes a Consumer Information Assessment. Six more received a stand-alone Consumer Information Assessment, which is an evaluation focused on compliance with disclosure and reporting requirements. Both the full review and Consumer Information Assessment offer the benefit of colleague experience and collaboration from our team of currently practicing financial aid administrators. Visit <https://www.nasfaa.org/SOE> for more information about the program and how to request a review.

The 2019 NASFAA National Conference

Every year, more than 2,000 financial aid professionals arrive at the NASFAA National Conference from every corner of the country to sharpen their expertise, explore new ideas, network with colleagues, learn what's on the student aid horizon, and be uplifted by exceptional presenters. This year's National Conference in Orlando, FL, from June 24-27, was no exception.

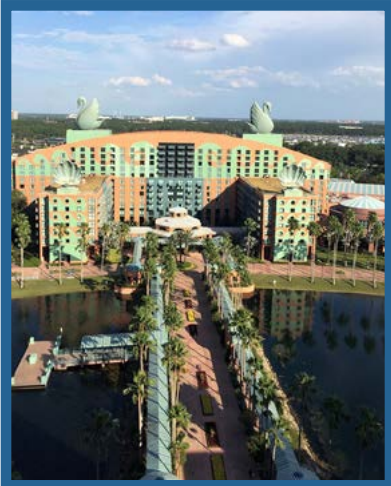
- Steve Pemberton, author of "A Chance in the World" (released as a major motion picture in 2017) and founder of a support and scholarship program of the same name, opened the conference with an unforgettable keynote address.
- Conference participants selected from more than 75 sessions led by 255 presenters in six content tracks: compliance, enrollment and retention, graduate and professional issues, leadership/management, research and data analysis, and regulatory implementation.
- NASFAA President Justin Draeger and Vice President Megan Coval presented an in-depth student aid policy update.
- The U.S. Department of Education delivered its annual update and a glimpse into the coming year, and provided nine targeted interest sessions.
- Preconference activities included an intriguing session on student mental health by Barbara Blacklock and live NASFAA U courses on Satisfactory Academic Progress and Administrative Capability.
- 2018-19 National Chair Lori Vedder passed the gavel of leadership to 2019-20 National Chair Paula Luff, and 12 outstanding individuals and groups received NASFAA awards at the annual Business Meeting.
- Of the 2,127 participants, 76% came from institutions, representing 934 universities, colleges, and vocational technical institutions.
- Nearly 180 people who couldn't attend the conference enjoyed general sessions and popular interest sessions via live-streaming, available for the second year through NASFAA Live.

* Las Vegas will host the [2020 conference](#).

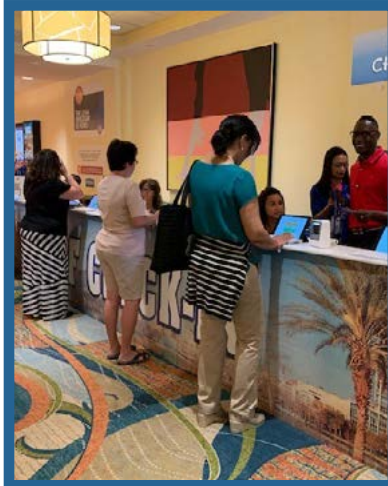


"Keep up all the good things about what is clearly in NASFAA's wheelhouse. The conference is a unique venue that allows financial aid administrators from a wide range of places to share ideas, get information about what is happening and may happen, and get to know each other in ways that exchanging emails doesn't allow."

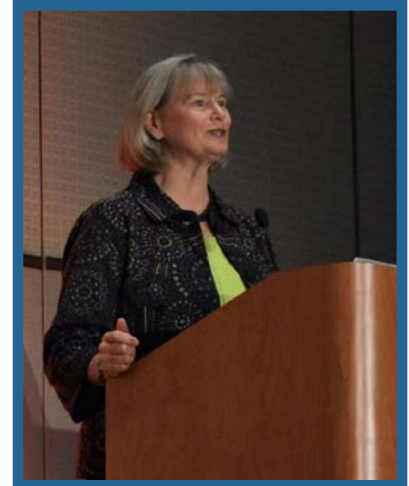
(2019 National Conference survey response)



Sunny Orlando welcomes NASFAA!



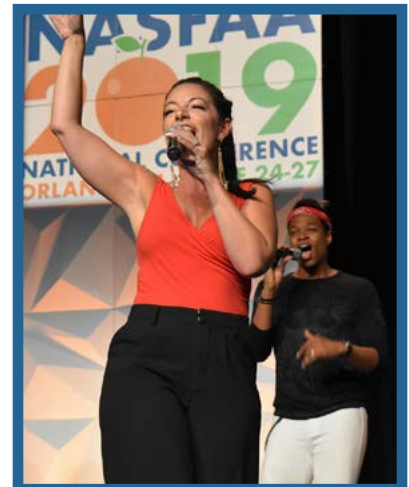
Registration is quick and easy.



Barbara Blacklock presents on student mental health.



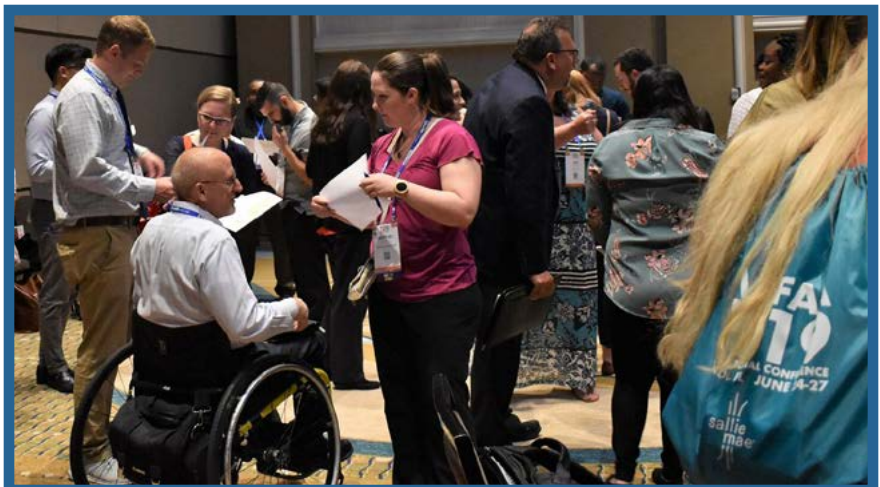
NASFAA U students learn key satisfactory academic progress concepts in a pre-conference course.



The conference opens on a high note.



NASFAA's Diversity Officer Craig Slaughter delivers a moving rendition of the National Anthem.



First-time attendees at the Kick-Off Networking Event.



Two proud new Certified Financial Aid Administrators™.



A packed house at the U.S. Department of Education federal update.



Board members and past chairs enjoying Orlando.



NASFAA staff introduce Blue Icon Advisors.



Keynote speaker Steve Pemberton: "You're not just impacting lives. You're impacting generations to come!"



Smiles from two NASFAA U instructors.



NASFAA retirees reunite at the conference.

NASFAA Awards

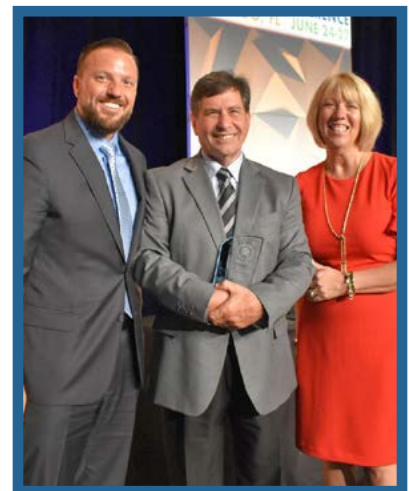
NASFAA honored 12 individuals and groups at the 2019 National Conference for their outstanding work supporting the association’s mission and vision. See the [NASFAA Awards page](#) to read more about the awards and this year’s recipients.



Pam Fowler
Lifetime Achievement Award



Lori Vedder
Allan W. Purdy Distinguished Service Award



Tony Sozzo
Meritorious Achievement Award



Dr. Robert Kelchen
Robert P. Huff Golden Quill Award



National College Access Network (NCAN)
Robert P. Huff Golden Quill Award



SASF AA
Gold Star Award

[Regional Leadership Awards](#) — EASFAA: Wynette Zuppardi, MASFAA: Susan Swisher, RMASFAA: David Martin, SASFAA: Amy Berrier, SWASFAA: Denise Welch, WASFAA: Frank Green

Leadership & Legislative Conference & Expo

In February 2019, 322 financial aid professionals gathered in Washington, D.C., for a deep dive into critical leadership topics at [NASFAA's Leadership & Legislative Conference & Expo](#). This year, participants chose from four pathways: Association Management, Strategies for New and Aspiring Aid Directors, Strategic Enrollment Management, and, new for 2019, Advanced Topics in Financial Aid Leadership. In each pathway, industry leaders and experts engaged with attendees to further their purpose, enhance their strategic planning skills, and support their pursuit of excellence in student aid.

Leadership Conference, and this year 200 participants visited the offices of their representatives on Capitol Hill to advocate for student aid. Other highlights of the event included a discussion led by *Inside Higher Ed's* Scott Jaschik on the tough issues facing higher education, and an inside-the-beltway view of the state of student aid issues delivered by NASFAA President Justin Draeger.



Justin Draeger presents this year's Washington update.



Area experts deliver intriguing presentations.



Team-building activities keep everyone on their toes.



Networking opportunities abound.



A stop at the NASFAA booth is always worthwhile.

Communications

One of NASFAA's core values is to serve as a forum for the financial aid community, giving our members opportunities to exchange ideas and engage in thoughtful discussion. We pursue this in countless ways on every level of our work, from in-person and online training events and conferences to NASFAA's website and podcasts. Our communications outreach about important news — via *Today's News*, five social media platforms, and specialized audio and video content — encourages input and discussion through comments on articles and social media posts, as well as frequent requests for feedback on audio content. Our media engagement helps ensure that both the media and the public receive the most accurate information possible, creating a more enlightened public understanding of student aid issues.

Today's News

Every business day, *Today's News* keeps members on top of the latest news and trends in student aid and higher education with an email summary update on breaking news, opinions, training opportunities, career opportunities, and more. Last year, subscriptions grew to 23,324 daily recipients — an increase of 518 subscribers since 2017-18. The *Today's News* average open rate of 30.33% for 2018-19 continues to exceed the [average open rate](#) for nonprofit emails (25.96%) and members consistently rate *Today's News* as one of the most valuable benefits of membership.

A key feature of *Today's News* is original, NASFAA-developed content targeted to the specific interests of our members. This year, the government shutdown featured prominently among our 10 most-read original articles:

1. [Verification Guidance Released This Month Includes Changes for Amended Tax Filers, Victims of Identity Theft](#)
2. [Government Shutdown May Impact Some FAFSA Database Matches](#)
3. [Amid Government Shutdown, Questions Arise Over IRS Processes](#)
4. [IRS Announces Changes to Tax Transcript Retrieval Processes](#)
5. [Senators Introduce Bipartisan Bill to Simplify FAFSA and Reduce Verification through ED-IRS Data Sharing](#)
6. [ED Releases Guidance on Financial Aid Award Notifications](#)
7. [Updated: ED to Reprocess All Affected ISIRs Due to Partial Government Shutdown](#)
8. [IRS to Redact Personally Identifiable Information From Tax Transcripts](#)
9. [President Trump Again Proposes Massive Cuts to Student Aid](#)
10. [What Went Wrong With Verification?](#)

Proactive Media Engagement

NASFAA's media outreach efforts include press releases, targeted email pitches, and NASFAA-written op-eds submitted to media outlets. In 2018-19, NASFAA enjoyed another successful year of placing op-eds published in prominent publications, including the following:

- [“To Freeze ‘Summer Melt’ in Its Tracks, Congress Must Fix the FAFSA.”](#) in *The Hill* — July 16, 2018
- [“The FAFSA Challenge.”](#) in *Inside Higher Ed* — September 27, 2018
- [“Should All College Admissions Become Need-Blind?”](#) in *The Wall Street Journal* — March 17, 2019
- [“Five Things We’ve Learned About Financial Aid Offers From Consumer Testing.”](#) originally self-published June 4, 2019, on nasfaa.org and later reprinted at the request of a representative from the National College Access Network on their blog

Reactive Media Engagement

Due to NASFAA's reputation as the foremost resource on student aid issues, reporters reach out to us for quotes or background information for news articles. This year saw 125 original articles mentioning NASFAA, published by national, local, and trade publications, reprinted 2,322 times. In May 2019 alone, several prominent publications — including *The Washington Post*, *The New York Times*, *The Wall Street Journal*, *MarketWatch*, and *U.S. News & World Report* — quoted NASFAA staff.

“Director Download” Podcast

Launched in September 2018, the limited run [“Director Download”](#) podcast spotlighted some of the leadership, management, career, and human resources issues presented at NASFAA's Leadership & Legislative Conference & Expo. The nine episodes saw a total of more than 6,500 unique downloads. Each episode featured experts from aid offices at member institutions — such as Ron Day of Kennesaw State University, Brad Barnett of James Madison University, Jim White of Gonzaga University, and Shar-day Campbell of Houston Community College — sharing their expertise on topics ranging from managing a work-life balance and telecommuting, to utilizing social media and becoming a leader rather than a manager.

“Off The Cuff” Podcast

Since its first episode in 2016, [“Off The Cuff”](#) has presented more than 100 lively discussions by NASFAA staff experts on financial aid policy news and analysis from the nation's capital. This year, 34 episodes covered issues ranging from the federal budget and negotiated rulemaking, to a government shutdown, Higher Education Act reauthorization proposals, and the college admissions scandal that rocked the higher education community. Listeners downloaded the podcast nearly 30,000 times this year, bringing the total downloads since inception to more than 100,000.

“The ‘Off The Cuff’ series is fun, intellectual, and always informative. It is a great way to catch up about the ‘happenings’ in Washington, D.C., which maintains my relevancy as an administrator of federal funding,” a member wrote us in October. “Thank you for having a great chemistry and sharing your knowledge base for all to enjoy and grow.”

NASFAA Video Projects

This year, NASFAA produced seven videos designed to highlight and support the association's ongoing efforts. The [most popular video](#), released ahead of the 2019 Leadership & Legislative Conference & Expo, discussed the importance of advocating for financial aid funding on Capitol Hill. Other videos highlighted NASFAA's efforts in improving institutions' financial aid offers, creating a website to assist borrowers from closed schools, and the celebration of Financial Aid Awareness Month.

“Member Spotlight”

Today's News published eight [“Member Spotlight”](#) columns in 2018-19 showcasing special initiatives by NASFAA members. This year's highlights included a look at institutions' efforts to help students struggling to buy food and pay for housing, FAFSA filing events, and avoiding “verification melt.” The most popular article, with 2,335 views, described a University of Pittsburgh program to replace qualifying students' loans with grants.

FinAidFeb

The higher education community celebrates Financial Aid Awareness Month every February to raise awareness of federal, state, and institutional student aid. As part of this year's FinAidFeb activities, NASFAA highlighted financial aid administrators' outreach to students and families; updated infographics financial aid administrators can share with students; conducted a month-long media campaign; and showcased members' Financial Aid Awareness Month events in *Today's News*. An [article in *Associations Now*](#) also featured the FinAidFeb activities of several member institutions.

NASFAA.org

Members and visitors use NASFAA.org as their portal to a wealth of resources and services targeted to student aid administrators. The website receives thousands of hits per month, and this year, AskRegs received the most visits.

Five most-visited pages on NASFAA.org from July 1, 2018 to June 30, 2019

Website Area	Number of Visits
AskRegs	88,126
<i>Today's News</i>	78,037
National Conference	68,358
State & Regional College Tuition Discounts	52,574
State Financial Aid Programs	46,547

Technology Initiatives

Several behind-the-scenes technology improvements increased NASFAA's efficiency and service to members this year, including a multi-phase conversion project to make NASFAA's e-commerce tools easier to use, streamline processes for the staff, and support complex product purchases (critical for the new Certified Financial Aid Administrator™ (CFAA) dashboard). Staff also made significant progress in developing an online Standards of Excellence Peer (SOE) Review Program platform, scheduled to launch this fall.



Professional Development and Institutional Compliance

It's been a landmark year in NASFAA training and assessment. In spring 2019, NASFAA formed the Professional Development and Institutional Compliance division to recognize two independent areas of its tools and services for members: training and assessment.

High demand for NASFAA's Professional Credentials and analysis of members' needs led to the launch of a new professional certification in June 2019: Certified Financial Aid Administrator™. The scope of this new option required us to create two discrete units — one for training and education and another for assessment — that operate independently. With this expansion, we will not only continue to provide members with the training and resources that comprise the toolkit of nearly every student aid expert, but we will also offer the option to demonstrate that expertise through a nationally recognized credential.

Training and Regulatory Assistance

"If you build it, they will come!" That's not only a great quote from the movie, "Field of Dreams," but also the premise behind the support and educational efforts NASFAA deploys each year to support the work our members do on a daily basis. Webinars, online courses, self-study guides, and a myriad of online self-help tools like the AskRegs Knowledgebase, the Compliance Engine, and the Student Aid Index, are some of the many training and regulatory assistance offerings NASFAA provides to financial aid professionals.

Every year, our training and support services grow stronger. Here are a few 2018-19 highlights:

- NASFAA members accessed the [AskRegs Knowledgebase](#) more than 1 million times during the past year – 1,321,843 times, to be exact!
- Members asked 4,617 questions of AskRegs staff in the last year, and most received answers within two business days.
- The NASFAA Webinar Series earned an average participant satisfaction score of 97%.
- NASFAA added free "pop-up" webinars on emerging hot topics in student financial aid to its Webinar Series lineup.
- The [Compliance Engine](#) became home to 1,296 institutional policies and procedures manuals via the [Policies & Procedures Builder](#) tool.
- Direct Loans captured the title of most utilized checklist in the Compliance Engine's [Self-Evaluation Checklist](#).
- Verification maintained its top spot as the most-downloaded [NASFAA U Self-Study Guide](#).
- Professional judgment and needs analysis were the most popular topics purchased by our states and regions as part of [NASFAA U Authorized Events](#).
- Direct Loans, student eligibility, verification, cost of attendance, and satisfactory academic progress were the top five topics accessed on the [Student Aid Index](#).
- [NASFAA U Online Courses](#) saw its highest annual participation, with 975 students registered.

Certification and Credentials

NASFAA Certified Financial Aid Administrator™

Certification is finally here! In June 2019, NASFAA launched the highly anticipated [Certified Financial Aid Administrator™](#) (CFAA) certification. We created this exciting new professional development opportunity for financial aid professionals who are dedicated to advancing their careers and enhancing their knowledge of Title IV aid administration. Designed to complement on-the-job expertise, this voluntary certification brings a valuable benchmark to our community, providing the foundation for continued professional development and career growth. Since CFAA's inception, 75 financial aid professionals have already earned the CFAA designation.

NASFAA Professional Credentials

Members earned 4,433 credentials last year through [NASFAA Professional Credentials](#). This versatile professional development suite offers a deep dive into Title IV topics confronting financial aid administrators every day, as well as assessment credential tests based on nationally recognized standards to demonstrate knowledge in key student aid areas. NASFAA's Professional Credentials users:

- Expand their mastery of student financial aid topics
- Improve their job performance and service to students
- Demonstrate their knowledge to current and future employers
- Distinguish themselves from others in the field

Members have earned more than 17,300 professional credentials since the program began in 2012.



Membership

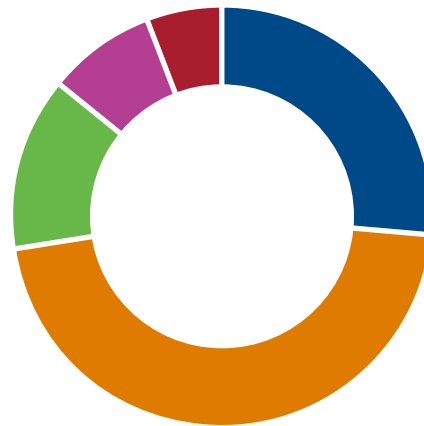
For nearly two decades, NASFAA’s member retention rate has held steady above industry averages, and the association has retained at least 95% of its members each year since 2010-11. This year, we achieved a retention rate of more than 97%. In addition, the overall number of institutional memberships increased this year, reaching 2,707 — the highest increase in the last six years. NASFAA member schools educate the large majority of the nation’s students, serving nine out of 10 undergraduates in the country.

In 2018-19, NASFAA’s Board held dues steady for the fourth year in a row to encourage new memberships and renewals. NASFAA continues to exceed its membership projections due to higher retention rates, membership dues package upgrades, and recent marketing campaigns that have brought in both new and reinstated members.



NASFAA Institutional Members by Sector

	Number of Schools	Percentage of Member Institutions
Community Colleges	771	28.5%
For-profit	244	9.0%
Graduate/professional	116	4.3%
Nonprofit	1,051	38.8%
Public 4-year	525	19.4%
Total	2,707	100.0%



NASFAA Institutional Members by Institution Size

Number of Students	Number of Schools	Percentage of Member Institutions
0-999	716	26.4%
1,000-4,999	1,253	46.3%
5,000-9,999	361	13.3%
10,000-19,999	226	8.3%
20,000 and above	151	5.6%
Total	2,707	100.0%

Diversity Leadership Program

Congratulations to the 2018–19 Diversity Leadership Program (DLP) class. Six financial aid professionals — one from each region — enjoyed a robust portfolio of benefits, mentorship, and guidance on how to develop as a financial aid association leader as part of NASFAA’s inaugural DLP class. DLP celebrates diversity and helps financial aid administrators from different backgrounds establish themselves as leaders in the field. NASFAA designed DLP to achieve the following:

- Advance the careers of program participants and provide important professional development
- Help NASFAA and the six regional associations develop a “deep bench” of talented, motivated leaders from diverse backgrounds
- Provide individuals from identified underrepresented groups in the association community (e.g., people of color, lesbian/gay/bisexual/transgender people, people with disabilities) with support, access, and opportunities for leadership

From a field of nearly 100 DLP applicants, a committee chaired by NASFAA Diversity Officer Craig Slaughter selected six individuals to participate in the inaugural 2018-19 program.

Each of the DLP participants received complimentary registration to both the NASFAA National Conference and the Leadership & Legislative Conference & Expo; a free online NASFAA U course and credential test; a place on a NASFAA committee, working group, or task force; and regular contact with an assigned mentor who previously served on NASFAA’s Board of Directors. Information on the criteria for DLP and how to apply appear on the NASFAA.org [DLP page](#).



[Kelly Carrell](#)
Associate director,
University of Iowa



[Samreen Khurram](#)
Director of financial aid,
Lone Star College-Tomball



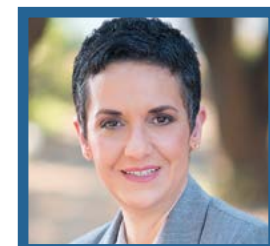
[Dameion Lovett](#)
Campus director, University
of South Florida



[Sylvia Martinez](#)
Associate director of client
services, Colorado State
University



[Christopher Pollard](#)
Assistant director of law
school financial aid, George
Washington University



[Christina Tangalakis](#)
Associate dean of financial
aid, Glendale Community
College

A Few Words From NASFAA's Diversity Leadership Program Participants



"Throughout this whole program, it has been clear that NASFAA is taking action and walking the talk of making sure that everyone is seen and heard," said **Kelly Carrell**. "They recognize that the oppression of marginalized groups has a profound impact on an individual's access to advancing into leadership roles."

"This program provided me with the tools and experience needed to support my growth and become a leader within my state association," **Christopher Pollard** said. "[It] is a great opportunity for professional development and encourages diversity efforts within the association on all levels."

Christina Tangalakis said, "The DLP has been a great opportunity for me to engage further with the financial aid community at the state and national level. I took advantage of each opportunity to make sure I benefited from all that was offered to me."

Sylvia Martinez said, "I loved DLP! The program offers a great opportunity for growth both personally and professionally. I met some amazing individuals, including my mentor, Jim Brooks (NASFAA's first diversity officer), and the rest of the DLP cohort. I have so much respect for my DLP classmates — they are such amazing examples of what a truly well-rounded financial aid professional should represent."

Volunteers

NASFAA is both proud of and grateful to the more than 350 dedicated individuals who served the association in 2018-19, many of whom are [listed on our website](#). We depend on our dedicated volunteers to support our members and achieve our mission. Volunteers enrich the association in countless ways, lending their time, effort, and most importantly, their diverse insights to our work.

Working side-by-side with volunteers from every part of the country also helps keep NASFAA staff on top of the on-the-ground impact of trends and challenges in student aid. Likewise, our volunteers benefit through increased knowledge of the association, greater awareness of financial aid issues, exposure to new ideas from members outside of their sector or region, and networking with a diverse group of professionals in the field.

The following list reflects many of the task forces, working groups, committees, and other areas where volunteers supported NASFAA's work in 2018-19. Those shown without a chair were led by NASFAA staff members. If you're interested in volunteering with NASFAA, see <https://www.nasfaa.org/volunteer-information> and watch *Today's News* for announcements of new opportunities.

Advocacy Pipeline

Staff led

Assisting Displaced Students Working Group

Staff led

Association Governance Committee

Chair: Billie Jo Hamilton, University of South Florida

Awards Committee

Chair: Billie Jo Hamilton: University of South Florida

CFAA Commission

Chair: Daniel Barkowitz, Valencia College

CFAA Implementation Working Group

Chair: Daniel Barkowitz, Valencia College

Compliance Engine User Working Group

Chair: Lisa Berrien, Georgia Institute of Technology

Conference Mentor Task Force

Chair: Dareth Wallace, University of Maryland University College

Conference Program Task Force

Chair: Michelle Trame, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

Diversity Leadership Program Mentors

Staff led

Diversity Toolkit Task Force

Chair: James Brooks, University of Oregon

Editorial Board of the Journal of Student Financial Aid

Chair: Jacob Gross, University of Louisville

Enhancing Loan Counseling

Chair: Brenda Hicks, Southwestern College

Ethics Commission

Chair: S. Kay Lewis, University of Washington

Financial Affairs Committee

Chair: Lianne Masterson, Blue Ridge Community College

Grad/Professional Liaison

Anthony Sozzo, New York Medical College

HEA Reauthorization Recommendations Refresh Working Group
Staff led

Higher Education Committee of 50 Task Force
Staff led

Leadership & Legislative Conference & Expo
Chair of the Advanced Topics in FA Leadership Track: Ron Day, Kennesaw State University
Chair of the Association Management Track and New Directors Track: Andrew Hammontree, Francis Tuttle Technology Center
Chair of the Strategic Enrollment and Management Track: Brent Shock, Miami University

Local Arrangements Task Force
Chair: Alicia Keaton, University of Central Florida

Modernizing Title IV Aid to Encourage and Accommodate Innovation in Higher Education Task Force

Chair: Melissa Haberman, University of Wisconsin Extended Campus

Nominations and Elections Committee
Chair: Billie Jo Hamilton, University of South Florida

Online Technology Review Working Group
Staff led

Podcast Participants
Staff led

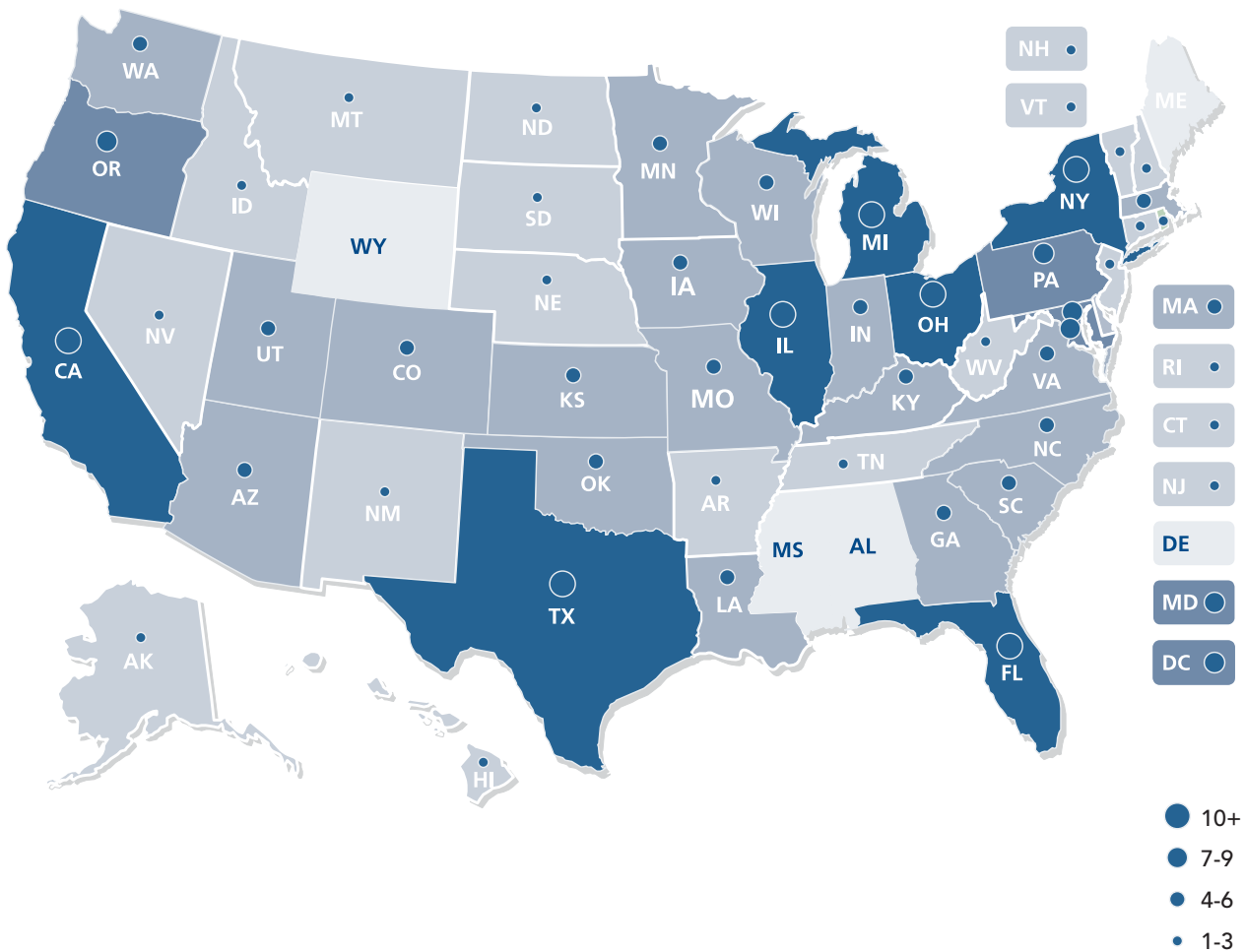
Policy Rapid Response Network Task Force
Staff led

Publications Editorial Board
Staff led

Selection Committee: Diversity Leadership Program
Chair: Craig Slaughter, Kenyon College

Student Aid Index User Working Group
Staff led

2018-19 Board Members & Volunteers, by State



The Dallas Martin Endowment for Public Policy and Student Aid

Every year, the Dallas Martin Endowment (DME) for Public Policy and Student Aid awards a summer internship to an upper-division undergraduate or graduate student interested in financial aid policy and/or research. DME helps prepare the next generation of student aid advocates through hands-on experience in NASFAA's Washington, D.C., office and Capitol Hill.

The award, named for NASFAA President Emeritus A. Dallas Martin Jr., allows DME interns to work side-by-side with NASFAA staff, gaining new perspectives through their full immersion into student aid advocacy and research.

This year, NASFAA awarded the DME internship to [Maylene Rodriguez Scott](#), a sociology and education policy student from the University of Massachusetts Amherst. Making great use of social media, she shared her experiences with NASFAA members on Instagram, in [NASFAA.org posts](#), and even in a conference video blog. Maylene is our eighth DME intern since summer 2012.

NASFAA is deeply grateful to all [DME donors from inception to today](#), with a special thanks to Edson Sample, who has generously donated \$51,000 since the DME's inception. The following groups and individuals contributed in 2018-19:

Diamond Level: \$1,000 to \$9,999

Next Gen Personal Finance

Platinum: \$500 to \$999

Justin Draeger

Gold Level: \$100 to \$499

The NHHEAF Network Organizations

Silver Level: Up to \$99

Holly Goodsell

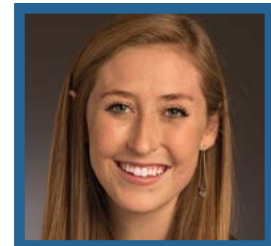
Verna Hazen

This year we created a new DME donor category — Diamond Plus Level — to recognize donations of \$10,000 and above. This new category includes benevolent gifts from **Robert Evans** and **Edson Sample**, who served as presidents of NASFAA's Board of Directors in 1986-87 and 1974-75, respectively.



2019

Maylene Rodriguez Scott



2018

McCall Hopkin



2017

Brianna Hayes



2016

Janette Martinez



2015

Angel Flores



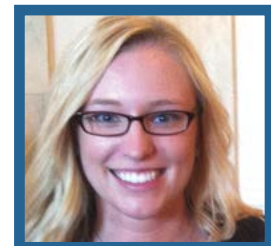
2014

Blonden Philamond



2013

Charlotte Etier



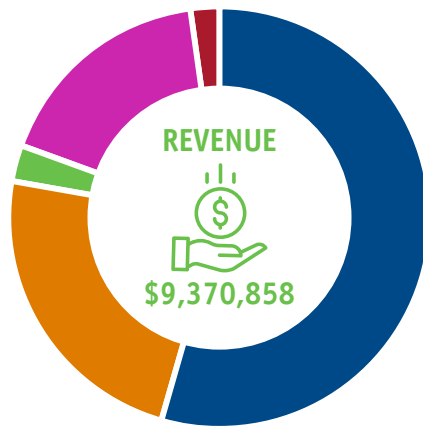
2012

Margot O'Meara

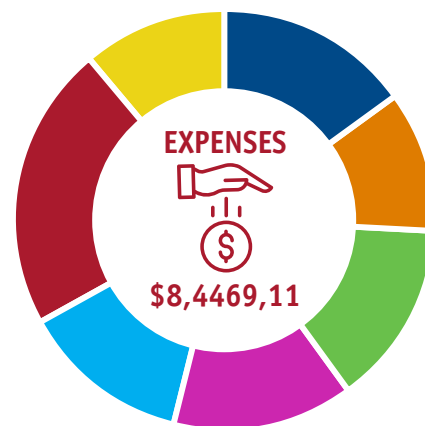
Finance

In 2018-19, NASFAA’s Board of Directors and Financial Affairs Committee worked cohesively to safeguard the association’s finances, position NASFAA funds strategically for investment in member services, and offer comprehensive fiscal oversight. Treasurer Lisanne Masterson reported to the membership in June 2019 at the Annual Business Meeting in Orlando, FL, that the Board had just approved a new break-even Operating Budget for 2019-20, which once again holds costs steady for members with no dues increase in 2019-20. Masterson also reported that NASFAA contracts with an independent auditor, and, for the eighth consecutive year, the association received a clean audit.

The association put its money toward membership services in 2018-19, with just 14% of total operating expenses attributed to overhead or administrative expenses. The association expended the remaining 86% of operating funds on mission-focused work, including public policy and advocacy work, training efforts, conferences, communicating with members, and new program development. Administrative expenses were lower in 2018-19 (14%) than in 2017-18 (15%) and significantly less than the nearly 26% average for “general and administrative expenses” cited for organizations of NASFAA’s size, according to the *Association Operating Ratio Report* (2016) of the American Society of Association Executives.



Membership Dues	\$5,098,995	54%
Conference & Meetings	\$2,140,077	23%
Grants & Research	\$299,199	3%
Training & Programs	\$1,604,811	17%
Publications	\$5,666	0%
Advertising	\$221,130	2%
Other	\$980	0%
Total	\$9,370,858	



Membership Support	\$1,265,741	15%
Advocacy	\$969,364	11%
Administrative & General	\$1,157,306	14%
Communications & Web Expenses	\$1,155,459	14%
Conference & Meetings	\$1,125,494	13%
Programs & Trainings	\$1,840,657	22%
New Program Development	\$932,890	11%
Total	\$8,446,911	

**The National Association of Student
Financial Aid Administrators (NASFAA)
provides professional development
for financial aid administrators;
advocates for public policies that
increase student access and success;
serves as a forum on student financial
aid issues; and is committed to
diversity throughout all activities.**

© 2019 National Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators



NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF STUDENT FINANCIAL AID ADMINISTRATORS

1801 PENNSYLVANIA AVENUE, NW, SUITE 850
WASHINGTON, DC 20006-3606

202.785.0453 FAX. 202.785.1487 WWW.NASFAA.ORG