

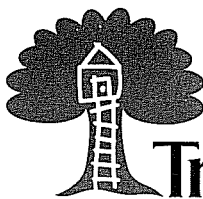


WASFAA Highlights is a monthly electronic news update provided by the WASFAA President for the benefit of the WASFAA membership. The electronic publication will contain informational items pertaining to WASFAA activities and newsworthy items of interest to the WASFAA community. Past issues are archived on the WASFAA website at <http://www.wasfaa.org>. Additional information regarding any given issue may be obtained by emailing the current WASFAA President, Tami Sato, at [tsato@scco.edu](mailto:tsato@scco.edu).

## WASFAA Highlights for the Month of August, 2006 - (Vol. 2, No. 5)

- The WASFAA Executive Council does not meet until November but that does not mean we have not been active. With on-line voting we have approved a comment letter to the Department of Education on the interim final regulations of the new grant programs. This letter was provided to membership in a list serve message sent on 8/16. We also voted to decline future sponsorship and exhibit space at the WASFAA conference from My Rich Uncle until the council sees sufficient evidence of a public retraction of the implied accusations and innuendos leveled against the financial aid profession. This follows the similar action by NASFAA, two other regional associations and many state associations.
- The Federal Relations Committee sends regular list serve messages with quick updates. An important date coming up this month is **September 29<sup>th</sup>**. This is the deadline date to submit your FISAPP report which usually is in October.
- Another important date in September is **September 17<sup>th</sup>**, Constitution Day. Hope you all know that thanks to Senator Byrd, if you receive federal funds you must hold an educational program on the U.S. Constitution for your students each year. How you can do this varies from providing a copy of the document to all students and holding a trivia contest to showing the film "National Treasure" which actually provides some great historical information. USA Funds provides a great compilation of resources and samples at [http://www.usafunds.org/financial\\_aid/constitution\\_day.htm](http://www.usafunds.org/financial_aid/constitution_day.htm)
- More travel whining...I was coming back from a meeting in San Diego and because of a truck fire had to sit in my car for 90 minutes. Got to read the latest draft of the report from the Commission on the Future of Higher Education which each draft has been toned down. You can read it too at <http://www.ed.gov/about/bdscomm/list/hiedfuture/reports/0809-draft.pdf> If you don't have time it does include recommendations like college tuition should not grow faster than the median family income; Pell Grants should be increases to cover a larger share of public college tuition; universities should measure student learning with standardized tests and institutions should be more accountable for students who drop out or graduate with few skills. The U.S. Education Department is holding a series of regional meetings to consider how the negotiating rulemaking process could be used to institute some of the commission's proposals and if this start the same process and solicit input on the new grant programs. The public meeting in our region will be **September 19<sup>th</sup>** at UC Berkeley.
- The Dear Colleague letter, GEN-06-06 has a revised list of eligible fields of study for the SMART program. You can go to <http://www.ifap.ed.gov/dpccletters/GEN0606.html> to get this August 25<sup>th</sup> update. (Send me the full name of the ACG and SMART programs and I'll send you a \$10 Starbucks gift card to the first correct response received.)
- Registration for the Jerry R. Sims Management Leadership Institute is available now at the WASFAA website [www.wasfaa.org](http://www.wasfaa.org) Our Ethnic and Diversity Action Committee members, chaired by Luhui Whitebear, are presently making selections of scholarship winners for this exciting training event.

- We received a very nice letter from Dallas Martin thanking WASFAA for being great hosts for the NASFAA Annual Conference in Seattle. Dallas wanted to personally thank WASFAA for the contribution to their humanitarian project, Tree House. A nice letter was received from this organization that assists foster children and is attached to this message. He liked the WASFAA welcome at the opening session. Some of the photos from the conference, including your president making a presentation on the path to leadership at the Diversity Leadership Connections event were included in the August 8<sup>th</sup> NASFAA News.
- The Project on Student Debt report has just been released. It has some interesting factoids that can be used when you try to urge your administration or legislators to help students by keeping tuition increases the lowest possible. There are many factors that influence debt level including the amount of state grants, tuition and fee levels, institutional aid offered, location of the college (% of commuters), and the availability of low-cost community colleges. Apparently living in a higher cost of living area is not a factor. Three WASFAA states are in this high COL category (CA, HI and AK) but none are in the top10 highest debt levels. In fact, Hawaii, California and Alaska are in the 10 lowest debt levels. You can go to [www.projectstudentdebt.org](http://www.projectstudentdebt.org) and check out their report which includes an interactive map with statewide averages.
- The WASFAA Executive Council members and chairs and co-chairs of the committees have submitted their yearly goals to our Strategic Planning Chair, Steve Herndon. These goals align with the 8 WASFAA 2005-2010 Strategic Plan goals. For instance, Cathy Bio is our Awards Chair and one of her goals is to make scholarship opportunities more visible to members and to increase the number of applications received. This goal aligns with Strategic Plan Goal #1: Be a leader in providing training and professional development opportunities that are responsive to members needs. Catherine King-Todd is our Volunteer Chair and has a goal of formalizing a buddy program and increasing participation at the Newcomers Session by 10%. These support Strategic Plan Goal #5: Increase participation of members in Association activities. Efforts from all executive council members and committees will be tracked in the WASFAA Strategic Plan Measures Tracking Tool. This tool tracks data such as the number of members participating in WASFAA events, number of scholarship applicants and number of advocacy efforts. By comparing these measures from one year to the next we can see our progress to our goals. Yes, the WASFAA Strategic Plan is not just a nice document that collects dust! It is a working document that takes a lot of effort and time that will result in a more effective WASFAA that meets the needs of our members and the students we serve.



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*Giving foster kids a childhood...  
and a future.*

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August 17, 2006

WASFAA  
4101 University Drive  
Anchorage, AK 99508

Dear Friends:

On behalf of the nearly 3,000 kids receiving Treehouse services every year, thank you for making a generous donation of \$2,000 received on August 8, 2006. We are truly honored to have had the opportunity to participate in the NASFAA conference this year, to share with you how our programs make a difference in the lives of Treehouse kids.

With summer upon us, our Tutoring program is busy working with over 30 students in the newly launched Summer Academy program – learning math, language arts, honing reading skills, as well as learning about our local community and touring college campuses. Coaching-to-College coaches are mentoring over 110 high school students, preparing them for college and post-secondary educational opportunities.

Volunteers and staff are busy stocking the Warehouse shelves with new clothes and school items – getting ready to provide kids with the essentials for their first days of school this fall. Summertime is also about getting outside and spending time with friends. Our Summer Camp program does just this – sends kids to the summer camp of their choice, from horse camp to art camp Treehouse provides kids with the opportunities to participate in the activities that make summer truly memorable.

Treehouse programs are successful because of donors like you. Our educational and enrichment programs give foster kids the opportunity to reach their fullest potential and build self-confidence. As Treehouse strives to serve more and more kids, your support means more than ever and we thank you.

Sincerely,

Deborah Edison  
Development Director

*This is incredible!  
Thank you!*

*Treehouse supplied no goods or services in connection with this contribution;  
all donations to our organization are tax deductible under IRS Code 501(c)(3).  
Our tax ID number is 91-1425676. You may use this letter as your receipt.*

