



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 December, 2006 - (Vol. 2, No. 9)

- Seems like I just got the November issue out and I thought there would be no way I could get a December issue out since our college will be closed between Christmas and New Years. But students are already gone and it is relatively quiet so I'll crank out a short one.
- I just attended the CASFAA Conference in Ontario, California. No. not the Ontario in Canada. How could we have a state conference there? Anyway, during my WASFAA Update presentation I mentioned that the Jerry R. Sims Management and Leadership Institute will be at the Doubletree Alana in Hawaii next year. Someone asked me for the dates and I did not have them handy. Hopefully our WASFAA members from California read these highlights because here are the dates: November 12-16, 2007.
- Don't you hate not being through the 2006/2007 year and having to start preparing for the 2007/2008 year? The Verification Worksheets for dependent and independent students are available for you to download. Try this link or just use the first part: <http://www.ifap.ed.gov/vgworksheets/0708VerifWkshts.html>
- If you are at a health professions college and participate in the Scholarships for Disadvantaged Students (SDS) program it has been a challenging month. In order to apply this year we had to go through a process to become an AOR (Authorized Organizational Representative) on the Grants.gov system. With a deadline date of 1/3/2007 we then had to send in a face page, SF 424 R & R and get a Grants.gov Tracking Number. In 3-5 days, if all went well, we received HRSA EHB Tracking Number and could fill out the actual application which included an abstract and narrative. After submitting this we had 5 days to send in the face page with a signature. Anyway, do you get the picture that this was a nightmare? It will be like the Survivor show with the successful schools remaining getting to split the funding. Grants.gov and HRSA did a great job of responding quickly to questions and guidance but write me if you would like to talk to a colleague who survived.
- On December 13<sup>th</sup> NASFAA provided a webinar on the ACG/SMART grants. If you missed it you can view a full recording of the training event along with the Power Point presentation. Just go to <http://www.nasfaa.org/redesign/webinarcenter.asp> and click on the bullets.
- I have new twin grand nieces and am thinking of starting a college savings plan for them instead of regular Christmas and birthday gifts. If you are interested in researching the 529 plans there is a website for college savings plans at [www.collegesavings.org](http://www.collegesavings.org) or you can compare plans at [www.savingforcollege.com](http://www.savingforcollege.com)
- The Negotiated Rulemaking team met this month and reviewed 16 agenda items suggested by ED including entrance counseling for GP PLUS and repayment alignment with Stafford loans, identity theft, use of preferred lenders, prohibited inducements, and eligible lender trustee relationships between FFEL lenders and schools or school-affiliated organizations. There are 15 negotiators on the team and some alternates. The only one on this loan team from the WASFAA region is an alternate, Robert Collins from the Apollo Group representing the proprietary schools.

- There were lots of news items from the WASFAA states in a recent NASFAA News. The Idaho State Board of Education is working on a proposal to increase need-based financial aid for Idaho students. The proposal is known as I-CAN (Idaho Commits to Access Now). The Oregon Student Assistance Commission sent applications for more than 3,400 college awards and scholarships. High school or returning college students can find the application at [www.GetCollegeFunds.org](http://www.GetCollegeFunds.org). The East Valley Tribune in Arizona reported that the share of ASU students who graduate in debt has increased by 30% in the past 5 years, with a majority of last spring's 6,000 graduates relying on loans to pay their way.
- Part of HERA included creating an identity theft loan discharge which borrowers could use if they became a victim of identity theft. With recent big breaches of security at higher education institutions it is important that students know what to do when their identity has been stolen. The Federal Trade Commission (FTC) has a web site that provides advice to identify theft victims. Go to [www.ftc.gov/idtheft](http://www.ftc.gov/idtheft) . They also have a program called "Defer, Detect, Defend" that provides information on how to prevent ID theft. There is even an "Online Quiz". Here's a not so funny story that happened at our school. A parent sent us her son's tuition payment. Guess she wanted it to be properly applied so she wrote on the OUTSIDE of the envelope the students name and social security number! How's that for helping out the identity thieves?
- Wow, thought I would provide a short monthly highlight but there is always so much going on in financial aid. I'm preparing to attend the OASFAA State Conference that will be in Salishan on January 28-30. This is a beautiful conference site and I am looking forward to enjoying the natural beauty in that part of the state.