



WASFAA Highlights is an 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, Mindy Bergeron, at bergeron@jfk.edu.

WASFAA Highlights for the Month of January 2010 - (Vol. 5, No. 5)

- Happy New Year! I hope you all had a chance to spend some time with your families and loved ones during the Holidays. This seems to be the time of year that you stop and realize just how crazy your life has been the past year. And now we're already on to another year with lots of expected and unexpected changes coming our way. Hopefully, we are all acclimated back into the unpredictability of our financial aid lives. You can never say that our careers are boring. Every day and every student is different.
- One of the WASFAA President's duties includes attending each of the eight state conferences in the WASFAA region. This is hardly a duty. To date, I have had the pleasure of attending the ALASFAA conference in Fairbanks, Alaska; the NAFAA conference in Lake Tahoe, NV; WFAA in Seattle, WA; AASFAA in Mesa (Phoenix), AZ and CASFAA in San Jose, CA. I still have two conferences to attend which include OASFAA in Portland, OR and PacFAA in Honolulu, HI. The only state not having a conference this year is Idaho. The annual WASFAA conference is being held this year in Idaho on April 16 to 18, 2010 so we hope some of our Idaho colleagues can join us there. The one thing I found in common with these conferences is that they had an increase in attendance over last year. For instance, in Alaska they had two more attendees than in 2008 for a total of 52. Coming from California I learned that even with 52 conference attendees you can have a successful conference. All the conferences I attended had the same concerns and had a variety of interest sessions and guest speakers. Even Marianna Deeken, one of our favorite federal trainers, made it up to Fairbanks. And to the other extreme California had a successful conference with 766 attendees at the San Jose Convention Center. I also had the opportunity to attend the SWASFAA regional conference in Albuquerque, NM in December. With cuts to their entertainment budget the SWASFAA gang had a couple of "family game nights." They found an empty meeting room and played board games such as "Apples to Apples" well into the evening hours.
- The WASFAA Executive Council had their quarterly meeting in Summerlin, NV, which is outside of Las Vegas, on November 19 and 20, 2009. Leonard Walker, our Site Selection Chair Extraordinaire, found us the bargain room rate of \$55/night and a low-cost all-you-can eat buffet. The rooms were actually really nice, too.

The next WASFAA Executive Council meeting is in Portland, OR at the Benson Hotel on February 25 and 26, 2010.

- Speaking of keeping costs down, the WASFAA Core Activities Taskforce, a subcommittee of the WASFAA Fiscal Planning Committee, continues to meet on conference calls and in person before each Executive Council meeting to address the reality of reduced funding resources to cover association expenses. The Taskforce is closely monitoring the revenue and expenses in order to determine where WASFAA needs to make cuts and to see if there are any additional income streams available to us. One recommendation and action taken was to reduce and/or consolidate the number of WASFAA committees and activities in order to attempt to further lower the operating budget for FY2010. We have had to use our reserves in the past couple of years in order to balance our budget. We know we cannot keep doing this as our reserves will eventually be fully drained. Sandi Guidry, our WASFAA President-Elect for 2010-11, has already taken the Taskforce's recommendation to collapse some of her committees into one thus reducing the need for committee chairs. In keeping WASFAA's mission and goals in mind, we have gone from supporting 21 committees to 14 in 2010-11.

- The **NASFAA Board of Director's** meeting was held at the Marriott Rivercenter Hotel in San Antonio, Texas on November 8 and 9, 2009. Representation from the WASFAA region at the table included WASFAA Regional President, Mindy Bergeron; Regional Past-President, Pat Peppin; Commission Director, Tami Sato; Pat Hurlley, Representative-at-Large; Kay Soltis, Representative-at-Large and in the "peanut gallery," Sandi Guidry, WASFAA Regional President-Elect. One of the main projects for NASFAA during the next several months is to conduct a search for a new CEO. A search team has been put together with Catherine King-Todd representing WASFAA as well as the graduate/professional segment.
- Last month there were 6000 attendees at the FSA Conference in Nashville representing 2000 schools. In a recent **NASFAA Quick-Scan Survey** regarding the FSA conference the majority of student financial aid administrators that attended the FSA conference rated the conference good or excellent. The three most repeated responses included: 1.) difficulty attending interest sessions due to overcrowding of rooms. 2.) waiting for almost two hours in the lunch lines for the restaurants in Opryland and 3.) request for FSA to offer two conferences per year instead of only one and to have one of them be more conveniently located to West Coast institutions which would cut-down on their travel costs and time out of the office.
- **WASFAA Training Update-** Mark your calendars for WASFAA's annual week-long training event, the **Sister Dale Brown Summer Institute**, which is scheduled for June 6 through June 11, 2010 at Arizona State University in Tempe, AZ. The chair for this event, Jack Edwards, is a long-time SDBSI instructor who is from the Stanford Graduate School of Business. He can be reached at Edwards_Jack@GSB.Stanford.Edu or 650.736.1758. Here's the link to this training http://wasfaa.org/docs/toc_summerinstitute.html
- **WASFAA Training Update-** The **2010 WASFAA Conference is in Coeur d' Alene, Idaho, April 18-20, 2010.** With the theme "Reflections on Student Success", it promises to be a fully packed program at the beautiful and serene lakeside setting of Lake Coeur d' Alene, Idaho. It is a conference you don't want to miss. The tentative agenda and speaker profiles are available at http://wasfaa.org/docs/toc_conferences.html. Please note that there is a new "green" initiative where attendees will print out the handouts for the sessions they want to attend instead of having paper handouts available at the beginning of the sessions. For questions, you can contact the 2010 Conference Chair, Wendy Olson, at wolson@whitworth.edu or call 509.777.4306.
- **WASFAA Training Update -** WASFAA has purchased a **web-based training and conferencing platform** that will allow us to offer training webinars and to conduct web-based meetings. By eliminating travel expenses, this should cut down the costs to both the schools and WASFAA. Look for Spring 2010 training coming soon.
- **WASFAA Elections -** Be on the lookout in your email for the 2010-11 WASFAA elections. Please take a few minutes out of your day to vote.
- **WASFAA Awards Nominations -** The Awards Nominations is around the corner and you are encouraged to nominate your colleagues for one of our awards. There are so many folks who do great things!!! We have a total of six awards - Outstanding New Professional, Meritorious Achievement, Distinguished Service, Lifetime Membership, Honorary Membership and our newest one Outstanding New Volunteer. We will be making an announcement soon - once our technical challenges are handled.
- If you have any items of interest to include in future WASFAA Highlights email me at bergeron@jfk.edu

Mindy Bergeron
 2009/10 WASFAA President
bergeron@jfk.edu