May 2014

Greetings WASFAA!

This week marks the end of my first full month as your 2014-15 WASFAA President and what a month it has been! In addition to all of the exciting spring events on my campus your 2014-15 WASFAA Executive Council has been hard at work. For those of you who weren't able to attend the 2014 WASFAA Conference in Reno, NV this past April - we missed you! As always, the conference was a tremendous time of training, collaboration, and networking - a "can't miss" event in all respects. If you weren't able to attend the conference, we certainly hope to see you next year in the San Diego area - mark your calendars for April 12-14, 2015! Be sure to stay up to date on the latest in professional development by checking out the 2014 WASFAA Conference presentations online at wasfaa.org

Of course, the annual WASFAA Conference isn't the only great training event available to WASFAA members. We are excited to offer the 2014 Sister Dale Brown Summer Institute next month - June 22-27 - on the campus of the University of Nevada Reno. Summer Institute is one of the premier, immersive training opportunities in the nation built around the NASFAA CORE Curriculum. At the conclusion of Summer Institute, attendees will be qualified to sit for NASFAA credentialing exams and earn the only nationally recognized professional credentials available to professional financial aid administrators. Register now - space is filling up quickly!

I do want to take a moment to say a very big MAHALO! to Past-President Frank Green whose leadership of the association this past year has been superb. As President, Frank as led our association with conviction, wisdom, and with a keen eye on the future. Thanks to Frank's leadership as well as that of his predecessors, WASFAA is now in the strongest financial position we've seen in the past decade. In fact, WASFAA now enjoys what may be THE strongest financial position of any of the 6 regional associations at the current time! The importance of the groundwork President Green
has laid for the future of WASFAA cannot be underscored - Thank You Frank! (Please send him a quick note to and thank him personally - I'm certain he would love an inbox full of thank you messages!)

Finally, to the future of WASFAA . . . my hope for the coming year is that the leadership of our association will seize upon the opportunities our strong financial situation affords us and focus our efforts on three things:

First, member engagement. Our profession has been growing exponentially in complexity and difficulty in recent times, all while institutional budgets have been shrinking. Often, our only support - for training, best-practices, even just a shoulder to cry on some days - is each other. WASFAA will be committed to helping our community meet those needs by working diligently to create connections - to resources, to information, and to each other.

Second, investing our assets in the future of WASFAA. We currently enjoy a very healthy balance sheet and that hasn't always been the case. WASFAA is now in the position to make a number of key strategic decisions that will ensure that the Association remains and active, vibrant resource to our membership from years to come. WASFAA will begin several strategic initiatives in the next year with the purpose of providing more and better opportunities for you, our membership, to get the things you need to be great at your jobs.

Third, increasing the quality of our premier training events. At the heart of WASFAA's mission is professional development and we're very proud of our premier training opportunities - the WASFAA Annual Conference, the Sister Dale Brown Summer Institute, the Jerry R. Simms Management & Leadership Institute, and our other in-person and webcast-delivered training events. Through a process of strategic self-evaluation and outreach to our membership, WASFAA will be focused on being relevant, being contemporary, and being excellent in our professional development offerings for the benefit of our members and our students.

The West is the Best! Looking forward to the year ahead and all that we can accomplish together - happy summer everyone!