

SASFAA Annual Report

2006-2007

**Southern Association of Student Financial Aid
Administrators, Inc.**



June 2007

**Prepared by Brent Tener
SASFAA President, 2006-2007**

In Compliance with SASFAA Bylaws, Article VII, Section 1

SASFAA Annual Report

2006-2007

This annual report is a review of the activities of the officers, state presidents, committees and liaisons during 2006-2007 and serves as the President's report to the SASFAA membership. This report summarizes the goals established by the Board, committee chairs and liaisons and highlights some of the results of the Association's activities and achievements. We had an outstanding year and each individual and committee listed should be commended for a job well-done.

President

When the 2006-2007 SASFAA Board, committee chairs and liaisons met in transition on June 10, 2006, I outlined several goals for the year:

- That each participant better understand SASFAA and our roles for 2006-2007.
- That each participant become familiar with the SASFAA Policy and Procedure Manual, the governance and planning document, the long-range plan and the implications they hold for setting of goals, objectives and the work that we are to accomplish during the year.
- That we understand the Board and committee structure and have a clear understanding of our duties and roles within that structure.
- That we understand the importance of establishing individual, committee and liaison goals and objectives for the year.
- That we recognize and understand the importance of committees comprised of a diverse membership: ethnicity, gender, sector, institution type and state representation.
- That we understand our fiduciary responsibility and the role of each individual in ensuring the continued financial health and stability of SASFAA.
- That we do what we can as a regional association to support leadership development and other activities at the state level.

I feel very confident when I say that the charge given on June 10 was embraced by the Board, committee chairs, and liaisons. As you read through this report you will see the many activities and accomplishments summarized. Several of my specific goals for the year that were carried out by various individuals and committees were:

- Planning for a successful Leadership Symposium. This was held in Charlotte, NC, in March 2007. A total of 25 individuals from the 9 SASFAA states gathered for a two-day intensive training activity.
- Planning for the 44th Annual Conference. Our Nashville meeting held in February of 2007 was tremendous success with over 945 members attending.
- Planning for the New Aid Officer Workshop to be held at Furman University in June 2007. At the time this report was prepared, we had a waiting list to attend this workshop.
- Planning for the Mid-Level Workshop to be held in Arlington, TX, in June. This is a cooperative endeavor with the Southwest Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators (SWASFAA).

Last year we had over 102 volunteer forms submitted. Unfortunately not everyone that submitted a volunteer form could be accommodated on a committee. There were approximately 80 volunteers appointed to committees for 2006-2007. I would like to thank everyone that submitted a volunteer form and hope you know how much I appreciate your interest in and support of SASFAA. I have provided the names of those individuals not selected for a committee to the incoming President, Lisanne Masterson, for her review. To those that served on committee this year a sincere thanks. You did a great job!

I would like to thank the entire SASFAA membership for the opportunity to serve as President of the Association in 2006-2007. It was great meeting so many folks at the various state meetings I attended and appreciated the hospitality shown during my "tour." There are no better folks than financial aid folks!

If you have questions about any of the activities conducted by SASFAA please do not hesitate to contact any member of the SASFAA Board of Directors. I can be reached at 615-343-1422 or at b.tener@vanderbilt.edu.

Immediate Past President

Guy Gibbs (Virginia, 2-Year Public) had a very busy year as Immediate Past President. In this position he was responsible for:

- Nominations and elections
- Professional recognitions and awards
- Compilation of the Governance and Strategic Planning (GASP) report
- Continued work with the SASFAA Endowment Fund

The Nominations and Elections Committee worked hard to identify candidates for SASFAA elected positions. Every attempt was made to encourage minority candidates to have their names submitted for consideration. Unfortunately these efforts feel short of the desired outcome. It is hoped that continued leadership development activities within the Association will result in minority candidates that are ready to advance in leadership positions. The committee was actively involved in soliciting names of potential candidates from the state associations.

The committee was able to identify a dual slate for each position but one candidate withdrew due to a job change. Effort was made to find another viable candidate; however, the committee was unable to do so and a single slate for Vice President was presented to the Board and ultimately to the membership.

Between the Board approving the slate of candidates and the annual conference, information was provided on the SASFAA listserv informing the membership about the upcoming elections, information about online voting and a newsletter article containing the photos, bios and candidacy statements. Online voting commenced 10 days prior to the annual conference.

Heather Boutell from Bellarmine University was elected to the position of President-Elect, Pat Arauz from the University of Louisville was elected to the position of Vice President and Terri Parchment from Edamerica was elected to a two-year position as Treasurer.

The following awards were presented at the annual conference:

- SASFAA Distinguished Service Awards were presented to Janet Sain and Rose Mary Stelma. Both are long-time contributing members of SASFAA along with contributing to their state and national associations.
- After long-time service to the financial aid profession and SASFAA, Honorary Lifetime Membership was presented to Bill Rodgers who retired during the year from the Access Group. Bill is a SASFAA Past President and has contributed much to the success of SASFAA.
- The Executive Board also submitted a nomination to NASFAA for the NASFAA State and Regional Leadership Award. This award recipient will be recognized at the NASFAA conference to be held in Washington, D.C. in July. The award will be presented to the recipient by National Chair Michael Bennett at the SASFAA Annual Conference in Arlington, VA, in February 2008.
- David Cecil was presented the NASFAA State and Regional Leadership Award by NASFAA National Chair Janet Dodson at the Nashville SASFAA Conference in February. The award was announced at the NASFAA annual meeting in Seattle.

The GASP committee met in May to compile the annual report that was presented to the SASFAA Board in June. The GASP report will be available for review on the SASFAA website by July 1, 2007.

Working with the chair of the Budget and Finance Committee, the purpose and structure for the SASFAA Endowment Fund was presented for review and approval by the SASFAA Board at the June 2007 Board meeting. It was decided that the "Foundation" will be replaced by "Endowment Fund" to better represent the structure and intent of the program funded by the Board in June 2006. Investment guidelines for the endowment fund were also approved by the Board at the June 2007 meeting.

Vice President

Sandy Neel (Tennessee, 4-Year Public), Vice President, was responsible for the professional development activities of the Association. With the exception of the one-day New Aid Officer Training that was held on the Sunday prior to the annual conference, much of her work and the work of the Professional Development Committee occurred in June.

The one-day New Aid Officer Workshop held in February was a success. The week long New Aid Officer Workshop was held from June 17-22 on the campus of Furman University in Greenville, SC. This marked a return to Furman who served as host in prior years. The workshop accommodated 156 participants and by mid-February, the workshop was considered as full and a waiting list established. Pat Arauz from the University of Louisville was the curriculum coordinator for the workshop. Fourteen SASFAA members were selected as faculty and represented a cross-section of the membership and institution types. Assistance during the week was provided by the lending community and a U.S. Department of Education training officer.

The Mid-Level Workshop was held in conjunction with the Southwest Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators (SWASFAA). SWASFAA was the host this year and the three-day

workshop was held June 17-19 at the Crowne Plaza Suites in Arlington, TX. The workshop included 38 participants. Janet Jones (University of Kentucky), Kim Jenerette (University of South Carolina-Upstate) and Brenda Brown (University of Miami School of Law) served as instructors from SASFAA.

President-Elect

Lisanne Masterson (North Carolina, 4-Year Private) served as the SASFAA President-Elect. Her responsibilities during the year included:

- Acted as parliamentarian to the Board and presented a workshop to the Board regarding parliamentary procedure.
- Created a new parliamentary procedure handbook for state presidents and select SASFAA officers.
- Served as an alternate voting representative to the NASFAA Board of Directors and provided written reports of NASFAA activities to the SASFAA Board.
- Represented SASFAA at state meeting in the absence of the President.
- Conducted an orientation session for the state presidents-elect prior to the February SASFAA conference.
- Made preparations for the 2007-2008 year.

In preparation for 2007-2008, she became more familiar with the SASFAA Policy and Procedures Manual, promoted the 2007-2008 SASFAA conference at this year's conference in Nashville, promoted volunteerism and updated the SASFAA volunteer form, selected committee chairs, and assisted committee chairs in selecting members to serve on their committees.

Secretary

Deborah Byrd (Alabama, 2-Year Public) is completing the last year of her two-year term as SASFAA Secretary. Her responsibilities and accomplishments for the year included:

- Made hotel reservations for all SASFAA Board meetings.
- Coordinated Board meeting arrangements with the hotel staff for all SASFAA Board meetings.
- Ordered and mailed SASFAA stationary to the President, President-Elect, Vice President and Past President.
- Reviewed the Policy and Procedures Manual for corrections.
- Mailed sympathy cards to SASFAA members and others as needed.
- Prepared all Board minutes and posted these to the SASFAA web site.
- Posted the updated Long Range Plan to the SASFAA web site.
- Attended the NASFAA Leadership Workshop in Washington.

Deborah will continue to serve SASFAA as Secretary during the 2007-2008 year.

Treasurer

Heather Boutell (Kentucky, 4-Year Private) is in her second year of a two-year term as SASFAA Treasurer. Her responsibilities and accomplishments included:

- E-mailed at least quarterly the budget line itemized expense report for each Board member and committee chair.
- Assisted in the updating of the Policies and Procedures manual.
- Paypal can now be used to pay membership fees, conference fees, professional development fees and vendor/sponsor payments.
- Worked with CPA firm to review our procedures for the 990. Successfully filed the 990 and 990-T for the past fiscal year.
- Purchased QuickBooks on the Web that allowed Budget Chair and President to have anytime access to budget information or fund information.
- Paid all bills in a timely manner and reimbursed members via the Web.

The job of the Treasurer is a voluntary one. However, the hours that are required to perform all of the necessary duties are many.

State Presidents

The state presidents had essentially two goals as they served on the SASFAA Board. These goals included:

- To become an integrated part of the SASFAA Board with vested interest in the leadership and activities of SASFAA.
- To actively report to and involve the nine state's respective membership in the activities and concerns of SASFAA.

I am happy to report that these goals were met. The state presidents were very active this year by attending Board meetings, having a better understanding and representing their members within SASFAA and actively communicating their issues and concerns to the President and the Board. Other ways in which the state presidents were involved this year included notifying their respective membership of upcoming SASFAA Board Meetings and soliciting comments regarding questions or concerns for the Board; reporting back to their membership developments resulting from these Board meetings; encouraging participation in SASFAA conferences and sponsored training; and encouraging their membership to volunteer for SASFAA committees.

Conference Committee

The 44th SASFAA conference was held at the Nashville Renaissance Hotel from February 11-14. The chair of the Conference Committee was Michael Morgan (Kentucky, Lender). His committee was staffed by individuals from all nine of the SASFAA states and representative from all sectors of the Association. The conference committee was also supported by a robust group of Tennessee Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators (TASFAA) that hosted the Hospitality Suite.

The committee was tasked with several goals including:

- Determine the training/professional development needs of members, recognizing categorical distinctions among members such as experience, institutional type, and level of responsibility.
- Improve and enhance the annual conference using the reviews and evaluation of previous conferences, as well as current needs of members.

- Present programs and sessions possessing both vitality and relevance for all members.
- Provide a diversity of topics recognizing both the need for regulatory and technical knowledge, as well as the need for skills in management and human relations.
- Recognize and encourage the development of informal "networking" strategies for sharing information and locating job opportunities.
- Offer advanced training programs and seminars for experienced members on unique topics related to financial aid administration after considering whether such activities are geographically accessible, financially feasible, and educationally enhancing.
- Select a committee make-up that represented all sectors, ethnic groups, etc., to provide active participation and new leadership opportunities for members.

The following is a brief summary of the 2007 Nashville Conference:

The conference's opening day on Sunday was designed to provide a little something for everyone. The New Aid Officer's Workshop was led by Pat Arauz and taught by several of the instructors who also taught again during the New Aid Officer's Workshop in the summer. Simultaneously, we held a pre-conference workshop led by Bonnie Joerschke, Mary Anne Coughlin and Barry Simmons. The pre-conference Research Seminar was designed to provide tools and techniques helpful to the more experienced financial aid professional.

The opening session included the Tennessee State Percussion Ensemble led by Teddy Hall, Jr., while Tara Burns, the 2005 Miss Tennessee, sang of our national anthem. Our keynote speaker, Dr. Hurley set an upbeat tone for the entire conference. His humor inspired us all to look on the bright side of life. He also reminded us "without education we cannot purchase a dozen of anything but we can get twelve of whatever we want". The Department of Education with Carney McCullough provided the Federal Update, and the Diversity Committee provided "Excelencia" throughout the conference and share the Spanish influences prevalent in our educational culture. Our general session speaker, Sarita Brown, who has spent more than two decades working to raise academic achievement and opportunity for low-income and minority students, inspired us with her comments on Tuesday. In addition to the tremendous general session offerings, over 60 concurrent interest sessions were held on a variety of topics.

This year's community service project was Katie's Helping Hand. Thanks to the generous hearts of SASFAA, we were able to present Katie Mitchell of Katie's Helping Hand with a check for \$15,000, a new giving record for our Association. This money went to provide 3,000 meals to families struggling to deal with the needs of their sick child. During the Tuesday night banquet attendees were asked to don their country finery, and they did. Denim, Cowboy hats, boots and rhinestones were the rave at this special event which honored the Past-Presidents of the Association. In addition to the awards already mentioned in this report, Guy Gibbs, Immediate Past President, Sandra Neel, Vice President and Heather Boutell, Treasurer were recognized for their service to SASFAA. The conference concluded on Wednesday with an uplifting update from Janet Dodson, NASFAA National Chair and a Washington update from NASFAA's Larry Zaglaniczny.

A total of 945 individuals attended the conference. Those in attendance were encouraged to complete an on-line evaluation, and 413 responded by doing so. The following summarizes some of the responses:

- 67.55% - Previously attended a SASFAA conference
- 54% - Had over 11 years of financial aid experience

- 19.37% - Had between 6-10 years of financial aid experience
- 26.64% - Had between 0-5 years of financial aid experience
- 80.88% rated the quality of interest sessions as either 'Excellent' or 'Good'.
- The Opening Session gathered the highest rating of all general session offerings with a 4.46 rating out of 5.
- 95.34% rated Katie's Helping Hand Charity as either 'Excellent' or 'Good'.
- 39.23% gave an overall rated of 5 (excellent); 52.30% at 4; 7.99% at 3 (average); .48 a 2 and no one rated it as poor.
- 97.05% (395) indicated the conference met their professional needs; 2.95% (12) indicated that it did not
- 96.10% (394) indicated the conference met their expectations

Diversity Committee

The Diversity Committee was chaired by Janet Sain (North Carolina, Lender). The committee worked toward achieving their goals by working with the Conference Committee to ensure that there were sessions at the conference that dealt issues of diversity. They worked to plan personal and professional development opportunities that embraced sound principles and practices of aid administration. Included in this were a number of concurrent sessions and one general session.

The committee's activities included:

- Conducted an information session on Hispanic student growth and impact on financial aid at the annual conference. The session was led by Sarita Brown, who is the President of Excelencia in Education. Sarita served as one of our General Session speakers and is the foremost leader when it comes to discussing the needs of the Hispanic population in relation to students wanting to gain a college education and how that impacts all colleges and universities now and in the next ten to fifteen years.
- Conducted four interest sessions at the annual conference. The information included Basic Spanish in the Workplace, Cultural Differences as a follow-up by Sarita Brown's session, The ABCs in Outreach for Latino Families, and one on the Hispanic Youth Forum.
- A Special entertainment activity was sponsored by the Diversity committee as part of the President's Reception. It was a Hot Latin Dance themed activity in which professional dancers provided us with entertainment and then actual dance lessons with the attendees
- A Hispanic resource table was provided in the exhibit area for schools to go by and select FA pamphlets and brochures they might want to utilize at their schools.

Electronic Services Committee

Leonard Gude (Florida, Vendor) served as chair for the Electronic Services Committee. The goal of his committee was to support SASFAA's mission by providing a mechanism for disseminating information to the membership through the SASFAA website and the SASFAA Listserv.

Significant activities and accomplishments by Electronic Services included but are not limited to:

- Updating of the SASFAA website through ATAC.
- Setting up the 2007 conference mini-site and providing ATAC with periodic updates as they were made available by the Conference Committee.

- Working with ATAC and the Vendor/Sponsor Committee to get sponsorship application available via web and to post new banner ads for sponsors.
- Working with Nominations and Elections to set-up online voting both at the conference site and by absentee voting.
- Working with ATAC and the Membership Chair to get membership information updated.
- Providing updates to ATAC for SASFAA web site including newsletters, budget updates, updates to member state information, calendar updates, updates to form, minutes, etc.
- Worked with the SASFAA Treasurer to allow for online payments through Paypal.
- Work continued on an initiative started last year to scan SASFAA historical documents and make these available in electronic format.

Budget and Finance Committee

In order for the Association to accomplish its' mission to establish a community of members who share ideas and professional competencies and experiences, serve the diverse needs of students, parents and institutions, the Association must be financially sound. It falls to the chair of the Budget and Finance Committee, Clark Aldridge (Alabama, Lender), and his committee to oversee this responsibility.

The financial stability of the Association is provided through careful and regular planning and evaluation. The Chair, along with the President and the Board of Directors established an operational budget for 2006-2007 and managed the Association's reserve funds. These reserve funds have been established to protect the Association in the event that the Association is unable to meet its contractual obligations. These funds are invested in long-term CDs and securities and have varying maturity dates. The Association is advised by James A. Mills, Senior Investment Officer, SunTrust Securities Corporation. As these funds mature the chair of the Finance and Audit Committee works to ensure that the best rates are found for reinvestment.

Other activities conducted by the Budget and Finance Committee included:

- Conducted annual financial review of SASFAA revenues and expenditures.
- Worked with the Treasurer to adjust SASFAA budget line items as necessary.
- Prepared annual SASFAA budget for adoption by SASFAA Board.
- In cooperation with the SASFAA Past-President, developed SASFAA Endowment financial policies.

Legislative Relations Committee

Bill Spiers (Florida, 2-Year Public) was the chair of the Legislative Relations Committee. This committee was charged with reviewing proposed Federal legislation affecting the administration of financial aid, keeping the SASFAA membership updated on pending legislation and to make recommendations to the Board as to possible positions that the Board might take related to this legislation. Where appropriate, SASFAA provides legislators and public policy officials with SASFAA's views on legislative and regulatory issues that will have a positive impact on students' ability to afford a college education. This year, the chair was assisted by several members of his committee in keeping the community updated. The committee also reviewed the SASFAA Legislative Guide which will be re-issued during the summer of 2007.

The following is a summary of major activities conducted for the 2006-2007 year:

- In August, coordinated a response from SASFAA to the establishment of regulations for the ACG and SMART grant programs.
- In September, coordinated a response from SASFAA commenting on the Federal Student Aid Programs, Final Rule.
- President Tener testified on November 2 at the regional Department of Education hearing, discussing issues that SASFAA would like to have considered in negotiated rulemaking.
- Coordinated a response to the membership from President Tener regarding the ongoing student loan controversy.

Membership Committee

Soraya Welden (Mississippi, 2-Year Public) served this year as chair of the Membership Committee. She worked with the state presidents to encourage financial aid professionals to join SASFAA. The result of this work was the largest number of SASFAA members in history of the Association. The last reported count was 1,744.

Membership by State:

- 103 – Alabama
- 321 – Florida
- 203 – Georgia
- 145 – Kentucky
- 86 – Mississippi
- 170 – North Carolina
- 149 – South Carolina
- 204 – Tennessee
- 192 – Virginia
- 171 – Out of Region

Membership by Institute Type:

- 388 – Not Specified
- 24 – Other
- 141 – 2-Year Public
- 417 – 4-Year Public
- 11 – 2-Year Independent
- 266 – 4-Year Independent
- 24 – Proprietary (Technical/Trade)
- 4 – Health Related/Nursing
- 21 – Graduate/Professional
- 55 – Government Agency
- 78 – Guaranty Agency
- 315 – Lender

Membership by Ethnicity:

- 421 – Not Specified
- 15– Other
- 3 – American Indian/Native American
- 8 – Asian/Pacific Islander/Filipino
- 296 – Black/African American
- 42 – Hispanic/Chicano/Mexican American/Latino
- 959 – White/Caucasian

Membership by Gender:

- 524 – Male
- 1175 – Female
- 45 – Not Specified

Newsletter Committee

The objective of the Newsletter Committee and the Newsletter Editor, Sharon Oliver (North Carolina, 4-Year Public), was to disseminate information of interest to the financial aid community and to publish an online newsletter four times a year. The work of this committee involved the assistance of the state newsletter chairs to obtain information for publication from the state. In addition, articles were submitted by the Executive Board members, committee chairs and liaisons. SASFAA members were also encouraged to provide articles for publication.

The editor worked closely with the Keith Reeves, chair of the Sponsorship Committee, to ensure advertisements were received timely for placement in the newsletter. The following is a summary of activities for the year:

- Newsletter publication dates and contact person were posted to SASFAA’s website as of July, 2006.
- Quarterly newsletters were published as scheduled in October, December, April with the final newsletter scheduled to be released in June.
- Communicated effectively with the newsletter committee to ensure that they were actively involved with approving articles for the newsletter as well as the change in the format of the newsletter.
- Email reminders were appropriately sent 30 days before the publication to the executive board, membership, and sponsors soliciting articles and ads for the newsletter.
- Added a new section to the newsletter entitled Movers and Shakers.
- Changed the format for delivery of the newsletter from html to PDF to allow members to easily download and print the newsletter to read at their leisure. The PDF format also enhanced the design and graphics of the newsletter.
- Ensured that all ads were included in the newsletter for the appropriate size and edition purchased.

Site Selection Committee

The purpose of the Site Selection Committee was to identify sites that will provide a suitable physical environment for conferences, committee meetings, Executive Board meetings and professional development workshops. Ron Gambill (Tennessee, Secondary Market) chairs this committee.

Major accomplishments of the Site Selection committee included:

- Provided the basic guidelines for a conference site to the State Presidents.
- Provided a site selection training session at the August Board meeting.
- Site Selection assisted with arrangements for five committee meetings and both non-conference Board meetings for the 2007-2008 Executive Board. Additionally, the Conference Committee meetings were negotiated for the 2008 Conference in Crystal City, VA.
- Contracts were reviewed for Professional Development as requested.
- Mississippi elected to pass on its rotation for the SASFAA conference as construction from Hurricane Katrina was not at a place where a site could be considered. Kentucky was next in the rotation.
- Site visits were made to Lexington, KY and Louisville, KY to consider hotel and convention facilities for the 2010 SASFAA Conference.
- Proposals were submitted to the Board of Directors and contracts were finalized after the Board recommended the Marriott Louisville as the convention hotel and additional rooms to be provided at the Hyatt Louisville.

Sponsorship Committee

Keith Reeves (South Carolina, 4-Year Public) chaired the Sponsorship Committee for 2006-2007. Membership dues and conference registration fees alone do not provide sufficient revenue streams to support the activities of the Association. The outstanding support that SASFAA receives from its vendors and sponsors provides the additional revenue required to meet general Association expenses, support for the annual conference, the New Aid Officers' Workshop, the Mid-Level Workshop and The other activities that are supportive of the membership. The Board is very appreciative of the support received.

Special Appointee – Leadership Symposium

One of the initiatives started this year was a leadership symposium. This symposium was held March 14-16 in Charlotte, NC. The symposium was designed to include 27 financial aid professionals throughout the 9 southeastern states and these individuals were identified to participate based upon leadership potential. The symposium was an intensive 2 day experience that included a series of guest speakers, small group meetings and individuals exercises designed to help develop leadership skills. These skills can then be used in a variety of settings.

The selection process included 2 individuals nominated by each of the 9 state presidents. An additional individual from each state was identified and selected by the SASFAA Board to attend. We had two individuals who decided not to attend at the last minute, so the final number was 25. Barry Simmons (Virginia, 4-Year Public) coordinated this initiative.

A web-based survey was conducted post-symposium to elicit the symposium participants' opinions and comments on the symposium. Out of 24 symposium participants, 15 completed the survey resulting in a 63% response rate. All survey respondents considered the Leadership Symposium a

great success and one of the most rewarding experiences in their professional career. The overwhelming majority of respondents (80%) rated the symposium as highly useful and the rest, 20%, as useful. All sessions and other curriculum components offered in this symposium received high ratings as well. The 16 sessions and other curriculum components were perceived as either highly useful or useful by all respondents. Nearly all respondents suggested the curriculum remain the same and almost all sessions be included in future workshops.

All presenters were commended for their effective presentations and for stimulating group discussions. Over 90% of respondents rated the presenters as either effective or very effective. A number of respondents used this survey as an opportunity to compliment SASFAA and the symposium organizers for a well designed curriculum and the great performance during this event. Surprisingly, 53% of respondents suggested that SASFAA should consider sponsoring a similar Leadership Symposium every year, 34% recommended every other year, and the rest (13%) every three years. Also, given the variety of the sessions provided, several respondents stated that there was so much information covered in a small amount of time. One third of respondents perceived the length of symposium as being too short while 53% think its length it about right. Some recommended extending any future leadership symposiums to 3 or 4 full days.

Special Appointee – Conference Handbook

Janet Sain (North Carolina, Vendor) was charged with constructing a manual and guidebook used as a tool to be utilized by future SASFAA and/or State Presidents, Conference Chairs and Local Arrangement Chairs as a means to organize all aspects of planning and putting on the best possible conference at the state or regional level. The manual and guidebook encompasses many facets of a conference and contains as many items as possible in order to address any item/issue that may come up in the planning stages. This handbook and associated electronic documents will be distributed in late July.

Agency Liaison

Mike Hawkes (Virginia, Agency) was the Liaison to the various state agencies in 2006-2007. The following includes of summary of major activities for the year:

- Identified both grant/scholarship and guaranty agencies for each SASFAA state. Slowly over the years, contact had been lost with many of these entities but there now appears to be a renewed interest in mutual contact between these agencies and SASFAA. Each of the designated state guaranty agencies were asked to provide reports to the Board and by and large have done so this year.
- The National Council of Higher Education Loan Programs (NCHELP) provided a written report for each Board meeting.
- SASFAA members were kept well-informed on regulatory/statutory issues and changes.
- In each Board report and newsletter article, information was included regarding issues affecting guaranty agencies and State higher education agencies.
- Sessions on both the College Access Initiative and lender/guarantor issues were held at the annual conference.

Lender Liaison

Paul Mittelhammer served as the Lender Liaison in 2006-2007. Paul's goal was to bring lender concerns to the Board for consideration and appropriate action as well as to relay Board actions affecting the lending community. This was a particularly important role to play since SASFAA depends on sponsorship to help support its' activities.

U. S. Department of Education Representative

Unfortunately the U.S. Department of Education has retreated from allowing their training personnel to be an active participant in regional association activities such as Board meetings. While the training officers are still permitted to visit with state associations to provide updates at training at conferences, attendance at other types of regional activities is no longer supported. The SASFAA Board missed the opportunity of having Greg Martin, Training Officer for Region III, participate this year. We were fortunate that Greg was able to join us in Nashville for the Board meeting prior to the annual conference and was a presenter for a number of sessions during the conference. We do not see the Department relaxing their restrictions and allowing a representative to attend future Board meetings.

Summary

As I indicated this is but a brief summary of the activities of the elected Board, state presidents, committee chairs and liaisons this past year. The individuals that comprise this group have worked together and tirelessly for SASFAA this year.