

# **SASFAA Annual Report**

**2007-2008**

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



**July 2008**

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SASFAA President, 2007-2008**

**In Compliance with SASFAA Bylaws, Article VII, Section 1**

# SASFAA Annual Report

## 2007-2008

This annual report is a review of the activities of the officers, state presidents, committees and liaisons for 2007-2008 and serves as the President's report to the SASFAA membership. This report summarizes the goals established by each of the officers, committee chairs, and liaisons, and will focus on highlights of their accomplishments. Although this was a trying year in some respects, the Executive Board, committee chairs and liaisons should be commended for a job well-done for their service to SASFAA.

### President

The 2007-2008 SASFAA Board, committee chairs and liaisons met to transition on June 9, 2007, when I outlined several goals for the year:

- That we understand our fiduciary responsibility and the role of each individual in ensuring the continued financial health and stability of SASFAA. With the recent events surrounding the Loan Crisis, we know that the long-term fiscal health of the Association must be reviewed, and a plan for moving forward must be done carefully and thoughtfully.
- That we do what we can as a regional association to support leadership development and other activities at the state level. SASFAA should be assisting our state associations with activities that they alone cannot accomplish or would be better served in working together. To that end, I instituted an Inter-State Visit Program so that the state presidents and presidents-elect could attend another state's board meeting and/or conference. In addition, because of the new fiscal concerns, I wanted to offer a Treasurer's workshop for state treasurers and treasurers-elect to ensure that all of our state associations will be fiscally sound moving forward.
- That each board member become familiar with the SASFAA Policy and Procedure Manual, the governance and planning document, the long-range plan and the implications they have in setting their goals and objectives for the year. In doing so, many changes need to be made to the P&P Manual, and each board member was asked to read through the manual to make recommendations for change.
- That we recognize and understand the importance of committees comprised of a diverse membership: ethnicity, gender, sector, institution type, state representation, and years/types of service. The membership is built upon involving the membership, and we need to ensure that all voices are heard and everyone has an opportunity to serve.
- That we acknowledge our past and celebrate the present in order to truly move into the future. Because 2007-08 was SASFAA's 45<sup>th</sup> Anniversary, I wanted to recognize those who have brought us to this point in time and celebrate our accomplishments, knowing that will give us the impetus in moving ahead with a strong, clear vision and pride in all we do.
- That we learn to find our voice legislatively. Having the conference right outside of Washington DC was the perfect opportunity to educate members on the importance of speaking up – to be more proactive rather than reactive. In addition, the SASFAA Legislative Guide was updated and reposted to the website and an excellent hill visit brochure was created by the Conference Local Arrangements Committee.

Although I provided my focus, it was clearly the Board, committee chairs, and liaisons that ran with it – as you will read in the next several pages, as their many activities and accomplishments are summarized. Five specific “training” goals for the year included the following:

- A successful pre-conference Legislative Symposium. A total of 35 individuals from the 9 SASFAA states gathered for a half-day information session.
- A long-overdo and much-needed state treasurer’s workshop. A total of nine members participated at this pre-conference workshop.
- The 45th Annual Conference celebration! Our meeting held in Crystal City VA in February of 2008 was a huge success with over 690 members attending.
- Our premier New Aid Officer Workshop was held at Bellarmine University in May 28 - June 2, 2008, with 112 participants.
- A Mid-Level Workshop, planned solely by our regional Association this year, was held in Louisville, KY, May 29-31, 2008. This had been a cooperative endeavor with the Southwest Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators (SWASFAA), who chose not to participant this year.

Disappointingly, only 53 volunteer forms were submitted for the 2007-08 year. However, through the work of the committee chairs (especially conference committee), every single volunteer was asked to participant in some manner! My thanks is extended to everyone who submitted a volunteer form, and I want you to know how much I appreciate your interest in and support of OUR Association. Without you, we would not be able to accomplish much of what we do!

My last official capacity as your President was to represent you at the NASFAA pre-conference board meeting. Having NASFAA in our region in July was a huge success, and the Florida Association did an outstanding job of managing local arrangements. Of course, my biggest source of accomplishment came when SASFAA was announced as a co-recipient of the first-ever NASFAA Regional Award with our Conference Manual/Site Selection Guidebook. Congratulations to Brent Tener and Janet Sain, who began this project a year ago and whose merit has been recognized!

To serve as your President this year was a tremendous honor and privilege. The confidence and support you have shown in me this year has been overwhelming – my goal was to represent you to the best of my ability. The hospitality you showed me during my visits to your state association meetings was AWESOME! I have made many new acquaintances, but more new friends.

If you have questions about any of the activities conducted by SASFAA please do not hesitate to contact any member of the 2007-08 SASFAA Board of Directors, but you may reach me at 828.884.8287 or at [lisanne@brevard.edu](mailto:lisanne@brevard.edu).

### **Immediate Past President**

Brent Tener (Tennessee, 4-Year Private), as Immediate Past President, was responsible for Nominations and Elections, professional recognition and awards, and compilation of the Governance and Planning (GAP) report.

The Nominations and Elections Committee worked extremely hard to identify qualified candidates for SASFAA elected positions, especially to encourage minority candidates to have their names submitted for consideration. Their efforts were rewarded with a full slate for each office – one third of whom were minorities. A desired outcome is to continue to develop leadership at the state and regional levels that will result in a minority candidates advancing in leadership positions.

Once the slate of officers received Board approval, 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.

Keith Reeves from Clemson University was elected to the position of President-Elect, Erik Melis from the Georgie Mason University was elected to the position of Vice President, and Brade Barnett from James Madison University was elected to a two-year position as Secretary.

The following awards were presented at the annual conference:

- SASFAA Distinguished Service Awards were presented to Guy Gibbs and Greg Martin. Past SASFAA President Gibbs is a long-time contributing member of SASFAA and VASFAA, while Greg, a training officer for the US Department of Education has heavily involved in supporting our mission through training at our regional and state conferences as well as our New Aid and Mid-Level workshops.
- After long-time service to the financial aid profession and SASFAA, Honorary Lifetime Membership was presented to Guy Gibbs (Northern Virginia CC) and Past SASFAA President Susan Little (University of Georgia) who retired during the year.
- Bob Godfrey was presented the NASFAA State and Regional Leadership Award by NASFAA National Chair Michael Bennett at the SASFAA Conference in February 2008.
- The Executive Board submitted the nomination of Betty Whalen to NASFAA for the NASFAA State and Regional Leadership Award, and she was recognized at the NASFAA conference in Orlando, FL, in July. The award will be presented “officially” to Betty by National Chair Dave Gruen at the SASFAA Annual Conference in Myrtle Beach, SC, in February 2009.

The GAP committee met in May to compile the annual report that was presented to the SASFAA Board in June. The GAP report will be available for review on the SASFAA website by July 2008.

### **Vice President**

Pat Arauz (Kentucky, 4-Year Public), Vice President, was responsible for the professional advancement (i.e. training) 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 May/June.

The one-day New Aid Officer Workshop held in February was a success with 31 members participating. The week long New Aid Officer Workshop was held from May 28 - June 2 on the campus of Bellarmine University in Louisville, KY, with 112 participants. Sandy Neel from the University of Tennessee at Martin served as 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 at the Hilton Garden Inn in Louisville, KY. SASFAA has been conducting this workshop jointly with the SWASFAA region; however, they chose not to participate this year due to budget concerns. This three-day workshop was held May 28-31, 2008, and included 41 participants. Janet Jones (University of Kentucky), Kim Jenerette (University of South Carolina-Upstate), Brenda Brown (University of Miami School of Law), Mike Reynolds (Auburn University) and SASFAA President Lisanne Masterson served as instructors from SASFAA.

### **President-Elect**

Heather Boutell (Kentucky, 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.
- 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 2008-2009 year.

In preparation for 2008-2009, she became more familiar with the SASFAA Policy and Procedures Manual, promoted the 2009 SASFAA conference at this year's conference in Crystal City, promoted volunteerism and updated the SASFAA volunteer form, selected committee chairs, and assisted committee chairs in selecting members to serve on their committees. Two major projects for her year include holding the SASFAA Management Institute and a Leadership Symposium. Contracts for the dates and sites for those events was finalized, and Brenda Brown was named to chair the Management Institute.

### **Secretary**

Deborah Byrd (Alabama, 2-Year Public) is completed the second 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.

Deborah did a remarkable job keeping our printed records current, arranging meeting sites, and making the massive changes to the SASFAA Policy and Procedures Handbook during the year.

### **Treasurer**

Terri Parchment (Tennessee, Lender) started her first 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.
- Updated 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 and crucial to the long-term fiscal stability of the Association. The hours that are required to perform all of the necessary duties are numerous, especially at peak processing times. Terri performed her duties accurately and timely.

### **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.

This group of state presidents served the Association during a time of transition and uncertainty, but they represented not only their respective states well, they always kept the best interests of SASFAA in the forefront. They 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, and they did it with enthusiasm, humor, and a deep sense of connectedness. The state presidents not only updated the board to issues in their state, but were actively involved notifying their respective memberships of SASFAA events and activities.

### **Conference Committee**

The 45th SASFAA conference – “45 Monumental Years of Helping Students - was held at the Hyatt Regency in Crystal City, VA, February 17-20. Brad Barnett (Virginia, 4-Year Public) served as chair of the committee. His committee was staffed by individuals from all nine of the SASFAA states and representatives from all sectors of the Association. The conference committee was also supported by a host of Virginia Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators (VASFAA)

members that hosted the Hospitality Suite, produced a Legislative Directory, and provided general assistance.

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 2008 Conference:

The conference's opening day on Sunday was designed to provide a little something for everyone. Four pre-conference events were held – A New Aid Officer's one-day Workshop was led by Sandy Neel and taught by several of the instructors who also taught again during the New Aid Officer's Workshop in the summer, a State Presidents' Workshop was led by President-elect Heather Boutell, a State Treasurer/Treasurer-elect workshop was led by Past SASFAA President Dave Cecil, and a Legislative Symposium was coordinated through Legislative Relations Committee, chaired by Bill Spiers.

The opening session included a President George Bush impersonator, but the highlight was the beginning of our 45<sup>th</sup> Anniversary celebration, where we had nineteen past SASFAA Presidents in attendance, providing remarks on the beginning days of SASFAA. A highlight on Monday included the first appearance before the membership of our new NASFAA President/CEO, Dr. Phil Day. Jeff Baker and Carney McCullough from the Department of Education provided the Federal Update, and the Legislative Relations Committee organized an excellent general session on current Loan Issues. In addition to the tremendous general session offerings, over 60 concurrent interest sessions were held on a variety of topics categorized as New Aid, Department of Education, Financial Aid Practices, Technology, Industry Issues/Trends, and Personal/Professional Development.

This year's community service project was the Community Partners for Children. Thanks to the generous hearts of SASFAA, we were able to present them with a check for over \$5,500! In addition to the awards already mentioned in this report, Brent Tener, Immediate Past President, Pat Arauz, Vice President and Deborah Byrd, Secretary were recognized for their service to SASFAA. SASFAA conference attendees were entertained with a SASFAA Fashion Show through the decades, as well as the marvelous talents of our membership with in a SASFAA Talent Show. The conference concluded on Wednesday with an inspiring update from Michael Bennett, NASFAA National Chair, as well as "Call to Action" by our 2008-09 President Heather Boutell.

A total of 690 individuals attended the conference. Those in attendance were encouraged to complete an on-line evaluation, and 260 responded by doing so. On the whole, the evaluations were excellent, and will be reviewed by the 2008-09 conference committee in order to make changes they deem appropriate. One major item of concern was the number of speakers for interest sessions that were not employed at institutions. Within the process for selecting the topics and the speakers for these sessions, the committee went through a very detailed plan to minimize this issue. However, there are two items that should be mentioned. First, we greatly appreciate our lender partners sharing their expertise and knowledge with their willing to present, and second, we need to encourage our school members to step up to the plate in offering to conduct sessions singly or with another member when the “Call for Sessions” is sent out.

### **Diversity Committee**

The Diversity Committee was chaired by Charlene Morgan (Georgia, “Transition”). The committee worked toward achieving their goals by working with the Conference Committee to provide a Diversity Bingo game that can be used at meetings, conferences, etc. It debuted at the New Aid Officer pre-conference workshop in February. The other focus of the committee for the year included information on the blind – they set up a booth in the Exhibit Area at the conference and provided all attendees with a Braille Alphabet/Number card.

### **Electronic Services Committee**

Keith Reeves (South Carolina, 4-year Public) 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 2008 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.
- Contracted with our web provider to upgrade the website and database functionality.

### **Budget and Finance Committee**

It fell to the chair of the Budget and Finance Committee, Jane McNaughton (Tennessee, Lender), and her committee to oversee that the Association remain financially sound in order to accomplish our 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 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 2007-2008 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, and to ensure timely filing the tax return.
- Prepared annual SASFAA budget for adoption by SASFAA Board.
- Developed a SASFAA Contract Committee spreadsheet to track ongoing even liability and monitor hotel deposit amounts and due dates.

### **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, updating and posting the SASFAA Legislative Guide, and conducting a pre-conference Legislative Symposium. 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, and they met their goals admirably.

### **Membership Committee**

Laura Diven-Brown (Mississippi, 4-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 a year-end SASFAA membership of 1,582.

Following is a summary of major activities conducted for the 2007-2008 year:

- Efforts were made to clean up data in the system in order to provide more meaningful statistics. For example, at the beginning of the year, 323 organizations were in the database without an institution type.
- An electronic membership brochure is being explored

## Membership by State:

- 90 – Alabama
- 249 – Florida
- 198 – Georgia
- 113 – Kentucky
- 77 – Mississippi
- 180 – North Carolina
- 167 – South Carolina
- 146 – Tennessee
- 186 – Virginia
- 176 – Out of Region

South Carolina was the winner in the friendly state competition for highest percentage of membership retention in SASFAA with 112.1% reached.

Of our total membership numbers, 64% of the membership are school representatives, 24% are lender/servicer/guarantor members, and 12% were government employees, consultants or otherwise 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 Lester McKenzie, 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, 2008.
- 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.
- 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. Janet Sain (North Carolina, Lender) chairs this committee.

Major accomplishments of the Site Selection committee included:

- Completion of the Conference Manual/Guidebook CD and submission as NASFAA Regional Award
- Completion of the New Aid Officer Workshop Checklist.
- Finalized arrangements for committee meetings, training workshops, and both non-conference Board meetings for the 2008-2009 Executive Board. Additionally, the Conference Committee meetings were negotiated for the 2009 Conference in Myrtle Beach, SC.
- Conducted site visits for annual conference possibilities in AL and FL for the 2011 and 2012 conferences.

### **Sponsorship Committee**

Lester McKenzie (Tennessee, 4-Year Public) chaired the Sponsorship Committee for 2007-2008. Since membership dues and conference registration fees alone do not provide sufficient revenue streams to support the activities of the Association and because support from our vendors and sponsors was uncertain, the first task was a revamping of our Sponsorship Policy. The new policy, focusing on a flat fee (with other “add-ons) was presented to the board and approved at the first board meeting of the year. In addition, due to our dependence on this source of income, the Sponsorship Chair was also added as an ex-officio member of the Budget and Finance Committee. The final major task assigned to the Sponsorship Chair this year was to serve as Chair of the Revenue Review Task Force, whose goals was to review financing options for the future and to report to the board at the final board meeting. There were a number of conclusions, which will continue to reviewed and monitored in the upcoming year. The funding we receive from our exhibitors/sponsors is of great assistance in being able to provide the lower-cost training to which we have become accustomed.

### **Special Appointee – State Training**

One of my goals for the year was to assist the state associations with training opportunities as well as enhance leadership development. Sandy Neel (Tennessee, 4-Year Public) was charged with overseeing two programs – the Inter-State Visit program and the Treasurer’s Workshop. The Inter-State Visit program was to provide state presidents and presidents-elect with an opportunity to visit another state’s board meeting and/or conference. The hope was to have them experience first-hand new initiatives as well as standard operating procedures from another state in order to enhance their ability to serve their association as well as see a larger picture (and thereby enhancing future leadership prospects within the region). Due to low numbers needing the training and the ability of the state’s to provide it themselves, a regional Treasurer’s Workshop was held as a pre-conference event in February. Especially in light of recent events and reduced Sponsor income, it has become even more crucial that the association’s financial stability is ensured. Seven of the nine state presidents were able to attend another state’s conference; however, only two presidents-elect were able to attend another state’s board meeting. Although not as successful as planned, especially for presidents-elect, the idea has merit for continuation with some adjustments.

### **Special Appointee – 45<sup>th</sup> Anniversary**

Betty Whalen (South Carolina, 4-Year Public) was charged with coordinating an anniversary celebration to be held during the Opening Session at the Conference and continue into that evening. The committee did an outstanding job in every aspect – from sending personal invitations to all past SASFAA Presidents, to arranging Ken Wooten to speak on their behalf (due to the late illness of Dr. Jim Carr, SASFAA's first President), to the video montage of our SASFAA Presidents through the SASFAA years, to arranging a "toast". In addition, they complied numerous pictures and old documents to have on prominent display during the entire conference.

### **Agency & Lender Liaisons**

Tracy Ireland (Georgia, Agency) was the liaison to the various state agencies and Clark Aldridge (Alabama, Lender) was the liaison to all of our lender partners for 2007-2008. Their responsibilities for the year include keeping the board updated regarding current issues within the profession that affects our lender and agency partners and updating the SASFAA members on regulatory/statutory issues and changes through newsletter articles and listserv avenues

### **Summary**

As mentioned, this a brief summary of the activities of your officers, state presidents, committee chairs and liaisons for this past year. This group of individuals worked exceptionally hard on your behalf this year and represented your Association well.