

*Climbing Higher Together!*

NCASFAA Director's

Summit

Spring 2025





Hello and Welcome to NCASFAA Spring Conference and this year's Director's Summit. Today, we gather as leaders, innovators, and advocates in the field of financial aid—each of us committed to a shared mission: making higher education accessible and affordable for all students.

In a time when the landscape of financial aid is rapidly evolving – whether through policy changes, technological advancements, or increasing student needs—our roles have never been more critical. We are not just administrators of aid; we are architects of opportunity, ensuring that finances are not a barrier to education but a bridge to success.

This summit is a chance for us to engage in meaningful discussions, share best practices, and collaborate on solutions that will shape the future of student support. Over the course of Sunday and Monday, we'll hear from leaders, engage in strategic conversations and gain insights that will empower us to better serve our institutions and, most importantly, our students.

Thank you for being here, for the work you do, and for your dedication to student success. Let's make this summit a productive and inspiring experience.

**Welcome and let's get started!!**

Sincerely,



**Lee Bray**  
**2024-25 NCASFAA President**



**Nikki Glaspie**  
**2024-25 NCASFAA Vice President**

**NCASF<sup>AA</sup> Spring 2025 Director's  
Summit AGENDA**  
*with Session Moderators*

<b>Sunday, April 6, 2025</b>	<b>Event</b>	<b>Individual(s)</b>
12:00pm – 12:30pm	Registration/Check-In	
12:30pm – 12:35pm	Welcome	Nikki Glaspie, NCASF <sup>AA</sup> Vice-President, CFCC
12:35pm – 12:55pm	Icebreakers	Janee Knippenberg, PNC
12:55pm – 1:00pm	Introduction of Heather Boutell	Janee Knippenberg, PNC
1:00 pm – 2:00pm	Becoming a Fearless Leader	Dr. Heather Boutell, Vanderbilt School of Medicine
2:10pm – 2:15pm	Introduction of Dr. Shawn Weathers	Casey Wallen, Sallie Mae
2:15pm – 3:15pm	The Importance of Financial Aid in Enrollment Management	Dr. Shawn Weathers, Central Piedmont CC
3:15pm – 3:30pm	Break	
3:30pm – 3:35pm	Introduction of Bruce Blackmon	Rachel Cavenaugh, NCASF <sup>AA</sup> Past President, CFCC
3:35pm – 4:35pm	Your Financial Aid Director is Not Okay	Bruce Blackmon, UNC-Charlotte
4:45pm – 5:00pm	Getting Involved	NCASF <sup>AA</sup> Board Members
5:00 PM	Dinner On Your Own	
<b>Monday, April 7, 2025</b>		
7:30am – 8:30am	Breakfast	
9:00am – 9:30am	Recap Discussion and Icebreaker	Nikki Glaspie, NCASF <sup>AA</sup> Vice President, CFCC & Janee Knippenberg, PNC
9:30am – 9:35am	Introduction of Dana Kelly	Shannon Jones, Inceptia
9:35am – 10:35am	Enrollment Management Impacts Given Declining Student Populations	Dana Kelly, NASF <sup>AA</sup>
10:45am – 11:45am	Panel Discussion: HOT TOPICS Q&A with Panel about newly developing financial aid issues and best practices	Bruce Blackmon, UNC-Charlotte Dr. Shawn Weathers, Central Piedmont Dr. Heather Boutell, Vanderbilt School of Medicine Dana Kelly, NASF <sup>AA</sup>
11:45AM	Closing	Nikki Glaspie, NCASF <sup>AA</sup> Vice President, CFCC

## Director's Summit Speakers

NCASF AA extends its deepest gratitude to our esteemed presenters and speakers. Their insights, expertise, and passion have made a lasting impact, inspiring and enlightening us all. Their time and effort in sharing valuable knowledge are truly appreciated, and we are grateful for your willingness to share that knowledge. Your dedication to your craft has made this event a meaningful and enriching experience for all in attendance.

### **Bruce Blackmon**



Director of Financial aid at UNC-Charlotte and has been in the financial aid profession for over 29 years. Bruce has helped thousands of students in his career and enjoys the challenge of the ever-changing world of federal regulation. He earned his undergraduate degree from Coker College and a graduate degree from UNC Pembroke. Bruce is originally from Hartsville, South Carolina, and is always on the road between Laurinburg, NC, and Charlotte. His wife is a Nurse Practitioner with the Carolinas Hospital System.

### **Dr. Heather Boutell**

Dr. Heather Boutell is the Director of Financial Aid at Vanderbilt School of Medicine in Nashville, TN. Heather has worked in the field of financial aid for 33 years, spending the last 6 years as Director of Financial Aid at Vanderbilt School of Medicine. Heather has been active in professional organizations and served as the President of the Kentucky Association of Student Aid Administrators in 2004-2005 and President of the Southern Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators in 2008-2009. She has served on the National Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators (NASFAA) Board of Directors several times in appointed and elected positions. She received the KASFAA and SASFAA Distinguished Service Awards, and the NASFAA Regional Leadership and Meritorious Achievement Awards for her contributions to the profession. Heather earned her Bachelor of Music Education at Kentucky Wesleyan College and her Master of Education in College Student Personnel Services and College Counseling at the University of Louisville. She recently earned her Ed.D. at Lipscomb University. Heather, her husband Steve, and cat Crouton reside in Lebanon, TN. They have two adult sons who both live in Chicago. For fun, Heather loves reality TV competition shows – ask her about Survivor, Top Chef, or Amazing Race!





## **Dana Kelly**

**Dana Kelly** serves as the Vice President of Professional Development and Institutional Compliance at the National Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators (NASFAA). In this role, she leads a diverse portfolio that includes training, regulatory assistance, certification, credentialing, and corporate partnerships. Dana also oversees several of NASFAA's signature events, including the annual Leadership & Legislative Conference & Expo, the National Conference, and the Executive Leadership Collective.

With more than two decades of experience in higher education, Dana brings a deep wealth of knowledge shaped by her work in campus financial aid offices, loan servicing, and national training initiatives. Her frontline experience uniquely positions her to understand the financial aid community's evolving needs and deliver impactful, relevant professional development.

As a member of NASFAA's executive leadership team, Dana plays a key role in shaping and executing the association's strategic vision in partnership with the Board of Directors.

Dana holds a Bachelor of Science in Justice and Policy Studies from Guilford College, a Master's in Organizational Management from the University of Phoenix, and a Master's in Public Administration from the University of North Carolina at Greensboro.

## **Dr. Shawn Weathers**

Dr. Shawn Weathers is the Director of Scholarships and Financial Aid at Central Piedmont Community College in Charlotte, NC. She began her career in financial aid in 2003 and, after 22 years in the field, is recognized as a knowledgeable, dedicated, and accomplished leader. Her primary focus is on educating students about the various financial opportunities available to them. With a transformative and strategic approach, Dr. Weathers takes pride in providing encouragement, positivity, and growth opportunities for those around her. As a first-generation college student, she earned an associate's degree from Central Piedmont before transferring to the University of North Carolina at Charlotte, where she completed her bachelor's degree. Shortly thereafter, she earned a master's degree, and in 2018, she achieved her Doctorate in Educational Leadership Management. Dr. Weathers has extensive training and experience through various webinars and conference sessions. She is a passionate advocate for turning educational dreams into realities and fostering student success, which she consistently demonstrates through her work.

