Message from the President

WOW! Spring came early this year and can you believe the month of March is almost over! While all financial aid offices across the state are awarding their students and sending out their financial aid packages for the upcoming year, I wanted to take a minute to thank all of our members for their continued support of this great association we call NCASFAA! Without our volunteers this organization could not be as successful as it has been and will continue to be.

Our annual spring conference will be April 15-18 at the Holiday Inn Resort (formally known as the Sunspree) in Wrightsville Beach, NC. The spring conference theme is “Catching the Regulatory Wave – 45 years of Navigating the Currents.” Don’t miss out on this action packed, fun filled conference with lots of opportunity to get training in the areas you need. At the same time, it provides you the opportunity to network with your colleagues in a relaxing environment. I look forward to seeing each and every one of you in April!

Kim Driggers
2011-2012 NCASFAA President
CLEAR, OPEN COMMUNICATION.

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From timely and specific training to valuable financial literacy resources, Nelnet is committed to providing schools and borrowers with reliable communication and excellent service.

Some of the useful tools and resources we provide our school partners include:

- Free Webinar Wednesday trainings for schools
- Free interactive financial literacy materials
- Free financial wellness trainings for students
- Recently enhanced default management tool—Nsight

VISIT OUR UPDATED WEBSITE JUST FOR SCHOOLS AT NelnetLoanServicing.com, OR CALL 866.463.5638.
Carver Middle School's Stephon Bennett is one of the 2012 Middle School Enrichment Scholarship winners from the North Carolina Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators (NCASFAA).

"We created this scholarship to help disadvantaged students see that there is another world out there," said Kim Driggers, NCASFAA president and director of financial aid at St. Andrews University. "We want to help students realize that they all have the opportunity to go to college. We are reaching out to them at middle school age so they have more time to prepare for that option."

The six scholarships are awarded up to $1,000 each to attend a summer enrichment program at a North Carolina college or university. Scholarship recipients represent the eastern, western and middle regions of the state, with two recipients from each region.

"We started this project about six years ago," Driggers said. "We allocated money, did some fundraising and then awarded the first three scholarships. We are getting close to the point where our first scholarship recipients will graduate from high school. We are asking them to come back and speak at our conference about the impact it had on their lives."

As for Bennett, he is still deciding which camp his strong application essay will allow him to attend this summer.

"Committee Chair Skip Watts was extremely impressed with the strength of Stephon's essay with his application," Driggers said. "It is wonderful to have one of our Scotland County students win this opportunity."

To learn more about the Middle School Enrichment Scholarship, contact Skip Watts at 828-337-7939 or swatts@cfi.org.
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NCASFAA 2012 Spring Conference: "Catching the Regulatory Wave: 45 Years of Navigating the Currents"
Tonja Suttles - Spring Conference Chair

Come celebrate NCASFAA's 45th Anniversary Conference at the beautiful Holiday Inn Sunspree Resort in Wrightsville Beach, NC. Make your hotel reservations by March 15th to ensure you'll have a room at the conference, April 15th - April 18th, 2012. If you are unable to book a room prior to the cutoff date and all rooms at the Sunspree are full, don't be discouraged: there are several alternative lodging locations within an easy commute of the Conference venue.

The Spring Conference Committee has been hard at work to provide you with the best training available. Don't forget, the conference set up has changed and concurrent sessions will begin Monday morning prior to the opening luncheon.

Susan Collins, Mayor Pro Tem of Wrightsville Beach will offer our welcome during the Monday's opening luncheon starting at noon. During lunch you will learn more about our Conference Charity, Nourish NC, and meet candidates for 2012-2013 election. If you didn't vote before the conference, make sure to stop by the Nominations & Elections Committee's booth to cast your votes at the conference. After lunch, stick around for Jim Briggs', The Tax Detective, general session on 2011 tax filing thresholds, filing statuses and a brief line by line review of the 1040 and how it relates to Federal methodology.

You'll have the opportunity to discuss issues on your campus or at your agency during the Sector Caucuses, Monday afternoon. After the Monday's sector caucuses, change into something comfortable and join us by the pool or out on the beach for Team Building Activities involving food, volleyball, corn hole, and the opportunity to sign up for great door prizes! The door prize winners will be announced during the President's Reception by the pool Monday after dinner on your own. So, don't forget to join us for activities by the pool before and after dinner Monday! Monday night, we will have a showing of the hit movie Rio, from the creators of ICE AGE.

Twenty concurrent sessions will be offered on Tuesday to provide us with a full day of training. The Tax Detective, Jim Briggs, will be presenting on 2012-2013 Verification Changes and understanding tax transcripts. Michael Roberts and Wood Mason the U.S. Department of Education will be providing training on return of funds, program integrity, COD and DL reconciliation. Ron Day, NASFAA Chair-Elect, Brad Barnett, SASFAA President, and Allison Sullivan, SCASFAA President will all be in attendance and offering a variety of training during our concurrent sessions.

Dr. Steven Brooks, Executive Director of the North Carolina State Education Assistance Authority, will deliver the State Update during Tuesday's lunch where we will also, celebrate award recipients and retirees.

Wednesday morning, Brad Barnett will give the SASFAA update and Michael Roberts will finish up our conference with the Federal Update.

There's still time to volunteer to help out at the conference as a conference committee member, volunteer online at www.ncasfaa.com.

Don't delay, register today! If you have questions or concerns, please contact me at tsuttles@wpcc.edu. I look forward to seeing you all at the beach!
The New Aid Officers Pre-Conference Workshop will take place on Sunday, April 15, 2012 from 1-5pm, with Registration starting at 12pm that day. The workshop topics and presenters are:

- The Application Process – Rachel Cavenaugh, Cape Fear Community College
- Cost of Attendance – Sarah Shearer, UNC-Greensboro
- Federal Student Eligibility – Regina Huggins, Wake Technical Community College
- Packaging and Award Notification – Joey Trogdon, Randolph Community College

Materials for the NCASFAA “New” FAA Workshop were developed by SEAA and funded by the U.S. Department of Education College Access Challenge Grant, P378A110017.

Chad Williams—NCASFAA Vice President
NCASFAA Spring 2012 Conference
Holiday Inn Sunspree Resort, Wrightsville Beach NC

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Conference Room Rates:

Oceanfront $179
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Plan, apply, and pay for college
The Professional Affiliates Committee is proud to present the 2011-2012 Affiliates for this year. NCAS-FAA would like to thank each of them for their continued support of our training efforts and annual conference. If you are able to attend the conference in Greensboro, please do go by the vendor area and show your thanks!

**Platinum Level**
College Foundation Inc
Nelnet

**Gold Level**
Discover
Great Lakes
Greenwood and Hall
Inceptia
National Education
PNC
Sallie Mae
SunTrust
USA Funds
Wells Fargo

**Silver Level**
American Student Assistance
Citizens Bank
Dixon, Hughes & Goodman
FAS
Union Fed

**Bronze Level**
Chase

Once again, thank you to all our Professional Affiliates for 2011-2012!
Spring Conference Charity: Nourish NC

Nourish NC was chosen as the 2012 Spring Conference Charity. Nourish NC supports over 190 children in New Hanover County schools through providing weekend food as well as food for long holidays and summer breaks. Childhood hunger is rising in New Hanover County. When a child suffers from lack of nutrition, it creates a ripple effect in the child’s life, classroom, and neighborhood community. Nourish NC believes prevention starts with nutrition. Food insecure children experience a wide range of problems that affect their health, development, well-being and school performance. Nourish NC’s missions is to strengthen community resources that connect children to health food and reduce food insecurity. Nourish NC empowers children to succeed in the classroom and community alike.

According to the USDA, over 16 million children nationwide lived in food insecure household in 2010. 15.7% of all North Carolina homes were considered food insecure between 2008 and 2010, a full percent higher than the national average of 14.6%. In 1999, the national average of food insecure homes was 10%.

There are many ways for you to participate in this cause. We will be selling NCASFAA 45th anniversary edition T-Shirts and apple cut-outs for our wall of apples. Lowe’s Food will be setting of a virtual store, where you will be able to purchase bags of food to donate to Nourish NC.

We will also be raising most of funds for the charity through a silent auction. So we need your help!! We need your help in donating items for the silent auction, whether it is a personal donation for you, a donation from your company or a donation from your school, whatever you can donated for the silent auction for members to make bids on will be wonderful with the proceeds going to a wonderful cause.

In addition to our normal fundraising activities, we will also be hosting a food drive for Nourish, NC. So don’t forget to bring a can of Chef Boyardee or two to help our feed hungry children.

You can learn more about Nourish NC at www.nourishnc.org.

We would like to raise as much food and funds as possible for our worthwhile charity and to help Nourish NC provide positive change in the lives of New Hanover children.
Backpack Program Most Needed Items:

Grains:
- Breakfast / Cereal Bars
- Oatmeal
- Trail Mix / Granola Bars
- Boxes of Macaroni & Cheese
- Individual Cereal Boxes

Proteins:
- Jars of Peanut Butter (Plastic Jars)
- Canned Pasta with Meat
- Canned Tuna in Spring Water

Fruits / Veggies:
- Canned Fruit in Light Syrup / Juice
- Individual Servings of Applesauce
- Raisins (snack size boxes)
- Canned Veggies

Miscellaneous:
- Pudding cups (fat free / sugar free)
- Beef Jerky
At this time we have the following items for silent auction or raffle:

- North Carolina Symphony - 2012 Summerfest Flex Tickets
- North Carolina Aquarium - 4 passes to any of the NC Aquariums
- Holiday Inn Wilmington - 2 Night Stay
- Historic Poplar Grove Plantation - 4 Tour Passes
- Holiday Inn Sunspree - 1 Night Stay
- Grandfather Mountain - 1 Guest Pass
- Hilton New Bern Riverfront - 1 Night Stay and Breakfast for 2
- Battleship NC - 4 tour passes
- Knife Set
- Autographed Copy of the novel Clover, by Dori Sanders
- Bechtler Museum of Modern Art (Charlotte)- 2 guest passes
- Cameron Art Museum – The Cook’s Canvas
- North Carolina Zoo, Asheboro – Family Four Pack
- Oceanic Restaurant, Wrightsville Beach - $50 gift certificate
- Appalachian Ski Mountain, Blowing Rock – 2 passes for skating ring and 2 passes for ski lift
- Wilmington Convention Center – John Burchetta Hand Blown Glass Shell
- Hilton Wilmington Riverside – 2 Night Stay
- Carolina Brewing Company – T-Shirt, 2 Pint Glasses and a Six Pack of Beer

Don’t forget: We need your help in donating items for the silent auction, whether it is a personal donation for you, a donation from your company or a donation from your school, whatever you can donate for the silent auction for members to make bids on will be wonderful with the proceeds going to a wonderful cause.

Tonja Suttles - Spring Conference Chair
Managing Your School’s Default Rate: Contacting Student Borrowers

Whether you represent a public, private or proprietary school, your ultimate goal is to provide students with the means to become educated citizens. That responsibility doesn’t end when students leave campus. Helping students navigate the financial aid repayment process is in the school’s financial best interest.

One common feature stands out in the U.S. Department of Education’s most recent cohort default rates for schools: the average default rate increased in every category. This isn’t shocking news to most schools, since external factors like the economy place greater pressure on students. It follows that many borrowers struggle to repay their student loans.

A silver lining does exist, however. Schools can help maintain or lower their cohort default rate. There are a number of options available—from exit counseling, financial education and grace contact efforts, to actual default prevention on delinquent borrowers. Schools may choose to do some, all or none of these depending on budgets and overall risk involved with the school’s student loan default rate.

Three options for tackling default prevention:

1) Do it yourself;
2) Hire an expert vendor;
3) Use a combination of efforts.

It is a challenge to counsel borrowers who are delinquent on their student loans. A borrower’s initial reaction may be one of anxiety and concern. Each borrower’s response is based on his or her individual experience.

Take this statement for example: “Hello, I’m calling on your student loan…” Not only is this statement an awkward beginning, it violates the student’s confidentiality.

One of the many challenges when contacting a student borrower is that your counselors cannot disclose information before verifying that the person they are speaking with is the borrower.

Before you decide to take on the challenge of conducting the default prevention effort yourself, consider the answers to the following questions. They will impact the overall success of your initiative.

How do I attempt to contact the borrower?
Will you be mailing letters, sending e-mails, making phone calls, or using other means? Determine your contact strategy before starting and formulate a plan that achieves optimal success.

Once you determine how to contact the student, make sure your letters, e-mails and scripts for phone calls are legally sound. Consult with your legal counsel before starting the assignment and whenever you make changes. While some believe that schools don’t need to abide by the Fair Debt Practices Collection Act (FDPCA), you should follow the guidelines for your own protection.

Who will perform this service?
Your staff must have good phone skills, be organized and be highly structured to ensure all letters, e-mails and calls are done according to your established contact strategy.

How many people do I need?
Unfortunately, borrowers don’t become delinquent on your schedule. So, one person may not be enough and, if it is only one person, outline a plan for when that person is sick or on vacation.
The best time to communicate with borrowers is on their schedule and in the medium they choose. The wider variety of methods you use to contact a borrower the more successful you will be. Therefore, make outbound phone attempts when the borrower is available, which includes days, nights and/or weekends.

When will the staff person(s) be available?
To have the greatest success your counselor must be available when the borrower calls back. The longer your hours of operation, the more likely you’ll make contact with the borrower. This can create difficulty for schools that use only one person, since one person generally cannot be available from 7 a.m. to 9 p.m., each and every day.

How will I train my staff?
In addition to reaching the borrower, a successful resolution relies on an ongoing training and quality assurance program. Repayment plans, discharge options, as well as deferment and forbearance options, can change regularly. Provide regular and ongoing training.

How much effort will I spend on default prevention before the account becomes delinquent?
A great deal of time and effort is required to ensure successful default prevention. Initially, your efforts will help borrowers who would have been easiest to resolve. That's because it’s always easier to work with students who are not yet delinquent, since the stress of resolving a delinquent account is not an issue.

The borrowers whose accounts are more difficult to resolve are those who become delinquent. More time and effort is required to resolve these accounts.

Once I have the borrower on the phone and a resolution determined, what’s next?
You can immediately resolve the delinquency if you are the agency in charge of the debt. However, if this is a Federal Direct Loan or a FFELP loan, only the borrower and the lender/servicer can process the resolution.

Many vendors use a “warm transfer” process where you, the borrower and the servicer are on the line at the same time, and the servicer helps with the resolution before anyone hangs up. While this is more expensive and takes more time on the call, this effort creates a significant increase in the number of borrowers who complete the resolution agreement.

Make outbound phone attempts when the borrower is available, including days, nights and/or weekends.

How will I manage quality control?
Strict adherence to laws and regulations will help to prevent future liability. Quality control is often done by recording all calls and then reviewing a percentage of randomly selected calls to determine compliance.

Finally, how will I evaluate success?
The answer to this question is two-fold. First, there is the reporting system used to monitor performance. Many vendors use a form of batch tracking to track when accounts become delinquent and how many were resolved.

In addition, this system also tracks the history of conversations, letters sent and calls made. This can be done using a spreadsheet if you have a low number of borrowers. However, a more sophisticated system is needed if you have many borrowers.

The second answer is concerned with how you define success. Since the cohort default rate is moving to a three-year rate, the lag time between your efforts and the rate of overall success or failure is very long. Look at the cure rate you have on a batch-by-batch basis and determine your goal.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR
Dave Macoubrie has more than 22 years of student loan experience, including work with bankruptcy, claims, account administration, and product development and support. In his role as the vice president of repayment solutions at NSLP, he directs customer service, default prevention and post-default collection efforts. Dave oversees all operational and account management functions. He earned a bachelor’s degree in business administration with an emphasis in accounting from Wayne State College in Wayne, Nebraska.

ABOUT NSLP
Headquartered in Lincoln, Nebraska, NSLP is a private, not-for-profit company with a 25-year legacy in the higher education marketplace. A former Top-10 student loan guarantor, NSLP continues to be a passionate leader and advocate for student success by providing colleges and universities nationwide with financial education, delinquency prevention, default aversion, financial aid related support, and Title IV training and compliance programs. NSLP collaborates with schools to develop programs that will ultimately help our future generations thrive financially.

MEDIA CONTACT
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SusanH@NSLP.org, www.NSLP.org
NCSEAA conducted the 23rd “New” FAA Training Workshop March 13 – 15 at CFI in Raleigh. Since the first training for new financial aid administrators in 2003, more than 670 attendees have participated with 31 attending the March training. Designed to provide an overview and introduction to the financial aid profession, the training includes information on state and federal programs. More in-depth training is presented on several topics including state programs, student eligibility, verification, cost of attendance and the Federal Pell Grant Program. The most challenging topic for this workshop was “Verification” because of the many changes for 2012 – 2013.

Elizabeth McDuffie, Bill Cox, Shera Hube, Rose Mary Stelma, Kay Stroud, Bridget Ellis, Victoria Lenderman and Miranda McCall presented sessions.
Julie Mallette (pictured) retired from NC State's Financial Aid Office as Associate Vice Provost and Director of Scholarships and Financial Aid on January 1, 2012, after working there 20 1/2 years. Julie's total number of years in financial aid and the state was 31!

Heather Willet was named Associate Dean of Student Services at Central Carolina CC on January 2, 2012. Heather previously work at Sand Hills CC for over 15 years, serving as Director of Financial Aid before her departure.

Diane Sims retired from NC State's Financial Aid Office as Assistant Director of Scholarships and Financial Aid on January 1, 2012, after working there for over 12 years.

Diane Sims retired from NC State's Financial Aid Office as Assistant Director of Scholarships and Financial Aid on January 1, 2012, after working there for over 12 years.

Cecil Outlaw started working for NC State's Financial Aid Office on March 19, 2012, as Assistant Director of Scholarships and Financial Aid. Cecil brings with him 8 years of experience in the collegiate environment.

David Bowman started working for NC State's Financial Aid Office on February 28, 2012, as Assistant Director of Scholarships and Financial Aid. David brings with him over 15 years of experience.

Sherilynn Mims began working at St. Andrews University on January 9, 2012 as a Financial Aid Assistant.

Cecil Outlaw started working for NC State's Financial Aid Office on March 19, 2012, as Assistant Director of Scholarships and Financial Aid. Cecil brings with him 8 years of experience in the collegiate environment.

At Great Lakes, we work with you every step of the way to help you succeed. We support you with a dedicated representative, an experienced Client Services team, and an array of online tools and resources. Our hands-on trainers lead free SmartSessions™ webinars on essential topics for financial aid professionals everywhere.

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