NYSFAAA Executive Council
December 13, 2021
9:00am – 1:00pm
Remote Meeting via Zoom:

Call to Order & Roll Call	**Adrienne King/Anne Sullivan Polino**

President – Adrienne King
President-Elect – Patty Donahue
1st VP – Renee Swift
2nd VP – Brian Smith
Secretary – Anne Sullivan Polino
Treasurer – Shalena Clary
Treasurer-Elect – Taylor Kreutter
Region 1 – Nicole Griffo
Region 2 – Lucinda Snyder
Region 3 – Peg Stearns
Region 4 – Rochelle Filler
Region 6 – Tom Zarkos
Region 7 – Samantha Silvia
Region 8 – Sonya Stein

Guests:
Chris Barto
Deborah Evans
Stacey Hawkins
Jeanne McCarthy
Lisa Simpson

The meeting began at 9:03 AM quorum

REMOTE VOTES:

MOTION: A motion was made by Peg Sterns, seconded by Brian Smith that we compose and send a letter to Naveen C. Sha, CPA, President and Chief Executive Officer of BlueSky Hospitality Solutions that brings to his awareness our concerns about not being refunded our deposit of $21,450.

There was no discussion. A vote was called-the motion passes with 13 in favor, no oppositions, and no abstentions.

MOTION: A motion was made and revised after discussion by Brian Smith, seconded by Rochelle Filler that we sign the revised WHOVA contract to cover us until December of 2022

Discussion followed where the following points were made: Much discussion was had on the what to include and exclude from the is contract based on our 2122 conference needs and the overall impact on this agreement.

A vote was called-the motion passes with 12 in favor, 1 oppositions, and no abstentions.

MOTION: A motion was made by Thomas Zarkos, seconded by Sonya Stein to accept the new Zoom contract that goes into effect on January 4, 2022.

There was no discussion. A vote was called-the motion passes with 13 in favor, no oppositions, and no abstentions.

Approval of Minutes	**Adrienne King/Anne Sullivan Polino**

MOTION: a motion was made to accept the minutes with one minor edit.

The motion passed with all in favor.

President's Report	**Adrienne King**

Adrienne King welcomed all new members of the Executive Council and expressed her hope for a successful 2022 despite all we are all going through at this time.

NYCDOE-Staten Island

A representative of the NYCDOE- Staten Island asked if NYSFAAA could partner with them. Adrienne King asked Gene Rogers to connect with this group to assist and help to close the FAFSA completion gap. NYSFAAA will assist in anyway it can, given FAFSA applications are down nationwide. Please contact Adrienne to help organize these types of initiative. The School Outreach Committee also partners with HESC.

Renee Swift recommended that Gene also work with LaSonya and Lisa Simpson.

Adrienne reported that High School Counselors are also asking for these events to be virtual.

Peg Stearns mentioned that many High School Counselors are asking for FAFSA training themselves. –

EASFAA

Adrienne reported that the next EASFAA Executive Council meeting will be held from February 20 through February 22, 2022 at the Sheridan Lincoln Harbor hotel in New Jersey.

Novice

Renee Nunziato has stepped down as chairman of the Novice Committee because of increased responsibilities at her job as this new role will not allow her to dedicate time to Novice.

NYSFAAA will need a new chair for this event.

It was also reported that Mercy College allowed us one additional year for the event in 2021 and that they are not taking any outside groups this year. This will require us to find a new venue. While it is important to have this training, it will likely be virtual again this year, given this change.

Patti Donahue asked if we put any money down for this year. Shalena Clary will check because she believes there was a deposit made for last year's in person that was held virtually.

MOTION: A motion was made by Brian Smith, seconded by Patti Donahue to hold the 2022 Novice training in a virtual format again this year. There was no discussion and the motion passed with all in favor.

Advocacy Day-NYSFAAA Position Points	**Christopher Barto**

Adrienne King received an email prior to Thanksgiving email from New York State Higher Education Committee (NYSHE) asking for her to appear the following week to discuss the impact of COVID 19 on Higher Education. Christopher Barto and Donna Gurnett were asked to testify in Adrienne's absence.

Chris Barto reported to NYSFAAA that the Assembly and Senate staff is pulling together a meeting on a last minute basis in an effort to hold the meeting prior to the holidays. SUNY, CUNY and CICU also testified. All four sectors are submitting comments that are due today.

Government Relations Committee was not in a position to supply comments given the inability to complete a survey Many organizations and schools were asked to provide comments for this report as did the Association of Proprietary Colleges, LIM and Bryant & Stratton College.

February Advocacy Meeting. Christopher Barto also reported that CICU organizes this meeting and is expanding it one additional day to include February 1 and 2, 2022. NYSFAAA members do not have to attend both days. The Executive Council is able to attend this virtual meeting.

The plan is to target key legislators from the Higher Education subcommittees in the Assembly and Senate. Meetings will be held with Dr. Guillermo Linares, President of HESC and Elsa Magee, Executive Vice President of HESC.

Sonya Stein asked why a survey would be needed to respond to request for comments. Christopher replied that NYSFAAA typically responds with a summary developed using comments from members. In this instance, the ask was so broad and the timeframe so limited that the Government Relations Committee felt that to have a NYSFAAA focused response, feedback from membership was needed.

Christopher also shared a draft of NYSFAAA Advocacy document that was developed based on the prior year's document.

Final talking points will come out in January after release of the state budget. The comments presented were preliminary.

Primary talking points are:

- NYSFAAA's comments are not bound by CICU but will echo much of the same requests to build a stronger voice on shared issues.

- Bump up maximum TAP to $5,665 and increase income from $80,000k to $100,000

- HESC has shared the TAP is being underutilized in state in part due to decline in FAFSA submission. It was also thought that another good talking point would be that the current TAP table is to not reflect of current demographics. For example, there is a growing number of independent/adult students who are not eligible.

- Waning interest in Excelsior and ETA (27 participating colleges out of 100).

See below for additional information on these talking points discussed during this meeting.

Recommendation #1:

Support Meaningful TAP Awards for New York State Students

– Increase Maximum TAP Award and Expand Income Eligibility –

We thank the legislature for approving the first major increase in the maximum Tuition Assistance Program (TAP) Award in 20 years, raising the current maximum by $500 to $5,665 for many students. This year we ask the legislature to keep that momentum going and approve an increase in the minimum TAP award to $1,000 (from $500) and increase the TAP income eligibility ceiling from $80,000 to $110,000 NYS Net Taxable Income (NTI), helping more families in need. Establish a funding formula for future years (post-2024) whereby TAP would be increased annually to keep pace with inflation.

Rationale:

REVISE: *We were encouraged that TAP funding was not cut in the Executive Budget. If additional revenue is available in the Budget, we urge the Legislature to increase TAP funding for students who need it now more than ever.*

The New York State TAP award schedule has not kept pace with the U.S. inflation rate, nor with students' and families' struggles due to the pandemic that has caused sigificant financial hardship for families trying to meet higher education costs. Over the last 20 years the maximum TAP award has increased only 3.3% and the maximum TAP income eligibility has remained flat. **Senate bill S.1889, that was advanced in the 2019-2020 legislative session, recognized the need to increase the maximum TAP income eligibility level, raising it from $80,000 NYS Net Taxable Income (NTI) to an NTI of $95,000.** We urge passage of similar legislation that would phase-in further adjustments to increase maximum TAP awards to $6,000 and TAP income eligibility to $110,000 NTI.

Recommendation #2:

Support Opportunity Programs Serving Our Most Vulnerable Students

– Enhance Funding for Opportunity Programs –

To support access and effective programming, we urge you to continue to increase funding for all Opportunity Programs – Educational Opportunity Program (EOP), College Discovery Program, Search for Education, Elevation, and Knowledge (SEEK) Program, the Collegiate Science and Technology Entry Program (CSTEP), its high school counterpart STEP, and the Liberty Partnerships Program (LPP). For the Arthur O. Eve Higher Education Opportunity Program (HEOP), we request a 20 percent increase per FTE to $8,400 (from $7,000 per FTE) for programs serving students outside New York City and an increase to $9,000 per FTE (from $7,500) for programs serving students in New York City. A recent survey of institutions with HEOP programs clearly showed that the HEOP program needs increased support to ensure program stability.

Rationale:
We were encouraged that Opportunity Programs' funding was not cut in the Executive Budget. If additional revenue is available in the Budget, we urge the Legislature to increase Opportunity Programs' funding for students who need it now more than ever.

Rationale:
We were encouraged that Opportunity Programs' funding was not cut in the Executive Budget. If additional revenue is available in the Budget, we urge the Legislature to increase Opportunity Programs' funding for students who need it now more than ever.

The NYS Opportunity Programs have a long and well-established track record of successfully supporting a diverse population of economically and academically disadvantaged students to persevere and complete their programs of study. Opportunity Programs lead to improved graduation rates and are well worth an increasing investment of our tax dollars. The academic, co-curricular, and financial support provided by these programs make a real difference in the lives of students in opportunity programs who are traditionally at higher risk of not graduating.

It was noted that Opportunity Funding was increased in recent budget. We are going to ask for increase funding in this area.

Adrienne asked when the last time increased Christopher responded that it was restored with a slight increase in last budget. CICU would like to see a doubling of funding over a period of time based on 2015 budget. Opportunity programs have been underfunded with an increased need from eligible students.

Patti Donahue asked if the Foster Youth Program and EOP students are often the same and recommended crafting talking point to justify need for increase. Christopher will work with Donna Gurnett to write a recommendation. Donna is working with a statewide committee to get feedback as she is working with this group on these points.

POINT 3: rational for change in schedules and changes in students' statuses because of losses of parents during pandemic, etc. It is recommended that a professional judgment be available for use in these situations.

Recommendation #3:

Eliminate Disparity in Access to TAP Awards

– Standardize Dependent & Independent Student TAP Award Schedules –

Use the same TAP Award Schedule, income, and maximum award eligibility for all students regardless of their Dependency Status. Currently independent students who are married or single and have no tax dependents receive significantly lower TAP awards compared to dependent students and independent

– 2 –

students with tax dependents (with a maximum award of $3,525 compared to $5,665 for the later group). There is also a significant difference in the maximum income allowed, with eligibility for TAP for independent married students without dependents limited to those below $40,000 NYS Net Taxable Income (NTI) while eligibility for single independent students without dependents is restricted to those with NTIs no higher than $10,000. **We strongly urge you to pass legislation that fully eliminates award discrepancies based on dependency status.**

POINT 4: Give expanded authority to HESC for Professional Judgments. The whole idea that FAAs having the authority to make these could lead to an increase in TAP awards that can't be funded. Address primarily changes in income because of issues such as losses in income. Patti Donahue believes this will help HESC.

Renee Swift indicated that HESC is overhauling of its systems that could be useful for schools to provide documents directly to help make these decisions.

Recommendation #4:

Better Align State to Federal Use of Professional Judgment

-Allow HESC to Exercise Further Professional Judgment (PJ) for State Aid Programs-

Financial Aid Administrators (FAAs) are allowed to exercise "Professional Judgment" for Federal Title IV programs for defined, well-documented extenuating circumstances, allowing adjustment of aid awards to better reflect significant changes in family circumstances or a student's and/or family's ability to pay based on losses to family income. We urge the state to allow HESC to exercise further Professional Judgment for NY state aid programs similar to federal aid provisions. This would give HESC more authority to consider granting independent status (i.e. "Dependency Overrides"), or to revise household income and certain other data elements with appropriate documentation – expanding the limited circumstances under which HESC is currently able to consider extenuating circumstances.

REVISE: *Rationale:*
FAAs work with students who have been abused, abandoned, and/or severely neglected by their

POINT 5: protect BUNDY Aid. We need to revise the ask. This point could be expanded to include other items such as foster care support, further supporting HESC, under resources and increase to provide support to HE community. The loss of resources at HESC is hurting schools who have to pick up the added responsibility of helping HESC keep up with demand.

BUNDY tends to be a target in Governor's budgets. It was to be cut last year but was restored.

Recommendation #5:

Protect Bundy Aid Funding

Protect Bundy Aid Funding – REVISE: The Governor's Executive Budget eliminates Bundy Aid for state fiscal year 2022, a critically important program to Independent Sector institutions that is used for direct student aid to students. He further proposes not restoring the amount (20%) withheld from payments already made in this fiscal year and cancelling remaining Bundy Aid payments owed during the current academic year. This amounts to a $51.9 million cut to student aid and support during a pandemic – a devastating and untenable blow. The Governor's budget inaccurately suggests that Federal emergency relief funding is a substitute for Bundy Aid. In reality, Federal relief provided a portion of the funding campuses incurred to protect jobs, to fund robust COVID-19 testing programs and buy needed PPE that is enabling campuses to keep their communities safe during the pandemic. The Governor's proposed elimination of Bundy Aid will only exacerbate the grave fiscal stresses on independent colleges and universities and the students they serve. **We urge the legislature to fully restore Bundy Aid in the FY 2022 Budget and reject cuts to Bundy Aid funding that the Legislature already approved in the FY 2021 budget.**

Christopher asked for the Executive Council's timeframe for review of final document. Adrienne indicated that she would like to see by the week after the Governor's budget is released. The timeline appears to be that the budget will be released on January 6, look at changes on January 11 to finalize the document and agreed that we could approve edits via email.

Christopher also encouraged regional teams to get involved and choose at least one or two local legislators to expand reach of advocacy day. Government Relations can help with setting up appointments with early January being the most appropriate timeframe to get legislators to look at information. Advocacy is not limited to two days. Every region has a member on the Higher Education Committee. See list below.

Region 1 will invite Christopher to their next meeting to discuss this topic. Others are encouraged to follow this lead.

Christopher thanked the group for support and wished everyone a happy holiday.

2022-2023: Assembly Higher Education Committee Members

Slide 42 © 2019 NASFAA

Glick [D] – Manhattan – Chair	Walczyk [R] – Watertown – Ranker
Bichotte Hermelyn [D] – Brooklyn	Buttenschon [D] – Utica
Cahill [D] – Kingston	Clark [R] – Rochester
Cusick [D] – Staten Island	Englebright [D] - Suffolk
Epstein [D] – Manhattan	Fahy [D] - Albany
Fitzpatrick [R] - Suffolk	Gandolfo [R]- Suffolk
Griffin [D] - Nassau	Gottfried [D] - Manhattan
Hyndman [D] – Queens	Lupardo [D] - Binghamton
McDonald [D] - Albany	McMahon [D] - Williamsville
Reilly [R]- Staten Island	Salka [R] - Oneida
Simon [D] - Brooklyn	Smith [R] - Suffolk
Smullen [R] - Herkimer	Souffrant Forrest [D] - Brooklyn
Stripe [D] - Syracuse	

NYSFAAA NASFAA

Slide 43 © 2019 NASFAA

NYStudentAidAlliance.org

2022-2023: Senate Higher Education Committee Members

Slide 41 © 2019 NASFAA

Stavisky [D] – Queens – Chair	Boyle [R] – Suffolk – Ranker
Cooney [D] – Rochester	Gaughran [D] – Nassau & Suffolk
Gounardes [D] – Brooklyn	Griffo [R] – Utica
Jackson [D] - Bronx	Liu [D] - Queens
Oberacker [R] – Cayuga, Chenango, Cortland, Delaware, Herkimer, & Otsego	Parker [D] - Brooklyn
Rivera [D] - Bronx	

NEW YORK STATE SENATE

NYSFAAA

NASFAA

2022-2023: Assembly Higher Education

Slide 42 © 2019 NASFAA

President-Elect Report	**Patti Donahue**

Governance and Ethics

Patti is going through the Bylaws of these two committees. She reached out to 3 people to join these committees and will update the Executive Council on their progress.

Adrienne asked that the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Committee be added to the list of committees. Governance can make this adjustment and add this the February agenda

Elections

Open positions for this year's election include the Secretary and possibly the Second Vice President.

First Vice President's Report	**Renee Swift**

Membership

Renee reported that there are currently 1104 active members. This compares to 965 from December 2020 resulting in plus 139 in comparison. Given the climate over the past 24 months, this is encouraging that our members are still finding exceptional value in membership.

Mentorship Committee

It was also reported that the Mentorship Committee needs a new chair as Taylor Kruetter has taken on the role of Council Treasurer-Elect.

Second Vice President	**Brian Smith**

TICC

Howard Leslie and Lea Nuwer are working with MemberClicks to get the social media function set up. Shawn Sherwood will act as back up for this functioning.

The Facebook page is set up. Sonya Stein reported that there is not a lot of engagement and this point. A subcommittee has been formed with plans to meet early next year. New members = 71

SWT

The Committee is getting Spring training ready for after the Fall break. Chris Barto and Donna Gurnett reported on advocacy. Brian Smith asked them to help provide feedback on how to build engagement and asked regions to add this to their agenda and promote video to help drive advocacy.

Treasurer's Report	**Shalena Clary/Taylor Kreutter**

Shalena Clary reported the following activity items related to the budget and finances:

- Membership numbers being up, and dues are nearly at budget.
- Additional scholarship dollars have come in as a result of the annual conference fundraising efforts.
- Scholarship checks are ready to go out to recipients.
- She is beginning to pay conference bills.
- Dollars have been set aside under Executive Council/Special Meetings for attendance at the NASFAA Leadership Conference.

NYSFAAA Balances as of 12/01/2021

Bank Accounts

004 Key Bank	$246,291.21
006 Key Bank Scholarships	$33,013.72
007 Key Bank CD	$5,3014.26
Total	$332,319.19

Morgan Stanley

Current Value (12/12/2021)		January 1, 2021	Difference	
Reserve Fund	$417,605.17		$392,545.66	$25,059.51
Scholarship	$314,372.77		$295,509.66	$18,863.11

NYSFAAA, Inc.

Budget vs. Actuals: 2021-2022 NYSFAAA Final – FY22 P&L

	ACTUAL	BUDGET	OVER BUDGET	% OF BUDGET
Income				
102 Dues	74,210.00	77,000.00	-2,790.00	96.38 %
104 Training/Workshop/ProfDev	3,780.00	6,415.00	-2,635.00	58.92 %
106 Annual Conference Inc	18,240.00	12,500.00	5,740.00	145.92 %
107 Novice Workshop Inc	0.00	66,000.00	-66,000.00	0.00 %
110 Interest Income	1.38	80.00	-78.62	1.73 %
304 NYSFAAA Scholarship Inc	10,440.00	4,000.00	6,440.00	261.00 %
Total Income	**$106,671.38**	**$165,995.00**	**$ -59,323.62**	**64.26 %**
GROSS PROFIT	**$106,671.38**	**$165,995.00**	**$ -59,323.62**	**64.26 %**
Expenses				
501 Executive Council Administration				
501A Revenue Sharing	0.00	11,000.00	-11,000.00	0.00 %
501B Professional Services	4,367.98	11,000.00	-6,632.02	39.71 %
501C General Executive Council		3,700.00	-3,700.00	
501D Executive Council Meetings		7,500.00	-7,500.00	
501E Special Meetings		9,200.00	-9,200.00	
501F Bank Service Charge	2,464.81	850.00	1,614.81	289.98 %

501G Credit Card Fees		5,000.00	-5,000.00	
Total 501 Executive Council Administration	**6,832.79**	**48,250.00**	**-41,417.21**	**14.16 %**
504 Awards Committee		2,150.00	-2,150.00	
507 Communications Committee	1,283.04	1,200.00	83.04	106.92 %
507A Website		13,655.00	-13,655.00	
Total 507 Communications Committee	**1,283.04**	**14,855.00**	**-13,571.96**	**8.64 %**
509 Mentoring Committee		1,000.00	-1,000.00	
510 Professional Development				
510A Statewide Training	1,500.00	12,500.00	-11,000.00	12.00 %
Total 510 Professional Development	**1,500.00**	**12,500.00**	**-11,000.00**	**12.00 %**
511 Annual Conference		12,500.00	-12,500.00	
512 Novice Training Exp	624.00	66,000.00	-65,376.00	0.95 %
538 Diversity Committee Expenses		1,140.00	-1,140.00	
700 NYSFAAA Scholarship				
700A Scholarship Committee		7,600.00	-7,600.00	
Total 700 NYSFAAA Scholarship		**7,600.00**	**-7,600.00**	
Total Expenses	**$10,239.83**	**$165,995.00**	**$ -155,755.17**	**6.17 %**
NET OPERATING INCOME	**$96,431.55**	**$0.00**	**$96,431.55**	**0.00%**
NET INCOME	**$96,431.55**	**$0.00**	**$96,431.55**	**0.00%**

Accrual Basis Sunday, December 12, 2021 10:35 PM GMT-05:00

Shalena is reaching out to auditors to determine the status of prior year reports, given the last year available is 2018. We provided full list of items needed but haven't heard back nor have we received a bill from them. Anne Sullivan Polino offered to reach out if needed as her school uses the same accounting firm.

Adrienne King and Howard Leslie are working on getting a discount with WHOVA by joining with EASFAA. We will continue to also use ZOOM.

MOTION: A motion was made by Patti Donahue, seconded by Anne Sullivan Polino to accept the Treasurer's Report. There was no discussion and the motion passed with all in favor.

HESC Update **Lisa Simpson**

NEW YORK STATE OF OPPORTUNITY. | Higher Education Services Corporation

KATHY HOCHUL
Governor

GUILLERMO LINARES, Ed.D
President

HESC Update

December 2021

2022-23 Processing Updates

The 2022-23 application for the Tuition Assistance Program (TAP) opened on October 1, 2021.

- **HESC was notified about issues applicants experienced with linking to the NYS payment application from the 2022-23 FAFSA confirmation page. The issue seems to be resolved at this time. Students who were unable to link to the NYS Payment Application can apply on the HESC website once their FAFSA application is processed.**
- Processing of 2022-23 applications, missing information and application updates is currently underway. However, 2022-23 Student Status Listings (SSL) will not be produced until early Spring 2022.
- Please make sure you provide student ID numbers for your students as schools will not receive any information about the students' accounts without student ID associated with their applications.

In addition, the 2022-23 STEM Scholarship application opened on October 1, 2021.

2021-22 Processing Updates

TAP Processing

The first Spring 2022 roster was produced on December 8, 2021.

Technical Issue with Roster 005 for Fall 2021

- There were several students who had not successfully completed the income verification process that were included on November Roster 005 in error.
- The issue was resolved and only students with verified income will remain placed on this roster
- Any student included on TAP roster 005 without verified income was resent to Tax and Finance for IVP verification. There were no changes made for those students who were successfully processed through IVP.
- Students who could not be successfully verified through the IVP process have been decertified by HESC to remove them from Roster 005 and their accounts reset to pending IVP
- Once successfully verified, they will be processed on a new roster for certification
- Students who were paid in error were notified by HESC on December 3rd that their account will be reset to pending until income verification is completed. A notification and list of impacted students was also shared with schools.

Excelsior Scholarship

- Currently the application period for the 2021-22 academic year is closed. To learn when the next Excelsior Scholarship Application period opens, we encourage students to sign up to be notified at hesc.ny.gov/excelsior
- Prior Excelsior recipients MUST complete the 2021-22 NYS Payment Application to renew their awards for the 2021-22 academic year.
- Both new and renewing applicants are submitted to NYS Tax & Finance to verify income.
  - Students whose household income is over income level will receive a denial notice.
  - Students who cannot be verified are sent an Income Questionnaire, which must be completed and returned to HESC for processing.
- Income must be successfully verified for students to receive their awards. Awards will not be placed on a manifest if income verification is outstanding. Students will be decertified with a '9' miscellaneous denial if not verified by the end of the academic year.
- Schools can utilize the QGE012-Pending Income Verification Report to capture the population of students who have income verification issues.

2020-2021 Processing

Schools should complete any pending certifications for the 2020-21 academic year for all programs now. In addition, all schools should utilize the error reports on the HESC website to review and resubmit any outstanding errors for this period.

Excelsior recipients who were required but failed to file the 2020-21 NYS Payment Application to renew their awards will be decertified. HESC will decertify their 2020-21 awards with a '9' miscellaneous decertification code, which will allow the student to remain eligible in subsequent year if they file the NYS Payment Application by the deadline and meet the qualifications.

COVID Impacted Processing Updates

HESC has processed all certifications that were submitted with the COVID-impacted indicator. The 2019-20 year is closed for payment and all those certifications should already be processed. 2020-21 certifications are still being accepted.

- Students can be certified using COVID flag for terms in the 2020-21 academic year in which the Governor's Executive Order declaring a State disaster emergency for the entire state, remains in effect.
  - Fall 2020, Winter 2021, and Spring 2021
- NYS financial aid award recipients who are:
  - Eligible for financial aid at the 100% liability date
  - Impacted by COVID-19
    - School makes determination
  - Information currently on HESC website.
- Schools who indicated the COVID flag in error should send a request to have the flag removed to prioritysservices@hesc.ny.gov

2019-20 Processing

- The 2019-20 academic year is CLOSED for processing.
- Certification transactions received from schools will not be processed.
- Schools should begin remitting 2019 refunds as reported on their Term Payment Accounting Reports or Consolidated Scholarship Remittance Advices.
- Any requests to decertify student records for closed academic years must be sent to our Payments Unit
    - payments@hesc.ny.gov or Fax to 518-473-3749

HESC Financial Aid Services Modernization Project

- Vision: Provide a fully operational, state-of-the-art, financial aid services system that vastly improves the user experience and quality of communications, increases efficiency and productivity, and reduces costs.
- Key Success Factors:
    - Applicant-Friendly
    - Modern, client-centric public UX
    - Seamless Integration with Schools
    - Application Processing Efficiency
    - 24/7 dashboard for statuses, updates, and document retrieval
    - Real-time email/text communications, account updates/status changes
    - Reduction of Operational Costs
    - Elimination of Application Backlog
    - Elimination of Paper Processing
    - Migration from mainframe-based files to modern CRM platform
    - Robust and flexible framework to easily add new programs

- Current Status:
    - RFP development is currently underway including documenting business functional and non-functional requirements.
    - Three focus groups comprised of members from all school sectors, is completed. Groups will include financial aid officers, bursars, certifying officers.
    - HESC Project Team staffing is ongoing
- Next steps:
    - Start focus group meetings
    - Target of second Quarter 2022 for RFP issuance.
    - Target of fourth Quarter 2022 to award project to selected vendor and execute contract.

What To Look Out For…

- Webinar to discuss processing students who were deregistered based on the SUNY/CUNY COVID Vaccine mandate
- Excelsior enhancements for early certification/decertification of awards

- Nurses for Our Future Scholarship

Patti Donahue asked Lisa Simpson to provide a general update on HESC technology initiatives. Lisa provided an update on projects underway with three focus groups: Financial Aid Officers, Bursars, and Registrars to review system needs. All groups are meeting this week with discussion topics. Groups will meet together to discuss common issues and needs. Other stakeholders as needed will be added to help develop plan.

Peg Stearns asked what will happen with APTS. Lisa indicated that this program will be reviewed.

Conference 2021	**Debra Evans/Jeanne McCarthy**

Debra Evans and Jeanne McCarthy provided a report on the 2021 NYSFAAA Conference. A copy of the Conference report can be found in the Exhibit section of this report. The survey results and WHOVA Report are available upon request from the Secretary.

Overall, Jeanne and Debra are happy with the survey results and felt that overall, the committee did a really good job.

Technology committee did a great job and the conference ran smoothly.

Adrienne thanked the Debbie and Jeanne for everything they have done for the past two years. Jeanne and Debbie felt it was a unique experience managing two conferences in these unusual times.

There were 402 registered attendees with about a quarter of the participants completing the survey.

Shalena will review accounts to make sure everyone paid.

The 2022 Conference Committee will incorporate wellness in their agenda given the success of the session on wellness at the 2021 committee

Information was provided on other state conference's participation as follows:

- Connecticut State Conference: 84 registrants and 24 business partners
- New Jersey State Conference: 100 registrants and 15 business partners

It is believed that low numbers are due to budget reasons, smaller states and fully in person events.

Per Adrienne, other states are moving to in person conferences and she will update us on numbers as they become available.

Debbie recommends that if next year's conference is remote, that we work with the hotel to get additional contract accommodations. Sonya indicated that businesses in Region 8 are booming as they have not experienced some issues with COVID that are seen elsewhere.

Conference 2022	**Sonya Stein/Stacey Hawkins**

Stacey Hawkins and Sonya Stein reported that conference planning is beginning, and they are meeting at the venue. They would like to review survey results from 2021 conference to ensure that they are

comfortable with holding the conference in person in the fall. They feel that low response to survey may not be indicative of interest in holding the conference in person, although the committee anticipates that it could be a smaller group. Historically, conference held in region 8 tend to be smaller given the location. Executive Council needs to discuss the options.

Tom Zarkos asked if we should consider going remote or hybrid until we are sure we are out of the pandemic.

Sonya is concerned that shift to virtual would be a burden on their small region and they would not be able chair two conferences in a row. The venue allowed us to cancel one year in advance. We are past that date.

Patti Donahue indicated that there are other groups (EASFAA and NASFAA) going in person and believes we should continue down this path.

Adrienne King agrees with the understanding that some people won't be comfortable to do this.

Renee Swift asked Stacey and Sonya to provide a description of the facility and how the breakout sessions, etc. will be structured. This will give people an opportunity to get comfortable with the structure of the conference.

Sonya indicated that there are only 4 breakout rooms. Virtual vs. in person. may also be an issue with school budgets and it looks like FSA will always be virtual again this year.

Adrienne wants to say in person for now and noted that it is difficult to do a dual event because of cost and people resources.

Sonya indicated that there could be a financial risk. There is a $10,000 deposit that could be used for other events and asked if we are comfortable with the risk of losing this funding. Adrienne indicated that she is comfortable as we are missing the networking events as there wasn't much of this type of activity with virtual events at the last conference.

Renee indicated that the Regions can promote these talking points using the networking talking points as an encouragement to get together in person. We need training given the changes that are happening.

Debbie agreed that in person events connects us, but we need to be aware of school budgets as these may drive the decision.

Survey results indicated that many respondents want the conference to be in-person, but they are not sure that the cost would be covered by the school. 34 % responded that they are extremely likely to attend.

Tom Zarkos indicated that regional meetings are going back to in person because membership wants it that way. There are always schools with budget issues, but we should focus on in person. Letter template for school administrators to help with budgetary concerns.

It was recommended that a notice be sent out to membership or college presidents that this conference will be in person. Adrienne agreed to send something out before break.

Stacey will have a budget and tentative program at February Executive Council meeting.

The meeting was paused until 11:40 AM for a lunch break.

Review of Operational Calendar	**Adrienne King**

Adrienne reviewed the Operations Calendar and let new Executive Council members know where to find the documents.

February Executive Council Meeting will be remote.

Adrienne will add to the calendar – due dates for the Regional Reports.

In person Executive Council meeting may be attended virtually, if necessary.

Old Business

Four Points document from 2021 Conference Committee

Debbie and Jeanne provided the following points for action by the Executive Council and a summary of events to date for new members of the EC.

Points for consideration by Executive Council regarding the pending contract with Hilton Hotel Huntington (a division of Blue Sky Hospitality):

1. Take no further action. The hotel (Blue Sky Hospitality) keeps the 2 deposits for the June exec council meeting and October conference totalling $21,450. (expenditure from the 2019 or 2020 budget cycle)
2. Attempt negotiation to allow NYSFAAA and Region 7 to use the credit for future meetings and/or support staff or HS guidance counselor workshops (?possibly Novice?)
3. Hire a lawyer who an attempt to negotiate the return of the deposits on behalf of NYSFAAA. I have contact information for possible free legal services. Alternately, attempt to find help from a school with a law school (ie: Hofstra, St. John's, NYU, etc) to see if there is a professor or a group of students under the direction of a professor who would do similar work.
4. Engage the media to bring Blue Sky's delaying tactics to the attention of the public to attempt to push them into returning our deposits.

Adrienne believes that point 4 should not be an option to protect the organization from bad press

Option 3 – try to get an attorney - possible to use one of the law schools. Peg Stearns asked to look at the contracts. Jeanne to send these to Executive Council for review as there are many new members. Per

Debbie, the local contacts were very positive and were in support of returning the deposit. It was Blue Sky that denied it.

Peg Stearns will reach out to Syracuse Law School to see if we can get support for a letter to Blue Sky, parent company, to discuss the verbal agreements made with the organization. Debbie and Jeanne to forward information to Peg.

Samantha Silvia had this type of situation occur with another organization that had a similar situation with a Hilton Hotel and was able to resolve the issue. She will provide us with helpful with information to help work through this issue.

New Business

BJ Revill indicated that the Rochester Region would like to hold the 2023 conference in the Rochester area.

Adrienne King asked if any other region wants to consider this as well.

Next Meetings

- Executive Council: January 31 - 9:00 AM - -3:30 PM (Virtual)
- Financial Aid Alliance Day (CICU and NYSFAAA) February 1
- Executive Council: April 25 1:00 PM 0 4:00 PM

MOTION: a motion was made by Rochelle Filler, seconded by Renee Swift to adjourn the meeting at 12:58 PM. The motion passed with all in favor.

Exhibits:

New York State Financial Aid

Administrators Association (NYSFAAA)

2021 Conference Report

Submitted by Debbie Evans and Jeanne McCarthy December 2021

2021 has been an unprecedented year given the ongoing COVID 19 pandemic.

In November 2020, Executive Council (EC) decided to move the annual conference to a virtual format once again. We continue to work with Hilton Long Island to facilitate use of the deposits that were initially made for the anticipated EC meeting in June 2020 and the planned 2020 conference. It is hoped that NYSFAAA will be able to use those funds sometime in the future for training, EC meetings etc.

The 2021 conference took place virtually over 3 days – October 26 – 28, 2021 The conference fee was $50 for all paid members. 2021 Novice attendees were granted a free conference registration. The final number of registrants was 49 Novice, 352 paid, total 402.

Program

Chairs – Howard Leslie, Clair Jacobi and Jeanine Murphy. We had a very robust agenda that allowed attendees to choose sessions based on their level of experience (novice, advanced, everyone, proprietary).

The agenda follows:

General Session - Welcome
Verification
VA Benefits
Making Financial Literacy Stick
Ethics in Financial Aid

COD Update
Developing Your Career
Is social media Worth the Effort?
Forthcoming 90/10 Calculation Changes
VA Benefits Certification and Best Practices
R2T4 Calculation
Networking Lunch
General Session HESC Update
General Session Diversity
Focus Symposium: SAP
Focus Symposium: PJ and Verification
Focus Symposium: Student Communication
Focus Symposium: HEERF
Focus Symposium: Diversity
Virtual Happy Hour
General Session - Having Fun with Taxes - theConference Version
Mistakes You're Making with your P&Ps
TAP Certification and SAP

Financial Aid Advocacy & You: Getting Started!
The Space Between: A Mindful Break forCounselors
Re-Application for School Eligibility
Networking Lunch
General Session - NASFAA Update
Enrollment Management
Customer Service
Changes in FAFSA and the Formula
SSCR Reporting
Professional Judgment
Trivia!

EASFAA Greeting, NYSFAAA Scholarships andBusiness Meeting, Presidents' Panel
Thriving in Change
R2T4 Changes in Regs for Modules
Preparing for the End of COVID-19 Forbearance
HEERF
Empowering Tomorrow's Leaders
Networking Lunch
Federal Update
Award, Raffles - Conference Closing
Trivia!

Business Partners

Chairs – Chris Earnshaw and Stephanie Stock

As this was not an in-person but rather a virtual conference, opportunities for business partners (BP) were limited. We explored the possibility of purchasing the exhibitor add-on within the WHOVA platform, but it was determined that due to lack of interest from attendees (indicated in the survey responses after the 2020 virtual conference) and overall cost that this was not feasible. As an alternative, business partners were asked to submit a donation to the George Chin Memorial Scholarship (GCMS) Fund. This scholarship program aids high-performing students of need attending schools throughout New York. In exchange for their donation, NYSFAAA posted the business partner's company logo and link on the WHOVA platform, increasing exposure for that business partner. Business partners were solicited several times over the preceding months leading up to the virtual conference. In all, requests were sent to 41 business partners and **14** business partners were able to contribute, resulting **in $4,400** in donations to the fund.

Publicity

Stephanie Stock, Debbie Evans and Jeanne McCarthy developed a cadence of emails that were sent every two weeks via member clicks communication center that included both information on registration and fundraising for the GCMS. These communications were sent by the webmaster.

Other Resources used to ignite interest were the NYSFAAA.org homepage and Facebook. NYSFAAA's Facebook administrators are:

- Lea Nuwer nicholla@buffalostate.edu

- Sean Sherwood ssherwod@binghamton.edu
- Tanya Patterson-Stanley tpatte01@nyit.edu
- Sonia Stein sstein@paulsmiths.edu

NYSFAAA's webmasters are:

- Howard Leslie hdl@berkeleycollege.edu
- Lea Nuwer nicholla@buffalostate.edu

Recommendations (when back to in-person conferences)

- Engage social media
- Create videos to promote key sessions and pre-conference workshops
- As the conference is approaching, send at least one email per week.
- Access should be given to the Publicity chair to allow them to be able to format the emails in MemberClicks such that it is possible to change font size, color, and general formatting (e.g., bullet points, anchor text for links, addition of photos, addition of other visuals etc.)
- Coordinate any email messaging that is going out to the general listserv with the various conference
  subcommittee chairs so that timing of messages makes sense and there isn't a deluge of emails with competing
  messages.
- ***We strongly recommend checking*** with non-conference committees to ensure they are not planning communications on the same day – we received complaints about too many NYSFAAA emails.

Technology

Chairs – Howard Leslie and Sean Sherwood

The technology used for the NYSFAAA 2021 Conference was two-fold:

1. WHOVA - WHOVA is a conference agenda/engagement platform that allows conference organizers to build and manage their conference details, attendees, agendas, presentations, etc. as a "one stop shop." The NYSFAAA Conference Committee utilized WHOVA to post the 3-day agenda and manage the many ZOOM links which were assigned to the various sessions. WHOVA also allows the organizers to load in registered attendees, communicate with attendees, and provide interactive engagement within the platform, including an open forum, photo posting, and messaging functions.

2. ZOOM - Zoom was used for the actual presentations. We used both the ZOOM Webinar feature (for the large sessions - 1000-person capacity) and the ZOOM Meeting feature (for the breakout sessions - 100-person capacity). Each breakout session was assigned a different ZOOM room "link" which was managed by a moderator and speaker for each session. The rooms were linked in each agenda session and on the main landing page in WHOVA.

It was decided by EC that each session would be recorded and made available to only registered conferees. This was announced when the conference began. This ended up being a good decision due to the technical difficulties during the first session which prevented recordings. No one can say they registered based on the promise of recordings.

Our zoom license promised 20 Giga Bytes (GB) of cloud memory. Not knowing how much memory we would require we increased our cloud memory by 100 GB for October. We ended up only using 14 GB.

The Technology and Innovation Committee decided to let the recordings continue to be housed on the cloud rather than transfer them to YouTube. The advantages of that were the ability to post the videos to the website quickly at the end of each day, and the view is far more professional. The disadvantages are if storage space may be needed next year, we will have to remove the videos from the website or add/pay for more space or transfer to YouTube and we will lose the ability to count views (until it can be figured out (if at all)).

All in all, we are pleased that we decided to record the sessions. It seems to be very popular.

Fundraising for the NYSFAAA GCMS

Chairs - Crystal Krudis and Janice Hilbrink

Being in a virtual environment for the 2nd year in a row, the NYSFAAA website was enhanced to allow individuals to make donations to the GCMS. It was again suggested to the membership that if a member passed away, a donation could be made in their memory, which would aid in the effort of NYSFAAA's goal of providing support to students attending schools in New York State. This appears to have been well received by the membership as there were donations made, totaling $785. (An additional donation from the Chin family is pending).

Since there was no "vendor" area where our BP have traditionally paid to have a space where they could meet with members, a recommendation was made to solicit donations to the GCMS (which is allowable under the SLATE Act). The donation allowed the corporations to provide a logo with a link to their company's website which were displayed both before and during the conference on the WHOVA app. **14** business partners contributed resulting **in $4,400** in donations to the fund.

For members to participate in the fundraising process as they would at an in-person conference, the committee proposed virtual and 50/50 raffles. Each region was asked to provide e gift cards for prizes. These prizes ranged from
$100 to $250. Tickets were sold through the website with all purchases made by credit card with the funds going directly into the scholarship account. There were 184 participants in the raffles with income totaling $1,805. The virtual 50/50 was handled in the same way. There were 177 participants with income totaling $1,560 with $780 going to the winner and $780 going to the scholarship fund.

The total income for the 2021 going to the NYSFAAA GCMS was $7,770. This amount fully covered the cost of the 5 scholarships awarded this year at $1,500 each.

Entertainment

Chairs – Gene Rogers and Amy Thompson

Three entertainment events occurred throughout the three-day virtual conference. A virtual happy hour and two trivia games.

Virtual Happy Hour

- Tuesday October 26, 2021, 3:50-4:30 p.m. (originally scheduled for 3:20-4:00 p.m. agenda was pushed back 30 minutes on the first day).
- Located in the Hudson Valley Room and the Leatherstocking Room
- 34 attendees added to their agenda

Financial Aid Themed Trivia

- Wednesday October 27, 2021, 2:15-3:00 p.m.
- Located in the Five Boroughs Room
- 39 attendees added to their agenda
- Approximately 40 people did attend
- 10 teams participated
- First place Team: Robert Weinerman, Anna Chrissotimos, Josie Edwards, Jeffrey Louis-Jean
    - Each win $25.00 Amazon Gift Card
- Second Place Team: Sean Sherwood, Robyn Rhyner, Clair Jacobi, Adrienne King
    - Each win $10.00 Amazon Gift Card

1980's Themed Trivia

- Thursday October 28, 2021, 2:30-3:30 p.m.
- Located in the Five Boroughs Room
- 29 attendees added to their agenda
- Approximately 34 people did attend
- 8 teams participated
- First place Team: Brian Birch, Laura Worley, Howard Leslie, Renee Swift
    - Each win $25.00 Amazon Gift Card
- Second Place Team: Clair Jacobi, Ideta Daniel, Josie Edwards, Linda Jaycox-Thatcher
    - Each Win $10.00 Amazon gift Card

Total Budget Expended: $280.00

A survey was conducted and results are available in a separate document. WHOVA provided a detailed report, also available in a separate document.