



MAFAA Matters

A Newsletter for the Minnesota Association of Financial Aid Administrators

December 2019

Contributors this issue:

- Brittany Tweed
- Brynn Juranek and Sheila Krause
- Susan Brady
- Beth Barsness
- Kris Parker
- Jacquelynn Mol Sletten
- Sandy Goman
- Brad Riebel
- Carol Swenson

Inside this issue:

| | |
|---|----|
| President's Column | 1 |
| Fall Training Recap | 2 |
| National College Fair | 3 |
| MAFAA Flyer for HS Counselors | 5 |
| Minnesota Goes to College | 6 |
| Calendar of Events | 6 |
| Executive Council Planning Retreat | 7 |
| MASEA-check it out! | 8 |
| Legislative Task Force | 9 |
| Nominations for Distinguished Service Award | 10 |
| MAFAA at FSA | 11 |
| Living With Passion | 12 |

President's Message

Brittany Tweed, 2019-20 MAFAA President

Hi MAFAA members,

Entering the winter season, with Thanksgiving behind us and Christmas, Hanukkah, and New Year's looming right ahead, has really got me thinking about being thankful. Being president of an all-volunteer association, I could not be more thankful for the aid administrators (whom I also consider colleagues; some are just closer in proximity on a day-to-day basis) who invest so much time and energy into assisting students every day. My staff alone is volunteering at two dozen events this fall (classroom/HS night presentations/completion events). On top of what we do every day, that truly speaks to the level in which we care for the students in our communities and at our institutions. Still, there is a disparity in some of the more rural areas in Minnesota, where volunteers for Financial Aid presentations and FAFSA completion events are hard to come by or aid administrators in the area are spread too thin. I know we are doing our best to fulfill this need, but I recognize we can only do so much.

This led me down a rabbit hole to consider how MAFAA can serve aid administrators, students, high school/college admission counselors, and our other associate members best. We are at a stage where we, as an association, have to analyze what we are doing well and what our next steps should be. How can we better partner with other non-profit organizations, high schools, and institutions to make more resources available to students? How can we help others meet the needs of their campus communities to fill the gaps they see or to advocate for students on their campuses?

MAFAA's committee chairs and co-chairs have all been hard at work to engage presenters to provide quality training to administrators in our association which increases our knowledge-base and influences the level of care that we are able to pass along to students. The hard work we put in everyday does matter. You may not hear "thank you" from students/families often enough, but I appreciate you and recognize that what you do impacts student success on many levels.

Have a wonderful holiday season!

Brittany



Stellar Attendance at MAFAA's Fall Training Day

Brynn Juranek and Sheila Krause, Conference Planning Co-chairs

Fall Training Day for MAFAA members was held on Thursday, October 24, 2019, at the Eagan Community Center. About 220 MAFAA members participated in a fun-filled and informative day. The agenda included general sessions with virtual updates from an FSA Trainer, and NASFAA President Justin Draeger, as well as an in-person session about Immigration with Marissa B. Hill-Dongre from the University of Minnesota. In addition, members were given the opportunity to network and visit with our business partner exhibitors.

The breakout sessions included topics such as updates from the Office of Higher Education, Professional Judgments and Dependency Overrides, Veterans Benefits, NSLDS and COD, Child Care Grant and State Work Study, Customer Service, State Grant Audits, Student Employment, Financial Literacy, and a Business Partner panel discussion. The Conference Planning Committee extends a big THANK YOU to everyone who attended and to the business partners for their corporate support.

The committee has now turned the focus on planning the MAFAA Spring Conference. Mark your calendars for the conference at Madden's on Gull Lake in Brainerd, **May 6-8, 2020**. What can you do now to prepare for Spring Conference? Start thinking about what your item will be to donate for the silent raffle for the chosen charity. More information on registration and accommodations will be shared with members next month.



**Fall 2019
Training
Day**



MAFAA at the 2019 Minnesota National College Fair

Susan Brady, Co-Chair, Outreach and Early Awareness Committee

The National College Fair is huge, loud and exciting! Over the two-day event, MAFAA joins with admissions representatives from over 400 schools across the country, school counselors and other education partners to help Minnesota students plan for the next step in their education. Thousands of high school and middle school students arrive by the bus load. Others arrive on their own or with their families to visit the fair. The air is charged with possibilities!

MAFAA volunteers offer a **Financial Aid 101: The Basics** presentation nine times during the two-day fair. One of the most well-attended presentations at the fair, the session provides an overview of the financial aid application process, a timeline, the various types of financial aid, special circumstances, the Minnesota Dream Act, online resources and scholarship searches. MAFAA members can find this presentation on the MAFAA Outreach and Early Awareness Committee page. Feel free to use the PowerPoint as is or as a starting template to develop your own presentation for high school financial aid night events.



Front and center in the exhibit hall is the Counseling area. Staffed by high school counselors and MAFAA volunteers, fair goers stop by for assistance to find out which colleges to consider, what admissions officers look for in a college essay, which schools best meet their special interests and how to find out if they are eligible for financial aid.

We handed out hundreds of publications and answered dozens of questions from students and parents. We encourage students to not just stop by our table and pick up a brochure, but rather engage us with a few questions. This year we fielded questions about tuition reciprocity programs, how non-citizen parents complete the FAFSA, and how to search for scholarships. Most often, we provided reassurance to anxious students and parents about the timeline to apply for admission and financial aid and the friendly support provided by their financial aid office.

This year, we had two laptops and wi-fi at our booth and anticipated assisting students with the FSA ID process. While we had no takers on this service, we did hand out an FSA ID work sheet from the State of Oklahoma's U CAN GO 2 campaign to many seniors and their parents. The laptops and wi-fi came in very handy to re-search questions from students. (Can you link the words FSA ID work sheet to <https://www.ucango2.org/publications/fafsa/FSAIDworksheet.pdf>)

— continued next page —

MAFAA at the 2019 Minnesota National College Fair, *continued*

The Outreach and Early Awareness Committee also reaches out and connects with the high school counseling community at the fair. Committee members Anna Smith de Yoma and Taleya Pillai developed a MAFAA 2019 National College Fair Update for High School Counselors. Distributed to the school counselors who volunteer at the fair and those who stopped by the MAFAA booth, it promotes Minnesota Goes to College, the U.S. Department of Education Financial Aid Toolkit for Counselors, Requesting a MAFAA volunteer for a Financial Aid Night and the 2020-2021 FAFSA and 2017 Tax Law Updates.

We know that many financial aid offices develop their own outreach materials to provide to their local high school counseling community. Check out our [MAFAA High School counselor flyer](#) on the next page and considering using it as a starting point for your own campus outreach efforts.

A big shout out to everyone who volunteered at the fair:

Lisa Apitz, South Central College-North Mankato
 Larry Bloom, University of Minnesota-Twin Cities
 Michael Crider, Dakota County Technical College
 Dianne Danov, University of Minnesota-Twin Cities
 Alyssa Gillette, Crown College
 Valana Hillard, Rasmussen College-Eagan
 Brad Riebel, Sallie Mae
 Anna Smith de Yoma, Anoka-Ramsey Community College-Coon Rapids
 Shannon Sullivan, Mayo Clinic College of Medicine
 Gayle Yamry, Metropolitan State University



Plan ahead and **SAVE THE DATES** to volunteer at the **2020 National College Fair**:

Wednesday, September 30 — from 9am to noon and 5pm to 8pm, and
 Thursday, October 1 — from 9am to noon





**Minnesota Association of Financial Aid Administrators
2019 National College Fair
Updates for High School Counselors**

MAFAA is a volunteer association committed to the principle that no one should be denied access to higher education for financial reasons.

Minnesota Goes to College

Register your site with Minnesota Goes to College, a statewide collaborative effort to promote College Knowledge Month and FAFSA completion events in Minnesota. Once registered, you are provided with the contact information of admissions and/or financial aid professionals who want to volunteer at these events. Learn more at <https://sites.google.com/view/minnesotagoestocollege/home>

Financial Aid Toolkit for Counselors, U.S. Department of Education

Find publications to assist your students and families, as well as training materials for school personnel, from the U.S. Department of Education. Download in pdf format to print. Learn more at <https://financialaidtoolkit.ed.gov/tk/resources/all.jsp>

Request a MAFAA volunteer for your Financial Aid Night

Submit an online request for a presenter to the MAFAA Early Awareness and Outreach Committee. Your request will be shared with our entire membership. Interested volunteers will contact you directly. Learn more at <https://mafaa.org/Outreach-and-Early-Awareness>

2020-2021 FAFSA and 2017 Tax Law Updates

Under the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act, the 2018 Form 1040 was overhauled. This impacted the wording of tax-related FAFSA questions. Advise students and families to read instructions extra closely to confirm what is needed. Students selected for verification may be required to provide multiple IRS Schedules to accompany any Form 1040.

**Thank you for attending the National College Fair and
supporting your students to learn about the admissions and financial aid process.**

www.mafaa.org

MAFAA Minnesota Goes to College FAFSA Events

By Beth Barsness, MN Office of Higher Education

Fall and Winter seasons are . . . cinnamon spice . . . chilly air . . . hot chocolate . . . and FAFSA completion! Minnesota Goes to College FAFSA completion events are in full swing! We are excited to announce that there are currently 85 sites in all corners of the state that are registered to host at least one FAFSA event – our highest number yet as of October 1. And sites are still registering!

All Minnesota Goes to College FAFSA events are added to the [Map of Registered Sites](#) and public events are listed on the public-facing [FAFSA Event Calendar](#). FAFSA events are added weekly to the map and calendar until January 15, 2020.

Volunteering at local high school FAFSA events

Thank you to the many MAFAA members who have registered to volunteer at specific sites! To date, there are 34 registered volunteers. Sites who request volunteers for their event(s) are [identified on this map by region](#). If you register as a volunteer through Minnesota Goes to College, these site coordinators will receive your contact information and preferences. They are urged to contact you as soon as possible to communicate their event details and needs. There is a great need for financial aid professionals to assist at these events, especially outside of the metro area. If you are interested in helping out, [register as a volunteer](#)! As a reminder, Minnesota Goes to College FAFSA events run through March 15, 2020.

[Visit the Minnesota Goes to College website for more information about the initiative](#). Or, contact co-chairs beth.barsness@state.mn.us (MN Department of Education) or kathleen.klima@state.mn.us (MN Office of Higher Education) with any questions.

As always, thank you for your willingness to assist schools and students with completing the FAFSA!

MAFAA Calendar of Events

2019

Dec 12
Dec 13

Learn & Connect: New Professionals
Executive Council meeting

Hennepin Technical College-Brooklyn Park
Old Chicago, Apple Valley

2020

Jan 17
Jan 22
Feb 21
Mar 17
Mar 21
May 5
May 6-8

Executive Council meeting
MAFAA Legislative Task Force
Executive Council meeting
MAFAA Day at the Hill with MACAC
Executive Council meeting
Executive Council meeting
MAFAA Spring Conference

remote via Skype
Webinar 10:00 am
Anoka Ramsey Comm College
St Paul and State Capitol
Anoka Ramsey Comm College
Madden's Resort, Brainerd
Madden's Resort, Brainerd

Executive Council Planning Retreat June 2019



The 2019-20 year is already halfway over and activities for the MAFAA Committee Chairs, Executive Council, and Appointed Positions have been going gang-busters for several months in 2019. It all began with the planning at the MAFAA Executive Council Retreat held in June at Madden's Resort. Here are a few shots of your 2019-20 MAFAA Leadership (and a chance to dream of warmer weather again)!

2019-20 Executive Council



Above: Kari Ellering, Jacqelynn Mol Sletten, Bridgette Johnson, Anita Ostercamp, Brittany Tweed, Monica Ehalt, Carol Swenson

Below: Jana Koehler, Brynn Juranek, Anne Dahlen, Sheila Krause, MEG Calabrese, Debbie Cordova, Amanda Cantú, Carolyn Chesebrough



Above: Jon Erickson, Jesús Hernández Mejía, Andy Levesque, Ben Flikeid, Dick Battig



Above: Katie Hendrickson, Jenny Truebenbach, Rob Graham, Larry Bloom, Scott Roelke, Michael Crider

Connect with MASEA - Here's How and Why

Kris Parker, Carleton College



Connect with the Midwest Association of Student Employment Administrators (MASEA)!

By connecting with MASEA, you can connect and share ideas with over 200 dedicated Student Employment professionals in 14 states. Our members are located across the Mid-west region at various institutions of higher education.

Through conferences and professional development opportunities, our goals are to support the Student Employment profession by sharing knowledge and resources to help members learn more about how they can advance their respective on-campus employment programs. The services that MASEA provides to its members are second to none.

Membership Benefits

MASEA Members are able to:

- Connect and network with fellow Student Employment professionals
- Volunteer for various opportunities within the MASEA community □
- Stay current with laws and regulations that impact student employment □
- Better serve the student employees within their institution □
- Learn best practices regarding program enhancement □
- Advocate for issues that will affect the future of student employees on their campuses
- Recognize student employees through our annual Student Employee of the Year (SEOTY) program

Contact

Please feel free to contact a member of our leadership team at info@masea.org to learn more about what we do and how we can help you!

You may also visit us at www.masea.org.

MAFAA LEGISLATIVE TOOL KIT featuring Minnesota Legislature Website and Identifying Minnesota Legislators

Jacquelynn Mol Sletten, MAFAA Legislative Task Force

As we look forward to an awesome year ahead of us, the Legislative Task force wants to wish everyone a fun and safe holiday season. This is only our second year as a task force, so for those not quite sure who we are, please allow us to introduce ourselves. The Legislative Task Force is responsible for supporting a foundation of learning about Minnesota State legislative procedures and activities. We are committed to providing various mediums of learning to cultivate an environment where MAFAA members feel encouraged and confident to learn and participate.

This year we are creating a partnership with the Minnesota Association for College Admission Counseling (MACAC) for a day at the Capitol, providing legislative webinars, and emailing the membership with state updates. Be sure to visit our webpage for upcoming event dates: <https://mafaa.org/Legislative-Task-Force>. We also want to provide our MAFAA members with a tangible tool kit to navigate the legislative process. As a result, our goal is to provide at least one legislative tool in each MAFAA Matters newsletter that we hope you will put into practice.

In this issue of MAFAA Matters we are highlighting the Minnesota Legislature website and identify Minnesota Legislators.

I. Minnesota Legislature Website

LINKS

Minnesota Legislature: <https://www.leg.state.mn.us/>

Minnesota House of Representatives: <https://www.house.leg.state.mn.us/>

Minnesota State Senate: <https://www.senate.mn/>

The Minnesota Legislature website provides many different topics including audio and video archives of committee meetings and a calendar to view upcoming scheduled meetings. Minnesota House and Senate websites also illustrate listings of members for all districts in Minnesota, as well as provide multiple search features for bills passed by legislators.



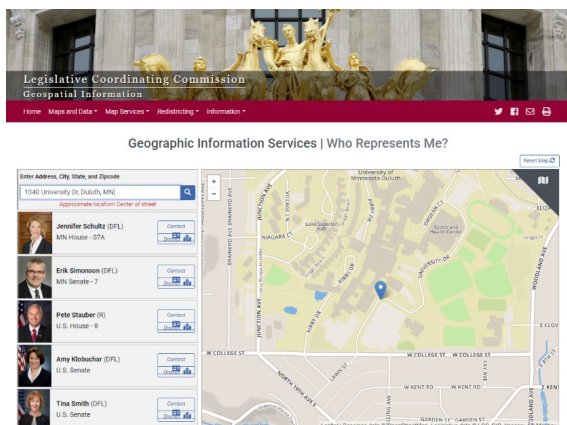
— Continued next page —

Legislative Tool Kit, *continued*

2. Identify Minnesota Legislators

LINK

Who Represents Me: <https://www.gis.leg.mn/iMaps/districts/https://www.gis.leg.mn/iMaps/districts/>



The Who Represents Me feature of the Minnesota Legislature website is a great tool to navigate to information about a specific district. We highly encourage you to try the tool now and identify who represents your home district the district of your institution.

- 1) Type in address (city, state and zip)
- 2) District House and Senate representatives will appear
- 3) Representatives can be emailed by clicking "Contact"
- 4) Highlight the specific area of Minnesota that each member represents by selecting "District"

We hope these resources are insightful. Please stay tuned for further legislative tools, webinars, and posts. Have a great 2019-2020 academic year.

Seeking Nominations for Distinguished Service Award

Sandy Goman, College of St. Scholastica

As a MAFAA member, you have the opportunity to recognize your colleagues for their outstanding service in the financial aid community.. Please consider nominating a deserving person for the **MAFAA Distinguished Service Award**.

This award is presented to a MAFAA member whose years of service, highlighted by contributions made this past year, warrant recognition by this association.

A committee, comprised of the past five Distinguished Service Award recipients, and chaired by the most recent recipient, reviews the contributions of nominees and selects the recipient. This award will be presented at the MAFAA Spring Conference in Brainerd on May 7, 2020.

To nominate a MAFAA member, please provide information about why the nominee should receive the award, including a list of activities or accomplishments, to support the nomination. All nominations should be emailed to Sandy Goman (sgoman@css.edu) by March 5th, 2020.

Please feel free to contact any of the past recipients for comments or questions about the award. The committee selecting the next recipient is as follows:

Sandra Goman, College of St. Scholastica sgoman@css.edu
 Pam Engebretson, Century College pam.engebretson@century.edu
 Doug Minter, Gustavus Adolphus College dminter@gustavus.edu
 Valerie Knopp, Saint Cloud State University vjknopp@stcloudstate.edu
 Mike Uran, Saint Cloud State University mturan@stcloudstate.edu

Scenes from Reno: MAFAA Goes to FSA in December

Photo credit Brad Riebel



MINNESOTA ASSOCIATION OF FINANCIAL AID ADMINISTRATORS

MAFAA Matters is published online six times per year. Submission deadline for the next issue is **February 2020**. Please email contributions to MAFAA Matters Editor, Carol Swenson, cswenson@ascendiumeducation.org

MAFAA's Statement of Purpose

The Minnesota Association of Financial Aid Administrators (MAFAA) is an association of professionals committed to the principle that no one should be denied access to higher education for financial reasons. MAFAA is dedicated to working with students, educators, policy makers, and others to ensure that adequate programs of financial assistance are available to every student attending a Minnesota institution of higher education.

www.mafaa.org

Living With Passion

PEOPLE and PLACES

Emily Wehmann is the new Financial Aid Counselor/Loan Coordinator at College of Saint Benedict | Saint John's University. She had been at Rasmussen in St Cloud working in admissions.

Venessa Gietl is the new Financial Aid Counselor/Loan coordinator at Hamline University. Her email is vgietl01@hamline.edu

Gina Hitchcock has been promoted to Assistant Director of Financial Aid at North Central University and **Melissa O'Neil** moved from Financial Aid to Associate Director of Student Accounts at NCU.

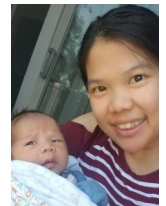
Jean Flores Dennis has joined the Graduate Team at Sallie Mae covering the Central region (including MN). She comes to Sallie Mae with several years' experience in higher education. Jean will manage graduate school relationships in the Central Region, working together with the Business Development team (including **Brad Riebel**). Jean resides in the Kansas City area.

Jon Erickson (Crown College) has taken a new position as Director of Financial aid at Alexandria Technical College. He started there in mid-November

Alyssa Gillette is the new Director of Financial Aid at Crown College, transitioning from her role as Assistant Director of Financial Aid.

NEW BABIES

Borr Vang (St. Catherine University) and her husband celebrated the arrival of Peyton C. Lee, born July 19th at 8 lbs 2oz and 21 inches long.



SYMPATHY

Jim Moe, husband of **Carol Swenson** (Ascendium Education), passed away on September 20.

Dear MAFAA friends,

As your newsletter editor, I would like to take this space to extend my thanks and express my gratitude for the outpouring of care and love and support given when my husband, Jim, left this world. His death was sudden and I was in no way prepared for it.

It is difficult to find the words to express my gratitude for the many kindnesses you have shown me during this sad time. I am so grateful for all you have done. The cards, letters, phone and email messages, prayers, flowers, and attendance at Jim's services meant a great deal to my family and me. My adult children know how important the people in MAFAA are to me as I've been part of this association since way before they were born! Knowing that I am not alone in this journey helps bear the grief and sadness. Thank you for being there.

With sincere thanks,
Carol

Live Every Moment With Passion!