



# President's Message



Chad Olson, IASFAA President

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What a busy year it's already been and we're still approaching the fall conference! As I write this, my term as IASFAA President is already half way over. (I'm really not counting the days, I just noticed it when I looked at the calendar, I promise!)

In June, the IASFAA Executive Council started the 2009-2010 year with a great planning retreat in Ames. That morning, the Long Range Planning Committee, chaired by Susan Ladd, reviewed the previous Long Range plan and plotted IASFAA's course for the next five years. The Long Range plan is available for viewing on the IASFAA website, along with a narrative that explains the committee's thoughts. The Long Range Planning Committee recommended a dues increase for the 2010-2011 year during the course of these discussions. The goal of the Long Range plan is for IASFAA to be truly self-funded and not rely on support from outside sources for its day-to-day activities. Times have changed in the financial aid industry and this is no longer your "parents' IASFAA." If you're able to attend the Fall Conference Business Meeting on Friday, November 6, please consider a "yes" vote for the 2010-2011 dues increase. You'll find more information about this subject inside this newsletter.

In July, I attended the NASFAA Conference in San Antonio. Many informative and useful conference sessions were presented, as always. A small but mighty group attended an Iowa dinner for the evening activity. Laurie Wolf shared her NASFAA President-Elect suite with us after dinner for some fellowship.

I had the opportunity to attend the MASFAA President-Elect's Retreat in St. Louis on September 12th & 13th. It's always productive to meet with others from the MASFAA region and discuss some of the many issues that we all have in common.

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## President's Message (continued)

Thanks again to all those who participated in the IASFAA Reality Store on October 8 at Woodbury Central High School in Menville, IA. We had a great IASFAA crew who were assisted by the Woodbury Central Senior Honors Class. It's a very enriching experience to teach our community's youth about financial literacy. This program pays off many dividends when the financially educated students reach our campuses. Special thanks to the IASFAA Community Outreach committee, chaired by Jennifer Schroeder, for all of their hard work to organize this event.

Your IASFAA Executive Council is aware that office budgets are a difficult subject right now. We appreciate your continued membership and support of IASFAA. Please let us know how we may continue to serve you. I look forward to seeing you in Cedar Falls on November 4-6, for the IASFAA Fall Conference!

**Chad Olson**  
09/10 IASFAA President

## Worry is Not Preparation, and Hope is Not a Plan: A Long Range Planning Story

IASFAA Long Range Planning Committee

IASFAA's leadership recognized the need for both preparation and planning and assigned The Long Range Planning (LRP) Committee to review IASFAA's mission and define strategic areas necessary to support that mission across the next five years. The result of these deliberations is the 2010-2015 IASFAA Long Range Plan now available on the web in the "Inside IASFAA" area under "Governing Documents." The two-part document provides both a five-year fiscal plan and a narrative section describing the focus and philosophy of the plan. The Long Range Planning Committee and President Olson welcome your questions and comments.

The Executive Council discussions during the development of the Long Range Plan mirrored discussions many of us have had on our campuses and in our "informal time" with colleagues. A consensus emerged that a financial refocus was necessary to allow IASFAA to survive in a rapidly changing environment. The five-year fiscal plan recognizes loss of vendor support, decreased funding in college/university training budgets, and a decline in the number of associate members. Also accounted for is the dramatic increase in the footprint of Federal Student Aid (FSA) as a

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*(Long Range Planning Story Continued)*

no-cost training provider. The regulatory guidance provided by FSA Conferences and the convenience of the webinar format have offered federal support that had been lacking in the past. The association acknowledges the impact that FSA and guarantee agency trainings have had upon IASFAA as a professional development provider. We firmly believe, however, that the training and guidance we offer as actual practitioners of our craft is a brand of training that others cannot provide. IASFAA's training expertise calls upon our shared experience and geography, our friendship and respect for one another, our trust in one another enabling frank discussion and disclosure, and our sure knowledge that the welfare of students is always first in our hearts.

The 2010-2015 fiscal plan calls upon the reserve as the association weans itself from previous sources of income. The LRP Committee and the Executive Council recognize the five-year plan as transitional and understand that the association remains pledged to working toward the concepts articulated in the planning narrative. These concepts include training events that are self-supporting and core functions that are supported by dues revenue. The association has always sought to live within its means; the last change in annual membership dues was a \$5 increase in 2007-2008. While the plan includes the recommendation for a small dues increase each year in the next five, the plan will be evaluated each year with any increase always subject to an affirmative vote of the association. The Executive Council does recommend approval of membership dues of \$75 for 2010-2011 with the vote to occur during the fall conference business meeting.

Please take the time to review the 2010-2015 Long Range Plan. It is the wish of the committee that our labors have helped diminish any worry and provide more than hope as we prepare together for IASFAA's future.

**Long Range Planning Committee:** Michele Dunne, Julie Haack, Jobyna Johnston, Susan Ladd, Joan Meyer, Chad Olson, Jen Sassman, and Aaron Steffens

The committee also wishes to thank past treasurer, Chris Ditter, for her assistance during the entire long range planning process.



## 3rd Annual IASFAA Reality Store

On Thursday, October 8, the Community Outreach Committee held the 3th annual IASFAA Reality Store. The event was held in Merville, Iowa with the 8th and 9th grade classes at Woodbury Central Community Schools. All together we had about 100 students experience the Reality Store this year.



There were 20 volunteers from IASFAA who took time out of their busy schedules to help facilitate the event and make it a success! Woodbury Central also allowed 10 of their upperclass National Honor Society and Student Council students to help our volunteers at various stations. A BIG thank you to all who dedicated their time and energy to the store this year!

If you are not familiar with the Reality Store, it is an interactive financial program geared toward eighth and ninth grade students. The program is designed to provide students with real life experiences including financial decision making, budgeting and check book management. Those participating assume they are an adult with no financial assistance from family or friends. Each participant is assigned an education, occupation, and income at the beginning of the program. By luck of the draw, marital and family status are determined. Participants then

### Top Ten Student Reality Checks

- #10 – Things are expensive.
- #9 – There are a lot of expenses that I didn't know about.
- #8 – Clip More Coupons!
- #7 – I liked that we had a chance to learn about the real world.
- #6 – I realized how much money my parents spend on me.
- #5 – Stop spending money.
- #4 – It's not as easy as it looks to pay the bills.
- #3 – Being an adult is harder than I thought.
- #2 – Children make you go broke.
- #1 – **Reality Stinks!**

proceed through 21 stations that provide the opportunity to make adult financial decisions on things such as transportation, utilities, child care, student loans and household extras. Students must stop by all 21 stations but are not required to utilize the services if they are not necessary (example: a single person with no children would not have to pay for child care). One of the popular stations was the "Wheel of Fortune" or wheel of misfortune for some. They could have random, everyday things happen to them like getting their car towed, sending a kid to summer camp, getting a tax refund, a TV in need of repair, or receiving a bonus check from work.

Each student that participated in the Reality Store received a backpack with pens, pencils, highlighter, ruler, candy, and information booklets from the Iowa College Student Aid Commission, and the US Department of Education about higher education. The students all seemed to really enjoy event, as did our volunteers. Each year we have held the event, we hear and learn something new from the younger generations; things that are insightful and usually humorous as well!



# 2009 Annual Review of IASFAA's Treasurer's Books

The three Delegates, Erin Gjerde-Bailey, Mary Jacobsen, and Mary Bloomingdale; the Treasurer-Elect, Julie Haack and the President-Elect, Joan Meyer gathered on August 18, 2009 to perform the annual review of the 2008-2009 IASFAA Treasurer's books. The review team would like to thank the Treasurer, Jen Sassman, for all her efforts in preparing the books for the review.

The review focuses on three main areas:

1. A proof of cash worksheet is completed to ensure IASFAA accounts balance for the review year.
2. Comparability tests are completed on dues, conference fees, interest income and exhibitor income. All items are reviewed to ensure the amount calculated by the review team reasonably matches the amount of income reported by the Treasurer.
3. A sampling of expenses and disbursements is reviewed to ensure that expense vouchers are properly signed and approved, documentation matches what was paid, expenses were properly allocated to the correct expense category and the check cleared the bank.

No exceptions were noted in any of the above areas. Recommendations made were minor in nature, dealing mostly with items that could help the review run smoother. The results of this review validate the goal of IASFAA to have strong Policies & Procedures and Executive Council Members who strive to follow the rules of the association.



# **IASFAA School Relations Committee**

## 2009 High School Counselor Training Events

The IASFAA School Relations Committee has set webinar training dates for the annual IASFAA High School Counselor Training. This has always been a very successful and much appreciated service to our middle school and high school counselors. As in previous years, the training will consist of four different training topics.

### **Friday, November 13th 1:00-2:30**

Todd Brown and Natalee Girardi, Iowa College Aid Commission- State Programs & Federal Updates

### **Monday, November 16th 1:00-2:30**

John Holland & Steve Loven, Iowa College Access Network- Applying for Financial Aid

### **Wednesday, November 18th 1:00-2:30**

Carolyn Small, Iowa College Student Aid Commission- ACG/SMART & TEACH Grants Programs

### **Friday, November 20th - 1:00-2:30**

Roberta Johnson, Iowa State University- Financial Aid Overview



## **Recycle, Reuse, Attend IASFAA!**

If you need a little help with your 'going green' efforts, then plan on attending the fall IASFAA conference! "IASFAA Goes Green-Harvesting Funds for Students" will put you on the straight and narrow and help you harvest the full crop of knowledge you need as a financial aid administrator.

Dave Bartlett, a Department Training Officer, will provide the most current information about year-round Pell Grants and converting to Direct loans. A panel of top-notch financial aid administrators also will provide their perspective on the Direct loan conversion topic. Additionally, representatives from the Inspector General's Office will present about fraud rings in our region.

We'll provide a bushel of regulatory information regarding VA Benefits and the Yellow Ribbon program, as well as an auditor's perspective on audit findings. Seasoned professionals will give you the tools you need to write the most effective policies and procedures for your office. And if you are considering implementing a survey on your campus, we have a session that will fill your bushel basket!

Many of us may still be 'green' about how best to communicate to students, as well as social networking sites. An expert in the field will plant the seeds you'll need to evaluate how you might utilize these sites on your campus. Local college students will also give their perspective about Facebook, Twitter and blogging.

Fill your financial aid silo this fall and plan on joining us at the beautiful Park Place Event Centre in Cedar Falls November 4 - 6!

## Weddings

**Heather Norris**, Iowa Student Loan, and Douglas Gaumer were married on September 19, 2009 in California at Sequoia and Kings Canyon National Park. (Picture submitted)



## Babies

**Chad Olson**, Iowa State University, and his wife Emily, are expecting twins, one boy and one girl, on December 31.

Celeste Louise Brown was born to **Matt Brown**, Iowa Student Loan, and his wife on August 28, 2009 and weighed 8 lbs, 3.5 oz. She has lots of dark hair (not red!) but is a real darling! :) Big brother Simon, who recently turned three, thinks she is great and can't wait to play trains with her when she gets a little bigger.

**Jan Cordell**, Luther College, became a grandmother when her granddaughter, Zoe, was born in May.

## Milestones

**Carolyn Schwendeman**, Luther College, celebrated her 20th anniversary at the college and in aid on September 11.

## Career Moves

**Kay Kelleher** joined the financial aid community on August 1, 2009 as the Financial Aid Coordinator at Grand View University. She had previously worked in the Grand View Business Office.

**John Jones** became Grand View University's Loan Coordinator on July 15, 2009. He was previously a Loan Counselor III at Iowa Student Loan.

**Felicia Campbell**, Grand View University, was promoted from Loan Coordinator to Assistant Director on July 15, 2009.

# 2009 MASFAA Leadership Institute

By Amy Gaffney, Chris Ditter and Gisella Baker

The Leadership Institute Program is a part of the MASFAA Professional Development Program and is offered to professionals in all nine states within the MASFAA region. Representatives from each state association, generally association presidents, nominate a select few individuals to attend the Institute. The nominees are identified as leaders who are open to learning, interested in growth and will maximize their potential with this knowledge. Participants attend the MASFAA Leadership Institute at no cost.

Amy Gaffney (Associate Director of Financial Aid, University of Dubuque), Chris Ditter (Associate Director of Financial Aid, Drake University) and Gisella Baker (Associate Director of Financial Aid, Hawkeye Community College) were nominated by Chad Olson, IASFAA President, and selected by MASFAA to attend this year's leadership training August 10-12 in Duluth, Minnesota.

All attendees were expected to bring an open mind, a willingness to grow from the experience, and the desire to take what one has learned and apply it in a meaningful way.

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(MASFAA Leadership Institute Continued)

## This is what each Iowa attendee has to say about this three day institute:

“It was a very worthwhile three day program which included interactive sessions such as ‘Effective Teamwork’, ‘Fact-Based Management’, ‘Hiring, Managing, Delegating’, and ‘Next Stop Enrollment Management’ just to name a few. It was very helpful that the presenters were financial aid professionals (i.e. Vickie Crupper, Rick Shipman, Pam Fowler, Dick Battig, Jason Crowe and Kathy Ruby) who could relate to the same issues that we deal with everyday and who were very eager to share how they have developed and utilized their leadership skills. The program allowed for interaction among participants who came from all types of institutions in the MASFAA region. It was nice to hear the varying perspectives from different colleges on how they have had to deal with challenges they have faced at their institutions and in their offices.” ~**Chris Ditter**

“The topics presented could have been presented at any other industry management seminar. You might then ask yourself then what made this event so special? Because the trainers took their management topics and delivered the content using the Higher Ed industry as their backdrop, and more specifically--- financial aid administration! Real scenarios, from highly regarded professionals, speaking to me as a peer about their own challenges and how they, by using various management and leadership skills, achieve their goals for their students and respective institutions. Watching, learning and sharing with the others in this group certainly helped develop another line of colleagues I will not hesitate to call for guidance, a second opinion or a lunch date at the next MASFAA conference! Moreover, it has reinvigorated my commitment to what we do and why. It reinforced my drive to learn to become a most effective leader and advance the cause for our students on our own campus.” ~ **Amy Gaffney**

“Not knowing what to expect from this training is what made the three day experience an overwhelming realization of how fortunate I was to have been nominated and selected to attend. There were about eighteen of us (mostly associate directors) coming from different types of institutions and backgrounds, eager to see what we could learn from others while contributing our own unique experiences and personalities to the mix. It was a very upbeat, fun training that allowed me to evaluate what I currently do and how it could be improved. I was so interested on the material being presented the first day that I could hardly wait for the next day. It amazed me how knowledgeable the presenters were, especially Rick and Pam, yet how friendly and funny! I have added quite a few friends to my financial aid reference list from this training and have already contacted one of them for help on a subject. I wish we could have this type of training every year!” ~**Gisella Baker**

Our appreciation to Chad Olson, IASFAA President; the MASFAA Executive Council; our superiors and office colleagues at our institutions for allowing us the opportunity to participate in this fabulous event.



# Financial Literacy Programs 101: Starting a Program on Your Campus

Craig Berkley, TG Account Executive Team Manager

Effective money management and financial literacy skills are among the most important real-life lessons for students and families in today's challenging economy. Beyond the short-term implications of mismanaging money and debt, poor financial habits can adversely affect a student's ability to continue his or her education, buy a house or car, or even find a job. The need for better financial literacy education has never been more acute. To help students avoid financial pitfalls, a growing number of campuses are looking for ways to reach their students by developing and implementing financial literacy training programs.

## Determining student needs

As a financial aid administrator, consider your campus's needs to help you define and develop a plan for an effective financial literacy program. Some schools mandate specific financial literacy courses for all students, while other campuses have opted for a more comprehensive program to address all aspects of personal finance. Other schools prefer a more piecemeal approach that lets students select topics they feel are relevant to their unique situation. Regardless of the structure you choose, remember to focus on reaching students during key transitional periods, such as when they enter and leave college or move on- or off-campus.

The variety of possible approaches point to the first step in any financial

literacy initiative: finding out what students need and want from such a program. Counselors planning a program have a wide variety of elements teaching options to choose from, including workshops, online courses, traditional classroom-based academic courses, individual counseling, student mentor programs, and using content



developed by other schools and institutions. Employ focus groups to determine what best fits your students' needs. Start with students most likely to participate in a financial literacy program, and then target portions of the student population less likely to be involved. Internal surveys of

faculty members and other student service-oriented offices can also provide direction when planning and developing financial education programs.

## Securing approval and funding

Once you have identified the scope of your campus' financial literacy program, you must then define the program's goals and get buy-in from school leaders. As with any new initiative, this entails finding resources and determining logistics. A clear vision of the program's plan and intentions should be established, and it should be consistent with the school's existing culture.

One of the most challenging aspects of launching a new financial literacy program involves funding it. Your campus might consider linking the program to a degree-granting department, with funding provided through course fees. Other options for securing the necessary funding include assessing a flat program fee from every student, seeking outside grants or alumni donations, or receiving funds from for-profit financial institutions like banks and insurance companies. If possible, secure multiple funding sources in order to assure that money will be there should one source dry up.

## Implementing the program

Once a program has cleared the hurdle of administrative approval and found the needed funding, it's time to get started. While the enthusiasm of a new venture can carry a program a long way, remember the importance of starting small, being patient, and expecting a few lean years at first.

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# Iowa College Access Network Becomes Own Foundation

The Iowa College Access Network® (ICAN), known for the free college planning services it provides Iowa students and families, recently established itself as an independent nonprofit foundation. The move provides ICAN new growth opportunities and funding options to expand its services that help students plan for, apply to, pay for and succeed in college.



ICAN, previously a division of Iowa Student Loan®, filed articles of incorporation in September and created a board of directors representing a variety of backgrounds in education, diversity, financial aid and businesses from across Iowa.

IASFAA members DeLores Hawkins and Robert Piechota sit on the ICAN board. At the first board meeting on Oct. 1, Hawkins was elected secretary of the board. “ICAN does a great job of promoting college affordability through its outreach and literature,” Hawkins said. “I am excited about my role on the board because I will be one of several members making a difference in the lives of Iowans by ensuring that as many people as possible are obtaining educational and career goals.”

ICAN will continue to provide free information and services to Iowa students and families on how to succeed in postsecondary education, apply for financial aid, find scholarships and other topics. With its new independent status, ICAN will also be able to pursue grant opportunities to further assist Iowa organizations.

*(Financial Literacy Programs 101 Continued)*

The most important thing during this early period is to seek out and draw on the program’s character and strengths. Find out early on what part of the program works best and then develop it.

Use this primary strength as a foundation on which to build the program’s continued recognition and reputation on campus. Marketing a new program must be a top-of-mind priority, not least because financial advising programs are still a relatively new presence on campuses throughout the country. Many students might not expect money management courses to be made available in college, so financial literacy program developers must work diligently to get the message to their students, and then do so repeatedly. Possible communication channels include booths and flyers in the student union, bus ads, and advertising on the school’s Web site or in other campus publications. Given the increasingly plugged in

lifestyle of today’s students, consider reaching them through social networking sites like Facebook® or Twitter™.

## Moving forward: Improving established programs

Some of you may already have funding sources established, and perhaps some students know about, use, and benefit from your program’s services. Where do you go from here?

In order to address all aspects of students’ financial concerns, work closely with other campus offices, and keep in touch with the individuals working closely with students every day. Also, take the time to regularly evaluate students’ responses to your financial literacy initiatives, and set relevant, measurable goals for improvements. Student surveys are an effective method of achieving one essential goal of any financial

education initiative — expanding the range of programming offered — by revealing new services and topics students want.

Ultimately, the end purpose of measuring outcomes and expanding services reinforces the purpose of implementing financial literacy programs in the first place — improving the lives of students. If your campus is in the early stages of considering program options, remember you have colleagues who have been down this road already. Seek them out. The exchange of ideas, experiences, and information with other financial literacy program administrators will help make your program that much more effective.

*Craig Berkley is an account executive team manager with TG serving schools in IASFAA. You can reach Craig at (800) 252-9743, ext. 4808, or by e-mail at [craig.berkley@tgslc.org](mailto:craig.berkley@tgslc.org). Additional information about TG can be found online at [www.tgslc.org](http://www.tgslc.org).*

# IHaveAPlanIowa Web Portal Launch



i have a plan  
IOWA

The Iowa College Student Aid Commission is pleased to announce the successful launch of [www.IHaveAPlanIowa.gov](http://www.IHaveAPlanIowa.gov). This new statewide community web portal provides free access, information and resources for all Iowans seeking assistance with career and college planning; financial aid; college admissions; national, state and local scholarships; free ACT, SAT and GRE test preparation; as well as Iowa employment opportunities.

By providing a community web portal that incorporates resources for students, parents, adult learners, and job seekers, IHaveAPlanIowa encourages individuals to discover their strengths and interests that can lead to fulfilling educational and career opportunities. IHaveAPlanIowa helps individuals reach their educational and career goals by planning for their futures today.

The screenshot shows the homepage of the IHaveAPlanIowa web portal. At the top left is the "i have a plan IOWA" logo. To the right is a search bar with a "Go" button and a link to "En español cuando disponible". Below the search bar are links for "Sign In", "Create an Account", "Talk to Us", and "Need Help?". The main content area features a large banner with a photo of a smiling student and the text "i have a plan - what's yours?". To the right of the banner is a quote from Gov. Chet Culver: "Welcome to Iowa's newest online resource...". Below the banner is a "who are you?" section with buttons for "Middle School Student", "High School Student", "Parent of a Student", "College Student", "Adult Learner", and "Job Seeker". There are also buttons for "For Educators" and "For College Professionals". On the right side, there is a "sign in" section with a "Sign In" button and links for "New to this site? Create an Account", "Forgot your account name?", and "Forgot your password?". Below that is a "quicklinks" section with links for "Online Test Preparation", "Scholarship Search", "Financial Aid", "College & Universities", "Programs & Majors", "Career Exploration", and "Job Search". At the bottom, there are logos for the Iowa Department of Education, IowaJOBS (Iowa Workforce Development), Iowa College Student Aid Commission (Your Financial Aid Connection), College Savings Iowa 529 PLAN, and the IHaveAPlanIowa logo.