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CCCCSFAAAA news

A PUBLICATION OF THE CALIFORNIA COMMUNITY COLLEGE STUDENT FINANCIAL AID ADMINISTRATORS ASSOCIATION

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Thank you for giving me the opportunity to serve you as your President. It was great seeing and talking to many of you at the annual conference in Monterey in December. I thank Susan Jones and Toni DuBois for doing an amazing job in chairing the CCCSFAAA/CASFAA conferences despite many unexpected challenges.

I am pleased to have served on a few prior CCCSFAAA Executive Boards and have seen the hard work and enthusiasm to continue to make CCCSFAAA a great organization. I want to take that momentum to keep improving the association. A major accomplishment under John Muskavitch's leadership was to move the Transition meeting earlier. Historically, the last Board meeting was held the day prior to the Conference, and the Transition meeting was held the morning before the Conference. This year, we moved the last Board

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2003 CONFERENCE RECAP

Branching Out to New Opportunities

The CCCSFAAA conference, held in beautiful Monterey, in December was certainly reflective of the theme, "Branching Out to New Opportunities." Prior to the beginning of the conference, all vendors and sponsors were invited to an appreciation event hosted by the association. It was an opportunity to personally thank them for supporting CCCSFAAA.

This year's conference was attended by the largest number of attendees in the history of the association with approximately 600 registrants.

For the first time, the proprietary segment joined the community college segment in planning and attendance at the conference.

The program offered a variety of sessions which included round table discussions and electronic access sessions. Core model sessions were part of



the program and were attended by both community college and proprietary. It was an opportunity to learn and discuss similarities and differences of the two segments.

Our keynote speaker was Dr. Carmen Tafolla, an internationally acclaimed poet, author and speaker on multicultural issues. The theme of her address was "My Heart Speaks A Different Language: Voices from the World of Our Children." It was a medley of voices from our multicultural and multilingual world. By listening carefully to the voices of our world, states Dr. Tafolla, we can further our cultural understanding and our effectiveness and enrich our own lives. She presented a program of

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CCCSFAAA NEWSLETTER

This publication is an official publication of California Community Colleges Student Financial Aid Administrators Association (CCCSFAAA). Its contents are the sole property of CCCSFAAA and is mailed to all current members.

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CCCSFAAA welcomes member views, articles, photographs or reports. Submissions are subject to some modification.

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CCCSFAAA Web Page: www.cccsfaaa.org



CHANCELLOR'S UPDATE

Notes From Sacramento

Well, the March 2 deadline has passed... and you and your staff are still hopefully among the living! Congratulations!

I have had preliminary reports from some Financial Aid Directors that our outreach efforts have been effective. We hope to soon gather information that we can use in the preparation of the final report to the legislature on the implementation and use of funding for our outreach and financial aid capacity appropriation for 2003-04. That report is due in April.

All of you are probably aware that there has been a recommendation by the Legislative Analyst's Office that \$30 million of the \$37 million tentatively appropriated in the Governor's budget for 2004-05 for our continued outreach/financial aid capacity efforts be redirected to the CA Department of Education for college preparedness programs. The Chancellor's Office has responded to this recommendation, challenging the LAO's assumption of our segment's under-utilization of these funds as incorrect and providing some information on how these funds are being effectively and efficiently

used by our Financial Aid Offices. We have good feelings that we will be able to make our case for keeping these funds. The passage of Props 57 & 58 by the CA electorate two days ago has taken a lot of pressure off this issue. Past actions show the Governor and the legislature seem to realize our need for these funds, so...unless something unexpected occurs and spending has to be dramatically cut, we are hopeful that our outreach and financial aid capacity funding will remain in the 2004-05 budget. However, we will need to produce results. Please continue in your efforts to make as effective use of this funding as possible, both in your outreach efforts and in your financial aid processing. There are no finer advocates for student financial aid than Vice Chancellors Mary Gill and Linda Michalowski. We

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2004 CCCSFAAA Executive Board

President: Craig Yamamoto, Sierra College | Vice President: Pat Maga, Sacramento City College | President-Elect: Susan Jones, Mt. San Antonio College | Treasurer: JoAnn Bernard, MiraCosta College | Secretary: Lisa Maciel, Reedley College | Past President: John Muskavitch, Crafton Hills College

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REGIONAL UPDATE

Region III We're Out & About in Region III!



Many new outreach initiatives have been launched this year in Region III with the augmented SFAA funding.

At the top of the list is a Student Ambassador program that includes intensive training (and \$11.50 per hour pay rate + mileage) for student employees to visit area High Schools, Middle Schools, parent groups, the High School Counselor breakfast, and to provide on-campus tours. Launched at Skyline College, FAD Sherrie Hancock said, "Even if we lose our SFAA funding next year, somehow I will hold onto this program-it has been so successful!"

College of Alameda also began a Student Ambassador Program this year, complete with a PowerPoint presentation that they take on the road with them. In addition,

posters highlighting Financial Aid availability were created, and distributed to local businesses in the Alameda area.

College of San Mateo hired several short-term, non-continuing workers for outreach on-campus (sometimes called "in reach"). They made use of wireless laptops for E-app entry and provided general information. Also an on-campus computer lab for up to 8 people was established, to assist students in bridging the technological divide-which made it possible for them to apply electronically on campus!

Laney College hired two financial aid specialists, updated computers for all staff, incorporated an EOPS part-time recruiter position (that would have been discontinued) into a full-time Financial Aid outreach position, and

hired several temporary employees not only in financial aid, but in DSPS and CalWorks as well, to "spread the word" about financial aid!

Los Medanos College focused on providing E-access by having financial aid applicants receive PINs and file for aid electronically. Representatives from

the financial aid office went to area high schools, and walked students through the PIN and application process in their own high school computer labs. After filing the FAFSA on-line and being comfortable with the process, student can make corrections and re-apply on line in the future. Los Medanos hopes to

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correspond with students soon via email, and to also send award notifications electronically.

Santa Rosa Junior College sent an outreach “team” to 21 District high schools, both public and private. The team consisted of a representative from Financial Aid, EOPS, Counseling and Scholarship and talked through a PowerPoint and video presentation to over 2000 high school seniors. SRJC also developed a second “team” of bilingual (English/Spanish) representatives to visit ELL high school classes and to speak with Migrant Education families at monthly meetings.

With College Goal Sunday events, and the big push for outreach (and application) by the March 2 priority deadline behind us, it’s time to breathe for just a little bit, and then begin planning for May/June and summer

outreach, and don’t forget the September CalGrant cycle! Merritt College is planning a huge outreach event for May, to be widely publicized in their community, to get student’s attention prior to graduation time.

And this is just a summary of **some** of what’s been happening at only **some** of our schools—in only one region out of ten! Keep up the good work in your communities, all of you, and know that you’re making a difference. *

*by Kris Shear
Director, Student Financial Aid
Services
SRJC*

Region 7

Now that Propositions 55, 57, and 58 have been approved by California voters, our institutions are breathing a sigh of relief. Of course these Propositions do not solve all of California’s fiscal problems, but they will certainly assist and hopefully there will not be a surprise with a “May Re-vise.” Although the news is good, we cannot rest on this accomplishment, so a “March on Sacramento” is being organized for March 15, 2004. Students will mobilize to “keep the doors of education open,” reminding legislators of their strong desire and

need to obtain an education that is affordable.

Meanwhile, most of our colleges are gearing up for the 2004-2005 academic year and for campus Financial Aid Offices it appears as though we are witnessing a record number of applicants applying earlier than usual. This can be credited to the BFAP Augmentation that has allocated funding to increase financial aid awareness and outreach programs. Throughout Regions 7 & 8, Directors have shared their positive experiences of educating students and parents about the availability of financial aid programs and communicating the very important message “college is possible, regardless of one’s ability to pay.” In our industry this message cannot be emphasized enough so everyone please remain vigilant in your efforts. *

*by Barbara Ralston
Los Angeles Valley College*

Transitions

College of the Canyons

New Employees

- Sami Salvatori, Assistant Director, Outreach & Financial Aid
- Wendy Trujillo, Financial Aid Specialist
- Gail Pyle, Financial Aid Technician *

Federal Issues Update

CCCSFAAA Federal Issues Committee continues to focus on Reauthorization. In addition, several new issues have surfaced that may require your attention.

In regards to Reauthorization, we continue to work to eliminate Pell tuition-sensitivity, even if the enrollment fee increases to \$26. We need to stop chasing the Pell maximum every year.

The IRS match continues to move towards implementation with many red flags being raised by the Financial Aid community. Some concerns include the ability of the IRS system to handle the match; the inability to disclose the specific data error; the timing of the match that will occur after many awards have been made; extremely restrictive tolerances; and of course the increase in workload.

FAFSA simplification is another hot topic. Congress has charged the Advisory Committee on

Student Financial Assistance to conduct a study to examine options to simplify forms and reduce data elements; address the student work penalty; measure the burden of state and local taxes on

EFC; and discuss ways to provide students with an early notification of eligibility.

The increase in college costs continues to be an issue with congress. Recently, Representative George Miller introduced a proposal to control college tuition prices. Miller's plan will help states to stop tuition hikes and make college more affordable.

I encourage all of you to email your comments, ad-



vice and concerns regarding federal issues to me at magap@scc.losrios.edu. *

*by Pat Miyai Maga
2004 CCCSF AAA Vice President*

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

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meeting and Transition meeting to early in November. In doing so, we are able to get our elected officers and regional representatives up and running on the issues and ready to get to work. These are some of the ambitious goals we set for this coming year:

- ✪ Strengthen our partnerships with partners such as CASFAA, CSAC, EdFUND, USA Funds, the US Department of Education, and other vendors and sponsors.
- ✪ Work closely with CASFAA on site selection for the upcoming Conferences.

- ✪ Improve on the Directory and Newsletter.
- ✪ Improve on our Fund Development and Fiscal planning.
- ✪ Create an Historian committee to document our history and accomplishments.
- ✪ Clarify and strengthen the role of the CCCSF AAA liaisons.
- ✪ Expand our training offerings and work towards a master training calendar.
- ✪ Update the Policies and Procedures.
- ✪ Encourage 100% participation for Regional Representatives.
- ✪ Research a consultant position to assist the association on state legislative advocacy and help protect our administrative funding.

Although we may not be able to complete all of these goals, I am up to the challenge and I know the Executive Board is ready to do much work ahead of us. We will need your support. I encourage you to become active in the CCCSF AAA organization. I have really made some great friends by being active in the association. I thank you for your support and dedication for doing what we all do in this profession: making dreams come true. *

*by Craig Yamamoto
2004 CCCSF AAA President*



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The Customer's Bill of Rights

I believe that effective customer service takes place when all of your employees' efforts are focused on demonstrating:

- that they're aware of your customers' needs,
- that they care about your customers' needs, and
- that they're doing their share to meet or exceed your customers' needs.

That's it. Three simple principles, easy to measure easy to achieve, easy to observe, and, in the age of SARS, timely, for all of you SMART people.

Hi, I'm 'Your Customer'. Sometimes I'm the Customer From Hell and other times I'm your best customer. They tell me I'm 'always right'. Hogwash! Would I be 'right' if I chose your competitor?

Maybe you've seen me in your store, or your hotel lobby. Or perhaps you remember me as the one who ordered that big shipment last week. If you don't recognize me, maybe it's because I buy your product over the phone, or sometimes even try to on your web-site.

Today, I'm both cranky and overjoyed. Cranky because I know times are tough, but I think it's getting harder and harder to get good service lately. Except for from Irene (the reason for my joy). She IS customer service to me, and living proof that it still exists.

Here's a list of 10 things Irene does for me, things every customer deserves (needs?) and things that every service provider can do. If Irene can, your employees can. They're not big things; they are important things. Give them to me consistently, and I am your customer for life. I've been Irene's for 15 years.

The right to eye contact.

"Um, hello! Look at me, please. I'd like to make a deposit into your company's bank account."

That's what I'm thinking, even if I don't think it out loud. Though sometimes I do. Or, I've been known to blurt out, "Excuse me, do you know when the clerk's come on duty here?" Irene always looks at me. I like that. It shows she is aware of my presence.

Besides, that's a good thing; it could save your life. If you look me in the eye, you can identify me, to the police, if necessary. It's a crazy world out there. Everyone is much more aware of safety and security issues nowadays. And studies show that if the customer doesn't make eye contact with you, then maybe that's a clue that you'll want to keep a closer eye on that particular customer. There might be a reason. *

CONFERENCE RECAP

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funny, victorious and poignant human encounters, in a dramatic performance that has been presented around the world. From the voice of the old lady to the voice of the Spanish-speaking first-grader, from the Latina college student to the black woman janitor, this one-hour performance of voices from the barrios and the hearts of our young and old made us laugh and cry.

Friday night, CCCSF AAA President, John Muskavitch hosted the President's Reception. DJ Desni Scott kept the music going and the bodies moving.

Saturday was finished off with an "Adventure by the Sea." The CCCSF AAA Surf City Beach party was a hit. We had three roaring bonfires surrounded with seating for those who wanted to unwind by the fire. Several huts were set up for serving

food and drinks. The DJ kept the party alive in the main room and Comedian "Chicago Steve Barkley" came by to poke fun at CCCSF AAA and the world of financial aid.

The business meeting took place at Sunday morning's breakfast and awards were handed out. The highlight of the meeting was the wrestling over the gavel between past President John Muskavitch and President Craig Yamamoto. Craig then went on to speak about his life, involvement in financial aid, and his goals for CCCSF AAA in 2004.

The conference ended with a State update by Diana A. Fuentes-Michel, Executive Director of California Student Aid Commission and a Federal update by Marianna Deeken, Training Officer, United States Department of Education. *

*by Susan Jones
Mt. San Antonio College*

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CHANCELLOR'S UPDATE

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will keep you informed as things progress.

Pat Hurley, Assistant Dean of Financial Aid at Glendale College needs our help. She has been asked to provide information at the upcoming meeting of Congress' Financial Aid Advisory Committee in Los Angeles. The committee is studying ways to simplify the FAFSA, the application process and the need analysis. Both Pat and Craig Yamamoto, CCCSFAAA President, posted this request for financial aid staff input on the cfao-all list serve on February 26. Please review this notice and attachment and provide Pat your comments as soon as possible. Effective representation of our segment requires our ideas and comments. Please help Pat help us all. You can

send comments to her at phurley@glendale.edu or discuss this with her at (818) 240-1000 x5429.

A segment of our student population that usually has fewer resources than others are our former foster youth. Due to their circumstances, their support system is reduced or non-existent when compared to our average students. Our limited financial aid resources usually don't allow us to meet their complete financial need. An opportunity is available to help them. CSAC is administering the CA Chafee Grant Program. This program assists eligible CA youth aging out of foster care with the costs of attending a Title IV eligible program in a postsecondary institution.

The rules of this program are quite different. Eligible students are not required to meet the fol-

lowing normal student financial aid rules regarding: (1) selective service registration; (2) HS diploma or GED or ATB; (3) US citizen or eligible non-citizen; (4) student loan default; (5) federal or state grant repayment rules.

Awards, based upon need, can be as high as \$5,000 per year. Students must apply ASAP as awards will be made until funds are exhausted. Funding is renewable each year, provided federal program funding is appropriated. Your help in identifying (if possible) former foster youth and informing them of this financial aid opportunity would be greatly appreciated. Applications and a FAQ document providing additional information on this program are available at the following web site: www.chafee.csac.ca.gov.

We need to show the federal government that

there is definitely a need for funding this group of students. This can only be demonstrated by awarding all available dollars. Your help is needed in reaching this goal.

I greatly miss working closely with Tim Bonnel and Brenda Fong. It has been a one-person office since they both left in December. Fortunately, help has arrived. Charles Mawson, a CO staffer for more than 15 years, has been redirected to help me provide services in the SFAP Unit. Charles can be reached via cmawson@cccoco.edu or at (916) 322-7412. Welcome, to the wonderful world of student financial aid, Charles! You will never be bored!

And how was your week? *

*by Richard Quintana
Specialist, Student Financial
Aid Assistance Programs
Chancellor's Office*

Customer Service Tips

Information taken from the Impact Learning Systems website at www.impactlearning.com.

Here are some tips taken from a Customer Service website that might be useful in our day-to-day work with students:

- A pet peeve of many customers is that customer service representatives don't listen to what they're saying. They cut them off or try to finish their sentences because they believe they know what the customer is going to say. To guard against this happening to you, try this today: Wait until the customer has completely finished speaking, then count to three (one alligator, two alligators, three alligators) before responding. We're betting you'll be surprised at what happens!
- It's virtually impossible to work in the financial aid industry and not use jargon day in and day out. But keep in mind that many of your customers may not understand the jargon terms that you're so familiar with. And if you use language that they don't understand, you run the risk of alienating your customer and causing potentially hazardous misunderstandings.

There are two simple guidelines when it comes to using jargon with customers: 1) Use simple, basic language whenever possible, and 2) If you do have to use jargon (for example, because a more basic term doesn't exist), explain the meaning of the term to the customer.

- How many chances do you get to make a first impression? Only one! A customer's first impression of you and the institution that you represent sets the tone for the entire dialogue. So, in order to get off on the right foot with customers, make sure to convey a professional, upbeat attitude—and a willingness to serve—right from the beginning seconds of the interaction.
- People often think that the "soft" skills of customer service (things like attitude, ability to build rapport, skill in handling challenges, etc.) are of secondary importance next to their technical knowledge. Customers, however, tend to see it differently. It's often said that customers don't care how much you know, until they how much you care. When handling your own customers, keep in mind that to them, a pleasant experience is as important as a solution.
- Making assumptions, without confirming them, can lead to a misunderstanding of what the customer wants. To avoid this potential disaster, always confirm your understanding. Doing this not only shows that you have listened to and understood the customer's request, but it also helps customers to crystallize their own thinking. *

by Maureen Martinez
San Bernardino Valley College