



Spring 2018 Newsletter

President's Message

Hello, WFAA colleagues—and many wishes for a successful, fulfilling and hopefully WARM spring quarter! I have some exciting news to share from recent months that highlight our growing partnerships and advances as an organization:

- In October, after much research and consideration, the WFAA Executive Council voted unanimously to make a move from our previous web platform and website host (ATAC Corporation) to a new, content management system (MemberClicks) that will give us more control over our website and our membership data. After a few delays related to restrictions with our current contract, I am happy to report that we are ready to move forward with our new website implementation beginning this spring quarter. That being said, we could really use some assistance with the design and implementation process! If you—or someone in your office—is an active member of WFAA and looking for a small way to volunteer and/or build skills in helping to implement a project in the non-profit sector, please contact me so that I can get you connected with our Electronic Services Committee.
- WFAA's Early Awareness Committee partnered with the Washington Student Achievement Council (WSAC) to successfully execute Spring Counselor Workshops for K-12 and non-profit staff throughout the state during the months of February and March. These workshops covered everything from policy changes to building a K-20 community network for student success to learning how to navigate financial aid and admissions at the college level. A special thanks goes out to the many WFAA members who volunteered to serve as financial aid panelists and/or offered space on their campus for these workshops to occur! If you would like to learn more about these workshops or volunteer for a future event, please visit the following website: wsac.wa.gov/spring.
- The WA State legislature is making progress toward fully-funding education in our state and produced some huge "wins" for higher education during the most recent legislative session, including the approval of an additional \$18.5 million for the WA State Need Grant program, and re-affirming its support of DACA-status students by expanding the eligibility definition for the College Bound Scholarship program to all resident students.
- WFAA continues to get requests from our partners in "the other Washington" for ways that national lawmakers and policy think tanks can assist us in administering programs and help students achieve additional support for attaining a college credential. As we pass along these opportunities to comment and share via the WFAA listserv, I encourage you to share your experiences as they truly make a difference and our state has a real opportunity to increase our presence and influence!



Inside This Issue:

President's Message	1 & 2
Budget Requests	2
Legislative Corner	3
Train the Trainer	3
Editor's Notes	4
Summer Training and Annual Conference	5

I am so happy that WFAA has been able to get our quarterly newsletter to our membership back into circulation, and I am hopeful that as we move to a new website platform with additional communication functionality that we can continue to improve the look and accessibility of this important publication. We anticipate many positive changes ahead for WFAA in website look, communications and event management—so be watching your email inbox for updates!

In addition to the many seasonal changes that occur during the spring time, our organization is gearing up for its annual "passing of the baton" from one cohort of executive council members to the next. As of July 1st, Brian Dixon (Washington State University) will be taking over as Washington President, so this may be the last WFAA newsletter article you read from me as your president (don't worry, though—I will still be serving WFAA in the role of Past-President for an additional year).

I wanted to take a brief moment to thank all of you for helping to make my tenure as president so enjoyable and rewarding! Since starting my volunteer work with WFAA in 2012, I have worked with some incredibly intelligent and passionate people on the executive council who have been willing to take extra time out of their busy personal and professional lives to make a difference; not just in aid administration, but in advocacy, support and training that directly benefits our students. As a result of my travels to trainings, meetings and annual events, I have been honored to make both acquaintances and friends at the state, regional and national levels. There have been many fun-filled moments, lots of opportunities for learning and advocating, and even some challenging conversations that have helped me to grow both personally and professionally. To my Past-President, Kelley Christianson, and Past-Past-President, Tracy Hall, thank you for always taking my "oh crap" emails and phone calls at a moment's notice and for always offering me wisdom coupled with understanding and humor. To WFAA executive council members that I have worked with (past and present), thank you for welcoming me into the leadership fold and affirming my skills when I was still a novice FAA, and for allowing me to express my opinions, take ownership and help solve big problems. And to all of our faithful WFAA members—thank you for actively engaging with this fabulous organization by asking tough questions, keeping your leadership accountable and for constantly seeking new and better opportunities for yourselves and your students. I have cherished my interactions with many of you during events over the last few years, and hope we continue to connect on some level as I learn so much from your experiences and equally enjoy sharing my own knowledge in return.

Pres. message continued on page 2

President's Message Continued...

With that said, if you're still reading this and feeling like something is calling you to do more in your profession, to further your own advancement, or advocate on behalf of WA State's students-- I challenge you to take that first step by emailing an executive council member—or tapping my shoulder at a WFAA event—and we will get you connected to opportunities to serve! The incredible thing about volunteering is that the volunteer receives so much in return for what they put out—in the form of network connections, mentoring, advice, new skills and fuzzy feelings—that once you've done it you are really hooked!

Lastly, I leave you with a couple of my favorite reads from this past year that I hope will encourage and challenge your heart and mind. The first is [Paying the Price: College Costs, Financial Aid, and the Betrayal of the American Dream](#), by Sara Goldrick-Rab, which examines some of the unspoken, outdated assumptions about higher education and poses some challenges to historic methods of collecting and interpreting data to measure effectiveness. The second book, [So You Want to Talk About Race](#), by Ijeoma Oluo, provides a solid, truthful primer on the complexities of the American racial landscape. Both of these books have changed how I approach my work and respond to systemic bias, and I know they will be invaluable tools to have in your arsenal as you close out one school year and prepare for another.

Linnea Todd | 2017-2018 WFAA President

Connecting Budget Requests to Institutional Goals



By **Dianne Fulmer**
Director
School Partnerships
Financial Aid TV
(FATV)

Conveying the importance of a new expense to the folks who hold the purse strings can be a tough task. To get the attention of your upper management, keep the large-scale goals of your institution at the core of the proposal. When you're trying to illuminate a need within your office, do so in light of how it ties into those high-level institutional goals and draw clear connections between spending and your unit's role in helping the school achieve its objectives. Effectively demonstrating these connections in a black-and-white manner using the concept of Return on Investment (ROI) converts what you know into something your leadership can understand, embrace, and justify to their counterparts.

To begin, set aside your specific expenditure, and imagine yourself in the shoes of a President, Chancellor, or Dean. You've got many students to serve and a limited amount of money with which to do it; good ROI is the ultimate justification. While each institution is different, there are conversations happening at campuses across the nation about many of the same topics, and below are a few of the most common ways to illustrate the potential for return on your investment.

Persistence & Retention: A focus on keeping students in the crucial first-to-second year transition, and on continued re-enrollment are popular topics around meeting tables these days. Can you show how granting the request will help you keep students engaged? Could it help the school identify and address "at risk" students?

Progression: Are your leaders seeking to increase the pace with which students move from admission through completion, or the percentage of students who do so? It's not just about keeping students around, but making sure they move toward completion. Maybe time spent serving students comes into play; if your office is better able to meet student needs in one area, have you freed up essential resources in another?

Underserved Groups: Colleges nationwide are evaluating their success in supporting students' distinct needs. Are there other offices or resources in your institution that would also benefit from what you're asking for? Would it allow you to support the work of others on campus who share some of your mission?

Sharing Resources: With institutions weighing the cost of staff time and administrative burden against shrinking funding, can you make an argument that this request covers multiple areas, goals, or purposes? The more ground you can cover with these funds, the more successful you're likely to be. Are there other stakeholders in your institution who might be interested in partnering to share resources, time, or the execution of a new plan?

Outline and clearly demonstrate the ways in which your objective helps the institution meet these high-level goals, and you'll have built your decision makers' justification for them.

Legislative Corner

By Kelly Wentz
VP Legislation,
WFAA, Gonzaga
University

Hello WFAA members! I hope you are enjoying the improved weather!

Some exciting things have come out of the WA State legislation during this past legislation period.

One of the most notable highlights was the approval of the 2018 supplemental budget, providing additional funds for K-12 as well as higher education. Part of this budget includes over \$18 million additional dollars to fully fund the WA State Need Grant program.

DACA has still been a tough topic throughout the federal and state governments. WA has been supportive of its DACA students and continues to show its support through legislative updates. Earlier in the year, WA State approved legislation that would allow undocumented students eligibility for the College Bound scholarship and other forms of state aid. The bill also allows these students to be eligible for funding regardless of what actually happens to DACA.

Further supporting underrepresented students, the Senate also approved a bill establishing the Passport to Careers Act, encouraging foster youth and unaccompanied homeless youth to complete higher education or apprenticeship program. This bill built on the Passport to College program that was previous established in the state, and provides additional monetary support for the costs associated with higher education and apprenticeship costs.

As a reminder, we are always eager for volunteers to assist with gathering and disclosing all of the legislation that impacts the work we do at WFAA. If you feel you would like to contribute as a volunteer, please contact the vplegislation@wfaa.org for more information on how you can help!

Train the Trainer Workshop

By Barbara Hammer
Scholarship Manager
& Senior Advisor,
DigiPen Institute of
Technology

The Spring semester usually marks the end of the year for most college students, but for high school students, the spring is a new beginning. Within months, they will start their college career and find out how crucial financial aid really is! This is why it is important for them to have as much information as early as possible, and who better to give them this information than their High School Counselors! In March, the WFAA Early Awareness Committee collaborated with the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI), the Washington Student Achievement Council (WSAC), and the Washington College Access Network (WCAN) for a Train the Trainer Workshop. This was geared toward high school counselors so they have more knowledge and resources when it comes to financial aid and college planning for their students.

Throughout the month, 464 counselors attended at 10 locations state-wide where they were able to network with their peers, learn about evidence-based school counseling and personalized planning policies and system changes, and explore the world of financial aid as an umbrella. Within the financial aid presentations, counselors were able to obtain more knowledge around subjects such as the College Bound Scholarship, completing the FAFSA and WAFSA, and how to read award letters. During this portion of the workshop (thanks to many volunteers from the WFAA community!!), the counselors were able to ask questions directly to a Financial Aid representative in attendance.

Each attendee was asked to complete a post-workshop evaluation and within the responses, about one-third stated the financial aid information they received was one of the most useful components to the workshop. One attendee even stated that this was the “best” workshop she had ever been to! From the additional information received in the evaluations, we can conclude that many of the counselors feel more comfortable assisting students and families with award letters and that their knowledge of financial aid was increased overall. Our goal was reached!

Thank you to all of our partners at OSPI, WSAC, and WCAN for making this possible and a special thank you to all the volunteers from WFAA who took time out of their day to help with our mission.

Notes from the Editor

Hello WFAA members:


As it may be with some of you, this has been a busy Spring term and start of Summer. This issue was intended to be published much sooner. Please forgive my tardiness. While I am not new to financial aid, I am new to the state and am learning more about Washington and about my institution. As with my former state, I am very impressed with the dedication that so many of you have for your students and your institutions.

The main reason I am writing is to encourage you to make this YOUR publication. Please submit material you would like published to: communicationschair@wfaa.org. I will do my best to make the publication of this more timely.

A special thanks to our 1718 WFAA President, Linnea Todd, for her great leadership and her gentle nudging with the newsletter! I appreciate all that you have done for WFAA!



By Robert Clarke
WFAA Communications
Chair/ Associate Director,
Washington State University



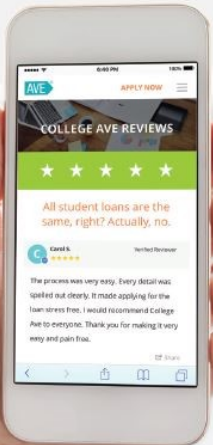
More than three million students drop out of higher education each year due to financial constraints. Yes, 3,000,000 students.

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For additional questions, please contact your campus representative
Ciel Senechal at csenechal@collegeave.com or (562) 826-7636.

2018 Summer Training

Mark your calendars for Tuesday, July 31st for the WFAA training this summer at Diver's Institute. We will have updates from the Department of Education and Washington Student Achievement Council. We'll also have training on 2 NASFAA University subjects with voucher codes for the testing. Please watch the listserv and our Facebook page. Registration coming soon.

2018 WFAA Conference

Join us for the **2018 WFAA Annual Conference**. The Conference will be held October 10-12, 2018 at the Yakima Convention Center in Yakima, WA. Known as "The Palm Springs of Washington", Yakima offers many local opportunities to hike, taste craft beverages, shop and visit historic attractions. If you want to get a head-start on your planning, visit www.visityakima.com. You will not want to miss this conference. Watch the listserv and our Facebook page for more information on the WFAA Conference soon!



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