2023 Annual Conference: Oh Ship! It’s an OASFAA Trip!  
Wed. February 1 – Fri. February 3  
Salishan Coastal Lodge, Gleneden Beach OR

OASFAA is rocking the boat and setting sail to Salishan Coastal Lodge for the 54th annual conference! February is just around the corner, and you can register now through our website. Registration prices are $300 for members and $335 for non-members. The OASFAA Annual Conference is a great professional development opportunity for anyone whose work is related to financial aid in higher education!

Registration includes:
- Access to all conference programming, including:
  - NASFAA-U Credential opportunity on Cost of Attendance
  - NASFAA, WASFAA, & state updates
  - Breakout sessions following 6 learning tracks:
    - Programs & Policies
    - Best Practices
    - College Readiness
    - Personal & Professional Development
    - Financial Literacy & Wellness
    - Leadership & Management
  - Networking opportunities
  - 5 full meals (Wed. lunch, Thr. breakfast, Thr. lunch, Thr. dinner, Fri. breakfast)
  - A president’s reception with appetizers
  - Entertainment including our annual Karaoke Party!
  - Visiting with our corporate partner sponsors
  - And lots of fun!

For more information, registration, and hotel reservations, visit: https://www.oasfaaonline.org/annual-conference
Volunteer Spotlight: Ryan West

The OASFAA Volunteer Spotlight shines on Ryan West, the Financial Aid Director at Chemeketa Community College.

Volunteer activities with OASFAA: Wow – there have been a lot. I’ve been Treasurer, VP, President, Conference co-chair, FA 101/201 co-chair, Archives chair, OPB Financial Aid for College Night and on various committees throughout the past 20 years. I may have been the secretary one year too but I’m a terrible notetaker so hopefully I wasn’t.

How long have you been in financial aid? Started January 2, 2002

How did you get your start in financial aid? When I was a student at Western Oregon University, I worked for the Vice President for Student Affairs. Prior to being a VP, he was the Director of Financial Aid (Michael Cihak for any other ancient OASFAA people out there). Our office shared a copy machine with financial aid because Michael was too cheap to get us one. So my job often required me to go to financial aid and copy things. Over the course of a couple years, I got to know the people in the WOU financial aid office. After I graduated from WOU, I worked as an Auditor for Grant Thornton in Portland and was miserable. A financial aid counselor position came available at WOU, I applied, and was hired.

What is the most rewarding part of your job? Even amidst the thick bureaucracy in which we work, I still get the sense that the work we do matters. It helps transform lives from poverty. It helps people achieve their career and college dreams. It feels like it is work that improves lives and that is deeply rewarding to me. (Volunteer...continued on page 3...)
What case/student will you be most likely to remember for the rest of your life? When I was a financial aid counselor at WOU, with maybe 1-2 years of experience, I met with a non-traditional aged woman. She was bald from finishing chemo treatments, had a young child with her and had told me how her husband had left her and her business had failed and she faced cancer treatments all in the past year and had decided she needed to go to school to have a brighter future. I went over the paltry financial aid offer we could give her (she applied late so missed the Oregon Opportunity Grant and our campus-based aid) so basically, she had freshman-level loans and a Pell Grant – not enough to support her education let alone a family trying to survive. She was wildly disgusted with what I had to offer and made her displeasure known. She stormed out of my office frustrated and showed back up about 15 minutes later and told me she was going to do it anyway. She did it – she earned a bachelor’s and a master’s degree at WOU and became a teacher. I visited her school for an unrelated meeting several years ago and reconnected with her. She has thrived as a teacher; her health is good and her kids are grown. She’s happy and made quite the impression on me!

What is the most difficult aspect of your job? The pace of change is so slow in academia in general, including financial aid. It can be frustrating when it seems like there could be simple changes to make education financing more accessible to more students, but we’re stuck with old-school rules for an old-school education model that often fails our students.

How do you cope with stress on the job? Laughter – I like to laugh at the absurd things (and people) in life. Eyerolling and swearing also seem to help.

Who has been the biggest influence/mentor on your career? There have been so many. The biggest influencers/encouragers for me, especially regarding OASFAA, were my first two bosses in financial aid – Sandy Mountain and Donna Kirk. They both supported me in getting involved in OASFAA as a newbie and Donna especially was so great at introducing me to amazing colleagues in the financial aid profession. I’ve benefitted in the course of my career by hanging around with people much smarter than me who astonishingly are willing to respond to my many questions – Mike Johnson, Kathy Campbell, Peter Goss, and Breana Sylwester to just name a few. (Volunteer...cont on p.4...)
What is/was your favorite volunteer experience? My favorite volunteer job for OASFAA, hands-down, was being the co-chair of the Annual Conference for two years alongside Michelle Holdway. We planned some great conferences and started the multi-year tradition of costumes (completely unintentionally). The conference is a lot to organize but it is so easy to see the culmination of your hard work. Michelle and I both appreciate a good mojito too which makes the experience even better.

What do you do when you are not working? I’m married and have 3 children, 1 dog and 1 cat so I mostly do boring middle-aged things. As time allows, I love being outside in nature – hiking or just sitting and listening. I love books and although I don’t get to read as much as I like, I did finish 40 books this past year which was pretty great.

If you could change anything in our industry, what would it be? Widespread recognition (and compensation) across colleges of the work that we do and the skills that it takes to do it well.

Do you have any advice for your fellow financial aid administrators? Financial aid is not a profession to be done alone with just you and the FSA handbook. Get involved with OASFAA, go to conferences, webinars or other trainings – frequently. If you think you know a lot about something, offer to present about it or teach it. Keep learning!

If you were not in financial aid, what would you be doing now? I don’t know honestly. After having a short-lived career that wasn’t for me and then finding such a good fit in higher education, I have trouble picturing myself doing anything else. I’d love to be an author or landscaper – not sure I’d be particularly good at either but those have always stood out to me.

FA 101/201

FA 101/201 was held in person at Umpqua Community College and Portland State University in October. We had 86 attendees, with individuals from the Business Office, Registrars, Enrollment Services, SNAP/STEP Programs, as well as OSAC and The Ford Family Foundation. This year OASFAA offered scholarships to our members. Here is what one recipient had to say about the event:

"Thank you OASFAA for the scholarship to attend FA 101/201 this past October. I appreciated my time getting to know fellow Financial Aid Administrators in a space of sharing and learning. I had a wonderful time learning from Debbie O'Dea’s credential presentation on Packaging and Aid Notification. Thank you for the opportunity to hear from others on how we can all become more connected in order to help our students succeed and be well-informed. My attendance would not have been possible if not for this scholarship opportunity. Thank you so much!"

We would like to take this opportunity to say thank you to everyone that supported this event.

Our gracious hosts!
❖ Michelle Bergmann ~ Umpqua Community College
❖ Eli Herr ~ Portland State University

A special thank you to all of our volunteers!
❖ Peter Goss ~ Portland Community College
❖ Eli Herr ~ Portland State University
❖ Leslie Lloyd ~ Western Oregon University
And our behind-the-scenes heroes!

- Jesse Bjornsen ~ Umpqua Community College
- Emily Cardinal ~ Reed College
- Frankie Everett ~ Rogue Community College
- Karen Garcia ~ Reed College
- Tim Hill ~ Umpqua Community College
- Joanne Leijon ~ Lewis & Clark College
- Colin Murphy ~ Umpqua Community College
- Megan Pickens-Lloyd ~ Linn-Benton Community College
- Ronda Stearns ~ Umpqua Community College

Submitted by: The FA 101/201 Committee

School Profile

by Shauna Wing, Director of Student Financial Services, American College of Healthcare Sciences (ACHS)

School Mission Statement? To lead the advancement of evidence-based, integrative health and wellness education through experiential online learning and sustainable practices.

What year was your institution founded? 1978

What is your current undergraduate and/or graduate enrollment? 1024 undergraduate and graduate students enrolled in the Fall 2022 semester.

What types of degrees do you offer and what’s your largest or most popular program? ACHS offers undergraduate and graduate certificates, diplomas, associates, bachelors, and masters degrees. Currently, our most popular program is the Associate of Applied Science in Integrative Health and Wellness.

Is your campus primarily residential, commuter, or online? Fully online

What is your school mascot? Olive the Owl

What are your school colors? Navy and gold

Do you offer institutional grants and/or scholarships? ACHS offers an Adult Scholarship program that awards a one-time $1000 tuition scholarship (not to exceed 35% of tuition for the student’s enrolled program) to 10 students per year. ACHS also offers a Military Scholarship to servicemembers, spouses, and dependents who have exhausted other military education benefits. (School Profile...cont on p.6...)
Do you run on semesters, quarters, trimesters, or another schedule? Semesters

Do you offer programs using credit hours or clock hours? Credit hour only

What type of financial management system do you use? Anthology Student

What is one thing EVERYONE should know about your institution or one little-known fact? ACHS was founded in a garden shed in New Zealand nearly 50 years ago! ACHS opened its doors in the United States in 1989 and has since been a pioneer in holistic health education specializing in online programs in aromatherapy, herbal medicine, nutrition, and wellness coaching. Our mission is to lead the advancement of evidence-based integrative health and make wellness knowledge accessible to everyone!
If it’s happening in OASFAA, it’s happening at...

**The Watercooler**

*Sharon Haner* was promoted to Assistant Director at University of Portland.

*Rebecca Lewis* was promoted to associate Director of Financial Aid for Advising at PCC.

*Eric Perez* was promoted to Sr. Financial Aid Counselor at University of Portland.

*Miranda Robertson* was promoted to Assistant Director at University of Portland.

*Ann Sumner* (Hawkins) got married over the summer and was promoted to Financial Aid Tech Lead at PCC.

If you or someone you know has received a promotion, taken a new job, or experiences a significant life event, email: feverett@roguecc.edu

**THANK YOU**

to

OASFAA’S CORPORATE PARTNERS

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When you reviewing a ISIR manually and realize the parent used the Data retrieval tool.
“I was wondering if there was a tracking number on my bell grant letter. I have yet to receive it in the mail. Thank you for your time.”

“How do I teach my body that my fight or flight response is supposed to be for life or death situations, not answering an email?”

“I got a refund check in fall. If I do not enroll in Spring, can I still get a refund check?”

Got one to share? Send it to feverett@roguecc.edu. All submissions will be published anonymously.

Interested in volunteering for OASFAA?
Contact a committee chair below...

2022 Committee Chairs

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OASFAA Newsletter Editorial Staff:
❖ Frankie Everett  ❖ Ashley Coleman  ❖ Layla Solar  ❖ Ryan West

SAVE THE DATE

2.1-2.3 – OASFAA Annual Conference (Gleneden Beach, OR)

2.5-2.8 – NASFAA Leadership & Legislative Conference (Washington DC)

4.17-4.19 – WASFAA Conference (Tacoma, WA)

6.29-7.2 – NASFAA (San Diego, CA)

Check the OASFAA calendar for webinars & training events available to our membership at: www.oasfaaonline.org
Winter Crossword

ACROSS
2. formerly known as the Basic Education Opportunity Grant
4. alternative name for Portland who lost in the coin flip
6. president who signed the G.I. Bill of Rights in 1944
8. type of student loan where government pays the interest
10. legal document serving as borrower's promise to repay
11. 6-month window after leaving school when borrowers are not required to make payments
12. in 1643, first college to award a scholarship
13. federal loan program ended in 2017

DOWN
1. signed into law in 1965 by LBJ, establishing the U.S. as the primary financial aid provider
3. public ___ loan forgiveness
5. the ___ academic progress policy requires schools to review students' grades and pace
7. oldest 4-year institution in Oregon
9. deepest body of water in the U.S. that is located in Oregon