

# 2025 IASFAA CONFERENCE



Tentative Interest Session Descriptions as of March 31, 2025

Business Officer Track



## Accelerating Iowa Workforce Grant Success

### Workforce Grant Roundtable for Regent University Financial Aid Leadership

Buckle up as we shift into high gear for a high-octane discussion on the Iowa Workforce Grant! Aimed for those who work with the Iowa Workforce Grant (we're looking at you, Regents!), join forces with Todd Brown from the Bureau of Iowa College Aid to navigate the twists and turns of systemic processes, streamline workflows, and dodge roadblocks. Let's fuel collaboration, boost efficiency, and ensure we're all racing toward student success—because in this race, we all cross the finish line together.

## Balancing the Books & Supporting Students: A Student Accounts Roundtable



**Facilitators:** **Kristin Sellers**, *Senior Associate Director, Systems and Awarding, University of Iowa*; **Vanessa Wiest**, *Program & Communications Chair, Communications Manager, University of Iowa*

Managing student accounts is more than just processing payments—it's about balancing institutional financial health with student success. Join colleagues from across institutions for an engaging roundtable discussion on key topics such as tuition billing, payment plans, refund processing, financial holds, and collections. Share best practices for improving communication, and leveraging technology to support students while ensuring compliance. Whether you're looking for innovative solutions or simply want to compare approaches, this session provides a space to exchange ideas and challenges with your peers.

## Battling Burnout!

**Sara Edwards**, *SVP, Relationship Manager, Citizens Bank*

Have you ever explored the science of stress and burnout? This presentation provides practical strategies to manage and mitigate stress by completing the stress cycle, addressing societal pressures, and promoting emotional well-being. With actionable advice and relatable anecdotes, it empowers you to break free from the cycle of exhaustion and lead more balanced, fulfilling lives.

## Breaking Down Silos: Cross-Departmental Collaboration for Student Success



**Panelists:** **Amy Gaffney**, *EdD, Vice President of Student Services, Northeast Iowa Community College*; **Amanda Maher**, *Director for Business & Finance, Mount Mercy University*; **Jennifer Sassman**, *FAAC®, MAEd, Executive Director, Wartburg College*

Navigating student finances requires coordination across multiple offices, yet institutional silos often create roadblocks. This session will explore best practices for fostering collaboration between Student Accounts, Financial Aid, Academic Affairs, Enrollment Services, and Student Support Offices. Through a panel discussion and audience Q&A, we'll dive into real-world strategies for improving communication, aligning policies, and working together to enhance the student experience. Attendees will leave with actionable ideas to strengthen partnerships at their own institutions.



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**FAFSA  
AND FURIOUS**

### **BBAY Drift: Mastering the Turns of Borrower-Based Loans**

**Sara Sroka, FAAC®**, *Director, Financial Aid, University of Dubuque*; **Chad Olson, FAAC®**, *Director, Iowa State University*

Ready to tackle the twists and turns of Borrower-Based Academic Year (BBAY)? This session will give you lightning-fast insights on best practices for packaging in BBAY, including summer term and single-term scenarios. Whether you're looking to streamline your processes or better understand how to apply BBAY, our drivers will equip you with the knowledge to optimize your financial aid packaging and improve student outcomes. Get the tools you need to master BBAY, streamline your processes, and stay ahead of the game in the fast-paced world of financial aid.

### **Community College Pit Stop**

**Randy Mashek, IASFAA Site Chair & Director of Financial Aid, Northeast Iowa Community College**; **Kylee Klommmhaus, IASFAA Delegate-at-Large & Director of Financial Aid, Southwestern Community College**

Start your engines and join your fellow IASFAA community college colleagues for a high-octane networking session! This is your chance to hit the track together, share insights, and discuss the financial aid challenges you're navigating at your institutions. Whether you're speeding through FAFSA processing or maneuvering through complex regulations, this "pit stop" will help you refuel with fresh ideas and turbocharge your solutions.

### **Crafting Cost of Attendance**

**Isaac Ehlers, FAAC®**, *IASFAA Professional Development Chair and Program Co-Chair & Senior Assistant Director – Student Financial Services, Iowa State University*; **Matt Falduto, FAAC®**, *IASFAA Past President & Senior Director of Financial Aid, Kirkwood Community College*; **Jerry McKeen, Director of Financial Aid at Des Moines Area Community College**

Buckle up and hit the gas as we dive into the high-octane world of financial aid regulation transformation with a Fast & Furious twist! Join us for an adrenaline-fueled session on constructing a top-tier Cost of Attendance (COA). We'll be racing through the key components of COA, from tuning up your process with student surveys to drifting through the curves of industry data and research studies. Together, let's shift into high gear, balancing compliance and innovation to build a COA that's engineered for today's students. Get ready to leave the competition in the dust and cross the finish line with a formula that's fast, furious, and effective!

### **Discussing Cost, Value and How to Pay the Gap**

**Heather Gaumer, Director, Assistant Region Head - Midwest, Sallie Mae**

While most families agree that college is an investment in their student's future, many are confused and stressed about paying for that education. This session will help you have a thorough discussion with students and families about how to pay the "gap" so they don't make a fast and furious decision. You'll learn strategies to communicate value beyond price and uncover facts on how families have historically shared in the responsibility to pay for education. It's time to get revved up to discuss payment strategies for responsible borrowing and student success that are sure to help with your enrollment and retention goals.



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# FAFSA AND FURIOUS

### FA101 - State Scholarships and Grants

**Tristan Lynn, FAAC®**, *Financial Aid Program Specialist, Bureau of Iowa College Aid*

Rev your engines and buckle up! Whether you're new to the game or need a quick pit stop, we've got you covered. Join us for an all-out crash course on every state-funded scholarship, grant, and loan repayment program from the Bureau of Iowa College Aid. We'll break down eligibility, the paperwork you'll need, and the timelines to keep you ahead of the curve. Let's hit the road!

### From Zero to Trained: Onboarding and Training at High Speed

**Jess Graham**, *Awards Co-Chair & Assistant Director, University of Iowa*; **Jacob Severn**, *Financial Aid Advisor, Iowa State University*

Buckle up and get ready to accelerate your student employee training program! In this high-octane session, we'll dive into the essentials of hiring, onboarding, and training new student employees—because when it comes to building a strong team, there's no time for a slow start. Learn how to develop and implement a structured training plan that fuels success, equips student staff to handle high-stakes responsibilities, and keeps your office running at peak performance. Whether you're looking to fine-tune your current process or build one from the ground up, this session will give you the tools to drive your student workforce to the finish line!

### Program Participation Agreement Tune Up

**Matt Falduto, FAAC®**, *IASFAA Past President & Senior Director of Financial Aid, Kirkwood Community College*; **Beth Davenport, FAAC®**, *Diversity Chair & Director of Financial Aid, Cornell College*; **Chad Olson, FAAC®**, *Director, Financial Aid, Iowa State University*

Have you had to update or renew your Program Participation Agreement (PPA) recently? So much has changed! But never fear – we'll be your pit crew and help you race around the E-App track to the finish line. We'll explain the basics, share our experiences navigating the changes, and give you some tips to ensure a smooth race.

### Projection Modeling with Bureau of Iowa College Aid

**Todd Brown**, *Section Chief Financial Aid Program Administration and State Authorization, Bureau of Iowa College Aid*; **Tristan Lynn, FAAC®**, *Financial Aid Program Specialist, Bureau of Iowa College Aid*

Time to hit the nitrous! Get under the hood and dive deep into how the Bureau of Iowa College Aid uses powerful data to set program deadlines, SAI maxes & ranges, and determine those crucial award amounts for state-funded scholarships and grants. It's all about precision—so let's fuel up and break it down!

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## Revving Up Workplace Wellbeing: The Fast Track to Mental Health

**Sarah Freestone, FAAC®**, IASFAA President & Senior Assistant Director – Data Compliance, Reporting, and Verification, Iowa State University; **Chelley Jackson**, ILASFAA President-Elect & Associate Director of Systems and Compliance, Illinois State University

Join us for a high-octane session where we'll navigate the fast track to mental health using the Surgeon General's Framework for Workplace Mental Health and Well-being. Through interactive pit stops and practical examples, you'll gain valuable insights and actionable strategies to enhance your workplace wellbeing. Whether you're a seasoned driver or new to the track, this session will equip you with the tools to navigate the twists and turns of the financial aid profession with resilience and positivity. Join us to shift gears towards a healthier, more supportive work environment and leave with a renewed commitment to fostering a culture of wellbeing in your workplace. Get ready to rev up your engines and drive towards a brighter, more balanced future!

## Staying Audit-Ready: Compliance Essentials for Business Officers



**Sarah Freestone, FAAC®**, IASFAA President & Senior Assistant Director – Data Compliance, Reporting, and Verification, Iowa State University;

Navigating financial aid audits requires proactive collaboration between business officers and financial aid professionals. This session will break down key compliance updates affecting audits, including cash management regulations, reconciliation best practices, internal controls, and common findings in Department of Education program reviews.

## Turbocharged Graduate Financial Aid: Rapid-Fire Strategies for Graduate Counseling

**Chris Roling**, Assistant Director of Financial Services, Carver College of Medicine, University of Iowa; **Tara Joyce**, Assistant Director, Veterinary Medicine Financial Aid, Iowa State University; **Sara Sroka, FAAC®**, Director, Financial Aid, University of Dubuque

In the world of grad school, securing financial aid is like racing through the streets of Tokyo—you need to be fast, focused, and ready for any curveball that comes your way. Hear how your peers navigate the financial aid process like pros. In the end, financial aid isn't just about getting through the race—it's about winning it. With the right knowledge, timing, and strategy, you'll cross that finish line and be ready for the next chapter in your academic journey—Fast and Furious style!

## Turbocharging Verification: Navigating the Tax Information Split

**Courteney Kuehl**, Financial Aid Advisor, Iowa State University; **Diane McCall**, Financial Aid Specialist, Southwestern Community College

Rev up your engines and get ready to speed through the complexities of splitting tax information from the FAFSA! Learn the ins and outs of accurately separating and reporting tax data to ensure a smooth ride for students and their families. We'll cover common pitfalls, best practices, and provide practical tips to help you navigate this critical aspect of the FAFSA with precision and confidence. Buckle up for an informative and fast-paced session that will leave you feeling like a FAFSA pit crew pro!