



THE INFORMER

The Quarterly IASFAA Newsletter

IN THIS ISSUE

NASFAA CFAA EXAM PREP WORKSHOP

SPRING CONFERENCE INFORMATION

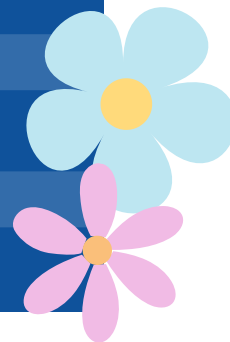
DIRECTORS DAY

LEADERSHIP FORUM

CREDENTIAL OPPORTUNITY

ELECTION RESULTS

WHAT'S NEW WITH THE IASFAA CREW?



Spring is near, and the **IASFAA Newsletter** is here!

With offers coming out,

We're switching into high gear.

Through the strife and doubt,

IASFAA professionals need not fear!

We will persevere through the troubles and burnout,

And come together at the conference with cheer!

Did You Know? IASFAA's New Institutional Membership is Here!

As of the 2024-2025 membership year, IASFAA has transitioned to an Institutional Membership model for Iowa colleges and universities. Memberships are now processed by institution or organization, rather than by individual staff members. Renewal applications can only be accessed by your organization's designated Key Contact, who manages membership on behalf of your institution. Associate Members can annually choose between individual or institutional membership options. Instructions are provided to guide you through this process each year. If you have any questions about your membership, feel free to contact Duane Polsdofer, Membership Chair, at duane.polsdofer@waldorf.edu.

NASFAA CFAA Exam Prep Workshops

IASFAA is offering free NASFAA CFAA exam prep workshops this Spring! These workshops will provide all the information need to take CFAA exam. Included in the free cost of these workshops the CFAA study guide, instructor lead training, practice exam, and the cost of the exam, all for free!

The first NASFAA CFAA exam prep workshops Workshop was held on March 14. There were 10 people in attendance! Thank you to those who participated!

Don't worry, you can still sign up!

Ensure you meet the [eligibility requirements](#) and join us for this valuable opportunity to prepare for the NASFAA certification exam.

Final Upcoming Workshop:

April 24, 2025 - 8:30 a.m. – 5 p.m. - University of Northern Iowa, Cedar Falls

[Register now](#) - you will need your IASFAA login to complete registration.

Questions? Contact Isaac Ehlers, Professional Development Chair - imehlers@iastate.edu or Renae Armentrout, Professional Development Co-Chair - rarmentrout@coe.edu





**2025 IASFAA
CONFERENCE**

**FAFSA
AND FURIOUS**

Get Ready to Rev Your Engines!

Buckle up, IASFAA! Our FAFSA & Furious conference is speeding your way, packed with high-octane sessions, engaging events, and opportunities to connect. Whether you're new to financial aid or a seasoned pro, we have something for everyone! Read on to know why you should register before the April 3 deadline!

Powerful General Sessions

We're kicking things off with three dynamic general sessions designed to accelerate your knowledge and career: Supporting Non-Citizen & Undocumented Individuals, Accelerate Your Career Path, and Caring for Self While Caring for Others: You're Hardy and You Know It! Each session is geared to fuel your professional growth and provide valuable insights.

Something for Everyone: Engaging Interest Sessions

With an array of interest sessions, there's a tune-up for every financial aid professional. Get in the driver's seat for From Zero to Trained: Onboarding and Training at High Speed, Turbocharging Verification: Navigating the Tax Information Split, Discussing Cost, Value, and How to Pay the Gap, Community College Pit Stop, and Program Participation Agreement Tune-Up—there's truly something for everyone!

Supporting Our Community: Horizons Family Services

This year, we're rallying behind Horizons Family Services in Cedar Rapids, an organization dedicated to nutrition access, transportation equity, and financial literacy and empowerment. They work tirelessly to support vulnerable older adults, single parents, and individuals striving for financial stability. Help us support their mission through our Football Squares fundraiser and a special pie-themed challenge—details coming soon!

IASFAA Tailgate: Games, Prizes, & Fundraising Fun!

No road trip is complete without a tailgate! Our IASFAA Tailgate will be a lively mix of games, activities, and point-earning challenges for a special prize. Plus, all the fun fuels a good cause—help us raise funds for Horizons Family Services while engaging in some friendly competition!

Exhibitor Race Track: Make Your Pit Stops Count

Our amazing exhibitors help keep registration costs down, and we encourage you to visit them at each pit stop on our Exhibitor Race Track. Learn about their offerings, express your appreciation, and engage in our interactive way to track visits and be entered into a raffle!

Take Time to Network & Celebrate Your Peers

Beyond the sessions, be sure to take time to network with colleagues, meet new faces, and strengthen your professional connections. This year, we're excited to introduce a fun new feature from the Awards Committee—so stay tuned for an exciting way to recognize and celebrate our outstanding IASFAA members!

Welcoming Business Office/Bursar/Student Accounts Professionals

On Thursday, we'll shift gears to welcome our colleagues from Business Offices, Bursar, and Student Accounts, offering specialized sessions tailored to their needs, including:

- Balancing the Books & Supporting Students: A Student Accounts Roundtable
- Breaking Down Silos: Cross-Departmental Collaboration for Student Success
- Staying Audit-Ready: Compliance Essentials for Business Officers

Two of these sessions may also be of interest to financial aid professionals, so don't hesitate to check them out!

Thursday Night Adventures

After a full day of learning, it's time to hit the town! While you can go out on your own adventure, there are a couple of additional options this year! You can embark on a themed adventure with fellow attendees as options may include a free art museum visit, Pickleball, or a shopping trip! Sign up will be at the Registration Table, and a host will take your group out for a fun evening and dinner.



**VOLUNTEER
OPPORTUNITY!**

On Thursday night, there will be a "Discuss Your Aid Offer" event for local high school seniors and their families, hosted by the Community Outreach Committee.

More information to come to you soon through the IASFAA Listserv!

Special Guests & A Grand Finale

We are thrilled to welcome our MASFAA friends, including Dr. Betsy Johnson, MASFAA President & Director, Student Financial Aid & Scholarships, Bowling Green State University, and Chelley Jackson, ILASFAA President-Elect & Associate Director of Systems and Compliance, Illinois State University. Their presence and involvement add an extra boost of energy to our event!

Finally, we'll close out the conference with a high-impact State Update followed by the always-engaging NASFAA Inside the Beltway—an unmissable session filled with key insights into the ever-changing financial aid landscape.

Start your engines, IASFAA—this conference is set to be FAFSA & Furious, and we can't wait to see you at the starting line!

Stay Connected with the IASFAA Listserv!

Are you taking advantage of the IASFAA Listserv? This valuable tool is designed for IASFAA members to quickly and efficiently share relevant information with fellow members.

[What is the IASFAA Listserv?](#)

The IASFAA Listserv is an email-based platform that allows members to easily disseminate and receive updates, announcements, and other important information related to the financial aid profession and our association.

How to Subscribe or Post a Message

It's simple!

1. Click on IASFAA Listserv.
2. Navigate to My Features > E-Lists to subscribe or post a message.

Join the conversation and stay in the loop with timely updates from your IASFAA community. Don't miss out—sign up today!

Directors Day

The IASFAA Directors Day 2025 was held at the Raccoon River Nature Lodge in West Des Moines. The event was well attended with 35 participants driving in from all over Iowa. The day started with some discussion of new state legislation and shortly thereafter, Todd Brown [Division Director, Financial Aid Programs] and David Ford [Bureau Chief & Executive Director] from the Iowa Department of Education's Bureau of Iowa College Aid. Todd and David shared updates on proposed legislation upcoming appropriations. The participants broke for lunch and wrapped up the afternoon with further discussion.

The Administrative Capability credential was offered in the afternoon and later some IASFAA members gathered at The Foundry close by for some social time.

Thank you to Isaac Ehlers and the Professional Development committee for coordinating this jam-packed day of information, connection, and fun!



Leadership Forum

The IASFAA Professional Development Committee is launching the Leadership Forum for the 2025-2026 academic year. This program is designed to help members grow as leaders through meaningful discussions, networking, and professional development.

What: 2025-2026 Leadership Forum

When: September 2025 – May 2026

Where: In-person events throughout the year and monthly virtual meetings

Cost: Estimated at \$99 + one night in a hotel and travel to in-person events

What to Expect:

- Kickoff Retreat: An overnight stay in Des Moines (Sept/Oct 2025)
- Advocacy Experience: Attend an advocacy event in Des Moines (Feb 2026)
- IASFAA Spring Conference: Connect in person at the Spring 2026 Conference in Cedar Falls

Participants will engage in monthly virtual meetings to discuss NASFAA's "You're the Director: Third Edition." Personal development opportunities will include a StrengthsFinder session and work throughout the year on a personal development project that will be presented to the group.

If you're interested in participating in Leadership next year, please [complete the interest form](#) to assist the committee with planning and budgeting. Registration opens Summer 2025.

If you have any questions, please feel free to reach out to Renae Armentrout, 25-26 IASFAA Professional Development Chair, 319.399.8809 or rarmentrout@coe.edu.

Credential Opportunity!

We're excited to offer two FREE NASFAA Credential Trainings as preconference sessions at the IASFAA Spring Conference! These sessions are open to all IASFAA members—whether you're attending the conference or not.

Preconference NASFAA Credential Trainings

These sessions provide valuable professional development and a deeper understanding of key financial aid topics.

- Student Eligibility
- Cash Management

When & Where: Wednesday, April 9 | 8:30 a.m. - 11:00 a.m.

Location: DoubleTree by Hilton Hotel Cedar Rapids Convention Complex, Downtown Cedar Rapids

[Sign up for a free NASFAA Credential Training today!](#)

Interested in Being a Moderator?

We're looking for moderators for these sessions! If you'd like to volunteer, submit your name by Tuesday, March 25. Those randomly selected will be notified no later than Friday, March 28. Don't miss this chance to invest in your professional development!

[Submit your name to be a moderator by March 25!](#)

Election Results

We are excited to announce our new IASFAA Executive Council for 2025-2026!

President-Elect: **Ryan Zantingh**, Drake University

Vice President: **Jess Graham**, University of Iowa

Treasurer-Elect: **Vanessa Wiest**, University of Iowa

Secretary: **Tristan Lynn**, Bureau of Iowa College Aid

Delegate: **Rachel Moser**, Luther College

Thank you to everyone that ran to be on Executive Council and to IASFAA members for voting. We look forward to another great year led by our new Executive Council!

What's new with the IASFAA crew?

- **Kaity Fisher** was promoted to Senior Assistant Director and will be supervising the financial aid advising team at the University of Iowa. Congratulations Kaity!



- Teresa Brahm has retired after 31 years at University of Dubuque. Sara Sroka is now Director of Financial Aid. Melissa Schmitt is now Associate Director of Financial Aid. We have also hired a new staff member - Melissa Baker will join the office as Assistant Director of Financial Aid on March 17th. Congratulations to Teresa on her retirement, and to Sara on becoming Director of Financial Aid!