

NASFAA Gold Star Application 2021

FASFAA 2020 Spring Conference Moves Online

Narrative Explanation:

The Coronavirus pandemic and subsequent lockdowns, quarantines and travel restrictions caused massive disruption for students, colleges, and workplaces starting in March 2020. Colleges were changing instructional delivery plans, staff were moving to work from home, the Department of Education was issuing multiple (and often conflicting) guidance for schools, and on March 27 the President signed the CARES Act creating brand-new programs of support for students and requiring institutions to pivot quickly.

With the incredible pace of change, many professional associations slipped into quiet mode. Their volunteers focused their energy on institutional priorities at their workplaces, many associations cancelled their Spring conferences, and others seemed paralyzed with business partners withdrawing their support and plans adjusted.

FASFAA, however, quickly jumped at the opportunity to pivot and managed to deliver a phenomenal and well-attended series of virtual webinars and workshops during the period of early April to June 30, 2020. At a time when FASFAA had to cancel our annual conference, we were able to maintain business partner support, make use of a free webinar solution to deliver content to our members and non-members, and grow our membership base.

In addition, in 2020 FASFAA created a new annual award in memory of Ollicia Anderson, a young promising financial aid professional who had passed away in late 2019. The award, now named the Ollicia Anderson Achievement Award, will be presented in her memory to a new promising Financial Aid Administrator with less than three years of experience who has made a significant contribution at their office. The award will feature a scholarship to attend either the SASFAA New Aid Officer Workshop, the FASFAA Conference, or the FASFAA New Aid Workshop. During the 2020 Award Ceremony, we presented the inaugural award to Ollicia's mother, and shared a tribute to Ollicia and her memory.

In looking back now, and with the work of many other associations in bringing their content online since June 2020, the project now may seem *de rigueur*. At the time, however, and with our speed of implementation, FASFAA found a workable solution without any disruption in service to our members and to the profession as a whole.

The solution:

- FASFAA offered 19 webinars from April 3 to June 29. These included the Annual Business Meeting, the Annual Awards Presentation, two NASFAA Authorized Events, several FSA updates, and an open workshop for all educational professionals in the state of Florida regarding HEERF funding. A list of all sessions (with links to replays on YouTube where available) and handouts was maintained on the FASFAA webpage for members and is duplicated below (number of registrants is **highlighted in red font** – this does not include video replays):
 - **April 3, 2020** - Anh Tran Do - [Understanding Foreign and Other U.S. Territories Tax Returns](#) - [handout](#) **165 registrants**
 - **April 17, 2020** - Michael Bennett, Francisco Valines and a panel of FASFAA Financial Aid Directors - [Spending the CARES Emergency Grant Funds: Best Practices and Open Forum](#) **652 registrants**
 - **April 28, 2020** - Robert Weinerman - [The 2018 Tax Return and the Tax Code - What You Need to Know](#) - [handout](#) and [PowerPoint slides](#) **215 registrants**
 - **April 30, 2020** - Dr. Douglass Lobo - [Maintaining Mental Health and Managing Anxiety During a Global Pandemic](#) - [handout](#) **114 registrants**
 - **May 5, 2020** - Dameion Lovett - [Integrating Financial Literacy into Financial Aid Office Services](#) **69 registrants**
 - **May 14, 2020** - Patti Corjay and Laura Dickerson - [How America Pays for Grad School](#) - [handout](#) **26 registrants**
 - **May 15, 2020** - Trudy Plunkett and David Bartnicki - [A Clock Hour Overview and Discussion](#) - [handout](#) **100 registrants**
 - **May 20, 2020** - Wayne Kruger and Francisco Valines - [Moving Operations Remotely in a Time of Crisis](#) - [SPC handout](#) - [FIU handout](#) **66 registrants**
 - **May 21, 2020** - David Bartnicki - [Administering Adds, Drops and Withdrawals](#) - [handout](#) **112 registrants**
 - **May 27, 2020** - FASFAA Leadership - [FASFAA Business Meeting video replay](#) - [handout](#) - [minutes from 2019 meeting](#) - [2018-19 Profit and Loss](#) - [2018-19 Balance Sheet](#) **127 registrants**
 - **May 28, 2020** - Dana Kelly - NASFAA Authorized Event: Professional Judgment (replay not available) **36 registrants**
 - **June 2, 2020** - David Bartnicki - [Basics of Determining Academic Calendars \(Standard, Non-Standard, and Non-Term\)](#) - *Sadly, GoToWebinar (our webinar presentation partner) was experiencing audio limitations during this webinar. We made use of a different audio solution for much of this presentation, so you will hear no audio in the video. We apologize for this, but are presenting the video for your review.* - [handout](#) **112 registrants**

- **June 4, 2020** - *FASFAA Leadership* - [FASFAA Annual Awards Ceremony and Celebration](#) **104 registrants**
- **June 9, 2020** - *Robert Weinerman* - [2019, 2020 and COVID-19 Tax Issues for Financial Aid Officers](#) - [handout](#) **150 registrants**
- **June 11, 2020** - *Rachel Allen* - **FASFAA Conference Keynote Speech: [Waking Up to Our Shared Humanity: Conversations on Inclusiveness](#) - The Peace and Justice Institute's [13 Principles for How We Treat Each Other](#)** - reading 1: [White Privilege: Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack](#) - book recommendations: [Why Are All the Black Kids Sitting Together in the Cafeteria](#), [White Fragility: Why It's So Hard for White People to Talk About Racism](#), and [How to be an Antiracist](#) **83 registrants**
- **June 18, 2020** - *FASFAA Member Facilitators* - **FASFAA "Birds of a Feather" Sessions - Clock Hour Schools, Grad/Professional Colleges, Private Not-For-Profit and For-Profit Schools, State Colleges, State University System (replays not available)** **142 registrants in total**
- **June 18, 2020** - *Dana Kelly* - **NASFAA Authorized Event: Cash Management (replay not available)** **39 registrants**
- **June 25, 2020** - *David Bartnicki* - [Federal Update](#) - **handouts: [introductory slides](#) and [main presentation](#)** **238 registrants**
- **June 29, 2020** - *Anthony Abraham Jack (author of The Privileged Poor) with introductions from Justin Draeger, NASFAA CEO* - [FASFAA Year End Celebration](#) **196 registrants**
- The online meeting solution utilized was GoToWebinar / GoToMeeting. The LogMeIn Company, which owns these products, offered a free three-month trial subscription to institutions of higher education and not-for-profit associations starting in April. FASFAA took advantage of this opportunity and professionalized our presentation platform (we had been using FreeConferenceCall) at \$0 cost to the association.
- When the decision was made to cancel the in-person conference (which had been scheduled for late May), FASFAA reached out to all of our business partners (25 sponsors) to offer three options:
 - 13 chose to cancel their sponsorship of FASFAA for the year.
 - 5 chose to make a partial reduction of their sponsorship amount for the year.
 - 7 chose to leave their entire sponsorship with FASFAA for the year.
- For sponsors who chose to retain all or part of their sponsorship, we invited them to provide a 3-5 minute "booth speech" at the start of one of our webinars to allow them to present their organization and products. This was well received by our business partners and by our members.
- Individual membership is required for FASFAA conference attendance (and the next year's membership cost is included in conference registration fee), so our annual conference is a primary way to grow our current year and future year

membership. Given the conference cancellation, we did require that webinar attendees become members (other than our CARES Act webinar), and this led to a substantial growth for FASFAA membership for 2019-20. We had 87 new members join between April and June for the 2019-20 year which represents greater than a 10% growth in membership. FASFAA in 2019-20 had the highest membership numbers in recent years even with the pandemic (968 members).

- We also charged \$30 per person (in addition to membership) for attendance at the NASFAA Authorized Events which yielded \$2,250 in revenue.
- The conference is a major source of revenue for the association, as well as a major expense. With the potential cancellation of business partner support, we were in jeopardy of having a large deficit. Thanks to our business partners who remained sponsors, as well as increased membership numbers, we ended the year with a very small deficit (less than \$5,000).
- As final incentive to rejoin FASFAA for the 2020-21 year, we offered a year-end webinar for which the first 200 registrants would receive a free copy of the presenter's book (Anthony Abraham Jack's [The Privileged Poor](#)). Overall membership for 2020-21 has continued to reach record numbers due to the successful outreach at the end of the 2019-20 year.