



2024-25 ANNUAL REPORT

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A MESSAGE FROM OUR NATIONAL CHAIR AND PRESIDENT

It is no secret that higher education is undergoing a period of rapid and sometimes unsettling change — new policies, shifting enrollment patterns, evolving technology, and growing expectations from students and families. And more often than not, the challenging task of implementing these changes, communicating them to students and families, and ensuring that your institution remains in compliance falls on your shoulders.

In moments of change and uncertainty, the true character of our profession shines through. Time and again, you have shown the strength and leadership that define financial aid professionals — steadfast in your commitment to students, creative in your problem-solving, and determined to uphold the promise of higher education, no matter the obstacles.

Today, as polarization and divisiveness threaten to pull communities apart, our shared mission calls us to something higher. We may differ in perspective or approach, but we are united by a common goal: to expand access and opportunity for every student who dreams of a college education. That common ground is stronger than anything that seeks to divide us.

As your association, we pledge to listen closely to your challenges, questions, and frustrations and to respond with action. We are committed to equipping you with the tools, training, and resources you need to excel in your work — and to serving as a strong, consistent voice for you in Washington. Your experiences shape our advocacy and our programs, ensuring that the profession's needs and the needs of the students you serve remain at the core of all we do.

This shared commitment between you and your association is a powerful reminder that we do not face uncertain times alone. Our community is a network of support and resilience — one that fuels optimism and keeps the promise of education alive for every student.

Hope is not naïve; it is a discipline. Every award letter you send, every conversation you have with a family navigating the cost of college, is an act of hope — that education can transform lives and strengthen our society. Your daily work proves that progress is possible when we stay focused on what matters most.



Kristi Jovell, FAAC®
2024-25 NASFAA National Chair



Melanie Storey
NASFAA President & CEO

GOVERNANCE AND LEADERSHIP



In 2024-25, the NASFAA [Board of Directors](#) met twice in person and several times virtually. Under the leadership of National Chair Kristi Jovell, the Board navigated executive orders from the Trump Administration affecting the higher education community. Leadership also undertook a comprehensive needs assessment and planning process for NASFAA's presidential search — NASFAA's first in 14 years. This work included consultations with legal and governance experts, the appointment of the Presidential Search Committee (PSC) chair and members, the issuance of a Request for Proposals (RFP) for a search firm, and, ultimately, the selection and appointment of NASFAA's new President & CEO, Melanie Storey, who took the helm on May 1, 2025.

As NASFAA's chief governing and oversight body, the Board provided essential fiscal and strategic direction, advanced NASFAA's mission through key programmatic initiatives, and remained agile in serving the membership. Below is a summary of significant [Board activities and actions](#) during 2024-25:

- Approve a Replacement Representative-At-Large
- Fiscal Year 2023-24 [Audit](#) Approval
- Ratify SASFAA Board Member Changes
- Re-Appoint Presidential Search Committee (PSC) Chair
- Ratify/Approve Presidential Search Committee (PSC) Charter & Roster
- Approve NEC/Awards/Ethics Rosters for 24-25
- Approve Ascendium Grant - Prison Education
- Approve Mathematica Contract
- Approve [Leadership & Legislative Conference & Expo](#) 2025 Budget
- Approve 2025 [National Conference](#) Budget
- Approve 2025 [Virtual Conference](#) Budget
- Approve NASFAA Lease Termination
- Approve 2025-26 [Membership Dues](#) & Framework
- Approve Additional 2024-25 Board Designated Fund Request
- Appointed Melanie Storey as the next President and CEO of NASFAA
- Approve 2025-26 [Executive Leadership Collective](#) Budget
- Approve Board P&P Update
- Approve Presidential Transition Task Team (PT3) Charter
- [Awards](#) Approval for 2025
- Staffing 2025-26 Committee Rosters
- Approve NASFAA 2025-26 Operating Budget
- Approve 2025-26 Board Designated Requests

2024-24 NASFAA BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Officers

National Chair: Kristi Jovell
Johns Hopkins

National Chair-Elect: Heidi Carl
Purdue University

Past National Chair: Helen Faith
University of Virginia

Treasurer: Alex DeLonis
Saint Louis University

Diversity Officer: Sharon Oliver
North Carolina Central University

Secretary: Melet Leafgreen
UT Southwestern Medical Center

Regional Representatives

EASFAA: Danette Burgess
Howard University

MASFAA: Amanda Fijal
University of Chicago

RMASFAA: Kelli Engelhardt
University of Providence (MT)

SASFAA: Leigh Ann Hussey
University of West Georgia

SWASFAA: Audra Main
Moore Norman Technology Center

WASFAA: Amanda Cornelius
Northern Arizona University

Representatives-at-Large

Shannon Crossland
Frank Phillips College

Sarah Everitt
Gonzaga University

Christal Williams
Johnson County Community College

David Alexander
ECPI University

Amy Cable
Louisiana Community and Technical College

Silvia Marquez
University of California-San Diego

Ex Officio

Interim President: Beth Maglione

NASFAA CFO: Mitchell Weintraub
NASFAA/Cherry Bekaert Advisory



FINANCIAL SUMMARY

NASFAA's financial position is consistently strong. For the 14th consecutive fiscal year, an independent audit resulted in an "unmodified opinion" on the consolidated financial statements, with no proposed adjusting entries or disagreements with management. NASFAA continues to provide strong member value, with an industry-leading 97% retention rate in 2024-25, and has reinvested the majority of its net revenues into strategic initiatives.

In the fiscal year 2024-25, NASFAA approved a single-year increase for the 2025-26 member dues that aligns with the new framework to keep dues and other fees within plus or minus two percentage points of the Consumer Price Index (CPI). The Board initiated this new approved framework to ensure regular and predictable future increases that keep pace with expense increases.

In May 2025, the Board approved NASFAA's FY 2026 operating budget and designated funds for development projects in line with the association's strategic goals.

In 2024-25, NASFAA secured grants to provide ongoing support for the FAFSA Simplification Policy Implementation and to support the Strada Enrollment Management Advisory Group. NASFAA was also approved to extend existing grants to support the coalition-led College Cost Transparency Initiative and prison education program convening.

NASFAA's subsidiary, Blue Icon Advisors, continues to expand its footprint by providing services such as interim leadership, policy development, compliance evaluations, and custom training to schools and organizations. Due to their continued growth and need to provide a more robust financial analysis, Blue Icon Advisors partnered with NASFAA's outsourced accounting firm, Cherry Bekaert, and began implementing a new accounting software, switching from QuickBooks Online to Sage Intacct.

Overall, NASFAA's financial outlook remains in good standing as it moves forward into the new fiscal year.

POLICY AND FEDERAL RELATIONS: ADVOCACY, RESEARCH & GRANTS



Advocacy

NASFAA's legislative advocacy in 2024-25 focused on protecting robust increases to federal student aid programs and following the budget reconciliation process.

This year, we:

- [Endorsed](#) several pieces of legislation aimed at improving affordability and transparency.
- Facilitated six [advocacy pipelines](#) through which NASFAA members came to Washington, D.C., to meet with their representatives and senators on Capitol Hill.
- [Offered](#) policy recommendations to the incoming Trump Administration and 119th Congress.
- [Followed](#) closely the fiscal year (FY) 2025 federal budget and appropriations process and urged Members of Congress to protect funding for Federal Work-Study (FWS), the Federal Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grant (FSEOG) program, and the Pell Grant program.
- Launched a Call to Action advocacy campaign that encouraged NASFAA members to ask their members of Congress to protect higher education programs in the budget reconciliation process.
- [Developed](#) a web center to keep members informed on the 2025 budget reconciliation process and the One Big Beautiful Bill Act that was signed into law.
- [Created](#) a chart highlighting the federal student aid changes from the One Big Beautiful Bill Act.

NASFAA continues to engage and partner with the Department of Education (ED) on long-term policy initiatives and timely problem-solving as issues arise. We ensure NASFAA's voice is on the record by submitting public comments for all of ED's initiatives that impact financial aid administrators, and we draft or sign on to community letters in areas of concern that fall outside the regulatory process. Our efforts are informed by NASFAA's members, both through formal engagements like task forces and working groups, as well as through informal channels like our Slack Communities. NASFAA collaborates with external higher education policy partners to amplify efforts and ensure group coordination. ED-focused advocacy in 2024-25 focused on ensuring a smoother 2025-26 FAFSA rollout and implementation of the gainful employment/financial value transparency regulations.

In 2024-25, NASFAA:

- Submitted public comments to the Department of Education on:
 - FSA's proposed changes to the [Master Promissory Note](#)
 - FSA's proposed [R2T4, Distance Ed, and TRIO Regulations](#)
 - FSA's 2025-26 FAFSA [Request for Information](#)
 - FSA's draft [2026-27 FAFSA](#)
 - FSA's proposed changes to the [Income-Driven Repayment enrollment form](#)

- Engaged in the Department of Education’s negotiated rulemaking process with comments on:
 - FSA’s [proposed student loan debt relief for financial hardship](#) rules
 - FSA’s Interim Final Rule on the [Income-Contingent Repayment Plan](#)
 - FSA’s intent to conduct negotiated rulemaking on [Public Service Loan Forgiveness](#)
- Sent letters to ED and/or signed on to community letters about timely issues, including:
 - Ensuring a fully functional [2025-26 FAFSA](#)
 - Requesting [training and resources](#) for gainful employment/financial value transparency reporting
 - Requesting a [delay](#) of the gainful employment/financial value transparency reporting deadline
 - Requesting FY 2025 Pell Grant and campus-based [funding levels](#)
 - Urging ED to commit to an October 1 release date for the [2025-26 FAFSA](#)

Research & Grants

NASFAA continued to work to solicit grant funding to support a multitude of policy, research, and communications efforts throughout the association. This year:

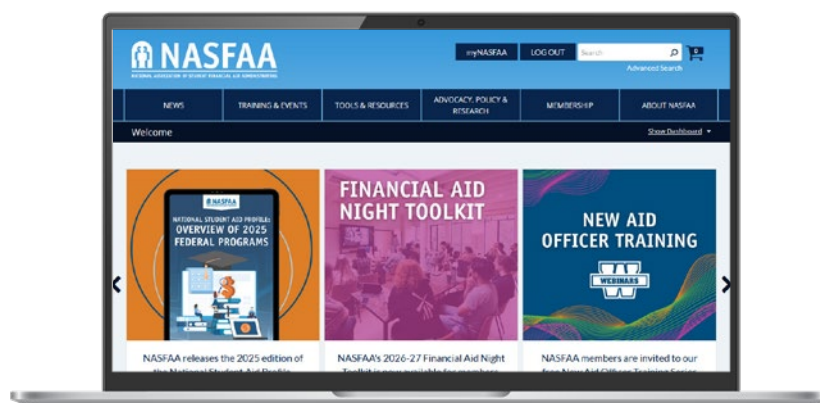
- Grants from the Gates Foundation funded FAFSA Simplification Implementation efforts. This grant covered exploratory work on [data sharing in the context of federal tax information \(FTI\)](#), how institutions construct their Cost of Attendance (forthcoming), and the implications of Negative SAI (forthcoming). This grant will continue into the 2025-26 membership year.
- A grant from Strada Education Foundation funded the [College Cost Transparency Initiative](#) and will continue to do so for this upcoming membership year.
- Our prison education-related work received additional funding from the Ascendium Education Foundation. This grant funding will continue into the 2025-26 membership year.

Outside of our grant-funded work, NASFAA’s Research Department produced several reports that assisted our association’s work. Our most notable work included:

- The [2025 Administrative Burden Survey Report](#) follows up on studies from 2010, 2015, and 2020 and examines how ongoing regulatory changes affect college financial aid offices.
- An exploratory study on the [impact of workforce reduction and potential closure of the Department of Education on financial aid offices](#).
- A series of [seven research-based case studies](#) to assist our members with reclassification efforts,
- Our annual update on the state of the Title IV programs, with our [2024 National Student Aid Profile](#).

NASFAA’s Research Department continued supporting other departments’ needs and NASFAA’s leadership with data analysis and internal evaluative and administrative surveying of staff and the NASFAA membership.

COMMUNICATIONS AND MARKETING



In 2024-25, the financial aid community has had to reckon with sweeping policy changes that reshape much of their work. Shifting federal guidance, fluctuating funding levels, and forthcoming monumental changes to key programs have required aid offices to remain agile and adaptable. Many have also had to navigate increased student need and higher expectations for personalized support, all while managing limited staff and tightening budgets. Despite these pressures, financial aid professionals have continued to serve as steadfast advocates for students — helping them access, understand, and afford higher education amid a constantly evolving landscape.

In this time of transition, NASFAA provided members regular updates, analysis, and guidance on navigating these challenges, member-written [book reviews](#), and new avenues for collaboration and sharing best practices, in keeping with our longstanding mission of serving as a forum on student financial aid issues and ensuring financial aid professionals have access to the knowledge needed to achieve their goals.

Below are some milestones the NASFAA Communications and Marketing team reached in 2024-25.

Today's News

Year after year, members rank *Today's News* — NASFAA's newsletter emailed each weekday morning to more than 30,000 subscribers — as one of the most valuable benefits of NASFAA membership. A year of continued growth, with more than 500 new subscribers in 2024-25, demonstrated the extent to which members relied on *Today's News* for the latest updates and challenges facing the profession. NASFAA-produced news articles and podcast episodes focusing on the changing financial aid landscape leading up to and following the 2024 presidential election.

Top 10 Most-Read Articles Written by NASFAA Staff



1. [What a Second Trump Term Could Mean for Student Financial Aid](#)
2. [Biden Administration Announces 'Final' Student Loan Debt Relief Approvals](#)
3. [What Could an Effort to 'Abolish' the Department of Education Actually Mean for Financial Aid Policy?](#)
4. [Trump Signs Executive Order Seeking to Dismantle ED](#)
5. [Senate Passes Federal Spending Bill, Averting Government Shutdown](#)
6. [PSLF Buyback Program: A Way to Have SAVE Plan Forbearance Months Counted Towards Loan Forgiveness](#)
7. [Court Ruling Affirms Blocking of SAVE Plan While Next Steps for the Program Remain Uncertain](#)
8. [President Trump Again Proposes Massive Cuts to Student Aid](#)
9. [Trump Releases FY 2026 'Skinny' Budget Proposal, Making Cuts to ED Programs and Eliminating FSEOG](#)
10. [Congress Unveils Short-Term Spending Deal, Funding Government Until March 14](#)

Top 5 "Off The Cuff" Podcast Episodes of 2023-24

1. [OTC Inside The Beltway: Working Through the Trump Administration's Latest Effort to Dismantle Education Department](#)
2. [OTC Inside the Beltway: Mass Layoffs at ED, Chances of a Shutdown, and the PSLF Executive Order](#)
3. [OTC Inside The Beltway: 2024-25 and 2025-26 FAFSA Updates and the 2024 Election](#)
4. [OTC Inside The Beltway: Unpacking ED's DEI Dear Colleague Letter, SAVE Plan Updates, and Batch Corrections Functionality](#)
5. [OTC Inside the Beltway: The Latest on GE & FVT Regulations, SCOTUS' Regulatory Shakeup, and FAFSA Timelines](#)

Media Engagement

NASFAA regularly engages with members of the media to champion the association's policy positions, share new research, and raise public awareness of the funding-related issues plaguing college students and postsecondary institutions.

In 2024-25, reporters across the country repeatedly turned to NASFAA as a voice of authority on financial aid news and policy updates. The association was quoted or referenced nearly 3,800 times in national media and trade publications, including major outlets like The New York Times, The Washington Post, The Associated Press, and more. NASFAA also continued its proactive media outreach, publishing more than 20 press releases and statements, in addition to targeted outreach to individual reporters throughout the year.

NASFAA.org

The NASFAA website continues to be where members find everything they need in one place, from news to training to resources to membership information and much more. In 2024-25, NASFAA.org received more than 5.8 million pageviews, a nearly 4.8% increase in web traffic since 2023-24.

Five Most-Visited NASFAA.org Pages, July 1, 2024 - June 30, 2025

1. [NASFAA.org Home Page](#) (479,922 page views)
2. [AskRegs Landing Page](#) (124,987 page views)
3. [Today's News Landing Page](#) (93,162 page views)
4. [NASFAA 2025 National Conference Home Page](#) (70,560 page views)
5. [Training & Events Landing Page](#) (64,408 page views)

Social Media

NASFAA actively posts on [LinkedIn](#), [Facebook](#), [X/Twitter](#), and [Instagram](#) at least five days a week. In 2024-25, we had 2,479 social media posts across our platforms, earning over 3.3 million impressions. As of June 30, 2025, we had 26,985 LinkedIn followers, 15,628 X/Twitter followers, 14,840 Facebook fans, and 3,023 Instagram followers.

Marketing Team Highlights

The Marketing team continues to help the NASFAA and Blue Icon Advisors staff achieve their goals by consistently promoting NASFAA's offerings and membership benefits across the website, social media, Today's News newsletter, emails, and NASFAA Communities. Again, this year, many NASFAA U Online Courses, CFAA Exam Prep Workshops, and Leadership & Legislative Conference pathways filled up well in advance.

In 2024-25, we executed quarterly marketing campaigns to highlight different initiatives, events, and resources, including the [College Cost Transparency Initiative](#), Financial Aid Day and [Member Appreciation Day](#), [Financial Aid Awareness Month](#), and a Call to Action campaign to urge Congress to protect higher education and student aid funding in the budget reconciliation.

TECHNOLOGY ADVANCEMENTS



The backbone of NASFAA is our membership database, iMIS, which touches just about every part of our work and experience. Last year, we started planning for a full-scale upgrade and expansion of this system - a multi-year project involving staff across the association, requiring a complete overhaul in how data is managed, processed, and accessed. It's not a project we went into lightly, but it is imperative to ensure we can continue to grow and meet our current and future needs. This year, we secured our new environment, and work began in earnest to plan for a migration that will be here before we know it.

Additionally, AI is an undeniable force impacting our work and world, and NASFAA has been focused on setting the stage for its integration into our tools and daily lives. We've started to build the framework for AI-assisted tools in the AskRegs platform, which will be available to administrators to evaluate and support this critical service. AI-assisted components were also evaluated for the website and other tools, and further work is underway.

Other 2024-25 advancements include:

- Migrated to and refined a streamlined server array and authentication procedures, increasing stability and data security, and offering greater access to data and materials across departments and staff
- Deployed an app to enhance the 2025 Leadership & Legislative Conference & Expo experience
- Developed and launched a searchable/sortable [event attendance](#) tool
- Developed and launched searchable/sortable [CFAA](#) and [Credential](#) registries
- Completed enhancements to the CFAA admin tools, conference tools and templates, display of member and organizational activity, the dues management and payment process, and other site components.

COMMUNITIES



This year, our communities have moved beyond simple chats to become dynamic engines for member collaboration and value. Our strategic focus on creating connected spaces has led to tangible successes benefiting the entire association. We've not only created a single, streamlined hub for professional support, but also fostered new opportunities for transparency and open communication between members and NASFAA staff.

- **Active Engagement:** More than 150 original member posts each month, with over 90% of posts receiving at least one reply from another member.
- **Growing Network:** This year, we welcomed over 1,500 new users to Slack, bringing our total community to just under 10,000 members.
- **Driving In-Person Connections:** In-person community events hosted with our regional partners and at national conferences fostered valuable connections, with hundreds of community members attending each gathering.
- **Highlighting Member Voices:** Our "[Voices of NASFAA](#)" series, which highlights the stories and experiences of our members, has become a popular feature, with episodes averaging 200 views.
- **Building Trust and Transparency:** Our communities have become a powerful space for NASFAA staff and members to connect openly and transparently, strengthening trust and improving our reputation. In particular, when times are tough, we'll often have members of NASFAA's policy team who can come into the Slack space and provide answers and context to help our community.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT



Training & Regulatory Assistance

In 2024-25, NASFAA's professional development, compliance, and regulatory services delivered strong results across multiple program areas. AskRegs demonstrated its ongoing value as a high-impact member service with impressive engagement and deflection rates. NASFAA U continued to expand its role as the leading training platform in the space, webinars provided timely and high-quality learning opportunities, and Self-Study Guides remained a trusted compliance resource. At the same time, the Compliance Engine strengthened institutions' ability to manage Title IV requirements effectively. Collectively, these programs reflect NASFAA's commitment to supporting financial aid administrators with innovative, responsive, and high-quality training and professional development resources.

AskRegs

[AskRegs](#) continues to be one of NASFAA's most highly utilized member services, offering timely, expert guidance to regulatory and compliance questions. The service not only delivers direct support but also proactively reduces inquiries through a strong deflection rate, saving staff time while ensuring members receive answers quickly. Engagement levels this year reaffirm AskRegs as an essential value-added resource for our members.

Key Achievements:

- **Total Page Views:** 2,206,565
- **User Engagement:** 6,760 questions submitted
- **Deflections:** 8,578 avoided submissions due to existing content
- **Deflection Rate:** 55.93%, reducing staff time and providing members with immediate answers

Webinars

NASFAA's [webinars](#) remain one of the most popular and practical training and professional development tools, delivering timely training on pressing issues. Webinars continue to balance reach, accessibility, and high satisfaction ratings, proving to be a cornerstone of our member engagement strategy.

Key Achievements:

- **Participation:** Average registration of 3,164, and average live attendance of 1,510
- **Quality Ratings:** Attendees rated usefulness, content quality, and presenter effectiveness at 99% satisfaction, consistently above the 95% target

NASFAA U Online Courses

[Online, facilitated courses](#) through NASFAA U offer comprehensive training and professional development for financial aid professionals nationwide. These courses help participants deepen their knowledge of federal student aid regulations, improve their skills, and enhance their understanding of financial aid administration in higher education. NASFAA U provides comprehensive instruction to financial aid and other campus professionals with an in-depth perspective not found elsewhere.

Key Achievements:

- **Utilization:** 1,509 enrollments by 1,242 unique users in 2024-25
- **Participant Success:** 94% average pass rate, exceeding the 88% target

Compliance Engine

A comprehensive, web-based tool, the [NASFAA Compliance Engine](#) helps financial aid offices ensure compliance with federal student aid. Its tools include checklists and the Policies and Procedures (P&P) Builder to help financial aid professionals conduct internal reviews, maintain regulatory compliance, and prepare for audits and program reviews.

The Compliance Engine continues to serve as a critical tool for institutions in managing Title IV compliance. With steady growth in subscriptions and usage, the Compliance Engine demonstrates its value as a valuable compliance management resource.

Key Achievements:

- **Utilization:** 3,432 checklists and 4,729 manuals created in 2024-25
- **Top Checklists:** Most-used included Student Consumer Information, Federal Direct Loan Program, SAP, Cash Management, and Student Eligibility
- **Subscriptions:** 1,636 P&P subscribers

Self-Study Guides

The suite of NASFAA [Self-Study Guides](#) remains a vital compliance and training resource for financial aid administrators. They provide accessible, self-paced content institutions rely upon to strengthen knowledge, improve compliance, and prepare staff for credential testing. Additionally, they are used as an office regulatory resource. The demand continues to grow, underscoring their importance in our training portfolio. They are also the cornerstone of NASFAA [Authorized Events](#), enabling the aid community to provide solid training events nationally.

Key Achievements:

- **Total Downloads:** 17,961 in 2024-25, including 2,369 free downloads through a grant from Strada Education Foundation
- **Reach:** 1,320 unique schools and 5,662 unique individuals accessed guides in 2024-25

CERTIFICATION & CREDENTIALS



Certified Financial Aid Administrator® Program

This first-in-the-industry [certification](#) validates the knowledge and unwavering commitment to the highest ethical standards of financial aid professionals at postsecondary institutions nationwide.

“Earning the FAAC® designation... reflects your competence, commitment, and the countless hours you’ve invested in serving students and families,” says Elizabeth Jacquez-Amador, 2025-26 commission chair and director of student financial aid at the University of New Mexico.

Recertification encourages continued learning and professional development in each of the financial aid competencies that define the role of a skilled and well-rounded financial aid administrator.

By the end of this fiscal year, we reached the following benchmarks:

- Added 202 new FAACs
- Expanded to 859 FAACs in all six regions
- Sustained a consistently higher success rate among exam preparation workshop participants (9 out of 10) compared to independent study (7 out of 10)
- Achieved a recertification rate of 84%
- Increased [100+ Club membership](#) to 181 FAACs
- Grew the FAAC Community on Slack to more than 800 members

Number of FAACs by Region as of June 30, 2025

Region	Number of FAACs as of June 30, 2025	Percent increase since June 30, 2024
SASFAA	225	19%
MASFAA	203	42%
EASFAA	144	20%
WASFAA	118	31%
SWASFAA	85	29%
RMASFAA	83	20%

Professional Credentials

In 2024-25, NASFAA’s [Professional Credentials Program](#) continued growing, with more members earning new credentials or renewing their existing credentials. Despite ever-changing regulatory and legislative requirements, NASFAA credentials, combined with experience in the field, help financial aid professionals ensure their knowledge remains relevant and current. Authorized events and NASFAA’s online courses continue to be the leading pathways.

By the end of the 2024-25 fiscal year:

- More than 46,500 professionals earned or renewed credentials
- More than 12,000 professionals earned at least one credential
- More than 425 professionals earned all available NASFAA Professional Credentials

Credentials also serve as excellent preparation for becoming certified. More than 140 of the top credential earners now also hold the FAAC® designation.

BUSINESS SERVICES



Blue Icon Advisors and the Standards of Excellence Review Program

Registered as a business in 45 states (and growing), [Blue Icon](#) has completed more than 649 projects for 367 institutions across the country, with 282 of those projects coming from returning clients, underscoring the trust and value we have built within the financial aid community. Since 2019, Blue Icon's primary services have included interim leadership and staffing, compliance and operational reviews, policies and procedures development, system optimizations, and more.

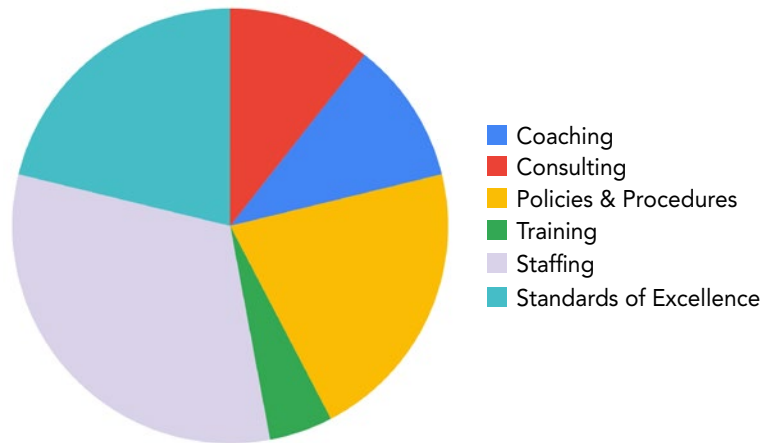
Member Survey Results

In spring 2025, we conducted a survey with NASFAA members to assess market awareness and identify any new services needed. Of survey respondents, 93% had heard of Blue Icon before the survey, with staffing support and P&P assistance as the most widely used consulting services. Among clients, 92% described their experience as mostly positive (the highest rating on the survey). For respondents who had not used Blue Icon, 41% reported no need for consulting services, while others cited prior vendor relationships, limited awareness of offerings, or resource constraints. When asked about needed services, respondents cited report preparation (such as FVT/GE and Federal Work-Study reporting), default management planning, cross-departmental support, and executive training for institutional leaders unfamiliar with financial aid.

Contract Volume

Including all grants and contracts, Blue Icon signed 85 client contracts in 2024-25, which is a decrease compared to last year. Federal and state funding cuts, uncertainty with the Department of Education, and the administrative burden needed to deal with FAFSA simplification meant aid administrators did not have the budget or bandwidth to engage in consulting projects. In 2024-25, Blue Icon received 332 inquiries, produced 216 proposals, and signed 85 contracts. 251 proposals produced*

2024-25 Contracts Signed



Consultants

Most of Blue Icon’s consultants are practicing financial aid administrators who apply their expertise via part-time consulting support. Fewer consultants are available to work full-time on leadership and staffing support projects, but they are in high demand. To learn about becoming a Blue Icon consultant, visit the Blue Icon careers page at BlueIconAdvisors.com.

Quick Facts About Blue Icon Consultants:

- Blue Icon has received 359 consultant applications since its launch in 2019.
- Blue Icon has hired 51% of applicants.
- As of the end of 2024-25, Blue Icon has 152 total active consultants, including [SOE peer reviewers](#).

Group Coaching, Let’s Talk, and Webinars

In 2024-25, Blue Icon held four [group coaching opportunities](#), 12 [Let’s Talk events](#), and two webinars within the NASFAA webinar series.

- New Director Group Coaching – 26 participants in two sessions
- Aspiring Director Group Coaching – 11 participants in one session
- Policies & Procedures Group Coaching – 26 participants in two sessions
- Let’s Talk – the average attendance was 206 participants per session
- Fall Webinar on Top 10 SOE Review Findings – 609 live attendees
- Spring Webinar on Data Sharing – 976 live attendees

Clean Audit

Blue Icon is proud to have submitted another clean third-party services audit report to the U.S. Department of Education.

- The audit requires collecting documentation for all engagements in which we perform Title IV financial aid functions on a school’s behalf, such as interim staffing and writing policies and procedures.
- The audit firm reviews the documentation to ensure our actions are in compliance with Title IV Federal Student Aid rules.

DIVERSITY LEADERSHIP PROGRAM



NASFAA's award-winning [Diversity Leadership Program \(DLP\)](#) is a cornerstone of our commitment to building a more inclusive and representative future for the financial aid profession. The program actively seeks out rising leaders from marginalized and underrepresented communities, providing a curated portfolio of NASFAA resources designed to accelerate their professional growth and amplify their state, regional, and national leadership.

Beyond professional development, the DLP's mission is to intentionally build a diverse and resilient leadership pipeline for the association while fostering a vibrant, supportive community that unlocks new participant opportunities.

The [2024-25 cohort](#) was selected from a highly competitive pool of over 50 applicants, a testament to the program's growing prestige. Their journey began by connecting at the 2025 Leadership & Legislative Conference & Expo in Washington, D.C., and continued at the 2025 National Conference in Anaheim. These pivotal events allowed the new cohort to build essential skills and forge a lasting professional network.

The capstone of their experience was a powerful return to Washington, D.C., in October 2025. This vital advocacy trip empowered the participants to leverage their front-line perspectives, directly shaping policy discussions and serving as a new voice within NASFAA's advocacy efforts.

The 2024-25 DLP Cohort:

- [Jonathan Charres](#), Assistant Director of Diversity and Outreach, Chapman University
- [Monica Flores](#), Director of Financial Aid, University of Houston-Downtown
- [Daisha Holmes](#), Specialized Grant Programs Manager, Johnson County Community College
- [Brenda Ilojirole](#), Associate Director of Financial Aid, Bethune-Cookman University
- [Quintin Sipp](#), Assistant Director of Financial Aid, Columbia University NY School of International and Public Affairs
- [Monique Ware](#), Executive Director of Campus Financial Aid Operations, Ivy Tech Community College

EVENTS

2025 Leadership & Legislative Conference & Expo



Over 500 financial aid professionals — the largest number in the conference’s history — [convened](#) in Washington, D.C. in February for NASFAA’s Leadership & Legislative Conference & Expo to grow professionally, learn, network, and become leaders on their campuses.

NASFAA’s Interim President and CEO Beth Maglione focused her remarks on resiliency in the face of change within the profession and noted that NASFAA is also in a state of transition as NASFAA’s Presidential Search Committee was working to fill the presidency position in the association.

“I want to tell you what won’t change, and that is NASFAA’s commitment to you,” Maglione said. “Our core values remain strong. We stand in the gap between schools and our federal partners when we need to do that, to provide the information that’s necessary for you. We ensure that your voices and challenges are heard at the highest levels.”



2025 National Conference



The National Conference is NASFAA's premier event serving the student financial aid community. Financial aid professionals from across the nation attend each year to increase their knowledge, network with colleagues, and learn the latest requirements, trends, and strategies in student aid.

Held June 24 - 27, 2025 in Anaheim, California, NASFAA 2025 brought together 2,684 financial aid professionals from across the country — including over 845 first-time conference attendees.

[LeVar Burton](#), a renowned actor, director, and television host, [opened the conference](#) with a conversation with NASFAA President & CEO Melanie Storey, sharing stories from his childhood, as well as moments from his career, including his first role in "Roots," along with "Star Trek: The Next Generation" and "Reading Rainbow."

"There is divine purpose in all things, and we tend to forget that," Burton said. "We tend to think and believe that it's up to us. I propose to you that it is up to us to trust that we are part of the doing right. We have a role to play, and when we apply ourselves to our highest ability to function, [things get] done."

Burton also stressed courageousness in his remarks, calling on attendees not to let fear paralyze them into inaction. "Fear is a natural part of the process of being alive, but if we allow that fear to prevent us from acting, then we've lost and we've eliminated our ability to be effective in the moment, right?" Burton said.

Burton ended the session by answering questions from attendees in the audience. He encouraged financial aid professionals to help students recognize that financial literacy is incredibly important. "If you are literate in at least one language, then you are, by my own definition, free," Burton said.

The conference also featured policy updates by Storey and Vice President of Public Policy and Federal Relations Karen McCarthy, a [preconference session](#) on the successes and challenges of prison education programs, a ceremony to pass the gavel of leadership from 2024-25 National Chair Kristi Jovell to 2025-26 National Chair Heidi Carl, several U.S. Department of Education sessions on FAFSA updates and student loan repayment, and more.

Online registration for the [2026 National Conference](#) in National Harbor, Maryland, on the Washington, D.C. waterfront, opens in January 2026.

"This was my first NASFAA Conference, and I hope it's not my last. I was very inspired and encouraged, especially during this time of uncertainty. This conference helped me find 'my people' and appreciate the work that I do. I'm so grateful."

"This was one of the best NASFAA conferences. With all the changes coming to financial aid, NASFAA has definitely become the leader in information for financial aid administrators."

"Being surrounded by 2,700 attendees who all work in the same field and understand the day-to-day realities of my role was incredibly validating — I felt heard in every conversation."

AWARDS



Each year, NASFAA awards recognize the outstanding achievements of members of the financial aid profession and the higher education community. NASFAA's national chair and president announce award recipients each year during the National Conference. A special [press release](#), published after the awards ceremony, highlights each awardee.

The 2025 [Allan W. Purdy Distinguished Service Award](#), one of the highest awards that NASFAA bestows, was given to:

- Kristi Jovell, FAAC®, Director of Strategic Financial Aid Initiatives at Johns Hopkins University and NASFAA's 2024-25 National Chair
- Beth Maglione, NASFAA Executive Vice President

The 2025 [Meritorious Achievement Award](#), presented to an individual who has made either an important single contribution to NASFAA or the profession, or multiple significant contributions, was given to:

- Dr. Sharon Oliver, Associate Vice Chancellor for Enrollment Management, North Carolina Central University
- Daniel Barkowitz, Assistant Vice President, Office of Student Financial Assistance & Student Employment, University of Miami

The 2025 [Robert P. Huff Golden Quill Award](#), presented each year to an individual or organization chosen for their contributions to the literature on student financial aid, was given to:

- Dr. Zach Taylor, Assistant Professor, University of Southern Mississippi

NASFAA's 2025 [Gold Star Award](#), which recognizes innovative ideas in the financial aid arena at any level, targeted toward any constituency, was presented to:

- "Better FAFSA Help" Facebook group
- "Financial Aid Follies" Facebook group

The association also presented six [Regional Leadership Awards](#) to recipients who have exhibited high integrity and character, have shown creative leadership, and have inspired and encouraged others to actively participate in professional development. One award was given in each of six regions to:

- EASFAA – Marie Johnson, FAAC®, Director of Student Financial Services, University of Vermont
- MASFAA – Laura Rogers, Associate Director of Compliance, University of Chicago
- RMASFAA – Dr. Angela Karlin, Assistant Vice Provost/Director of Financial Aid, University of Kansas
- SASFAA – Celena Tulloss, FAAC®, Assistant Vice President, Enrollment Management & Executive Director of Financial Aid & Scholarships, Auburn University

- SWASFAA – Ben Montecillo, Executive Director, University of Houston
- WASFAA – Nicole McMillin, FAAC®, Director of Financial Aid, Idaho College of Osteopathic Medicine

2024-25 National Chair Kristi Jovell spoke about the federal and regulatory landscape continuing to undergo significant changes due to a new presidential administration and shifts in Congress, FAFSA simplification, gainful employment (GE) and financial value transparency (FVT), and more.

“We as leaders need to not only be thinking about and building our own resilience but also supporting and fostering resiliency with our teams,” Jovell said. “We’re in a marathon, not a sprint, and we need to prepare properly. The sessions that you will attend over the next couple of days will equip you with the skills to more effectively lead through these times.”

The multi-day conference separates attendees into five different pathways where they can speak about these issues with their peers. Over the first two days, members learned new skills to serve as state and regional association leaders, pick up new strategies for association leadership, compliance management, financial aid management and leadership, strategic enrollment, and network and explore important issues facing the financial aid community.

Attendees also had the opportunity to meet with their representatives on Capitol Hill and discuss pressing student financial aid issues, including student aid funding, FAFSA simplification, and more.

MEMBERSHIP



In fiscal year 2024-25, NASFAA maintained an impressive 97.1% member retention rate — well above the industry average of 85%.

That rate is a testament to NASFAA’s work delivering what members need, especially as member institutions dealt with implementing monumental changes as a result of FAFSA simplification, new federal reporting requirements, and still more policy movement on the horizon with the new presidential administration. In 2024-25, NASFAA also continued its upward trajectory of institutional members, with 75 new and rejoined schools, to reach a total of 2,784.

Number of Students	Number of Schools	Percentage of Schools
0-999	829	29.8%
1,000-4,999	1,290	46.3%
5,000-9,999	338	12.1%
10,000-19,999	181	6.5%
20,000 and above	146	5.2%
TOTAL	2,784	100%

Sector	Number of Schools	Percentage of Schools
Community College	860	30.9%
For-Profit	232	8.3%
Graduate/Professional	110	4.0%
Nonprofit	1,062	38.1%
Public 4-year	520	18.7%
TOTAL	2,784	100%

DALLAS MARTIN ENDOWMENT FOR PUBLIC POLICY AND STUDENT AID (DME)

An Open Message From the 2025 DME Intern

This year's intern, Cristian Reyes (he/him/él), is a first-generation, Mexican-American graduate student from McFarland, a small rural town in California's Central Valley. He is currently pursuing his graduate studies at Cal Poly San Luis Obispo, where he supports student success programming and assessment through his graduate assistantships with the Cal Poly Scholars program and the Basic Needs Initiative. In this adapted excerpt from his [September 2025 message to NASFAA members](#), Cristian describes some of the most significant experiences during his internship.



Prison Education Program Convening



In June, I had the opportunity to attend the PEP Convening in Washington, D.C., an entirely new learning experience for me. Although I arrived with limited prior knowledge, it quickly became one of the most impactful moments of my summer. I was especially moved by several presentations, including the justice-impacted scholar panel and a session on providing essential services for students with disabilities in Prison Education Programs (PEPs). One statement that has stayed with me came from Rameika Robinson, a justice-impacted scholar on the panel, who shared that her experience “broke me before it empowered me.”

2025 NASFAA Conference

In June, I had the incredible opportunity to attend the 2025 NASFAA Conference in Anaheim, California. I was able to connect with so many members of the NASFAA community, whether cheering them on during the annual 5K, engaging in thoughtful conversations at receptions, or simply sharing stories over coffee between sessions. The most impactful session I attended focused on the effects of FAFSA simplification on mixed-status families, a topic that is both deeply personal and often overlooked in broader policy conversations. Hearing stories and data about how these changes are creating new barriers for undocumented students and their families reminded me of the critical importance of inclusive, equity-centered policy work.

Legislative Office Meetings + PNPI Financial Student Aid Bootcamp

In July, I had the privilege of participating in advocacy meetings on Capitol Hill with the offices of Senator Alex Padilla, Senator Adam Schiff, and Representative Salud Carbajal. During these meetings, I advocated for key legislative priorities, including the standardization of core elements and terminology in financial aid notifications and communications, the extension of Pell Grant eligibility to DACA students, and increased investment in campus-based aid programs such as Federal Work-Study and the Federal Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grant (FSEOG). While in D.C., I also had the opportunity to attend the Postsecondary National Policy Institute (PNPI) Bootcamp. One of the most impactful aspects of the program was deepening my understanding of how the cost of attendance and Student Aid Index (SAI) are calculated.

California Student Parent Summit

In September, I had the opportunity to attend the California Alliance for Student Parent Success' Student Parent Summit. I was especially grateful that the event was hosted in San Luis Obispo, which made attending much more accessible. One of the highlights of the summit was hearing from keynote speaker and New York Times bestselling author Stephanie Land, who shared her powerful story and experiences as a student parent navigating higher education. This summit was an incredibly eye-opening experience, and it was heartening to see so many of my former colleagues and mentors play key roles in bringing this important event to life.

2025 National Profile

Following a year of significant changes, including major updates to FAFSA simplification and the conclusion of the COVID-19 student loan repayment pause, the [National Profile](#) serves as a comprehensive overview of federal student aid programs for the 2024-25 award year. This project was a tremendous opportunity to strengthen my project management and data analysis skills. I worked with federal data sources to analyze trends, create visualizations, and ensure the accuracy and clarity of the information presented.

Basic Needs Blog Series

This summer, I had the opportunity to author a three-part blog series, Basic Needs, Real Costs, focused on one of my key professional research interests, basic needs insecurity in higher education. In the first post, I introduced the issue by defining what constitutes basic needs insecurity and examined the populations most affected by it, along with the compounding barriers they face in accessing higher education. The second post delved into the current policy landscape, highlighting both federal and state-level efforts, and evaluated campus-based interventions aimed at addressing food, housing, and financial insecurity. The final post explored the importance of cross-sector collaboration, specifically between basic needs practitioners and financial aid professionals, to create holistic systems of support that promote student success.

What's Next

As I prepare to begin my final year at Cal Poly San Luis Obispo in the Master's of Science in Higher Education Counseling and Student Affairs program, I find myself reflecting on the path ahead with renewed purpose. I remain committed to my aspiration of pursuing a doctoral degree in education and building a career where I can harness research to inform policy and advance equity and access in higher education. I want to extend my deepest gratitude to the entire NASFAA policy team, thank you for listening, for believing in my ideas, and for creating space for me to grow and thrive throughout the summer.

VOLUNTEERS



Despite the many challenges this past year presented financial aid professionals, NASFAA’s volunteers selflessly shared their talent and time to support the association’s mission and its members. On the following page, you will find a list of 2024-25 task forces, commissions, committees, boards, and working groups and their leaders, but there are so many more volunteers to honor. Please visit the [volunteer section](#) of our website to view a full list of NASFAA’s [2024-25 volunteers](#).

Advocacy Pipeline

NASFAA staff led

Association Governance Committee

Helen Faith, University of Virginia, Chair

Awards Committee

Helen Faith, University of Virginia, Chair

Career Awareness Toolkit Task Force

Zachary Goodwin, Marquette University, Chair

CFAA Program Commission

Jessica Flogaites, University of Pittsburgh, Chair
Craig Slaughter, Kenyon College, Past Chair
Brian Drabik, Northwestern University, Chair-Elect

Conference First-Time Attendee Task Force

Angelika Williams, University of San Francisco, Chair

Conference Program Task Force

Alicia Keaton, University of Central Florida, Chair
Patti Kohler, Western Governors University, Incoming Chair

Diversity Leadership Program Selection Committee

Sharon Oliver, North Carolina Central University, Chair

Ethics Commission

Quinton Taylor, Johns Hopkins University, Chair

Executive Leadership Collective Task Force

Anthony Jones, University of Utah, Chair

Financial Affairs Committee

Alex DeLonis, Saint Louis University, Chair/Treasurer

Financial Aid Competencies Mapping Working Group

NASFAA staff led

Graduate/Professional Borrowing Thought Force

Emily Osborn, Northwestern University Chicago Campus, Chair

Grad/Professional Caucus Chair

Emily Osborn, Northwestern University Chicago Campus

Leadership & Legislative Conference & Expo: Association Management

Helen Faith, University of Wisconsin - Madison, Past Chair

Kristi Jovell, Middlebury College, Chair

Heidi Carl, Purdue University, Chair-Elect

Leadership & Legislative Conference & Expo: Compliance & Risk Management

Chad Olson, Iowa State University, Chair

Angela Karlin, University of Kansas, Incoming Chair

State Advocacy Network

NASFAA staff led

Test Development Volunteers

NASFAA staff led

Under-Resourced Schools Scholarship Selection Task Force

Naglaa Gaafar Rego, Community College of Rhode Island,
Chair

Policy Rapid Response Network Task Force

NASFAA staff led

Publications Editorial Board

Linda Conard, LMC Communications Ltd., chair

Selection Committee: Diversity Leadership Program

Derek Kindle, University of Wisconsin–Madison, chair

Test Development Volunteers

NASFAA staff led

Under-Resourced Schools Scholarship Selection Task Force

Sandra Neel, Kentucky Community & Technical College
System, chair

Conference First-Time Attendee Task Force

Angelika Williams, University of San Francisco, Chair

Conference Program Task Force

Alicia Keaton, University of Central Florida, Chair

Patti Kohler, Western Governors University, Incoming Chair

Leadership & Legislative Conference - FAAC® Forum

Jessica Flogaites, University of Pittsburgh, Co-Chair

Craig Slaughter, Wake Forest University, Co-Chair

Leadership & Legislative Conference & Expo: Financial Aid Management & Leadership

Heather Boutell, Vanderbilt University School of Medicine, Chair

Alex DeLonis, Saint Louis University, Incoming Chair

Leadership & Legislative Conference & Expo: Strategic Enrollment Management

Shelby Maguire, Lafayette College, Chair

Melissa Pizzo, Arizona State University, Incoming Chair

NASFAA Associate Member Advisory Board

Joseph Garzillo, Sallie Mae, Chair

Nominations & Elections Committee

Helen Faith, University of Virginia, Chair

Policy Rapid Response Network Task Force

NASFAA staff led

Presidential Search Committee

Sharon Oliver, North Carolina Central University, Chair

Presidential Transition Task Team


Heidi Carl, Purdue University, Chair

Publications Editorial Board

Linda Conard, LMC Communications Ltd., Chair

Reclassification Working Group

NASFAA staff led

The background of the slide is a solid dark blue. In the center, there is a large, semi-transparent graphic of two hands cupping a globe. The hands are rendered in a lighter shade of blue, and the globe is also in a lighter shade, creating a subtle, layered effect. The text is centered within a white-bordered box that is also centered on the page.

**The National Association of Student
Financial Aid Administrators (NASFAA)
provides essential professional
development, information, and
services to financial aid administrators;
advocates for public policies that
increase student access and success;
nurtures community and belonging
throughout the financial aid profession;
and is committed to diversity
throughout all activities.**