

NASFAA's "Off The Cuff" Podcast - Episode 172 Transcript

Justin Draeger:

Hey everyone. Welcome to another edition of Off The Cuff. I'm Justin Draeger.

Allie Arcese:

I'm Allie Arcese with our communications team.

Megan Coval:

I'm Megan Coval with our policy team.

Jill Desjean:

And I'm Jill Desjean with our cynical policy team.

Justin Draeger:

Welcome back everyone. I'm glad to have you with us. It's been quite a week. It feels like the election to me was months ago, but it's only been just over a week. We talked a little bit about it last week. I want to talk a little bit more about it this week. We also have some updates for folks on what's going on with 2021/22 budget and appropriations and Pell Grant numbers. We have some things we want to talk about with the Department of Education and we want to talk about some debt cancellation statuses and proposals. Before we get to all of that though Allie, do we have any member comments?

Allie Arcese:

Yeah. Last week we asked folks how they spent election night, or if they have any election night traditions and Brad Williams from College Options said, that on election night his wife was very understanding as he commandeered the living room TV to settle in for a long night of watching. She retreated to the other room to enjoy the Hallmark Channel. He says that his marital bliss election night separation has kept us married for 39 years.

Megan Coval:

That's a good idea.

Allie Arcese:

That sounds like a good agreement arrangement.

Justin Draeger:

Yeah, I'm just curious. Do all of you watch Hallmark Channel movies come this time around Thanksgiving and Christmas? You do. Okay.

Allie Arcese:

They're so easy to watch and they're just-

Justin Draeger:

They are like background of your life for a little bit.

Allie Arcese:

Yeah, it's good background noise and if you want something where there's going to be a happy ending. It's great as frustrating as it is that they all follow the same plot and whatnot. But if you want to feel good-

Justin Draeger:

I want to send you a Tik Tok that my kids and I enjoy watching. My gateway to Tik ToK is through my teenagers, but they there's a woman on Tik ToK who does a recurring Hallmark Channel like movie in 60 seconds or less. And they're very spot on. I love it. I'll send that around so everybody can enjoy. Megan you strike me as a Hallmark Channel taper.

Megan Coval:

I don't really watch them. I maybe watch one or two. I do feel I would really like it. I just-

Justin Draeger:

You guys are 100%. Oh, we probably all are. But the problem with the streaming is, you don't just have a channel on all the time. When we were cable subscribers yes, it would be on. But with streaming you sit down and on that note, YouTube went down last night. Did you guys know this? [crosstalk 00:02:47]. For a little bit? Yeah, I saw it well, right. I didn't know either until I saw my kids crawl out from their hovels and be like, "what's going on with the internet?" And I'm like, "let's check Twitter." And it was YouTube. [crosstalk 00:03:02]. Anyway, that's YouTube is now what runs in our house instead of just a cable channels.

Megan Coval:

Do you have the YouTube TV?

Justin Draeger:

We do. My kids just literally just have YouTube and the algorithm just keeps showing you videos nonstop. Our kids don't turn things off lights, television, anything. They just walk out of a room and YouTube just- [crosstalk 00:03:23]

Megan Coval:

Okay. Got you. Yeah.

Justin Draeger:

All right. Well, thank you Brad, for sending that along. Let's get into this week's agenda. Over those last weekend since we did the last podcast, the race has been called for now, president elect Joe Biden. Some exciting information there. We know we have a new administration although, it's probably worth noting. Everybody knows president Trump has refused to concede the election, which I guess depending on where you sit on the side of spectrum, you either look at that as typical president Trump unconventional. What did you expect to like we're heading towards a constitutional crisis. I don't know where all of you are at on that scale. For me, it probably depends on the day or maybe even the time of day. But this led me to a couple of things about how this transition will go and maybe to shed a little bit

of light on for folks who aren't watching this blow by blow in the beltway. What myself and Megan and the team are all watching here at NASFAA.

Justin Draeger:

These are the steps that would normally take place. Normally by now, when its called for a candidate, because statistics and math, you would start to see a presidential transition team come into play. And normally what happens is you have the head of basically GSA, the government services agency that frees up money for the incoming administration to hire staff and start hiring up so that they can start seeing security briefings and get up to speed on all the federal initiatives. That chief is nominated by and put into place by the president. To date, the GSA has not had actually freed up any funds, which is interesting because Joe Biden did announce his transition team including in education. And I don't know if you noticed this, but next to everybody's name, it says volunteer, volunteer, volunteer-

Allie Arcese:

Because you have to say what the source of funding is for that person, for each person on the transition team.

Megan Coval:

Obviously it makes sense that there's a source of funding for this, but I never even knew all this GSA stuff before this year because it just happened so seamlessly in the past.

Justin Draeger:

Yeah. It's a non-issue and the last time it was an issue was Bush V. Gore back in what was that? 2000. Yeah. It's been 20 years, at that time president Clinton didn't actually release funds through GSA till mid-December. And the reason for that is because that's when, and we can put this in the show notes, but some in Congress saw this coming. They commissioned a Congressional Research Services Report in October 2020. But it runs through week by week. What has to happen between now and inauguration day for us to have a president. Even if, Regardless. Presidents conceding is not actually part of the Constitution or federal law. This is just like best practice and orderly transition of power. But in reality, the actual States have to appoint their electors for the Electoral College in the coming weeks.

Justin Draeger:

And then they all convene and actually send in and do their vote in mid-December. And at that point you have the Electoral College vote cast. The challenge there is that even in the CRS report though, they outline that you could still have contested elections even after those votes. And they go into all these sort of decision trees about what has to happen before the president of the Senate, or Senate majority leader, confirms those votes. Anyway, I won't go into all the nuances except to say, people are postulating that GSA will release that funding in mid-December at the latest. But the CRS report makes pretty clear that, the president retains all authority until the actual inauguration happens at 11:59 AM on whatever day that January.

Allie Arcese:

Well, that's how it should be. They're elected for a four year term. They go four years and that's why we don't have a new president the day after the election.

Justin Draeger:

Yeah. States are given till December 8th, this year for a safe harbor. In other words, the states have to get their act together by December 8th. They have to figure out who is getting their electoral votes by that date. Like in Georgia, I think we're going to have not only the runoff in January, but I think they're doing a recount just to make sure. All of that has to be wrapped up.

Allie Arcese:

I think you're required to just because of the margin. Yeah, if it's within 1%, then they're required to do a recount.

Megan Coval:

Yeah.

Justin Draeger:

And then Monday after the second Wednesday in December, this year, that's December 8th. That's the date that the electors meet and vote. And then on January 6th, that's the first order of business when Congress comes back, they get back together to count the actual electoral votes that were cast in December and they declare an election result winner. There is an actual orderly process. It's just like you have years and years of tradition and then funding isn't released and it upends everything. I don't know where we'll end up except to say that president elect Biden's transition team is in place and is moving forward.

Justin Draeger:

I think a lot of people are wondering who will be the secretary of education? Megan I don't know. I've been getting this question actually at a lot of the virtual conferences I've been speaking at. Maybe you and I should see if we're on the same page. But my answer is the thing that president Biden has a vice-president. Excuse me, president-elect Biden has promised is that the next secretary of education will have been a teacher at some point.

Megan Coval:

Yeah.

Justin Draeger:

That doesn't necessarily exclude somebody in higher ed. But I think the names that have been mostly floated are from K-12 and teachers.

Allie Arcese:

That's how it usually is.

Megan Coval:

Yeah.

Megan Coval:

Heads of the unions are the other names that have been floated. And yeah, unless they can get someone from higher ed who had a stint as a teacher, I was trying to think about anyone we know who might fit that mold, but yeah, that's usually the direction they go.

Justin Draeger:

And then the other big piece about this is...There's this whole staffing up process that we have to get through. We've talked before about some of the priorities of the Biden administration, right? We'd expect to see gainful employment come back in some way, shape or form. We talked about borrower defense being re-litigated. All of that is to say that before any of that can happen, the new administration needs an infrastructure. You actually need people in political positions to drive the agenda. And then, besides all of that, you need staff on the ground like career staff to actually implement and do the actual legwork.

Justin Draeger:

I was looking at a report that just came out of Politico that showed that roughly 24,000 more government employees left in the first nine months of Trump's term than at the start of president Barack Obama's. And I guess that's not a surprise. President Trump has talked a lot about the deep state, which I don't think [crosstalk 00:11:05] draining this one. Yeah. These things don't engender a lot of high morale if you're a federal employee. A lot of people have exited federal service. We've thought a lot and talked a lot about FSA and the department of ED staffing and are concerned about retirements, that positions aren't being replaced. And do you all recall? I think it was in the first year of the Trump administration, FSA announced nobody could telework.

Allie Arcese:

Yeah.

Megan Coval:

That I feel you-

Allie Arcese:

I know it was crazy because I mean someone I know who worked at the department said a lot of people had made major life choices based on the fact that they could telework, like bought houses in different places where they would take the train in. Yeah.

Justin Draeger:

Yeah. That doesn't seem-

Megan Coval:

It's a way to push people out. That's for sure.

Justin Draeger:

Yeah. And then hindsight 2020. It doesn't seem like a good way to make people particularly prepared for 100% telework during a pandemic. The Politico article noted that employment dropped by more than 14% between 2016 and this last year 2019, at the Department of Education. And then as we've noted, year after year, when we have those federal surveys about morale at different federal agencies, the Department of Education always comes in at the bottom of comparable federal agencies of similar size. It's already a tough place to work. And then you see reduced staffing. All of this anyway, begs the question like during this transition, not only does the Biden administration need to be thinking about

staffing up politically, but then what do you do about on the ground staff? And that's mentioned we're in the middle of a pandemic.

Allie Arcese:

I think one thing to note is that there was a hiring freeze at the beginning of president Trump's term. When people left, they weren't necessarily refilling those positions.

Justin Draeger:

Yeah.

Megan Coval:

The processes-

Justin Draeger:

It's hard for us to predict how quickly the first 100 days of every new president's benchmark. What's the plan for the first 100 days? In reality, the plan might be staff up. Because they're not getting GSA funds. The Trump administration is not sharing data or intel with the Biden administration as of today. And the president hasn't and may not have any plans to concede until-

Allie Arcese:

The lawsuits play out.

Justin Draeger:

Yeah. Lawsuits. Congress has to confirm the vote. I could just see like just dragging your feet in a way that means the first 100 days are potentially just stalled.

Megan Coval:

Yeah. If you're Biden right now every single day counts, right? Up until there's much any new administration wants to do with that. When you lose days like this, it's pretty substantial.

Justin Draeger:

Yeah. The calculus is hard because president-elect Biden has more experience obviously in the white house than any former president in the last 20 years maybe. Coming in served as a vice president for eight years, 50 years of public service experience. But then beset by all these challenges and hurdles in this transition. We'll see how it affects the timing of what happens in the Biden administration, but we'll stay on top of it. And we are obviously in touch and working on transition plans for the new administration and trying to make sure our priorities are seen. All right. Megan, let's talk about, it seems like a little ways off, but for schools that are going to be sending out awards the 21/22 award year. How are we doing on funding? Where are we at? And do we have Pell grant amounts here?

Megan Coval:

We don't have any final numbers yet. And we talked about this a couple of weeks ago, but right now the federal government is being funded through a continuing resolution. Which, is a short term spending measure through December 11th. That was passed back in September to buy Congress some more time to get the funding done and to get them essentially through the election and to give them more time. It

sounds right now, like a majority leader McConnell and Speaker Pelosi, have both said that they want to get the funding wrapped up before this Congress ends at the end of the calendar year. I think that's a positive sign that they're both indicated.

Justin Draeger:

Yeah. Senator McConnell's tune changed right after the election. Right? I think the day after all of a sudden he's super motivated to get this done.

Megan Coval:

Get this done. Get COVID relief done. Getting both of those things done. I don't see how that happens, but they're moving forward on the spending.

Justin Draeger:

Yeah. Politically it makes sense because if I'm Senator McConnell majority leader, right now I'm thinking worst case scenario for me is that, in the new Congress I have a democratically controlled Senate. We should get a spending bill that Republicans can sign onto. Let's focus on that. Best case scenarios Republicans retain control, but they're probably less interested in spending big, spending packages next year. It's predictably, I think Republicans are going to double down on fiscal [crosstalk 00:16:23] conservatives where they democratic administration. We've seen this play out over and over again. It's can we wipe the slate clean, get everything off our docket and then start over in January. But you said, Speaker Pelosi seems like she's willing to play ball too?

Megan Coval:

They both talked about doing an omnibus spending bill, which is basically just stitches together. All of the 12 appropriation bills into one. And this week, Senator Shelby who is Chairman of the Senate Budget Committee, put out draft bills just yesterday. That's some action there, right? You have majority leader McConnell saying it, but actually the bills are out now and meant to start as a starting point for negotiations with the house. They're not going to go through the normal process of being marked up by the committee and going to the Senate floor, but they basically put them out and pass them over to the House. Because, the House has already passed 10 of their 12 bills. They're pretty far along in the process and can start to do the back and forth and horse trading now. It's a good sign.

Justin Draeger:

Where are we going to land? Do we have any inclination of where we're going to land on, on things like campus-based funding or the maximum Pell grant?

Megan Coval:

The House bill and the Senate bill don't actually appear that too far apart. They have overall pretty modest increase for all of Department of Education, but they do both give \$150 increase to the max Pell, which is great. We've always, obviously wish it were more, but there were lots of years where we were just getting level of funding.

Justin Draeger:

If I'm an institution and I'm thinking about sending out a word notifications like this month or next month. It looks like the House and the Senate are on the same page with at least \$150 mark increased to the maximum.

Megan Coval:

Yeah. I think the fact that we saw that from the Senate too is a good sign.

Justin Draeger:

All right, we'll be on the lookout for that and continue to monitor and pass along information as we have it. Thank you Megan. All right. Thank you, Megan. We have some news about president-elect Biden and some debt cancellation plans. Jill, you want to catch us up here?

Jill Desjean:

Yeah. I don't know if it's so much news yet, as wondering what might happen. We do know that Biden has supported some form of student loan debt cancellation in his campaign platform. Not quite as expensive as what some of the other candidates had come out with, where they wanted to basically burn the system down. But I think he looked at something like \$10,000 of forgiveness for all borrowers and then forgiving all debt for certain borrowers. And it might've been students who attended public colleges and universities and, or, HBCUs or MSIs with incomes below a certain threshold. The thing that people are wondering about now is how exactly, if he decides to go through with them some form of debt forgiveness, how he would do that? We don't yet know how easy it's going to be to get things through Congress because we don't yet know the Congress, the makeup of Congress, the Senate won't be decided until January.

Jill Desjean:

And we know that the House has lost some seats. The democratic majority has lost some seats there. Some proponents of debt cancellation are looking at executive action as a way to get toward debt forgiveness. And so Senators Warren and Schumer, as two examples have believed that the president has authority under the HEA as it's written, so wouldn't need any intervention by Congress, to be able to use executive action to broadly or however he saw fit to do forgive student loan debt. And we do know that Biden's expressed some willingness to otherwise use executive action. He has indicated plans to do similar to what President Trump has already done, extend that borrower of relief related to COVID-19 that students are currently enjoying, where since March, where they're not making payments on their loans, their interest isn't accruing, collections have been suspended. Biden has expressed support.

Justin Draeger:

Yeah, this is legally untested territory, except that in a weird way, President Trump may have set a precedent by unilaterally suspending all loan payments. And maybe even if that's not really controversial saying that all the loan payments that would have been made for PSLF continue to count, even though they're not being made. It's not that far of a leap then to say, well, we're just going to count, we're going to suspend all payments for everybody who has this much or less in debt and say it all counts, and we're just going to wipe away your debt. I don't know if there'll be an executive action that says hereby anybody with \$10,000 or less in debt, you don't have debt anymore. Maybe it's a little bit more nuanced the way that we just did it with the executive action to suspend payments but count them towards PSLF.

Jill Desjean:

It might just matter how you do it, because it's not like the HEA says, the president has the authority to wipe out all student loan debt. If it said that no, but it has someone that says oh, if you're looking at it this way and you did this thing-

Justin Draeger:

Terms and conditions like the secretary has some discretion on terms and conditions. So what if you say the terms and conditions are if you have this much or less, you don't have to make payments, but they will count towards paying off your loan. I guess I'm just saying legally untested but it seems like more and more people are buying on to this idea that Congress may not be needed for some forgiveness in the direct loan program.

Jill Desjean:

There might be some way and there probably are going to be some people will challenge it as well. But-

Allie Arcese:

Yeah. That's what I was going to ask. What push back would you get from that?

Jill Desjean:

I read it this way, then someone else is saying no, you can't. Right?

Megan Coval:

It's like data. You can make it say whatever you want. It's like a cynical view. But yeah, it is interesting.

Jill Desjean:

And there's other stuff in there to that, aside from the broad forgiveness. Biden through executive order could expand eligibility for PSLF possibly, reverse those stricter limits that the current administration put on borrower defense. Those are other ways to get people forgiveness than are just broadly saying. Hey, none of you have debt anymore.

Justin Draeger:

Yeah. And all of those are part of his higher ed platform too, like lowering income-based repayment from 10% to 5% of discretionary income. All of these sort of drive at the same thing, which is additional borrower relief and potentially less repayment. We will see what happens on the other side. Jill, it looks like we have a bit of a preview of some news coming out of the department tomorrow. What do we got here?

Jill Desjean:

Tomorrow ED is going to publish a document in the Federal Register called a Notice of Interpretation. I think we've talked about this on the podcast a couple of weeks ago, but the topic of this is foreign gifts reporting, which has been much more popular this year than it's been in years past. Notices of interpretation work like interim final rules and that they become effective on the date of publication. This will be effective tomorrow when it's published in the Federal Register. And it essentially draws a link between foreign gifts reporting and institutional eligibility to participate in the Title IV student aid programs. The foreign gifts piece falls under title I of the HEA and all the student need programs fall

under Title IV. That link is not immediately apparent, but basically this notice of interpretation is ED's interpretation. They issue an opinion where they say that they have the authority to enforce non-reporting of foreign gifts in the same way that they would be able to enforce other violations of the program participation agreement, because they're saying, go ahead.

Justin Draeger:

Well, this means that part of the PPA then is binding the president who signs it and the institution to foreign gift reporting.

Jill Desjean:

Right. It finds them to comply with all mandatory reporting, something to that effect. And so they're saying that well foreign guests reporting is mandatory reporting. It falls under the PPA, you're in violation of your PPA if you're not reporting your foreign gifts.

Justin Draeger:

And then as far as teeth goes because it's a PPA, potentially a PPA violation for schools that don't report. Schools could find themselves with fines or HCM, right? Like heightened cash management, if not outright disqualification for the Title IV programs?

Jill Desjean:

You'd even have available to them, their full suite of penalties that they could impose.

Justin Draeger:

Yeah. They always had the ability to investigate and hold schools accountable, but this solidifies their enforcement of how they can make this enforceable and some of the penalties that they can impose them.

Jill Desjean:

It's really more just clarity than anything, but it definitely indicates their interest in this topic.

Justin Draeger:

Jill, is there a comment period? And will NASFAA be commenting.

Jill Desjean:

Yes there will be a comment period, and NASFAA will be commenting.

Justin Draeger:

If people have opinions, they can send them along to us, policy@nasfaa.org.

Allie Arcese:

Just in Jill, one thing on this is I think this gives you one of those things that might not be an issue under a Biden administration too. We'll comment. We'll definitely comment and you don't expect the Biden administration to be uninterested in foreign influence. But maybe just-

Justin Draeger:

Turning down the temperature a little bit.

Megan Coval:

Yeah, But we'll definitely get on the record for sure.

Justin Draeger:

Okay. Just as a reminder to schools, when I highlight for you, it's something we get asked about quite a bit, our 2019 version of our verification data and federal tax form comparison tool is updated and available on our website. We'll put it in the show notes. It's basically a tool that allows you to look line by line on a tax return, where you're going to find data elements for verification, very helpful for schools as you're performing verification. It's updated and available now, go ahead and check that out. All right. Let's wrap up. I'm curious we're going back to an original here, what was that? Anything stand out from you all from the last week. Megan do you have one?

Megan Coval:

Yeah. And I suspect some of you saw this, but I just think it's amazing. Did you all see that article about how quickly they put together Maya Rudolph outfit on SNL?

Allie Arcese:

Oh, yeah.

Justin Draeger:

That was crazy because they spoke and then 90 minutes later, we watched it and she was almost spot on.

Megan Coval:

I thought that was so amazing. And I saw a little picture of it on Sunday or something and I remember thinking like ... well that was just ... But then I thought this week has been so messed up. Maybe I'm wrong on my dates. And she wore that. And then somebody in our office shared that article about how they just use what they had in the back room because, all the stores were closed. They had like all these tailors on staff. And she looked spot on. It was so cool. Maybe we can link to that article. I don't know. Can we link to fun things?

Allie Arcese:

Yeah. We can link to that article.

Megan Coval:

Really cool.

Justin Draeger:

That is some next level parody right there.

Megan Coval:

And just hearing like the costume, I was just saying how important he thought always that every detail is like she almost went out without her little lapel flag and he was like, no, she can't go out without that. And super cool.

Justin Draeger:

On that note I watched that as well, that evening I watched it live. President-elect Biden gave a transition speech which was very inclusive focused. It was very much, the messaging was president for all Americans, regardless of whether you voted for him. But the part I love the most is the candid moment. After he was done speaking, the spouses came out and then they had fireworks, two things one like fire, like some streamers went off right by them. And everybody looks at it.

Allie Arcese:

because it was like a pop.

Justin Draeger:

I was like, somebody didn't do their job right there. And then the other thing I noticed was after it was all done, everybody's filtering off stage. It's a really feel good moment. And with other presidents as well Republicans, Democrats, it's always like a feel good moment. It's more of a celebration of America and peaceful transfer of power. And you could see their families and their grandkids, but like everybody had left the stage except president-elect Biden, who just seemed very reluctant to be done with the night. Hats off to him. I get it. But everybody's moving off and he's not quite ready. But hometown, everybody was there celebrating. That's good. All right. Jill, you got anything?

Jill Desjean:

I was listening to a podcast this week about basically how Siri recognizes speech patterns and in your Gmail, there's that predictive texts where it decides what your sentence is going to be. All of that technology, not all of it, but a huge contributor to that technology came from a trove of emails from Enron. Have you guys ever heard is?

Allie Arcese:

Oh my gosh. No.

Justin Draeger:

This is the defunct company that was scamming everybody on their account and went bankrupt.

Jill Desjean:

It's just a crazy story. There's this regulator who was just appalled by the just blatant disregard for decency that the Enron executives and high level people at Enron displayed. And he did the investigation, read all of these emails and everything and then just decided, the public doesn't really understand how bad this is. And I'm just going to release these emails so people can just see what things these people were writing back and forth. And he was just really angry and he released them and they became part of this big trove of email data.

Justin Draeger:

Outside of the scandalous stuff in the email, like computer algorithms, let's just capture all the mundane stuff so we quickly populate this.

Jill Desjean:

It's very great to get at like natural conversation to use, to be able to train like AI tools to be able to recognize speech patterns and things. And so they had all of this just like. Hey, what are you doing for lunch today? All kinds of things.

Justin Draeger:

Yeah. You know what I got to say, the outlook app on your phone does this, it just pre-populates responses. When I first started saying it, it was like a game, could I just construct an entire response based off these pre-populated things, but now they actually are really good. And so I have this duality of personality where I hate the invasion of privacy. But on the other hand, it's just so much easier on my mobile device to just start clicking words that pop up, then actually pecking things out with my thumbs.

Jill Desjean:

I just get really irritated because it doesn't say it the way I would say it. And so I'm like yes exactly, but that's not my tone. And so I always go back and fix them because I'm just like no, someone's going to read this and realize that I didn't authentically write this. That I let some tools write it for me.

Justin Draeger:

Oh, really.

Jill Desjean:

Yes.

Justin Draeger:

Megan, you get a lot of emails from me. Can you tell that mine are computer generated?

Megan Coval:

No. I feel they always sound like you.

Justin Draeger:

You know what I think the difference might be that your emails are a little more complex than a lot of mine, Jill. You couldn't use an algorithm from Enron to answer an R2T4 question or brief a lawmaker. Right. Whereas a lot of mine are like, sounds good. Yes. Do that great job.

Jill Desjean:

Because it will often be, I would never say blank. I don't know. But yeah.

Justin Draeger:

Jill's compliments always come with a caveat. I would know that in my head.

Megan Coval:

I do think like a Google one though, I was writing something on there. Because they have it in Google docs now. And I was writing something where I'm that's not what I was going to say, but that sounds better. I feel sometimes it's improving. This would have been, what are kids going to do? I feel Google is going to learn, teach. I don't know. I had this thought like, are they going to learn to write? Or is Google going to just-

Justin Draeger:

Well, they're definitely not going to learn to write cursive. I can tell you that 100%. In fact on our staff, I often wonder, the notes I write are cursive and I do wonder how many of our staff can't make out what I'm writing when I write them like a note. Just because cursive is becoming Egyptian in terms of-

Allie Arcese:

Well, as one of the younger people on staff, I think I definitely learned cursive in school.

Justin Draeger:

Well, my kids do not. We went to Popeye's chicken and they have their story written up on the wall in cursive. Couldn't make it out.

Megan Coval:

I get it though.

Justin Draeger:

Well, it's on the other hand, it's what's, they're all typing by third grade. I don't know. My work was that sort of builds off Jill's I saw something this last week that I found heartwarming and also hilarious. There was a grandchild who was teaching their grandparent how to use voice to text on Siri. And so grandma could stay in touch with the grandkids. And so she hits Siri, grandmas starts talking, Siri starts taking down what she's saying. But then at some point the grandma got confused and started reading her own words back to her. And she ended up in an endless loop of just talking and then repeating what, just reading what Siri.

Justin Draeger:

And the grandma just got frustrated by the end, but was still laughing. I just felt I love these interactions between generational, just trying to bridge technology. Yeah. It was very sweet. And it made me think my remaining grandparent doesn't text, so it's phone calls and that's fine. It's totally fine. But I don't know. There is this generational divide that I dragged my own parents into some of this so that they could better, see their grandkids and whatnot, especially during a pandemic where we can't see them. All right. Allie, I don't want to put any more pressure on you. Do you have anything or we should just move on?

Allie Arcese:

I thought of something and didn't necessarily make me say what was that, but just give me a good chuckle. Some 2020 humor, I saw this Tik Tok video of this guy going back and forth with him playing two different people. One was him being God and like an angel, and him as God is saying like, "angel, did you schedule all the events for the 2020s? Like I asked you to?" And the angel was like, "yeah, I got it done." Wait, you said 2020s. And God's like, yes. What'd you think I said? And he's like as in plural year?

Justin Draeger:

God just did everything in one year.

Allie Arcese:

Yeah. And God goes, "did you schedule all the events for the next 10 years for all the 2020s in one year." And he's like, "maybe?" And also, the Americans have the election this year and then God goes, "Oh, there we screwed"

Justin Draeger:

It has been a year.

Megan Coval:

That is really good.

Justin Draeger:

Thanks everybody for joining us for another edition of Off The Cuff. Send us your comments. Remember to subscribe, tell a friend, and we'll see you again next time.