Spring/Summer 2001

The NYSFAAA Connection

Volume 3, Issue 2

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A Note From the Webletter Committee

Laura Worley, Citibank - Editor
Vince Scalise, College Loan Corporation - Web Master

Welcome to the Spring/Summer Edition of the NYSFAAA Connection! With this issue we celebrate our second year of delivering news and information to the NYSFAAA Membership.

Over the past two years The NYSFAAA Connection has seen a few changes. This edition brings a new format, as well as new sponsors. Follow the links to the left to read articles and view photos of your colleagues. This new edition is the first step to transforming the newsletter into an effective on-line tool as well as a printable version for distribution at Regional Meetings. Soon we will be adding a PDF version of The NYSFAAA Connection that can be viewed and printed from the site. This will make it easier to print and share the Webletter with all Members.

As always, your thoughts, articles, photos and input are needed to make this organization a success. *This is especially true for the Webletter.* Below is the schedule for the NYSFAAA Webletter. If you have an article to submit please do so by the deadline date indicated.

Winter Edition - Articles/Banner Ads are due January 25
Spring/Summer Edition - Articles/Banner Ads are due May 25
Fall Edition - Articles/Banner Ads are due September 25

Article submissions for the Webletter can be in any of the following formats:
Microsoft Word via e-mail attachment (preferred)
e-mail text, paper, disk, photographs on disc, CD or negatives (you will get them back)

Affordable banner ad guidelines and sponsorship opportunities can be found by clicking here.

To all of you who have supported The NYSFAAA Connection over the past two years - We Thank You! We look forward to hearing from other Members as we begin our second year!

Election Results

HESC Updates:

1. TAP Processing
2. HESC Clarifies Processing Changes

Hot Topics:

1. Why it's so difficult for Students to Know what they Owe?
2. Credit Card Usage
3. E-Signatures
4. Education is Crucial for Preventing Default

Thoughts from Members:

1. Shoot at Me?

Committee Updates:

1. Membership Announcement
2. Government Relations

Where are They Now?

Questions or problems regarding this web site should be directed to WEBMASTER. Please do not send financial aid questions to this address.
 Last modified: 05/24/2004

Statewide Election Results - 2001

405 ballots cast.

A special "Thank You" to both candidates for taking on the responsibility of running for a NYSFAAA office. We had two good candidates, and both should be proud that the membership felt strongly enough about them to nominate them for President Elect.

Results:
Anne Barton of Hobart & Wm. Smith Colleges will be the new President Elect, and will begin her term at our annual conference in October 2001 at the NEVELE.

Respectfully reported,

Bill Cheetham
Chair, NYSFAAA Nominations and Elections Committee

Regional Election Results - 2001

Region 1
Region 2
Region 3
Region 4
Region 5
Region 6
Region 7
Region 8

More Electronic TAP Processing From HESC

HESC continues to expand Web-based TAP processing. Currently, administrators have online access to several Grants and Scholarships reports and documents: Express TAP Applications, Payment Rosters, Remittance Advices, and College Accounting Documents. In July, HESC plans to add the Student Status Listing, Pending List, and Scholarship Accounting Report to the on-site printing option.

Online access to these reports allow schools more control of their administrative practices. Administrators can view or print reports when they need them, eliminating the need to rely on large paper reports mailed from HESC at regular intervals throughout the year. All of the reports above can be accessed at hesc.com. First, select Schools and Lenders, then choose HESCWeb and select HESSCWeb Reports and Forms. An approved Web password will be needed for access.

We strongly recommend that schools view and print Grants and Scholarships documents using HESCWeb's on-site printing. HESC is committed to reducing the reliance on paper documents. As of July 1, 2001, HESC will no longer print and mail those reports which are available on HESCWeb. To help schools with this transition, a special satellite teleconference will be held on Monday, June 25 from 2-3:00 p.m. Notices will be posted on the Web, sent via NYSFA-L, and mailed to college offices giving regional viewing sites, satellite coordinates, and viewing instructions.

HESC continues to modernize the nation's largest state grant program with new processing enhancements for aid administrators. These Web-based processing services are the latest in a year-long series of significant changes to create a more effective and accessible TAP Program. The student application process has been streamlined, relying more on FAFSA data for TAP application input. This year, the Automatic Renewal Process has resulted in more than 90,000 TAP awards going directly to award certification with no need for students to file the ETA. HESC is working to greatly improve the school change request process for students, which will be available online this summer. The goal is to focus on HESCWeb for schools to use for the bulk of their processing, and to greatly reduce WinPATH transactions and reliance on paper forms. As in the past, HESC will continue to provide information and training on electronic processing and system changes as they occur.

Please check the Web site, www.hesc.com for training invitations, program/policy/procedure bulletins, and "what's new"/HESC News Announcements.

HESC Clarifies Processing Changes

In early summer, HESC will make a processing change to accommodate implementation of the Master Promissory Note (MPN). The modification will bring HESC into alignment with the federal one Lender, one Servicer, one Guarantor concept of the MPN. The change involves how HESC determines which lender is the Lender of Record.

- Typically, the holder of the MPN is the originating lender. That originating lender may sell loans, but usually retains origination rights.

- Previously, when a loan sale occurred, the HESC system recognized the Lender of Record as the entity who purchased the loan. As a result, borrowers were required to execute a new MPN for subsequent loans.

- As of Summer 2001, HESC's processing system will be modified so that the originating lender (i.e., the holder of the MPN) remains the Lender of Record on the HESC system.

To determine the Lender of Record, schools may check Loan Screen 118 which displays all of a borrower's MPNs. If there is more than one MPN, the Lender of Record is the MPN with the latest signed date that is not canceled. Screen switching to Screen 145 will display the demographic data for the originating lender(s) and their servicer. All other processing will remain unchanged.

The current process for enforcement of the One Lender Rule for Proprietary and 2 Year Schools remains the same. If the school submits "Guarantee/Print" transactions with a blank lender code field, HESC will print the MPN with the Lender of Record if one is established. If the borrower does not have a Lender of Record, the MPN will be printed without lender information and the borrower would need to choose a lender when they receive and complete the MPN.

The current process to allow an exception to the One Lender Rule will continue. If an undergraduate borrower wants to change their established Lender of Record, the borrower must complete an Exception to the One Lender Rule form, APP143. This form must then be completed and signed by the school. The form, along with the MPN and School Certification, must then be mailed to HESC.

At the New York State Financial Aid Administrators Association (NYSFAAA) Regional Meetings and SUNYFAP (State University of New York Financial Aid Professionals) conference, HESC discussed additional proposed processing changes to the One Lender Rule. Many of these changes would require amendments to New York State Regulations and would take time to implement. HESC will continue to review possible changes to the One Lender Rule and will seek additional feedback from the lender and school community on changes.


9/11/2001
We Remember.
We Stand United.

Why It's So Difficult for Borrowers to Know What They Owe

By Kathleen Gibbons, Nellie Mae

Picture a 1000-piece jigsaw puzzle of the solar system. Completed, it's a beautiful picture of a starry night sky that evokes mystery and promise. Incomplete, it's a seemingly endless pile of similar-looking black and white pieces, presenting a daunting and often frustrating challenge to assemble.

Those who have been on the borrowing end of education loans can probably relate to this image. Borrowing a loan to finance the dream of higher education should be pretty straightforward. Unfortunately, with all the bits and pieces of detail that borrowers receive about their loans, it's easy for them to be puzzled about how much they owe. As a previous student loan borrower, current parent loan borrower, and also as someone who has worked in financial aid for several years, I have both personal and professional experience with student loan borrowing. If I feel confused about my educational debt, I think it's reasonable to assume inexperienced borrowers do too.

A big part of the problem is the overwhelming amount of paper a borrower receives. For example, in the past academic year alone, my family has received easily over 50 pieces of loan-related mail—an average of five mailings per month over a ten-month period. If you take out my monthly PLUS Loan billing, that still leaves about 40 non-billing related loan mailings, including: Promissory Notes, Notices of Loan Disbursement, Quarterly Interest Statements, Account Statements, Interest Rebate Notices, etc. And that's just from the U.S. Department of Education. The school that my daughters attend (fortunately, they attend the same state university) also sends loan-related material. Just reading through this information is time consuming, let alone processing it mentally and figuring out what action, if any, must be taken.

Despite the vast amount of loan detail my family has received, if you asked my daughters (a sophomore and a senior) what the total amount of their borrowing is today, I'm certain they wouldn't have a clue. And while I may have an educated hunch, without sitting down, sifting through, and adding up several pieces of the puzzle, I'm not really sure either. (I do have a pretty good idea of my total PLUS Loan borrowing, but I attribute that to having recently gone through loan consolidation.)

This obliviousness on the part of borrowers is no surprise to researchers or to financial aid practitioners. Recent studies have pointed out that most students don't fully comprehend how much they've borrowed, especially related to interest accrual. For example, the State Public Interest Research Group (PIRG) Higher Education Policy found that nearly 80 percent of students recently surveyed underestimated the total cost of their student loans. And in a series of debt management focus groups conducted nationwide, USA Funds found a prevailing trend of “information disconnect” between students’ understanding and the reality of their total debt.

One logical solution to this disconnect, it might seem, would be to provide *more* information. However, instead of more, what borrowers need is *better* information that provides—on a regular basis—the current, total amount of their education loan debt.

No wonder many students (and parents) are clueless about what they’ve borrowed. Instead of receiving a regular statement giving total loan amounts, they receive several similar-looking pieces of the total—like several disbursement notices, each showing one-half of one loan, minus fees. It gets even more cumbersome when, in the same academic year, a student borrower has both a subsidized and an unsubsidized Stafford Loan; or a parent borrower has PLUS Loans for more than one child. They can receive multiple disbursement notices. And if a borrower increases a loan amount after the original loan is made, another notice. Trying to add up the bits of disclosure notices to get a total borrowing amount—for that one year—can feel like rocket science!

With all the technology tools available today, it would seem that providing the big picture about a borrower’s total indebtedness should be fairly easy to do; but it isn’t. Part of the problem, we know, is that students can have multiple loans from both federal and nonfederal sources. Databases like the National Student Loan Data System (NSLDS) and National Student Clearinghouse have helped centralize federal loan data, but that’s only part of the picture.

Another downside to the current data systems is the timing and method of informing borrowers about their education loan debt. For example, data stored by the NSLDS is reported directly to students only once a year, buried on the back of their Student Aid Report. Students can access their loan information online more frequently, but they need to initiate the information request and provide a PIN.

The information gap is most acute for student borrowers during their in-school years, before they enter repayment. Ironically, this is the time when students receive the least information about their cumulative debt (although they receive plenty of disclosure “bits”), and they’re simultaneously making decisions about how much additional loan funds to borrow. How can we expect students to make good decisions about future borrowing if they’re not adequately informed about their current level of debt? Since parent (PLUS) borrowers enter repayment sooner than students, they receive billing statements sooner that list total debt levels for individual loans; but unless loans are consolidated, the debt picture for parents is also piecemeal.

What’s needed is a more systematic approach to delivering total education loan information directly to borrowers on a regular basis, without their having to initiate the request.

This may seem like bending over backwards for the borrower, but it’s really not. If you think about other forms of consumer debt, like credit cards, mortgages or even home utilities, a consolidated, monthly statement of total spending activity is not so far-fetched. If consumers had to go online each month to retrieve this information, it’s pretty likely more than a few of us would fall behind on our bills and miss the mark on how much we owe.

Until our industry can figure out how to provide a consolidated statement of education borrowing—admittedly no small task—students and parents will have to continue piecing together the puzzle of their total loan debt.

Kathleen Gibbons is an editor for Nellie Mae, a leading student loan provider based in Braintree, Massachusetts.

Credit Card Usage Continues Among College Students

By Marie O'Malley, Nellie Mae

The prevalent use of credit cards by a growing number of college students has generated concern about the impact of easy credit card availability and subsequent indebtedness accumulated by students. Those who are directly responsible for managing student loan default prevention among that very population are particularly concerned; after all, students who owe substantial amounts of money on credit cards and education loans may not have the wherewithal to make payments on both after graduation.

Less stringent underwriting criteria at major credit card companies, coupled with the direct push to students on many campuses to apply for credit cards, has led to easier access to credit cards for students who may have arrived on campus with no credit history. A recent analysis of credit card debt from students who applied for credit-based loans with Nellie Mae in calendar year 2000 showed that 78% of undergraduate students (aged 18-25) have at least one credit card. This is up from the 67% of undergraduates included in a similar study by Nellie Mae in 1998. In years past, these same students would not have been given credit cards, certainly not without a co-signer.

Using small increments of available credit responsibly is a great way to learn about the pros and cons associated with borrowing, and to establish a positive credit history. Unfortunately, without being educated on the possible pitfalls associated with amassing too much debt, some of those students may be learning lessons the hard way. The undergraduates in the 2000 Nellie Mae analysis carried an average credit card balance of $2,748, up from an average of $1,879 in the 1998 study. A student using a card with an 18% APR and who makes only a minimum monthly payment of $75 will be paying off that credit card balance of $2,748 over 15 years, paying as much interest on the loan as he originally borrowed. And that assumes the student doesn't make additional charges. Some students unwittingly accumulate credit card debt, not consciously planning ahead whether they can afford to borrow that sum, and not aware of the actual finance charges they will pay over time.

Graduate students have even higher debt levels than undergraduates, though graduate student credit card debt and usage levels remain similar to 1998 levels. In both studies, 95% of Nellie Mae graduate student loan applicants had at least one credit card. The average credit card balance was $4,776 in 2000, down slightly from $4,925 in 1998.

The above statistics indicate a growing comfort level with credit card borrowing. Being comfortable, however, doesn't necessarily indicate knowledge about the ramifications of borrowing in general; nor does it show that the student has evaluated the benefits and costs of borrowing with a credit card vs. other types of financing. For example, it may be easier for a student to use a credit card to pay for some expenses associated with a college education, such as books and transportation – even tuition in some cases – but a federally guaranteed student loan is a much more cost-effective choice. However, it takes planning to obtain a student loan; the student must file the appropriate forms and work through the financial aid and bursar's offices, as well as work with the lender, to process the loan. Although school offices and loan processes are becoming more streamlined, a credit card is simply more convenient. Students may base their borrowing choice on that rationale, rather than long-term cost.

Although many students do their homework -- they understand and manage the responsibilities of borrowing, they don't borrow more than they need, and they borrow as cost-effectively as possible -- there is some apprehension that a certain percentage of the credit card-using student population is setting up itself for financial failure even before graduation. Without assistance, these students may not have the know-how to borrow wisely on the front end and they won't have the income to honor their credit obligations after they've borrowed.

It would be ideal if credit card companies agreed to take a more conservative approach to lending to students to prevent them from getting too deeply into credit card debt while in school. They could put low borrowing caps on accounts when students are enrolled; they could institute stricter re-issue rules; they could agree to put a cap on the number of cards that can be issued to students. But, more practically, students need to learn how to manage financially. Credit cards and other borrowing options will continue to be available to them while they are in school, and after they graduate.

Colleges and lenders work together today to provide student debt counseling at the beginning and end of the enrollment/borrowing cycle. One solution might be to have colleges and lenders work together to provide financial management education throughout the student's college career. A curriculum could be developed that teaches several aspects of sound fiscal management, and where lessons are reiterated at key points during the total enrollment period. Of course, teaching by example is always effective; therefore planners should strive to keep costs minimal for implementing such a program. Interactive tools are already available on a number of finance-related web sites today, and e-mail allows for efficient, cost-effective communication between schools and students.

Credit card use and borrowing money have become common practices in American society and aren't going to cease. To prevent debt levels from becoming burdensome for students, which could result in student loan defaults as well as general poor financial health for a segment of the population, it behooves colleges and lenders, as well as credit card issuers, to teach students to limit credit card usage and to borrow wisely.

Marie O'Malley is director of marketing for Nellie Mae, a leading national student loan provider based in Braintree, Massachusetts.

Electronic Signatures May Change Financial Aid

By Sharon O'Neal, National Student Loan Program

Last October, an important piece of legislation became effective that will make it easier for students to apply for and receive financial aid; and for schools and lenders to deliver and manage it. The *Electronic Signatures in Global and National Commerce Act (Public Law 106-229)* makes electronic contracts, signatures and records legally enforceable – effectively clearing the way to make the delivery of financial aid totally paperless for students, schools and lenders. We already have the technological tools we need to facilitate electronic transactions and records – the law now makes using the technology to conduct business electronically legally-binding on the parties who want to do business that way.

Advantages for schools and lenders. Schools and lenders can take advantage of the new law by using it to collect electronic signatures on documents, and to facilitate the wider use of electronic records. Any document that must be signed, or provided in writing may now be handled electronically. For example, schools can use it to interact electronically with students during the awarding and acceptance of financial aid, have students electronically sign promissory notes for loans, and provide any notices or disclosures electronically. Likewise, lenders can take advantage of the new law to collect electronic borrower signatures on student loan promissory notes, deferments and forbearances; and use it to provide borrowers with an electronic version of any notice, authorization, disclosure or other document that must be provided in written form.

Rules and requirements. However, there are consumer consent and disclosure requirements in the law, as well as rules for ensuring that electronic records are accurately retained and accessible to those who are entitled to them. Schools and lenders must follow these legal requirements as they begin using the new law to facilitate electronic financial aid transactions and records. A copy of the *Electronic Signatures in Global and National Commerce Act (Public Law 106-229)* is available from the Library of Congress website at http://thomas.loc.gov.

ED's voluntary standards for student loans. In May, the Department of Education (ED) issued *Dear Partner Letter GEN 01-06* to announce voluntary standards for electronic transactions that can be used by lenders, guaranty agencies, schools and borrowers for loans made under the Federal Family Education Loan Program and the Federal Perkins Loan Program. Lenders and schools that choose to use the standards will be protected against possible loss of federal benefits (e.g., insurance, reinsurance, interest, special allowance, etc.) if a court later decides the loan is unenforceable simply because an electronic process was used for the signature or records. The standards cover any transaction where a borrower might sign a document related to the loan, including a promissory note, loan application, deferment, forbearance, loan cancellation or discharge, or a new repayment agreement. They do not apply to other types of electronic loan transactions. The standards address borrower consent and disclosure requirements, the authentication of the borrower's identity, as well as the format, integrity, maintenance and access of electronic records. Also included in the standards are the processes that may be used as electronic signatures for executing electronic promissory notes and signing electronic documents. A copy of *GEN 01-06* is available on ED's website at http://ifap.ed.gov.

Record keeping regulations postponed. In May ED announced it will not make any changes to recordkeeping regulations for electronic records and transactions as earlier proposed. The decision not to proceed was based on public comments that additional regulations beyond the current record retention requirements are not necessary and may result in additional costs for financial aid providers.

PIN verification process available. For those who want to use a PIN process for authenticating borrower identity, ED is making its SFA PIN verification process, the Student Authentication Netowrk (STAN), available to schools and lenders through NCS Pearson, a government contractor that currently provides SFA PINs to financial aid applicants. Schools and lenders are not required to use STAN, but if they choose to, an agreement with NCS Pearson must be signed, and a transaction fee of $.20 to $.28 will be charged for each PIN verification. More information about STAN is available by e-mail from stan@ncs.com. On April 19, ED announced it would issue PINs to borrowers who have not been assigned a PIN, including parents who need a PIN to electronically sign a student's FAFSA forms. The announcement is available on ED's website at http://ifap.ed.gov.

For more information. For more information about using electronic signatures and records, see "Electronic Signature Legislation Makes Paperless Financial Aid Possible" in the "Washington Watch" section of NSLP's website at www.nslp.org/washwach.htm.

Continual Education Crucial in Preventing Defaults, Expert Says

By: David Manning, USA Funds® Services, Regional Director

Continual education that extends beyond the campus financial-aid office is key in curbing education-loan defaults, says a debt-management consultant now working with the schools of New York.

Scott Lewis is a new member of a debt-management team that has assisted more than 400 postsecondary institutions nationwide as part of an overall effort to help colleges lower their education-loan default rates. Based on nearly a decade of experience in working to lower college default rates, Lewis recommends the following steps to help prevent education-loan defaults:

- **Educate parents, and get them involved.** When parents actively participate in the financial-aid process, and when they understand the rights and responsibilities that come with getting financial aid, they can be partners to financial-aid professionals. Lewis suggests that schools schedule activities such as a financial-aid-awareness week for potential students and parents.

- **Conduct consumer counseling and debt-management workshops throughout the student's college career.** Go beyond the federally required student-loan entrance and exit counseling, reinforcing the importance of debt management with life-skills courses and consumer counseling.

- **Promote early awareness.** Junior and senior high school is not too early to talk with students and their families about what college will cost and the options they have for paying higher-education expenses.

- **Encourage students and their families to borrow less.** Help students and parents make good decisions about the financial aid that they seek and accept, and promote grants and scholarships.

- **Make debt management an effort that extends beyond the financial-aid office.** Because high default rates affect the entire school, make default prevention a campus-wide effort by involving other departments, including the registrar's office and alumni programs. Lewis also recommends that schools include a course about debt management in the campus' curriculum.

For more information, contact Lewis at 617-298-1162; toll-free at 800-551-1353, ext. 7875; or by e-mail at *slewis@usafunds.org*.

Shoot at Me! Shoot at Me!

By Dan Brent, Professional Development Officer, Citibank

In a recent trip to Colorado Springs, the airport driver showed me a mountain just south of Pikes Peak. There was an unmistakable forest of antennae clustered at the top. “Burrowed into the mountain at the base,” the driver explained, “is the headquarters for NORAD.” NORAD is the brains of America’s air defense system.

“It looks like it would be pretty hard to hit with a missile coming from the west,” I naively volunteered. “Yes,” he responded. “But from the east, of course, it would be hard to miss!”

Built on a foothill just below the NORAD site were clusters of homes strung out between Interstate 25 and the mountains. “On the roof of one of those homes,” the driver volunteered pointing, “the owner has painted a target!”

I like someone with a sense of humor.

Aren’t there days in the Financial Aid office when you feel like the target is painted between your eyes? Nothing against admissions people, but I’ve always felt that they have the fun job – telling students that they are accepted. (I suspect that few of their rejection letters generate angry, personal, on-site house calls to the front desk at Admissions.) But when Admissions has sent the good news – “We’ve admitted you” – the task falls to Financial Aid to find a way to make attendance happen in real life. And, short of being delivered with large amounts of unmarked bills in moneybags, I expect that award letters have a remarkable capacity to generate in-your-face calls and visits.

Enter the sense of humor! It’s often your potential remedy against suffering through the feeling that by some sorcery you’ve flunked out of college yourself a dozen times or so each time award letters go out.

At a recent workshop I told the Japanese folk tale of Yukio and the Baku. Beset by terrifying nightmares, little Yukio tries to unburden himself of them on his father. But the father notes that he has nightmares of his own and chases Yukio away. After similar experiences with his mother, grandfather, and the old samurai of the village, Yukio meets a *baku*, a strange but somehow familiar and likeable creature – who eats nightmares. Yukio brings the *baku* back to the village. There the *baku* eats everyone’s nightmares and grows fat while everyone in the village is able now to sleep in peace.

The challenge of conquering nightmares in the Financial Aid office (whatever their origin) is in recognizing what your *baku* looks like. It may come in the guise of perspective – reminding you that the student’s anger is not directed at you personally but is the result of his or her own frustration. It may come in the guise of concern, which makes you want to help with their burden without taking it on your own shoulders. It may come in the guise of experience, which reminds you that the sign on the office door promises “financial aid” and not bags of money, nor the resolution of everyone’s problems.

And often the *baku* may come in the guise of a sense of humor. Some day you will be the lead character in the students’ funny stories of this day of crisis for them – as they may well be the lead in your story today.

The Colorado Springs homeowner who lives at the base of NORAD's mountain is certainly not making little of the risks involved with air defense in a nuclear age. He certainly knows that some targets will be "strategic" in case of a conflict. But he's making a statement with his roof target. "I'm not going to forfeit my sense of balance just because we live in a dangerous age." His sense of humor is his *baku*. Yours too? Or if not, what?

Citibanker Dan Brent is a veteran of the training staff at the Student Loan Corporation. He frequently offers seminars for Financial Aid Office staffs and is a certified quality trainer for Citigroup.

Membership Committee

Warren Hoffman, NYSFAAA Vice President for Membership would like to announce that NYSFAAA Membership Applications for 2001/02 will be going out in the mail in June 2001. The membership year runs July 1, 2001 to June 30, 2002. Cost of NYSFAAA membership is $35.00

NYSFAAA Executive Council Visits New York State Legislators

By Beth Post, Union College

In February of this year, NYSFAAA Executive Council visited members of the Lower and Higher Education Committees in the New York State Legislature. These appointments were arranged by the Government Relations Committee and for some, it was a first time experience.

We met with Assemblyman Ed Sullivan, Higher Education Committee Chair and with Mr. John D'Agati, Director of Budget for Senator Kenneth Lavalle, Senate Higher Education Chair. Other member's offices that were visited included: Senator Owen Johnson, Senator Mary Lou Rath, Assemblyman Steven Sanders, Assemblyman Richard Gottfried, Senator Randy Kuhl and Assemblywoman Audrey Pheffer.

During our visits, we presented a TAP written proposal, the Government Relations Brochure and a NYSFAAA mug. The main goal of our discussions surrounded improvements for the TAP program but we also hoped to establish relationships with key Higher and Lower Education legislators to better serve the financial aid needs of New York State students and their families in the future. We believe we were successful on both accounts.

Where Are They Now?

Yvonne Nagel (formerly of Trocaire College) has accepted a position as Financial Aid Counselor at Buffalo State College.

Jennifer Folger has joined the staff in New Student Financial Aid at Clarkson University.

Mark Hill is the new Scholarship Coordinator at SUNY Potsdam.

Karen Southwick is about to join the staff at SUNY Plattsburgh at the Technical Support Specialist.

Amy Sipher, Financial Ais Advisor at SUNY Potsdam and her husband Justin are the proud parents of their first child, Cody Justin Sipher!

Sandy Stevenson is the new Education Loan Services Manager at First Niagara Bank.

Lisa Kendi joins NYSFAAA as the Fleet Bank representative for regions 1 & 2.

Kathleen Kulbacki is the new Educational Lending Representative for M&T Bank. Kathleen will be covering NYSFAAA Regions 1, 2, & 3.

Dan Tramuta has accepted the position as Director of Financial Aid at SUNY Fredonia, this announcement comes after two and half years as Interium Director of Financial Aid.

Lorraine Horner is the new Financial Aid Director at SUNY Delhi.