

# NYSFAAA Connection



Web Letter Editor: Laura Worley, Citibank | Assistant Editor: Vince Scalise, College Loan Corporation | **Winter 2005**

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

*Judi Miladin, Cayuga Community College  
NYSFAAA President*

It seems hard to believe that it was just over 3 months ago that the gavel was passed to me in Rochester. So much has happened since then. It's been a busy time. And there is still so much to do... But here are a few highlights of the last three months.

Perhaps one of the most significant initiatives has been the collaboration with Senator LaValle's office to begin a comprehensive look at TAP funding. John D'Agati, the Senator's Chief Education Aid, is eager to understand the inner working of TAP and to generate an alternative to the Governor's TAP proposals. He understands the devastating impact of a plan like the Governor's that disproportionately penalizes our poorest students. However, in these extremely tight budget times, he is fearful that eventually the Legislature will not be able or willing to return to business as usual. Therefore alternative proposals are critical. These meetings have been very encouraging.

Complementing this initiative will be the Second Annual NYSFAAA Legislative Training session that is planned for all Legislators, Aids and Staffers. This year the training will be held in Albany on February 25 and will be highlighting the differences between federal and state application processes, needs analysis, and populations served.

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## NYSFAAA Executive Council

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NYSFAAA is once again preparing a campaign to defeat the Governor's proposal. Our Government Relations Chairs, Beth Post and Jim Valle have prepared NYSFAAA's position paper to respond to the Governor. Executive Council will be in Albany on February 8 to visit Assembly members and Senators to educate our representatives on the devastating impact on students. We will also be counting on all of you to assist in the effort. In conjunction with these visits, NYSFAAA will be featured in the Legislative Gazette.

The Government Relations Committee is also preparing to gear up to work on NYSFAAA's input into Federal Re-authorization.

And speaking of Gear-up, NYSFAAA has applied for and received a grant from HESC to fund our increased participation in the Gear-up Program. Anne Barton will be heading this initiative. The first cohort of Gear-up students will be attending college in the fall. NYSFAAA's efforts will be geared toward assisting students in the **Renewal FAFSA** process. We plan on creating a brochure, magnets and bookmarks in Spanish and in English to remind the students and their families to apply in future years. Hopefully this will be just a first step in working with additional cohorts as they begin and continue the financial aid process.

Nancy Pawlak and the Early Awareness Committee have distributed bookmarks to libraries around the state. They are currently meeting to decide on new initiatives to reach out to students and families on issues of saving for college and also reaching those who may think that college is out of their grasp.

Bill Mack, Lisa Simpson and Karen Price-Scott are collaborating on new initiatives to integrate new members and especially Novice attendees into the organization.

Executive Council will soon be looking at our investment policies in an effort to ensure a sound fiscal future for the organization.

In addition to new initiatives we have had a very successful season of High School Counselor Workshops. CAAN activities and events including "Ask the Expert" have continued to reach out to prospective students. Interest in Novice Training appears to be running very high and indications are that we could reach new attendance records. Karen Price-Scott is working on new opportunities for professional development opportunities. The Scholarship Committee has had an outstanding year -- doubling our scholarship amounts.

Our new web-site is still a work in progress as Committee Chairs and Regions get comfortable with using and up-dating the site. There are exciting things

in the works. Thanks to Joan Warren and her heroic efforts, our membership database is now more accurate than ever and the web-site features will be giving us the capability to assess our member profiles and needs much more effectively. We will be using the web-site for electronic elections beginning this spring. This is almost certain to increase participation. The site will also be used for event registration including Novice and the Annual Conference, which should make registration far more efficient – and EASIER for the Registration chair. We also now have a contract with a phone conferencing company to provide committees with additional alternatives for meetings without travel time and expense.

That's just a little glimpse of what's been happening. I'll look forward to updating you again in the next Connection. In the meantime, watch for e-mails with updates and check the web-site for news. And as always please contact me with ideas, suggestions, and questions.

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**35<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL NOVICE WORKSHOP AT  
MANHATTANVILLE COLLEGE – JUNE 4 – 10, 2005**

The New York State Financial Aid Administrators Association, Inc. will hold its thirty-fifth annual Novice Training Workshop June 4-10, 2005 at Manhattanville College. This workshop has been designed for financial aid personnel with less than one year of experience, admissions and enrollment management personnel, as well as others who would like to gain a complete, comprehensive understanding of financial aid administration.

The program provides six days of intensive training on the administration of financial aid. Training is structured in formal, large group presentations and informal small discussion groups. Participants are given a detailed overview of each topic, followed by the opportunity to discuss special points of interest and to apply their new knowledge through the use of case studies. All participants are strongly encouraged to take advantage of the opportunity for professional growth through group and individual interaction. The training begins on Saturday at 12:30pm and ends on Friday at 11:00 am. Full-time participation in the Workshop is required of all attendees.

A certificate will be awarded on the final day of the workshop. The certificate acknowledges an active and successful participation in the program. This participation includes attendance and written/oral interaction within each session (formal and informal) groups. A written test will be administered and the results will be used in conjunction with staff critique to determine each participant's evaluation.

Registration information will be available shortly.

## MEMBERS ON THE MOVE . . .

Jean Branicky (SUNY Fredonia) has taken a position at the University at Buffalo in the department of Institutional Research. NYSFAAA will miss you Jean!

Congratulations to Joe Kakaty of College Loan Corporation on his promotion to Executive Vice President.

Congratulations to Vince Scalise of College Loan Corporation on his promotion to Senior Vice President.

NYSFAAA would like to welcome Megan Zafflon to the organization. The new Financial Aid Counselor at SUNY Fredonia, Megan comes to Fredonia after finishing her degree in Student Personnel Administration at Buffalo State College. Welcome aboard Megan!

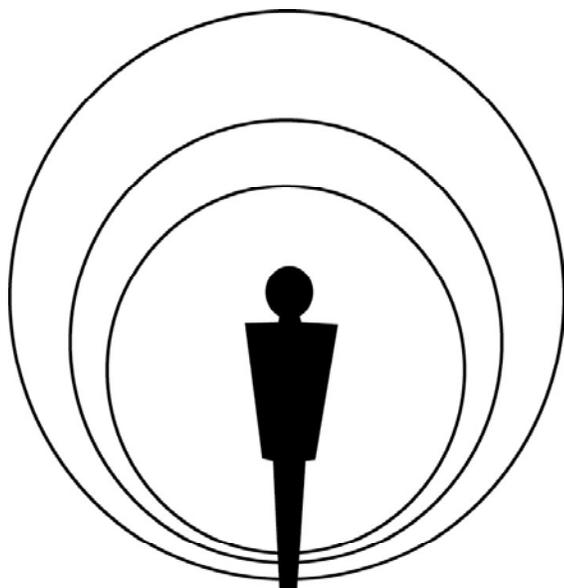
NYSFAAA would like to say a fond farewell to Dennis Tillman, Director of Financial aid at the University at Albany. Dennis a long time member and mentor of NYSFAAA retired as of December 15, 2004. Thank you Dennis and keep in touch!

Congratulations to Patty Herbst, Director of School Relations at College Loan Corporation for being named "Rookie of the Year" at CLC's National Sales Conference in January

## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

*Visit our Website for all the latest information on events happening in your Region.*

Go to: [www.nysfaaa.org](http://www.nysfaaa.org)



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### Executive Council Meeting Schedule

- June 15-16-17, 2005

## **A NEW VENTURE FOR NYSFAAAA**

*Submitted by: Ann Barton, Hobart & William Smith Colleges, NYSFAAA Past President & Gear Up Coordinator*

NYSFAAA has entered into a partnership with the NYS GEAR UP program to provide personalized services and materials to the 22,000 New York students enrolled in the GEAR UP program.

For those not familiar with GEAR UP (Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs), it is a program designed to target at risk students and encourage and support them in their efforts to obtain a college education. The NYS program actually started 6 years ago when students were in the 7<sup>th</sup> grade. Those students will be graduating from high school this year, so it is the appropriate time for NYSFAAA to become more fully involved as a partner. The state program is funded through a federal grant given to Higher Education Services Corporation to administer. They in turn have entered into partnership with numerous sites/groups across New York State to grant funding so services can be provided to these students. NYSFAAA will be one of their newest partners in this effort. You can obtain more detailed information about this program on the HESC website.

As the NYSFAAA coordinator of this initiative, I will be working with the various federal and state partners across New York State to provide specialized services to these students. Some of the initiatives planned at the current time are:

- A brochure, produced in both English and Spanish to walk students through not only the initial financial aid process, but also covering the renewal process once they are in college;
- A poster to be made available to the high school counselor offices emphasizing process and deadline dates;
- Bookmarks that mirror the posters, so students will have a visual reminder to carry with them;
- Creation of a common PowerPoint presentation that will be provided to the host sites so we can be sure all of the students are getting the same financial aid information;
- Magnets for parents to keep on the refrigerator at home to remind them of the financial aid process and deadline dates.

Of course, all of the materials created will include reference to NYSFAAA's website as a major source of guidance for these students.

HESC will be applying to the federal government for another GEAR UP grant to cover the next cohort of students to go through the program. NYSFAAA will apply to become a partner right from the time the new cohort of students enter the program, providing ongoing contact and information over the time the students are participating in the program.

This is just a brief summary of NYSFAAA's involvement in this venture. If you would like more details or would like to become involved, just contact me. Since it is a new venture, we are evolving and need ideas on how we can best serve this population.

I am excited about this opportunity to reach out to the students that financial aid is meant to serve – those at risk students who are mostly first generation college students, coming from educationally and economically disadvantaged backgrounds. Being part of a program that plants the seed in junior high that college is possible – a dream that can be realized, is a most gratifying experience. I hope you will be as excited about this opportunity as I am and look forward to receiving your comments.

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## **MARK YOU CALENDARS!**

NYSFAAA Annual Conference at the Hyatt Regency Wind Watch on Long Island, October 18-21, 2005  
Region VII is planning a conference that you won't want to miss. More details will be available very soon.  
Watch NYSFAAA.org for more information.

### **Planning ahead:**

NYSFAAA Conference 2006 – Holiday Inn Lake Placid Resort, Lake Placid, NY, Nov. 5-8, 2006  
NYSFAAA Conference 2007 – Sheraton New York Hotel and Towers, New York, NY, Oct 14-17, 2007  
NYSFAAA Conference 2008 – Turning Stone Casino Resort, Verona, New York. Oct. 22-27, 2008

## YOU ARE THE SCHOOL

Submitted by Allyson Wynne, Citibank, The Student Loan Corporation

Students will judge the entire school by the kind of experience they have with you! The school has neither personality nor voice – except yours! Many students deal with the Financial Aid Office before they've met their professors. You may very well be the first person they meet and you have the power to make or break that interaction! The Financial Aid Office often holds the key as to whether the student is able to attend your school or not. You (figuratively speaking) possess the key for the students future...You are the school!

When anyone comes to the office or calls the school and talks to you, you are the school to them. They will tell others what “the school” did or didn't do for them. They won't be talking to the university president; they will be talking to you! So, what can you do to set a positive tone for your university? Provide outstanding customer *care*!

How do you provide exceptional service to your customers?...By understanding what your student and/or parent customer wants. The following is a list of items that always receive high marks on customer service surveys:

- ✓ Competence – You have the ability to deliver the service advertised by the sign on your door: “Financial Aid.” Students know that “Financial Aid” doesn't mean bags of money. It does mean help with a difficult, and critical hurdle.
- ✓ Attentiveness – They want to be recognized as present and, when it's their turn, they want you to give them your full attention and concern. This is not an automatic. Its eye contact, body language, focus on the conversation, sensitivity to nuances. Most Financial Aid Offices are open and busy places. You have to make an effort not to be distracted.
- ✓ Taking Ownership – They want you to take responsibility for addressing their need. They don't want excuses or buck-passing. Never say “It's not my job.” You can refer them to someone else and still keep ownership. “I'm Mr. Jones. If by chance you run into a problem, come back to me and we'll figure it out together.”

- ✓ Respect – They want to be treated like human beings. They don't want to feel scolded or talked down to. The risk of patronizing a student is real because in the Financial Aid Office, you have the power position: age, turf, title, control of the resources, and knowledge about the processes.
- ✓ Sensitivity – They appreciate being heard out. They appreciate having their emotions and individuality recognized and taken into account. Dealing with financial aid issues is scary stuff for students. You may have done this 1,000 times, but for them, it's a first. Using their name helps.
- ✓ Kept Promises – They want you to do what you say you'll do and when you say you'll do it. Don't make promises you can't keep and don't forget to follow-up and follow-through.

Here are some additional tools to keep in mind when interfacing with a student customer: Be a good listener and give the customer your full attention. Accept responsibility, do everything you can to be helpful. The customer doesn't care who is to blame; they want the problem fixed. Try to avoid the “poison phrases” that customers don't like to hear. For example: *I don't know. We can't do that. Who told you that? When you wait until the last minute...*

Keep in mind when communicating that your words account for only 8% of the meaning, tone of voice contributes to 37% to the meaning of your message, and body language accounts for 55% of what you are communicating to a customer. These numbers can be summarized by the age-old saying, “It's not so much what you say, but how you say it!” Practice saying this sentence: “Where have you been?” Say it to yourself as though you are angry, then happy, and then surprised. As you will see in doing this exercise, the words are the same, it is your tone of voice and your expression that is really “speaking” here.

The Golden Rule for customer care is to treat each student as you would want someone else to treat your son or daughter. If you really *care* about the student, you will give good customer service!

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*Allyson Wynne is a Professional Development Manager with Citibank – The Student Loan Corporation. She regularly presents seminars for financial aid office personnel.*

## SIX SIMPLE WAYS YOU CAN MOTIVATE YOURSELF TO SUCCEED

*Submitted by Tom Zarkos, Bank of America*

We all have plans to achieve success in life. But what is lacking is the motivation that keeps us going to convert plans into action.

Usually, you feel very 'excited' at the beginning when doing something new for the first time. But after a while, somehow you feel that you lack passion and motivation. The excitement, which you had in the first few days, just disappeared for no reason.

I had a similar problem. But I did not let the problem of motivation stop me from achieving my goals.

Here are the ways that I use that can effectively curb the problem of motivation. I use one or more of these techniques.

**1. READ A BOOK.** Just grab a book and read; especially an inspirational book or a book of success stories. By reading these books, you not only learn from others but the story will motivate you to move ahead with your plans. It also makes you re-focus your energy on your goals rather than focusing your energy on the problems at hand. I especially like books written by Mark Victor Hansen, Anthony Robbins, Stephen Covey, and Brian Tracy.

**2. THINK OF PURPOSE OF WHAT YOU DO.** If you don't feel motivated, think of why you want to achieve what you want. That is the purpose of doing what you are doing. Your purpose could be to improve the life of others, or help people to do things more efficiently, or to help people to make more money. Thinking of your purpose is an important way to motivate yourself.

**3. TALK TO A SUPPORTIVE FRIEND.** Talking to a supportive friend could help overcome low motivation. You can also talk to a trusted business partner. The key is to find someone that you are comfortable with and share your problems and concerns with them. After sharing your problems, you will feel re-charged and re-energized.

**4. LISTEN TO AUDIO TAPE.** If you don't like reading, get a motivational tape and listen to it. The contents of the tape can motivate you and help you look at things from the different perspective and from a positive outlook. Besides that, you can also read and browse through a list of motivational quotations of famous people. Gems lie in these quotations.

**5. GO THROUGH YOUR GOALS DAILY.** Prepare a list of goals that you want to achieve. Write them down on a piece of paper. You should go through your goals at least once every day. You need to do this even more if you feel down and de-motivated. By doing this, you refresh your mind with the goals you have set for yourself and avoid other distractions.

**6. DO IT.** Another way to prevent the problem of motivation is to get your hands dirty and get started with what you need to do. Sometimes you don't feel like doing what you need to do. But by "forcing" yourself to just do it, you'll gain momentum little by little and without realizing, you have actually finished the task at hand. No matter what, just start the task at hand.

Having said all this, intrinsic motivation is far more effective than extrinsic motivation. Intrinsic motivation is fulfillment, satisfaction, sense of achievement and enjoyment. An example of extrinsic motivation is the desire to make money. If money is your only motivation your success will be short lived. I'd advise you to focus on the intrinsic motivation for long lasting success.

Remember to forget these words..."BUT", WHAT IF...and MAYBE... THERE ARE NO EXCUSES TO NOT SUCCEED...I truly believe that IF I CAN, YOU CAN, WE ALL CAN.... SUCCEED!

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## NASFAA'S BEST PRACTICES SYMPOSIUM SCHEDULED FOR 2005

Washington, D.C. (January 12, 2005) – For the fourth year, the National Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators (NASFAA) will host a training opportunity to explore critical issues facing financial aid professionals. **“In Search of Best Practices – A NASFAA Symposium”** will be offered as a day and a half symposium at three sites in 2005.

### Las Vegas, NV, February 3-4, Hampton Inn Tropicana

Registration - Thursday, Noon - 1 p.m.

Day 1 – Thursday, 1 p.m. to 5 p.m.; Day 2 – Friday, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Reservations: 877-584-6835 or direct at 702-948-8100

### Arlington, VA, March 18-19, Sheraton National Hotel

Registration - Friday, Noon - 1 p.m.

Day 1 – Friday, 1 p.m. to 5 p.m.; Day 2 – Saturday, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Reservations: 800-325-3535

### Chicago, IL, April 15-16, Chicago Marriott O'Hare

Registration - Friday, Noon - 1 p.m.

Day 1 – Friday, 1 p.m. to 5 p.m.; Day 2 – Saturday, 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Reservations: 800-228-9290 or direct at 773-693-4444

Symposium topics will include *Personal Finance and Financial Aid: A Formula for Success*, *Managing Scholarship Resource*, and *Motivating and Retaining Your Staff*. The subject matter will be targeted towards intermediate and advanced financial aid administrators and other senior level campus administrators, including chief enrollment management officers and chief student affairs officers.

The cost per registrant is \$180 and includes one meal. Registration is available to NASFAA members only. For more information, including hotel rates, and a registration form, visit [www.NASFAA.org/BestPractices.asp](http://www.NASFAA.org/BestPractices.asp) or contact Eileen Welsh at 202-785-0453 ext. 153 or [welshe@nasfaa.org](mailto:welshe@nasfaa.org).

*The National Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators (NASFAA) is a nonprofit membership organization that represents more than 11,000 financial aid professionals at nearly 3,000 colleges, universities and career schools across the country. Based in Washington, D.C., NASFAA is the only national association with a primary focus on student aid legislation, regulatory analysis and training for financial aid administrators. Each year, Members help more than 8 million students receive funding for postsecondary education. For more information about NASFAA, visit [www.NASFAA.org](http://www.NASFAA.org).*

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***If you would like to contribute to the NYSFAAA Connection***

***Please contact Laura Worley at [laura.m.worley@citigroup.com](mailto:laura.m.worley@citigroup.com)***

***or Vince Scalise at [vscalise@collegeloan.com](mailto:vscalise@collegeloan.com)***

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## NEWS FROM NYSFAAA'S VP OF MEMBERSHIP

SUBMITTED BY JOAN WARREN, THE JULLIARD SCHOOL

Your questions, concerns, and recommendations regarding member services are always welcomed. Please e-mail me anytime at: [jwarren@juilliard.edu](mailto:jwarren@juilliard.edu).

It has been a hectic, yet exciting three months since I officially began serving as your Vice President for Membership. The membership application and renewal process, as you know, has undergone a monumental change, and I would like to thank you all for your patience as we transitioned to an on-line membership database. I especially want to thank Kerrie Cooper, our previous Membership Vice President, for her hard work in implementing the data conversion and processing workflow.

NYSFAAA now has 1,090 members! Each week, more members are signing up using the on-line application. Contact with your NYSFAAA colleagues has become easier and more efficient, since you can locate your colleagues on the directory, or post messages to everyone on the statewide and regional [listservs](#). You can keep up with NYSFAAA activities by checking the [News & Updates](#) section, and by viewing events, which are posted in the [Calendar](#) section. A big value-added member benefit is our [Employment Resource Center](#), where members can view and post jobs for free!

Now that you have paid your dues, and have access to the website, I would like to highlight some key features of the [Member Services](#) section of the site.

### MEMBERSHIP BROCHURE – NEW!

A downloadable Membership Brochure has just been added to the website. It includes a brief history of NYSFAAA, membership benefits and activities, and information about how to join. Although the brochure will be professionally printed, anyone can print the on-line version, and share it with colleagues in order to encourage more professionals to join our association.

### MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION & DATA MANAGEMENT

In addition to removing duplicate records, the institutions file has been updated. The application section of the website has been re-designed to make it easier for members to select their primary and secondary regions correctly. Also, the fabled "Region 9", which was meant to represent a non-regionally affiliated status, has been changed to "Non-Affiliated" in the Primary Region drop down selection box. A map of NYSFAAA regions was added to help new members choose their regional affiliations.

You can help us to maintain an accurate membership database by reviewing and correcting your own data. If you forget your password you can easily request a new one, and change it to one that is more "user-friendly". Since membership is individual, **you can keep your membership status current, even if you change jobs during the membership year, just by updating your own data.** Members who are designated as the primary contact between NYSFAAA and their institution/agency should check their institutional data, particularly *institution type*, since we will be conducting research and targeting services to members utilizing this data. The primary contact access is located in the Administrative Services Area below Payment Services.

### PAYMENT SERVICES

Payment processing has changed dramatically. To date, all membership payments have been entered into the database, including those paid through the annual conference registration. When your payment is entered into the database, your member status is automatically updated, which triggers an e-mail to you to acknowledge your payment. Membership cards will no longer be mailed, however membership pins are available upon request.

A "**Payment Services**" section has been added to the Member Services section of the website. You can now check your [payment status](#) and [print duplicate invoices](#) without having to recreate an application. E-mails are sent to all members with outstanding invoices. If you believe you have received a non-payment e-mail in error, kindly reply with information about when payment was made, so that I can follow

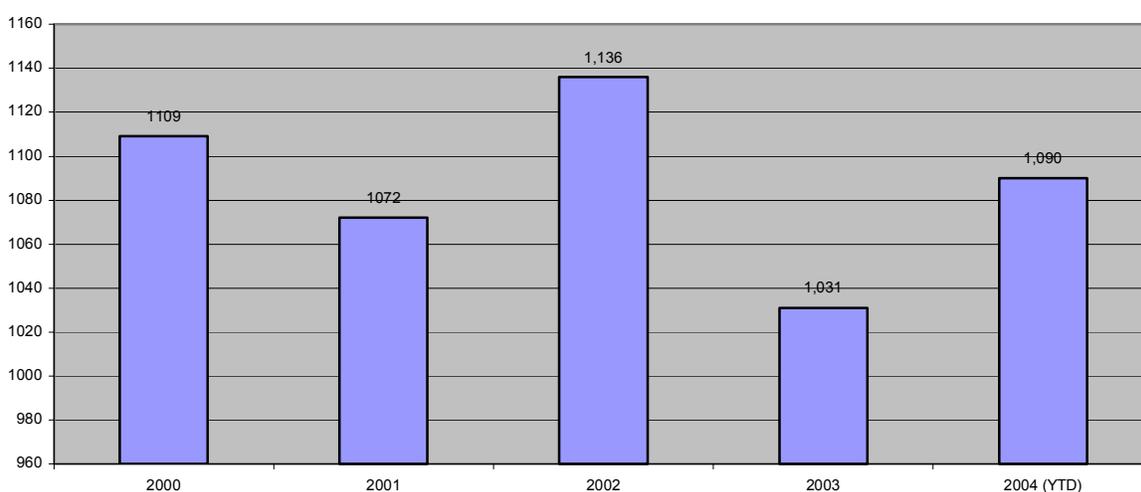
(Membership News Continued)

up appropriately. A special targeted message was sent to over 500 former members who had not renewed their membership, and many have responded by submitting an on-line application!

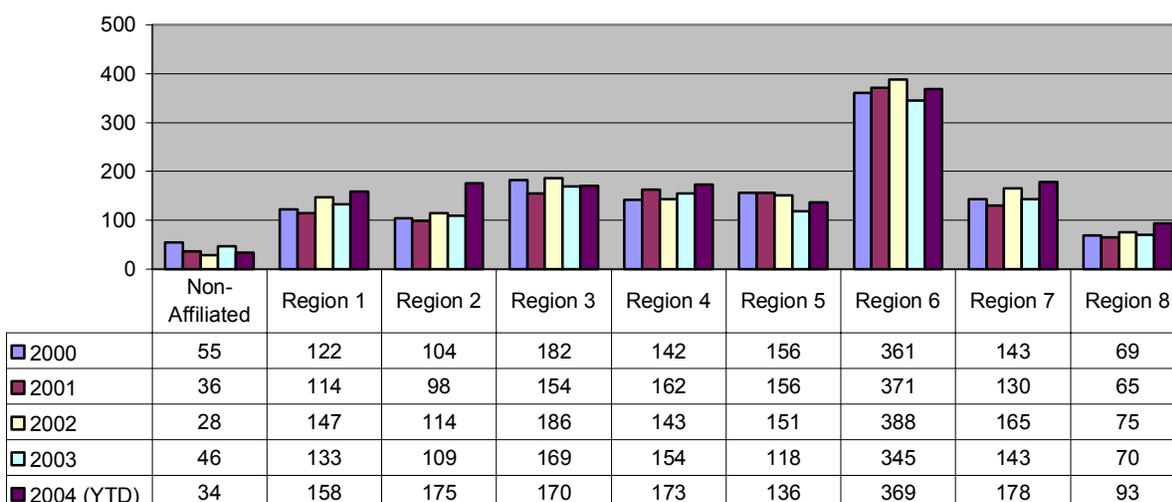
### ON-LINE EVENT REGISTRATION COMING SOON!

I am very pleased to inform you that both the **Novice Training Program** and our **Annual Conference** will have fully automated on-line registration. When a participant registers for either event, his/her membership status will be checked, and if the participant is not a current paid member, s/he will be billed for both the registration and membership fees simultaneously. Once full payment is received, both the conference registration and membership status will be updated. The implementation of this process will ensure that we have complete, accurate membership data REAL-TIME! *Stay tuned for more information!* Check [News & Updates](#) on the website and the listservs for the most up-to-date information on these upcoming events.

#### NYSFAAA MEMBERSHIP



#### NYSFAAA REGIONAL MEMBERSHIP DATA



NYSFAAA MEMBERSHIP BY NSTITUTION TYPES

