



Iowa Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators

THE INFORMER

The Quarterly IASFAA Newsletter

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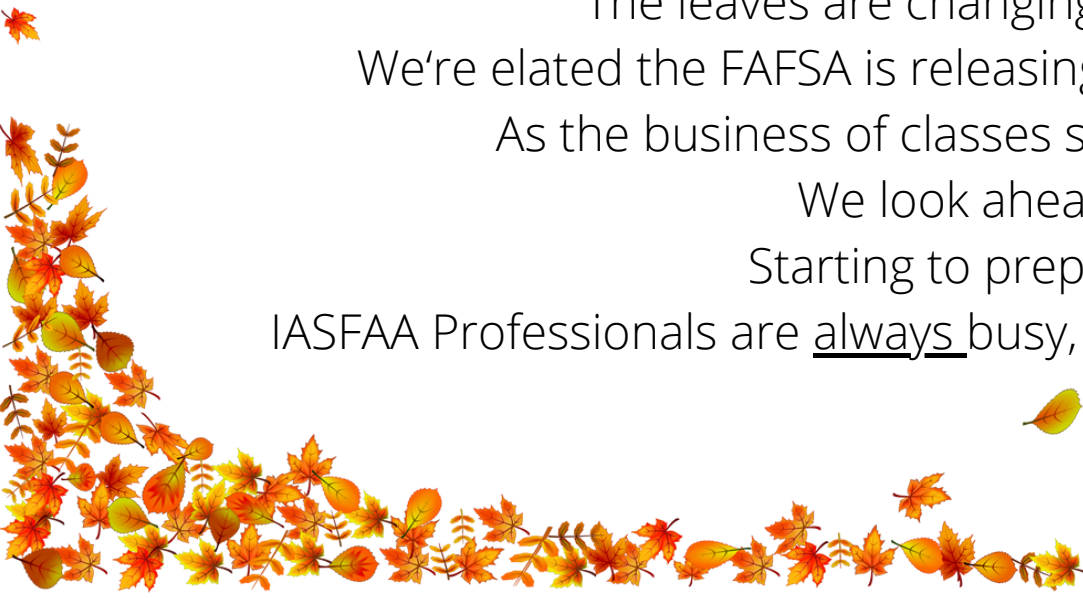
MEMBER SPOTLIGHT: IASFAA STARS!

WHAT'S NEW WITH THE IASFAA CREW?

POLL: DOGS OR CATS?



The leaves are changing, fall is finally here,
We're elated the FAFSA is releasing on time this year!
As the business of classes starting fades away,
We look ahead to what's on bay.
Starting to prepare for 2026-2027,
IASFAA Professionals are always busy, that's no question!



Executive Council Summer Retreat

In July, IASFAA's Executive Council gathered in Iowa City for its annual summer retreat. Elected officials, committee chairs, and co-chairs came together to reflect on the past year and explore ways to strengthen IASFAA in the year ahead.

The Council discussed several new ideas, including:

- Offering IASFAA merchandise for purchase at conferences
- Transitioning organizational processes to electronic formats
- Expanding professional development opportunities for members
- Encouraging engagement, particularly among new members

The Executive Council is excited to serve you this year and looks forward to continuing efforts to enhance the IASFAA experience for all members!



Get Involved with IASFAA

Find your perfect volunteer match!

IASFAA is run by so many fantastic volunteers! If you are looking for a way to get involved but aren't sure where to start, the newsletter will be spotlighting IASFAA Committees that could use YOU as a volunteer.

Find something that piques your interest? Contact the committee chair for your potential new committee to learn more.

Diversity Committee

The Diversity Committee coordinates at least one session at the IASFAA conference, and educates membership by recognizing heritage months, celebrations, holidays, etc. via the IASFAA listserv and social media.

Time Commitment: Low! We meet once typically every other month via Zoom.

Chair: Shelly Adams, SAdams@Studentloan.org

Membership Committee

Tries to encourage IASFAA membership growth through various endeavors. A highlight from the past year: Converting both Regular and Associate membership over to an Institutional option has been a huge but gratifying activity!

Time Commitment: Would plan to meet with committee on an every other month basis and as needed.

Chair: Alice Bunjer, bunjera@faith.edu

Site Coordinating Committee

The Site Committee researches and makes decisions on venues of where the annual conference of the association will take place. The chair and co-chair serve as members of the Program Committee to assist in the planning of the annual conference. This committee selects all conference meals to recommend a registration fee for the conference. During the conference the committee members make sure all technology is set up in the rooms for presentations, meals are served as planned/scheduled and works as the point of contact between IASFAA and hotel staff.

Time Commitment: 2-4/hours per month while planning. During the conference, the committee is on call the entire scheduled time.

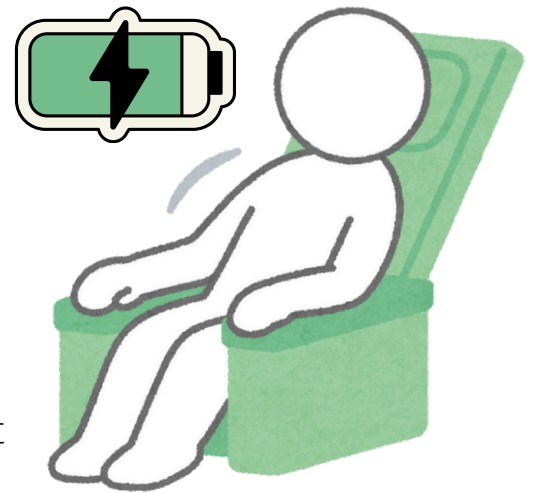
Chair: Kristi Fuller, Kristi.fuller@drake.edu

Finding Ways to Recharge

Diversity Committee Fall Article

As fall settles in and the bustle of classes begins, cooler weather and shorter days can quickly feel overwhelming. It's important to pause and find ways to recharge.

Most people have heard the standard advice: "Take breaks, go for a walk." While those are helpful reminders, let's look at some specific strategies that can make a real difference.



Music is a powerful tool for shifting mood and energy. Looking for a pick-me-up? Songs from the 70s and 80s can provide an instant boost. Feeling stressed? Singing along to Broadway tunes, cuddling with your cats or turning on calming spa music can help reset the mind. Stretching and breathing exercises are also excellent ways to support both physical and mental health.

Sleep plays a central role in overall well-being. Quality rest strengthens the immune system, lowers the risk of chronic illness, supports mental health, and helps maintain a healthy weight. Developing good sleep habits starts with consistency — going to bed and waking up at the same times each day.

Bedtime routines can also prepare the body and mind for rest. Activities such as taking a warm shower, listening to music, or reading a book signal that it's time to wind down.

Daytime habits matter, too. Regular exercise improves sleep quality and overall health. Avoiding large meals, caffeine after noon, and substances like nicotine and alcohol can also make falling asleep easier. If hunger strikes before bed, small, light snacks are best.

As the semester moves forward and the holiday season approaches, responsibilities can feel heavier. Remember to prioritize rest and self-care. Taking small, intentional steps to maintain balance can help manage stress throughout the year.

NEW FAAC MEMBERS!

Congratulations to the new FAAC Members in IASFAA! Your hard work and dedication to the financial aid profession are recognized in this great accomplishment!

- **Elizabeth Augustine** - Briar Cliff University
- **Jess Graham** - University of Iowa



Stay Connected with the IASFAA Listserv!

Are you taking advantage of the IASFAA Listserv? This valuable tool is designed for IASFAA members to quickly and efficiently share relevant information with fellow members.

[What is the IASFAA Listserv?](#)

The IASFAA Listserv is an email-based platform that allows members to easily disseminate and receive updates, announcements, and other important information related to the financial aid profession and our association.

How to Subscribe or Post a Message

It's simple!

1. Click on IASFAA Listserv.
2. Navigate to My Features > E-Lists to subscribe or post a message.

Join the conversation and stay in the loop with timely updates from your IASFAA community. Don't miss out—sign up today!

Connect with us!

Please send content suggestions or member updates to
tatiana-ochoa@uiowa.edu



Like the IASFAA page on [Facebook](#) and follow us on [Instagram](#) and [LinkedIn](#)!



IASFAA Stars!

Nominated IASFAA member spotlight

**NEW**

We're excited to introduce a brand-new section in the IASFAA newsletter:

Member Spotlights!

In this feature, IASFAA members can nominate colleagues who go above and beyond in their profession. Each nominee will be celebrated and showcased in an upcoming issue of the newsletter.

Thank you to everyone who submitted nominations for our very first spotlight. We're thrilled to highlight three outstanding members in this edition!

Do you have someone in mind who deserves recognition?
Be sure to share their name in the next IASFAA newsletter survey!

This month's IASFAA Stars are:

Cole Blankenheim, *University of Iowa*

Alyssa Dalton, *University of Iowa*

Kaity Fisher, *University of Iowa*

Cole Blankenheim, Loan & Work Study Specialist, UIowa: Cole has been a great addition to the UI office. He was a quick learner and has been eager to hop in and help the advising team when needed. Cole provided much-needed support during Iowa's Orientation season and also provides assistance with our private loan counseling process!

Alyssa Dalton, Sr. Processing Advisor, UIowa: There are too many great things to say about Alyssa. She is a trusted source of information on her team and is always willing to provide assistance or a pair of eyes to help review something. Alyssa has stepped up as a leader in our office/for her team and consistently goes above and beyond in her work. She also goes above and beyond in extracurriculars in the office by volunteering her time to help with planning of events and/or training!

Kaity Fisher from the University of Iowa, Senior Assistant Director for Advising, Financial Literacy and Outreach. Kaity has just made it through her first fall supervising the front facing advising team. Kaity came into her role after only a year and a half or so in the financial aid world and has done an amazing job leading the advising team. She was always willing to jump in and help wherever needed and brought a sense of calm to the chaos that is financial aid in August!



What's new with the IASFAA Crew?

- **Janine Baeza** started at the University of Iowa in August as an Associate Director, MAUI Operations and Systems. She will be working with the University of Iowa's homegrown system, MAUI, and our IT team. Welcome to the team, Janine!
- **Olivia Lederman** was hired as a Financial Aid Advisor at the University of Iowa over the summer and started working in August. Welcome, Olivia!
- **Libby Rolfs** started at Luther College in June as their newest Financial Aid Counselor. Welcome to IASFAA, Libby!

IASFAA Member News

Faith Baptist Bible College Chamber Choir was able to sing the National Anthem at both the Iowa Cubs game and at the KC Royals game this fall. This was a great opportunity for the chamber choir! Below are a few pictures from the event.



Dogs or cats?

The votes are in!

IASFAA members have spoken, and the majority vote goes to... **DOGS!**

Thank you to everyone who participated in the poll. Be sure to check out the next Newsletter Survey sent via the IASFAA Listserv to cast your vote in our upcoming IASFAA poll!

