

Texas Association of Student Financial Aid
Administrators



2024 TASFAA Annual
Report



TASFAA Conference 2024: Coming Together

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TASFAA Statements

TASFAA Mission Statement

The Texas Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators (TASFAA) advances student access to higher education by providing professional development for its diverse members, advocating for informed public policies, and facilitating forums on financial aid topics.

TASFAA Vision Statement

TASFAA will serve as a pillar by empowering members with excellent professional development opportunities and promoting student access and success in higher education.

TASFAA Statement of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

TASFAA is firmly committed to fostering a warm, open environment for Financial Aid Professionals, as our membership is comprised of many intersecting identities that make us unique individuals. We strive to eliminate discrimination including, but not limited to: race, color, ethnicity, national origin, gender, gender identity and expression, sexual orientation, age or veteran status. Additionally, we embrace the cultural, political, social class and religious affiliations of our members, as those differences allow us to best serve the vastly diverse student community in the State of Texas.



TASFAA Board and Committee Chairs

President- Denise Welch (Panola College)

Vice President -Dawn Coleman (Texas A&M University)

President Elect-D Ingram (University of Texas Southwestern Medical School)

Past President- Dede Gonzales (Texas State University)

Treasurer-Monica Smart (Dallas Baptist University)

Secretary-Keith Hoelscher (Angelo State University)

Members-At-Large

Thomas Ratliff (Hardin-Simmons University)

Christ Miller (Wayland Baptist University)/Taryn Anderson (Baylor University)

Leandra Garcia (St. Mary's University)

Chandra Gonzalez(South Texas College of Law)

Zarita Barton (Lone Star College)

Lawana Haynes (San Jacinto College)

Tonya Richardson-Dean (Trinity Valley College)

President's Letter

Greetings TASFAA Members. It has been an honor to serve you this past year as President. We had an amazing board that worked very hard to make sure that TASFAA continued to strive to meet our organizational goals. This year, your board focused on making sure that TASFAA as an organization were using our resources to the fullest. While insuring that we were meeting our financial obligations, we were planning for our future. TASFAA is very fiscally sound and we have invested well. That allows us to be proactive in providing the best service to our members possible.



Our Committees Year in Review:

Conference Committee

2024 Annual Conference was held at the Hilton Post Oak by the Galleria, Houston. We had 395 total registrants, including 48 sponsors/vendors. Our theme this year was "Coming together- When we come together, we overcome together". Our keynote Andrea Nguyen, Dir, Corp/Foundation Relations.



The Federal update this year was a live virtual session with Melanie Storey and she did allow for questions.



Charles Contero-Puls as always provided our state update.

NASFAA Chair, Kristie Jovell, presented the NASFAA update and presented a very timely session to conclude the conference.

Our SWASFAA President, Audra Main also gave us the SWASFAA update and present on R2T4



Our silent auction raffle raised \$2620.00 for GRADCafe' Houston.



Among the great sessions we always take time to have fun. Our band for the Thursday evening event, "The Fab 5", was a 70's theme and they did not disappoint.



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The conference was very successful and **Thank You** to JoEllen Price, Chair and Lawana Haynes, Co-chair. And the committee. Members: Alberto Hernandez, Boni Jacobs, Felipe Romero, Jeffrey Scott, Laura Elizonda, Leah Grassi, Rebecca Dyess, Sergio Gonzales, Chandra Gonzales, Tonya Richardson-Dean, Sophia McGee, Dawn Coleman, Zarita Barton and Melissa Jones

We could not do any of these without our sponsors and partners.





NASFAA Credential Committee

Robert Fishkind, Chair

Members: Stacey Vasquez, Cristen Alicea, Norma Aguilar, and Lucreasha Mixon

As a summary for the year, there have been 145 NASFAA credentials awarded to date including those of the names submitted following the previous fall conference. The breakdown is as follows:

Packaging & Aid Notification-10

Professional Judgement-14

Satisfactory Academic Progress-15

Student Eligibility-17

Cost of Attendance-89

Training Committee

NAOW was again at Great Wolf Lodge, Grapevine. We had 72 in attendance.



NAOB at conference, we had 63 in attendance.

Melissa Jones, Chair and her committee: Sarah Gordon, Erin Dunham, Julie Finn, Ilaria Puente, Bruce Ware, Cecelia Jones, and Elizabeth Edwards worked tireless to make these events a success.

Governance and Compliance

Melet Leafgreen, Chair, and Rebecca Bradley, past chair

Reviewed the committee and task force structure for possible combining of some committees and the possible use of subcommittees within a committee.

Diversity & Inclusion Committee

Chair, Cecelia Jones and committee members:

Shanya Blueitt, Houston Community College
Nilda Mason, University of Texas - Austin
Carla Dixson, University of North Texas at Dallas
Sahmeen Ali, Rice University
Swaytha Ramakrishnan, Prairie View A&M University

Monica Comeaux, University of Houston-Downtown
Joy Thomas, Prairie View A&M University

Purpose

The Diversity & Inclusion Committee is responsible for guiding efforts to conceptualize, define, assess, nurture, and cultivate diversity as an organizational and educational resource.

Activity

- Presented a Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion session, “Embracing Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion”, during the TASFAA New Aid Officers Workshop (NAOW), April 2024. Educating those new to financial aid of the importance of diversity, equity, inclusion in the TASFAA organization.
- Presented a Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion session, “Embracing Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion”, during the TASFAA New Aid Officers Basics (NAOB), October 2024. Educating those new to financial aid of the importance of diversity, equity, inclusion in the TASFAA organization.

The Diversity & Inclusion Committee assists TASFAA with providing with support, access, engagement, and opportunities.

Site Selection Committee

Nora Cargo Chair

Members:

Ed Kerestly, Past Chair

Zarita Barton

Robert Clark

Chandra Gonzalez

The Committee considered area hotels and submitted requests for information to 22 properties. Thirteen properties responded. Many of the hotels were unable to fully accommodate our requirements (dates, room rate, room nights, meeting rooms, etc.).

After a site visit and Board approval, the Site Selection Committee is pleased to have secured the **San Antonio Marriott River center on the River Walk** for the 2025 Fall Conference, October 8-10, 2025.

The Site Selection Committee also secured Great Wolf Lodge for the next two years' New Aid Officers Workshops: April 9-11, 2025, and April 8-10, 2026.

Awards Committee

Molly Garrett, Chair

Members: Cynthia Chavez, Yvonne Vera, Renee Bealer, Stephanie Martin, Christina Yoakum, Cecelia Alongi, and Maggie Sheehan

TASFAA Hall of Fame – Lou Murray, Ernest

Trailblazer Award – Melissa Jones, University of Mary Hardin Baylor

Carolyn Jones Teaching and Mentoring Award – Chandra Gonzalez, South Texas College of Law

Financial Aid Star Award – Chyna Halbert, Texas A&M University

Financial Aid Support Award – Jennifer Tamayo, The Alamo College District

Diversity and Inclusion Award – D. Ingram, UT Southwestern Medical Center

TASFAA Committee of the Year Award – Governance, Chair Melet Leafgreen



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Mack Adams NAOW –

Rhonda Ledbetter – Wayland Baptist University

Lillian Gonzales – Collin County Community College

Troy Tolly – Tarrant County College

Sandra Ballard – University of North Texas at Dallas

Sarah Mack – Concordia University Texas

Margarita Aguero – Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi

Carrie Hallmark – Texas Lutheran University

Mack Adams NAOB – Juan Jaramillo – Texas A&M – Commerce
Kiara Soliz Heitzman – San Jacinto College
Mikaela Gomez – El Paso Community College
Michael Gibson – Texas A&M – Commerce
Maressa Mendez – University of Texas – Rio Grande Valley

ATLE-TASFAA Education Scholarship – Heather Fountain – Texas A&M University

Years of Service Members:

First	Last	Institution	Years of Service
Jennifer	Aiello	Howard College	10
Scott	Alford	South Plains College	10
Cecelia	Alongi	University of Houston - Clear Lake	10
Tonya	Anderson	South Texas College of Law - Houston	10
Yessenia	Betancourt	San Jacinto College	10
Martha	Chairez	University of Texas - El Paso	10
Delsa	Copeland	Hill College	10
Alberto	Cuevas	Lone Star College	10
Alisha	Danner	Grayson College	10
Deshondis	Elliott-Taylor	University of Houston	10
Leslie	Galindo	Texas Christian University	10
Daisy	Garcia	Odessa College	10
Angela	Gutierrez	Trinity University	10
Misti	Hardison	Trinity Valley Community College	10
Abbie	Huang	University of Houston-Downtown	10
Janet	Huggett	Texas A&M University-Commerce	10
Andrea	Livingston	Texas Southern University	10
Ernesto	Martinez	University of North Texas Health Science Center at Fort Worth	10
Ana	Moros	Lone Star College	10
Natalie	Nickerson	Cisco College	10
Kyle	Parsons	Texas Christian University	10
Belinda	Pena	Austin Community College	10
Lacey	Price	Sam Houston State University	10
Anthony	Prieto	El Paso Community College	10
Imelda	Ramos	Tarrant County College	10
Luis	Ramos	University of Texas at San Antonio	10
Sheryll	Selmon	Dallas College	10
Rick	Shoemake	Baylor University	10
Alfredo	Siller	Texas A&M International University	10
Carla	Taylor	Texas A&M University-Commerce	10
Menisa	Vega	South Texas College	10

Madie	Westmoreland	Texas A&M University - Texarkana	10
Lindsey	Wood	Baylor University	10
Pauline	Armendariz	Austin Community College	15
Ellen	Binion	Vernon College	15
Shanya	Blueitt	Houston Community College System	15
Vicky	Bradley	Houston Community College System	15
Janelle	Braxton	University of Texas - San Antonio Health Science Center	15
Maria	Caballero	San Jacinto College	15
Raul	Cavazos	Texas A&M University - Kingsville	15
Sara	Connolly	Midwestern State University	15
Blake	Dalina	Rice University	15
Eileen	Eiden	Austin Community College	15
Flor	Espinosa	Alamo Colleges District	15
Donna	Evans	College Ave Student Loans	15
Carmen	Franco	College of the Mainland	15
Stephanie	Franco	Tarrant County College	15
Tangelia	Gay	Houston Community College System	15
Eugenia	Glinsey	Abilene Christian University	15
SanJuanita	Gonzalez	San Jacinto College	15
Donna	Guzman	Texas Tech University	15
Kathy	Hall	Texas A&M University-Commerce	15
Brett	Hawkins	Dallas Baptist University	15
Alexandra	Hellinger	Alamo Colleges District	15
Kimberly	Herron	Paris Junior College	15
Barbara	Humphrey	Southwestern Assemblies of God University	15
Danchees	Ingram	UT Southwestern Medical Center	15
Minerva	Knudson	El Paso Community College	15
Delilah	Magdaleno	Dallas College	15
Irma	Marin	Baptist Health System School of Health Professions	15
Ruby	Martinez	Del Mar College	15
Bianca	Matlock	Houston Community College System	15
Jo	Mayhall	Howard College	15
Devona	McNeal	Baylor University	15
Melinda	Mendoza	Victoria College	15
Nikki	Montoya	Galveston College	15
Bridget	Moore	Abilene Christian University	15
Alicia	Morris	Parker University	15
Ruthe	Newman	College of the Mainland	15
Holly	Nolan	University of Houston - Clear Lake	15
Lefaye	Palmer	Texas Southern University	15
Erica	Rhone	Houston Community College System	15
Andee	Rodriguez	Tarrant County College	15
Aurelia	Sanders	Houston Community College System	15
Teresa	Sterling	University of Houston-Downtown	15
Earle	Thomas	San Jacinto College	15
Mayra	Torres-Gonzalez	University of Texas - Arlington	15

Jamaah	Tyler	Houston Community College System	15
Renee	Walker	Texas A&M University-Commerce	15
Jennifer	Watson	Dallas College	15
RaDonna	Womack	Trinity Valley Community College	15
Daniel	Yarritu	Brazosport College	15
Allen	Bissonnette	Texas Christian University	20
Karalee	Byrnes	Dallas College	20
Tricia	Cisneros	Texas A&M University	20
Carla	Dixson	University of North Texas at Dallas	20
Maria	Ferrer	University of North Texas at Dallas	20
Sivan	Flores	Lone Star College	20
Nathan	Flory	University of Texas - Tyler	20
Jeff	Francis	Southwestern Assemblies of God University	20
Pedro	Garcia	University of Texas - Rio Grande Valley	20
Debra	Gonzalez	Lone Star College	20
Arianna	Gray	Collin County Community College	20
Allysa	Guel	University of Texas - Rio Grande Valley	20
Jerrod	Harrell	Southern Methodist University	20
Va-Linda	Henrie	Collin County Community College	20
Lieu	Hodges	Higher Education Servicing Corp.	20
Mayra	Juarez	Texas State Technical College	20
Mary	McGowan	McLennan Community College	20
Irma	Mooney	Texas Tech University	20
Laurie	Nedwed	Austin Community College	20
Felipe	Olivarez III	University of Texas - Rio Grande Valley	20
Rhonda	Parker	Texas State Technical College	20
Erin	Porter	Texas A&M University	20
Araceli	Ramirez	El Paso Community College	20
Azalea	Ramirez	Alamo Colleges District	20
Tonya	Richardson-Dean	Trinity Valley Community College	20
Carey	Rose	Temple College	20
Priscilla	Salas	Wharton County Junior College	20
Leah	Smalley	Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board	20
Shanetta	Burke	Houston Community College System	25
Randal	Dement	Lubbock Christian University	25
Carol	Exum	Texas A&M University - Kingsville	25
Charlotte	Farrington	Texas A&M University	25
Lety	Gallegos	University of Houston	25
Lydia	Gaona	Texas Tech University	25
Rosa	Gonzalez	Houston Community College System	25
Heidi	Granger	University of Texas - El Paso	25
Amy	Hardesty	Lubbock Christian University	25
Jennifer	Hoffpowier	LeTourneau University	25
Amy	Hoss	Parker University	25
Rayanne	Hukill	Weatherford College	25
Melissa	Morin	Texas A&M International University	25

Tish	Owen	Southwestern University	25
Janie	Rangel	Alamo Colleges District	25
Felicity	Swann	Amarillo College	25
Lacey	Thompson	Texas Woman's University	25
Michelle	Wells	Midwestern State University	25
Brent	Williford	Blinn College	25
Jason	Young	Dallas College	25
Rosa	Alaniz	Vernon College	30
Lisa	Albers	Monogram	30
Cynthia	Chavez	Baylor University	30
Deedra	Grant	Houston Community College System	30
Marisol	Gutierrez	Texas Southmost College	30
Sandra	Guzman	College of the Mainland	30
Jo	Harrington	Wharton County Junior College	30
Caroline	Hernandez	Austin Community College	30
Ed	Kerestly	Angelo State University	30
Debra	Knighten	Dallas College	30
Trina	Manor	University of Texas - Austin	30
Melissa	Moncivais	Texas A&M University - Kingsville	30
Ellen	Nystrom	University of Texas - San Antonio Health Science Center	30
Jana	Polansky	Texas State Technical College	30
Thresa	Tyus	Trellis Company	30
Greta	Wheeler	University of Mary Hardin-Baylor	30
Anna	Barrera	South Texas College	35
Cynthia	Bazan	Austin Community College	35
Debora	Burnett	Houston Christian University	35
Jeannie	Gage	Texas A&M University - Corpus Christi	35
Cherylyn	Joseph	Houston Community College System	35
Karen	LaQuey	Howard Payne University	35
Pat	Richardson	Trinity Valley Community College	35
Laurie	Rosenkrantz	University of Texas - Arlington	35
Liza	Torres	Houston Community College System	35
Gloria	Corona	El Paso Community College	40
Richard	Renshaw	Department of Education	40
Becky	Wilson	Lubbock Christian University	40
Marcus	Wilson	TTU Health Sciences Center - Lubbock	40
Susan	Lewis	Collin County Community College	45
Harold	Whitis	Alamo Colleges District	45
Earl	Hudgins	Panhandle-Plains Higher Education Foundation	50

Regional Training Committee

Chandra Gonzales, Chair

Member Cody Buczyna

Regional Training had 6 sites. Our committee worked tirelessly to successfully complete the Regional Training. Below are the sites and the numbers for each site. Also, compared to 2 previous years.

Location	Registered:	Actual Attended	# of Vendors to Table:
Collin College, Frisco Campus	57	46	5
United Way Houston	99	87	9
St Mary's University	73	62	8
Texas Southmost College	61	56	3
Lubbock Christian University	109	99	7
Tarrant County Community College-South Campus	103	86	6
TOTAL:	502	436	38
Difference from 2023:	19	-6	
2023 Numbers:	521	430	
2022 Numbers:	307		

Our Regional Training is a success and our members benefit across the state.

Nominations and Elections Committee

Harold Whitis Chair, Whitnie Smith Co-Chair

After much hard work the N&E committee have the 2025 Slate of Officers:

The Nominations & Elections Committee, following procedures established by TASFAA, solicited nominations for President-Elect and Board members at-large. Those nominated have been vetted for eligibility and we sought to secure a diverse pool of candidates to lead TASFAA. Following are the nominees.

PRESIDENT-ELECT

Candidate 1

Chandra Gonzalez, Senior Director, Student Services
South Texas College of Law Houston

Serving on the TASFAA board of directors has been one of the most rewarding and valuable decisions I have ever made. After having served 3 years on the TASFAA board, I feel I have found a new avenue to help fellow administrators along with contributing a unique voice to our organization. I would love the opportunity to further assist my fellow financial aid administrators as your TASFAA president.

I have worked in higher education for over 23 years, from financial aid advisor to director level, and with private, proprietary and public institutions. I want to continue to give back to our

financial aid community and serving as your president would be a great next step. Currently, I serve on the TASFAA regional training committee, site selection committee, and the early awareness committee. I love training and helping others to better understand our already complicated financial aid world! TASFAA helps me to achieve this goal.

I am a first generation, Asian American who loves to represent our financial aid community and find ways to make our professional lives a little bit easier and a lot more fun. I believe in sharing best practices, ideas and spending time as a community to better understand everyone's struggles....ultimately trying to help each other overcome those struggles. I'd be honored to lead TASFAA to ensure we will always represent you!

Candidate 2

Thomas M. Ratliff, Associate Vice President, Student Financial Services
Hardin-Simmons University

I truly appreciate being considered for the opportunity to serve TASFAA as President-Elect. My 35 years of financial aid administration experience in a variety of proprietary, public and private institutions, have given me the ability to see our profession through many different frames of reference. Similarly, my service with multiple professional associations, including being President of both our SWASFAA regional financial aid association and the MASFAA regional association, has allowed me opportunity to internalize a variety of approaches for meeting group objectives.

Just like our students, we as a professional body have very diverse needs. I want to help ensure we do all we can to help each other effectively fulfill those through training, contributing to aid program development and encouragement of one another.

In this time of unequaled challenges with the U.S. Department of Education, NASFAA leadership change and increasing regulatory complexity, it is important that our state association have a strong and understanding voice for our concerns.

It is my hope that with your support through this opportunity I will be able to help contribute to that voice in ways that best meet the needs of our membership while pursing our goal of delivering educational funding opportunities for students throughout Texas.

BOARD MEMBERS AT-LARGE

Candidate 1

Tanika Aggison, Interim Director, Financial Aid Customer Service and Processing
Houston Community College

Hello colleagues! My journey in financial aid began over 23 years ago. As a work-study student, I was fortunate enough to experience the importance of financial aid and the great impact it has on students' success. The length of my career has allowed me to gain experience in public universities, proprietary schools and community colleges. I am currently serving as the

Interim Director of Customer Service and Processing at one of the largest community college systems in the United States. My experience here has fueled me in wanting to continue to serve in a capacity where students are given the opportunity to pursue whatever they desire educationally.

I would be honored to serve on the board to use my expertise to better serve our institutions in understanding the policies that are consistently changing and may be challenging to understand. My current role allows me to serve a large population of non-traditional students, which I am sure would bring a unique perspective to the Board.

Thank you for your consideration.

Candidate 2

Victoria K. Chen, Executive Director, Office of Scholarships and Student Financial Aid
Texas Christian University

I am grateful for the opportunity to be considered for the TASFAA Board of Directors position, drawing upon my extensive background in financial aid administration and unwavering commitment to the field. With over 26 years of experience across various roles within higher education, I have gained a profound understanding of the challenges and opportunities confronting aid administrators, students, and families in navigating the complexities of higher education financing.

Throughout my career, I have remained steadfast in advocating for students' needs and ensuring transparency, efficiency, and equity in financial aid processes. Actively engaging in dialogues with esteemed organizations such as the College Board, THECB, TASFAA, SWASFAA, NASFAA, and ED has kept me abreast of evolving regulations, best practices, and emerging trends in financial aid.

My leadership capabilities have been honed through my involvement in numerous opportunities, including:

- College Board CSS/Financial Assistance Assembly Council
- TASFAA Regional Training Committee and THECB FAAC Committee and Data Collection Sub-Committee
- Enrollment Planning Network (EPN), American Talent Initiatives
- American Talent Initiative (ATI)
- TCU leadership committees

These engagements have enabled me to foster collaboration among team members and stakeholders, analyze complex issues, develop strategic solutions, and implement effective policies and procedures.

As a prospective TASFAA Board of Directors member, I bring forth a fresh perspective, innovative ideas, and a steadfast commitment to advancing the association's mission. I am deeply passionate about supporting and empowering financial aid professionals, advocating for policies that enhance access to higher education for all students, and nurturing a culture of continuous learning and professional growth within the field.

I am genuinely excited about the prospect of contributing my expertise, energy, and enthusiasm as a member of the TASFAA Board of Directors. I am confident that my skills and experiences would serve as valuable assets to the team. Thank you for considering my candidacy.

Candidate 3

Jason Edens, Director, Financial Aid & Compliance
Austin Community College

Hi TASFAA!

I'm excited and honored that I have the opportunity to serve the financial aid professionals across our great State as a Board Member At-Large for the next two years. My work history includes 21 years of higher education finance at a public community college and a public four-year university. I am currently serving Austin Community College as its Director of Financial Aid & Compliance.

With TASFAA, I have experience serving on the Membership Committee as a member for two years, on the Communications Committee as the chair for one year, and on the Nominations & Elections Committee as a member for one year and as the chair the next year. As a Board Member, my priorities would focus on bridging gaps between rigid laws and regulations and the need to provide our students with knowledge and simple processes to aid their success.

Candidate 4

Bridgette Ingram, Director, Scholarships & Financial Aid
Texas A&M University, College Station

I'm seeking a position on the TASFAA Board of Directors to contribute to enhancing student access to higher education. TASFAA is an advocate for public policy, a platform for financial aid discussions, and a provider of professional development. With over two decades of experience in financial aid, I've overseen aid programs, ensured compliance, crafted policies and procedures and engaged in strategic planning.

Together, as a collective, I believe we can devise strategies to ensure every student has the opportunity to pursue college. Despite the myriad challenges we've faced this year, I'm confident that by uniting as a community, we can support students, parents, and our educational institutions.

Candidate 5

Melissa Jones, Assistant Director of Financial Aid
University of Mary Hardin-Baylor

I have worked in higher education for over 13 years and am passionate about educating students about available aid and borrowing responsibly. I have the unique experience of having worked on the student account side for three years before transitioning to the financial aid side over seven years ago. During my time in financial aid, I have worked on financial literacy,

degree eligible hours, compliance, verification, SAP, the Pell program, and the Hazelwood Act Exemption. I have overseen both federal and private loan programs and recently began overseeing student work programs. Additionally, I hold several credentials from the National Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators (NASFAA).

My involvement in TASFAA began three years ago with serving on the TASFAA Training Committee where I now serve as committee chair. Through this experience I have come to realize that I have received much more than I have given. TASFAA's mission is one that I am honored to be a part of. Relationships I have built with people across the state have enhanced my ability to ensure our institution meets regulatory guidelines and serves our student population well. My diverse experiences have prepared me to offer a well-rounded viewpoint in helping guide the direction of the association. If given the opportunity, I look forward to serving and advancing the mission.

Thank you for considering me.

Candidate 6

C. Edward Kerestly, Director, Office of Financial Aid & Scholarships
Angelo State University

I discovered the great value of involvement in professional organizations like TASFAA early in my career. Through this involvement there is opportunity for; learning which is so vital to our success as a financial aid administrator, advocating for higher education access and affordability, and serving our students, institutions, and community. Yet, what I have gained the most from my involvement is the opportunity to connect with people who have become valued

colleagues and even lifelong friends. I am honored to be nominated as a candidate for an At-large Representative position in TASFAA to continue this involvement.

I began working in financial aid in 1994 with the last twelve years in Texas. Prior to coming to Texas, I participated in various financial aid organization activities including serving as the Michigan association president. With TASFAA, I have had the opportunity to be a member of several committees including serving as the regional training and site selection chairs. I have also participated in the THECB Financial Aid Advisory Committee acting as chair in my final year.

I believe these experiences will allow me to contribute to the TASFAA board in the at-large representative role. I also believe that my experience working at both public and private institutions—for the past six years, as the Director of Financial Aid and Scholarships at Angelo State University (TX) and leading financial aid offices at University of Texas Permian Basin (TX), Abilene Christian University (TX), Grand Valley State University (MI), Calvin University (MI) and Cornerstone University (MI), as well as worked in the areas of admissions and student life at Greenville University (IL)—also equips me well to serve in this role.

Candidate 7

Lucas Martinez-Salas, Training Coordinator

The University of Texas at Austin

I am honored to be nominated for the TASFAA Board of Directors. With extensive experience in financial aid and a recent promotion to Training Coordinator at UT Austin's Office of Scholarships & Financial Aid, I bring a wealth of knowledge and a strong commitment to professional development. Over the past year, I have successfully developed and implemented comprehensive training programs, significantly increased NASFAA certification rates among staff, and led the training efforts for a major software transition. These achievements reflect my dedication to fostering a culture of continuous learning and operational excellence, perfectly aligning with TASFAA's mission and vision.

If elected to the TASFAA Board of Directors, I will leverage my expertise in staff development and process improvement to drive impactful changes in financial aid practices across Texas. My value proposition lies in my proven ability to enhance staff capabilities, ensure compliance with complex regulations, and improve service delivery through innovative training solutions. By focusing on increasing certification rates, streamlining processes, and incorporating feedback to refine training programs, I aim to empower financial aid professionals to better serve our diverse student populations. My leadership will help ensure that financial aid administrators are equipped with the skills and knowledge needed to support student success and access to higher education.

Thank you for considering my candidacy.

Candidate 8

Joy D. Thomas, Ed.D., Executive Director, Office of Student Financial Services
Prairie View A&M University

I am writing this statement to express my interest in a place on the ballot for the TASFAA Board of Directors. To provide some background, I have served in various roles throughout institutions of Higher Education, where my commitment and willingness to serve those in need in the financial aid and academic world has spanned over 19 years, working at Georgia Southern University, Savannah State University, and Prairie View A&M University.

I have had the opportunity to work in the areas of student services, including financial aid and information technology, where I have gained the administrative and technical knowledge needed to be successful in my career as a financial aid administrator.

While serving in various capacities in financial aid, I have had the opportunity to contribute to the success of numerous minority, low-income students and I am continuing to strive to make an impact to those minority college students who may not have otherwise had the opportunity to attend college. I pride myself in knowing that I will one day become a leader who continues to develop creative and innovative methods of servicing the student population. In my current role as Executive Director of Student Financial Services, I am with hopes that having the opportunity to serve on the TASFAA Board of Directors will allow me to learn about and embrace the internal and external challenges faced in Colleges and Universities in the State of Texas as it relates to federal, state, and institutional practices surrounding federal student aid.

TASFAA Activities including committees and offices held:

- TASFAA Board of Directors (2021-22 – Member-At-Large)

- Member of Diversity/Inclusiveness Task Force, Chair

Other Professional Association Activities including committees and offices held:

- NASFAA Diversity Leadership Program (DLP) Cohort 2022-23

- Serves as a member of the THECB Financial Aid Advisory Committee (FAAC) – Term: 2019 - 2022

- College Board Enrollment Leadership Academy (ELA) Cohort (2023-24)

- Former Member of Georgia Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators (GASFAA) 2005 – 2009 - Volunteer Committees Participated: Site Selection

- Delta Sigma Pi Professional Business Fraternity – active member

- National Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators (NAASFA) – active member

- American Association of Blacks in Higher Education – former member

Campus Activities:

- Served as a member of the PVAMU HR COHORT R.I.S.E. Training Academy

- Served as a member of the PVAMU Athletic Council

- Member of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Incorporated (Katy, TX area) – Current Position:

Grammeteus (Secretary)

- Conducts ongoing academic research in the areas that focus on financial aid/financial literacy and student loan default.

- Financial Aid Professional for over 19 years.

President Elect-Thomas Ratliff, Hardin-Simmons

Board Member At Large

Joy Thomas, Prairie View A&M

Victoria Chen, TCU

Bridgette Ingram, Texas A&M

Melissa Jones, University of Mary-Hardin Baylor

Legislative Committee

Delisa Falks, Chair

Members: Jimmy Parker, Scott Lapinski, and Gabrielle Jimenez

This has been a quiet year in terms of legislative issues since it is not a legislative year with the state. There have been activities surrounding federal aid issues which this committee reviewed, and Delisa presented at the previous board meeting. Those are part of The College Cost Reduction Act. In the end Delisa did not send out a summary to the TASFAA Board after discussion of these items. This year with all the FAFSA challenges this committee took a back seat as aid offices (including my own) were facing challenges daily.

This email was sent to Commissioner Keller on behalf of TASFAA:

4. TASFAA/TASFAA Board

Search for all messages with label 4. TASFAA/TASFAA Board

Remove label 4. TASFAA/TASFAA Board from this conversation

F

Falks, Delisa F <delisaf@tamu.edu>

Fri, Mar 1,
2024,
4:02 PM

to harrison.keller@highered.gov, me

Howdy Mr. Keller,

Although it is not a legislative year, TASFAA wants to continue to advocate for alignment of state programs with federal programs to remove additional barriers for students.

On behalf of Ms. Denise Welch the current President of TASFAA and the TASFAA Legislative Issues Committee attached please find a document that further describes alignment.

We understand that THECB may not be able to present these directly to Legislators, however if there are any forums or discussions where this can be a topic of conversation we would appreciate the information being shared.

We will continue to reach out to Legislators on these issues as well.

I appreciate your time and review.

Sincerely,
Delisa
Chair-TASFAA Legislative Issues Committee 2023-2024

Delisa Falks | Assistant Vice President, Enrollment Management
Scholarships & Financial Aid and Aggie One Stop, Academic Affairs | Texas A&M University
P. O. Box 30016 TAMU | College Station, TX 77843-3016

Sponsor Relations

Craig Poleman, Chair

Members: Sergio Gonzales, Michelle Enriquez, Chris Campbell, and Jeff Daniels

TASFAA has 31 sponsors attending the conference this year.

Platinum Level Sponsors (\$3,500)-Earnest, HESC, Inceptia, Oracle

Gold Level Sponsors (\$2,500)-SoFi, Sallie Mae, PNC, Colleging, Ascent, Navy Federal Credit Union, CollegeAve, Brazos, KHEAA

Silver Level Sponsors (\$1,500)-Citizens, Panhandle Plains, Nelnet, Ascendium, RedKite, edamerica, ScholarNet, Student Choice, Fully Disbursed, ECMC Solutions, nextgen web solutions, College Aid Services, Global Financial Aid Services, Monogram, MOHELA, ELM Resources, blue icon advisors, Regent Education

These sponsorships generated \$63,500.

In addition to general sponsorship, a la carte items sponsored are as follows: WiFi-SoFi-\$200, WiFi-Colleging-\$200, WiFi-HESC-\$400, Break Sponsor-Colleging-\$800, Badge Sponsor-Earnest- \$1,050

The a la carte sponsorships generated \$2,650.

Total amount generated by sponsors this year is \$66,150. Conducted a "ALL SPONSORS" meeting on 9/6/24.

The committee hosted a Zoom Meeting for all current and potential sponsors. Nearly 40 participated in the call. I reviewed details of the conference to include sponsorship levels, a la carte sponsorship opportunities remaining and layout of the hotel/conference area. I provided setup and breakdown time details along with shipping instructions and costs. I received several positive comments from sponsors expressing appreciation for the conference details.

Thank you to Denise Welch, Dawn Coleman and Melissa Jones for participating in the call as well. The Zoom was recorded and shared with all participants and new sponsors for there review and information details. I want to thank Jeff Daniels with PNC Bank for putting the presentation together.

Membership Committee

Taryn Anderson, Chair

Members: Yvonne Campbell, Tomasa Zapata, Sara Williams, Eileen Eiden

Helping cover tasfaa@tasfaa.org emails while Kayla is out. Emails since 4/1/2024 185 initial inquiries to membership@tasfaa.org Most Email traffic is in regards to roster updates and password resets for people registering for NAOW and Conference

Opportunities:

8 Associate members did not renew from 2023

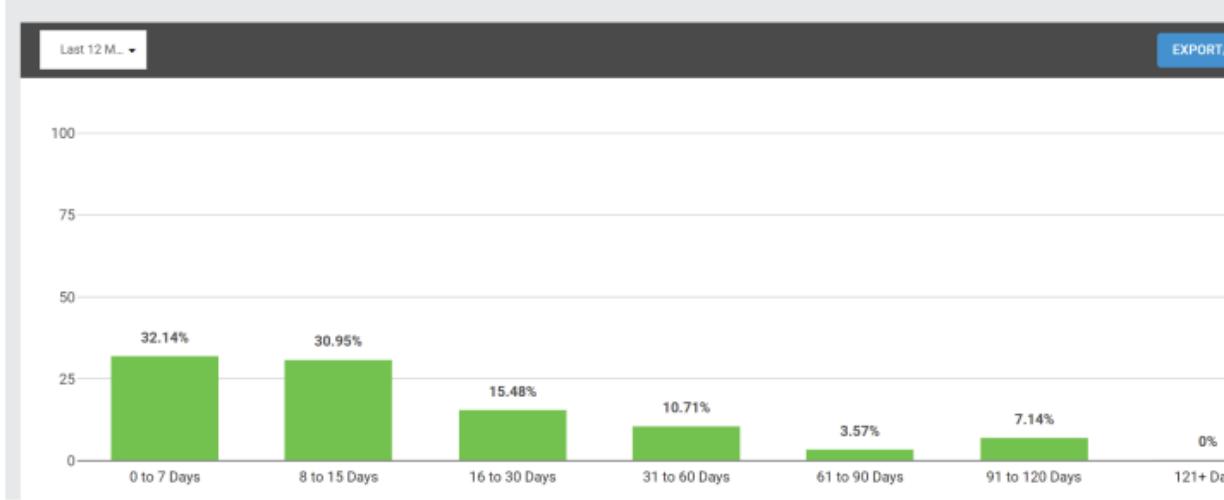
7 Institutional Members did not renew from 2023

7 schools filled out member applications this year but never paid dues for 2024

Current Membership Rosters

Member Type	Lapsed	Graced	Pending	Active
Admin	0	0	0	1
Associate	0	0	0	0
- Associate Member	0	0	0	0
Associate/Sponsor	24	0	0	43
- Associate/Sponsor Member	59	0	0	163
Institution	18	0	7	131
- Institutional Member	87	0	10	2039
Lifetime Member	0	0	0	8
Total	188	0	17	2385
Prospect				0
Total Active				2385

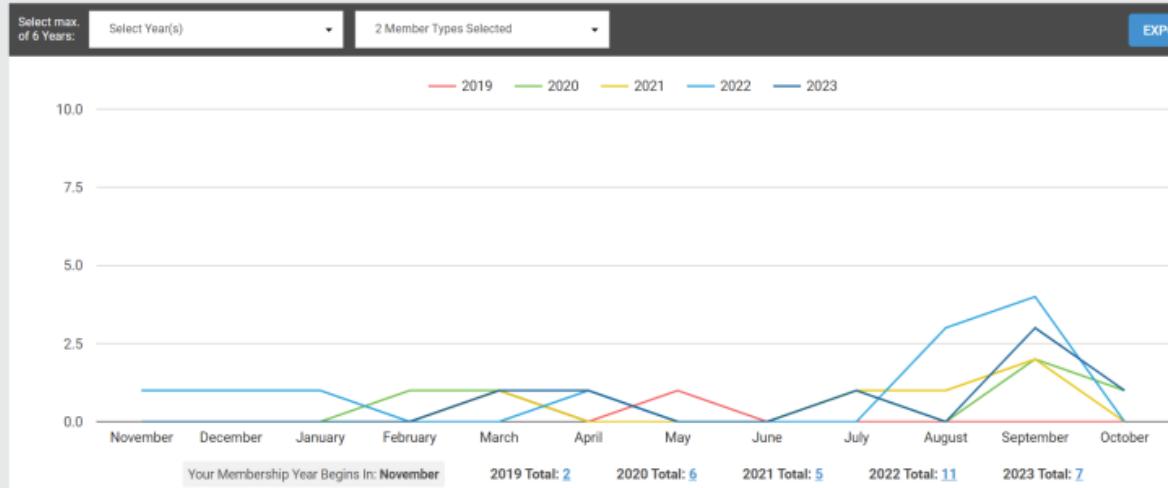
Act: Renewal Invoice Payment Timeline



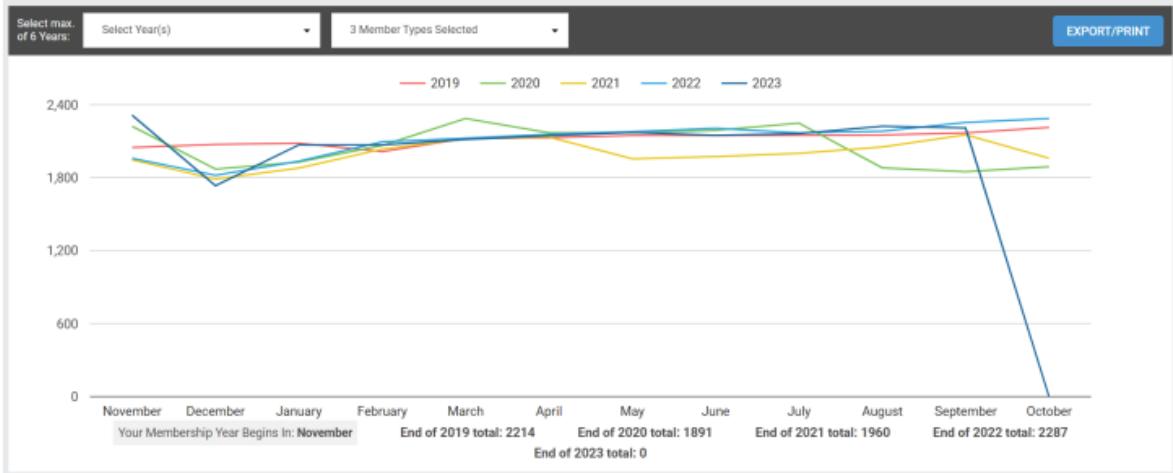
Analyzes actual members and when they became active (had access to the website) Red is institutional members and green is Associate.



Analyze: Membership Joins Year over Year



Analyze: Membership Counts Year over Year



New report for Membership Engagement Metrics: 11/1/2023-10/4/2024 Top engagers

First Name	Last Name	Member Type	Organization	Event Score	Login Score	Email Score	Total Score
Sergio	Gonzalez	Associate/Sponsor Member	Sallie Mae	99	98	100	99
		Associate/Sponsor	SoFi (Social Finance, Inc)	98	97	97	97
Craig	Poleman	Associate/Sponsor Member	SoFi (Social Finance, Inc)	98	97	97	97
Meghann	Degges	Institutional Member	Galveston College	95	96	95	95
Chandra	Gonzalez	Institutional Member	South Texas College of Law - Houston	100	99	84	95
Denise	Welch	Institutional Member	Panola College	98	99	84	94
Lou	Murray	Associate/Sponsor Member	Earnest	100	93	93	94
Ben	Montecillo	Institutional Member	University of Houston	95	94	92	94
Priscilla	Sales	Institutional Member	Wharton County Junior College	95	91	96	93
Zarita	Barton	Institutional Member	Lone Star College	69	98	100	93

Setting up everything for membership renewal. Nov 1. Confirm invoices go out Nov 1. Send reminders and update signatures and dates on invoices and emails. I need to have one more meeting with my team in October to show them this process. We did not meet over the summer but would like to get them in the system to see this part of membership before year close out.

Early Awareness Committee

Joseph Ruiz, Chair

Members: Chandra Gonzales, Dawn Coleman, Melanie Prudhomme, and Debra Urias

The following Regions ask for and received training through TASFAA

February 22 Region 7 (Denise Welch)

March 26th in ESC2 (Joseph Ruiz)

April 19th Wichita ESC (Brooks Gustafson)

Comments: Due to the FAFSA simplification and delays as committee chair I believe that I did not do a good job leading the early awareness committee. These are the only events that I am aware took place and I invite any committee members present to offer any updates to FAFSA events.

Year End Wrap up:

This year had its losses: Our good friend and colleague Marcus Wilson left us. He was TASFAA President 2002-2003. His leading style was by example.



He loved TASFAA and what it stood for. Here are his thoughts:

This is Marcus' testimonial in his own words:

Volunteering in TASFAA...where to begin?

Like most financial aid folks, my first job was almost an accident. It was not something I was pursuing, but an opportunity was presented, and I was needing a change. Amongst all the training and learning (and mistakes along the way) a fondness developed. I made new friends that shared this fondness (later I learned it was their passion and became mine also).

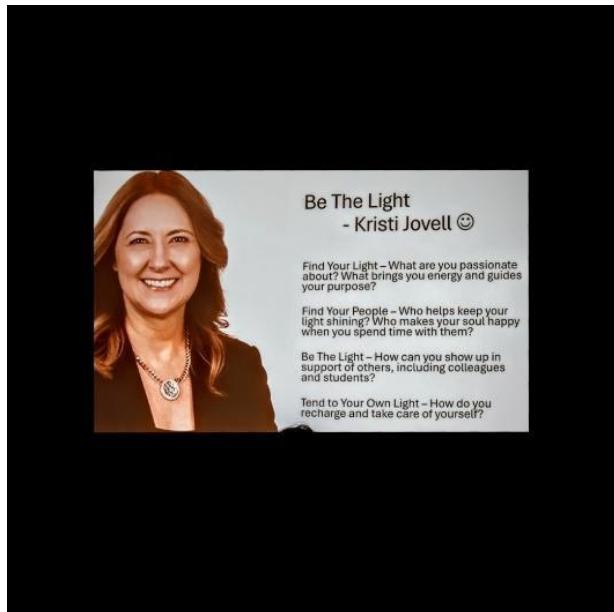
Shortly thereafter, I was voluntold of my participation on a local arrangements committee. Then, in the blink of an eye, I was all in. These new acquaintances were soon colleagues, a network for information and then great friends. So now, 35 years later, having been a committee member, vice-chair, chair, board member, vice president, president elect, president, past president, committee member, vice-chair and now chair again, the cycle has partially repeated. What a fun ride.

My suggestion, volunteer to help. You will quickly find you are the one receiving the greater benefit (not discounting your contributions in any way) because of the relationships formed.

Most sincerely

Marcus

It was through trials and tribulations that we made it through the Better FAFSA Better Future debacle. From FAFSA delays and more delays to complete over haul of the software systems used by the Financial aid offices from ED. Helping navigate the EFC to SAI process with students and parents, all the while trying our best to understand. It was a hard year is a understatement for sure. As we wrapped up our conference this year we are reminded to “Be the Light”



TASFAA Conference 2024: Coming Together Powered By [Whova](#)

We still show up, we still provide help to our students and parents so that they can be successful. What we do is important. While there are still many challenges, we can be the light to guide others to do the best possible for themselves and others. Most of all Be Kind

Thank you just doesn't seem to be enough to everyone that helped make it through this year.

