



APRIL 2016

Bits & Bytes

Newsletter of the Indiana Student Financial Aid Association

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Over 1,400 FAFSA's Filed at College Goal Sunday!

Many numbers combined for a heart-warming story on February 21st for the Indiana Student Financial Aid Association. Numbers like 1,454, and 42 as well as 587 and "over 99%" all add up to a very successful day.

For our 27th edition of College Goal Sunday here in Indiana, sites were added to make locations more easily accessible statewide for those wishing to attend an event. The 42 locations used 587 volunteers to assist the over 2,700 attendees with their questions and FAFSA filing!

By the end of the event 1,454 FAFSA's had been filed, a 42% increase from 2015!

Another bright spot is that not only did the numbers increase, but those that attended were overwhelmingly glad they did. In the survey given to students at College Goal Sunday, **over 99%** responded that they "found College Goal Sunday helpful."

\$10,000 in scholarship money was also offered to those attending College Goal Sunday in the form of 10 \$1,000 scholarships.

Follow Indiana College Goal Sunday's social media pages to keep up with the latest information as planning for the next College Goal Sunday begins. The Facebook page is [Facebook.com/IndianaCollegeGoalSunday](https://www.facebook.com/IndianaCollegeGoalSunday) and our Twitter page is [Twitter.com/CGS_Indiana](https://twitter.com/CGS_Indiana).



ISFAA's Christy Miller, David Reseigh and Cyndi Lang promoting College Goal Sunday in TV interviews.

President's Perspective

Ah, Spring time in financial aid. As I look at my ever growing list of things to do in preparation of fall, I am reminded of the quote "Life moves pretty fast. If you don't stop and look around once in a while, you could miss it." No doubt, life in financial aid moves pretty fast this time of the year.

Over the last couple of months, things in ISFAA have also been moving pretty fast. I want to give a big thank you to Patt McCafferty, Casey Trela, Megan Watson and Sue Allmon for the great work they did organizing the Support Staff Workshop. This year's workshop took place at the Ivy Tech Corporate College Center in Indianapolis. I have to say, in all the years of attending conferences and workshops I have never seen an individual present with a baby strapped on: kudos to Sara Soper. Baby, Killian Soper did an excellent job articulating everyone's thoughts on some of the new rules.

I would also like to say thank you to Carrie Bishop and her team for the "Make it Real" event held at Shortridge High School in Indianapolis. Over 100 students participated in the "real life"

budgeting exercise. It is always interesting to hear teenagers weigh the ever important decision: "do I buy food or do I buy an iphone?"

Robert Sommers, Kelli Kalisik and their team are doing a great job putting together the Summer Conference. I had the luxury of a "sneak peak" at the sessions and I think all of you will be very impressed and excited about the speakers/sessions they have planned. Also, there will be training opportunities the day before the conference formally begins. We will also have an informal activity that night. So please plan on heading to South Bend early on Wednesday, there will be plenty for you to do.

I just happened to glance out my window to see the rain/snow/sleet mixture that is April in Indiana and just like financial aid, ever changing. So, as you are drowning in ISIRs, tax forms and verification worksheets, every once in a while take a step back and take the overall, one thousand, three hundred and fifty-three feet look. Why? Because anything can be "peaceful from one thousand, three hundred and fifty-three feet."



Ben Burton

"Life moves pretty fast. If you don't stop and look around once in a while, you could miss it."



Save the Date

NASFAA Conference 2016

July 10th – 13th, 2016

Marriott Wardman Park

Washington DC

Financial Aid Reforms Helping Students Stay on Track for Timely Completion

By Stephanie Wilson - Commission for Higher Education

More Hoosier college students with financial need are enrolling in and completing at least 30 college credits per year, staying on track to graduate from college on time. Two years after the Indiana General Assembly passed legislation creating credit completion requirements for state financial aid, the number of 21st Century Scholar students taking and completing 30 credit hours per year has increased by 23.4 percentage points at four-year colleges and 24.2 percentage points at two-year colleges.

Students who receive the Frank O'Bannon Grant also marked gains in completing 30 or more credits—increasing by 12 percentage points at four-year colleges and 6.5 percentage points at two-year colleges in the same two-year period.

Financial aid reforms passed in 2013 created financial incentives for students

to complete degrees on time. Under the reforms, 21st Century Scholar students must complete 30 credit hours per academic year to remain eligible for financial aid and Frank O'Bannon students receive lower financial aid rewards if they fail to meet the 30-credit benchmark.

Key Findings

- **Financial Incentives for On-Time Completion Work.** Significantly more students are taking and completing 30 credits per academic year at both four-year and two-year colleges.
- **Students Who Take More College Credits Are More Successful.** Students who enroll in 30 or more credits earn a higher percentage of the credits they take than students who enroll in lighter course loads.

- **Scholars at Community Colleges are More Likely Stay on Track.** While the percentage of 21st Century Scholars meeting the 30-credit-hour benchmark has increased at all institutions, success rates for those at two-year colleges have more than doubled.

Read the full year-two report, [Reforming Student Financial Aid to Increase College Completion](#), online here.

New Financial Aid Reforms to Help Students Get Back on Track

This legislative session, the Indiana General Assembly enacted additional college financial aid reforms. The changes create a smoother path back to financial aid eligibility for students who fail to meet the 30-credit-hour requirement for one year but work to get back on track the next.



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For more information contact Bill Wozniak:
wwozniak@ismloans.org

Manage the PPY changes, don't be managed by them

By Amy Glynn - CampusLogic



What does change management mean to you? Does it mean managing the process of change? Managing to survive the change? A bit of both? If the thought of change management compels you to think about pure survival, rest easy. Resources exist to help you manage the changes that are occurring, rather than being managed by them.

Pretending change isn't happening isn't a good approach

Let's all be honest: ignoring what's coming doesn't make it go away. It's the worst way to approach change, actually. Confronting and embracing the future is necessary. All of my experience in financial aid has been in offices swamped in change. From struggling aid offices to start-up campuses, and at an institution that had gone through an ownership change, managing change was a daily task. And it became second nature. However, it wasn't until I joined a technology company that I received formal training on some incredibly effective change management techniques. I've also been provided with more formal tools to manage said change.

FinAid Office fundamentals

There are a lot of amazingly well run aid offices—some of you have really figured out how to manage change. But some are still trying to figure out how to manage the changes wrought by initiatives like prior-prior year, instead of getting managed by them. Any change management plan you create should detail how you'll address three things:

- Managing continuous change with static resources
- Maintaining a positive culture at your FinAid office and throughout the institution through the change
- Providing a consistent, positive student experience

Take control

You need to take control of the work around you. At times, you may feel this is easier said than done in a busy, high-pressure FinAid office. Trying to juggle accrediting requirements, Federal regulations, state requirements, institutional priorities and expectations, and the student experience is not an easy task. For example, when [HEOA was reauthorized in 2008](#) it contained 432 pages of statutory language. More than four hundred pages. Implementation of change on a scale like that requires a plan.

Implementing HEOA: 400 compliance changes and updates

I recently read that the [2008 HEOA required more than 400 compliance changes and updates](#) across a variety of implementation dates. These are all of the new requirements you have been implementing for the past seven years; things like Net Price Calculators, preferred lender arrangements, borrower disclosures, and updated disclosure and compliance provisions. I'm pretty confident that the changes we are seeing are going to spike again once re-authorization is passed. Fingers crossed it won't take the 13 extensions and five-plus years it did last time (but I am not holding my breath).

Change is constant

The atmosphere surrounding higher education seems to indicate that we will have as much change going forward as we have seen in the past. Not having mastered how to manage it is ok, as long as you are working to improve. Read on for some of the tools and techniques that I have used to manage the changing aid office.

Download the [Change Management Tips and Tools PDF here](#).



A proven leader in higher education, [Amy Glynn](#) spent more than a decade in financial aid, ensuring products and services were in compliance with Federal Title IV regulations while meeting the highest service levels possible. Today she is the Vice President of Financial Aid & Community Initiatives at CampusLogic. She earned her Master of Science in Higher Education from Walden University.

Executive Committee Member Focus

Angela Spangler



Angela Spangler

1) Please tell Bits and Bytes about your current position at Indiana Wesleyan University

Director of Financial Aid for the Non-Residential Programs

2) How did you get your start in Financial Aid?

Luck??? Actually it was probably the same way almost

everyone else gets started in Financial Aid. I was looking for a job and there was an opening. I knew someone that worked at IWU that was very familiar with the FA office here so she was able to give me the “inside” scoop on if I would like the job. It was a great fit for me!!!

3) Tell us about your current role(s) with ISFAA and being on executive committee.

Through the years I have served in a variety of roles. I’ve co-chaired the site committee, served on the program committee, co-chaired the Leadership symposium and the Support Staff Workshop so when I was asked to run for the executive committee I was excited to serve in a new role. I currently serve as a delegate at large. I also help with the monthly bank reconciliations.

4) You have been involved with financial aid for 16 years. Do you have a memory about a student you helped that stands out in your mind that shows the good work that FA folks do?

Oh there are lots of stories and lots of students that have crossed my path in my 16 years of FA. The interesting thing about my job is by far the majority of my students are online so I really don’t get to work super closely with our students. However, there are always students that do things to get themselves into trouble by mishandling their funds. I can recall a student that called me one day because he had a terrible family emergency and he needed to withdraw. He needed to better understand how this would impact his FA. I was able to look at his information and tell him that if he just went to one more night of class that I wouldn’t

have to return any of his federal funds. He was a master’s student so it was going to be a \$4000 return. I think he still withdrew but at least I was able to properly counsel him and even pray with him over the situation. I know that may seem like a strange story to share but any time I can help to educate a student and equip them with the power to make a decision that is in their best interest, I’ve done my job! Our students need us to help them understand the very difficult nature of our business!

5) Please tell us about any other leadership roles you’ve had involving financial aid

I’ve been with IWU for all of my years in FA. I started off as a FA counselor, then was promoted to an Assistant Director and eventually promoted to the Director.

6) You joined ISFAA in 2000. Please share your thoughts about the organization after over a decade and a half as a member.

ISFAA is such a great resource for any FA professional. Attending conferences helps to put us in contact with other professionals in our field and allows us to learn from one another.

7) What is your favorite thing about your profession?

I love helping students achieve something that they never thought they would achieve!

8) Do you have a least favorite thing about your profession?

Putting students in debt! I know there are way too many students that abuse the money that we’re processing for them. It is really hard to continue to give out loans knowing there is a good chance that student will never finish their program!

9) Do you have any thought or message that you would like to pass along to the other ISFAA members?

Don’t hesitate to jump in and try out different committees. It’s guaranteed that you’ll meet some pretty wonderful people that you’ll be able to call on for years to come!

10 Spring Stress Busters for Financial Aid Professionals

Doug Hess, Great Lakes Educational Loan Services, Inc.

Remember the instructions on a plane for what to do if the oxygen masks are released from above the cabin? It's a good idea to apply those to life in the financial aid office over the next month or two, as well. Read through our simple stress-busting tips, and see how you can work them into your day. Taking care of you will benefit you—and your students, too.

1. **Get enough rest.** During times of additional stress, your body needs the critical recovery period offered by a good night's sleep. Unfortunately, those are times when insomnia can be most problematic. Give yourself a break from all electronics—yes, all of them—for at least the last hour before your targeted sleep time. Instead, keep a mildly boring book (not your Kindle) next to your bed to help your eyes and your mind wind down. Trouble staying asleep? Make sure you keep a notepad and pen next to your bed in case you wake up, worrying about something you need to do tomorrow. Jot it down, and visualize the piece of paper floating into your office and landing on your desk. (Don't forget to take the note with you to work in the morning, since it will probably still be there.)
2. **Take control.** When we feel like situations are out of our control, damage-causing stress hormones are activated over time. If a situation or person is stressing you out, identify the parts of the situation you can control—and try to remove the emotional triggers caused by someone else. You'll be more productive in finding solutions, and leave the office in a better frame of mind, too, if your problem-solving centers about owning your actions.
3. **Use a to-do list.** Having a realistic list helps you ensure critical tasks aren't forgotten, and allows your overtaxed brain to choose something—anything—to tackle first when it feels overwhelmed. If you're a visual person, plot your day's tasks on a Covey time management matrix using sticky notes on a white board to ensure you're getting necessary tasks done first. At day's end, update your matrix for tomorrow so your path is clear when you come in. Prefer electronic task management? Consider using a free app such as Wunderlist, which allows you to break down your task list by category, and then by day and week. It's satisfying to check things off as you complete them, and it lets you see how much you actually accomplish.
4. **Change your scenery.** If you're feeling burned out, frustrated, or productivity is flagging, a change of scenery could do you good. Even a five- or ten-minute walk outside in that fresh spring air can allow your tense muscles to relax, your breathing to slow, and your perspective to shift.
5. **Drink water.** Eat food. How many times have you left the office, only to realize that you haven't even used the restroom all day? And you usually have a splitting headache, too? Make sure you stay hydrated for productive functioning, and take at least a few minutes for lunch. It's a great idea to have a supply of energy-sustaining quick snacks at your office so that you can easily grab something between meetings or tasks.
6. **Remember the reward.** Problem-solving is a major part of your job as a financial aid professional, so it's easy to see why your brain may be trained on the negative after a while. The student you're helping now will be happy to leave with a solution. Remember that happiness and let that motivate you as the next student walks in with an issue that needs your attention. You're helping students because it's rewarding. Don't let the reward walk out of your office without taking note of it!
7. **Make friends with the optimists.** Every office has its complainers—and when you most feel like joining them, it's a good time to step away. Instead, seek out colleagues with a sunny outlook so that you can keep your positive, problem-solving mindset. When your day heads south, these people will help you find the energy to keep going and are more likely to help you find solutions than the complainers.
8. **Breathe.** (Seriously.) Even if it's shallow—coming from between tense shoulders or a scrunched up diaphragm—as you pore over paperwork, you have to breathe. While you've been frantically checking things off your list, you've managed to continue doing it so far today. But if you stop and force yourself to take just 10 or 20 deep breaths, tension leaves your body and more oxygen flows to your brain. (If you can meditate, even better.)

Continued on page 7

9. Help your students help themselves. Do students come to you with the same question over and over again? Record a walk-through training of your online counseling tool, for example, or provide a quick tutorial at orientation, and then use your office's social media channels to let students know how it may be accessed to save you—and them—time.

10. Power down. Leave yourself 20 minutes at the end of your day. Take 10 minutes to set your priorities for tomorrow in whatever format you prefer, and then another 10 to clear away clutter from today—whether papers on your desk or old emails. You'll benefit from coming in to a clean desk with a ready-to-go plan tomorrow, and be reminded of what you accomplished today as you walk out the door.

Doug Hess is a Senior Marketing Associate with Great Lakes, serving schools in Indiana and Illinois. You can reach Doug at (800) 308-0161, or by email at dhess@glhec.org. Additional information about Great Lakes can be found online at schools.mygreatlakes.org.

Wanna Get Away?

Need to get away from the hustle and bustle of finishing one year and awarding for the next, then we have the opportunity for you! ISFAA's Summer Conference 2016 is just around the corner and way to relax! Join your ISFAA colleagues on June 9-10 at the Morris Inn on the beautiful campus of the University of Notre Dame. The conference committees have been diligently working on activities that will stretch your mind and provide the essentials: food, fun & fellowship!

The program is packed with all kinds of sessions from a Prior Prior Year track to counseling strategies for diverse populations, the role of financial aid with partner offices and creating a financial aid communications plan. We are excited to have Megan McClean Coval, Managing Director of Policy and Federal Relations for the National Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators (NASFAA) join us and provide some legislative updates and insights. Our friends from the Indiana

Commission on Higher Education will also provide several sessions and show the web interface changes that will be implemented soon!

Of course we'll have some great evening activities to provide ample opportunity for networking and relaxing with friends! So, wanna get away? Register today at isfaa.org and reserve your room at the Morris Inn. You won't want to miss the ISFAA Summer Conference on June 9-10!



Join Us

ISFAA Summer
Conference 2016

June 9th – 10th, 2016
Morris Inn,
University of Notre Dame

Shortridge High School Hosts Make It Real!

Carrie Bishop - Ivy Tech

At different stations around the gym, they found out what it would cost for child care, health insurance, and student loan payments. Then they made choices about "life style levels" for housing, clothing, groceries, transportation, entertainment, household extras, savings, and personal expenses.

At each station, they deducted expenditures from their checkbook register and updated their remaining balance. Some students ran out of money before visiting all of the stations!

Their favorite station was probably the Wheel of Fortune, where they had a happy experience (such as receiving a tax refund, finding money in an old pocket, or winning their March Madness pool) or a financial set-back (like medical expenses for a pet, losing their cell phone, or fixing a broken window).

What did students learn from this exercise? First, they found out that it is very expensive to have children! They also learned that more education generally leads to higher-paying jobs. They even picked up on the main theme: CHOICES -- getting an education increases the choices they will have in life! That's what we call "making it real!"

Many thanks to the volunteers who guided students through this experience:

Katie Bohmeier, Vincennes University-Indy

Ben Burton, Ivy Tech Central Office

Alex DeLonis, Ivy Tech Indianapolis

Julia Devine, Vincennes University

Brandy Gildon, Ivy Tech Indianapolis

La Vette Gladney, Ivy Tech Central Office

Holli Hunter, Ivy Tech Indianapolis

Dave Hussain, Ball State University

Tony Karras, Rose-Hulman Institute

John McPherson, Ball State University

Angie Snapp, Ivy Tech Terre Haute

Ginny Washington, IUPUI

Julie Wonderlin, Ivy Tech Terre Haute



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ISFAA Support Staff Workshop ---- No Foolin!

Patt McCafferty - Ivy Tech

The 2016 ISFAA Support Staff Workshop was held on April 1st at the Corporate College and Conference Center on the Ivy Tech Community College campus in Indianapolis. It was a great success with nearly 50 registrants. The day kicked off with a welcome from Ben Burton, ISFAA President. A general session followed, led by Marvin Smith and Sarah Soper, in which federal and state updates were highlighted. Workshop breakout sessions included ethical considerations in financial aid; veteran education benefits; dealing with difficult students; career pathways in financial aid; student privacy and information protection; and packaging philosophies. Workshop participants were able to choose the sessions that were of interest to them.

A true highlight of the workshop event was the networking opportunities participants engaged in throughout the day. During sessions, on breaks, and at lunch, conversations were taking place that reinforced the roles financial aid professionals play in their daily lives. One participant said it best, "it's good to talk to other people, from different schools, and learn that we all experience similar things."

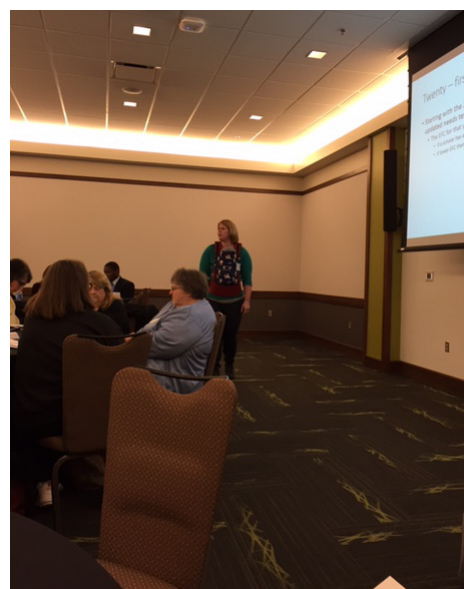
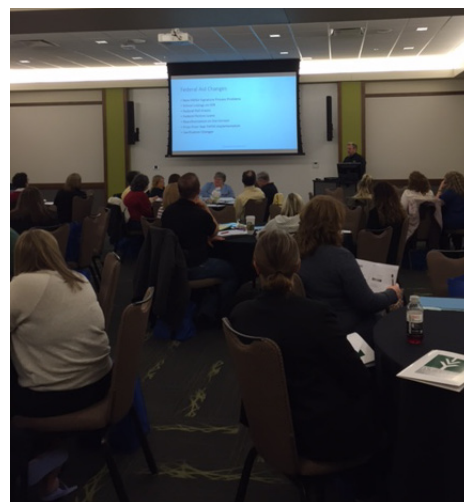
Christy Miller, ISFAA President-Elect wrapped up the day with information about ISFAA and the volunteer opportunities available within the organization.

We would like to thank everyone who attended the workshop and a special thanks to all of our awesome presenters. Presenters include: Ben Burton, Carrie Bishop, Marvin Smith, Sarah Soper, Christy Miller, Sue Allmon, Megan Watson, Kim Bloodgood, Melissa Smurdon, and Stan Werne.

A thank you, also, to ISFAA associate members SallieMae, PNC, CampusLogic, Inc., Discover, and Union Federal for their contributions to the participants workshop gift bags. And to Ivy Tech Community College for providing the awesome conference facility for the day.

Committee members:

Casey Trela
Megan Watson
Sue Allmon
Patt McCafferty



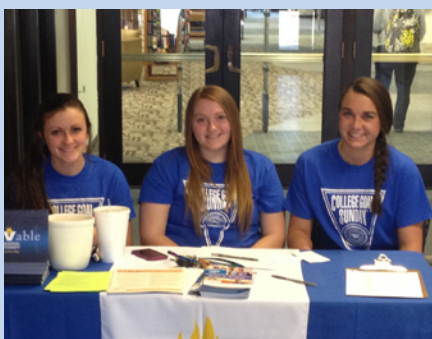
Save
the Date!

MASFAA Conference 2016

October 2-5, 2016

Kansas City Marriott – Kansas City, MO





Comings and Goings

...and other tidbits of association news

Sue Allmon

Comings

Ivy Tech Community College-Bloomington welcomes **Wayne Parkinson** as Assistant Director of Financial Aid. Wayne is currently an academic advisor at Ivy Tech. He holds a Bachelor of Arts degree in English Literature and Telecommunications from Indiana University.

Transitions

Kim Thalmann has decided to move a little further south and has transferred from Purdue-Northwest to Purdue – West Lafayette. Her position in West Lafayette is Assistant Director-State Aid Programs.

Deaths

Ivy Tech Community College-Bloomington sadly reports the passing of **Gabe Hinds**. Gabe had been an employee at Ivy Tech for nearly 20 years and in his role as Assistant Director for twelve years. He was integral to the Bloomington College Goal Sunday effort making sure all of our site needs were requested and ready. He is missed by students, faculty and staff

Mark Your Calendars for



ISFAA Winter Conference 2017

January 26-27th at the Indianapolis Marriott North



Indiana Student Financial Aid Association

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Keeping ISFAA Informed... (Preview the next 3 months activities).
Calendar Quickview - Click for Upcoming Events

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- 2015-2016 Membership Application now online
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Welcome to ISFAA
The Indiana Student Financial Aid Association (ISFAA) is Indiana's financial aid professional

Today's News from NASFAA



Bits and Bytes

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March 25 for April Issue

Thanks

For the latest ISFAA information, or to check out previous editions of Bits & Bytes, visit www.ISFAA.org!