

SURVEY OF NASSGAP PAST PRESIDENTS

1. WHAT DO YOU RECALL BEING THE MOST IMPORTANT ISSUE YOU FACED INSOFAR AS STATE AND/OR FEDERAL STUDENT AID CONCERNED?

MELANIE AMRHEIN
2005-2006

At this time, (2005-2006) many entities want to simplify the process/application for student aid. Our primary focus, through groups like the Advisory Committee on Student Financial Assistance, is to ensure that the states' needs for information are not overlooked or overhauled as an unforeseen consequence of simplification.

LEE ANDES
2008-2009

THERESA ANTWORTH
2004-2005

Fighting to save the LEAP/SLEAP dollars, and the federal reauthorization of the HEA. Unfortunately, it was only extended during my year not reauthorized.

MARILYN CARGILL
2007-2008

The Reauthorization Bill was finally passed August 4, 2008. NASSGAP spent a tremendous amount of time and effort (mostly from Chas Treadwell and Marie Bennett) working on that bill. Highlights of items NASSGAP was able to have influence with included the creation of the GAP program which replaced SLEAP. Thanks our efforts an admin allowance was created, the eligibility rules were simplified, and the MOE language was greatly simplified.

DOUG COLLINS
1992-1993

Preservation of SSIG.

SCOTT FREEMAN
1996-1997

Like too many President's my term was one more spent in a quest to save SSIG from having no funds appropriated. If I believe then Congressman Reed from RI had not stepped forward we would have lost any appropriation. While it may only be NASSGAP legend I think my term was the closest we got to the budget passing with no SSIG funding.

RON GAMBILL
1998-1999

Negotiated Rulemaking

JIM GARCIA
2001-2002

There were several extremely important issues during my watch such as saving LEAP/SLEAP and discussing maintenance of effort; addressing the emerging need vs. merit aid issues that were taking center stage across the country; partially addressing our need for Washington representation; and accepting a Lumina Foundation grant to make improvements to the NASSGAP Survey. However the one that startled us during the week of June 3 required a NASSGAP conference call with USED and NCS Pearson staff. The Department was planning to implement major mid year (July 1) FAFSA processing changes on "auto zero" and "simplified needs test" without giving prior notice. Department staff stated that they were simply implementing the law and reacting to the Advisory Committee on Student Financial Assistance strong recommendations to implement these changes as soon as possible. Thanks to Mary Beth, Dennis, Sherrie & others we were able to convince them that un-noticed mid year changes are unacceptable, and that these changes would cause major implementation and fiscal problems to all states and participating schools. The Advisory Committee's Director joined us at the Spring conference the following week for a more direct discussion.

LOIS HOLLIS
2009-2010

From a Federal perspective, the most important issue we faced was trying to save the LEAP program. LEAP was a program NASSGAP fought hard to maintain and it was difficult to see it cut from the federal budget. Especially since the year before it was touted as such a success.

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RON IVERSON
1974-1975

On the state level our major objective was to ensure that no student would be denied an education from the lack of funds or knowledge regarding financial aid programs. We coupled this with a goal to work closely with post secondary institutions to develop a financial aid delivery system that was simple and easy for students to use, which finally boiled down to a common application and electronic networking with each other.

RICHARD JOHNSTON
1973-1974

The critical issue I faced during my presidency was attempting to establish a federal/state partnership in the grants and scholarship area. In particular, the State Student Incentive Grant (SSIG) program was developed and enacted during my Presidency.

SHIELA JOYNER
1994-1995

Federal funding issues, particularly continued threat of loss of SSIG funding, 1995 budget rescissions that ended funding for the Paul Douglas Teacher Scholarship Program

JOHN KLACIK
2002-2003

There were three issues:

- 1) Of course it was preserving LEAP (SSIG) in the annual budget bill.
- 2) Preparing for what was the then imminent Reauthorization of the Higher Education Act.
One of the organization's big tasks was to formulate its agenda.
Now four years later (in 2006), the Act still has not been reauthorized.
- 3) Navigating the re-development of the annual survey.

MAUREEN LAFFEY
2003-2004

Working with Executive Committee members and Elyse Wasch from Sen. Reed's office on the ACCESS Act legislation. The bill was introduced but stalled in the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

JULIE LEEPER
2011-2012

FAFSA simplification is the issue that comes to mind. Seems that every conversation included something about simplification and the need (or not) to simplify. There was a struggle between states and the U.S. Department of Education concerning what was important to include on the FAFSA.

**DIANE
LINDEMAN**
2014-15

During my tenure as President the two most important issues that were on the front burner were Early FAFSA (PPY) and the FAFSA masking issue. We had several conference calls with Jeff Baker and others about allowing the states to continue to receive the list of schools that the students listed on their FAFSA.

BOB LONG
1997-1998

The major challenge of my administration was two fold: (1) brokering an agreement with the various Washington based educational associations to support the reauthorization of the State Student Incentive Grant (SSIG) Program-the major federal/state partnership created in 1972 in the Reauthorization of the Higher Education Act and (2) securing continued funding for the program.

Given no administration had requested funding for the SSIG Program for more than ten years and had been consistently supported by the House of Representatives the prospect for success on both fronts was a long shot at best. From the outset it was apparent that structural changes in the program were of necessity in order to garner any support for its continuation. Even with structural changes in the program most observers concluded that no success would occur on the funding issue. Fortunately, we hit the lottery in that both the program was reauthorized and funding secured. We beat the greatest odds possible and the Washington prognosticators. Thus I was immensely relieved upon passage of the Reauthorization Act and subsequent appropriation bill that funded the SSIG Program-renamed Leveraging Educational Assistance Partnership (LEAP) Program as each NASSGAP President for the past ten or more years had to face the fear of the program's demise during their tenure.

CHERYL MAPLETHORPE Since my presidency did not take place during reauthorization, I suppose the greatest federal issue was the retention of LEAP funding. We also worked on increasing NASSGAP's visibility with the Education Department.
2000-2001

VICKI MERKEL The uncertainty for states as the impact of the Great Recession was felt at the state level. States lost College Access Challenge Grants when state funding was decreased and Maintenance of Effort was not met, state grant funding remained static or decreased as tuitions soared and jobs were scarce which sent more Americans back to postsecondary education for retraining. Members looked to each other for guidance and support.
2010-2011

For NASSGAP we had the challenge of strengthening an important legislative relationship after states declined to participate in the GAP program. NASSGAP contracted for a report to better understand the issues.

RITCHIE MORROW NASSGAP started submitting papers on proposals coming out of DC for Reauthorization of the Higher Education Act; met with James Kvaal and Ajita Talwalker on issues including College Access Challenge Grant (CACG).
2012-2013

DENNIS The most important issue I faced was trying to educate the U.S. Department of Education that NASSGAP is not a loan organization. NASSGAP was denied seats on several negotiated rulemaking sessions during my tenure because the Department believed that selected loan organizations could represent state grant agencies.
OBERGFELL 1999-2000

SHIRLEY ORT The most important issue I faced as President was in launching a campaign to save SSIG. No President, before or since, wanted to lose SSIG on his or her watch!
1988-1989

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KEN REEHER
1969-1970
and
1978-1979

I must assume the state part of this question has no relation to my role as President of NASSGAP since all of us generally had unrestricted travel to NASSGAP with paid expenses. However there were a few exceptions when members could not get state agency approval to travel to a NASSGAP meeting or to lobby at the federal level at state expense. I can't tie it to my specific time as I twice served as President of NASSGAP (69-70 and 78-79) but I think the lobbying for enactment of the State Student Incentive Grant and the annual effort to obtain a realistic federal funding level to encourage at least matching by state appropriations to assure program growth at the state level in the fifty states was the real challenge. Many of the states had no program at the time of SSIG enactment. PHEAA financed the personnel, travel and lobbying expenses for the most part in the early days to get enactment and improved funding of SSIG.

A companion and continuing problem to the federal funding problem associated with SSIG was the move of the U.S. Congress to stop funding SSIG on the basis that the federal funding had met its objective because each state had developed its own program and the need for federal incentive funds no longer existed. The Congress and USOE did not accept the idea that continued increases in federal funds would encourage continued program growth at the state level. Congressional and USOE staff generally felt that the only federal objective was to initiate a grant program in each state but not to support its growth or maintenance once a state had established a program. There was no regard for cost of renewals or new award recipients among the federal policy makers.

At the state level the most important issue for Pennsylvania was two-fold ----how to get a conservative Senate to enact state scholarship legislation that would be the death knell for their State Senatorial Scholarship Program (Four each at Penn State, Temple, Pitt, Lincoln). These were not awarded on need or scholarship but rather at the whim of the senator. That was on the Legislative level and then there was the Executive Branch impact where Governor Ray Shafer, when he was a candidate for the office said he would move the state funding level of the new need based scholarship to \$4 million but once this funding level was passed by the legislature as part of Governor Shafer's recommended budget, his Budget Secretary Martin Blackball said it was \$1 million a year over 4 years. The governor hung in with us to spend the \$4 million in one year and the renewal of these grants and the announcement of new grants for the next year meant the state funding level went to a number like \$17 million. We had spent \$4 million to cover renewal of previous year recipients, \$4 million on new awards and escrowed the rest for use the next year. We then had to notify many students "you have need but we are out of funds". This wording created "backlash" that resulted in the Democratic Senators and union lobbyists holding up the total state Republican budget until many of the earlier rejects for awards were reprocessed for award eligibility and the \$17 million totally expended. The appropriation for the next year rose to \$31 million with renewal of the \$17 million and new awards based on the new liberal standards.

EDDIE SHANNON
1991-1992

Expansion of SSIG Program

DR H KENNETH SHOOK
1984-1985

The main concerns in 1985-86 seemed to be: a) High default rates in the repayment of loans by students, especially at certain educational institutions; b) Fear that Federal funding of aid programs would not keep pace with the increases in college charges; c) Fear that Federal mandates might change existing student aid application procedures and needs analysis; and d) Concern about a possible push by some states and by some Federal programs to make reciprocity between states (free flow of awards) more prevalent.

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- GARY SMITH**
1989-1990
- Anyway, as for NASSGAP, I remember the organization and the people in such a positive light. The issues were always the same... gaining recognition and respect for the organization and for SSIG (I know that it is something else now) from the federal government.
- CHAS TREADWELL** 1993-1994
- Educating the Congress on the need to fund the SSIG program to continue a successful state/federal partnership for student access to college. And, balancing the SSIG campaign with the need to expand the state role in early intervention for at-risk youth, leading to the establishment of the National Early Intervention Scholarship and Partnership Program.
- GARY WEEKS** 1983-1984
- I recall three issues as being important during my tenure-continued and increased funding of the SSIG program, growth of the GLS program and the continued commitment to the principle of need based student aid. These three occupied much of our thinking at the time. Because the SSIG program was relatively small in comparison to other Federal aid programs, there was always the danger that it would simply not be funded each year. In regard to the GSL program, the concern was around the dramatic growth of the program and the debt that students were incurring. With regard to the principle of need based aid, there was a suspicion that the high cost, independent colleges were going to move away from that principle in order to compete for students.
- MARY ANN WELCH** 2006-2007
- I think the most important issue was working with the USDE to try to shape the College Access Grant in a way that would be fair and beneficial to all states.
- CHRISTINE ZUZACK**
2013-14
- It was a busy year for interaction with the US Department of Education as a number of new initiatives were coming to the forefront. The new FAFSA Completion Initiative was being finalized, a College Rating System was being explored, and FAFSA simplification was being promoted. All issues of great interest to NASSGAP.

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2. WHAT ASPECT OF SERVING AS NASSGAP'S PRESIDENT GAVE YOU THE MOST PERSONAL SATISFACTION? WHAT ASPECT PROVED TO BE THE MOST CHALLENGING?

MELANIE AMRHEIN
2005-2006

My greatest personal satisfaction was in working with the Washington DC groups on the hill to get the NASSGAP message across clearly. The most challenging was that my term of President fell when my state was devastated by the destruction along the gulf coast by two major hurricanes and our agency was severely impacted by financial woes and additional duties.

LEE ANDES
2008-2009

THERESA ANTWORTH
2004-2005

Personal satisfaction - Working with all the members of NASSGAP and helping to orchestrate the delivery of two wonderful conferences. Most challenging - Keeping up with the federal legislative activity. I was of major assistance to myself, our federal liaison, Chas Treadwell, and therefore to the NASSGAP members to have hired a DC representative, Bart Astor, that year to assist in such activities.

MARILYN CARGILL
2007-2008

The greatest personal satisfaction that I had was having the opportunity to represent an organization as important as NASSGAP at the National level. Meeting with Congressional staff to share NASSGAP's message was one highlight of my term. The most challenging aspect was the time needed to keep up with all of the updates and decisions that NASSGAP needed to be aware of during a reauthorization year.

DOUG COLLINS
1992-1993

Working with all the good friends I made over the years in a leadership role was extremely enjoyable. The most challenging issue we faced was defending SSIG and trying to anticipate the next move of Congress and USDE on the program.

SCOTT FREEMAN
1996-1997

My experience of testify before the Senate for NASSGAP relating to the pending reauthorization combined with the time spent working closely with colleagues from other States on a sustained basis brought the most personal satisfaction. Trying to obtain greater visibility for both NASSGAP and SSIG proved to be the most challenging.

RON GAMBILL
1998-1999

A. Working with an outstanding Executive Committee and maintaining the LEAP program.
B. Negotiated Rulemaking.

JIM GARCIA
2001-2002

The personal satisfaction was simply being the NASSGAP President. My year in office offered a couple of unique opportunities that few presidents had enjoyed. Shortly after our October, 2001 conference, I was invited to attend a conference by Harvard's Civil Rights Project on "State Merit Aid Programs: State Access and Equity". It was a great session and I was invited to join the organizers for dinner at the Faculty Club.

As each NASSGAP President before me, I had the pleasure of attempting to save LEAP/SLEAP from the "budget axe". We pulled it off on my watch primarily thanks to Chas Treadwell, Lisa Fuller, and the great Federal Relations Team. I also had the pleasure of testifying before the House of Representatives Committee on Appropriations, Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services, Education and Related Agencies on April 23, 2002.

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- LOIS HOLLIS**
2009-2010
- Working with such a dedicated group of volunteers on the NASSGAP Board was very rewarding. I was very appreciative of having so many professionals willing to give their time to an organization to make it run smoothly, efficiently and effectively.
- Working with the Department of Education was quite challenging. Nothing more to add there.
- RON IVERSON**
1974-1975
- Without question working with the diverse needs of all NASSGAP members provided the most personal satisfaction. The most challenging was developing a platform all members could support, and then trying to gain support in the higher education community, many who would have loved to bury NASSGAP along with state agency representation for ever! I recall my job being easier because people like Willy Wolfe, IA, and Joe Boyd, IL, provide me with their help and perspective during my tenure.
- RICHARD JOHNSTON**
1973-1974
- The aspect I enjoyed most was in developing the federal relationship as I had the opportunity to appear before the House Education Committee and provide testimony in support of the SSIG legislation. Subsequently, I enjoyed watching from the gallery as the House enacted the enabling legislation. What makes this event even more noteworthy is that it occurred against the backdrop of the Vietnam War and the Watergate scandal which ultimately led to the resignation of President Nixon.
- SHIELA JOYNER**
1994-1995
- Opportunity to give back to an organization that had provided great support to me as a financial aid professional. The most challenging aspect turned out to be taking on the extra duties while my agency was regrouping and rebuilding following the destruction of the 1995 OKC bombing.
- JOHN KLACIK**
2002-2003
- Most satisfying was being able to bring focus to the survey redevelopment and navigating the many issues that dogged the effort. I am also proud of the Reauthorization proposals that the organization put forth that year.
- Most challenging was dealing with the organization's finances and accounting. Since we are all volunteers it is asking a lot of any one member to take over the duties of Treasurer without any prior experience. Coming out of that experience was the proposal by then Treasurer Diane Sprague to the change to the position so that the Treasurer is elected to a three year term with the first year serving as Treasurer-elect and having it overlap with the preceding Treasurer's final year.
- MAUREEN LAFFEY**
2003-2004
- The most satisfying aspect of my presidency was working with an outstanding executive Committee and other NASSGAP members in supporting me to establish a more personal and collaborative working relationship with the Advisory Committee on Student Financial Assistance. Because of my proximity to DC, I was able to personally represent NASSGAP and relate the states' concerns/issues with the work they were doing. During that year the staff at ACSFA really started to reach out to NASSGAP membership for their opinions and I think today have a great respect for NASSGAP as an organization. The most challenging aspect was convincing Brian Fitzgerald and staff at ACSFA that NASSGAP isn't the enemy!
- JULIE LEEPER**
2011-2012
- Being able to work with all of the wonderful people who make NASSGAP successful was very satisfying and humbling. Most of NASSGAP's members are so knowledgeable in the field of financial aid that it is impossible to find a topic in which you cannot locate an expert. However, the wide expertise can also be a challenge and the President works to ensure that a balance is maintained when opinions don't always align.

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- DIANE LINDEMAN**
2014-15
- NASSGAP is the best professional organization that I have had the privilege to be a part of. I really enjoyed my role and working with the Executive Committee. I think I was always concerned about doing a good job because there were so many great Presidents who had proceeded me. I was fortunate to have such a great Executive Committee who I relied upon heavily.
- BOB LONG**
1997-1998
- Several aspects of serving as NASSGAP's President gave me personal satisfaction. The most noteworthy was the trust and confidence that the Executive Committee and the membership of the organization had in both nominating and subsequently approving my nomination as President during such a crisis period, the potential demise of the SSIG Program. Considering West Virginians have not typically been known for their leadership qualities combined with the fact that I was an exception to the norm as a NASSGAP President since I was not the director of my agency, the vote of confidence became a confidence builder and a source of internal strength. I also realized the organization was taking a major risk in selecting an untested candidate. Given the realization of my deficiencies I still had confidence in my ability to lead and successfully complete the monumental task of saving the SSIG Program. It became a personal challenge, like so many in the past, to prove myself. While I experienced the same anxieties as my predecessors over the potential loss of the SSIG Program during my watch, I resorted to those internal strengths to remind me that I could accomplish the task.
- Another heartening aspect was the tremendous encouragement and support that was exhibited by the membership. Without the total commitment of individual members toward the task at hand success could not have been accomplished. For that I am most appreciative. The most challenging aspect related to the deliberations on the SSIG Program. The conscientious and time consuming effort lasting many months seemed at times to be in vain as it appeared no consensus could ever be reached with the affected parties on the restructure of the SSIG Program. We spent an entire week in Washington D.C. attempting to broker an agreement with the major players-student groups, associations, and Congressional staff. At the end of each day an apparent agreement appeared to be reached only to return the next day to learn that disagreement continued to exist. Fortunately, a compromise agreement was finally reached and a successful conclusion resulted. While the end result was most gratifying, the process leading up to that end was somewhat traumatic. In my opinion the knowledge gained from that experience in terms of the dynamics involved became an influencing factor in initiating a discussion within the association about the need for a Washington presence.
- CHERYL MAPLETHORPE**
2000-2001
- I was most satisfied with the initiation of the study to make the NASSGAP survey more useful to NASSGAP and to other policy makers across the nation. The most challenging aspect was attempting to get the Education Department to recognize that state grant agencies are one of their most valuable partners.
- A second point of personal satisfaction is the creation of the NASSGAP hat. It demonstrates unity among the members and they're fun to wear!
- VICKI MERKEL**
2010-2011
- It was satisfying to work with many NASSGAP members on different projects. The board was very helpful and involved. I enjoyed seeing the implementation of the Conference Scholarship so all members have an opportunity for financial help to attend.
- Logistically it was a challenge when I personally moved to a different state and therefore represented two states during my tenure. I was also very concerned that states would not be able to afford to attend the 2010 conference so we chose a non-traditional venue at Gallaudet University Conference Center that was more economical. There were mixed reviews regarding the site but the NASSGAP budget emerged in good shape.
- RITCHIE MORROW**
2012-2013
- Satisfaction - started working with ED on FAFSA Completion Initiative – great to see how it's grown and the number of states participating. Challenging – lost two long time members of NASSGAP (Charles "Chaz" Treadwell and Peggy Wipf).

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- DENNIS OBERGFELL**
1999-2000
- Working collaboratively and aggressively with the Executive Committee on issues we believed were important to the organization. The Executive Committee and Committee Chairs debated issues thoughtfully and remained respectful of each other's viewpoints. The privilege of working with the Executive Committee gave me tremendous satisfaction. Getting the attention of policy makers within the US Department of Education. Working to develop NASSGAP's website also gave me great satisfaction as well as initiating a dialogue with Jerry Davis of the Lumina Foundation about improving NASSGAP's Annual Survey.
- SHIRLEY ORT**
1988-1989
- The aspect of serving as President that gave me the most personal satisfaction was getting to know my colleagues from other states both personally and professionally. The comfort of our informal times helped me to become more effective in performing my work at home, with our own state legislature. I always had first-hand knowledge of the values and practices of other states in the nation who were facing similar issues as mine. I learned a lot from my colleagues, and still cherish both the knowledge I gained, and the relationships and friendships that grew out of those years. It is nice to have built that network early. In my "old age" I can pick up the phone and call folks, and not have to get on airplanes to go to every meeting in order to "get in the know."
- The most challenging aspects of the work: the time that it took to launch an effective campaign to save SSIG without all of the applied technology that we have available to us now. Everything was done on paper; the year of my presidency was the first year that the Higher Education Coordinating Board in Washington State purchased its first fax machine. Charles Treadwell was my chair of the federal relations committee. I remember acknowledging Charles for his assistance at the May 1989 meeting and commenting that "Charles taught me the FAX of life this year."
- Folks used to tease me about being the "SSIG Poster Child." If this were true, it was then no less true that John Klacik (now President-elect) was my acolyte – for he did all of my agency work that year that I was President (and I am still grateful to him, and happy he himself will become President).
- KEN REEHER**
1969-1970
and
1978-1979
- One of the most satisfying personal aspects would be being elected a second time by my peers to serve a second term as their President in 1978-79 after having served in 1969-70 when we were first getting started as an organization. Having served twice – more than ten years apart – there were many changes and the most challenging were the education of new state directors coming on board as well as the education of USOE staff and congressional staff as to the proper federal role in developing state aid as a companion to federal student assistant programs. A second challenge was to maintain federal funding at a level that would encourage the states, once the state programs were established, to provide sufficient state funds to assure state program growth. You must keep in mind that during this period they were trying to establish the federal role in directing and funding post-secondary education.
- EDDIE SHANNON**
1991-1992
- Brokering the split-up of NASSGAP and NCHelp
- DR H KENNETH SHOOK**
1984-1985
- My greatest satisfaction came from the frequent contact with grant and loan officers in all of the states. Sharing ideas and concerns with these leaders helped me to better plan for worthwhile conferences and to better represent NASSGAP. The biggest challenge was the effort to increase the impact of the Association on Federal legislators and on college aid administrators.

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CHAS TREADWELL
1993-1994

Appreciating the goodness and competence of the NASSGAP members, particularly when implementing the important by-laws and organization name changes to reflect that NASSGAP meant more than grants and scholarships. Getting our tax-exempt status established with the IRS certainly proved challenging.

GARY WEEKS
1983-1984

I think I most enjoyed the opportunity to work with people from around the country, representing different view points and different state priorities. I also think this was the most challenging part of the job, that is to find ways to reach consensus and agreement on national priorities when there is so much difference between the interests of individual states.

MARY ANN WELCH
2006-2007

Due to the fact that there was negotiated rulemaking, a USDE Washington conference, and the presidential signing of a financial aid-related bill all during my presidency, I travelled to Washington many times to represent NASSGAP. It was both humbling and satisfying to know that NASSGAP had a voice in the shaping of national financial aid policy.

The most challenging aspect was to keep the NASSGAP voice alive with the USDE and other constituencies, and to consider each state's ability to handle certain program regulations when working with the USDE to shape new grants.

CHRISTINE
ZUZACK
2013-14

The comradery of the NASSGAP membership and their willingness to step-up and volunteer to keep the organization vibrant was most gratifying. We all experience similar professional challenges and it was so wonderful to be able to depend on the membership when they were needed. In addition, knowing that our actions ultimately help the students we represent was most satisfying.

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3. IF YOU HAD TO DO IT ALL OVER AGAIN, WOULD YOU STILL CHOOSE TO WORK IN THE FINANCIAL AID PROFESSION? IF SO, WHY? IF NOT, WHY?

MELANIE AMRHEIN
2005-2006

Sure, why not? It is challenging and worthwhile and has a lot of job security (not many people can figure this stuff out).

LEE ANDES
2008-2009

THERESA ANTWORTH
2004-2005

Yes, it has proved to be an area of work that directly impacts students in their pursuit of a postsecondary education and therefore most rewarding to see over time improvements in a system that so assists.

JOE BOYD
1967-1968

Student financial aid was a most satisfying career choice for me.

MARILYN CARGILL
2007-2008

Absolutely! I have had the opportunity to work with so many wonderful people and groups over the years. And the work that we do and the decisions that we made had a positive impact on students and families and their educational goals. As an added bonus, I can't remember a single time that I have ever said "I'm bored with this work". It is constantly changing and challenging those who work in this field to stretch and adapt and improve.

DOUG COLLINS
1992-1993

I really don't know. I got to work with a many, many wonderful people, and, at times, to have the satisfaction of being involved in performing an important public service. But, it was tremendously frustrating, as there was always great unmet need and uncertainty about program continuation. I feel the years were well spent. But there are many ways to serve and find personal fulfillment. I don't know that I would do it over.

SCOTT FREEMAN
1996-1997

I would do it again because when all is said and done and the day is over I feel I can take comfort in knowing that we have assisted some number of individuals in obtaining their educational goals and hopefully making a better life for them and their families.

RON GAMBILL
1998-1999

I am not sure that one initially chooses to work in the financial aid profession but more or less evolves into financial aid.

Once into the financial aid profession, I have found it to be a profession whose purpose and goals are commensurate with mine. Not only is it a noble profession, but the people with whom one associates are outstanding.

JIM GARCIA
2001-2002

This profession provided many opportunities to explore and address technical needs to assist students and schools participating in our programs. Early in my career, the smaller federal programs (Douglas and Byrd) challenged our staff before the availability of personal computers (remember the 1980's?) and forced us to create streamlined processes to deliver timely aid to our students. With the advent of PC's, rollout of MS Office products, Access, Excel, Word, we improved our delivery of Byrd and they propelled us into a new environment. We could do more with less effort. Those of you who know me also know that this profession gave me an opportunity to try just about every new gadget and technology available. Web based technology "mark-sense" equipment and products (Scantron), IVRs, color laptops, portable color printers with a scanner, portable projectors, cell phones, cell phones with Web access and digital cameras, all helped modernize and improve our services while they challenged us to do better.

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- RON IVERSON**
1974-1975
- I have no regrets about the profession and its challenges. After being involved for twenty-five years I guess if I was unsatisfied I would have left the field before I did.
- SHIELA JOYNER**
1994-1995
- Yes. Always changing environment keeps things interesting. Sense of accomplishment knowing that students benefit from the work done and that we do make a difference in some folks' lives
- JOHN KLACIK**
2002-2003
- My entry into financial aid was more accidental than intentional. For several years after my entry I pondered going back to the profession for which I had trained – community social service agency administration. If I had to do it over again I would have made a more intentional effort to train for and join this profession.
- MAUREEN LAFFEY**
2003-2004
- I didn't really "choose" to work in financial aid but rather "fell" into it and have stayed in it for over 10 years now. If I was guaranteed to meet such a wonderful, thoughtful, intelligent, passionate, friendly, and fun group of people again I would definitely choose to do it all over.
- JULIE LEEPER**
2011-2012
- I would definitely choose work in the financial aid profession. The work we do is so important to students and their families that I can't think of anything that would be more satisfying. It is so important for people to be able to afford to go to college – the work we do changes lives for the better. What could be more important or satisfying than that! I would say, though, that it is a difficult profession as we deal with state and federal regulations. I respect and admire all of the professionals who deal with rules and regulations that must be followed daily.
- DIANE LINDEMAN**
2014-15
- Some days I'm not sure – ha! Overall yes. I don't think there is one person out there who grew up thinking they were going to be a financial aid administrator. It just isn't one of those occupations that you really give any thought to. Probably all of us kind of fell into it. But, what better occupation can you think of that you can help people achieve their dreams of a better life.
- BOB LONG**
1997-1998
- Assuming that I was once again afforded the opportunity to pursue a career in the profession I would wholeheartedly follow the same path. It has been a rewarding experience from both a personal as well as professional standpoint. Knowing that I may have made a small contribution toward the success of many individuals has made the time and effort extremely satisfying. In addition, the comradery that has been developed and existed over time within both the profession and the NASSGAP organization has been of
- CHERYL MAPLETHORPE**
2000-2001
- The profession of financial aid is designed specifically to help people improve their future. I like the political strategizing and the planning necessary to create, fund, and implement financial aid programs.
- VICKI MERKEL**
2010-2011
- Yes, I came to financial aid in a non-traditional path by developing college access programs and then promoted to a position than including administering state and private financial aid. I feel that both access and affordability are issues that go hand-in-hand and impact college completion rates for non-traditional students.
- RITCHIE MORROW**
2012-2013
- Yes! This has been such a rewarding career both professionally and personally. Professionally – I feel I've been able to help students afford a college education which has led to successful careers. Personally – I've met so many good people through this profession who all have the some dedication to helping students.

SURVEY OF NASSGAP PAST PRESIDENTS

- DENNIS OBERGFELL**
1999-2000
- Actually, I'd rather be working in the broadcast booth for the Chicago Cubs. That said, I have enjoyed working in the financial aid profession. The profession has given me an opportunity to make a positive, albeit small, contribution to society. A job with meaning helps give my life a sense of purpose.
- SHIRLEY ORT**
1988-1989
- If I had to do it all over again, I would definitely choose financial aid as a profession. Interestingly enough, I had a Student Services professor when I was at Western Michigan University in graduate study in 1969 who encouraged me to consider financial aid as a growth area within the broader array of student service professions/occupations. He was an astute observer of higher education financing issues. I am glad I considered his advice.
- In answer to your question "why"? I can think of no other profession in higher education that would grant the variation and diversity that a career in financial aid has. We are called upon to be budget managers, counselors, public policy analysts, direct service providers, demographers, designers, and arbiters. One day I may come to work I can put on green eyeshades, and still be doing legitimate stuff (those days are usually Mondays when the INTJ in me is most acute). By Wednesday I may be daydreaming and designing initiatives or modifications to programs; and by Friday I can be debating some public policy issue that impacts my work. It is ever changing and dynamic. My energy level and aptitude on any given day can lead me to the work that is most satisfying and likely to be most productive for that day.
- KEN REEHER**
1969-1970
and
1978-1979
- I have mixed emotions on a decision to repeat my career in financial aid both because it has been so rewarding in helping students, leading other administrators in the student aid industry and personal financial returns, but also because I do not know what my career, industry influences and personal gain might have been without federal and state government restraints in another career choice.
- EDDIE SHANNON**
1991-1992
- Yes: Gives me great satisfaction to know that thousands of students have been assisted with their college educations
- DR H KENNETH SHOOK**
1984-1985
- My life has combined financial aid work with classroom teaching and college admissions. I would not have wanted it any other way. Separating financial aid duties as the only focus would have lessened the enjoyment for me. Even at the State Scholarship Board, I never moved far from the admissions process and classroom teaching.
- CHAS TREADWELL**
1993-1994
- Yes; I'm convinced that helping families realize their dreams through a college education is a fulfilling mission.
- GARY WEEKS**
1983-1984
- I would not change my experience in the student aid world for anything. I found the work very gratifying and stimulating. I believe that a quality education represents the great equalizer for those who come from poor and underprivileged families living in poverty stricken communities. I always felt good about being part of a movement which provided the opportunity for individuals from all walks of life to get an education. It was from my experience in student aid that I really began to learn about budgeting, planning, communications, leadership, visioning and legislative affairs -- all experiences that served me well in the years ahead.

SURVEY OF NASSGAP PAST PRESIDENTS

**MARY ANN WELCH
2006-2007**

My introduction into the financial aid profession occurred when I was sent to the RI Higher Education Assistance Authority for a two week stint as a temp. Two weeks turned into 28 years! This profession offered me a chance to help thousands of students realize their goals, introduced me to professionals that had sincere concerns for their students and families and their fellow professionals and allowed me to become a member of a fantastic association – NASSGAP! Yes, I would choose to work in the financial aid profession again.

**CHRISTINE
ZUZACK
2013-14**

I don't know of many careers that provide the opportunity to help people and change an individual's life so profoundly. By providing access to higher education, financial aid professions assist students in achieving their educational dreams. This education not only transforms the students' lives but also that of their children. To be a part of this powerful support network for students is very rewarding.

SURVEY OF NASSGAP PAST PRESIDENTS

4. WHY SHOULD MEMBERS OF NASSGAP GET INVOLVED IN THE ORGANIZATION?

MELANIE AMRHEIN
2005-2006

If you believe in NASSGAP's mission, it is hard not to get pulled into it. In spite of the differences among the states, we share much in our philosophies and attitudes about work, helping students and having fun!

LEE ANDES
2008-2009

THERESA ANTWORTH
2004-2005

The networking with colleagues that play your same role affords you camaraderie, growth and a relief in sharing similar dilemmas or accomplishments in your field; and the exchange of ideas and policy is a wealth of information.

MARILYN CARGILL
2007-2008

There are so many reasons to get involved with NASSGAP. First it is a very welcoming organization and this is an opportunity to meet and talk with others that do the same work you do, that understand your issues, your questions, your frustrations. NASSGAP is filled with members that have incredible experience and expertise that they freely share not only at conferences but throughout the year. Secondly, there are so many opportunities to become involved and you can chose anything from playing a supporting role in designing the agenda for an upcoming conference to serving on the Executive Committee. Third, NASSGAP give you access to opportunities and people that you would probably not have access to on your own, including staff from DOE, the Whitehouse, and Congressional staff members as well as leaders in higher education policy. And it's so much fun!

DOUG COLLINS
1992-1993

It is a way to meet others who share your commitment to common objectives. There is a great deal to take from these associations that can improve the delivery of programs in each home state. I have been enriched by those associations. Also, it's a hell of a lot of fun!

SCOTT FREEMAN
1996-1997

First of all I believe NASSGAP advocates on behalf of a very worthy cause that is not truly the focus of any other higher ed association. Second I believe that the professional experience of learning what goes on in other states and sharing your experience provides professional growth that is not available from the other associations.

RON GAMBILL
1998-1999

First, for professional growth and understanding, as it relates to the programs we administer in service to students. Secondly, to communicate to the Department and Congress the need for the programs and to facilitate cooperation of NASSGAP with other associations striving for similar goals.

SURVEY OF NASSGAP PAST PRESIDENTS

- JIM GARCIA**
2001-2002
- NASSGAP seems to provide the only forum for state grant program people where we can:
--work directly with USED staff and not be constantly worried about fees, fines, or loans;
--get ideas on grant program administration, talk about technology issues, and test ideas or concepts openly without having to worry about loss of market share;
--address FAFSA or federal aid programs from a state perspective and feel confident that someone else knows what you're talking about.
- Because we need to preserve this fiscally delicate organization, we each need to get involved and contribute in the best way we can. Not all agencies are able to permit their NASSGAP representatives to get involved as much as we would like. However, contacting congressional representatives, contributing to the on-line polls, and providing great information for the annual survey is a great contribution to the organization.
- LOIS HOLLIS**
2009-2010
- NASSGAP is an all-volunteer organization and could not operate without it's volunteers. In addition, getting involved with NASSGAP is of the best ways to build an effective network of state peers, to learn more about what's going on at a federal level and in other states.
- RON IVERSON**
1974-1975
- All members can broaden their thinking by being involved in NASSGAP, and especially by taking an active roll. Plus part of their responsibility should be to grow professionally and they cannot do that sitting in their office.
- RICHARD JOHNSTON**
1973-1974
- It is clear to me that by joining together, the members of NASSGAP can accomplish more than they can acting individually. Clearly, SSIG would never have been enacted, nor its survival secured, without the combined efforts of NASSGAP and the other Washington, D.C. interest groups including NASFAA and NCHELP. I also know that in the early years of NASSGAP the sharing of training and experience was particularly helpful to the members as they faced similar political, legislative and program development issues in their respective states.
- SHIELA JOYNER**
1994-1995
- Tremendous source of knowledge, experience, and support
- JOHN KLACIK**
2002-2003
- First NASSGAP has the presence of a large national organization in that it encompasses all the states and provides a platform for individuals to contribute to the national discussion and debate on the issues that threaten college access. At the same time, it's a relatively small organization in that the working membership is generally around 50 individuals. It is easy to get involved.
- Second, the quality of the people with whom we work is just exceptional. It's an opportunity for relationships that can not be easily duplicated in the mega DC- based organizations.
- Third, it's access to timely information especially on the DC front that is commonly made available only to people inside the beltway.
- MAUREEN LAFFEY**
2003-2004
- All members should get involved with NASSGAP to share their expertise, to work toward a common goal of financially assisting students, to take advantage of learning about the field from knowledgeable peers, and to learn what's happening in other states regarding policy decisions or programs. By participating in on- line surveys, volunteering to serve on the various committees, and attending conferences, the camaraderie and expert knowledge is unbelievably great and very helpful.

SURVEY OF NASSGAP PAST PRESIDENTS

- JULIE LEEPER**
2011-2012
- NASSGAP is a unique organization of friendly and helpful professionals. Before attending my first NASSGAP conference, I felt like I was the only one doing a job like mine. It is important to know that there are professionals across the nation administering state programs for students. My NASSGAP colleagues are always available when I have questions or just need some additional ideas. Being involved connects you with the professionals who can make your life easier. These professionals become close colleagues and good friends!
- DIANE LINDEMAN**
2014-15
- Being involved in NASSGAP is a great way to network. As state aid administrators we all have a very unique role that is much different from the student financial aid administrators at the colleges and universities. It is invaluable to be able to connect with others who do the same work that we do.
- BOB LONG**
1997-1998
- Member experiences in NASSGAP organizational activities have numerous benefits. There are personal and professional growth. Enhances the capabilities of the organization by virtue of the qualities of each individual member. Knowledge attained through association activities can be shared with other professionals within the agency, state and regional associations. Person becomes a valuable resource for others on various issues. Agency benefits by exposure of staff to current issues and ideas taking place elsewhere. Finally, lifetime friendships are established.
- CHERYL MAPLETHORPE**
2000-2001
- NASSGAP has no permanent central organization and, therefore, if members don't get involved, the organization will melt away. NASSGAP has worked to ensure that the financial aid application process is as simple and straight forward as possible through form design and rules negotiation.
- VICKI MERKEL**
2010-2011
- Not only are the members like-minded and cordial you can learn a great deal by listening and asking questions of other states regarding their programs and policies. When you have an unusual piece of legislation to implement you may find expertise within NASSGAP membership. Volunteering for NASSGAP also offers professional development opportunities.
- RITCHIE MORROW**
2012-2013
- The networking opportunity with colleagues – you never know what you might learn and be able to take back to your state. Also, the personal connections you can make – some of these people might end up being your best friends.
- DENNIS OBERGFELL**
1999-2000
- Members of NASSGAP should get involved because it will help them grow as a person and professionally. There is so much to learn from our colleagues, not just about how to administer programs but how to think and reason. Members have a privileged opportunity to influence public policy. Small contributions can make big differences.
- SHIRLEY ORT**
1988-1989
- Members of NASSGAP should get involved to learn and appreciate that which is right and that which is wrong, about how they are doing their jobs at home. This can be done in an informal, non-threatening, creative space within the activities of the organization. The learning and the networking are invaluable, and can serve you well (as it has me) for decades.
- KEN REEHER**
1969-1970
and
1978-1979
- Members should get involved in NASSGAP to have an exchange of ideas that lead to new or program extensions in their own program, to learn of challenges faced by other programs and the program attacks they face. In the case of the well established programs the opportunity to provide financial and statistical assistance to small or targeted programs. Many individuals have demonstrated their abilities during association activities and experienced exposure that has led to their personal career growth in their current job and offerings of new career challenges. If you are a member, you are involved – you joined up – it is that simple. You have a voice in the scholarship-grant industry and need to have the best data to present at your state and the federal level.
- EDDIE SHANNON**
1991-1992
- Younger members need to get involved so the old guard can pass the banner

SURVEY OF NASSGAP PAST PRESIDENTS

DR H KENNETH SHOOK
1984-1985

Joining NASSGAP is the way to share ideas and to learn from others. New approaches can be adopted, and mistakes of others can be avoided. It is a great place for new persons to receive aid training and to meet some giants in the field. These same role models can assist in establishing good practices of ethical behavior, a requirement of all professions. States joining forces also gives NASSGAP the clout it needs to guide and promote needed change in the delivery of student financial aid.

GARY SMITH
1989-1990

I believe the organization has been such a great success because all of the states had the same common issues and agenda regardless of their size. This was far different from NCHELP. I always felt comfortable at NASSGAP Conferences; not always at NCHELP where it was more competitive and less friendly.

CHAS TREADWELL
1993-1994

The comradery of NASSGAP is very special, and personal involvement in the organization is a chance to further enjoy that opportunity.

GARY WEEKS
1983-1984

I believe that NASSGAP represents the collective voice of all those who administer state student aid programs. It is this voice that can influence national and state policy. Unless you engage and participate in the organization, you forfeit your opportunity to be part of that collective voice, as well as your opportunity to help shape decisions that may effect your state and its postsecondary institutions.

MARY ANN WELCH
2006-2007

NASSGAP allows members to keep up to date on federal financial aid policies and to network with a group of professionals that share similar philosophies and goals. Sharing best practices and commiserating about work-related challenges are invaluable benefits of being involved in NASSGAP.

**CHRISTINE
ZUZACK**
2013-14

Although NASSGAP is small in size compared to other financial aid professional associations, our representation of the states is critically important in the higher education landscape. NASSGAP provides an excellent forum for professional development, legislative advocacy, and other activities that support members as individuals as well as our state agencies. The variety and richness of experiences of each member adds to the strength of the association and all should be willing to be involved with this dynamic organization to support its mission.

SURVEY OF NASSGAP PAST PRESIDENTS

5. HOW WOULD YOU CHARACTERIZE THE INTERACTION WITH OTHER CONSTITUENCIES, IN PARTICULAR THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION, DURING YOUR TERM AS PRESIDENT?

MELANIE AMRHEIN
2005-2006

I was very fortunate to have followed some great Presidents who had laid the groundwork for NASSGAP to be recognized as a viable, contributing organization and felt the relationship was and is very strong.

LEE ANDES
2008-2009

THERESA ANTWORTH
2004-2005

We had a good working relationship with USDE staff and the Advisory Committee staff while working on relevant issues of reauthorization and existing federally funded programs to the states.

MARILYN CARGILL
2007-2008

NASSGAP had a great relationship with DOE, the Advisory Committee and Congressional staff members such as Seth Gerson from Senator Reed (RI) office. We also forged closer relationships with NASFAA and the Student Aid Alliance.

DOUG COLLINS
1992-1993

Interaction with most constituencies was very fruitful. Relations with USDE were double edged. Program people were accessible and really tried to help, but USDE policies and interpretations were, many times, really difficult and inexplicable. SSIG policies with every executive administration were always impossible.

SCOTT FREEMAN
1996-1997

The interaction with other Washington, D.C. based constituencies was limited but helpful, particularly the student groups. It hurt not having a permanent Washington presence. The interaction with USDE was frustrating at any policy level as we were viewed as some appendage of guarantors despite our efforts to the contrary although our interactions with what I would term the operational folks was to some extent more successful.

RON GAMBILL
1998-1999

Negotiated rulemaking provided a wonderful opportunity to communicate, cooperate and negotiate with numerous Washington based associations. NASSGAP had representation on all four negotiating teams. NASSGAP was able to garner support for stances on several important issues as it related to the FAFSA (drug question) and the LEAP/SLEAP programs. Although regulations for SLEAP were not promulgated that year, a lot of groundwork was laid for the next session.

The Department was cooperative that year.

SURVEY OF NASSGAP PAST PRESIDENTS

- JIM GARCIA**
2001-2002
- By the time I became NASSGAP President, a lot of people had worked hard to pave the road to great relations with Department staff. These were the days when the Department was promoting FAFSA on the Web, when we were permitted to have a representative on their FAFSA development team (everything that Mary Beth did), when the Advisory Committee wanted the Department to reduce the number of FAFSA questions, and when LEAP/SLEAP was once again on the chopping block. The Department staff was extremely sensitive and helpful.
- Without a Washington, D.C. presence, we couldn't actively participate in every policy issue; however, thanks to HESC, PHEAA, and New Jersey (well, IN and OK too, because of the Web site and listserv) most of the issues were covered extremely well. The Advisory Committee was pushing their agenda and wasn't necessarily concerned with issues from a state perspective, especially agencies with smaller programs.
- RON IVERSON**
1974-1975
- Our involvement with the Dept. of Education was very good, and I believe this to be true as NASSGAP was a little fish in a big pond, and our Dept. of Ed people were also overshadowed by their federal colleagues administering the loan programs. As a result there was not a lot of politics compared to the loan programs and we could move forward quietly gaining support and no one paid a whole lot of attention. On the other hand it was evident that some of the other higher education associations looked at us as a threat to their funding and in my opinion did whatever they could to scuttle SSIG and its funding.
- RICHARD JOHNSTON**
1973-1974
- During my term as President of NASSGAP, I enjoyed a very positive and helpful relationship with the staff of the Department of Education. We all shared the same basic objective of serving students in an effort to meet the educational opportunity goals articulated in HEA 1965.
- SHIELA JOYNER**
1994-1995
- NASSGAP had started having more interaction with other higher education agencies such as NCHelp, NAICU, and the Committee for Education Funding. We were struggling for "state" recognition within the upper echelons of the Department.
- JOHN KLACIK**
2002-2003
- The relationship with the Department was on at best "testy", however there were notable exceptions. While this was a continuation of the same relationship that preceded me, I am happy to say that it was not for a lack of effort on my or NASSGAP's part to promote a cooperative attitude and partnership.
- The major exception was the working relationship that the FAFSA forms committee developed with their counterparts in the Department. While this was never perfectly smooth, it seemed that Mary Beth Kelly and the NASSGAP committee generally were able to bring a valuable and persuasive perspective to the Department.
- MAUREEN LAFFEY**
2003-2004
- The support from student and professional associations and the cooperation from Dept. of Education and the ACSFA were very good during my term. And I give the credit to previous NASSGAP presidents and the federal relations committee members (especially Chas Treadwell) for establishing such good relationships with these organizations. Without having a DC presence during my term, it took a lot of legwork from everyone involved to maintain those relationships.

SURVEY OF NASSGAP PAST PRESIDENTS

- JULIE LEEPER**
2011-2012
- NASSGAP has a very good relationship with the Department of Education and with other organizations associated with student financial aid. NASSGAP's federal relations committee and Washington DC presence ensure that we stay in touch and provide needed information. In return, the DE and other colleagues provide NASSGAP with valuable information and assistance.
- DIANE LINDEMAN**
2014-15
- In the recent past I think NASSGAP felt a bit alienated from the Department of Education. I felt that shortly before and during my tenure that NASSGAP has had a good working relationship with DOE.
- BOB LONG**
1997-1998
- It was of necessity during my term that we concentrate on improving our relationships with external groups such as student groups, Washington based associations and Congressional staffs. That effort would be essential in order to meet our goal of successfully securing passage and subsequent funding of the restructured SSIG now LEAP Program. From the results I suppose one could conclude that our effort was successful. Similar success was not forthcoming as it relates to policy issues with the Department. While we had good working relationships at the program level we were mostly dismissed at the policy making level. Being a member of the Department's Project EASI team for two years I had to repeatedly remind Department officials of the importance of state agencies in the delivery of financial aid. In both the Project EASI design and the subsequent Modernization Blueprint, state agencies were initially ignored. In the latter there was only one reference to state agency involvement in the entire plan. In addition, the Department failed to
- CHERYL MAPLETHORPE**
2000-2001
- The Education Department seemed to increase their appreciation of NASSGAP due to the overall effort of those who were president before me.
- VICKI MERKEL**
2010-2011
- Being on the west coast I relied heavily upon the Federal Relations Chair Lee Andes and the NASSGAP DC Consultant Frank Ballman by having regular phone conferences.. We worked as a team to respond to issues. Lee and Frank are very knowledgeable and valuable to NASSGAP!
- RITCHIE MORROW**
2012-2013
- During my presidency they were good. I feel we had issues that all felt were important and worked on how to either share our opinion or implemented.
- DENNIS OBERGFELL**
1999-2000
- I would characterize the organization's efforts to interact with the Department as strong, but would characterize Department's efforts to interact with NASSGAP as inconsistent. The Department like many large organizations, public or private sector, has numerous departments and long and sometimes not-so-direct lines of command. The sheer size and a complicated organizational structure of the Department of Education made it difficult for an outsider (me) to connect with the right people on the inside (the Department). By the time I had a sense of who was who, my term as President had ended.
- SHIRLEY ORT**
1988-1989
- Interaction with other constituencies (NAICU, ACE, NASFAA, Congressional offices, and the U. S. Department of Education), and trust, was high among all during the late 1980s. I especially appreciated the leadership of Fred Sellers during this period; he was an advocate but he also helped us clean a lot of things up in our reporting.
- EDDIE SHANNON**
1991-1992
- Good relationship with the Department of Education, from Lenora Smith to Fred Sellars to the present day Greg Gerrans.

SURVEY OF NASSGAP PAST PRESIDENTS

DR H KENNETH SHOOK
1984-1985

I would say that loan officers and grant officers worked well together. State program officials and college aid officers seemed to cooperate on student aid issues, and Federal officials would not have seem conflict between the two groups as to their positions on aid legislation. Federal hearings were open for our input, but I sensed that our opinions and suggestions carried less weight than we would have desired.

High marks had to be given to the representatives of Federal aid programs who attended and spoke at our conferences.

CHAS TREADWELL
1993-1994

NASSGAP was fortunate to have, and continues to have, wonderful support from national higher education associations, particularly the student groups. We have also been fortunate to have friends within the Department who have helped us sustain federal programs important to our residents.

GARY WEEKS
1983-1984

I think that relationships with the federal agencies were for the most part cordial and professional. Efforts were made through joint committees, task forces, etc to understand the state and the federal perspective on issues. Not surprisingly, there were frequent disagreements and from the states perspective and occasionally not much understanding of the challenges facing the states.

MARY ANN WELCH
2006-2007

While I would characterize the interaction with all constituencies, including the USDE as good, there was always the need to work at keeping it good. I was fortunate to have the invaluable help of Chas Treadwell, our federal relations committee chair, and Bart Astor, our Washington liaison director, to keep the lines of communication with the USDE and other constituencies open.

**CHRISTINE
ZUZACK**
2013-14

This was a very busy time for interactions between the U.S. Department of Education and NASSGAP on a number of issues and initiatives. One of the biggest issues was the roll out of new SAIG Agreements in which states are granted permission to release selected FAFSA data to high schools, school districts, and other designated entities. This FAFSA Completion Initiative originated with the White House in an effort to get more students into college. USDE hoped that all states would engage in this effort to encourage college attendance.

Another initiative pursued by USDE was a college rating system. In December of 2013, Frank Ballmann, Lee Andes and I met with USDE officials in Washington, DC on President Obama's college ratings system to be implemented in the 2015-16 award year. The officials included Jamie Studley, Robert Gomez, and Spiros Protopsaltis. Of course, history revealed that this project was never able to be implemented due to the complexity of the data to be collected and how it would be analyzed and used.

NASSGAP was also engaged in conversations with NASFAA, NCAN and educational staffers from the House of Representatives on Reauthorization of the Higher Education Act, FAFSA simplification, and the use of Prior-Prior Year data on the FAFSA.

SURVEY OF NASSGAP PAST PRESIDENTS

6. DO YOU BELIEVE THERE IS A NEED FOR A FEDERAL STUDENT AID POLICY THAT ENLISTS THE SUPPORT OF STATES IN PROVIDING AID TO STUDENTS PURSUING A POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION DEGREE?

MELANIE AMRHEIN 2005-2006	It would be difficult based on our (the states) differences. I have not felt it was a critical thing to accomplish, because I don't want to disenfranchise any one. Each state has its own mission to accomplish based on its needs and its population.
LEE ANDES 2008-2009	
THERESA ANTWRORTH 2004-2005	Absolutely, it takes all the states and local initiatives to serve the diverse populations of students and unique needs per state in order to afford opportunities for prepared students to enroll in postsecondary education.
MARILYN CARGILL 2007-2008	Yes. The partnership and collaboration between the Federal Government and States is essential to desired outcomes of student access and completion in higher education.
DOUG COLLINS 1992-1993	Absolutely! All federal student aid should be block granted to the states. The states are closer to the students and understand their particular needs. This is never going to completely happen, but the concept should always be clearly in mind.
SCOTT FREEMAN 1996-1997	Yes, now more than ever. I'm somewhat more hopeful that the Bush administration is more interested in partnership with the states. I reject the notion that since the feds provide the majority of student aid they can make the rules. Any approach that fails to take a more wholistic view of the higher education enterprise which would clearly show that students and states are the largest financial partners in this business is wrong and doomed to provide poor results.
RON GAMBILL 1998-1999	The concept of a policy for the federal government to work with states as it relates to educational funding already exists. The National Governor's Association focuses on K-12 and higher education, to a lesser extent. NASSGAP does not have membership sources from all the postsecondary funding entities within some states. Federal policies are often made in a vacuum or with limited partners. The idea is good, but it is only truly effective if you get all the partners involved including agencies and schools.
JIM GARCIA 2001-2002	Of course the answer is "yes". Big federal funds do make a difference at the state and local level. However, unless federal funds cover ALL costs, the federal government needs to seek input and address state issues before they implement new programs or make changes to the current common application form, the FAFSA
RON IVERSON 1974-1975	Yes.

SURVEY OF NASSGAP PAST PRESIDENTS

- RICHARD JOHNSTON**
1973-1974
- There is no doubt in my mind that as a nation we need to continue the efforts of the states and the federal government to ensure that sufficient financial resources are available to assist the ever increasing percentage of high school graduates who are going on to post secondary education meet the rapidly increasing costs of education. The future of our country depends upon an educated society even more now than it did when HEA 1965 was enacted.
- SHIELA JOYNER**
1994-1995
- Yes, for ultimate success there must be a partnership.
- JOHN KLACIK**
2002-2003
- This was a critical issue when I was President and it continues to be the issue into the future. I'm concerned that the Congress and the USED are becoming much more imperious and isolated to the bigger picture of how SFA works in states, than ever before.
- MAUREEN LAFFEY**
2003-2004
- Definitely. I think the states have their own unique needs regarding financial aid but by having a federal-state coordinated partnership (such as LEAP), we can together consistently provide aid to the most needy students. Unfortunately I think there needs to be more federal emphasis and funding for states to reach out to underserved students to provide access and affordability for postsecondary education for those who wish to pursue it.
- JULIE LEEPER**
2011-2012
- Yes. Federal and state policies and programs should work together for the good of students ensuring that students have the resources necessary to meet their educational goals.
- DIANE LINDEMAN**
2014-15
- I believe it is a good thing to have a pairing of federal student aid policy with support from the states. By working together we can provide programs that benefit more students.
- BOB LONG**
1997-1998
- The adoption of any federal student aid policy should incorporate a major role for states. In my opinion anything short of a major state role would be a grave mistake and result in only partial success. With the proliferation of state aid programs nationally over the past decade the need for cooperation and coordination in student aid policy becomes critically important. States are uniquely positioned to play a significant role in any student aid policy should they be afforded the opportunity. As the federal government has come to realize in the implementation of other federal initiatives micro-management is not always the most effective and efficient method. States seem to be in the best position to address the needs of their students.
- CHERYL MAPLETHORPE**
2000-2001
- Yes. The federal government can offer a foundation of support but each state should add to that foundation through additional financial support in addition to maintaining quality educational opportunities in-state and continue to inspire its citizens to greater educational attainment through general information and early intervention programs.
- VICKI MERKEL**
2010-2011
- This seems like a question that was important in the past. I think in the current climate states need to focus on what is best for their state and not tie state policies to the federal policies.
- RITCHIE MORROW**
2012-2013
- Yes. A student aid policy has to incorporate all aspects to be successful. Federal, state, private and institutional must all have some input in a policy so that aid can achieve the goal of helping students.

DENNIS OBERGFELL
1999-2000
No doubt about it. We live in the United States of America - a union of states with common goals. I believe that without the federal government and states working together to develop a strong nationwide workforce, all of our uncoordinated efforts will fall short of the success we could achieve by working together.

SHIRLEY ORT
1988-1989
The need for federal student aid policy is even more acutely needed now than ever. For all that we criticize Congress and/or the U. S. Department of Education, they and they alone have provided the leadership to ensure continued funding for needy students. Their role remains central to the “access mission;” it has never been more needed. My opinions on this are strong and heartfelt. Too many states have diffused their priorities and drifted down the path of merit aid; similarly, institutions continue to target funding to increase “quality” in the unending pursuit to elevate rankings.

KEN REEHER
1969-1970
and
1978-1979
Yes. There has been and continues to be a threat that states will restrict the out- of-state flow of students through the state student grant scholarship program and the state subsidy of public institutions of higher education. I also think that federal matching funds for new and increased state student aid funding will provide students with new options for enrollment including private “full charge” private colleges and out-of-state colleges.

EDDIE SHANNON
1991-1992
Yes: It should be a concerted effort.

DR H KENNETH SHOOK
1984-1985
I do not favor any structure which increases the power of the Federal policy and rule making over the decision making power of individual states and individual college campuses. We must recognize that the college aid officer and the student applicant are the two most important players in the game, and state officials are closer to this action than are Federal officials.

CHAS TREADWELL
1993-1994
Absolutely; the federal government cannot do it alone ? it is too expensive and the feds are too far removed from the action to be able to tailor program support to the unique needs of each state. That is why cooperative programs such as LEAP (formerly SSIG) and GEAR UP offer so much potential for success.

GARY WEEKS
1983-1984
I do believe that a sound national program and policy supporting student assistance requires a partnership between the states and the federal government. In these days of federal devolution on many fronts, it would be naive to think that either the federal or state government could alone solve the problem of financing postsecondary education.

MARY ANN WELCH
2006-2007
A partnership among federal, state, and institutional entities should exist that shapes federal student aid policy.

CHRISTINE ZUZACK
2013-14
Absolutely! Providing educational funding for students to pursue a college degree requires the cooperation and coordination of all funding entities. Since most states use the FAFSA as their application, we all have to ensure that the needs of states and schools are considered so that the student has a seamless and simple path to apply for college funding.

SURVEY OF NASSGAP PAST PRESIDENTS

7. FOR THOSE PRESIDENTS WHO SERVED DURING THE EARLY, FORMATIVE YEARS OF THE ORGANIZATION, TELL US ABOUT WHAT MOTIVATED YOU AND OTHERS TO ESTABLISH NASSGAP AND HOW YOU DID IT.

- JOE BOYD**
1967-1968
- I was the second president. Before we organized in 1966, we gathered informally at the College Board annual meeting. They provided room/refreshment and it soon became apparent we needed to become independent and have our own meetings.
- We had many reasons to have a NASSGAP. There was a desire to share plans and procedures and encourage development of need-based state programs in all states. We also felt we needed one/united voice to the federal government as regards legislation/regulations.
- We also needed to tell our story to others and I was privileged to be the author of the first eleven annual reports which displayed the programs of all states. The first survey was 1969.
- State grant aid was then and continues to be more sensitive to Access and Choice. Federal Aid has been more concerned with Access alone.
- In reflection, I do feel the abundance of grant and loan dollars has caused college tuition/other costs to annually increase at rates well beyond what was needed.
- DOUG COLLINS**
1992-1993
- I defer to Mr. Broadway.
- SCOTT FREEMAN**
1996-1997
- I'm not that old!
- JIM GARCIA**
2001-2002
- The group was probably inspired by the invention of the wheel and discovery of fire.
- RICHARD JOHNSTON**
1973-1974
- Many of us at the time were involved in both grant/scholarship and loan programs. We realized in both groups that influencing federal policy was important to our efforts. Since the loan program was even more dependent upon the federal government, NCHELP developed rapidly and eventually created a presence through its office in Washington. During my year as President, I attempted to convince both NASSGAP and NCHELP members to merge the organizations to give us more political clout. While I was unsuccessful, the two organizations did hold joint meetings annually until it became clear that the issues each group confronted diverged significantly.
- SHIRLEY ORT**
1988-1989
- I was motivated and challenged by the leadership of people like John Madigan, Jane Caldwell, Libby Taylor, Debra Wiley, Jerry Davis, Barry Dorsey, Stan Broadway, Jeff Lee, and countless others -- all of whom kept their focus on needy students. They were practical and at the same time forward thinking. They taught me a lot, and I wanted to emulate their insights and abilities.

SURVEY OF NASSGAP PAST PRESIDENTS

KEN REEHER
1969-1970
and
1978-1979

We were all members of the state student loan directors association (currently called NCHELP) and thought there should be a similar central membership organization for the state scholarship programs later changed to scholarships and grants as state aid moved to need based awards or grants. In the fall of 1968 we attended the annual meeting of the College Board in a hotel in New York City--- the CEEB can tell you what hotel. A group of us stayed over after the CEEB meeting and decided to form the new state scholarship organization. I am not sure it was titled NASSGAP when we first set it up. I think it was National State Scholarship Programs. Those at the meeting included Art Marmaduke of California (we named him the first President at that initial meeting). Others who were in the original or formative meeting were Dr. Joseph Boyd of Illinois, the late Dr. Betty Ehrhart of New Jersey, Ken Reeher of Pa., Sherman Tinkleman of New York, Ron Jursa of Michigan, and the late Jeff Lee of Oregon. This is my recollection of who attended this organizational meeting but I think it is close to including all participants, but you may get some additions from others at that meeting.

DR H KENNETH SHOOK
1984-1985

I was not in on the birth of NASSGAP, but I am proud to know those who lead the way. Art Marmaduke, Joe Boyd, Ron Jursa, Ken Reeher, and Stan Broadway are friends I treasure.

MARY ANN WELCH
2006-2007

Not applicable to me, but kudos to those who were involved in the formation of NASSGAP.

SURVEY OF NASSGAP PAST PRESIDENTS

8. PLEASE SHARE ONE HUMOROUS EVENT OR STORY FROM YOUR YEAR AS PRESIDENT!

- MELANIE AMRHEIN**
2005-2006
Only my Executive Committee will understand this but..."bad elastic underwear".
- LEE ANDES**
2008-2009
- THERESA ANTWRTH**
2004-2005
I enjoyed a laborious search one long evening after a grueling two and one half day executive board meeting, through a dozen or more boxes of NASSGAP history in hard copied documents. Chas Treadwell, Maureen Laffey and I drank wine and reviewed every piece of paper in those boxes, drank more wine and listened to Chas's historical counts of our association and the activities that molded it to it's present day form. I hope all members will be privy to such tales if Chas will only pen to paper our history some day soon.
- MARILYN CARGILL**
2007-2008
At the conference in New Orleans we held our meetings one morning at Mardi Gras world. One of the best memories I have is when we all went after the costume box from prior year floats like little kids at a birthday party. Pictures really are worth a 1000 words!
- DOUG COLLINS**
1992-1993
I guess it was when we had the spring meeting in San Francisco, and the feds chose that very week to retrench the current year's SSIG appropriation with absolutely no warning. Needless to say, it somewhat altered the original schedule of the conference. I spent a good share of time with the phone glued to one ear and cable car bells echoing in the other.
- SCOTT FREEMAN**
1996-1997
Jan Hilyer in search of an event location in Nashville that would ensure the availability of a baked potato with any meal.
- RON GAMBILL**
1998-1999
I can't remember anything significant.
- JIM GARCIA**
2001-2002
During our Spring 2002 conference Mary Beth spotted, stalked and cornered Danny Glover (actor), into a phone booth in the hotel lobby. With a little encouragement we brought him into the conference room to address our NASSGAP members. I gently bumped our very nice speaker Harold McCullough, and introduced Danny as a friend of NASSGAP.
- RICHARD JOHNSTON**
1973-1974
It was the custom of the President to invite NASSGAP to meet in his/her city for the annual meeting. Typically, we met at hotels, but I thought it would be appropriate to meet in a University of Wisconsin facility to bring us closer to the students we served. As I recall, the meeting was a success, but the participants objected to the loss of the amenities typically offered by large hotels. To my knowledge, that was the last time NASSGAP met on a university campus!

SURVEY OF NASSGAP PAST PRESIDENTS

**SHIELA
JOYNER 1994-
1995**

Bob Long from West Virginia attended a conference President's Reception (Halloween event) dressed as a woman (his wife dressed as a man); Jan Hilyer from Alabama didn't recognize them, thought they were "crashing" the event and proceeded to ask them to leave. Later that evening the Long's still in costume went to dinner in the hotel's restaurant and were quite the attention getters.

**JOHN
KLACIK 2002-
2003**

Well if irony qualifies as humor then –

I recall an incident at the conference in DC when Assistant Secretary Sally Stroup spoke to the membership about the future of the LEAP program. She loudly announced that the “partnership” between the USED and the states was over. To which I replied I'm glad to see the Department publicly recognize, for the first time, that we have been in a partnership.

We followed up by meeting personally with Asst. Secretary Stroup in her office where we again offered to work cooperatively. I think the outcome was that while the Department continued to propose the elimination of LEAP, that it did not press the issue very hard.

**MAUREEN
LAFHEY 2003-2004**

I can't specifically remember one humorous event, however, I do remember I laughed A LOT!

**JULIE
LEEPER 2011-
2012**

There was one incident that makes me laugh out loud every time if think about it. I won't provide the details, but will say it involved a locked door, a towel, and a very long walk to the front desk at a hotel for one of our colleagues.

**DIANE
LINDEMAN
2014-15**

I don't know that there was one humorous event particularly from my year as President, but I do want to make note of the year of the government shutdown, which preceded my presidency. I was the conference program chair and it was quite a feat to keep on top of whether or not we would have any DOE speakers, or others, who were affected by the shutdown. It meant having a Plan B, Plan C, etc. If it wasn't for Frank Ballmann, I'm not quite sure how we would have pulled it off. With his connections we were able to have speakers for all of our sessions. The shutdown ended toward the end of our conference so at least we were able to still insert a few DOE folks at the end of the week. The shutdown certainly challenged my personal skills, or lack thereof, in flexibility!

SURVEY OF NASSGAP PAST PRESIDENTS

BOB LONG
1997-1998

The current membership is aware of my two most humorous events as they have been well chronicled. But they are worth repeating. The first occurred while I was Member-at-Large and the other while I was President. The first incident occurred at Perdido Beach Resort in Orange Beach, Alabama, the site of the fall 1995 NASSGAP conference. The conference dates coincided with Halloween. Thus, the membership was instructed to bring costumes to be worn at the Sunday evening gala on the outside deck. My wife and I attended the conference and dressed as opposites for the party. My wife was dressed in a man's suit, with mustache, hat, and shoes while I wore a sleek black mini skirt, wig, high heeled shoes with face and nails painted. As we approached the deck we heard voices from the vicinity of our meeting place. I suggested that my wife meander over to the area to ensure it was our group. When she failed to return, I proceeded to make my appearance. Since my wife and I entered at separate intervals, no NASSGAP attendee had any inclination as to who we were. In fact, many in the audience assumed that we were either paid entertainers or had mistakenly arrived at the wrong party as numerous Halloween parties were being held at the facility. I, immediately propositioned several of the men in the audience who were flabbergasted. I was later apprised that Jan Hilyer, site chair and host for the conference had instructed my wife to leave or she would have security remove her. She attempted to forcefully remove her in advance of my wife finally convincing Jan of her identity. Jay Evans, long time friend from Pennsylvania, advised me later that he had determined that I was a man and planned to deck me should I approach him or his wife. As part of the costume party awards were to be presented. The irony of the contest was that Fred Sellers, Program Officer from the Department of Education, had informed my wife and me earlier in the day that he planned to win the grand prize as he had a surprise in store. My wife and I looked at each other with sheepish grins as we had an even greater surprise. Once Fred determined who we were his initial reaction was "YOU WON, YOU WON." He was totally deflated as he was convinced that he would easily win the contest. He dressed as the devil with face painted and horns on his head. Later that evening we were invited guests at the four or five star restaurant of Mr. and Mrs. Evans accompanied by Bill Lannan and wife from Utah. We entertained the waiters, waitresses and guests all evening as they continuously took glimpses our way in an effort to determine who and what we were, especially as we removed articles of clothing. The final humorous moment occurred during my stroll to the facilities. With dress on, wig off showing my bald head, and no shoes on, you have to use your own imagination as numerous cat calls, howls, whispers and chuckles took place. I was skeptical as to whether I would be permitted in the men's facility.

The other less humorous but somewhat interesting story relates to my monthly appearance at the federal Project EASI meeting. Since I drove to the sessions, it was necessary to leave Charleston, West Virginia around 11:00 to 12:00 P.M. as it took approximately six hours to arrive at the Metro stop, where I caught the train into D.C. On one of the scheduled visits I encountered rain and snow on the front end of the trip. Fortunately, the snow changed to rain during the day. Snow only remained on the non pavement portion of the ground when I left Washington at approximately 4:00 P.M. In fact, the rain had subsided. My normal routine was to travel non stop to within fifty miles of Charleston where I would stop to eat and refuel. For some unexplained reason I altered that routine on this occasion. I stopped at a fast food chain in Virginia to purchase a burger and refuel. I continued on what I expected to be another uneventful trip to Charleston. While intermittent rain occurred along the way there was no appearance of snow. No reference to impending snow was mentioned on the radio. I proceeded from Virginia to West Virginia along the southern route. After completing the drive through the level terrain I began to approach the mountainous area, approximately twenty-five miles from my normal stopping

CHERYL MAPLETHORPE
2000-2001

I guess the most humorous situation I can think of was my loss of control of the NASSGAP meeting when I gave the Executive Council and the Committee chairs my gift of appreciation. I had created a 15-inch NASSGAP action figures in their own image for each person. What I had intended as a 10 minute award ceremony broke down into a 30 minute break as the audience left their seats to come to the front to examine the dolls and those with cameras snapped picture of the award recipients as they press the dolls against their faces so the camera would capture the similarity between the doll and the recipient.

SURVEY OF NASSGAP PAST PRESIDENTS

VICKI MERKEL
2010-2011

I came down with food poisoning the night before my first board meeting and was too weak to crawl to the meeting the next day.. The able president-elect, Julie Leeper chaired the meeting and apparently there was some discussion that all board members are replaceable. A valuable lesson for leadership at my expense.

DENNIS OBERGFELL
1999-2000

I asked the U.S. Assistant Secretary of Education what his job title was. A long story.

SHIRLEY ORT
1988-1989

I have three highlights: one was the bus trip to the Von Trapp Family Lodge in Stowe, the year that we were meeting in Burlington, Vermont – I believe it was Fall 1988. After the dinner, Jeff Lee and Debra Wiley closed down every bar and dance floor in town. Barry Dorsey, John Siegrist, and I couldn't dance like they did, but we stayed sober enough to get them home safely!

Another was a sweet, warm, night in May when we were meeting in D. C. Jeff Lee and Doug Collins and I went out walking about town. We were laughing and talking. At about 2:00 a.m., the homeless in front of the federal post office (hearing a woman's voice) were awakened. They cursed me for being a woman out that late, and said that we were all stupid to be risking our lives on the streets of D. C. We cowardly took the first cab home, believing that they indeed would know!

Another was the raucous dinner we had at Bullfeathers' restaurant in Washington, D. C.; Sheila Joyner and Ron Gumball remember; they were the ring leaders. Bullfeathers never let us return: really. And if you don't believe me, just try!

KEN REEHER
1969-1970
and
1978-1979

I cannot say whether it was or was not during my tenure as president, but when we think of humorous, I think of the year we were having a joint meeting with NCHelp. At the last minute we learned that our speaker could not get out to D.C. On the spur of the moment Jeff Lee (our counter-part in Oregon) stopped up to the podium and spent the next hour bringing the house down with jokes on every subject imaginable. He was terrific, a real professional and saved the day. Nobody regretted that the scheduled speaker did not show.

EDDIE SHANNON
1991-1992

Received what I thought was a personal invitation to come to D.C. to meet with Congressman Ford, then Chairman of the House Education Committee. Flew to D.C., only to find 200 people there for the same meeting. Then, to make matters worse, Mr. Ford did not show up.

SURVEY OF NASSGAP PAST PRESIDENTS

DR H KENNETH SHOOK
1984-1985

I have more humorous stories in admissions than in financial aid, and none in the 1985-86 period, but I'll share one story none-the-less. Early in my ten years as a State Scholarship Executive Director, I approached public TV stations about doing a financial aid program. I suggested how the program could cover Federal, state, and institutional aid, and financial aid forms and critical application dates could be stressed. The program should be presented in January of each year, and aid officers could answer phone calls, while certain key persons discussed aid issues on camera. Film clips could record actual college students mentioning their success in gaining the necessary financial aid to attend higher education institutions. After three years of effort, a station finally decided to give it a try. The results amazed the studio, and they called me to exclaim that only "Wall Street Week" drew more viewers than did the first financial aid program. The aid program continues annually today. I always appeared on the early programs, and one of our early year moderators was none other than Oprah Winfrey. Do you think our program gave her the boost that started her toward greater success?

CHAS TREADWELL
1993-1994

For our Spring executive committee meeting, we traveled to the booming town of Boise, Idaho and were very lucky to book a new hotel at super reasonable rates. Of course, not until we got on site did we find that the hotel had zero room service or dining facilities. The closest food was across a double lane highway. I can't forget how many times I heard, "WHAT, no room service? Eeeuuuu?". I learned a valuable lesson.

GARY WEEKS
1983-1984

Too many years have gone by for me to remember a humorous event, although some would argue that the event was my election as NASSGAP President!

MARY ANN WELCH
2006-2007

While I cannot think of a particular humorous event during my presidency, I do remember another year when we all got caught in a downpour while touring the DC monuments. Everyone returned to the tour bus looking like drowned rats, but laughing like hyenas. I also remember another conference in Austin and being in the Coyote Ugly bar with fellow NASSGAPers when a barmaid literally picked me up and carried me to the bar, plopped me on a bar stool and "volunteered" me to be in a beer-drinking contest. It was quite funny, but I only wish I won the contest!

**CHRISTINE
ZUZACK**
2013-14

This experience occurred in August 2013, just before I took office as NASSGAP President, when Frank Ballmann, Ritchie Morrow, Lee Andes, and I attended a meeting in the West Wing of the White House. What a thrill it was to actually be in the West Wing! Of course, I wanted to capture the occasion on film and pulled out my camera to take a picture of Frank who was sitting under a large antique clock. My back was to the reception desk and I did not see the security guard rushing over to stop me since photos were not permitted. Seeing the alarm on Frank's face and hearing the security guard call out to me, I immediately apologized and dropped my camera into my purse. So, I almost got us ejected from the White House meeting for simply wanting a photo memory. Fortunately, our meeting went on as scheduled and I did get a pic of Frank under that magnificent clock!

SURVEY OF NASSGAP PAST PRESIDENTS

9. WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE TO TODAY'S GRANT ADMINISTRATORS?

- MELANIE AMRHEIN**
2005-2006
Use technology as much as possible.
- LEE ANDES**
2008-2009
- THERESA ANTORTH**
2004-2005
Continue to carry the torch, every act and piece of assistance offered does matter, even if one student at a time.
- MARILYN CARGILL**
2007-2008
Use the expertise that exists within NASSGAP to help you be successful in leading your own state program.
- DOUG COLLINS**
1992-1993
Keep the faith. I don't mean that glibly. There is a shared commitment that keeps one going when things get aggravating. Comparing notes with others in the same profession helps a lot.
- R. ROSS ERBSCHLOE**
1987-1988
One thing I learned, and which I doubt has not changed, was that you really had to keep on top of the federal agencies which manage the various programs. That meant the congressmen, senators, and, above all, the staffers there in DC. Visit them in their offices. Keep the elected folks aware of what you want and need, and keep up with what the staffers are doing to your programs. They varied from helpful to downright unscrupulous. A couple of times we came close to losing SSIG completely because one staffer was constantly harpooning it. I should add that we had some such people at the state level too – usually budget analysts.
- SCOTT FREEMAN**
1996-1997
You must strive to make time to go beyond the focus of the mechanics and politics of your particular programs and state and to look at policy and the bigger picture that is the higher education enterprise. The battle to turn us all into nothing more than technicians has, I fear, been fairly successful at the campus level. We must resist. We must avoid our enemies greatest weapon which is trying to wear us down.
- RON GAMBILL**
1998-1999
The realm of financial aid has grown significantly in the past several years. The focus on financially disadvantaged students is moving to academic scholarships, loan programs and paid scholarship (financial aid) search firms. State legislators and congressional leaders are being swayed by the glitz and glamour of programs that undermine the need-based student. Keep postsecondary educational opportunities available for financially needy students.
- JIM GARCIA**
2001-2002
Hang in there and do your best. Much of the work you perform goes unnoticed unless your latest creation has a noticeable flaw.
- LOIS HOLLIS**
2009-2010
The best advice I can give to a future NASSGAP President (and yes it is cliché) is--- keep a sense of humor

SURVEY OF NASSGAP PAST PRESIDENTS

- RICHARD JOHNSTON**
1973-1974
- As I prepare for my retirement, my biggest concern is that as a nation we have lost the commitment to equal educational opportunity so clearly articulated in HEA '65. We continue to see the erosion of the financial need policy that guided our successful efforts for so many years. Merit based scholarships, tax credits, and 529 savings accounts are just three examples of the new focus of federal and state financial aid programs. While these types of programs respond to political realities and the demands of middle class voters, research reports are now indicating that the percentage of low income students attending post secondary schools is continuing to decline sharply. Denying educational opportunity to this group of students will only lead to widening of the disparity in income between the "have" and "have nots" in our society. Given the nation's need for skilled manpower to continue the economic growth we have enjoyed in the last decade, it is critical that public policy refocus on the goal of providing financial aid to ensure equal educational opportunities are made available to all income groups. I would urge NASSGAP to join the other national organizations that are raising concerns about the current direction of financial aid policies and programs.
- SHIELA JOYNER**
1994-1995
- Always work closely with your school constituents to ensure that students are "best served"
- JOHN KLACIK**
2002-2003
- See the bigger picture. Know what's happening nationally and in other states. Set goals to improve access in your state. Work to achieve them.
- MAUREEN LAFFEY**
2003-2004
- The advice I would give to today's grant administrators is to remember who we are here to serve: students who are the future of our workforces, communities, states, and country. We need to assist them any way we can through education, advice, and funding to help all of them reach their potential educational and workforce levels. It will probably always be a fight to receive adequate funding for our programs, but keep fighting for the students and don't ever give up hope.
- JULIE LEEPER**
2011-2012
- Keep up the good work you do for students. They may not say it, but students and their families appreciate the work you do on their behalf. And, don't forget there are good NASSGAP colleagues as close as the telephone or e-mail when you need them.
- DIANE LINDEMAN**
2014-15
- Get involved with NASSGAP. Network, get to know your colleagues in this business. They will be invaluable in providing support.
- BOB LONG**
1997-1998
- I would encourage current grant administrators to be cognizant of the efforts and accomplishments of their predecessors in establishing a genuinely satisfying profession. To focus on articulating to the decision makers at the institutional, state, and federal levels the critical nature that this profession plays in improving the quality of life for many of our residents. To continue the fundamental commitment of helping deserving students strive to better their life style through the pursuit of a postsecondary education. A likely scenario from such effort will be satisfying career in a helping profession.
- CHERYL MAPLETHORPE**
2000-2001
- Get sleep when you can. The state grant program is like a new baby. It needs lots of attention and you can never do enough to care for it, shape it, and give it the resources that it wants and that you want for it but take time to take care of yourself. If every waking minute is spent thinking about financial aid you will become a very boring person.
- VICKI MERKEL**
2010-2011
- Don't be afraid of change. It's likely to happen so you should be part of the group designing and implementing change.

RITCHIE MORROW
2012-2013

Four of us, Chris Zuzack, Frank Ballmann, Lee Andes and myself, had a meeting with James Kvaal and Ajita Talwalker in the West Wing of the White House. While waiting in the reception room for our meeting Chris took a picture of Frank. Chris was then informed, as a Secret Service agent moved towards her, that no picture taking was allowed. Needless to say, no more pictures were taken.

DENNIS OBERGFELL
1999-2000

I would advise grant administrators to remind themselves that they are doing important and good work. Not everyone can say that about his or her profession.

SHIRLEY ORT
1988-1989

The advice I offer to today's grant administrator is: "Continue to look for ways to knit things together, to make sense of appealingly separate pieces, to leverage funds. We will not always have a federal budget surplus. We have a federal peacetime budget now that was constructed for peacetime priorities; all of that could change. All of us (states, institutions, and the federal government) have to work smarter and work together."

KEN REEHER
1969-1970
and
1978-1979

My advise to today's administrators would be to keep abreast of trends and new ideas – especially at the well financed state levels and at the federal level. Examine the policies and philosophies as compared to those of your own state and re-examine or update your goals and take positions in support or opposition to the external state or federal policies and philosophies. Keep your eye on the federal efforts to help surviving dependents of the Sept. 11 attacks and try to develop programs at your state level to mesh with federal and other aid to victims of Sept. 11. Anticipate a trend to assist dependent children of police, firemen, emergency workers etc. and look at how the federal and private money available as a result of Sept. 11 can be administered more efficiently at a state level NASSGAP member agency. Look to coordinate federal, state and private funding through the state based NASSGAP agency.

EDDIE SHANNON
1991-1992

Be persistent, and keep the humor

DR H KENNETH SHOOK
1984-1985

Maintain a close relationship with student aid applicants and never lose sight of the admissions process. The goal is to match the student with the right college or training institution. The goal must also insure that the programs entered are completed, and that reasonable financial aid support continues after the opening year. Always follow ethical practices in your work and life.

CHAS TREADWELL
1993-1994

Keep the faith, don't be shy; don't give up.

GARY WEEKS
1983-1984

I would ask today's administrators to always bear in mind the reasons why these programs exist and the individuals they are intended to benefit. If you stay focused on these thoughts, you will find it easier to also stay focused on the design, delivery and support of the highest quality student aid programs.

MARY ANN WELCH
2006-2007

Always remember your mission. Know that what you do can have an effect on the future of thousands of students. Become involved in organizations such as NASSGAP and your local financial aid administrators association to share best practices and to keep updated on financial aid issues.

CHRISTINE ZUZACK
2013-14

In working with any financial aid programs, always remember to keep the students' interests first and foremost. They are the entire reason why we exist and we always have to maintain their best interests at heart.

SURVEY OF NASSGAP PAST PRESIDENTS

10. ARE THERE ANY COMMENTS YOU WOULD LIKE TO MAKE FOR THE RECORD REGARDING YOUR TENURE AS NASSGAP PRESIDENT OR REGARDING YOUR CAREER AS A FINANCIAL AID PROFESSION? DO YOU HAVE ANY ADVICE YOU WOULD LIKE TO PROVIDE TO THE ORGANIZATION OR FUTURE PRESIDENTS?

**MELANIE AMRHEIN
2005-2006**

I need to thank Jim Garcia and John Klacik for mentoring me into taking a leadership role early on in this association. They recognized something in me that I did not know was there until they challenged me to step up and volunteer. I hope there are others out there that I can help to find their potential so they too will step up.

**LEE ANDES
2008-2009**

**THERESA ANTWORTH
2004-2005**

This has been the most wonderful organization and group of professionals that I have had the pleasure to participate with and to serve. Advice - Keep a Washington DC presence, it is an invaluable service to our association; and keep our conference sessions full of information that bring to our attention trends and national issues that could become our future.

**MARILYN CARGILL
2007-2008**

One of the very first tasks that I had as NASSGAP President was to replace the outgoing DC Liaison. Chas Treadwell and I met with Marie Bennett over a meal at the Washington Court Hotel (was it breakfast or lunch?) and had hired her before the meal was over. At the time it was questionable if we could afford to continue to have a liaison and now, I think we would all agree it is essential. The work done by the liaisons over the years to represent NASSGAP in meetings, to ensure our voice and point of view is part of conversations, and to imbed NASSGAP as a vital part of higher education in the minds of decision makers has lifted the visibility of the entire organization. I would recommend that you fight very hard to maintain this position as NASSGAP moves forward.

**DOUG COLLINS
1992-1993**

Not really. I would like to say that the only thing I regret about retiring is that I miss associating with all the great people I worked with in NASSGAP. Hi to you all who are still in the trenches.

**R. ROSS ERBSCHLOE
1987-1988**

I can't think of any pearls of wisdom to offer except the obvious ones that you all already know. Just keep on top of the programs and what they require you to do. And keep in touch with your colleagues in NASSGAP. They can really help.

Good luck to you all. Enjoy it while you're doing it. You'll be doing worthwhile things and helping lots of people. What could be better than that?

**SCOTT FREEMAN
1996-1997**

Get involved, run for election, serve in an office, you will find that when you look back you will view it as one of the most rewarding of your professional experiences.

SURVEY OF NASSGAP PAST PRESIDENTS

RON GAMBILL
1998-1999

A. NASSGAP needs a Washington presence if we are going to develop strong ties with other Washington based organizations. NASSGAP presence needs to be observed by USDE at the monthly meetings along with the other professional organizations.
B. The fear of associating more closely with NCHelp needs to be overcome. At least 19 of NASSGAP members provide full service (i.e., grants, loans, and scholarships) to students. Most of these agencies are significant in size and several have been actively involved with and supportive of NASSGAP. It seems the pendulum moves from one extreme to another and what we need is good middle ground so we can work better together for common goals.
C. NASSGAP membership dues are well below what most professional organizations charge. NASSGAP members pay more to be a constituent member of NASFAA than they do to be full members of NASSGAP. I am not suggesting a full-time person in Washington, DC, but we can contract for representation.

After twenty-eight years in financial aid, I find the profession to still be challenging and rewarding. The professionals involved for the most part are the greatest.

JIM
GARCIA
2001-2002

It's a great honor to serve as NASSGAP President and extremely educational as you monitor the development of federal and state issues, the Annual Survey and gain a better understanding of how other states prioritize their needs. Since most of us are dependent on the FAFSA, I also enjoyed subscribing to the FSA Tech listserv and FINAID-L. In the early years of monitoring these lists I was often able to anticipate issues with FAFSA production and delivery delays, Pantone color schemes, schools' concerns with technical issues, etc. These lists also kept me sensitive to software and operating system issues experience by schools. I would recommend that future NASSGAP Presidents subscribe to all available lists as it makes it easier to relate to state and school issues across the country.

RON IVERSON
1974-1975

In summary, NASSGAP has a large pool of talent, whose major purpose is to provide funding to enable students to choose and attend a post secondary institution and field of study of their choice. In addition NASSGAP is unique in its state based organizational structure, and if used wisely many eyes and ears of our elected officials in Washington can be well informed regarding the importance of state based programs of financial aid, information outreach services and delivery systems for their constituents families-lots of votes!!!

SHIELA JOYNER
1994-1995

NASSGAP is an exceptional organization, and it was an honor to serve as President. Advice would be just keep up the good work NASSGAP does on behalf of our nation's students and remember that being a personable organization is one of NASSGAP's greatest attributes.

JOHN KLACIK
2002-2003

Same as my response to the previous question.

SURVEY OF NASSGAP PAST PRESIDENTS

- MAUREEN LAFFEY**
2003-2004
- I would say that being President of NASSGAP was one of my most proud professional accomplishments. Although I was a little hesitant to begin my NASSGAP service as Secretary, going on to be conference site chair (3 times), and then working up to President, I would encourage everyone to volunteer for something with NASSGAP (committees or conferences). You really get to know your fellow NASSGAPPER'S and realize what a close knit and friendly, helpful, fun and supportive group of folks they all are. It has been a wonderful experience being a part of NASSGAP!
- JULIE LEEPER**
2011-2012
- Everyone should take the opportunity to be involved with NASSGAP. When you have an opportunity to serve on the Executive Committee, please take advantage of it and serve. You will gain more from serving than you can imagine. And, if you are asked to serve as President, take on the responsibility gladly and do what you can to promote federal and state policies to help students further their educations. There are many willing to help, and leading motivated individuals is not work -- it's rewarding.
- DIANE LINDEMAN**
2014-15
- Don't be afraid to get involved. There is a lot of support and you, and NASSGAP, will be richly rewarded for your efforts.
- BOB LONG**
1997-1998
- My tenure as NASSGAP President was and continues to be the crowning point of my professional career. The rewarding experience will always be remembered for the trust and confidence exhibited by my peers nationally in my ability to lead an outstanding organization during a crisis period rather than any accomplishments occurring during my term. It was a personal pleasure and an enlightening experience to have served on the Executive Committee as Member-at-Large, President, and Past-President. The knowledge gained from those experiences combined with the relationships established will be cherished forever. I encourage each current member to seriously consider serving the organization in some capacity. I am certain that each of you will experience the same sort of personal satisfaction and professional growth as those before you.
- CHERYL MAPLETHORPE**
2000-2001
- Creating a solid team means universal knowledge of the mission of the organization and getting everyone involved in projects. When you work on projects you get to know each other better as individuals and the stronger the individuals are glued together, the stronger the organization will become.
- VICKI MERKEL**
2010-2011
- It's an honorable profession that impacts students, families and communities. Never lose sight of the long-term gains you are making.
- DENNIS OBERGFELL**
1999-2000
- I would like to say that I enjoyed my tenure as President and serving on the Executive Committee immensely. It was an honor I didn't take lightly and I'd do over again in a heartbeat. I would advise future Presidents to have a sense of what they want to accomplish and to be persistent in trying to accomplish their goals. Persistence pays. Remember that your time as President is short; when faced with a seemingly difficult but worthy task ask yourself, on behalf of the organization, "If not us who, if not now, when?"

SURVEY OF NASSGAP PAST PRESIDENTS

SHIRLEY ORT
1988-1989

Comments about my tenure as NASSGAP President: “ Thank you for the opportunity to make friends among you and to learn from you. My association with NASSGAP strengthened my own career. My association with NASSGAP remains the most significant and rewarding professional affiliation of my long career, since entering the field in 1968. Although I have returned to the campus level, my closest professional friends and interests still lie within the bounds of your membership and issues.”

Advice to the organization or any future Presidents: “Read the Congressional Student Aid Committee’s report (Access Denied) and try to figure out how you can use your leadership and influence to become part of the solution. Providing educational opportunity to youth has never been more important than it is today. Our values are not old or tiresome; they are enduring because they seek the ‘greater good.’ Don’t apologize to any enrollment managers for thinking so, either; they generally strive for a ‘particular good’ – that which is right for the institution.”

KEN REEHER
1969-1970
and
1978-1979

My two terms as President of NASSGAP are a key factor in my financial aid career. I started at PHEAA with three clerical employees and PHEAA grew to one of the top student aid agencies in the country, offering scholarships, grants, loans, loan secondary markets, loan guarantees, nationwide loan servicing, bond issuance’s, math/science teacher training, high school and college based computer assistance systems, and many other services. The same growth is true of NASSGAP which grew from the core group setting it up in 1968 to a member or several members from each of the fifty states as well as many vendors and other associate members. Current and future participants in scholarship and grant programs should be active and make positive contributions to and receive benefits from NASSGAP.

EDDIE SHANNON
1991-1992

The best thing that NASSGAP ever did was to split away from NCHELP. The NCHELP organization is a different animal, driven (in my opinion) by profit motives. NASSGAP folks are more congenial and really care about the students. NASSGAP is like a big family that cares.

DR H KENNETH SHOOK
1984-1985

Remember that “Serving others” is one of the great pleasures in life. My high school had a motto that was perfect for students and for all others, namely: Enter to learn, go forth to serve.

CHAS TREADWELL
1993-1994

Revel in the fact that your daily actions are making a difference in real people’s lives. And, always keep in mind that, sometimes you get the bear, and sometimes the bear gets you.

GARY WEEKS
1983-1984

Over the years I have enjoyed the support and deep friendship of many individuals whom I met as a student aid administrator. I haven’t found a better group of people in all my years of public service and my wish for all of today’s NASSGAP members is that they will have a similar experience.

MARY ANN WELCH
2006-2007

Serving as NASSGAP president was a wonderful and rewarding experience. It is something I never imagined I would have the opportunity to do. I encourage members of NASSGAP to get involved as officers or conference planners and encourage presidents to recognize the wealth of knowledge and talent that exists among NASSGAP members and enlist the help of these talented people to help keep NASSGAP the vibrant organization that it is.

CHRISTINE
ZUZACK
2013-14

For all NASSGAP members, stay active and involved in the association and champion the support needed to keep financial aid funding available to students in the education pipeline.