

NASSGAP STATE ROLL CALL – OCTOBER 2008

Alabama –
Cheryl Newton

Awards were made from the **new Alabama Teacher Recruitment Incentive Program (ATRIP) Fall 2008**. One hundred scholarships were awarded to freshman who will major in the critical need areas of Mathematics, General Science, English Language Arts and General Science. Each recipient will receive \$5,000 per year for four years.

The state's Education Trust Fund usually carries over millions of dollars from the preceding year. However, **due to the shortfall of revenues during 2007-08, the new fiscal year will begin with no money left over from the previous year**. Results from the reduction have resulted in:

- Our state's need-based aid program, Alabama Student Assistance Program, was reduced by 21 percent of the previous year budget amount.
- Tuition increases are ranging between 8%-13%.

2009-2010 budget requests are to be submitted by December 1st.

Alaska –
Stephanie Butler

- The Alaska Student Loan Corporation (ASLC) continued to provide ACPE with \$500,000 in FY08 to use as matching funds for Alaska's participation in the LEAP and SLEAP programs (**the AlaskAdvantage Education Grant Program**). No General Fund \$ were appropriated.
- The governor's FY09 budget proposal included \$2.5 million from ASLC's annual dividend to the State as an appropriation to the AlaskAdvantage Education Grant account, but the funding proposal was not approved by the legislature. At the last minute, the appropriation reappeared as GF in the capital budget, which was approved. ACPE plans to award funds over a three-year period.
- ACPE is awarded the federal Challenge Grant for Alaska. Working with WICHE, ACPE is leveraging the grant to pilot a community-based higher education mentoring program.
- Oil prices hit historic highs, resulting in an Alaska state revenue surplus.
- **The Alaska Permanent Fund Dividend (PFD), an annual payout of earnings on state oil and gas tax revenues to state citizens, is increased by a one-time \$1200 resource rebate to compensate citizens for increased energy costs.** With the combined PFD and resource rebate, each eligible Alaska resident received a direct payment of \$3,269 in September 2008. Although the Alaska Department of Revenue provides an opportunity for citizens to deposit a portion of their PFD into the Alaska College Savings Plan, historically fewer than 2% do so.
- ACPE provides grants to schools, workforce development, and mentoring organizations to provide free access to the Alaska Career Information System (www.akcis.org), providing robust, interactive career and education exploration tool at no charge to students, teachers or citizens statewide.
- ACPE redesigns its grant servicing system to provide semester-based awards and to accommodate additional programs, should the state decide to leverage its revenues in the form of new grant programs.
- ASLC, which funds ACPE's activities, is, to date, unable to secure bonding for 2008/09 lending and FY09 program year activities, as a result of the disruption in the capital markets. Program activity is currently being supported by internal liquidity, and bonding efforts are underway for the next program year.
- Passed in 2007, a University of Alaska 5% tuition increase goes into effect in fall 2008, making tuition costs roughly \$4,290 annually for a typical student taking 15 credits per semester, compared to the current \$4,080. Per credit, lower division tuition will be \$134, up from the current \$128.
- The University of Alaska Board of Regents takes several actions to approve new training programs, new scholarships, and related commitments specific to Alaska workforce development.
- University of Alaska receives increased funding from the legislature, as well as funding specific to individual campuses. The statewide system expresses concern that funding should be made in one appropriation to the statewide system for determination about where to best use that funding. And, of course, Sarah Palin....

Arizona

NR

Arkansas –
Phil Axelroth

1. **Arkansas was one of three states selected for a WICHE grant: *Non-Traditional No More: Policy Solutions for Adult Learners*.** This is a 2 year project with the objective of defining strategies for identifying ready adults and focusing on policies that will attract and facilitate the return of these ready adults to the classroom to complete their degrees.
2. **Arkansas received a Competitive Access Challenge Grant** and is using the grant to: conduct a College Awareness Week, provide additional training for high school counselors in the poorest counties, and provide grants to 4 schools in the poorest counties to develop or improve academic preparation activities in their schools.
3. One focus during the upcoming legislative session will be expanding need-based aid through expansion of the Higher Education Opportunities Grant Program.

California
Colorado

NR

NR

Connecticut –
Mark French

Capitol Scholarship Program - The state's need and merit-based aid program administered by the Connecticut Department of Higher Education which was used as a match for LEAP and SLEAP funding for FY09. Due to state budget concerns, this program was reduced by \$.1million for FY08. Despite this reduction, as of fall 2008, over 5,713 needy students will be awarded Capitol Scholarships. The maximum award amount is \$3,000, and the average student award is \$1,793.

Connecticut Aid to Public College Students and Connecticut Independent College Student Grant Programs – These programs provide funding from the state which is paid directly to state public and private institutions to award as aid to needy Connecticut students. Over 22,000 aid recipients were awarded between the two programs, totaling over \$54 million in financial aid grants. Funding remained level for FY08 and has not been affected by the state budget concerns for FY09.

Minority Teacher Incentive Program (MTIP) – State-funded program with close to \$500,000 in annual allocations. Provides up to \$5,000 per year for up to 2 years in scholarship aid to students enrolled in their 3rd and/or 4th year of a teacher preparation program at a Connecticut college and up to \$2,500 per year for up to 4 years in loan reimbursement stipends for previous scholarship recipients who are teaching in Connecticut public schools. For FY08 the program assisted 84 students with in-school grants totaling \$290,450, and 65 teachers with loan stipends totaling \$193,279.

Weisman Scholarship – This program was established with private funding and follows MTIP award eligibility and criteria, with the difference of Weisman funding earmarked for students preparing to teach middle or high school math or science at a Connecticut public school. For FY08 the program assisted 5 students with aid totaling \$25,000.

Other student financial aid programs administered through the Connecticut Department of Higher Education include: Awards to Children of Deceased and Disabled Veterans, Connecticut GEAR UP I& II Scholarship Programs, and the Robert C. Byrd Honors Scholarship Program.

Other Issues of Note – Connecticut was successful in its application for College Access Challenge Grant funds, being awarded \$419,179 for the FY09 year. The funds will be used to support the FAFSA First program which is comprised of FAFSA preparation and completion workshops to supplement College Goal Sunday, as well as, Guidance Counselor training. Additional funds will be used for the Connections demonstration project which is a program designed to intrusively work with a group of students at one of the state's community colleges in order to facilitate their persistence and success in college.

Delaware –
Maureen Laffey

For our FY09 budget, our **Legislative Essay Scholarship program was eliminated**, and our program to provide interest-free loans to teachers who pursue National Board Certification was put on hold for at least this year. All recommended budget items above the FY08 budget in the governor's proposed budget were eliminated, including an increase of \$100,000 in our state grant program.

The **revenue estimates for FY09 fell by \$91 million between June and September**, and are anticipated to fall by \$140 million over the next few years. Decreases in revenues of personal income taxes, real estate transfer taxes, corporate and bank franchise taxes, and the lottery are all projected. We have not received a target amount of decrease yet for our FY10 budget request, but I have heard rumors that we will be asked to propose a budget that is 10% less than our FY09 budget.

We will have a new governor after the election. We just had a wild primary between our current Lieutenant Governor who the state democratic party endorsed, and our current State Treasurer who says Delaware needs "change". The race drew a lot of republican voters to change their affiliation to democrat so they could vote in the primary, and voters had a record-setting turnout with the Treasurer winning by 2% of the vote, about a 1,700 vote difference.

We're having a lot of fun with Sen. Joe Biden being selected as the democratic vice-presidential nominee. His son Beau, our current Attorney General is scheduled to leave on Saturday to begin training in Texas for a future deployment to Iraq, as a Captain in the Army National Guard. There have long been rumors that Beau would end up following his father's footsteps as US Senator when his father moved on. If Sen. Biden is elected as Vice-President and Beau is serving in Iraq (he would not be able to be named US Senator while serving as I understand), the governor would appoint a new senator to fill out the next two years. Depending on when Joe would resign his position, it could be the current governor (who endorsed the lieutenant governor for governor), or the new governor (who ran against the LG). This is far from over as far as Delaware politics go

We received \$330,000 College Access Challenge Grant that we will use toward three things: 1) enhancing the knowledge of counselors regarding financial aid awareness and guidance through a partnership with a number of SREB states to develop course content for middle- and high school guidance counselors, 2) building on our current student success plans that every 8th, 9th, and 10th graders currently use to guide them toward choosing careers, choosing the right high school curriculum to meet their needs, and learning about preparing for college, and 3) building a transfer matrix hosted in a DOE database for students to be able to attend a college in Delaware (public & private partnership) and be able to know which other colleges in Delaware will accept that coursework to be applied toward credit in pursuing a degree program at another college in Delaware.

We are continuing to develop an early awareness campaign for Delaware students, Delaware College Access Network, through our Reaching Higher for Student Success campaign. The development of this campaign is still in its early stages, but hopefully within the next year we will be fully up and running. Much of what we would like to do will cost money. Enough said about that!

Florida –
Theresa Antworth

During the 2007-08 year, we experience a budget reduction of 7.3% which was applied to specific programs within our state scholarships and grants.

However, our budget for 2008-09 overall increased by 7.5%. This is somewhat misleading because most programs took a 2% cut this year; with our merit program fully funded at a increase from 2007-08 due to student workload and tuition increases. Unfortunately, due to another bad budget year, we do anticipate that later this fall we may incur another budget reduction.

Our only new program in 2008-09 is the federal CACG. We plan to use most of the funding for our need based programs. Our Governor is still our Governor.

<p>Georgia Hawaii Idaho Illinois</p>	<p>NR NR NR NR</p>
<p>Indiana</p>	<p>As is the case everywhere, elections will be held this November in Indiana including one for Governor and budgets are tight. That said, our current Governor has proposed a very ambitious program that would offer students straight out of high school with family incomes below a yet-to-be determined income threshold (around \$50,000-\$60,000) two years of free tuition at the state's community college or an amount of \$3,000 to attend any school currently eligible for Indiana's primary need-based grant program. The program would be funded by privatizing the state's lottery program.</p> <p>The program's concept is gaining momentum with the increasing awareness among business, civic and legislative leaders of the link between the state's economic future and the educational level of its citizens.</p>
<p>Iowa – Julie Leeper</p>	<p>Iowa has spent much of the past few months dealing with natural disasters – tornados and floods – that affected Iowans. In response to these disasters, the College Student Aid Commission sought the authority to use carryover funds from two major grant programs to fund a Disaster Relief Grant Program. The Governor's office provided authorization for the use of \$500,000. Nearly 700 applications were received for funding from the Program. The Commission is now in the process of matching grant applications to federal applications for assistance.</p> <p>The Iowa General Assembly required the Commission to do a study of the awarding parameters used under the Iowa Tuition Grant Program, the state's largest grant program provided to students at Iowa's private colleges and universities. Many hours were spent modeling awarding scenarios, and a report is being prepared for discussion during the 2009 Legislative Session.</p> <p>This year the Commission was awarded the first statewide GEAR UP Grant for Iowa. A search is now underway for a coordinator of the program and partnerships are being finalized.</p>
<p>Kansas – Diane Lindeman</p>	<p>The state budget is kind of a mixed bag for Kansas. In June the State Budget Director said that tax revenues were off by \$51 million in May as a result of a reduction in individual income tax collections (due to the amount collected from withholding tax) and a reduction in compensating use tax revenues. He said it would be critical to watch the revenue collections in June and July. If those months also showed sharp reductions, it would mean a tight budget year with possible mid-year rescissions. June did bring a reduction in revenue and the Kansas Board of Regents requested that the state universities present proposals for budget cuts of 2% in State General Fund dollars in the current fiscal year with a 5% decrease in FY10, for a cumulative 7% cut. However, the state collected a slight increase in revenue in July and received 3% more in tax revenues in August than expected. Kansas is one of a few states that have not been hit as hard by the economic downturn, mostly due to their wealth of agriculture, energy production, and the aircraft industry. We are hopeful that we can hold steady. There is the promise of revenues from four state-owned casinos and slot machines at dog and horse tracks authorized during the 2007 legislative session that withstood a State Supreme Court challenge in May of this year. Legislators did not build these revenues into their budget.</p> <p>All of our state-funded student financial assistance programs remained flat for FY 09, with the only exception being a new Military Service Scholarship program that was enacted through the Omnibus Session during the 2007 legislative session and was placed into statute during the 2008 session with an increase in funding from \$250,000 to \$500,000. We are anticipating further changes in this program to make it compatible with the new federal GI bill slated for enactment in FY 10. Although the Governor and State Budget Director have proposed budget cuts for State General Fund dollars to all state agencies, all of the student financial aid programs have survived</p>

Kentucky –
Jo Carole Ellis

without any cuts being proposed.

The budget for FY 10 is currently being compiled. We are leaning toward not requesting any increases in our programs for FY 10. However, we have considered asking for an increase in some specific programs at the rate of the HEPI increase, which is currently 3.6%. This is yet to be determined as this is being written.

- Kentucky's student aid programs weathered a very difficult biennial budget process. The Governor's proposed budget would not have fully-funded the Kentucky Educational Excellence Scholarship (KEES) for the FY09-10 biennium, and KHEAA would have been forced to reduce KEES awards across the board for Kentucky college students. In the final budget, KEES was fully funded for the biennium and Kentucky's two major need-based programs, the College Access Program (CAP) Grant and the Kentucky Tuition Grant (KTG), were level funded from the previous year. However, CAP and KTG did not receive the full amount of Kentucky Lottery proceeds as designated by statute. Instead of the student aid programs receiving 100% of net lottery proceeds, the legislature appropriated 78% of net lottery proceeds to the programs. This meant CAP did not receive an additional \$18.3 million and KTG did not receive an additional \$3.6 million in lottery proceeds as expected.
- The 2008 Kentucky General Assembly expanded the KEES program by adding a new bonus award for students who are eligible for the federal free and reduced-price lunch program and who make qualifying Advanced Placement (AP) and International Baccalaureate (IB) exam scores. Beginning with the 2008-2009 academic year, eligible students who make a 3 or 5, respectively, on AP or IB exams will receive a \$200 supplemental award. A 4 (AP) or 6 (IB) score is awarded \$250 and a 5 (AP) or 7 (IB) score is awarded \$300. There is no limit to the number of supplemental awards a student can receive.
- In FY 2007, Kentucky implemented a need-based pilot program designed to assist nontraditional, adult learners. The Go Higher Grant gives adults age 24 or older up to \$1000 for one academic year when they enroll less than half-time in a Kentucky institution. For 2008-2009, KHEAA increased the eligibility threshold from PELL EFC to 150% of PELL EFC and eliminated the no previous college experience requirement.
- With funding from the Lumina Foundation, the Kentucky Adult Learner Initiative (KALI) was launched in February 2008 with the purpose of creating a comprehensive framework for adult learner policies and increasing the responsiveness of postsecondary institutions to the needs of adult learners. The initiative is focusing on three priority areas: flexible academic programming, credit for prior learning, and financial aid. Experts from each of these areas have formed work groups that will meet throughout 2008 to develop recommendations for the 2009 Kentucky General Assembly.

Louisiana –
Melanie Amrhein

September 30, 2008 opening line from the Baton Rouge Advocate newspaper "Personal and corporate income tax collections are falling. Sales tax revenue is flat. Oil prices are riding a rollercoaster" State economist are predicting a downturn for the next fiscal year, but for now, LA is dealing with a \$500 million surplus.

Higher Education - Tuition increase of 5% per year for four years was approved to raise Louisiana's public postsecondary institutions to within reach of their SREB peers.

Financial Aid - 2008-09 is our agency's 2nd year to administer it's largest need based state grant program (Go Grant). Appropriated at \$24 million, it will phase in a 2nd year cohort. This is also our 2nd year to administer the Early Start Program, appropriated at \$4.25 million, which allows 11th and 12th grade high school students to take college level courses (based on eligibility criteria) and earn both high school and college credit for the course(s).

The Tuition Opportunity Plan for Students (TOPS) was renamed the Taylor Opportunity Plan for Students (still TOPS) for the late Patrick Taylor, the New Orleans Oil Tycoon that raised

<p>Maine</p>	<p>awareness in the state legislature for such a program.</p> <p>NR</p>
<p>Maryland – Robert L. Parker</p>	<p><u>Loan Forum</u></p> <p>As a result of some lenders leaving the student loan industry and concerns over the availability of student loans for 2008-09, the Maryland Higher Education Commission conducted a survey of Maryland higher education institutions and held a Student Loan Forum on June 16, 2008. There were 110 attendees representing 32 public and private post-secondary institutions, lenders and representatives from the U.S. Department of Education and other interested parties.</p> <p>Mr. David Bergeron, Director of Policy and Budget Development from the U.S. Department of Education explained the details of how the present loan “crises” occurred and what plans the Department of Education had to ensure adequate student loans were available for the upcoming award year. Their goal was to assure liquidity for the student loan program and expand the direct lending program and to assure the forum members that student loans would be available.</p> <p>Representatives from USA Funds, the National Council of Higher Education Loan Programs and Education Finance Partner addressed their concerns and what role, if any, alternative loans would have given the current credit situation.</p> <p>A panel of five financial aid directors representing all sectors expressed their institutional and individual concerns, what problems their students were experiencing and what their schools were doing to help students affected by the current student loan market.</p> <p>The forum ended with a well received question and answer period and it was decided that a follow-up survey would be conducted later in the year to determine what changes in the student loan programs had occurred and what future actions MHEC could take or recommend.</p> <p><u>New Aid Program</u></p> <p>In 2008, the Early College Access Grant was initiated for needy students who are enrolled simultaneously in a secondary school and an institution of higher education in Maryland. The program awarded \$120,211 to 330 students in its first year with awards ranging from \$200 to \$1,000. All participants were enrolled in Maryland Community Colleges. The program is continuing at the same funding level for the 2008-2009 award year.</p> <p><u>Outreach Activities</u></p> <p>One of MHEC’s key goals and objectives is to increase financial aid awards to students with the highest financial need. In FY 2008 MHEC, in co-operation with institutions and other public and private organizations, was able to increase the number of financial aid presentations in high-need communities by 38% from 77 in FY 2007 to 104 in FY 2008. The Maryland Transit Authority was also used to sponsor public service announcements to encourage early FAFSA submission to meet State deadlines. Other activities presently under development include a MySpace page, working with the Maryland Business Roundtable for Education to promote financial literacy, and the Maryland Scholars Program for grades 8 through 12.</p> <p>MHEC is also actively participating in and supporting the new Way2GoMaryland program designed to put more middle-school students on the college-bound path. The Way2GoMaryland program is a new information campaign operated by the University System of Maryland and is supported by private and public organizations. The program has a new web site, www.way2gomaryland.org, and events are scheduled statewide to bring the campaign’s message to all middle-school students.</p> <p><u>College Access Challenge Grant Program</u></p> <p>The College Access Challenge Grant Program (CACGP) is a new Federal program designed to enable states to assist students and their families in learning about, preparing for and financing a</p>

postsecondary education. Maryland recently was awarded \$615,000 from the program. As the designated State agency, MHEC will administer the grant, working with other Maryland stakeholders, and plans to develop and promote outreach activities for middle school students who may be at risk of not enrolling in or completing postsecondary education.

Maryland plans to focus the project services in areas of greatest poverty and lowest achievement in Maryland. Baltimore City and Prince George's County are the two areas in Maryland with the greatest number of low-income, underachieving students. The school systems will select the middle schools in these areas to receive project services.

The purpose of the project is to increase the number of low-income, underachieving students from Baltimore City and Prince George's County who enter and remain in postsecondary education. Goals of the project are: (1) To increase college awareness among underrepresented middle school students and families; (2) To increase the number of underrepresented students taking STEM (science, technology, engineering and mathematics) or Algebra courses in high school (Maryland Scholars); and (3) To increase the number of underrepresented middle school students with career plans.

As part of the State match, the Maryland Higher Education Commission will provide an additional \$150,000 each year to be used for sub-grants and plans to allocate \$610,000 of the federal grant funds for a total of \$760,000 each year for sub-grants to nonprofits to provide services to students. It is anticipated that 12 to 16 awards will be made to support projects to serve 6th, 7th, and 8th grade low-income students in Baltimore City and Prince George's County.

Commission to Develop the Maryland Model for Funding Higher Education

This Commission, composed of four workgroups, was created in 2007 to review the consistency and applicability of the current State funding model for higher education. The Appropriate Funding Shares Workgroup was charged with examining other states' best practices and tuition models and looking into ways to minimize the impact on low-income students. MHEC staff provided information on affordability and financial aid to this workgroup. The other workgroup areas of interest included Accountability, Economic Competitiveness/Workforce and Capital Investment. The Commission's final report is due in late 2008.

Massachusetts NR

Michigan –
Tom Freeland

Promise Implementation

In December of 2006, Governor Jennifer Granholm signed legislation creating the new Michigan Promise scholarship. The program began with the high school graduating class of 2007 and the first scholarship payments were made in the 2007-08 academic year. Promise provides every high school graduate with the opportunity to receive up to \$4,000 in scholarship assistance if they successfully complete two years of postsecondary education. To qualify, students must take the state's high school assessment test, the Michigan Merit Exam (MME), which includes the ACT. Students receiving qualifying scores on the MME may receive early "installment" payments of \$1,000 in each of their first two years of college, and then the balance of \$2,000 after completing two years. Students not receiving qualifying scores receive their \$4,000 only after completing two years of college. Successful completion of two years of college means that students achieve an associate degree, a two-year certificate, or 50% of the requirements for a bachelor's degree, and achieve a minimum 2.5 cumulative grade point average. In the initial year of the Promise program, \$38,169,426 was paid to 38,155 students.

Enrollments & Aid Applications

Michigan is reflecting the national trend of higher enrollments at its colleges and universities. Many colleges have reported record numbers of applicants and record setting freshmen class sizes. This is also reflected in the number of aid applicants received by the Office of Scholarships and Grants. Comparative data shows that approximately 75,000 more FAFSA records have been received as of early September 2008 versus the number received at the same time last year. This has caused state's need-based grant programs to face increased demand resulting in adhering to

<p>Minnesota- Cheryl Maplethorpe</p>	<p>the state's published FAFSA filing priority date & making fewer awards to late applicants.</p> <p><u>College Access Challenge Grant</u> The Department of Treasury has been awarded a U. S. Department of Education "College Access Challenge Grant" for the state of Michigan. This grant will be administered by the Michigan Guaranty Agency. The funds will be used for a variety of purposes including the development of networks of college access leaders in 10 communities throughout the state, development of pilot college club coaching programs for parents and students, a statewide conference on college access, a public relations campaign on the financial aspects of going to college and the reasons to pursue higher education, and the development of a statewide data warehouse on current programs.</p> <p><u>Assisting Foster Youth</u> The Michigan Guaranty Agency has partnered with the Michigan Department of Human Services (DHS) and the Michigan Student Financial Aid Association (MSFAA) in promoting college access for students who are aging out of the foster care system, i.e., the Youth in Transition Program. These partners addressed several issues in the past year. One was to develop a standard form to be completed by DHS caseworkers that students can use to verify independent status for financial aid purposes. Another was the development of a state specific reference sheet for use by foster youth when completing the FAFSA. Finally, this group developed and conducted a special College Goal Sunday event specifically for foster youth in the Detroit area.</p> <p>We may have a 1.6 billion dollar shortfall when the legislature comes into session January 2009. All agencies will probably lose administrative money. (reduced travel may be the least of the problems)</p> <p>We have a veteran's grant which has not spent much money because they are getting a lot of money from federal programs. This will be even worse in the future when the federal government pays even more for veteran's benefits.</p> <p>We have a new Achieve Scholarship which requires the same rigorous course work as the federal Academic Competitiveness Grant (ACG) but allows income to go up to \$75,000. It is for students who graduate from high school after January 1, 2008 and have a C average GPA. It is a one year award disbursed over two terms. The student must "successfully complete" the first term in order to receive the second term's disbursement.</p>
<p>Mississippi – Mary Covington</p>	<p>Mississippi recently went before the Legislative Budget Authority (LEO) to request funding for FY 10. The request will go to fund programs already in place with the exception of a request of \$5M to fund a new scholarship program for community college transfer students. This full tuition scholarship program will be the 2nd need based tuition scholarship for our state and will assist needy students make the transition from the 2 year to the 4 year institution.</p> <p>The Mississippi Institutions of Higher Learning was awarded the College Access Challenge Grant. Implementation plans are well under way. The grant will be used to fund a major grass roots effort to increase awareness of college entrance requirements, knowledge of financial aid options and a financial literacy piece to be provided by the Mississippi Counsel on Economic Education. These goals will be accomplished through state wide counselor/mentor workshops, the development of college toolkits to show adults how to help students go to college and partnerships developed within the local community.</p>
<p>Missouri – Leroy Wade</p>	<p>In 2007, the <u>Missouri legislature established a new need-based financial assistance program called Access Missouri.</u> This program replaced the two existing programs, one from the late 1970s and the other from the mid-1990s. Need under the new program is based solely on the student/family federal expected family contribution (EFC) and is not related to the student's cost of attendance. In addition, funding for need-based aid was increased from \$24.6 million in 2006-2007 to \$96.4 million in 2008-2009. The number of recipients also increased substantially during that time period from 16,400 to an estimated 42,000. This level of program growth has created increased tension between the public and independent sectors of education in the state as competition for state dollars is very intense.</p>

The state's only merit based program (Bright Flight) received an overhaul as well. In 2010-2011, the program will expand eligibility from the top three percent of ACT/SAT test scores in the state to the top five percent. In addition, awards will be graduated, with the top three percent receiving a \$3,000 award and the four and five percent range receiving an award of \$1,000.

Two pieces of new legislation have also created concern and questions in the financial aid community in Missouri. One bill established a tuition cap at public postsecondary education institutions for certain post 9-11 veterans. Because of the language used in this provision, a large number of questions were raised relating to eligibility and implementation. The other bill required all recipients of state student financial assistance to provide proof of their U.S. citizenship or their legal status within the U.S. Additionally, questions were raised regarding the applicability of this requirement to the admission of students to public institutions.

Additional items of interest include—

- The economic downturn and its likely effects on available state funds for fiscal year 2010 and beyond. Much of the increase for the current fiscal year is being funding from one-time funds created by structural changes in state programs and state finances. As various programs compete for the shrinking discretionary dollars, tension between financial assistance programs and other higher education priorities has continued to increase.
- During 2008, the Department of Higher Education began oversight of a system of tuition limitations on public four-year colleges and universities. The permitted rate of increase is linked to the Consumer Price Index and institutions that exceed the limit may forfeit a portion of their state appropriation. The department is authorized to grant waivers of those consequences, if warranted.
- Several small special purpose programs were added to those already administered by the department. While the volume is low, the administration of these programs continues to drain resources needed to keep the primary programs operating smoothly.

Montana –
Jamie Dushin

- Montana's first awards were made this past June for the Quality Educator Assistance Program. \$330,000 in Federal student loans were discharged for Montana teachers working in shortage areas. Recipients are eligible to receive up to \$3,000 per year, for a maximum of four years. Appropriated \$660,000 for current fiscal year.
- Governor's Postsecondary Scholarship appropriation will increase by \$1 million this award year (\$2.5 million total). All other state aid programs received level funding.
- Policy changes were made to the renewable Montana University System Honor Scholarship. The changes reduced the number of scholarship from (about) 300 to 200. The scholarship is now a statewide competition rather than being awarded to the high schools based on class size.
- Changes were made to the Montana Community College Honor Scholarship, making it a renewable scholarship for up to two-years. Awarded to graduates of Montana's three Community Colleges (1 scholarship for every 25 graduates - awarded by college presidents) who plan to attend one of the four-year schools of the Montana University System.
- Montana's Biennial Legislature opens session January 2009. Bills of interest (so far):
 - Bill to study Financial Aid
 - Look at how much the state should be providing
 - How it should be administered - Decentralized vs. Centralized
 - Who should administer
 - Bill is interested in the possibility of program similar to the "Taylor Plan"
 - Funding for Governor's Postsecondary Scholarship
 - Renewable Merit and Need based programs (5 different)
 - Increased funding has been requested - Legislators want to know why
 - Funding for Quality Educator Assistance Program (Teacher Loan Forgiveness)
 - Increased funding has been requested - Legislators want to know why

Nebraska –
Ritchie Morrow

Nebraska's economy is doing better than the American economy, primarily thanks to our farmers. We've been adding jobs, salary and wages have climbed 6.5%, houses are still being built, and the value of homes have dropped slightly if at all. The last economic forecast for the state estimated a \$500+ million surplus for the end of the fiscal year.

Our new Access College Early scholarship program had a successful first year. We awarded \$114,856 to 363 high school students who were enrolled in college courses. The goal is to increase the college going rate of Nebraska high school graduates.

Nevada –
Sharon Wurm

- **College Access Challenge Grant** – Governor Jim Gibbons designated the Nevada P-16 Advisory Council to have executive oversight of the grant. NSHE applied for the grant as the fiscal agent, on behalf of the P-16 Advisory Council. The centerpiece of Nevada's plan calls for conducting a public information campaign that will foster a college-going culture, while communicating both college and workforce-readiness expectations. The campaign, developed and implemented by the Nevada P-16 Advisory Council and its partners, will build on the Nevada System of Higher Education's "Go to College" effort.
- **College Access Workshops** – As stated last year, NSHE institutions elected not to continue College Goal Sunday due to low turn-outs, rather they will focus on the larger issue of improving Nevada's college-going rate. In keeping with this goal, NSHE partnered with Senator Harry Reid and Congressman Jon Porter to offer college access and financial aid workshops in January and February. Congressman Porter's workshops were offered in his district at two different high schools in January. Senator Reid's workshops were offered in Reno, Elko and Las Vegas in February, at either local high schools or a local college campus.
- **GEAR UP** – The high school graduates from the first Nevada GEAR UP continue to receive a GEAR UP grant that will continue each semester provided they enroll and complete 12 credits. NSHE and the Nevada Department of Education continue to conduct a data exchange to communicate eligibility information.
- **Governor Guinn Millennium Scholarship** – Nevada's merit-based scholarship program continues to improve the state's college participation and retention rates more successfully than any preceding program. Since its inception, over 75,456 Nevada high school graduates have been eligible for the Millennium Scholarship. Of this number, 47,353 Millennium scholars activated their scholarship to attend an NSHE institution or Sierra Nevada College. Through Spring 2008, the program disbursed \$177 million to students.
- **State-funded Financial Aid** – The appropriation from the state for need-based financial aid increased slightly from \$16.1 million in fiscal year 08 to \$16.5 million in fiscal year 09. Again, this is primarily due to the commitment by NSHE institutions to devote more state funding to financial aid.
- **Student-funded Financial Aid** – The NSHE Board of Regents continues to support need-based aid by setting aside a portion of fee increases (up to 50%) for financial aid. For fiscal year 09 this is funded at approximately \$14 million across the NSHE.

New
Hampshire-
Judith Knapp

The main issue in NH, as I am sure is true elsewhere, is a budget deficit. All out-of-state travel, new hires and equipment purchases have been frozen since last spring with no end in sight. Originally, some waivers were granted but the word is that there will be no waivers from now on. It is projected that there will be a \$400 million shortfall in the next biennium (which I is a lot for us since we have no sales or income tax and thus a small budget) and we are to submit a budget with a 3% reduction. Since 95% of our budget is financial aid programs, we will have to make cuts in some, if not all, of the programs.

Completed the first year of tuition waiver for foster children attending public institutions. Only new program for this year is loan repayment for veterinarians who agree to practice in NH and have at

least 35% of their practice in large animals.

TEACH. Only 3 schools in NH will do TEACH next year and of those at least two of those the financial aid directors wished they weren't but were forced to do so.

New Jersey

NR

New Mexico –
Tashina Banks
Moore

New Mexico has a \$72 million financial aid budget. During the 08-09 academic year, we will be increasing our outreach activities now that we have been awarded the College Access Challenge Grant. Prior to the CACG, the New Mexico Higher Education Department has had to leverage existing partnerships to conduct any outreach since there are no state dollars appropriated for outreach activities.

One of the very successful programs operating in the state is our Legislative Lottery scholarship program that pays 100% tuition for eight consecutive semesters for students who enroll directly into college after graduating high school. Since inception 12 years ago, the Legislative Lottery scholarship program continues to provide an incentive for graduating high school students to enter directly into college.

The NM College Access Challenge Grant has four primary goals attached to it:

- 1) Establish a statewide college access network (similar to the OCAN model)
- 2) Develop a comprehensive college outreach campaign targeting middle and high school students
- 3) Increase financial support and expand the College Goal Sunday initiative
- 4) Develop and establish an online college and career planning tool

New York –
Chas Treadwell

- The maximum NYS Veterans Tuition Award was increased from \$2,000 per year to the SUNY 4-year college resident tuition rate (\$4,375). However, because of state budget reductions, the maximum amount awarded for the 2008-09 academic year will be 98 % of the SUNY 4- year college resident tuition: \$4,287.50 for full-time students;
- **99% of HESC communications to students regarding TAP eligibility for the 2008-09 academic year have been electronic** (i.e., e-mails directing recipient to a secure site to view award amounts and make updates to application data), compared to 95% last year at this time;
- **The Web scholarship application project nears completion - virtually all scholarship applications are now available for completion on-line at HESC's Web site.** The Web application populates the database with basic biographical information as well as specific eligibility data relevant to the applicant, eliminating manual entries, reducing errors, and resulting in more timely eligibility determinations;
- **The increase in TAP applications received for the 2008-09 academic year (up around 20,000 from a comparable time last year)** is reflective of the national trend.
- HESC, along with all other New York State agencies, has twice been required to reduce expenses this fiscal year; since April 2008, state operations expenditures have been reduced by a total of 10 percent.

North Carolina
Elizabeth McDuffie

Budget shortfall anticipated and as a result, state agencies have been asked to cut budgets by 2%. However, aid funds for students are not affected at this time.

Enrollment grew for the fall though exact numbers are not yet known.

New program, EARN, implemented for 08-09 and provides \$4000 to dependent students and foster youth who enroll in college within 7 months of graduation and whose parental income is equal or below 200% of federal poverty guidelines. The funds replace loans that would have been in the financial aid package. Approximately 12,500 freshmen expected to be funded in the

first year.

North Dakota
Peggy Wipf

- North Dakota is experiencing a budget surplus. Primarily a result of an oil boom in the western part of the state.
- In November, ND voters will be voting on an initiated measure which would amend sections 57-38-30 and 57-38-30.3 of the North Dakota Century Code for tax years beginning after December 31, 2008 by lowering the state corporate income tax rates by fifteen percent and the adjusted state income tax rates by fifty percent, except for one taxpayer bracket where the reduction would be forty-five percent and for two other brackets where some income would not be taxed.

Also, voters will be voting on a measure which would establish a permanent oil tax trust fund from oil and gas tax revenue exceeding one hundred million dollars per biennium, adjusted for inflation; interest earnings on the trust fund would be transferred to the general fund each year; and no more than twenty percent of the principal of the trust fund could be spent each biennium, if approved by three-fourths of the members of both houses of the legislature.
- **Affordability:** The State Board of Higher Education, in its 2009-11 budget request, requested an additional \$14 million for the State Grant program. Currently, we receive a little over \$6 million for the biennium. Additionally, the SBHE's 2009-11 budget request included a funding request which would limit four-year university tuition increases to no more than 4 percent and holds community college tuition rates at the 2008-09 levels.
- Governor Hoeven has announced that he will be proposing a \$34 million dollar increase to the State Grant program for 2009-11.

Ohio

NR

Oklahoma
Shiela Joyner

FY09 overall funding for higher education remained level with FY08 funding.

Legislation enacted by the **2008 OK legislature created a task force to perform a comprehensive review of Oklahoma's Promise.** This legislation also:

- Provided a one-year delay in the implementation of a second check on family income which, if implemented, would terminate eligibility for students whose family income qualified under the \$50,000 maximum requirement when they applied and whose family income upon graduation from high school exceeds \$100,000
- Provided a one-year delay in the implementation of more stringent in-college GPA requirements for students to remain eligible for funding
- Provided an eligibility exception for adopted students exempting them from the \$50,000 family income requirement at the time of application while in high school
- Provided an exception for Oklahoma's Promise students serving in the military, exempting them from a requirement that students start college within three years of graduating from high school

Oklahoma's Guaranteed Tuition law went into effect in fall 2008. Students may lock in a tuition rate at state four-year institutions not to exceed 115% of the institution's nonguaranteed resident tuition rate. The rate will be guaranteed for four years or the normal time to complete certain programs. Oklahoma's two-year institutions are exempt from the program.

Reach Higher: Oklahoma's Degree Completion Program is in its second full year of operation, and enrollments continue to increase. Reach Higher was developed as a statewide initiative with eight public regional universities partnering to deliver the program across the state. The program provides adult learners with the option for a convenient and accelerated path to a degree from a reputable state institution for a reasonable cost. One of the activities funded by Oklahoma's College Access Challenge Grant Program will be scholarships targeting students who are near completion of a degree program, such as

Oregon
Vicki Merkel

students in the Reach Higher initiative. For more information on Reach Higher, go to www.ReachHigherOklahoma.org.

A task force has been formed to study issues relating to student remediation in Oklahoma's public higher education institutions.

Oregon Opportunity Grant (state-funded need-based grants)

OSAC received an unprecedented increase in state funding for the Oregon Opportunity Grant for 2007-09 that has enabled OSAC to increase awards for all eligible students and expand the program to include students in middle-income families. For the second year of the 2007-09 biennium, Oregon is using the Shared Responsibility Model to determine Opportunity Grant awards. Under the SRM methodology, an eligible student is expected to contribute a reasonable portion of the cost of college through some combination of work, loans, savings, scholarships, and/or institutional aid. A student's grant award is based on the difference between the student's cost of attendance and financial contributions from the student, the student's family, and the federal government in the form of Pell Grants and/or federal tuition tax credits. Projections for the first year under the new methodology indicate that maximum awards will double and approximately 5,000 more students will receive grant assistance. Program funding increased from \$34 million for 2007-08 to \$72 million for 2008-09. However, even with cost controls such as income and award limits, OSAC expects demand to exceed available funds. Changes implemented for 2008-09 are a first step toward complete implementation of the SRM methodology in the 2009-11 biennium, although recent downturns in the economy may delay full implementation until 2011-13.

Scholarship Services

OSAC is unique in the nation for administering privately funded scholarships using one common application with one deadline. Currently, OSAC has over 280 scholarship programs for high school seniors, over 200 for college undergraduates, and even 75 available for graduate students. In the 2008-09 academic year, nearly 2,800 students received private scholarships, totaling more than \$12.8 million.

For the most recent awarding season, more than 8,000 Oregon students applied for scholarships, and more than 9 out of 10 applications were submitted electronically. Given the high percentage of electronically filed applications, OSAC's 2009-10 Oregon Scholarship Workbook was redesigned to include a worksheet modeled after the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) worksheet. The workbook lists nearly 400 scholarships and includes a reference tool bar that features abbreviated eligibility requirements. If necessary, a code in the tool bar prompts students to go online for additional requirements such as writing an extra essay or providing specific documents. The workbook is organized into distinct sections to help students find scholarships for which they may be qualified. Sections are organized for graduates of high schools regardless of the year they graduated; academic/college majors, career choice, and specific populations (foster youth, veterans, immigrants, older adults); and by employer and member organizations. Students can use the worksheet in preparation for completing and submitting their application electronically. Paper applications are available for those without access to the Internet to file online.

Access Programs

ASPIRE— Oregon's highly successful ASPIRE program is a one-on-one mentoring program to help students access education and training beyond high school. Students receive information about college options, admission, and financial aid from trained volunteer mentors who work with them throughout the year. Grants from several private foundations in Oregon have funded ASPIRE since its inception in 1998, which funded four pilot school sites. Establishing the program in statute and securing funding from the state's General Fund were major successes. In 2007-08, ASPIRE expanded to 115 sites across Oregon. ASPIRE trained 1,404 adult volunteers who

mentored nearly 12,000 students in pursuit of their educational dreams.

College Goal Sunday in Oregon on Saturday January 26th, 2009 will expand to 27 sites statewide. This free annual event designed to help Oregon college-bound students and their families complete the often-complex Free Application for Federal Financial Aid (FAFSA), experienced a 200 percent growth in attendance in the second year of the program in Oregon. The event also exceeded the state participation rate of attracting a racially diverse audience and did extremely well in attracting families earning less than \$60,000 annually. The 2009 event is projected to help even more students with their FAFSA. Oregon's model of success builds upon the many partnerships that OSAC maintains.

The Oregon College Access Network (OrCan) aims to increase the number of Oregonians accessing education and training beyond high school by connecting access professionals and organizations that work with these individuals. In October 2008, OrCan will host its first conference to bring together professionals representing education, higher education, financial aid, mentorship programs and youth and adult support programs to network and share best practices. Key Partners include the Educational Credit Management Corporation and many access programs statewide.

Pennsylvania
Christine Zuzack

Federal Loan Issues

At the invitation of House Financial Services Committee Chairman Barney Frank, Jim Preston, PHEAA CEO, testified before the Committee in Washington, DC on September 18. The hearing is being held to review problems and potential resolutions to the auction rate securities market. Mr. Preston will describe PHEAA's experience with the auction rate market, from the viewpoint of a major not-for-profit provider and purchaser of federal student loans and offer suggestions for reviving the student loan marketplace.

Mr. Preston is the new CEO at PHEAA as of March 2008 and has been working very closely with federal legislators, lenders, guarantors, and others in an attempt to bolster the FFELP program.

EducationPlanner.org Celebrates Increased Visitors

PHEAA's award-winning, college-planning website, EducationPlanner.org, has seen a 19% increase in visitors for the first six months of the year compared to the first six months of last year. The site has received 2.2 million visits since March 2004. The most popular sections of the site are: 1. Scholarship Search, 2. Career Exploration, 3. Test Prep and 4. Work-Study Programs.

Agency Restructuring

There are 264 non-union employees who have taken advantage of PHEAA's voluntary workforce reduction program. There were 1,008 non-union employees who were eligible for the program. These reductions are estimated to save PHEAA \$20.4 million a year, which can be added to more than \$54 million dollars in savings that have already been realized through other cost-cutting measures.

Program Funding

The Pennsylvania State Grant Program received a 5.5% appropriation increase for 2008-09. However, other Commonwealth supported programs received either level funding or had a decrease in funding of 1.3% when compared to 2007-08.

For 2008-09, PHEAA will not be using business earnings to financially supplement the State Grant program or other grant and loan forgiveness programs. This is the result of the downturn in the capital markets and changes in federal student loan regulations that have resulted in declining revenues to redirect towards student aid.

Personnel Changes

Mary Beth Kelly retired from PHEAA at the end of June 2008. Patricia Yaegar accepted a faculty position with the University of Illinois-Urbana in August 2008.

State budget	\$25 million
Awarded among	94 institutions (41 higher education & 53 non-degree granting)
For approximately	73,000 postsecondary students
Average amount per student	\$339 for undergraduate \$616 for graduate
5 state funded programs (all need based)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Undergraduate Supplementary Education Assistance Program (63,457 students) ▪ Graduate Supplementary Education Assistance Program (4,868 students) ▪ Merit Aid Program (4,642 students): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ requires 3.00 GPA minimum ▶ new enrollments must be served first ▶ average aid: \$381 ▪ High Achievement Students Program (87 students): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ requires 3.minimum ▶ for bachelor's 3th & 4th year students ▶ average aid: \$10,500 ▶ covers 100% of COA not covered by other aid ▪ PRCHE-PRIDCO Scholarship Program (under a Memorandum of Understanding with the PR Industrial Development Corp; 13 students): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ requires 3.00 GPA minimum ▶ for graduate studies on such disciplines which are priority for the industrial and economic growth ▶ average aid: \$5,300 ▶ covers 100% of tuition & fees not covered by other aid + \$2,000 stipend/year ▶ requires students to sign a contract and work for the industry after graduation (1 year per year of benefit)

Other comments:

- **The CACG was delegated to the University of Puerto Rico, not to our agency.** Notwithstanding, PRCHE will engage in outreach activities similar to those funded with CACG but with our own money to provide 3rd and 4th high school students and parents, and school counselors with information on the postsecondary academic offerings and financial aid. This project will start by “adopting” a school.
- **PRCHE will begin sponsoring and funding research on student aid impact;** first possible topic: Effectiveness of student financial aid programs, the relationship between federal and state investment and student success (enrollment, retention and promotion rates)
- PRCHE is developing collaborative projects in conjunction with the IHEs to promote the strengthening of quality in higher education by other means not related to mandatory licensing procedures. This year we will be working on two projects: (1) the design of an instrument that will facilitate the institution analysis of the cost-effectiveness of creating and implementing a new academic program, and (2) the incentive of reaching for educational excellence by recognizing those academic programs that excel the minimum levels of quality required for licensing purposes; this will be achieved through a call for proposals for the Award for Educational Excellence to be granted to the best academic programs in given disciplines.

Rhode Island
Michael Joyce

- **We received \$330,000 from the federal government for the College Access Challenge Grant** program, and are in the process of making full year grant award offers of \$1,000 each to 330 needy recipients.
- **We are piloting another new program this year – the Adult Education Grant** – a program designed for needy non-traditional students enrolled at less-than-half time status at Rhode Island colleges. Counselors working in conjunction with the RI Department of Education (RIDE) will select the 100 recipients to receive up to \$3,000 per year for two years.
- Fall certification and disbursement of our RI State Grant and our Academic Promise scholarships are proceeding as usual thanks to the online certification system designed for us by Gold Bridge Partners.
- Finally, **Mary Ann Welch retired the end of September** after many years of dedicated service to the RI financial aid community and RI students receiving the RI State grant. She will be deeply missed. **She will be missed by NASSGAP a great deal**

South Carolina
Ed Shannon

The SC Tuition Grants Program was enacted in 1970 by the SC General Assembly as a “need-based” grants program for South Carolina residents attending in-state, independent colleges on a full-time basis. In the current 2008-2009 school year, approximately **\$38.6 million** will be awarded to **12,600** students attending the 21 eligible SC independent colleges. The maximum award for 2008-2009 is **\$3,200** and the average award is approximately **\$3,000**.

The economic downturn has severely impacted state agency budgets in South Carolina for the 2008-09 fiscal year. Most state agencies were reduced across-the-board by 3-5 % by the State Legislature. Fortunately, all of the higher education grant and scholarship programs were exempted from the reduction.

SC Tuition Grants Budget Request for 2009-10: Additional **\$2.5 million requested** to increase maximum grant from **\$3,200 to \$3,450** (equals **HEPI increases** for 2006 (5%) and 2007 (3.3%).

Effective October 2, 2008, Earl Mayo will become the new Executive Director of the SC Tuition Grants Commission. Mr. Mayo, who has served as the Deputy Director since 1995, succeeds Eddie Shannon who has taken the position of Executive Vice President of the SC Independent Colleges and Universities association. **NASSGAP will miss Eddie as well.**

South Dakota

NR

Tennessee –
Tim Phelps

Tennessee, just like many other states, is facing a budget shortfall. For the 2008-2009 fiscal year, higher education in Tennessee had a budget reduction of \$55.8 million. The Tennessee Student Assistance Award’s (TSAA) portion of the reduction was \$946,000. TSAA is the need-based program for the State. However, the TSAA program did receive additional funding from the Governor’s budget and also from the Tennessee Lottery Corporation for a total of \$10 million for the 2008-09 academic year.

The 2009-2010 budget requests are being submitted for eventual presentation to the legislature. **Each agency is being asked to present a plan that represents a 3% contingency reduction on all programs.** This is in addition to already proposed cuts and means that all state programs face a potential reduction in funding.

Tennessee’s 529 program has now merged with Georgia’s Path2College 529 Plan. The move allows Tennessee residents to increase their investment options and save on management fees. Tennessee’s plan has approximately \$46 million in assets whereas; Georgia’s plan has over \$650 million. Tennessee will continue to offer the Baccalaureate Education System Trust (BEST) which is the college pre-paid tuition plan. The BEST program is not impacted by this merger.

Texas

Utah –
Kent Larson

4% Cut to FY-09 Budget for Higher Education – Legislative action taken 9/26/2008

New Regents Scholarship Funded by Legislature

- \$900,000 appropriation
- Program highlights
 - Successful completion of State Scholars Initiative core class with no grade lower than C
 - Three payment levels: Base, Supplemental 529 College Savings Plan, Exemplary
 - Exemplary allows for tuition payment for up to two years or completion of an associates or bachelors degree

UHEAA Grant Program

- Allocation cut 50% (second consecutive year)

Vermont –
Marilyn Cargill

The Vermont legislature notified VSAC that our grant program would face a 2.5% rescission effectively immediately in late August. This decrease included our major grant programs as well as a number of state supported scholarship and scholarship/loan programs. At this time it is rumored that we will receive a second rescission in November that is expected to be larger than the first rescission. By November we fully expect that these funds will already be awarded to students and that we will need to consider cutting 2nd semester grants.

VSAC is using the College Access Challenge Grant to support our [Start Where You Are initiative on the web](#). The Start Where You Are campaign and website recently won an award from Web Marketing Associations Web Awards. You will hear and learn more about this effort in the final conference session.



On March 26th, VSAC was very pleased to roll out our "apply online" product to borrowers. This process allows borrowers to electronically sign their promissory note for Staff and PLUS loans as well as the PLUS endorser Addendum. Initially this product was rolled out utilizing the VerID authentication method to complete the electronic signature process. However, on May 16th, VSAC enhanced this service to allow borrowers to sign their promissory notes electronically using their FAFSA pin (STAN). This process has been very successful in allowing borrowers to sign notes quickly and efficiently. To date, 45% of our borrowers are utilizing this service over the traditional paper method to complete their promissory note. Internally, VSAC is seeing a return on investment with the reduction of paper workflow and quicker turn around in loan approval.

<p>Virginia – Lee Andes</p>	<p>In January VSAC was notified by the U.S. Department of Education that effective 6/30/2008, we could no longer provide Financial Aid services to any of the seven Vermont schools for whom VSAC acted as the financial aid office. Over the next six months we worked closely with our schools to do the normal wrap up of the 2007 academic year, launch processing for their 2008-2009 school year and transition all seven schools to alternative solutions including other third party servicers and in-house financial aid offices. The first school was transitioned in mid-April and the last school transitioned in mid-June.</p> <p>VSAC was happy to communicate to schools in early April of this year that we had secured capital for all of our projected FFELP and Private loan volume for the 08-09 academic year.</p> <p>VSAC is launching a concerted effort to change the timeframe and manner in which we administer our Scholarship program. VSAC currently publishes a scholarship book that lists over 150 scholarships available to Vermonters of which we administer over 100. For the scholarships that VSAC administers we have created a single due date of March 1, 2009. The single due date combined with changes in selection committee timeframes will allow us to have all awards made and notifications sent by May 15th. We hope to pull that notification date back to pre-May 1 in subsequent years.</p> <hr/> <p>Virginia is facing over a \$2 billion budget deficit. Even though financial aid seems to be off limits, the colleges are likely to receive cuts that could result in additional tuition increases.</p> <p>We are kicking off the first year of a transfer grant that incentivizes students to consider two-year colleges and then transfer to a four-year college. This two-plus-two model, along with a modest grant, should provide another way for students to manage their education costs.</p> <p>SCHEV has placed a great deal of attention on the issues of access and affordability over the past two years. A report on findings and recommendations is under development.</p> <p>Virginia has been approved for the CACG. We have just over \$1 million and have very ambitious plans for it: web portal, inventory of access providers in the state, tool kit for access start ups, professional development, marketing plans, and parent/student workshops.</p>
<p>Washington – Rachelle Sharp</p>	<p>Washington’s Governor has called for a budget freeze including out-of-state travel, reduction in fuel consumption, and a hiring freeze. Our division is down 25% in staffing.</p> <p><u>New Program Update</u></p> <p>As a result of the 2007 legislative session, our agency spent last year implementing several new financial aid programs and initiatives.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>The Washington early commitment program for 7th and 8th grade students eligible for free and reduced priced lunch – the College Bound Scholarship</u> – had a successful first year implementation. Over 16,500 students applied and strong statewide partnerships were formed. Funds were invested in the state’s 529 guaranteed tuition program (GET) for scholarship payouts to begin in 2012. • The new program for foster youth – <i>Passport to College Promise</i> – is a comprehensive scholarship and institution incentive program. A data match with the Department of Social and Human Services was successful to provide institutions with lists of eligible students. Over 300 students have been identified as eligible for Passport. • The new conditional scholarship for students who excel in math or science – <i>Get Ready for Math & Science</i> – was implemented in partnership with a private non-profit organization, the College Success Foundation. Students who performed well on the state high school assessment, WASL, received information about the scholarship. Recipients will need to major in math or science and work in a related field in Washington for three years upon receipt of their bachelor’s degree – or the award converts to a loan.

- The **Scholarship Clearinghouse** – an online scholarship match system is in development. A project manager has been selected and RFPs from developers are being reviewed. State funding has been provided for the HECB to maintain the system once developed. The system is targeted to be live Fall 2009.
- The **State Work Study High Demand** project – providing **work experiences for students** interested in **teaching math and science** is underway on nine campuses.
- State funded Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs (**GEAR UP for Student Success**) **expands GEAR UP services to 25 school districts** that have high number of low-income population with no structured college access programs. The program is the first of its kind in the country and serves 3,700 students.

CACG in WA

Four non-profit organizations will receive CACG: the College Success Foundation, Community Foundation of North Central Washington, Metropolitan Development Council of Tacoma, and Northwest Education Loan Association. Efforts will include support for the College Bound Scholarship to conduct sign-up activities and other promotional activities. A network for sharing information and best practices on access to college will be developed. Other activities include increasing the number of "I'm Going to College" events (a program for 6th graders), increasing the College Goal Sunday locations, and expanding the reach of the KnowHow2Go campaign.

Washington DC
Kenneth Howard

Major Aid Application Trends

Applications Up: Last year, 10,788 students applied for assistance from January, 2007 until June 30, 2008. This year 10,901 students have applied as of September with nine months still to go in the application period. With over \$30 million dollars expended last year in the DC Tuition Assistance Grant Program, even higher expenditures are expected for the current school year. When compared with the number of eligible students as of June 30, 2008 with June 30, 2007, there was 80% increase in the number able to participate in our programs.

College Fair

This year, the National Association of College Admissions Counselors (NACAC) requested that D.C. Office of the State Superintendent of Education not hold its Annual Mayor's College Fair but partner with them instead in hosting the Annual Greater Washington, DC College Fair. The event was held On Monday, September 29th at the Walter Washington Convention Center. Over 5,700 students and families attended the event. Students came from as far away as Richmond, VA. More than 200 colleges and universities attended. Such schools as the University of Alabama, the University of Alaska, The University of Arizona, The University of Colorado, the University of Connecticut, George Washington University, Clarke Atlanta University, Florida A&M University, The University of Georgia, University of Iowa, The University of Massachusetts, the University of Michigan, Penn State University, Temple University, The University of Pittsburgh, Texas Christian University, the University of Wisconsin and many others. It was the largest fair in Washington, DC this year.

Outreach Activities

We have made our first foray into social networking sites by launching a Facebook page. Within three weeks of launch, the site has 120 friends linked to it and more joining each day.

For SY07-08 the OSSE had 145 outreach events throughout the city in numerous venues from schools to churches. Over 7,000 people attended these varied events. In the events conducted for the DCCAP Organization over 2,000 students and parents were exposed to program information. In the five Counselor Training Sessions, 85 high school and college access providers received information about our programs. Among the notable events that the office made presentations were such venues at the White House Initiative on Historically Black Colleges and Universities,

Delaware-District of Columbia- Maryland Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators and many others

New Programs

New aid programs are now administered by the OSSE.

Robert C. Byrd Honors Scholarship Program will enable ten students to receive \$1,500 per year. Currently 40 students participate in this program.

The **US Senate Youth Program (USSYP)**. Two students receive \$5,000 from this privately funded program.

The **DC Mayoral Valedictorian Program (MVP)** offers \$1,000 to valedictorians from each DC public, public charter school. The award is paid directly to the student to cover incidental college costs.

New Initiatives

Two new projects that are being initiated by the office are programs geared toward our high school students. They are the **AP Program** that will pay for the cost of the exams that students must take to gain college credit. The other is the **SAT Prep Program**, which will cover the cost of SAT classes for those students who are getting ready to take the examination.

College Access Challenge Grant Program

The College Access Challenge Grant Program (CACGP) is a new federal program designed to enable states to assist students and their families in learning about, preparing for and financing a postsecondary education.

The Office of the State Superintendent of Education (OSSE) will provide District students and their families with services in three key areas: awareness, access, and advocacy. The goals of this program are to: 1) increase District students and families knowledge of how to prepare for, gain acceptance and finance a college education; 2) provide District parents and students with a deeper understanding of college financing (including financial literacy and debt management); and 3) increase the number of students who persist through critical college transitions.

The OSSE will accomplish these goals by subgranting to the following organizations:

- College Success Foundation
- DC Parent Information Resource Center
- The Posse Foundation

These organizations will provide the following activities and services:

- Launch a citywide college awareness campaign;
- Develop a comprehensive college information and resource website;
- Conduct financial literacy and college financing workshops for parents;
- Provide professional development training for college faculty at selected institutions; and
- Provide campus support training for college first and second year students

West Virginia
Jack Toney

Merit-Based Financial Aid

- **State funding for the PROMISE Scholarship Program increased from \$40.8 million in 2007-2008 to \$43.06 million in 2008-2009.** The increased funding allowed the scholarship's academic eligibility requirements to remain the same for 2009 hs seniors.
- Approximately 9,000 West Virginia residents will be assisted with full tuition and mandatory fee awards at the state's public institutions and equivalent awards, \$4,372, at eligible independent institutions.

- During the 2008 session of the West Virginia Legislature, the Governor proposed that scholarship awards become forgivable loans if recipients did not remain in the state to work after graduation. He later proposed the creation of a committee to review loan forgiveness and the overall structure of the program. The committee's recommendations are scheduled to be released later this fall.

Need-Based Financial Aid

- The state provides need-based program funding for both full and part-time resident students.
- State funding for the Higher Education Grant Program, a grant for full-time students, increased from \$33.0 million in 2007-2008 to \$34.6 million in 2008-2009. Approximately 16,000 state residents will be assisted during the 2008-2009 award year.
- State funding for the part-time enrollment targeted Higher Education Adult Part-Time Student Grant Program increased from \$5.0 million in 2007-2008 to \$6.0 million in 2008-2009. Approximately 5,000 state residents attending traditional educational or workforce training programs will be assisted during the 2008-2009 award year.
- With a goal of increasing access to the Higher Education Grant Program, especially for adult and non-traditional students, the program's structure and processes are being evaluated.

Scholarship/Forgivable Loan Programs

- The state supports three targeted financial aid programs requiring work within the state after the use of funds to earn loan cancellation. In addition to the use of funds collected from previous recipients, the programs received the following state support.
 - **The Underwood-Smith Teacher Scholarship Program** received state funding of \$141, 142.
 - **The Engineering, Science and Technology Scholarship** received state funding of \$470,473.
 - **The Medical Student Loan Program**
 - The annual maximum cancellation amount for the program has been increased to \$10,000, matching the annual loan maximum.

Other

- **The state was awarded a six year \$18 million GEAR UP Grant** to serve ten West Virginia counties. As a result, about half of the state now receives GEAR UP services.
- The state's Access Challenge Grant award has been **dedicated to funding a comprehensive educational portal.**

Wisconsin
Wyoming

NR
NR