

nassgap

national association of state student grant and aid programs

To: NASSGAP members
From: Dennis Obergfell, President
Date: September 25, 2000
Re: Topics (not necessarily in the order listed)

- **Message in a bottle**
- **Time out**
- **A Survey Survey**
- **Headline of the month**

Message in a bottle II. Sending out an SOS

After month of letters and phone calls to the Department, I finally received a letter from the US Department of Education that recognizes NASSGAP as an organization that represents state grant agencies. Actually the letter states that "The Department recognizes that NASSGAP's unique position in representing state grant agencies provides a valuable perspective on issues that affect them".

If that sounds like a qualified statement, that's because it is. Not to beat a dead horse, but the letter below comes months after I wrote the Department a letter refuting their position that NASSGAP represented state agencies and loan organizations. The Department used this logic in denying NASSGAP a seat on Committee I of the most recent negotiated rulemaking session because according to the Assistant Secretary of Education "the Department believed that the concerns of the state agencies were adequately represented by a number of loan organizations participating on Committee I".

The letter I recently received is phrased in a way that does not contradict their earlier position. The used of the words "unique position" does not mean they no longer view NASSGAP as a loan organization. I have called The Assistant Secretary's office and have asked to meet with him to clarify this matter. I have consulted NASSGAP President-elect Cheryl Maplethorpe on this matter and she has agreed to meet with Assistant Secretary Fritchler to push this issue to it rightful conclusion. Things don't need to be this hard or drag out this long.

A Survey Survey

Time out

Time has flown and so will many of us have by the first week of October. My term as your President ends with the Fall Conference in Providence October 1-4. It has been an adventurous and fun year for me. It was a privilege to work with the Executive Committee in representing you on matters that we thought were of importance to members of the organization. Your Executive Committee has done terrific work, much of which is not clearly visible to the membership.

- **Ron Gambill** leaves the Executive Committee after serving as your President and Past President with distinction during his two-tenure. I can tell you from first hand experience that he and Chas Treadwell worked as hard and were as prepared and as anyone at the negotiated rulemaking tables. It didn't hurt that Ron knew everyone at the negotiation tables. In fact, I don't think I've been at a meeting or a conference where Ron didn't know most everyone present. Ron is a passionate debater and a great persuader. Reverend Ron, I thank you.
- **Mary Ann Welsh** leaves the Executive Committee after serving two years as its Secretary. Her work has been impressive and her sense of duty equally so. She deserves high marks for making sense of all the Executive Committee meeting's ramblings. She has also served as Conference Program Chair more than once, including the one in Providence. I thank you Mary Ann

- **Jim Garcia** becomes the organization's President-elect next month. He did a terrific job hosting our last fall conference in San Diego and is a tireless worker. I generally get to my office around 7:45 am Indiana time, 5:45 California time. It was not uncommon for me to call Jim intending to leave a message on his phone mail only hear him answer the phone. The man never sleeps. Thanks for all of your hard work Jim.
- **Cheryl Maplethorpe** will soon be our next President. She will be a good one. She made serious contributions to the organization during a year in which her husband suffered, and thankfully recovered, from a heart attack. In addition, Cheryl 's father passed away just weeks ago. I know that the membership will be there to help her in any way possible during her tenure as our President. Thanks much Cheryl.
- **John Klacik** remains on the Executive Committee as a Member-at-large. His voice of reason and common sense were invaluable to me during my tenure as President. I particularly benefited from his thoughtful approach to problem solving. In addition to all of his talents, he is a fan of baseball. What more can I say?
- **John Siegrist** remains on the Executive Committee as the organization's treasurer. As a graduate of the *Jan Hilyer School of Accounting and Investment*, he has picked up the mantle and served the organization well. Thank you John.
- **Mary Beth Kelly** has worked successfully as the organization's Technical Forms Chair for many years. If it were not for Mary Beth, I'm don't think state agencies would have any voice on matters related to the FAFSA. This is not an understatement and her efforts in this regard are not insignificant. Thank you Mary Beth "Swelly" Kelly.
- **Chas G. Treadwell** has served as the organizations Federal Relations Chair. For the first couple of years I thought the "G" in the acronym of SSIG had something to do with his middle name. He has worked relentlessly in mobilizing the membership and other organizations to support saving SSIG and its successor LEAP. I question whether either program would have survived without his persistence. Thank you Mr. G.
- **Shiela Joyner** has worked hard as the organization's Membership Coordinator. She has served as the organization's President-elect, President, Past President. She has helped coordinator conferences serving as site and program chairs – you name it. She is my candidate to replace the irreplaceable and retired Jan Hilyer as the organization's den mother. Many thanks Shiela.
- **My coworkers.** While they may never see this update, for the record I need to thank Pat Bright, Nick Vesper and Helen Ann Curley who work with me at SSACI. I could never have served as President for NASSGAP without their support. I'm fortunate to work with such dedicated and unselfish people.
- **Jan Hilyer**, NASSGAP's Unofficial Social Director recently retired. Jan is 100% original. Her charisma and southern charm were infectious. The organization will miss her greatly. I trust we will be able to convince her to come to our 2001 Spring conference in DC so we can rightfully give her our best regards with a little roasting thrown in for good measure.

I short, thanks to them all. They have given much to the organization. You can do the same. I encourage you to get involved in some way or another, whether it is serving on a committee or helping to organize a conference. You'll get to know some great people and do good things at the same time.

See you in Providence!