



Words of Wisdom from Marlene Seeklander

By Tracey Buisker South Dakota State University



Our colleague and friend Marlene Seeklander recently retired from Lake Area Technical College. She sent the below out to the SDASFAA group in June, but I thought there were some good nuggets in there and felt it was worth including in our newsletter as well. Thanks again Marlene for allowing us to include this and congratulations on your retirement!

SDASFAA Colleagues & Friends,

As I wrap up my final days in the office, I wanted to send a note to all of you. My last day in the office is June 27th as I have three days of vacation I need to use by June 30th. Thanks for the well wishes, cards, and emails over the past couple of months. It was a nice surprise to have some colleagues and SDASFAA Retirees come to my Retirement Party in May!

Thinking back on my career in higher education and financial aid, I'm reminded of the email that Jay Larsen, long-time SDSU Director of Financial Aid, sent shortly before he retired. In it he said, "The financial aid profession is challenging, but fulfilling; interesting, but difficult; rewarding, but with personal sacrifices." That is so true and sums it up perfectly! All of us can undoubtedly relate to those statements.

I value the information sharing, bouncing ideas off of each other, support for each other during happy times and challenging times, and the camaraderie of our profession, especially our state association. Thank you!

As I've been cleaning out my office, catching up on filing, updating our Policy & Procedure Manual, deleting old emails, etc. some "Words of Wisdom" that I'll share:

- *PURGE - Periodically go through any files you maintain in your office space and shred what is no longer needed or outdated. Shortly after I started, Carrie and I shredded some old stuff left behind by my predecessor, Rich Coplan. However, we still had a few boxes stashed in storage that we recently went through and dumped in the shred bin. I can't help but think the shred bill at LATC has increased over the past few months. I won't say I'm the only "guilty" party, but I know I contributed to the amount of shred that was picked up!*
- *FILE - File things as you are finished with them. I don't know how many times I would submit some information to SDEAF, etc., print it, and not file it right away. I would put it in a pile for when I had a "few spare minutes" and there it would wait for me. The "filing elves" didn't do their job when I went home at night and the "few spare minutes" are few and far between!*
- *REVIEW - Set aside time to do an annual review of your P&P or break it into quarterly reviews of various sections. That's a difficult endeavor; it is the one thing that takes the backseat in many of our offices. Many years ago, at a SDASFAA Conference, Brenda Murtha, former Augustana University Director of Financial Aid, shared that their office held a retreat where the staff physically left campus with computers in tow, settled into a hotel room to work on updating their P&P, and had some fun (including snacks and meals) while they worked!*
- *DELETE - Periodically delete emails! Our IT Department has always been gracious to those of us who are "heavy email users" by giving us extra storage space. Maybe they should've had automatic emails sent to us that told us we couldn't send or respond to any emails until we did some purging!*

Marlene Seeklander

2023 Calendar of Events

By Kristy O'Kief Western Dakota Tech

High School Counselor Workshop:

September 6-14, 2023

- Sept. 6, Northern State University, Aberdeen
- Sept. 7, Lake Area Technical College, Watertown
- Sept. 11, Western Dakota Technical College, Rapid City
- Sept. 12, Dept. of Education MacKay Bldg, Pierre
- Sept. 13, Mitchell Technical College, Mitchell
- Sept. 14, Southeast Technical College, Sioux Falls

RMASFAA Conference:

October 8-11, 2023 Fort Collins, CO

2023 SDASFAA Fall Training:

November 14-15, 2023

Arrowwood Resort, Oacoma, SD

FSA Training Conference:

November 28 – December 1, 2023 Virtual

2024 SDASFAA Spring Conference:

April 16-18, 2024

Holiday Inn-City Centre, Sioux Falls, SD



By Lindsay Miller University of South Dakota

Old Termonology		New Termonology
CPS – Central Processing System		FPS – FAFSA Processing System
SAR – Student Aid Report		FAFSA Submission Summary
FAA Access		FAFSA Partner Portal
DRT – Data Retrieval Tool		DDX – Direct Data Exchange
EFC – Expected Family Contribution		SAI – Student Aid Index
EFA – Estimated Financial Assistance		OFA – Other Financial Assistance
Special Needs Test flag		Applicants Exempt from Asset Reporting Flag

Get to Know the 2023 Summer Institute Scholarship Recipient Stephen Detlefs - Black Hills State University

By Alyssa Blake Black Hills State Univeristy

After 12 years of experience in higher education, including rolls as Adjunct Teacher, Admissions Recruiter, Dean of Students and even a stint with Nelnet, Stephen Detlefs finds himself in a new position as Financial Aid Advisor at Black Hills State University. In applying for the SDASFAA Scholarship to attend the RMASFAA Summer Institute, his hope was to have the opportunity to jump-start his platform of knowledge through an intensive setting, acquiring the nuts-and-bolts of financial aid that can reinforce his daily processes. Stephen is very appreciative to the committee for choosing him as the recipient of the scholarship that will provide such a focused and individualized training to meet him at his readiness level.

When asked how the SDASFAA community has impacted him professionally over his first 8 months as an advisor, he has this to say: "I don't know if I'd still be here in financial aid if it wasn't for SDASFAA at the moment. The other members of SDASFAA have been incredibly helpful during this time where we haven't really had a director much for various reasons. It's good to know that there is a group of people where, if I'm absolutely stuck and pulling my hair out, I can reach out and say, 'Hey guys – have you seen this before?'. And know, without judgment, that they will be glad to take that time out of their day to say, 'Oh, yeah – we've had that too before, and this is how we fixed it.'"

Stephen and his wife Maegan, a Communication Coordinator in the BHSU Marketing Department, live in beautiful Spearfish, SD with their sweet almost 3-year-old, Fox. They are surrounded by family within the Black Hills and are thrilled to be working together in the same institution to further the success of South Dakota students.



Stephen Detlefs
Black Hills State University



Stephen's Thoughts on the Summer Institute Experience:

"The Summer Institute was an amazing opportunity to be with other Financial Aid professionals and pick each other's brains on a variety of topics. As a fairly new Financial Aid professional it was great to just sit with others and talk about how we overcome issues our offices are facing and brainstorm navigating the changes on the horizon. Based on my time at the Summer Institute I have applied for the RMAFAA Leadership Pipeline program and continue to look for additional ways to be involved in both the Regional and State organizations. I am extremely grateful for the opportunity to attend and was able to do so because of the SDASFFA scholarship and I would highly recommend the Summer Institute to any Financial Aid professional."



2023 President-Elect Position Update

By Kristy O'Kief Western Dakota Tech

In June, we had a vacancy in the 2023 President-Elect position. Carissa and I working together sent out an email to the SDASFAA Institutional Voting members asking if there would be anyone that could fill this position for the remainder of the year.

Sydney Chapman from South Dakota State University has graciously volunteered to take on this role to finish out the remainder of the 2023 year and the following two years as President and Past President.

On behalf of SDASFAA and the SDASFAA Executive Council, thank you Sydney for agreeing to volunteer for this leadership role.

Associate Member Spotlight

Deb Gossman - College Avenue Student Loans Head of Campus Development - Central States

How many years in Financial Aid and tell us your journey of how you got into the business:

My career started in retailing and hotel management. I then applied for a position at a loan servicing company under USA Funds which at that time was a national guarantor. And that started my career in being associated with and working in the financial aid industry.

Family: Are you married? Children/Grandchildren?

Yes, to my husband Larry. We have had wonderful fur children (Vixen, Lexi, and Tiger).

Who do you look up to?

While these two individuals are no longer with me, I still look up to them. They were my parents. They were kind, nurturing, supportive, encouraging, and they enabled me to grow and realize my dreams. They were unsung heroes, who both battled terminal illnesses but the legacy and love they left behind continues today.

What's your favorite memory?

I have so many favorite memories—having wonderful family and friends, graduating from college, marrying my husband, working for great companies, and traveling the world. All are favorite memories.

Deb Gossman
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What's the best place you've traveled to?

Again, there are so many wonderful places and people throughout the world. My top 6 adventures include: Antarctica, Tahiti, Italy, Iceland, Holy Lands, and Tanzania. I will be travelling back to Iceland later this summer for another visit.

1. Antarctica—one of many icebergs within this beautiful but dangerous continent
2. Iceland—one of many beautiful waterfalls
3. Tanzania—3 momma lions which had 7 cubs ranging from 1-3 months.



Associate Member Spotlight

Tom Dreyer - PNC Bank AVP/Campus Relations Manager

How many years in Financial Aid and your journey of how you got into the business:

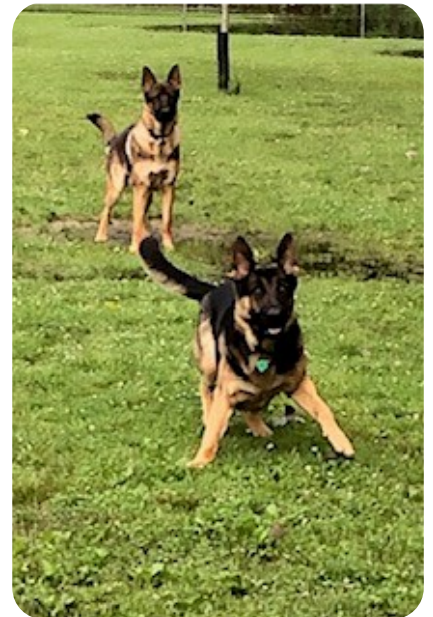
Like many others, my start in student financial aid was purely accidental. After graduating high school, I didn't think that a college education was in my future, so I took a line-cook position with a small restaurant. Unbeknownst to me, the restaurant was owned by an educational institution, and I was soon offered the opportunity to prepare meals on campus for their student/employee daycare center. The FAD's children attended the daycare center and after some encouragement I found myself taking some business courses and working part-time in the financial aid office. Over the next thirty-eight years, I worked in a variety of roles at two private colleges in Michigan and moved to my current role as a campus relations manager.

Family:

We have three adult children and three very active grandsons 😊. We enjoy traveling to different cities throughout Michigan to watch them play hockey and soccer. And if I'm being honest, we also enjoy the opportunity to sample the food and craft brews that these communities offer. In addition, to my two-legged family, I also have two German Shepherds named Max and Ramsey who consume much of my free-time.

Who do you look up to:

I most look up to my former VP of Student Financial Aid at Davenport University, Mary Kay Bethune. As a young financial aid professional, I had the opportunity to see MKB share her knowledge of FA with others through her involvement in our state financial aid associations. I was in awe of her understanding of financial aid regulations, the empathy she shared with her students, and the support she provided to her staff as they developed their careers. When the opportunity arose, I knew she was the type of manager I wanted to work with, and I was able to grow under her guidance for 8 years of my career.



What's your favorite memory:

My favorite memories are those that include a childhood spent at my grandparents one-room schoolhouse turned cottage. Growing up, we spent summers with cousins playing board games, "wheelbarrowing" down the hill, swinging and fishing. My grandparents taught us how to work hard, appreciate the simple things in life, and the importance of spending time with family. As an adult, I've tried to recreate those memories for myself and my children. In 2021, we purchased my dream home – a one-room church that closely resembles my grand-parents schoolhouse.

What's the best place that you've traveled to:

Most of my vacations have been "stay-cations". However, in 2019 we had the opportunity to travel to Ireland. Our travel began in Dublin and ended in Galway. In between, we were able to explore a number of abbeys and castles. We took a number of walking tours, learning about the local history. Next to learning to drive on the wrong side of the road, a favorite highlight of the trip was kayaking to Innisfallen Island.



Tom Dreyer
AVP/Campus Relations Manager
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We hope you enjoyed the newsletter! If there are topics you would like to see discussed or other items you would like to bring to the attention of our SDASFAA members please let someone on the Communication & Website Committee know.

Members: Alyssa Blake, Tracey Buisker, Sharon Martin, Lindsay Miller, Kristy O'Kief and Brenda Wipf