



2019 NeASFAA Spring Conference

Session Descriptions and Speaker Bios

General Session:

A Piece of the Puzzle... Eight Traits of a Quality Teammate, presented by Kevin Kush

Mr. Kush has been involved in coaching and teaching for over 30 years and spent 21 of those years working with at-risk youth at Boys Town in Omaha, Nebraska. As a head football coach, he compiled a remarkable record of 164 wins and just 58 losses with 13 of those teams finishing in the top 10. Coach Kush now speaks full-time to a variety of groups including teachers, youth organizations, and companies. He holds a Bachelor of Science degree from the University of Nebraska at Omaha in marketing and business education, and a Master of Arts degree from the University of Nebraska in vocational and adult education. In 2005 Mr. Kush was featured on *ABC World News Tonight* as their Person of the Week. He is the author of three books: *The 100 Yard Classroom*, *Competing with Character*, and *A Piece of the Puzzle - Eight Traits of a Quality Teammate*.

Breakout Sessions:

DACA/Undocumented Students 101 - Michelle Lubken, Angel Gabriel and Maria Lopez

3 staff members from CCC will breakdown the differences between international, foreign, DACA and undocumented students. This session will provide facts into the citizenship process along with data, visuals and tips for working with DACA and undocumented students.

Straight From the Director's Mouth – Panel: Justin Chase Brown, Paula Kohles, Sheila Johns, and Doug Watson

Do you have questions you would like to ask a Financial Aid Director? Are you an up-and-coming leader in your financial aid office, or aspire to be a director? This session will give you the opportunity to ask the panel financial aid, leadership, or other topic questions.

How America Values and Pays for College - Robb Cummings

A national study by Sallie Mae and Ipsos, *How America Values and Pays for College* explores how families of undergraduates regard the value of higher education, the factors that influence their choice of schools, and the steps they're taking to make college affordable. Discussion will focus on the resources families use to pay for college, particularly reliance on financial aid and the role of student loans, and highlight differences among certain population segments.

Digging Deeper: Having the Tough Conversations - Becca Dobry and Kristie Artz

The topic is focused on how to move to the next level in student conversation. This will benefit conference attendees in that we will discuss uncomfortable situations and how to work through them to make the most out of the experience for students and their families.

FSA Conference Recap – Panel: Margarita Gurrola, Paula Kohles, Renee Besse

Have you ever attended a conference or training and had these reactions: "Yikes," "Since when did we have to do that," "That's new," "Are we doing that," "We should be doing that," Margarita, Paula, and Renee were some that went to the last FSA conference and they will be discussing some of the more prominent and important take-a-ways from the presentations they attended at the FSA Conference. Join them and see if you experience any of these reactions as well.

Navigating Sharing Student Data: A Guide for Financial Aid Officers - Justin Chase Brown and Mary Sommers

This session will review key statutes and regulations regarding the protection of student data and discuss when it may or may not be appropriate to share private student data. We will also work through several case studies as a group and discuss scenarios from the audience regarding data requests and student privacy.

Tasks at Hand

These “birds of a feather” sessions will be split up to discuss responsibilities for a job, position, or task at your school. Student Loans and SULA, Counseling and Student outreach, Scholarships, and Verification will be the focus topics.

Title IV Reconciliation Tools and Tips - David Bartlett

We will take a look at the tools that you can use to conduct Title IV reconciliation for the Pell and Direct Loan programs. A discussion of monthly reconciliation as well as year-end closeout will be covered. We will close by looking some of the resources and reports you can use in COD.

What If? Complicated Communications - Mary Sommers

Frequently when financial aid professionals are asked a question, our answer is “it depends”. That answer can be frustrating! So during this session we’ll discuss those situations and explore some practical strategies to communicate complicated information in the best possible way.

One Letter, Big Results: Using Debt Letters to Encourage Smart Borrowing - Mike Lubben

Loan summaries, or debt letters, have taken the financial education world by storm. Some states are even making loan summaries a required step for colleges and universities. What does a good loan summary look like? And how can institutions build resources around loan summaries to ensure success? This presentation will share the findings of Inceptia’s latest research brief regarding loan summaries, examine preliminary results of institutional loan summary initiatives at three large universities, and offer suggestions and strategies for building a framework of resources to support responsible borrowing and repayment throughout the student lifecycle.

Top Ten Compliance Issues - David Bartlett

This session will start with a reminder of the program review process and then look at the top 10 compliance findings from audits and program reviews. We will focus in on the most common findings to examine a bit more closely like verification, R2T4, and other deficiencies.

Effective Customer Communication Skills - Linda Butcher

We rely on communication for everything. It’s important to be able to identify key elements of effective communication and to be able to determine that your communication has been effective. We’ll also go over some communication dos and don’ts.

Leveraging Financial Aid & Enrollment Management Processes to Increase Retention - Janel Walton

Join this session to engage with your peers and find out what they are doing to positively influence retention. This session is designed to be a conversation to allow for sharing of best practices and ideas between peers in regards to retention.

Advocacy and You - Megan Coval

This session will touch on the main principles of successful advocacy strategies. An overview will be given of how NASFAA enacts those strategies at the Federal level through relationships with Congressional staffers, the Department of Education, and the Administration. In addition to highlighting useful NASFAA tools and resources, the session will also cover tips and strategies on how to successfully advocate at the grassroots level, and outline how you can plan your own advocacy event!

Campus-Based Credentialing - Becca Dobry

This session reviews the provisions common to all three of the campus-based programs along with detailed information about the individual programs (Federal Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grant, Federal Work-Study, and Federal Perkins Loans).

SULA Misunderstandings and Misreporting - David Bartlett

This session will address common subsidized usage limit applies misunderstandings and the most common areas where misreporting may occur. We will look at how SULA reporting will impact a borrowers subsidized loan eligibility and even when it is less than 1.0 year.

Data Security from a Campus View - Panel: Art Provost, Vicki Kucera, and Mason White

We build on last year's Data Security session by adding some views from the institutional side. Art Provost, last year's presenter on data security, returns to be a panel participant along with two Financial Aid Directors to discuss how schools are securing their data, both institutional and student. We will hear them discuss some planned questions, but we really want to hear what you have to ask. Join us to expand your knowledge on this vital—but often overlooked—aspect of working with students.

NASFAA Washington/Federal Update - Megan Coval

This NASFAA Federal Update will provide a high-level landscape of the Washington political climate with a focus on federal financial aid policy and how it has impacted students and institutions in recent years. Overall trends in student aid will be discussed including an overview of reauthorization proposals as and predictions for how student aid funding will fare in the budget battles that are looming ahead. The session will also provide an overview of NASFAA-led projects, services, and advocacy efforts.

Bios:

Kristie Artz - Kristie Artz is currently a Financial Aid Counselor for the Office of Financial Aid at the University of Nebraska at Kearney. She has been working in financial aid since 2013. Prior to her position at UNK, she worked in Industrial Sales in Kansas City.

Kristie received her Bachelor's degree from the University of Nebraska at Kearney in Industrial Technology in 2006, and her Master's degree in Student Affairs in 2017. She has participated in Leadership UNK and served as president of the Board of Graduates for that program. She is currently serving on the PDRC committee for NeASFAA.

David Bartlett - David Bartlett is a Training Officer with the U.S. Department of Education in Kansas City. David has had the privilege to work in the student aid industry for 24 years at the U.S. Department of Education. He has been involved in delivering and developing training at Federal Student Aid (FSA) for 21 years, holding the post of Training Officer for 15 years.

Renee Besse - Associate Director of Financial Aid at the University of Nebraska at Kearney. I began my career at Kearney State College with no financial aid experience but quickly caught the bug (disease) and have remained dedicated student/professional of the industry for 30 years.

Justin Chase Brown - Justin Chase Brown serves as the Director of Scholarships & Financial Aid at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. He is a first-generation college graduate from Texas A&M University and earned his Master of Science in Education from the University of Kansas. He is currently pursuing a PhD in Educational Administration at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. Justin was recognized in 2013 by the National Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators (NASFAA) with the NASFAA Gold Star Award for innovation and regularly participates in state, regional, and national financial aid activities and presentations on student financial aid policy and advocacy. He is passionate about employing data analysis and technology to improve operations, aid delivery, and student service and is deeply committed to excellence in the financial aid profession and in advocating for innovative practices to support student success.

Linda Butcher - Linda works at Southeast Community College and is currently chair of RMASFAA's Training committee and is a member of NeASFAA's PDRC committee. Linda's past association experience includes being a member and former chair of NeASFAA's Membership Connections committee and a member of the NASFAA Graduate and Professional Loan Limit Task Force. She is an Accredited Financial Counselor through the Association for Financial Counseling and Planning Education (AFCPE). Linda is a proud grandma to four-year-old Jack and is a Master Gardener. Linda's passion is learning. It doesn't matter whether it is Title IV regulations, horticulture, or Scandinavian languages, Linda believes one should always be learning.

Megal Coval - Megan is the Vice President for Policy and Federal Relations at the National Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators (NASFAA) where she oversees the Association's policy and advocacy efforts. Prior to joining NASFAA in the fall of 2010, she served as the Director of Government Relations for the federal Advisory Committee on Student Financial Assistance, where she contributed to several congressionally mandated reports on the postsecondary access and persistence of low- and moderate- income students. Megan began her career in higher education as an admissions counselor at Penn State University. She received a master's in higher education at Penn State and BA in political science from Allegheny College.

Robb Cummings – Robb is the Director of Business Development for Sallie Mae, and has worked in the student financial aid industry for the past twenty-two years. He has been active on both the state and regional level. He has served RMASFAA as the Chair for the Rocky Mountain Summer Institute, Associate Member Delegate, Corporate Development Chair, Electronic Initiatives Chair, and on various other committees. Robb has also served in KASFAA, NeASFAA, SDASFAA, and NDASFAA. A graduate of Washburn University with a BBA degree in Marketing and Management, Robb resides in Topeka, KS.

Becca Dobry - Becca Dobry is currently the Assistant Director for the Office of Financial Aid at the University of Nebraska at Kearney. She has been working in financial aid since 2007. Before going to the University of Nebraska at Kearney she worked at National American University as a Financial Aid Advisor. Becca received her Bachelor's degree from Chadron State College in Business Administration with an emphasis in Economics, and her Master's degree in Student Affairs through UNK. She has been active in her state association, NeASFAA, having served as the Awards Committee Chair, Four Year Public Sector Representative and Professional Development and Recognitions Committee Chair. In RMASFAA Becca participated as a mentee in the Leadership Pipeline, chaired the Association News Committee and served as RMASFAA's treasurer.

Angel Gabriel - Angel Gabriel is a financial aid technician at Central Community College-Grand Island. He has been working in financial aid since 2015. Angel assists students in the financial aid process including the FAFSA application, scholarships, and work-study. He enjoys working in higher education, especially in ways that help students succeed in their educational goals. Angel has a Bachelor's Degree from the University of Nebraska at Kearney and a Master's degree from Doane University. In his free time, he enjoys spending it with his family and going out with friends.

Margarita Gurrola - Margarita Gurrola-Financial Aid Associate at Western Nebraska Community College since September 2012 but started as support staff in 2007. My dedication stems from being an alumni and my passion helps guide students to their educational goal.

Sheila Johns - Sheila is the Financial Aid Director at Western Nebraska Community College in Scottsbluff. She joined the WNCC financial aid team as its director in 2006. Her background and education are in accounting and prior to financial aid, Sheila was the Management Accountant for Scotts Bluff County and was a CPA in Wyoming.

Paula Kohles - Paula has served as Financial Aid Director at Creighton since October 2014. She started as a work study student at UNL, then worked in UNO Financial Aid Office prior to joining the staff at Creighton in 1994. She will have been at Creighton 25 years this summer.

Vicki Kucera - Vicki began her financial career in 1981 as an administrative assistant in the financial aid office at Central Community College-Hastings Campus, where she is now the Area Director of Financial Aid Services over their multiple campuses in South Central Nebraska. She has been on the RMAFSA Board in many capacities over the years as Secretary, President, and has chaired multiple committees. She has been a Summer Institute faculty member for many years and is currently the Faculty Dean for SI 2019. She is also a Past President of the Nebraska Association. Vicki has been married to her husband Bob for 42 years. They have two adult children and two absolutely adorable grandsons, Grady and Keaton. Bob farms with their son Phil, and their daughter Erin teaches Biological Sciences at Northeast Community College in Nebraska.

Maria Lopez - Maria was born, raised and educated in Mexico, with a Law Degree from the Universidad Autonoma de Zacatecas, Mexico. She came to the United States with a visitor visa, met her husband, and is now married with three children. She worked as an interpreter/Para-Educator with the Grand Island Public Schools. She attended Doane College and received a Bachelor degree in Liberal Studies and is currently taking classes in the early Childhood Education at Central Community College, where she works. Her position is the Diversity Recruiter in the Admissions Office where she mainly works with Spanish speaking students and their parents. She teaches citizenship classes to individuals who want to become U.S. citizens. She also volunteers at the city library for two Bilingual reading program hosted by Humanities Nebraska.

Mike Lubben - Mike, Senior Vice President – Business Development, has a 30-year track record in executive-level leadership. Before joining Inceptia, Mike served as Vice President, Sales, for on-demand solutions provider VoltDelta Resources. He has served as a senior-level executive with CRM Technology Ventures, a division of ICT Group, where he led a team in developing new business and business from non-government accounts. During his career, Mike also has been involved in sales and management for call center companies including Finali Corporation, APAP Customer Service, Call Interactive, and ITI Marketing Services. Mike has been with NSLP/Inceptia for over 6 years.

Michelle Lubken - Michelle began her career in higher education via event management and athletic compliance. She then spent 12 years in admissions and the last 4 years as the Associate Dean of Students at Central Community College. Michelle was nominated and selected as the Nebraska State Felons Educational Advocate and Central Nebraska National Institute for Staff and Organizational Development (NISOD) representative. She is a former Phi Theta Kappa honor society sponsor and IMPROV facilitator through Health & Human Services. She has served as an international advisor for 15 years. In January, after years of trying Michelle led the effort to open a Multicultural Resource Center on the CCC-Grand Island campus. These experiences have enhanced her appreciation of differences and willingness to learn facts plus personal stories to raise awareness.

Art Provost - Art joined FES/NSLP/Inceptia in 2011. He has been working in the Information Security arena for over 25 years. He has held positions in operations, implementation, design and engineering, audit, and Information Security management in the U.S. Air Force, multiple Fortune 500 companies, and Information Security consulting companies. He received his Certified Information Systems Security Professional from the International Information Systems Security Certification Consortium; Global Information Assurance Certifications including Security Essentials, Penetration Tester, and Web Application Penetration Tester and Certified Information Security Manager from the Information Systems Audit and Control Association. FES Security Services conducts security and vulnerability assessments, develops policies, performs compliance audits, and provides Information Security consulting to organizations across the country.

Mary Sommers - Mary Sommers is currently the Director of Financial Aid at the University of Nebraska at Kearney. She has been working in financial aid in Montana and Nebraska for 30 years. Prior to coming to UNK she was the Director of Financial Aid and also an Admissions Counselor at Rocky Mountain College, Billings, MT.

Mary currently serves on the Finance Committee of the National Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators (NASFAA). Previously she served as a representative at Large on the NASFAA Board of Directors and as chair of the NASFAA Ethics Commission. She worked on the task force that updated NASFAA's Statement of Ethic Principals and Code of Conduct. She is the proud recipient of NAFAA's Meritorious Achievement Award.

In her state and region Mary has served on two occasions as the President of the Nebraska Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators. She was the President of the Rocky Mountain Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators (RMASFAA) in 2004. Over her career, Mary has presented at state, regional and national conferences on a number of financial aid and higher education topics.

Mary has an undergraduate degree from Iowa State University and a Master's Degree from the University of Nebraska.

Janel Walton - Janel Walton is the Dean of Enrollment Management at Central Community College, overseeing admissions, assessment, financial aid, new student orientation, registration, and the registrar. Janel's previous experience includes Associate Dean of Instruction-Academic Education, TRiO Student Support Services, Hall Director, and Admissions Counselor. This dynamic background strengthened Janel's belief in serving students, the community, and fellow employees. Janel is working on her Ed.D in Leadership and Innovation, with her research and innovation focused on developing a program to engage and develop employees into future managers.

Doug Watson - Doug is Director of Financial Aid and Express Services at Midland University. He began working in higher education in 1981 and became the Director of Financial Aid at Midland University in 1984. In 2003, he became the Associate Vice President for Financial Aid and Enrollment Management at Midland. In 2007, he left Midland to become the Executive Director of Pathfinder Support Services. During that time, he also did some higher education consulting, particularly in the financial aid area. In 2009, he rejoined the higher education community at Metropolitan Community College in the Financial Aid Department. In July of 2010, he returned to Midland in his current director role.

Mason White - Mason White is the Director of Financial Aid at Peru State College. Mason has been with Peru State College since 2017. He was previously the Associate Director of Financial Aid at Knox College in Galesburg, IL. Mason started off as a work-study student in the financial aid office at California State University, Chico. Including his work-study experience, Mason has been working in financial aid for 19 years. He has held various positions in financial aid such as Program Manager, Financial Aid Counselor, Financial Aid Advisor, Associate Director and Director. He has worked at public and private institutions.