

Virtual VASFAA — Apart Yet Together 2021

VERMONT ASSOCIATION OF STUDENT
FINANCIAL AID ADMINISTRATORS

CONFERENCE



**June 8th-10th,
2021**

DEAR VASFAA COLLEAGUES:

Welcome to the 2021 VASFAA Conference!

We are so excited you are joining us for our 51st conference, which is also our first virtual conference! Our conference committee has worked extremely hard to organize this agenda around the very fitting theme of ***Apart Yet 2gether***.

While we were disappointed to cancel our conference last year due to the pandemic, it has been wonderful to see our VT colleagues pull together to make the best of the virtual tools at our disposal. One silver lining of the past year is the record-breaking attendance at our fall and spring virtual business meetings and seeing many of our colleagues who otherwise would not have had the opportunity to participate.

Thank you to Zack Goodwin, who led us from June 2020 to March 2021 before transitioning to a new opportunity outside of Vermont. Zack brought great energy and an abundance of knowledge to VASFAA and we will miss him dearly as we wish him all the best! VASFAA has a bright future ahead with our newly elected board members: President Ryan Dulude, President-Elect Marie Johnson, Secretary Judy Buxton, and our Treasurer for another year, Martha Hinchman.

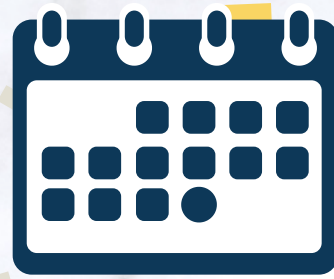
Sincerest gratitude to our sponsors, who provide not only financial support to VASFAA, but a wealth of knowledge, products, and support to our Vermont schools and students.

Please take a moment to read through this conference booklet and consider volunteering for a VASFAA committee. I have thoroughly enjoyed my terms as Secretary and President, and I believe that you will not be disappointed if you volunteer somewhere within this wonderful organization. Enjoy the conference and please contact me or any member of the VASFAA Board if you would like more information about ways you can volunteer to make our association even stronger.

Cheers!

MELANEY WALD
VASFAA President

Agenda



Tuesday

Day 1 - June 8	Duration	Session	Presenter(s)
9:45am-10:00am	15min	Opening/Welcome	Melaney Wald
10:00am-11:00am	1hr	Keynote "Power of the Positive"	Carrie Stack
11:00am-11:15am	15min	Break	
11:15am-12:15pm	1hr	VASFSA Business Meeting	Melaney Wald & Ryan
12:15pm-12:30pm	15min	Break	
12:30pm-1:30pm	1hr	How to Survive An Audit Before, During and After a Pandemic	Greg Rinderle

Wednesday

Day 2 - June 9	Duration	Session	Presenter(s)
8:30am-8:45am	15min	Opening/Welcome	Ryan Dulude
8:45am-9:45am	1hr	NASFSA Update & Q&A	Megan Coval
9:45am-10:00am	15min	Break	
10:00am-11:00am	1hr	State Update	Scott Giles
11:00am-11:15am	15mins	Break	
11:15am-12:15pm	1hr	The Value and Importance of Personal Relationships	Amy Dodge & Sara Vargo

Thursday

Day 3 - June 10	Duration	Session	Presenter(s)
12:00pm-12:15pm	15min	Opening/Welcome	Ryan Dulude
12:15pm-1:15pm	1hr	Student Eligibility and NSLDS	Matthew DeSorgher
1:15pm-1:30pm	15min	Break	
1:30pm-2:30pm	1hr	FAFSA Simplification Update	Jill Desjean
2:30pm-2:45pm	15min	Break	
2:45pm-3:45pm	1hr	Unintentional Bias's Role in Social Justice	Sherwood Smith, Ed.D
3:45pm-4:00pm	15min	Break	
4:00pm-5:00pm	1hr	Connecting and Investing - Apart Yet 2gether	

Session Descriptions



Keynote: Power of the Positive

Every single day people working throughout the field of higher education tirelessly support, encourage, & inspire students to succeed - which requires endless patience, optimism, and energy. This interactive keynote will highlight the most popular "people skills" strategies Carrie has successfully used with tens of thousands of people across the country & will provide participants with concrete tips/tools to help them keep doing this important work!

VASFAA Business Meeting

Join us for the 2021 VASFAA Business Meeting to stay up-to-date on the organization. We'll pass the President's gavel, review the FY22 budget, talk about the year ahead, and answer questions from the association!

How to Survive An Audit Before, During and After a Pandemic

Annual audits are required by the Department of Education to ensure institutions are compliant with Federal Title IV regulations. But this year, the regulations are continually changing due to the COVID-19 Pandemic (Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security (CARES) Act and Higher Education Emergency Relief Fund (HEERF)). Learn how to prepare for an audit; what to expect during the audit; how to document processes that have changed due to regulatory changes contained in the CARES Act and HEERF; what final steps are needed to complete an audit; and solutions to the most common audit findings.

NASFAA Update & Q&A

This session will provide a high-level landscape of the Washington political climate with a focus on COVID-19 relief efforts and the impact of federal financial aid policy. In addition, overall trends in student aid will be discussed including an overview of reauthorization proposals and predictions for how student aid funding will fare in upcoming budget battles. The session will also provide an overview of NASFAA-led projects, services, and advocacy efforts.

State Update

Hear the latest of what's happening in the Vermont legislature as it pertains to the work we do in financial aid, higher education, and as Vermonters and those who serve Vermonters!

The Value and Importance of Personal Relationships

In this presentation, we will reflect on the value and importance of personal relationships as they pertain to our work with students, colleagues, and communities. What we are speaking of is the act of taking the time to connect with the people around you. Bringing your kindness and heart to the room along with all your other strengths. Taking the time to listen, hear, and reflect with the intention of building a positive relationship, not just to get your work done. The current pandemic has been a challenging time and the importance of personal, kind relationships to maintain wellness has been magnified. How can we use this knowledge to grow our relationships with our students, colleagues, and communities? We hope that this presentation is a gentle reminder of all the wonderful tools you already have, and an inspiration for meaningful additions.

Student Eligibility and NSLDS

If a student exceeds their aggregate loan limits but then consolidates, are they eligible for aid? Can you offer new loans to a student who exceeds dependent loan limits but borrowed as an independent student last year? What loan limits apply if a student transfers schools mid-year? How do you resolve an NSLDS bankruptcy flag? What is a reaffirmation agreement and when do you need one? This session will address these questions and more, exploring student eligibility issues related to NSLDS and loan borrowing history.

FAFSA Simplification Update

Jill will lead a presentation and open discussion along with Teresa McCormack and Jeani Devani, both Financial Aid Directors within the VSC system. Join us to learn some of the highlights being addressed with the proposed FAFSA simplification and Verification changes slated for the 2023-2024 processing year.

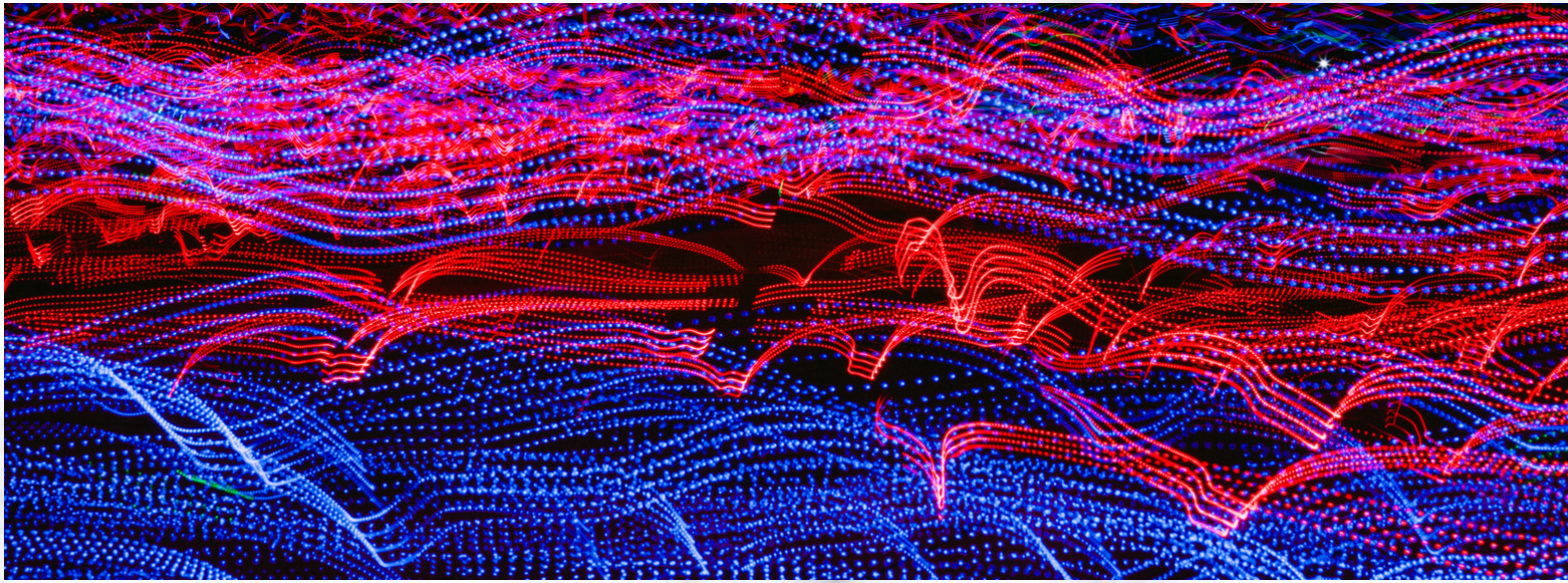
Unintentional Bias's Role in Social Justice

This introductory session explores less obvious forms of bias (unintentional and implicit) that can negatively impact our climate and productivity in higher education. Basic steps that can reduce these types of implicit bias are shared. Time for discussion and questions is part of the session. Further resources for post session learning are provided.

Connecting and Investing - Apart Yet 2gether

Grab the drink of your choice, put on some comfy clothes, and pop into the final session of the 2021 conference! We'll hear from our charity representative and then kick things off with a 'Guess Who' of the 2021 vendors as well as some music, conversation, fun, and just an overall jolly good time.





Mission.

The mission of the Vermont Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators is to promote the professional preparation, effectiveness, recognition, cooperation and association for our members to facilitate education, communication and cooperation among educational institutions and other organizations concerned with the support and administration of student financial aid.

Membership.

Membership includes Education Institutions of Post-secondary Education in the State of Vermont and VSAC and those educational associations, government agencies and organizations providing direct services that promote and support administration of financial aid to post-secondary institutions in Vermont.

Special Recognition.

Each year at its summer conference, VASFAA recognizes individuals who have made significant contributions to the association and financial aid profession in Vermont.

- | | |
|---|---|
| 2020 Ryan Dulude (Special Recognition) | 2009 Marcia Vance (Special Recognition, posthumous) |
| 2019 Pam Chisolm (Lifetime Achievement Award) | 2008 Michael Ireland (Volunteer of the year) |
| Donna Stevens (Outstanding Volunteer Award) | Yvonne Whitaker (Special Recognition) |
| 2018 Jill King (Outstanding Volunteer) | 2007 Cathy McCullough (Person of the Year) |
| 2016 Deborah Lessor (Volunteer of the year) | 2006 Dino Koff (Person of the Year) |
| 2015 Renee Blanchet (Volunteer of the year) | 2005 Marilyn Cargill (Person of the Year) |
| 2014 Ryan Gates (Volunteer of the year) | 2004 Dave Myette (Person of the Year) |
| 2013 Don Vickers (Lifetime of Achievement) | 2003 Yvonne Whitaker (Person of the Year) |
| 2012 Cathy Mullins (Volunteer of the year) | 2002 Maureen Gardner (Person of the Year) |
| 2011 Natalie Young (Volunteer of the year) | 2001 Pam Chisolm (Person of the Year) |
| Jason Stuart Walt (Special Recognition) | Ted Franzeim (Person of the Year) |
| 2010 Kit Ardell (Volunteer of the year) | 2000 Ken Moulton (Person of the Year) |

Please don't forget to complete the conference survey with your valuable feedback!



WE WILL EMAIL THE SURVEY LINK AFTER THE CONFERENCE

Keep an eye out for it!



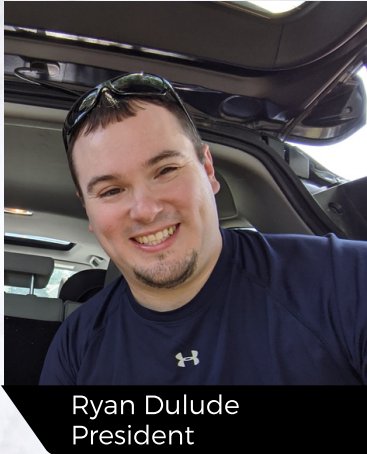
Need a resume boost?

Join a committee - make connections, gain experience, share knowledge!

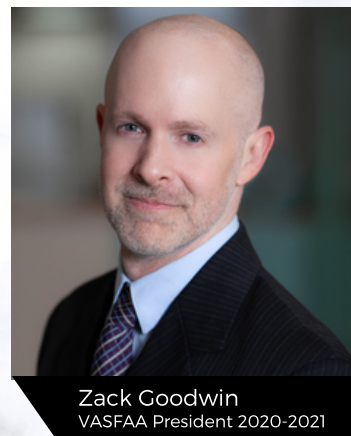
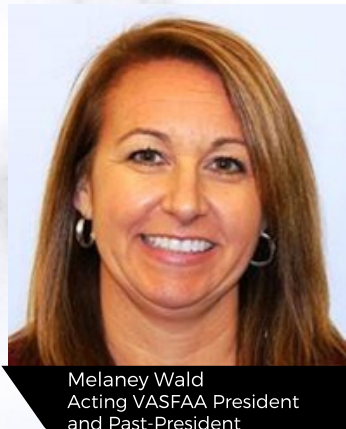
INSIDE VASFAA

- ELECTED OFFICERS -

2021-2022



2020-2021





Chris Barry
Co-Chair



Jeani Stella-Devani
Co-Chair



Lisa Talbot
Co-Chair



Marilyn Cargill

2021
CONFERENCE
COMMITTEE

welcomes you to the conference
 this year and invites you to
 join the committee!



Ryan Gates



Martha Hinchman



Lynda Ossola



Linda Thatcher

CONFERENCE@VASFAAVT.ORG

GET INVOLVED!

- JOIN A COMMITTEE -

VASF AA Executive Committee

President: Presides over all meetings of the Association and the Executive Committee and performs other duties that pertain to leading VASF AA as President. They are a member of all committees and also the official voting representative of VASF AA to any regional or national association.



President-Elect: In the temporary absence or disability of the President, this person shall have the powers and perform all duties and responsibilities of the President. If there is not a President-Elect in office, these functions are performed by the Past-President until election of a President-Elect.

Treasurer: Responsible for disbursement and receivables for VASF AA under policies approved by the Executive Committee and is responsible for keeping record of receipts and disbursements. The Treasurer should also be prepared to submit a financial report at each regular Association meeting.

Treasurer-Elect: Shall perform duties of the Treasurer in the event the Treasurer is unable to serve and performs duties as assigned by the President.



Secretary: Responsible for developing, distributing, and maintaining the non-financial records of the Association. This person also assumes responsibility for maintaining VASF AA's P&P Manual, administering the election of officers and any other voting requirements, and works closely with the President in planning VASF AA business and Executive Meetings.



GET INVOLVED!

- MORE COMMITTEES -

Website Committee: Responsible for the upkeep of the VASFAA website and monitoring the web email inbox for requests. Common updates include, yearly committee updates, meeting minutes, conference and event updates, and job board updates. This committee also works with the VASFAA website provider for updates to forms.



Conference Committee: Plans the annual summer conference which includes financial aid updates, trainings, and professional development opportunities. Monitors the conference email inbox and works closely with the Website Committee for conference page updates.

By-Laws Committee: The By-Laws committee reviews both the by-laws and Association activities annually to confirm that the Association is acting within the by-laws. The committee also recommends changes to the by-laws, as needed.



Government Relations Committee: Monitors and influences government financial aid activities and informs and educates the membership. Also keeps the VT delegation aware of issues affecting our students and campuses.

Training Committee: Enhances the professional development of the membership by recommending and soliciting training topics and sees them through to implementation.





Northeast Kingdom Asylum Seekers Assistance Network

<https://nekasan.org/>

"To provide for the basic needs of asylum seekers within a supportive community in the Northeast Kingdom of Vermont.

We help asylum seekers get released from detention by providing sponsorship, hosting, support and a welcoming community!"

NEKASAN currently sponsors 3 Guests:

- One has secured employment and plans to work with VSAC to pursue their CDL.**
- One has completed a CCV course (with a high grade) and plans to continue their studies.**
- One recently returned to VT and is excited to start a new job while waiting for their first child to be born.**



NEKASAN HAS RECENTLY DECIDED TO SPONSOR UP TO 3 ADDITIONAL GUESTS!

How can you help?

- **DONATE**
- Sponsor/Host
- Volunteer
- Join the 'Welcoming Community'

Online: [NEKASAN.org](https://nekasan.org)

Mobile Giving: Text NEKASAN to 44321

Mail a Check: NEKASAN PO Box 4123,
St. Johnsbury, VT 05819



KEYNOTE

POWER OF THE POSITIVE

Carrie Stack, M.Ed. is a Certified Life Coach, author and motivational speaker with over 25 years of experience providing people with skills and tools to make positive changes in their lives. Founder of the Say Yes Institute (SYI), a company focused on building emotional intelligence skills through training and coaching, Carrie has shared her “people skills” strategies with thousands of people across the country who are looking to build more positive and powerful relationships, both at home and at work.

CARRIE STACK





Megan Coval

VP, POLICY & FEDERAL RELATIONS, NASFAA

Megan is the Vice President of 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.



Jill Desjean

POLICY ANALYST, NASFAA

Jill Desjean is a Policy Analyst with the National Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators. In her role, Jill works with NASFAA's members to develop policy recommendations, provides feedback to Congress on legislative proposals, and interprets financial aid-related policy issues for NASFAA's members and other audiences. Prior to joining NASFAA, Jill enjoyed a 20-year career in financial aid administration, having held roles in the financial aid offices at Tufts University School of Medicine, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Brandeis University and the College of the Holy Cross in Massachusetts as well as The New School in New York City. Jill joined NASFAA in 2016 and lives in Maryland with her husband and three children.



Scott Giles

PRESIDENT AND CEO OF VSAC

Scott A. Giles has served VSAC since 2003. Mr. Giles was appointed president and CEO of VSAC after serving as vice president of operations, social marketing, and strategy. Mr. Giles previously served as deputy chief of staff of the Committee on Science of the U.S. House of Representatives and as senior professional staff member on the U.S. Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor and Pensions, where he authored the student loan provisions of the Higher Education Act of 1998. He was appointed by the Secretary of Education to serve on the Federal Advisory Committee on Student Financial Assistance and was elected chair. A national expert in higher education policy, regulation, and servicing, he has been designated by Secretary Spellings and Secretary Duncan to represent the nonprofit student loan lenders and servicers in three rounds of negotiated rule-making. Mr. Giles has a BA from St. Lawrence University and an MA and PhD from the University of Virginia, as well as certificates in finance and management from the Harvard Business School and the Kennedy School of Government.



Matthew DeSorgher

ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR, STUDENT FINANCIAL SERVICES

Matt's financial aid career began at VSAC in 2003 where he worked as a loan counselor and financial aid advisor. In 2007, Matt moved to the University of Vermont where he worked for seven years as both a financial aid counselor and Assistant Director for Compliance. From 2014 through 2019 Matt worked in the Student Financial Services office at Saint Michael's College as Associate Director and Director. Matt returned to UVM in 2019 where he now serves as Associate Director of Student Financial Services. Having landed in financial aid through the curious twists and turns of life, Matt has stayed in the field because he enjoys helping students and families and the comradery among those who work in the profession. Matt lives in Saint Albans with his wife and two daughters.



Greg Rinderle

AUDITS DIRECTOR, MCCLINTOCK & ASSOCIATES

Gregory is a Director within the Audit Department and has over 16 years of experience in the public sector. Clients value his views on internal controls and processes, Title IV regulations, proactive solutions for meeting regulatory covenants, interpretation of regulations, and suggestions to minimize compliance findings in student financial aid audits.

Gregory is an active presenter at numerous national conferences and conventions. Outside of the firm, he is the Board member for Hillside Christian Community and has been Youth leader for the past 13 years.

Gregory earned his Bachelor of Science Degrees in Accounting & Finance from Pennsylvania State University. He is a member of several different financial aid associations. He enjoys Martial Arts which he has been teaching and studying for over 25 years. He also likes to spend time with his wife Jamie and two sons Jacob and Jackson, camping, riding his ATV, playing baseball, golfing and exercising.



Amy Dodge

LEAD OUTREACH COUNSELOR, VSAC GEARUP

As a first-generation college student and native Vermonter, Amy is driven by a desire to serve her community and has dedicated her life to supporting students in their pursuit of education, training, and career opportunities. Working with Vermont State GEAR UP (VSGU) is the perfect continuation of her desire to support students in those endeavors.

Having over 25 years of experience in elementary, secondary and, higher education settings provides the basis for all Amy does with VSGU and in her role as Lead Outreach Counselor. Her role provides supervision and direction to VSGU's 10 Outreach Counselors who provide direct service to VSGU's 2,500 students in 38 schools across the state. Amy's many years of experience working with students of all ages has created positive and impactful change for them and hopefully, for generations to come.



Sara Vargo

OUTREACH COUNSELOR, VSAC GEARUP

Sara Vargo has been working with Vermont State GEAR UP (VSGU) as an Outreach Counselor since 2019. She has a Masters in Clinical Social Work and has worked in the mental health field as a clinician with children, adolescents and their families for the majority of her career. Sara's desire to pivot into the realm of college and career counseling with VSGU stems from a drive to support students as they explore the many possibilities of the future and support them in envisioning and attaining their goals. Sara's mental health background brings an important lens to this exploration. Sara finds that she does her best work when she feels as though she is part of a team that embraces collaboration and a drive to do good in the world. Outside of work Sara enjoys being active outdoors, experimenting with design and playing with her two children.



Sherwood Smith, Ed.D

DIRECTOR, CENTER FOR CULTURAL PLURALISM & SENIOR
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR VP DEI

Dr. Sherwood Smith works at the University of Vermont (UVM). Since summer 2014 he serves as Senior Executive Director for Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Unit which includes: Center for Cultural Pluralism, Interfaith Center, The Mosaic Center for Students of Color, The Prism, Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, Questioning and Ally Center, and Women & Gender Equity Center at UVM. As a faculty (2000-2014) with an appointment in the College of Education and Social Services, taught undergraduate and graduate courses. Through the Center for Cultural Pluralism, serving as director for the past 19 years provided professional development for faculty and staff on issues of cultural and social justice.

He has been faculty with the Summer Institute for Intercultural Communication (SIIC) in Portland, Oregon since 2000 - 2019 and the Winter Institute for Intercultural Communication (WIIC) in 2017 & 2018 at the UMASS Center in Springfield, Massachusetts.

Sherwood is a Co-Founder & Partner of CQ Strategies, LLC (www.cqstrategies.org), a collective of 5 partners providing training and consulting services on cultural competency, implicit bias, and organizational change. CQ Strategies has worked with more than 65 organizations, colleges, and city departments since 2010.

Sherwood consults individually focusing on equity, inclusion, intercultural communication in general and higher education curriculum & climate diversity issues and some of his clients have been Burlington Police Department, National Life Insurance, Oregon State University and Middlebury College. Sherwood has spoken on Vermont Public Radio and WCAX Television.

SPOTLIGHT ON: Jeanne "Jeani" Stella-Devani

Director of Financial Aid, Vermont Technical College



Jeani is one of the newest Directors of Financial Aid in Vermont! An opportunity at Vermont Technical College (VTC) brought Jeani to Vermont in November 2019, just in time for her first official "Vermont Christmas"!

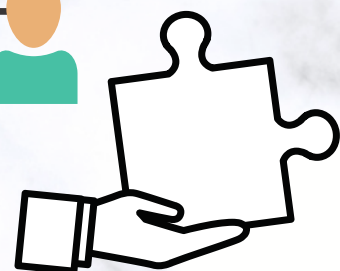
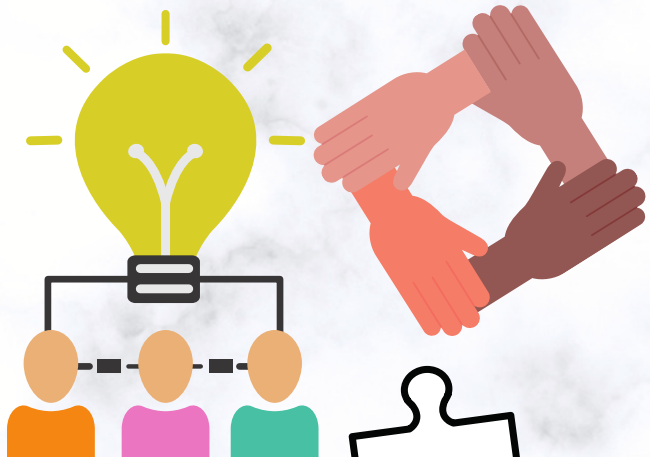
She is a Massachusetts-girl who traveled as far from home as possible to attend college and found the perfect international school in California. Taking advantage of their student exchange program, Jeani ventured to Mexico City for a semester-long program where she ended up falling in love with Mexico life and spent 4 years beginning her lifelong passion for travel and adventure.

Jeani and her husband (an Integrations Developer at Norwich) live in her dream home filled with plenty of nooks and crannies, and lots of space. Her son graduated Champlain College and lives and works nearby and her daughter will be entering her junior year at the University of Delaware this fall. Jeani and her daughter share a love of travel and the two of them will be headed to St. Thomas in July!

Jeani started her career in Financial Aid as a work-study student. Over 30+ years later, her experience includes work in Financial Aid, Student Accounts, Registrar, and as an independent higher education consultant.

Jeani is really looking forward to getting past the pandemic so she can finally get to meet her VASFAA colleagues face-to-face. "It has been tough meeting people, moving to a new home and starting a new job during the pandemic". Jeani loves to be involved in her community and her profession which is one of the reasons that she volunteered to be a co-chair of this year's VASFAA Summer Conference.

INTERESTED IN BECOMING MORE INVOLVED? CONTACT PRESIDENT@VASFAAVT.ORG



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Inceptia

A DIVISION OF NSLP

The logo for Earnest, featuring the word "earnest" in a lowercase, green, sans-serif font on a solid purple rectangular background.

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SoFi

The SoFi logo icon, consisting of a 3x3 grid of circles. The top row has three solid blue circles. The middle row has a solid blue circle, a white circle with a blue outline, and a solid blue circle. The bottom row has a white circle with a blue outline, a solid blue circle, and a white circle with a blue outline.