



Facing the Future Together!

***2025 VASFAA
Conference***

***Saint Michael's College
June 11, 2025***

Dear VASFAA Colleagues:

Things do not seem to be getting easier in Financial Aid, but VASFAA is resilient, and I am thankful for the opportunity to connect and support each other through a time of constant change and uncertainty.

I am proud of the diligent work that the Conference Committee has done to prepare this year's conference. It is not a small task to plan and execute the conference while managing all the other responsibilities we have. I am also so grateful for our membership who keep VASFAA going strong.

Change is constant, but no matter what lies around the corner we have what it takes to face the future together. Please enjoy the opportunity to build and sustain the community that makes VASFAA the small but mighty organization it is.

Welcome, and enjoy,

Tanner Matchus

VASFAA President

Agenda

Time	Session	Presenter
8:00 - 9:00	Registration	
9:00 - 9:15	Opening/Welcome	Tanner Matchus
9:15 - 10:15	Catching and Combating Fraud: A Vermont Perspective	Ryan Dulude and Marianne Werner
10:15 - 10:30	Break	
10:30 - 11:30	Breakout Sessions	
	R2T4 and Modules	Matt DeSorgher and Tanner Matchus
	Technology Roundtable: What Works to Engage Students	Ray Sykes
11:30 - 12:30	Lunch	
12:30 - 1:00	VASFAA Business Meeting	
1:00 - 1:45	EASFAA Update	Ken Ferreira
1:45 - 2:30	State and Federal Update	Scott Giles
2:30 - 2:45	Break	
2:45 - 3:45	Breakout Sessions	
	The Clear Framework: Responding to Difficult Student Situations	Conner Gilbert
	From FAFSA Frustrations to Future Solutions: A Vermont Collaborative	Jade Leighty
3:45 - 4:00	Closing	Matt DeSorgher
4:00 - 4:30	Networking	

Session Descriptions

Catching and Combatting Fraud: A Vermont Perspective

This discussion will cover observations and challenges on college campuses; strategies and tactics being employed by two Vermont colleges to combat fraud; the importance of collaborating with other institutions and sharing ideas and resources. Don't miss this opportunity to gain valuable advice and actionable tactics.

Return of Title IV Funds and Modules

In this session you will learn how to identify whether a program is offered in modules, how to determine whether a student enrolled in a modular program has withdrawn, how to determine date of withdrawal, date of determination, number of days in the period, and other critical elements to complete an R2T4 for a modular program.

Technology Roundtable: What Works to Engage Students

Come gather round the tables to discuss technology success stories and challenges related to financial aid in small groups. Topics of discussion will include: what technologies are currently proving the most effective in engaging students with financial aid information; what are the biggest challenges you face in using the technology.

Session Descriptions

The CLEAR Framework: Responding to Difficult Student Situations

Financial aid professionals support students and families with possibly the most stressful subject: finances. The CLEAR framework offers a practical, empathetic approach to addressing student concerns— helping staff listen actively, uncover root issues, and build trust before jumping to solutions. This interactive workshop includes small group practice and will equip participants with tools they can immediately apply in their daily work.

From FAFSA Frustrations to Future Solutions: A Vermont Collaborative

The landscape of financial aid is undergoing significant shifts, most notably with the implementation challenges and ongoing consequences of FAFSA Simplification. From processing delays and ISIR corrections, to evolving student demographics and resource constraints, financial aid offices are at the forefront of navigating unprecedented complexities. This session provides a platform for financial aid professionals to connect over shared struggles and collaboratively build strategies for navigating the current and future complexities of their field.

Presenters



Ryan Dulude

Ryan Dulude is the Director of Financial Aid at the Community College of Vermont, overseeing all financial aid functions across 12 academic locations in Vermont. He holds a B.A. in Journalism and Mass Communications from Saint Michael's College, an M.Ed. in Higher Education Administration from Northeastern University, and is a Certified Financial Aid Administrator. Ryan has worked in financial aid for 17 years, first as a counselor at Vermont Student Assistance Corporation (VSAC) and, since 2011, at CCV. He is a past president of the Vermont Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators (VASFAA) and has represented Vermont on three separate occasions on the Eastern Association of Student Financial Aid Administrator's (EASFAA) management council. He has served as a member of several state, regional, and national financial aid committees, including as a past chair of the EASFAA Federal Relations Committee and current chair of the VASFAA Government Relations Committee. He is a past recipient of VASFAA's Special Recognition Award and was a member of Vermont Business Magazine's Rising Stars Class of 2024. Ryan's volunteer work includes serving as a gubernatorial appointee on the VSAC Board of Directors, founding board member of the Early Learning Center in Colchester, and as a youth baseball coach. Ryan, a lifelong Vermonter, former Pell Grant recipient, and first-generation college student, lives in Milton with his wife and two children.



Marianne Werner

Marianne is the current Director of Financial Aid since July 2024 at Champlain College serving the on campus students with her focus remaining on the online undergraduate and graduate populations. She graduated from St. Michael's College with a Bachelor of Science in Psychology and was a lead Financial Aid Counselor in VSAC's Student Financial Aid Services Division from 1995-2008 which served as the Financial Aid Office for eight to ten Vermont post-secondary institutions. She was Director of Financial Aid at New England Culinary Institute from 2008-2016 and Associate Director of Financial Aid serving the online undergraduate and graduate populations at Champlain College beginning summer of 2016.

Presenters



Matt DeSorgher

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 Senior 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 because of the great comradery among those who work in the profession. Matt lives in Saint Albans with his wife and two daughters.



Tanner Matchus

Tanner Matchus is the Associate Director of Financial Aid at the Community College of Vermont (CCV). Tanner began his career in financial aid in 2014 as a Financial Aid Counselor at CCV. He has also served as a Coordinator of Financial Aid Services and the Assistant Director of Financial Aid at CCV prior to his current role.

Tanner is a NASFAA Certified Financial Aid Administrator® has earned several NASFAA credentials including R2T4, Satisfactory Academic Progress, Verification, and Cost of Attendance. He earned his BA in Anthropology from New Mexico State University and MA in Education from Western New Mexico University. He has served on the VASFAA conference committee and is VASFAA President. He is also a recipient of EASFAA's Outstanding State Representative Award.



Conner Gilbert

Conner Gilbert (he/him) is the Director of Student Services at the Community College of Vermont (CCV), where he oversees the TRIO Student Support Services (SSS) program and learning services. He previously held roles in academic advising and financial aid and currently contributes to CCV's coach training team. As a first-generation college student, Pell Grant recipient, and alum of the VSAC Talent Search program, Conner brings a deep understanding of the barriers many students face in accessing higher education. He holds a BA in Environmental Studies and Economics from Middlebury College and an MA in Leadership Studies from Northern Vermont University.

Presenters



Kenn Ferreira

Ken Ferreira is a seasoned enrollment and student financial aid professional with a career spanning over 25 years. He began his journey in higher education as a federal work-study student at his alma mater, Notre Dame College in Manchester, NH. Since December 2024, Ken has served as the Assistant Vice President for Student Financial Services at Suffolk University in Boston, where he leads a team of 20 staff and oversees more than \$200 million in student financial aid. His role also includes supervision of the Ram Registration and Financial Services Center, a one-stop service hub for students.

Ken is the 2025–26 President of the Eastern Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators (EASFAA), an organization he has actively contributed to since 1999. His leadership has earned him two Committee of the Year awards and recognition for his commitment to the 2,000-member association.

Previously, from 2005 to 2024, Ken held several leadership roles at Franklin Pierce University in Rindge, NH, including Vice President for Institutional Planning & Effectiveness and Director of Student Financial Services. He played a pivotal role in merging the Financial Aid and Bursar's offices and advancing the university's strategic planning initiatives.

Ken also served an unprecedented four terms as President of the New Hampshire Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators, where he authored the organization's long-range strategic plan and strengthened its financial foundation.

In addition to his work in higher education, Ken has been a dedicated board member of Community Crossroads, Inc. since 2005, holding several leadership roles including Chairman of the Board from 2013 to 2019.

Presenters



Scott Giles

Scott Giles is President and CEO of the Vermont Student Assistance Corporation (VSAC), a public non-profit established by the Vermont legislature in 1965 to open the doors of education and training to students of all ages. VSAC is widely recognized for innovation in the development of college access and success programs, expanded support for industry recognized credentials, facilitating employer-educator partnerships and use of research to shape policy.

An expert on federal and state higher education finance policy, he has devoted his career to expanding access to education and training after high school. He received a bachelor's degree in religious studies from St. Lawrence University and an M.A. and Ph.D. in Religious Studies (ethics) from the University of Virginia.

Prior to joining VSAC, Scott served as deputy chief of staff of the House Committee on Science. He previously worked on the majority staff of the Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions and was a principal staff member on the Higher Education Amendments of 1998 and the National Science Foundation Authorization Act.

Scott served as chair of the Federal Advisory Committee on Student Financial Assistance and has been appointed by multiple Secretaries of Education to represent non-profit student loan and grant providers in negotiated rulemaking. He has been interviewed by the Chronicle of Higher Education, The Economist, The New York Times, The Washington Post, and The Wall Street Journal.



Vermont Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators

Mission

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.

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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.

2024 Paige Carrier (Special Recognition)
Lynda Ossola (Outstanding Volunteer)
2023 Martha Hinchman (Special Recognition)
Linda Thatcher (Outstanding Volunteer)
2022 Jeani Stella-Devani (Special Recognition)
Matt DeSorgher (Outstanding Volunteer)
Tanya Bradley (Lifetime Achievement)
2021 Melaney Wald (Special Recognition)
Chris Barry (Outstanding Volunteer)
2020 Ryan Dulude (Special Recognition)
2019 Pam Chisolm (Lifetime Achievement)
Donna Stevens (Outstanding Volunteer)
2018 Greg Davis (Special Recognition)
Jill King (Outstanding Volunteer)
2016 Deborah Lessor (Volunteer of the year)
2015 Renee Blanchet (Volunteer of the year)
2014 Ryan Gates (Volunteer of the year)
2013 Don Vickers (Lifetime of Achievement)

2012 Cathy Mullins (Volunteer of the year)
2011 Natalie Young (Volunteer of the year)
Jason Stuart Walt (Special Recognition)
2010 Kit Ardell (Volunteer of the year)
2009 Marcia Vance (Special Recognition,
posthumous)
2008 Michael Ireland (Volunteer of the year)
Yvonne Whitaker (Special Recognition)
2007 Cathy McCullough (Person of the Year)
2006 Dino Koff (Person of the Year)
2005 Marilyn Cargill (Person of the Year)
2004 Dave Myette (Person of the Year)
2003 Yvonne Whitaker (Person of the Year)
2002 Maureen Gardner (Person of the Year)
2001 Pam Chisholm (Person of the Year)
Ted Franzeim (Person of the Year)
2000 Ken Moulton (Person of the Year)

Inside VASFAA

Elected Officers



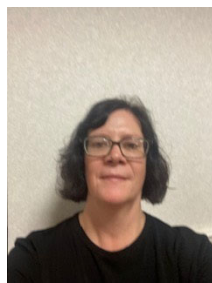
Tanner Matchus
President



Matt DeSorgher
President - Elect



Chris Barry
Secretary



Jennifer Tosi
Treasurer



Lisa Talbot
Associate Member Representative

Conference Committee



Jennifer Tosi



Tanner Matchus



Jade Leighty



Liz Studley
Chair



Ali Herman



Kathryn Calvert



Michele Hastings



Joann Larson



Janet Hinnis



Ray Sykes

Get Involved!

Run for elected office

VASFAA Executive Committee

President: Presides over all meetings of the Association and the Executive Committee and performs other duties that pertain to leading VASFAA as President. They are a member of all committees and also the official voting representative of VASFAA 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.

Past-President: An officer of the Association who serves as a member of the Executive Committee performs duties as assigned by the President.

Treasurer: Responsible for disbursement and receivables for VASFAA 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 VASFAA's P&P Manual, administering the election of officers and any other voting requirements, and works closely with the President in planning VASFAA business and Executive Meetings.

Associate Member Representative: Serves as the official representative and spokesperson of the associate members. This person serves as the voting member for all associate members and performs duties as assigned by the President. This individual serves and/or works closely with various committees to ensure associate members are incorporated and when possible, expand the membership.

Get Involved!

Join a committee

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.

Membership Engagement Committee

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

Not quite ready to join a committee?

You can still get involved by moderating a session at a future conference!

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

**We will e-mail the survey link
after the conference.**

Keep an eye out for it!

2025 Conference Sponsors Thank You!



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