



Welcome – Staci Holzheimer, Awareness Committee Co-Chairperson, called meeting to order at 2:00 p.m. Meeting was held remotely via ZOOM.

Members and Attendees present:

Committee Members Present		email
X	*Staci Holzheimer, BND [Co-Chair]	sholzheimer@nd.gov
X	*Tammie Reger, NDSU [Co-Chair]	Tammie.Reger@ndsu.edu
X	Bethany Vincent, NDSU	Bethany.Vincent@ndsu.edu
	Chelsea Larson, University of North Dakota	Chelsea.Larson@und.edu
	Chris Meek, Dickinson State	Christopher.Meek@dickinsonstate.edu
X	Karrie Huber, University of Mary	kkhuber@umary.edu
	Kelsey Walters, Lake Region State College	Kelsey.Walters@lrsc.edu
X	Laurie Kovar, University of North Dakota	Laurie.Kovar@und.edu
X	Lindsey Benson, Minot State University	Lindsey.Benson@minotstateu.edu
	Melonie Schwab, University of Mary	
X	Tonya Critz, Minot State University	Tonya.Critz@minotStateu.edu
Others Present		email
X	Alexandria Bauer, NDUS (visiting)	Alexandria.Bauer@ndus.edu
X	Amanda Woidyla, Bank of North Dakota	awoidyla@nd.gov
X	Andrea Carver, Williston State College	Andrea.Carver@willistonstate.edu
X	Desiree Cannon, Williston State College	Desiree.Cannon@willistonstate.edu
X	Crystal Tangsrud, NDUS CTS (visiting)	Crystal.Tansrud@ndus.edu
X	Heidi Smart, University of North Dakota	Heidi.Smart@und.edu
X	Katie Simonson, University of North Dakota	Katie.Simonson@und.edu
X	Laurie Weber, Minot State University	Laurie.Weber@minotstateu.edu
X	Marcia Pritchert, Valley City State University	Marcia.pritchert@vcsu.edu
X	Melanie Walkingbull	
X	Sheila Dolan, North Dakota State College of Science	Sheila.Dolan@ndscs.edu
X	Susan Cordahl, Mayville State University	Susan.Cordahl@mayvillestate.edu

Staci Holzheimer – Awareness /Committee Report 2021 (see separate document)

Counselor Workshops 2020-21:

- COVID restrictions – In person Counselor Workshops were replaced with informational videos and linked to NDASFAA website. No revenue collected from Workshops for 2020-21.
- BND still donated \$2000 that was typically used to sponsor Workshops to be used as scholarship dollars.
- Also utilized \$100 from NDASFAA account.
- Total of 7 - \$300 scholarships will be awarded this year.
- Questions? None

Financial Aid sessions:

- Scholarship applications were down in numbers. Students who attended Financial Aid information sessions (High School level) were invited to submit an application.
- Scholarship applications:
 - 2019-20: 389 vs. 2020-21: 127*
Scholarship applications for 2020-21 were received online.

Scholarship awards were drawn randomly using a **random number generator**. 7 winners and 7 alternates selected from 127 applicants.

Received information electronically for scholarship applications so able to draw names electronically for the scholarship awards today.

127 applications received:

WINNERS:	88,	66,	62,	71,	33,	95,	126
ALTERNATES:	22,	83,	120,	84,	1,	39,	87

Winners

1. Mathias Brien – NDSU
2. Paige Priewe – BSC
3. Jacob Dutchuk – NDSU
4. Kaden Auch – U Mary
5. Christina Mathias – NDSU
6. Anna Carignan – Mayville State University
7. Maria Cordero Solis – BSC

Alternates

1. KyAnna Halmrast – NDSU
2. Peyton Zaun – Valley City State University
3. Emily Hamilton – NDSU
4. Sophia Socwell – Dakota College at Bottineau
5. Kasey Stegman – Mayville State University, Lake Region State College, Bismarck State College, Dakota College at Bottineau, North Dakota State College of Science
6. Devin Quick – Valley City State University
7. Tanielle Berg – NDSCS

Staci Holzheimer will reach out to individuals as to confirm where they plan to attend and will follow up with Bethany Vincent (NDASFAA Treasurer) to send funds to the college payable to both the student and the institution.

Time of year sent? End of July / early August.

Staci Holzheimer will reach out to Counselor workshop contacts to discuss how we will proceed for workshops for the coming year.

Initiative Discussion/Review: Alexandria Bauer (FA Assistant, ND University System)

ND FAFSA Completion Project: NDUS is participating in effort to increase number of FAFSA completions of HS seniors. Project provides participating HS districts with individual student's FAFSA completion information. Counselors, or other working directly with seniors, are able to log into E-Transcript to view completion data. The tool is to help counselors determine which individual students

have submitted a FAFSA and whether the FAFSA has any issues requiring follow-up with the student (e.g. missing signatures, selected for verification, etc.) Counselors can target their outreach to help seniors navigate the Financial Aid process. If school doesn't participate in the E-Transcript system, they wouldn't have access to the data.

Q: Bethany Vincent: Why wouldn't school have access to E-Transcript? Cost barrier?

A: Alexandria Bauer: Uncertain - have both private and public schools currently participating.

- E-Transcript helpful to Counselors to better assist seniors to work through the process. Individual schools can bring up their specific data and export FAFSA data by year to EXCEL. There are 48 schools currently participating.
 - DATA AVAILABLE: FAFSA year, Student ID & name, HS enrollment dates, FAFSA submitted & processed dates, Verification flag (y/n), etc.
 - Data provides easy access to follow up with specific students
- Current data: 43% FAFSA completion rate reported in North Dakota (as of 4/13/21). Usually at 48% completion rate by July/August.
- Goal: ND historically completion rates are low. Nationwide 47-49% completion rate reported.
- Reasonable goal for us to consider in ND: 50% completion rate.

Discussion: How can we help/support this initiative?

One barrier is how to convince small schools of the value of FAFSA completion.

The E-Transcript system can streamline the process of knowing who has/has not completed the FAFSA. Easier to contact only those who have not completed the FAFSA and address questions or provide assistance. Looking to see how we can promote the use of E-Transcript to high school counselors.

Q: Bethany Vincent: IF a school doesn't participate in E-Transcripts – (e.g. smaller school that has maybe 10 seniors and all have filled out FAFSA). If data isn't reported in E-Transcripts – how do we know about it and how could (or does) this skew the overall completion rate data? We could already be at our national completion rate goal, but don't know it if there are some schools that don't participate in E-Transcripts system.

A: Alexandria Bauer: Other systems (e.g. Mapping Future) reporting data lower than what we are seeing in E-Transcripts but again, we are not looking at all data within E-Transcripts either.

Lindsey Benson: Directors for CUSAD calls (January?) Janelle at UND asked to speak to CUSAD user group. FAFSA completion down at that time. All schools having trouble with enrollment numbers. She came to that group to get ideas about how to set up a FAFSA initiative completion project. Financial Aid Awareness Month: February. Great idea but here wasn't much time to set up devise a plan at that point. During that conversation it seemed logical for this project/effort be added to Awareness Committee since that topic is part of our goal.

Laurie Weber: Idea was to see if NDASFAA (maybe the Awareness Committee) was willing to put some energy behind the effort. Look into developing common message/language to share collectively to make this more of a priority or make students more aware of the importance of FAFSA completion in ND. Look at pushing information out through our social media platforms, connections with High School counselors, etc. to make a push toward improving FAFSA completion rates. Alex's data could help

provide the statistical data to help us understand where we are at for completion rates overall as compared to prior years. The hope was to look at moving this question over to this group - Could we collectively as a financial aid community put our heads together to come up with some things that might help improve FAFSA completion rates.

Staci Holzheimer: Is this an initiative we should look at annually?

Laurie Weber: Similar to events NDASFAA supported in the past (e.g. College Bowl Sunday, HS Counselor Workshops, etc.). Wondering if this is something we as a committee could collaborate on in order to develop a common/universal theme we could use together more consistently so we aren't all trying to reinvent this messaging effort individually. Good to develop universal and consistent themes that we can share.

Staci Holzheimer: Timeline?

Laurie Weber: nothing specific at this time – possibly October through February?

Karrie Huber: Develop GO TO Website – tab set up for FAFSA completion where templates can be set up, texting scripts to send out to students, parents, school announcements, etc. Potentially open up Oct 1st – send out reminders to counselors to begin using the information earlier.

Staci Holzheimer: During current year workshops this could be a focus point – great way to get this initiative kicked off and out in front of interested people.

Lindsey Benson: Link to resources out there already on NDASFAA site (Financial Aid Toolkit). Provide the tools so they don't have to create extra work to initiate the effort.

Staci Holzheimer: Look into what current templates are out there already through Mapping Your Future? Develop communications as a group and develop a tool kit on our web site.

Staci Holzheimer: SNAP benefits information?

Bethany Vincent: Eligibility for college students to receive SNAP benefits (food stamps, discounted meals, etc.) Every state has different documentation requirements. Our NDASFAA board discussed whether or not this would be something for the Awareness committee to look into (reach out to county/state offices) to determine what documentation is required for students to apply for benefits. This is just in preliminary discussion stage at this time. Do we feel this is something that falls under our Awareness Committee goals?

Staci Holzheimer: That document would be sent out to institutions across the state?

Tammie Reger: This would be a logical place for this task to fall.

Bethany Vincent: Who to contact? Assume that ND would have same state guidelines? Department of Human Services a good resource of a place to start. Possibly using University of Nebraska as an example.

Karrie Huber: Yes, Department of Human Services (SNAP, Medicare, Medicaid, etc.)

*Don't call on Wednesday's – that's their work day

Bethany Vincent: If we think as a committee this is where the initiative belongs, she will go forward with recommending to the board to have this come through our committee.

Laurie Weber: Each state has different conditions/regulations. Don't want to create false hope or create massive backlog for agencies that would have to process applications for students ... Could we create a form to help define eligibility requirements across the state? Person she was in contact with wasn't very clear about providing specific language for defining eligibility.

Bethany Vincent: Go directly to state office to search for information?

Lindsey looked at Nebraska announcement which does have some Q & A information but it is very broad.

Bethany Vincent: Nebraska document shared at the Board meeting this morning. Doesn't show what documentation is required just refers individuals to contact FA offices. BV will look into the information and will share follow up information at our next meeting.

Staci Holzheimer will schedule meeting this summer to review this topic as well as FAFSA initiative and Counselor workshops.

Anything else to review?

- Bethany Vincent: Staci, do you want to let Marcia know Awareness Committee will look into the SNAP benefits topic? Yes, and Staci will gather additional information from Bethany – regarding State Benefits (schedule follow up later part of June).
- Staci will also complete the follow up for NDASFAA scholarship application information and forward to Bethany ASAP.

No further discussion. Meeting adjourned.