

**MEMBERS:**

Co-Chair: Joanne Dashiell, ASA

Co-Chair: Migdalia Gomez, Emmanuel College

Co-Chair: Kendra Lider-Johnson, MEFA & Meredith Barnhart, MEFA

**Members:** Beth Feinberg Kennan-College Coach, Deb Marsella-Middlesex CC, Cathy Nelson-Brandeis, Kristi Pierce-TERI, , Julie Shields-Rutya-MEFA

**Ex Officio Members:** Beth Hennessey-Blackstone Valley Tech, John Lewis-Springfield Y, Luis Manzi-Springfield Y, Ollie McArdle-OSFA, Holly Morrow-uAspire (formerly ACCESS Boston), Adam Reinke-uAspire (formerly ACCESS Boston)

**PURPOSE:**

The Committee is charged with developing and successfully implementing a statewide event that assists Massachusetts families with the first step in applying for financial aid for college – completing the FAFSA. The target demographics for these free services include low-income, first-generation and underserved prospective college students and their families. The current structure for the operational plan calls for the coordination of a network of host sites at key locations around the state.

Each site will be sufficiently staffed with experienced volunteers from MASFAA and partner organizations. Families will be able to obtain comprehensive instruction on FAFSA completion at each site and be able to discuss all aspects of the financial aid application process as it pertains to their unique needs. Most sites will offer services to help families complete the actual FAFSA.

A comprehensive grassroots promotional campaign including direct mail, presentations, and email, will precede the FAFSA Day events. The events will serve to increase college access among targeted families by assisting them in successfully completing the FAFSA and equipping them with a thorough understanding of the sources of available financial aid.

**2012-2013 OBJECTIVES:**

- Increase program participation from targeted demographics
- Reduce expenses
- Identify new channels to promote FAFSA Day to target populations such as faith-based organizations and local YMCAs.
- Rely more heavily on the expertise and guidance of the Steering Committee to support site logistics, marketing efforts, and fundraising projects.

**2012-2013 MASFAA GOALS:**

- ▣ Advance the Art and Science of our Profession

- with students, families, on and off-campus colleagues, faculty and administration, elected and governmental officials
- Increase engagement of members
- Continued commitment to high quality, cost effective training and professional development
- Update the Association's Strategic Plan

**MONTHLY REPORT: MAY 2013****MONTHLY REPORT: MARCH 2013****MONTHLY REPORT: FEBRUARY 2013**

- ◆ FAFSA Day 2013 events officially concluded this past Saturday!
- ◆ Are working on getting the final numbers and will send an update to all as soon as we have them
- ◆ Will notify raffle winners this month
- ◆ Are planning a wrap up meeting for early April
- ◆ Have an idea for a new Chair and are contacting Iris and Donna
- ◆ We have 263 Facebook likes and 495 Twitter followers!

**MONTHLY REPORT: JANUARY 2013**

- ◆ Currently in our final promotional push for FAFSA Day. Marketing materials have been sent to a list of community based organizations across the state.
- ◆ As of 1/7, there are 596 registrants and 306 volunteers.
- ◆ Site coordinator and steering committee meeting is being held on 1/11 at Quinsigamond Community College
- ◆ Planning for FAFSA Day's two second date pilot initiative are underway is Fall River (BMC Durfee High School on 2/26) and Worcester (Worcester Public Library 2/20). Both sites are partnering with local college access programs for promoting and staffing. Promoting the second FAFSA Day events will take place after January 27<sup>th</sup>.
- ◆ Meredith Barnhart from MEFA will be transitioning in as the new Chair. Kendra will be slowly transitioning off as she has accepted a new position and moved out of state.
- ◆ We have surpassed 200 likes on Facebook!

**MONTHLY REPORT: NOVEMBER 2012**

- ◆ Steering Committee members and Site Coordinators gathered on October 19 at Fitchburg State for a half-day planning meeting.

- An update on USA Fund and the national CGS perspective was shared, including a desire to understand the impact of CGS/FAFSA Day on FAFSA Completion beyond the event date itself.
- The new Steering Committee Subcommittees were introduced as a way to distribute the workload, streamline efforts, and boost the effectiveness and efficiency of our planning.
- Guest speaker Paul Lynskey, Executive Director of the Blackstone Valley Education Foundation, led a session about the principles of cultivating partnerships for development and community engagement. “All politics are local” → “All giving is local.” Identify your program’s needs, who can meet those needs, and what reasons they might want to help you.
- FAFSA Day Favor Bags were introduced as a new pilot initiative to thank our volunteers, increase volunteerism, and gain assistance in promoting FAFSA Day. FAFSA Day Favor Bags will be targeted to financial aid administrators, school counselors and college access professionals. They will contain a few copies of the FAFSA Day poster, a FAFSA Day brochure, Save-the-Date business cards, a newly-created FAFSA Day volunteer bookmark, and some small treats. They will be distributed at the MASFAA conference, MEFA’s TRiO training and school counselor trainings, and potentially other events. Our goal is to distribute up to 1000 Favor Bags this season. Ideas are welcome!
- Event details were discussed at length, including:
  - Importance of having attendees register in advance (typically about half do)
  - Ideas and challenges of having the attendee survey completed (paper vs online, having student volunteers do the data entry, offering a raffle prize for folks who submit survey)
  - Brainstorming new names and descriptions for “FAFSA Experts” to provide more clarity to volunteers: FAFSA Guides? FAFSA Team? FAFSA Support?
  - Sample partnerships within school and community: teachers and coaches, student volunteer/honors groups, local restaurants, banks and other businesses
- ◆ Two sites are being considered for potential pilot programs to offer alternate FAFSA Completion events after 1/27: BMC Durfee HS in Fall River (in cooperation with Bristol CC Upward Bound) and Plymouth North HS. Adding new sites is a way to expand the impact of FAFSA Day, but we have to do it in a responsible way that doesn’t stretch our volunteer resources too thin.
- ◆ The USA Funds grant application was submitted on 10/31. The grant request was for \$10,000 for the 2013 program. Decisions should be made by November 15.
- ◆ The 2013 volunteer registration webpage is almost live, so we will soon begin spreading the word and encouraging colleagues to sign up. We were informed by Noetic on 10/23 that there had been a bug in the registration process, so anyone who registered before that date will need to re-register. We will factor this into our messaging.
- ◆ FAFSA Day flyers and other materials are now available to print/request from the FAFSA Day website. Brochures listing all the sites are being printed now and will be available soon. The brochure and the flyer will be translated into Spanish. Approximately 10,000 Save-the-Date business cards have already been distributed to schools and families through MEFA financial aid nights, plus another 4700 to families through college open houses.
- ◆ What’s next for FAFSA Day planning? Spreading the word to families and encouraging folks to volunteer!

- ◆ Migdalia and Kendra returned from the CGS National Forum with a host of new ideas for making FAFSA Day even more successful. USA Funds demonstrated their deep commitment to expanding on the effectiveness of College Goal Sunday as a national program. They announced that **non-competitive grants will be awarded to state programs later this fall**. We did not anticipate receiving any funding from USA Funds for this year or in the future, so depending on the amount, it presents an opportunity to undertake a thoughtful pilot initiative or capital investment. Dollar amounts will be less than grantees had received in the past. The online grant application is available through the month of October, due by 10/31. Kendra will be coordinating the grant application process, and she welcomes advice and suggestions from the MASFAA Council. Grant awards will be announced in mid-November. USA Funds foresees continuing to administer grants in future years, but they will be awarded on a competitive basis.
- ◆ While at the National Forum, Migdalia shared our promotional materials (redesigned in 2011) with USA Funds Senior Program Officer Kyle Malone, and he was notably impressed. Kyle mentioned that members of the **USA Funds program staff will be visiting some CGS sites this winter**, and that a trip to Massachusetts is being considered. This would be a great opportunity to showcase our FAFSA Day program and hopefully we could arrange a meeting between USA Funds staff and MASFAA leadership.
- ◆ FAFSA Day's new **Save the Date business cards** have been a huge hit this fall. After distributing the first run of 10,000, we've printed another 20,000. Notable audiences include fall Open Houses at UMass Boston (1500), Salem State University (1500) and Fitchburg State University (200). Several thousand are also being distributed at the October & early November Financial Aid seminars by MEFA. The detailed brochures, including a list of all the site locations and dates, will be finalized soon and will be distributed at the remaining MEFA seminars and other events. Other FAFSA Day promotional items being considered are small wall posters as well as Volunteer bookmarks.
- ◆ **Dates, times and site locations for FAFSA Day 2013** are nearly finalized, including one new site at Mount Wachusett Community College (thank you, Ryan Forsyth). We have already begun to announce sites through FAFSA Day's Facebook account, and have been updating [www.FAFSADay.org](http://www.FAFSADay.org) with site information as it becomes available. Online Volunteer Registration and Student/Family Registration will be open soon.

#### MONTHLY REPORT: SEPTEMBER 2012

- ◆ FAFSA Day 2013 will be on Sunday, January 27 at 1pm.
- ◆ Kick-off steering committee meeting was held on 7/26 and report was submitted to the MASFAA Council on August 9, 2012
- ◆ The October meeting for steering committee members and site coordinators will be held on October 19<sup>th</sup> at Fitchburg State University – Thank you Pam!
- ◆ Kendra and Migdalia will be attending College Goal Sunday National Forum, hosted by USA Funds on September 26<sup>th</sup> and 27<sup>th</sup>.

- ◆ Grant Report was submitted to YMCA, concluding the end of the 2011-12 National College Goal Sunday grant cycle. No additional funds from National College Goal Sunday are anticipated at this time.
- ◆ Site Logistics Sub-committee
  - Sites have been divided evenly among committee members.
  - 2013 FAFSA Day Site contracts/intake forms and the list of site coordinator responsibilities have been distributed to site coordinators and committee members are in the process of collecting completed contracts.
  - The first Site Logistics Committee conference call took place on 9/7. Committee members provided updates on status of distributed contracts and any feedback from site coordinators. Joanne provided an update on marketing materials. We also discussed the feasibility of the second FAFSA Day pilot program, where 3 or 4 sites would be chosen to host FAFSA Day later in the season (late February/early March) in key geographical areas (Fall River, Worcester, Springfield, etc.). General consensus was that it might be a strain on resources (even with a later date) and historically, later dates have not been very well attended. This is still up for discussion, and all factors will be considered before a final decision is made.
- ◆ Marketing Sub-committee
  - Sub-committee has started researching different t-shirt vendors in order to reduce expenses.
  - FAFSA Day has ordered "Save the Date" business cards to help promote the event.
  - Website updates are being made this week to reflect FAFSA Day 2013 information.
  - A list of CBOs and RBOs has been started, please send any CBO and RBO contact information you may have to Migdalia.
- ◆ Development Sub-committee
  - Meeting has not happened yet but members have been divided into territories to support regional fundraising & sponsorship efforts.
  - Possible donations to solicit include: printing services & offices supplies, food & beverage for event day, gift cards to purchase supplies or raffle to attendees, promotional assistance, and of course unrestricted funding assistance.
  - Possible donors to approach include: Office supply stores (WB Mason, Staples, OfficeMax), groceries and restaurants (BJs, Costco, Market Basket, Boloco, Panera), civic organizations (Rotary Club, Elks, Lions, Kiwanis, Chambers of Commerce), and community banks and credit unions.

MONTHLY REPORT: AUGUST 2012

