

MEMBERS:

Tri-Chair: Alcira Zadroga

Tri-Chair: Kristi Pierce

Tri-Chair: Keith Dimalanta

Members:

Last Name	First Name	Title	Institution/Organization
Zadroga	Alcira	Associate Director of Financial Aid	Fitchburg State University
Pierce	Kristi	Managing Director of College Planning Services	ASA
Dimalanta	Keith Curtis	Financial Aid Counselor	Northeastern University
Barnhart	Meredith	Director of Integrated Communications	MEFA
Barwise	Addison Callahan	Gear Up Counselor	North High School
Butler	Sandra	Financial Aid Manager	BU School of Social Work
Feinberg Keenan	Beth	Senior Manager, College Financing	College Coach
Gearan	Michael	Financial Aid Officer	Simmons College
Gomez	Migdalia	Director, Financial Aid	Emmanuel College
Heang	Somaly	Senior Assistant Director	Babson College
Hubbard	Donna	Guidance Counselor	Quabbin Regional High School
Marsella	Deb	Associate Director of Financial Aid	Middlesex Community College
Morrissey	Kelly	Director of Financial Aid	Mount Wachusett Community College
Shields-Rutyna	Julie	Director of Early College Planning	MEFA

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.

2015-2016 OBJECTIVES:

1. Due to the transition from USA funds to NCAN (National College Access Network) and the possible decline of funding for 2016 and no funding for 2017, we will work on developing outside partnerships. We have started this process already with an initial meeting with Clantha from OSFA.
2. Work on increasing FAFSA completion by also working high school guidance counselors and Gear Up folks, etc.
3. As part of the decline of funding, we are continuing a shift from printed literature to more web-based and grassroots outreach.
4. Last year we came very close to having a Webinar and/or video for FAFSA Day and unfortunately this did not occur. We will make another attempt on this because this may be utilized by individuals who are unable to attend a FAFSA Day event in person.

MONTHLY REPORT: MARCH 2016

- ◆ We held the last of our 33 FAFSA Day events for the 2016 season on March 5th and are very happy that there were no cancellations this year due to inclement weather and that we had solid overall numbers:
- ◆ Some statistics:
 - This year (2016): 1454 students, 2852 overall attendants.
 - Last year (2015): 1442 students, 3129 overall attendants.
 - 21 events were held in January, 11 in February, and 1 in March.
 - Our sites with the largest number of attendees were Northeast Metro Tech (113 students/246 attendees), Attleboro HS (100 students, 200 attendees), Framingham HS (90 students, 183 attendees), and Malden HS (75 students/172 attendees).
 - From the pool of attendees who completed the survey, we gathered that:
 - A majority of students learned about FAFSA Day through their high schools (70%), a college (15%), electronic media (11%) and friends/family (11%). Other notable sources included school bus drivers, MEFA financial aid nights, and direct phone calls from QCC.

- Over 5% of attendees received translation assistance at their event, which was supplied by the event host. These languages included Spanish, Vietnamese, and Haitian/Creole.
- 78% completed their FAFSA, while 19% began and saved but chose to complete it later.
- 77% indicated that their attendance at FAFSA Day MA will increase the likelihood that they will enroll in college or vocational school within the next year.
- 81% of attendees were either in HS or a trade/vocational/apprenticeship program, and 14% were current college students seeking help with their renewal FAFSAs.
- 58% were female and 42% were male.
- 29% indicated that the highest level of education that their parents completed was HS; 5% indicated that neither of their parents completed high school; 11% indicated that their parents completed some college but did not attain a degree.
- 22% indicated that they were of Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish origin.
- 26% of attendees indicated that their household's annual gross income was below \$30,000; 47% were below \$60,000; 63% were below \$90,000.
- Of the respondents, 121 reported a household size of 2; 180 reported a HH size of 3; 274 reported a HH size of 4; 111 reported a HH size of 5; 39 reported a HH size of 6; 15 reported a HH size of 7; 5 reported a HH size of 8; 3 reported a HH size of 9.
- ◆ Each of our 10 raffle winners have been contacted and sent their \$100 Amazon.com gift cards via email.
- ◆ We are currently doing wrap-up work, putting together the year-end presentation for sponsors and site coordinators, and preparing our thank you letters to the principals/presidents of the FAFSA Day hosts.
- ◆ We are currently working with Steve Culp on designing and sending out FAFSA Day mugs to thank all of our site coordinators.
- ◆ A big thank you to College Coach for taking on the phone lines from January to February. The chairs have now resumed answering the line and continue to receive a handful of calls each week.
- ◆ We've sent out our formal invitations for the FAFSA Day chair roles, which will continue to be a 2-year role and encompass the 2017 and 2018 FAFSA Day seasons.
- ◆ With the arrival of the 2017-18 season on the horizon, we are already preparing for next year's FAFSA Day events. We have already received inquiries from families of juniors, and school requests about serving as a host site for next year.

MONTHLY REPORT: FEBRUARY 2016

- ◆ Our Spring Site Coordinator meeting at FSU went well. In anticipation of PPY for 2017-18, Site Coordinators all seem to be on board with potentially hosting FAFSA Day events in November 2016 and January 2017 (instead of the previous January and February dates). Months not yet finalized, but will be decided as we begin planning for next year.
- ◆ We've held 21 of 31 FAFSA Day events so far and we've received a lot of positive feedback from families. So far, we've had a total of 2,039 attendees, 967 of whom were students. Of the responses that we've received, 93% rated the assistance that they received as Excellent or Very Good, and 93% said they accomplished what they came for when they attended. Translator accommodation by request of families was available at 7 of the sites; languages included Spanish, Vietnamese, and Haitian/Creole. We have had no cancellations thus far and are bracing for good weather as we approach the final 10 events for the year.
- ◆ We've participated in the Twitter Chats with NBC News' Education Nation, the First Lady's Reach Higher initiative, Education Finance Council, and other state wide organizations.

- ◆ The Governor's proclamation for College Goal Sunday month (January) is official! We've sent copies to Clantha at OSFA and Katy Abel at MA Department of Higher Ed since they were pivotal in reaching through to Governor Baker.
- ◆ We are continuing our social media campaigns – we've had much success in both organic and inorganic posts, reaching a weekly average of 25,000 people. We are using our social media posts to assist families with Next Steps now that they've submitted their FAFSA.
- ◆ We are seeking new Chairs for FAFSA Day 2017 – possibility of adding on two new positions to mirror “past chair, current chair, and chair elect” positions.

MONTHLY REPORT: JANUARY 2016

- ◆ We are having our Spring site coordinator meeting at Fitchburg State University on January 15 to distribute all materials and go over day-of logistics for the 30+ FAFSA Day sites.
- ◆ All of the materials on the Admin Site have been updated for our Site Coordinators, including the FAFSA Day 2016 presentation.
- ◆ We have heard back from Governor Baker's office and are working on having him officially proclaim College Goal Sunday month for Massachusetts. We hope that this will allow us as aid administrators to reach and assist more families with completing the FAFSA, and hope to further close the access gap to high education in Massachusetts.
- ◆ We sent out a mass paper mailing to 214 Housing Authorities in MA which was targeted outreach to serve our lower-income communities. We included a cover letter as well as posters, brochures and save the date cards.
- ◆ College Coach has volunteered to resume answering the FAFSA Day phone line for January and February. The Chairs continue to receive and field several calls and emails daily regarding FAFSA Day.
- ◆ We have begun various social media campaigns on Facebook and Twitter. We've also expanded our outreach by including a new social media ad platform via Instagram.
- ◆ Site coordinators are also reaching out to their local communities (libraries, community centers, teen centers, etc.).
- ◆ Ryan Forsythe is putting out a PSA for Worcester and surrounding communities.
- ◆ OSFA added the FAFSA Day web banner to their front page.
- ◆ We took part in a Twitter Chat this week hosted by the College Planning Center of Rhode Island as part of the CollegeSuccess initiative along with Ed Finance Council, MEFA, YourPlanForTheFuture, inspirED, KHEAA, and NHHEAF.
- ◆ Next week, we'll have another Twitter Chat with NBC News' Education Nation and Reach Higher (the First Lady's higher education initiative).
- ◆ We are short of last year's volunteers numbers and could use some help. The Attleboro Site specifically could use some FAFSA Expert Volunteers, but any and all of the other sites would be very much appreciative of the additional support. Just visit fafsaday.org and click on the Volunteer link!

MONTHLY REPORT: DECEMBER 2015

- ◆ We continue to be in contact with Governor Baker's office regarding his invitation to a FAFSA Day event and seeking a proclamation for College Goal Sunday
- ◆ We attended MASCA's Professional Development event on November 6th and distributed materials to Massachusetts guidance counselors.

- ◆ We also attended PromiseFest's "Straight Outta High School" college event on November 10 from 4pm-8pm at Roxbury Community College, which was well attended, and allowed us to reach many families of junior and senior high school students.
- ◆ We've ordered FAFSA Day t-shirts, lawn signs, stickers, folders, pens, and other materials for next month's Spring Site Coordinator meeting at FSU.
- ◆ We are putting together a strategic mailing to Massachusetts Housing Authorities, which will help us reach our target demographics for FAFSA Day.
- ◆ Rather than ordering more "FAFSA Expert Buttons," we will opt into having FAFSA Expert Stickers, which will help with cost savings.
- ◆ Each of the Chairs are receiving several calls and emails each day regarding FAFSA Day.

MONTHLY REPORT: NOVEMBER 2015

- ◆ Our Fall FAFSA Day meeting with our Site Coordinators at FSU went well. We discussed site coordination logistics, shared best practices, successful outreach and advertising tips, and distributed marketing materials.
- ◆ We are in the process of updating all of our press releases, templates, surveys, and other resources on the Admin Site for our Site Coordinators.
- ◆ We attended the Boston Public Schools College Fair at Reggie Lewis Track and Athletic Center.
- ◆ We have reached out to Hispanic American Institute and El Mundo to ensure that we reach target demographics for FAFSA Day.
- ◆ We are utilizing social media boost posts to help us reach out to more families regarding FAFSA Day.
- ◆ Our letter to Governor Baker has been finalized and sent out.

MONTHLY REPORT: OCTOBER 2015

- ◆ Registrations for Volunteers and Attendees are open as of October 1, 2015, and we officially have over 30 sites for FAFSA Day 2016!
- ◆ We are putting the final touches for our Fall FAFSA Day meeting on October 20th at FSU. So far we have 34 anticipated to attend. We will be mentioning the recent announcement of PPY and will gauge volunteer interest for an earlier FAFSA Day event.
- ◆ We are still looking for folks interested in joining the FAFSA Day Marketing group.
- ◆ We are looking to fill some vacant co-site coordinator spots at the Framingham and Burlington locations.
- ◆ While NCAN no longer has a survey requirement, we will still collect surveys based on prior year survey questions that we've refined. We've reviewed various options, and the "Gold" plan through Survey Monkey seems to be the best fit for the number of responses anticipated vs. overall costs. We are looking to see if any other committees may also benefit from having access to a Survey Monkey account.
- ◆ We've finalized our letter to Governor Baker and will be sending this to Katy Abel at the MA Dept. of Higher Ed. for further refinement.
- ◆ We've sent materials and will be present at the BPS College Fair on October 17th.

MONTHLY REPORT: SEPTEMBER 2015

- ◆ We have 30 FAFSA Day Sites for the 2016 season, and are still looking to see if a few other sites may be interested in hosting.
- ◆ Our Fall FAFSA Day meeting is scheduled for October 20th at Fitchburg State University Center for Professional Studies. So far we have 21 people who will be in attendance.
- ◆ Updates have been made to the FAFSA Day site for reflect 2016 info.
- ◆ Registrations for volunteers and attendees will open on October 1st.
- ◆ We have begun a partnership with OSFA for assistance with FAFSA Day.
- ◆ FAFSA Day Brochures were sent to Katy Abel, the Associate Commissioner for External Affairs with the MA Department of Higher Education. She will distribute FAFSA Day materials for the state's "Go Higher!" initiative, which spreads awareness of the programs and opportunities available at community colleges, state universities, and UMass campuses.
- ◆ We were approved for our grant funding request from USA Funds/NCAN! This represents the last year of funding that they will provide towards College Goal Sunday efforts. Moving forward, we will need to alternative means of financial support.
- ◆ While there is no longer a national survey requirement, we will create our own Student/Parent survey and Volunteer survey. The Volunteer survey has already been completed.
- ◆ Keith will attend BPS College Fair on October 17th for FAFSA Day.
- ◆ We are reaching out to MASCA to see if we can be present at their Professional Development events concurrently taking place in UMass Lowell and Stonehill College on November 6th.
- ◆ PPY information will impact FAFSA Day. We are keeping an eye out for new developments to determine how we will move forward with future programming and planning.

MONTHLY REPORT: AUGUST 2015

- ◆ **Transitions/Budgets:** College Goal Sunday is transitioning from USA Funds to NCAN (National College Access Network). USA Funds will fund FAFSA Day for the last time in 2016; NCAN will not be providing funding. However, funding decisions will be made by NCAN, and *not everyone will be funded*. NCAN will make decisions by August 31, 2015.
- ◆ In order to prepare for this decline in funding, we are gearing our outreach efforts to strongly include social media- Facebook, Twitter, Snapchat, etc. Our print media will also have the same look and feel for FAFSA Day 2016.
- ◆ During the National College Goal Sunday Forum in May, presenters suggested to have 'others pick up cost for expenses'—such as banks, big corporations, 501c3 partners etc.
- ◆ Main goal for NCAN is FAFSA completion (low income, first generation, underserved students). They will use more Federal Data through the Dept of Ed. (i.e. no survey requirement), although each state may create their own survey.
 - <http://www.collegeaccess.org/> NCAN site
 - <http://www.collegegoalsundayusa.org/> Main site for College Goal Sunday programs
- ◆ **Site Intakes:** We've sent out Site Intake forms a little earlier this year to allow counselors to respond prior to summer break. So far, we've received 17 site intake forms; 2 confirmed that they are no longer able to host for 2016.

- ◆ In previous year, we had a total of 37 total sites for FAFSA Day 2015. This is okay as we will afford us the ability to focus our volunteer force and assistance towards sites that are still hosting
- ◆ **Marketing:** Shift from printed literature to more web-based and grassroots outreach, utilizing social media platforms, including Facebook and Twitter; RSS Feeds on MASFAA and OSFA websites.
- ◆ To continue the conversation with families, we want to provide attendees with follow-up info on Promissory Notes, Entrance Counseling, contacting billing, award letters, c-codes
- ◆ We found a list of 207 Print and Online Newspapers around Massachusetts – we will be reaching out to these venues, as well as local community organizations, section 8, etc. to spread the word about FAFSA Day.
- ◆ **State/Federal:** We are planning to develop partnerships with OSFA and state legislators. We had a lunch meeting with Clantha, she is connecting us with Katy Abel, Associate Commissioner for External Affairs, Department of Higher Ed
- ◆ Leveraging previously made connections with Senator Warren, previously named her an “honorary chair”
- ◆ **Steering Committee:** Friday, August 14th - we’ve heard back from 9: 8 confirmed, 1 tentative.
- ◆ New person expressed interest in FAFSA Day Steering Committee, we’ll see if they’re interested in Site Coordinating or Marketing