



# ASSISTANCE ADVISOR

Winter 2014  
Volume 2, Issue 1

## A Message from the Executive Director

Dear Colleagues:

Last fall, the Pell Institute for the Study of Opportunity in Higher Education published a report about college participation rates for students from low-income families between the years 1993 and 2012. The report looked at all 50 states plus the District of Columbia. Only four jurisdictions had college participation rates above 50% for low-income students. The first was New Hampshire, followed by New Jersey, then New York and then Massachusetts.

New Jersey's very generous Tuition Aid Grant (TAG) program and Part-Time TAG for County College Students program contribute enormously to providing low-income students with college opportunity. EOF, the Governor's Urban Scholarship program and Part-Time TAG for EOF also are important in enabling low-income students to pursue higher education. At HESAA, we are very grateful to Governor Christie and the N.J. Legislature for their enthusiastic support of all these programs. But funding, although critical, is only part of the equation. At HESAA, we believe the outreach, training and customer service our trained experts provide are equally important.

Under the Outreach section in this newsletter, please take a moment to read about how College Goal Sunday is being retooled and expanded by HESAA and our partner, the New Jersey Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators. At HESAA, we want to make sure that every student files a FAFSA. According to the Educational Longitudinal Survey, 90% of FAFSA filers actually enroll in postsecondary education. Therefore, if we can get students to file the FAFSA, we can get them to enroll. The new program schedule is designed to increase FAFSA filings, and in turn, increase enrollment.

Watch out, New Hampshire...

Sincerely,

Gabrielle Charette, Esq.

## Upcoming Events

**HESAA Board Meeting**  
February 5, 2014, 10:00 a.m.  
Building 2 Conference Room  
HESAA Offices  
2 Quakerbridge Plaza  
Hamilton Township, N.J.

**New Jersey Advisory  
Committee on Student Aid  
(NJACSA) Meeting**  
Friday, January 24, 10 a.m.  
Building 2 Conference Room  
HESAA Offices  
2 Quakerbridge Plaza  
Hamilton Township, N.J.

**Student Advisory  
Committee Meeting**  
Friday, January 10  
11 a.m. to 1 p.m.  
Building 2 Conference Room  
HESAA Offices  
2 Quakerbridge Plaza  
Hamilton Township, N.J.

## Grants and Scholarships

### Going Green and Easing Administrative Burdens

Effective with the 2014 spring rosters, financial aid officers (FAOs) will no longer be required to submit signed paper rosters. FAOs only need to certify and lock the rosters. By signing electronically, the process will be complete.

### Governor's Urban Scholarship Persistency Bonus

Under the scholarship program created by Governor Christie in 2012, students who persist to their final semester are awarded a \$500 persistency bonus. HESAA is pleased to announce that some Governor's Urban Scholarship recipients are achieving this milestone and will be awarded accordingly.

### NJ STARS/NJ STARS II

NJ STARS or NJ STARS II students whose awards are cancelled by either the institution or HESAA will receive a letter from HESAA. The letter will notify them of the cancellation and advise them of their right to appeal and the timeframe in which they must appeal.

### Administrative Reminders

Institutions must cancel fall 2013 awards for students who have not submitted the required documentation to complete federal/institutional verification by February 1, 2014.

- Students submitting additional information and/or outstanding documents will be considered for the spring term only.
- The spring deadline is March 15, 2014.

### Training Tip

When submitting a projected year change on the electronic N.J. change form as a result of change in family circumstances, enter six asterisks (\*\*\*\*\*) in the "U.S. Income Tax Paid" field so that HESAA can recalculate this figure.

### Tax Return Transcript

The IRS has made it easier for students and families to obtain their tax return transcripts. Previously filers had to go to IRS.gov and order a transcript that would be mailed to their homes within 5-10 business days. Now filers can go to the IRS website and download a PDF of their transcript and print it.

## Loans

### Credit Check Authorization for NJCLASS Loans

NJCLASS has made an enhancement to its application. Commencing with applications filed on Thursday, December 19, 2013 or after, all responsible parties to the loan will now have to provide permission before a credit report is obtained. Reminder e-mails will be sent to those individuals who fail to check the credit check authorization box.

### NJCLASS Volume Swift

Between July 1 and November 30, 2013, HESAA generated \$260,351,821 in loans to approximately 10,000 students/families.

### The Heart of HESAA

During the holidays, HESAA staff donated 11 boxes of toys to the Mercer County branch of the U.S. Marine's Toys for Tots program.



## Outreach

### **Annual FAFSA Assistance Program Format Revised**

The N.J. College Goal Sunday program – previously limited to Sunday sessions – has been reorganized to better serve students and families. HESAA and members of the N.J. Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators (NJASFAA) are holding a series of events – on weekdays, evenings and weekends – between January and March 2014. At least three events are scheduled in each location.

Your help in spreading the word is appreciated. An event schedule is posted at [www.njcollegegoalsunday.org](http://www.njcollegegoalsunday.org). If you are interested in volunteering, please register at the “How Can I Help?” page under “Volunteer Program.”

If you have any questions, please contact Sharon Austin at 609-588-3136 ([saustin@hesaa.org](mailto:saustin@hesaa.org)).

### **Interactive Financial Literacy Program Takes Off**

HESAA has partnered with Everfi to deliver a 24/7 web-based financial literacy program to students in Sussex, Warren, Cumberland and Salem counties.

According to most recent statistics, seven high schools have already launched the program and 372 students are participating. HESAA's goal is to have the program up and running in 35 high schools by May, 2014.

## Compliance and Quality Assurance

### **Refunds Checks Payable to N.J. Treasurer**

When certifying rosters and reconciling accounts, it is often discovered that award funds must be refunded to HESAA due to changes in student ineligibility. When returning these funds, institutions are reminded to make refund checks payable to *Treasurer, State of New Jersey*. Under no circumstance should checks be made out to an individual (e.g., the director of Grants & Scholarships).

### **New Federal Regulator on Campus: Consumer Financial Protection Bureau (CFPB)**

Created under Dodd-Frank, the CFPB has broad regulatory authority over several consumer protection laws, some of which directly involve private student lending, banking relationships with institutions of higher education (especially those surrounding college-branded bank credit/debit cards), and fees associated with the use of campus debit cards.

Recently, the CFPB began to focus on the use and marketing of “campus affinity products” – financial products and services offered by a bank carrying a school’s endorsement or mark. The CFPB is concerned that these products carry undisclosed or improperly disclosed fees and are generally less advantageous to students than traditional, non-affiliated accounts and services. Best practice in this area is to put students’ interests first and ensure they are provided with ample choices in banking on and around campus. For additional information please call Joel Mayer, HESAA’s Chief Compliance Officer, at (609) 588-3204.

# The entire HESAA team looks forward to working with you on behalf of students in 2014.



## Contact Us

### New Jersey Higher Education Student Assistance Authority

4 Quakerbridge Plaza  
Trenton, NJ 08625

[www.hesaa.org](http://www.hesaa.org)

609-584-4480 (English and Español)  
Monday through Friday  
8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

### General Business Hours

Monday through Friday  
8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

### HESAA Customer Care Line

609-584-4480 (English and Español)  
Monday through Thursday  
8 a.m. to 8 p.m.  
Friday 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

### Grants and Scholarships

609-588-3268

### NJCLASS

609-584-4480

### Lender and School Relations

609-588-3136

## Fax Numbers

Tuition Aid Grant (TAG)  
Fax 609-588-2228

Loan Servicing and Collections  
Fax 609-588-7285

NJCLASS Loan Origination/Processing Fax  
609-631-6730

## HESAA Technical Support

for user ID, password, login and registration  
Issues 609-588-3315 or  
[HelpDesk@hesaa.org](mailto:HelpDesk@hesaa.org)

## E-mail

[clientservices@hesaa.org](mailto:clientservices@hesaa.org)

Questions about applying for financial aid,  
including NJCLASS or grants and scholarships

[servicingandcollections@hesaa.org](mailto:servicingandcollections@hesaa.org)

Questions about repaying your loan with  
HESAA

## Postal Mail

for correspondence and application  
documents



### HESAA Grants & Scholarships

P.O. Box 540  
Trenton, NJ 08625-0540



### NJCLASS

#### Application Processing

NJCLASS Originations  
P.O. Box 538  
Trenton, NJ 08625-0538

#### Student Loan Servicing (correspondence only)

HESAA Servicing  
P.O. Box 548  
Trenton, NJ 08625-0548

HESAA is the only State agency with the sole mission of providing students and families with the financial and informational resources to pursue education beyond the high school level. With roots dating back to 1959, HESAA's singular focus has always been the benefit of the students we serve.