



ASSISTANCE ADVISOR

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Message from the Executive Director

Dear Colleagues:

Our first TAG graduation data collection reports have been received and are now available on HESAA's website on its Grants and Scholarships page. To view the reports, please go to <http://www.hesaa.org/Pages/TAGGraduationRates.aspx>.

I would like to thank all those individuals who provided feedback and guidance while we were in the process of designing the reports. And, of course, I must thank all of the 56 institutions of higher education that participate in the TAG program for submitting their reports in a comprehensive and timely manner. Your cooperation is greatly appreciated.

HESAA staff is currently analyzing the reports, and we will present our analysis at the upcoming NJASFAA Spring Conference. This is a significant milestone for TAG. For the first time in the program's 37-year history, we now have empirical data to demonstrate that TAG students do persist to graduation. Although access and affordability are paramount to all of HESAA's programs, we believe access and affordability should ultimately lead to attainment.

Since this was the first year for collecting this data, we realize that some tweaks may be warranted in the future. We are open to constructive suggestions. Please feel free to provide your feedback to Magda Torres at: mtorres@hesaa.org.

Sincerely,

Gabrielle Charette, Esq.

“Although access and affordability are paramount to all of HESAA’s programs, we believe access and affordability should ultimately lead to attainment.”

Upcoming Events

Due to construction, unless otherwise noted, events will be held at **MIDJersey Chamber of Commerce** at 1A Quakerbridge Plaza, Suite 2, Trenton, NJ 08619



HESAA University Payment Roster Training for Community Colleges
Thursday, January 7, 2016

Payment Roster Training for Public & Private Institutions
Friday, January 8, 2016

NJ STARS
Friday, January 29, 2016

Dependent or Independent for NJ State Aid... That is the question!
Friday, February 19, 2016

Demystifying TAG on E-Administrator
Friday, March 4, 2016

All courses will take place from 9:30 AM to 12:00 PM.
Visit www.hesaa.org for reservations and full schedule.

HESAA Board Meeting
Thursday, January 28, 2016, 2:00 PM

NJ Advisory Committee on Student Aid
Friday, February 5, 2016, 10:00 AM

HESAA Student Advisory Committee
Friday, January 22, 2016, 11:00 AM
Rutgers University-New Brunswick

Grants and Scholarships

Low-Income Carry-Over

In the past, if a student/family reported no or very low income, HESAA sent a Monthly Expense and Resource Statement (MERS) to the student/family for completion. If the same student/family reported no or very low income again the following year, HESAA would send another MERS for completion. Good news -- in academic year 2016-17, we will begin carrying over the data reported from the prior year for students who received the MERS through the State verification process. Please contact Pilar Sanchez with any questions.

Military Dependents Scholarship Fund

To show gratitude to our servicemen and servicewomen, Governor Chris Christie signed into law the "Military Dependents Scholarship Fund Act." HESAA is excited to begin administering this program which will grant scholarships to the spouse, child, or other eligible dependent of a New Jersey resident who is killed, missing in action, or totally and permanently disabled as a consequence of Operation Noble Eagle, Operation Enduring Freedom, Operation Iraqi Freedom, or Operation New Dawn. The scholarships will cover the cost of full-time undergraduate study leading to a degree at a public or independent college or university.

According to the new statute, the thirteen-member Board of Trustees of the Military Dependents Scholarship Fund will include Gabrielle Charette and Secretary of Higher Education, Rochelle Hendricks. Ms. Charette is honored to have the opportunity to work on behalf of such an important cause. HESAA appreciates that the State Legislature and the Governor have created this scholarship, enabling us to give back to the families of our dedicated armed forces.

Policy and Procedures Manual

A revised Grants and Scholarships Policy and Procedures Manual is now available by visiting the HESAA website and logging into the HESAA E-Administrator Portal. Furthermore, for the first time ever, NJ STARS has its own manual.

Loans

Over 76% of NJCLASS payments are now being made electronically!

There are a lot of features to the NJCLASS Loan program, and sometimes members of the aid community may not be aware of all that NJCLASS has to offer. Learn to distinguish the facts from the myths below.

Statement	Fact or Myth
A loan will be forgiven if a student dies while enrolled.	Fact!
A loan can be deferred while a student is in graduate school.	Fact!
If I decide to transfer to an out-of-state college, I can no longer participate in NJCLASS.	Myth! NJCLASS is a national and international loan program. If students are NJ residents attending an approved school in or outside of the United States, NJCLASS can go with them.
If I apply for an NJCLASS loan, my personally identifiable information will be shared with an overseas customer call center.	Myth! All NJCLASS loans are serviced locally at HESAA in Trenton, NJ.

Training Tip



Did you know?

You can identify students who have received the maximum number of payments at a two-year college (ineligible reason code "Q") or at a four-year college (ineligible reason code "B") to help them maximize their TAG eligibility. For details, refer to page 7 of chapter 4 in the Grants & Scholarships Policy and Procedures Manual, revised November 2015.

HESAA Welcomes New Chief of Staff

On Monday, November 30, 2015, Marcia Karrow joined the HESAA team as the new chief of staff. Ms. Karrow is excited about the diverse scope of her role leading the facilities, physical security, human resources, communications, information services, and legal and government affairs units. This position at HESAA will allow Ms. Karrow to apply the vast state government experience she gleaned as Executive Director of the New Jersey Meadowlands Commission, as a full-time State legislator, and in her handling of assets and budgets for the Department of the Treasury, not to mention her time spent in the private sector.

Upon arriving at HESAA, Ms. Karrow was thrilled to learn that our Authority does not rely on taxpayer dollars for operational expenses. As a self-described "fiscal conservative," she feels that HESAA is a great fit: "I was delighted and surprised that we are self-funded." She has also been impressed with HESAA's passionate employees: "There is a lot of pride here for what people do and what they deliver." Ms. Karrow feels that it is her responsibility to ensure that the true value of HESAA's hard work is recognized and appreciated: "I am very sensitive to public perception versus reality; we must make sure that the public sees the reality of HESAA." *(continued next page)*

Outreach

New Jersey Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators (NJASFAA) Fall Conference

The HESAA team was enthusiastically involved in a number of capacities with the NJASFAA Fall Conference in Atlantic City from November 11 –13, 2015. Both in front of the podium, as well as behind-the-scenes, HESAA employees worked hard to make sure that the conference was productive. One HESAA staff member, Training Facilitator Samantha Benson, even taught a “Rise and Stretch Gentle Yoga” class to offer attendees a chance to exercise before a long day of sessions.

This year HESAA ran a particularly successful exhibitor booth. Jules Cornelious, HESAA’s Media and Visual Designer, explained that this conference featured an added twist; NJASFAA introduced a stamp program to increase exhibitor/attendee interaction. Instead of gathering freebies at the different booths, attendees had to complete specific tasks to earn a stamp. For example, at the HESAA booth, visitors had to learn more about HESAA University. Mr. Cornelious was pleased with the attention this activity brought to HESAA’s important educational programs.

On the final day of the program Gabrielle Charette provided a “State Update” before a packed ballroom. Ms. Charette’s overview touched upon a number of changes made by HESAA in response to feedback from the financial aid community. A consistent theme of the update was the importance of teamwork between HESAA and colleges and universities. Collaboration between HESAA and financial aid offices includes working together to continue to introduce students and families to HESAA’s online portal, especially as more electronic communications are phased in. NJASFAA President Cynthia Montalvo warmly thanked Ms. Charette and the HESAA team for another job well done.

College Affordability Study Commission

On Wednesday, November 18, 2015, Gabrielle Charette was invited to speak before the College Affordability Study Commission at an open public hearing held on the campus of The College of New Jersey. Prior to Ms. Charette’s presentation, students and concerned citizens from around the State testified about a variety of higher education issues, such as the cost of attending college, the importance of the EOF program, their gratefulness for TAG grants, etc. Ms. Charette commenced her talk with an overview of HESAA’s accomplishments and an update on IRS guidance that may make it viable for HESAA to enable loan refinancing in the future.

A question and answer session followed, during which Ms. Charette took the opportunity to clear up a misconception about NJCLASS interest rates. She explained that NJCLASS does not offer tiered lending; other lenders may use a low rate to attract borrowers, but the majority of borrowers are then ultimately not eligible for the low rates. The NJCLASS program is more transparent and straightforward than its competitors.

During the Q & A, Ms. Charette also described the extensive financial literacy training conducted by HESAA staff for high school students, as well as the benefits of the NJBEST 529 College Savings Plan. Moreover, she had the chance to inform the Commission about the great lengths taken by HESAA to ensure that NJCLASS borrowers do not go into default. As a result of Ms. Charette’s presentation, the members of the Commission now have a greater understanding of the work that HESAA employees do every day to provide more students access to an affordable college education.

HESAA Welcomes New Chief of Staff *(continued)*

Ms. Karrow shares HESAA’s belief in the value of higher education. She earned her undergraduate degree from Smith College, a master’s degree in Classical Art and Archaeology from the University of Michigan, and an M.B.A. from Baruch College. Ms. Karrow credits the study of archaeology for her ability to collect information, research, plan strategically, and break large undertakings down into smaller pieces. Currently, she has the opportunity to view the college search process in a new light as one of her thirteen godchildren explores college options and considers taking out loans.

The immediate first task for the new chief of staff is to ensure that HESAA’s move and renovation projects are expedited quickly. However, Ms. Karrow is still making it her priority to get to know each and every HESAA employee. “I want people to feel comfortable popping into my office,” she explains. Likewise, HESAA staff members are giving their new colleague a warm welcome.

Congratulations to President Harvey Kesselman

HESAA is very proud to announce that former Board member, Dr. Harvey Kesselman, was named President of Stockton University on December 2, 2015. President Kesselman served on the HESAA Board for sixteen years. All of us at HESAA know that our friend and colleague will prove to be an excellent president at his alma mater. Congratulations!

Compliance and Quality Assurance

HESAA reminds institutions that verification cannot be completed for a student who was required to file a tax return but failed to do so; this represents conflicting information which must be resolved prior to award disbursement. Even if an individual provides a W-2, this may not encompass all income that should have been reported to the IRS (additional W-2's could exist, or the individual could have other sources of income) and that must be considered in determining award values. "If an individual is required to file a tax return and has not done so, the student is not eligible to receive a State award." *See page 5 of chapter 8 of the new HESAA Grants & Scholarships Policy and Procedures Manual.*

Higher Education Trivia

In 1969 the Legislature passed a bill establishing a State college in southern New Jersey. The Trustees originally voted to name the school "South Jersey State College." At the urging of the Board of Higher Education, which opted not to act on the proposed name, the Trustees reconsidered and named the institution Richard Stockton State College, now Stockton University.



Contact Us

New Jersey Higher Education Student Assistance Authority

4 Quakerbridge Plaza
Trenton, NJ 08625

www.hesaa.org

609-584-4480 (English and Español)

General Business Hours

Monday through Friday, 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 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.

Additional loan servicing hours

Saturday, 8 a.m. to noon

Grants and Scholarships

609-588-3268

www.njgrants.org

NJCLASS

609-584-4480

www.njclass.org



and send documents to HESAA via our secure connection.

School Liaison

609-588-3136

Fax Numbers

Servicing and Collections

Fax 609-588-7285

NJCLASS Loan Origination/Processing

Fax 609-631-6730

Email

clientservices@hesaa.org

Questions regarding loans held by HESAA, including NJCLASS applications or grants and scholarships

servicingandcollections@hesaa.org

Questions regarding servicing of loans held by HESAA

Your convenient way to send documents to NJ Grants and Scholarships and NJCLASS. Scan, upload

Postal Mail

For correspondence and application documents



HESAA Grants & Scholarships

PO Box 540

Trenton, NJ 08625-0540



NJCLASS Application Processing

NJCLASS Originations

PO Box 538

Trenton, NJ 08625-0538

Loan Servicing (correspondence only)

HESAA Servicing

PO Box 548

Trenton, NJ 08625-0548

HESAA Technical Support

For user ID, password, login and registration issues

609-588-3315 or HelpDesk@hesaa.org

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 to benefit the students we serve.