

2026 WyASFAA Annual **DRAFT** Conference Schedule

Conference Dates: April 23-24, 2026

Location: University of Wyoming – Laramie, WY

Conference Space:

Thursday: University of Wyoming Foundation – Marian H. Rochelle Gateway Center

Friday: University of Wyoming Conference Center

Hotel Options: Hilton Garden Inn* and Holiday Inn

**Conference Spaces are adjacent to the Hilton Garden Inn*

Theme/Focus: Beyond the FAFSA: Empowering the Whole Student

Elevates student support beyond funding—considering wellness, engagement, and holistic development.

Pre-Conference Gathering (Wednesday, April 22nd)

Time	Description
7:00 pm - TBD	Optional get together at <i>TBD</i>

DAY 1 – Full Conference Day (Thursday, April 23rd)

Location: University of Wyoming Foundation – Marian H. Rochelle Gateway Center

Time	Session	Presenter / Description
7:30 – 8:30 am	Breakfast & Registration	Continental breakfast (available for guests staying at the Hilton Garden Inn); visit vendors and reconnect.
8:30 – 8:45 am	Welcome & Opening Remarks	Allison Murray (WyASFAA President) and Anna Terfehr (Conference Chair) – Overview, housekeeping, sponsor thanks.
8:45 – 9:45 am	Keynote: Becoming a Superhero	Daniel Barkowitz (University of Miami) – <i>TBD</i> .
9:45 – 10:45 am	Empowering Financial Aid Pros with Smart AI Tools	Alissa Casey (University of Wyoming) – Responsible ways to use AI for everyday tasks while maintaining accuracy, compliance, and sound judgment.
10:45 – 11:00 am	Morning Energizer Activity / Break	Allison Murray (WyASFAA President) and Anna Terfehr (Conference Chair) – Quick icebreaker and refreshment break.
11:00 – 12:00 pm	Career Path Awareness & NASFAA Update (Virtual Session)	Heidi Carl (NASFAA Chair) – The identity and purpose of the financial aid profession and how professionals can reconnect with their “why” to build fulfilling, lifelong careers amid constant change.
12:00 – 1:15 pm	Lunch & Directors’ Meeting	Buffet lunch; Directors to meet separately for discussion.

Time	Session	Presenter / Description
1:15 – 2:15 pm	Hathaway Scholarship Program	Brad Barker (Wyoming Department of Education) – Annual update and institution brainstorming.
2:15 – 3:15 pm	State & Institutional Best Practices	WyASFAA Forum – Roundtable on navigating financial aid and higher education in Wyoming.
3:15 – 3:30 pm	Break	Refreshments & vendor visits.
3:30 – 3:45 pm	TBD	TBD (RMASFAA State Rep or Swap) – TBD.
3:45 – 4:45 pm	TBD (Focus on Staff Wellness)	Melissa Miller (Wyoming on Wellness) – TBD.
4:45 – 5:00 pm	Day 1 Wrap-Up	Announcements and evening preview.
5:30 – 8:00 pm	Evening Social: “WyASFAA Night Out”	Group dinner at a local establishment; optional group activity following dinner.

DAY 2 – Half Conference Day (Friday, April 24th)

Location: University of Wyoming Conference Center

Time	Session	Description / Presenter
8:00 – 8:30 am	Breakfast & Networking	Continental breakfast (available for guests staying at the Hilton Garden Inn); networking.
8:30 – 9:30 am	TBD	Daniel Barkowitz (University of Miami) – TBD.
9:30 – 11:00 am	Interactive Workshop: Scenario-Based Learning	Teams solve real-life aid challenges: “What would you do?” scenarios. Prizes for creativity.
11:00 – 11:15 am	Break	Refreshments & final vendor visits.
11:15 – 11:45 am	Business Meeting	Association updates and future planning.
11:45 – 12:00 am	Wrap-Up Session & Closing Remarks	Group discussion on takeaways, upcoming training needs, and feedback. Conference close; recognition of sponsors, committee, and swag delivery.