

What's Up WyASFAA?

Wyoming Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators

A Season of Thanks

"My therapist told me the way to achieve true inner peace is to finish what I start. So far I've finished two bags of M&Ms and a chocolate cake. I feel better already." ~ Dave Barry

It seems pretty obvious that we would choose a theme of thankfulness for our November newsletter. We discussed this and decided that even if it was cliché it was still fitting. As hard as it can be as we all face daily, weekly, monthly, yearly or lifelong challenges it is important to find that inner peace and thankfulness for it. Easier said than done, I know.

Thanksgiving has long been considered a time for families and friends to gather and celebrate and express gratitude. It is often correlated to the beginning of the holiday season, known for football, and feeling sleepy after stuffing ourselves too full. Some other fun facts (thanks to Google) are the following:

- * The Pilgrims did not declare Thanksgiving a public holiday. This was done by Abraham Lincoln in 1863.
- * In 1939, Thanksgiving was celebrated on the 3rd Thursday rather than the 4th as President Roosevelt thought that it would give 7 more days of shopping for the holidays. It was legally switched back in 1942.
- * More alcohol is consumed on Thanksgiving than any other holiday of the year.
- * The Sunday following Thanksgiving is one of the busiest travel days of the year in the United States.

So not because social media tells us that the next 22 days should be when we remember why we are thankful; or because it is the month of November and many of us will celebrate Thanksgiving, but for our own inner peace and sure, sanity, I challenge you all to find that thing or those things that make life worth living. For myself, besides the obvious reasons to be thankful (family, friends, health, etc.) I am also thankful for amazing people in the state that work in this field with me, for a crazy job that keeps me employable and the adult beverage that I can drink after a long day.

"Gratitude turns what we have into enough"

~ Shannon Eskam



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Inside this issue:

Member Spotlight	2
Hathaway Update	2
Upcoming Events	3
Ten Second Topics	3
Final Thoughts	4

Special points of interest:

- FAFSA season is here!
- Getting to know Alli McCown
- What do you Meme, Student Loan edition.
- Thankful Challenge

Hathaway Update

Here's the latest news on the Hathaway front: All districts will be required to use the weighted Hathaway GPA starting in the 2018-19 school year. AP, IB, and Dual/Concurrent 1000-level and above courses will be weighted.

Quick Facts

- The Hathaway GPA will be based on a scale from 0 to 5.0. All courses taken will be included in the GPA calculation; however, only AP, IB, and Dual/Concurrent college courses 1000-level and above will be weighted. College courses below the 1000-level will not be weighted.
- All Hathaway courses must be approved by the WDE's Hathaway Team. Additionally, AP courses must be approved by the College Board, and IB courses must be approved by the International Baccalaureate program.
- Starting in the 2018-19 school year, all student transcripts must include the weighted Hathaway GPA.
- The weighted GPA does not apply to any students who graduate before the 2018-19 school year.
- Beginning in the 2018-19 school year, all AP, IB, and Dual/Concurrent Enrollment courses students are taking or have previously taken will be weighted.
- Students do not have to take an AP test in order to receive a weighted grade.
- Students taking Dual/Concurrent Enrollment courses do not need to receive college credit from those courses in order to receive a weighted grade.
- The Hathaway Chapter 38 rules have been updated and promulgated to reflect the GPA change

~ Anna Miller

Member Spotlight: Alli McCown- LCCC

How long have you been in financial aid?

I have been the Student Hub Coordinator since March 2015 and this is my first job dealing [directly] with financial aid.

How did you get into financial aid?

It came with the territory of the Student Hub position!

What is your favorite/least favorite thing about your job?

In terms of financial aid specifically, I am very passionate about trying to educate students and prospective students about financial aid! I want all students to know and understand the financial aid process, their role and responsibilities in it, and all of the opportunities available to them! So I would say that's my favorite part of the financial aid piece of my job – getting to help spread the word about financial aid.

My least favorite part of the job is when students fail to read their emails/educate themselves on their financial aid status, and then are in very tough situations (and even worse when they are mad about it and take it out on staff!).

What are your hobbies, talents and/or quirks?

Hobbies: Yarn crafts - I really love crocheting and knitting and also recently learned to weave! I also love riding bikes, and playing board games/card games (and the occasional video game with my husband), and lifting.

What is something that a ton of people are obsessed with but you just don't get the point of?

Football! I just don't care about football (except the Super Bowl, which I care about because of the great snacks). I am just not into football. Hockey on the other hand, I am always down to watch!

What could you give a 45-minute talk on with absolutely no preparation on (other than financial aid)?

Harry Potter, yarn crafts, or powerlifting.



Upcoming Dates

Eastern Wyoming College has set the date for their Wyoming High School Counselor Workshop for Thursday, November 15th to coincide with the EWC Tech Days Event. Casper's workshop will be held in November with a date TBD.

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WyASFAA planning is in full swing! If you have ideas for a session that you would like included in the program, please email Scott: smcfarla@cw.edu (Be prepared, he may ask you to lead it!)

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It's never too early to start thinking about what you're going to do this summer...why not pack your bags and meet at Platform 9 3/4 to catch the Hogwart's Express to Summer Institute June 2-7, 2019 in beautiful Colorado Springs? Stay tuned for more information!

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The FSA Conference will be held in Atlanta, GA again this year on November 27-30. Several members from around the state will be in attendance.

The next WyASFAA conference call will be November 14th from 3-4pm. Contact your supervisor for more information if you're interested in joining.

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If you know of any upcoming dates that we need to be aware of, please submit them to Shelby or Anna.

shelbygarner@caspercollege.edu

amiller@caspercollege.edu

Ten Second Topics

Several e-mails bounced back after the last newsletter was sent out. That can only mean one thing: it's time to clean up the mailing list and member spreadsheet again! If you have had changes in your office, or know of changes with our associate members, please e-mail Shelby to let her know. shelbygarner@caspercollege.edu

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It was announced at the RMAFAA conference that our favorite Fed, Joe Massman has taken a new position with NASFAA. We will now work with the Kansas City office for ED training. Check with your director for more information.

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The Wyoming Community College Commission has increased tuition by \$5/credit hour and capped tuition at 15 credit hours for the 2019/2020 school year.

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Have a topic you'd like to see here? E-mail Shelby or Anna and we'll get it in the next issue!



What Do You

Thanks to everyone who submitted memes this month; there is definitely no love for student loans! Keep sending your (work-appropriate) submissions to Shelby or Anna and we'll include one or two each month. Enjoy:



Submitted by Shannon

Meme?



Submitted by Scott



Shannon Eskam- President
Scott McFarland- President-Elect
Susan Stephenson- Past President
Shelby Garner- Secretary
Brenda Haseman- Treasurer

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WyASFAA is a professional organization dedicated to assisting the nearly 40,000 students enrolled in Wyoming's institutions of higher education, their parents, and the schools and agencies that work collaboratively in disseminating information and administering the various financial aid programs available to Wyoming's students.

Final Thoughts

Have you ever participated in the “Thankful Challenge” that usually starts this time of year on social media? Thirty days of things you’re thankful for...I think I tried that once, and failed miserably. There is a lot of pressure this time of year to list your blessings and shout from the rooftops what you’re thankful for; but what about other times of the year? When was the last time you thanked someone for making your day a little brighter, or doing something nice no matter how small? Am I the only nerd who picks up a pack or two of thank you notes every time I pass the dollar bin at Target? It seems that while there is always a huge variety of thank you notes available in the stores (and if your parents or grandparents are anything like mine, tucked away in various drawers throughout the house); there are very few that are sent or exchanged today. After searching for etiquette tips on sending thank you cards, I found that the number one struggle people have is with the wording of the note (Phew! It’s not just me!). If you share in this struggle, here are some tips on how to write your thank yous:

1. Make sure you address your recipient in the note– be sure you are using the correct spelling of the person’s name
2. Write a message to express your gratitude- “Thank you” is the easiest way to start. Make the rest of your message personal and use your own style; steer clear of canned messages as they lack sincerity.
3. Add specific details to your note– make it one-of-a-kind. What exactly are you thanking the person for? Did they do or say something that made you feel special or appreciated? Add this to your message!
4. Be sure to send it! In the words of G.B. Stein, “silent gratitude isn’t much use to anyone.”

Here’s a new “Thankful Challenge”: try to find a reason to send a thank you card/note/letter to someone throughout the year. It doesn’t have to be huge as long as it’s sincere!

*“Appreciation can make a day—even change a life. Your willingness to put it into words is all that is necessary.”
~Margaret Cousins*