

November 2017

Wyoming had a small but mighty representation at the RMASFAA conference in Wichita mid-October.

Right (clockwise from left): Shannon, Shelby, Brenda, Montana colleague Dala, and Brandi enjoy the opening night festivities at Mosley Street Melodrama, Wichita's only audience-participation dinner theatre! Ask Brenda about her "participation" and almost losing her beer!

Below: WyASFAA is proud to have TWO graduates of RMASFAA's Leadership Pipeline this year! Congratulations to Shelby (second from left) and Brenda (second from right) on your accomplishments. We look forward to great things from you in the future! Watch for Leadership Pipeline enrollment for 2018-2019 in the spring.



Above right: Shelby, Shannon, Susan, Brenda, Karen, and Heidi get into the "Tune Into..." conference theme spirit with an appearance on TV. RMASFAA offered a fiscal officer's track this year and we were delighted to have Karen from Sheridan as part of our wild Wyoming group.

Right: Shannon and Susan presented a session on "Playing Nicely in the Sandbox: Best Practices for Building a Beautiful Financial Aid/Business Office Sandcastle," complete with props!



Hope to see you at the Federal Student Aid Conference in Orlando!

Now onto our fourth **school spotlight!**



Casper College

Year established: 1945

Financial Aid Staff:

Shannon Eskam; *Director of Student Financial Assistance*
Shelby Garner; *Enrollment Services Specialist* (Federal aid alphabet A-H and Work Study)
Tonya Clemens; *Enrollment Services Specialist* (Federal aid alphabet R-Z and Golden Age Grant)
Tanya Peterson; *Enrollment Services Specialist* (Federal aid alphabet I-Q and R2T4)
Laurie Johnstone; *Scholarships and Enrollment Services Coordinator* (Scholarships)
Nick Whipples; *Special Populations Coordinator* (Veteran and International Students)
Anna Miller; *Enrollment Services Specialist* (Admissions and Hathaway)
Vanessa Blank; *Enrollment Services Assistant* (Hathaway and Admissions backup)
Dan Dike; *Enrollment Services Specialist* (ES Front Counter)
Paula Epperson; *Enrollment Services Specialist* (ES Front Counter)
Mala Stagg; *Enrollment Services Specialist* (ES Front Counter)
Oliva Wickman; *Enrollment Services Office Assistant* (ES Front Counter)

Tell us a bit about your school:

Current total enrollment including all students is 4,091. We have several excellent programs so I have a hard time narrowing it down to just the top!

What is a favorite event or activity at your school?

Welcome Back Week for our students and staff is one of my favorite times. The energy levels are up, students are excited and we have many opportunities to interact with fellow colleagues and students at various events.

As the FA Director, what do you like about your institution?

Our focus on students. This is a prevalent mindset right now at our institution and I love that in the majority of our meetings and decisions we stop and think of what the best interest for the students is.

What is the best (or worst!) thing about working in your Financial Aid Office?

The best thing is my incredible team. In addition, we have amazing support from our vice presidents and president that help advocate for our needs.

Are there any unique or unusual facts/stories/legends about your school or in its history?

Casper College was the first junior college established in the state of Wyoming. The school emblem, the Thunderbird designed by Warren Weaver, was voted on by students of the first class at Casper College during a design contest. The mascot of the college is the Heyoka, who was chosen by Norman Weis. Heyoka, an Indian medicine man that tribes revered for his special powers, fit with the Thunderbird nickname. Casper Junior College was originally located in the third floor of Natrona County High School. One of the reasons it began operations there was because the Board of Trustees feared loss of federal aid for vocational programs if a separate campus was established.



This month's member highlight is Casper College's Enrollment Services Specialist, **Shelby Garner!**



How long have you been in financial aid?

I have been in my current position for three years. I started as a Work-Study in the financial aid office here at Casper in 2011 after returning to school due to a layoff.

How did you get into financial aid?

In 2010 when the OfficeMax customer service center here in Casper closed its doors, I found myself with an opportunity to return to school. After about eight months of being unemployed and spending much of my time at home with nothing to do once my homework was done, I decided I needed to find a job that would work with my school schedule. I had worked at OfficeMax with one of the other people in our office and had asked about the open position in the FA office. I started work in July of 2011 as a Work Study, was hired in 2014 full-time, and the rest is history.

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

My favorite thing about my job is seeing when I make a difference to one of my students. I recently had a student hug me because he was so grateful for my assistance, which was completely unexpected!

I would have to say my least favorite thing about my job is having to tell a student that I am unable to award their financial aid for whatever reason it may be...especially non-traditional students. I remember what it was like being in their shoes and it breaks my heart.

What are your hobbies, talents and/or quirks?

I could write a whole page on this...I suppose the one quirk that people find the craziest is that I absolutely HATE when someone leaves a cupboard or drawer hanging open. Something about walking into a room with that is a lot like fingernails on a chalkboard to me.

What is something you like to do "the old-fashioned way?"

Reading! There is nothing better than the feel of the pages as you turn them and the smell of books. I have an e-reader and the Kindle app on my devices, but there's just something about holding an actual book in my hands...

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

Basic Daylight Exposure (BDE)...I actually hold a degree from Northwest College in Photographic Communications. I could talk your ear off about a myriad of topics within the field of photography, but BDE is one of my favorites. One of my most favorite images that I ever captured was of the moon reflecting off of Yellowstone Lake while I was teaching my younger sister about BDE.



When asked about Shelby, Director Shannon Eskam had this to say: *Shelby is a wonderful asset to our office. She has really helped spearhead our new Federal Work Study process changes which will be such a huge benefit to making things simpler for students and our college staff. She is also our primary planner for our FAFSA Frenzy events and has done a wonderful job with them. She is great when she works with our students and is always willing to do what it takes to help the student. I had challenged Shelby to get out of her comfort zone this past year and I am happy and so proud that she is doing just that. From completing Leadership Pipeline this year to introducing herself to new people at our RMAFAA conference she has made great strides. I look forward to seeing what she pushes herself to accomplish next!*