

Volume 3, Issue 3

Winter 2001

The NYSFAAA Connection

New York State Financial Aid Administrators Association

Web Letter Editor:

Laura Worley

Citibank - The Student Loan Corporation

Web Master and Publisher:

Vince Scalise

College Loan Corporation

Facing an Uncertain Future *by Cathy Bellomo, Wells College and NYSFAAA President*

On September 11th, there was no downstate, upstate, or north country – we were all New Yorkers. And as the day unfolded, we learned what our fathers and grandfathers before us learned- we knew what it meant to be an American. That day our campuses changed. Phone centers were created for students to call home. Counselors were invited to campus to help students cope with their fears and depression. At Wells, we were very concerned for our students; especially the freshmen that may not have established close friendships. So we were asked to visit our dormitories to see if any student was alone and frightened in their room. We spent time together in student lounges watching the horrible, devastating events unfold on TV. We hoped that an adult presence would give some comfort to our students. As I sat in one of the lounges, I couldn't help but notice the fear on the faces of our youth. They arrived only a few weeks ago with all the hope and excitement that beginning a new stage of their lives should bring. I couldn't help but be saddened that our youth on that day had been stripped of their innocence. As history has shown, America has lost its innocence before but it never loses its idealism. The foundation of our society as it seeks to preserve life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness continues not just through the good times but the bad times as well. America will have scars but there is no doubt that we will recover and we will continue to flourish.

We, in the financial aid office, have a vital role in our nation's healing efforts. We have seen students who have lost loved ones. We have heard from parents who in these uncertain economic times now find themselves unemployed. We are being asked by our institutions to find resources that will enable these students to continue their education. It is in this past few months, amidst the sadness and grief, that we once again discovered our true purpose. Our profession is not just about making sure every "T" is crossed and every "I" is dotted, it is about helping families and students achieve their educational goals.

Our world leaders are talking of a "new kind of war" and we are being told that this war to fight terrorism will not be cheap. We are being told that the cost of keeping America safe will not be cheap. It is now estimated that the cost to both New York City and New York State related to the World Trade Center attacks will reach nearly \$34 billion. But we as educators know, that the lasting road to world peace is in educating our youth. It is through education that we attain the knowledge and understanding that is needed to eliminate hate and fear. This is the message that we must bring to our lawmakers as we seek funding during these uncertain economic times. Executive Council and the Government Relations Committee will continue its efforts in Albany during our February meeting. Our presence, on behalf of our students, is crucial for the continued success of our state financial aid programs. On the federal level, thank you letters should be written by everyone to the House Appropriation Subcommittee that approved a budget that increased educational funding \$7.1 billion over last year's level. This is the largest dollar amount increase ever for the Department of Education. Even though the Senate has not taken action yet - this is the ray of hope we needed – it demonstrates that education is seen by some, as a rebuilding tool needed to restore our nation's strength during this unprecedented time.

(Continued on page 3)

Inside this issue

Tax-cut Package Includes Higher Education Benefits	2
A Message from President Elect, Anne Barton	2
Regional Award Winner	2
Facing and Uncertain Future (Cover story continued)	3
HESC Update for November 2001	4
Members on the Move	4
May I see your Photo ID Again?	5
Private Sector Can Help Improve Education Access	6
DOE Issues Guidance to Borrowers After 9/11 Attacks	7
Region II CAAN Update	7
EASFAA Federal Relations Update	8
Tales From the Big City	9
Conference 2002 Invitation	10
Conference Entertainment	10
NYSFAAA History	10

If you would like to contribute to "The NYSFAAA Connection, contact Laura Worley, Citibank - The Student Loan Corporation at laura.m.worley@citibank.com

Tax-cut Package Includes Higher Education Benefits *By David Manning, USA Funds Services*

Taxpayers trying to meet higher-education expenses are receiving some additional assistance from Washington. President Bush recently signed into law a 1.35 trillion dollar tax-cut bill that includes the following higher-education provisions:

- **Expansion of student-loan interest deduction.** The law eliminates the current 60-month limit on education-loan interest that qualifies for this deduction. Under the bill, single taxpayers with modified adjusted gross incomes of \$50,000 to \$65,000 would be able to take a partial deduction. Taxpayers with incomes below \$50,000 would qualify for the full deduction. Under current law, the deduction phases out for single taxpayers with incomes between \$40,000 and \$55,000. Married taxpayers with modified adjusted gross incomes of between \$100,000 and \$130,000 also would qualify for a partial deduction. Under current law, the deduction phases out for married taxpayers with incomes of between \$60,000 and \$75,000.

The changes take effect for the 2002 tax year.

- **Increase of maximum Education IRA contribution.** The measure increases to \$2,000 from the current \$500 the maximum amount that taxpayers would be able to contribute to education IRAs each year.
- **Enhancements to private prepaid-tuition programs.** The law permits one or more education institutions, including private institutions, to establish tax-exempt prepaid-tuition programs. Only state-sponsored programs are tax-exempt under current law. Beginning with the 2002 tax year for state-sponsored programs (and the 2004 tax year for other institution tuition programs), taxpayers could exclude from their taxable income withdrawals from such plans, as long as they use the proceeds to pay qualified education expenses.
- **Expansion of tax savings for employer-provided education benefits.** The legislation allows taxpayers to exclude from their taxable income employer-provided assistance for graduate-education costs, as well as for undergraduate expenses, which already qualify for this benefit. The bill also makes this provision permanent; it had been scheduled to expire at the end of the year.

Addition of a new deduction for higher-education expenses. The law permits taxpayers to deduct up to \$3,000 in qualified higher-education expenses. For 2002 and 2003, the deduction would be available to single taxpayers with adjusted gross incomes of \$65,000 or less, or married couples who file joint returns reporting incomes of \$130,000 or less. For 2004 and 2005, those taxpayers would be allowed to deduct up to \$4,000, and single taxpayers with incomes between \$65,000 and \$80,000 (\$130,000 to \$160,000 for married couples filing jointly) would be allowed a maximum \$2,000 deduction. Taxpayers would not be allowed to claim both the deduction and higher-education tax credits in the same year.

A Message From President Elect, Anne Barton *By Anne Barton of Hobart & Wm. Smith Colleges*

Just wanted to say "hello" as my first official act as your new President-Elect. It was great to see everyone at the Nevele. For those of you who were unable to make it, you missed a wonderful conference. I want to publicly express my appreciation to the conference committee for the great job they did on the conference. It was a beautiful time in the Catskills!!

I would like to take this opportunity to let all the members know that I am looking forward to working with and for each of you. Please feel free to contact me anytime about anything. My email address is barton@hws.edu and my address and phone number are in the directory.

For my downstate colleagues, please know that you are in my thoughts and prayers as you get back to the business at hand. I look forward to visiting you when you have your next tri-regional meeting. Be sure to let me know the date.

I am also in the process of forming the leadership of my tenure. If there is anyone interested in serving on a specific statewide committee, please be sure to contact me. I have already had conversations with some of you. If my tenure is remembered for anything, I hope it is for the fact that I am open and available to the membership. Take care everyone and hope to see you soon.

Congratulations to our NYSFAAA Regional Award Winners for 2001!

Region 1 - Rick Ross, M & T Bank

Region 2 - Melissa Barabara, SUNY Brockport

Region 3 - Marcel Tyberski, Colgate University

Region 4 - Tiffany Gutierrez, Albany College of Pharmacy

Region 5 - Vince Scalise, College Loan Corporation

Region 6 - Tom Zarkos, HSBC Bank USA

Region 7 - Nancy Dunnagan, Suffolk Community College

Region 8 - Suzanne Davis, Clarkson University

Facing an Uncertain Future *by Cathy Bellomo, Wells College & NYSFAAA President (cover story continued)*

Every institution in America is affected by these acts of terrorism. Many of our colleagues in private institutions who have a substantial number of students from out of state are in meetings now trying to determine if the events of September 11th will keep students from enrolling in institutions far from home. Will parents want their children closer to home? Will our institutions in or near large urban centers suffer a decline in enrollment while those in rural, secluded areas see an increase? Will the loss families have endured in the stock market have an effect on enrollment in higher cost institutions? History has shown that when the economy takes a downturn, growth at community colleges and state institutions show an increase in enrollment. No matter what type of institution you work for, the development of your institution's 2002-2003 financial aid packaging policies should be challenging to say the least.

NYSFAAA will have a crucial role this year in educating our families and school counselors regarding the availability of financial aid resources for college costs. We can anticipate a number of questions involving the many scholarships established over the past month for the victims of families affected by the attacks. Every NYSFAAA member can and must help! Your volunteer efforts with our financial aid nights form workshop's, and school counselor workshops will be very much needed this year. Our New York State families need reassurance that there are still financial aid resources available to them. This year the CAAN committee embarked on a new project. They were part of a coalition of schools and CICU who had booths on "Student Day" at the State Fair. They estimate over 65,000 people attended the fair that day. CAAN, in cooperation with our Scholarship Committee, awarded a \$1,000 scholarship to a student enrolled full time this fall in a program leading to a degree or a certificate. The publicity we received that day for this scholarship exceeded our own expectations. And this year, HESC has agreed to work with the CAAN Committee to promote NYSFAAA's website as Peter tours the state with his "Paying for College" campaign. Our partnership with HESC will enhance our efforts to inform all college bound New York families.

NYSFAAA has been very fortunate over the years. The myriad activities we accomplish each year would not be successful without the help of our state agency and our lending community. Before I arrived at the Nevele, I received our latest investment report. I was sorry, but also relieved, to announce that our reserve fund and scholarship fund took an 8% loss. In view of recent events, it could have been worse. We are fortunate that our yearly activities do not rely solely on these funds. All of us would agree, that the lending community, many of whom are members of NYSFAAA, have enabled our organization to actively pursue statewide and regional training activities for students and families, our school counselors, and ourselves. Their financial support has helped us become a strong, thriving, and never dull professional organization. And we have provided our lending community with a marketing platform that they would never have been able to accomplish on their own. We simple need each other. The sole beneficiary of this union is the student. Students have benefited over the years, through improved customer service and a variety of financial options that meet their individual family's needs. Together we have played a major role in shaping our student loan programs. These programs have made it possible for many students to attend college, especially during the times when our grant programs do not keep pace with our rising college costs.

"NYSFAAA has always been a resilient organization. Our business is about change and helping others improve . . . "

It was a marriage made in heaven. When we form a partnership, we have in our mind a set of expectations. We ask ourselves two questions: "What is expected of me to make this union successful?" and "What should I expect to receive for my efforts?"

But times passes, our environments change, and with that so do our expectations. And that is why communication is so important to any successful union. We are in a unique and difficult time in our country's history. Families are uncertain of the future. The financial climate is uncertain. People are afraid. We have the opportunity and the responsibility to refocus our own efforts individually and as an organization to provide better service to students and parents, and to our colleagues and our institutions. That is and has been the mission of NYSFAAA. We need to be committed and united to that mission in the months and years ahead.

NYSFAAA has always been a resilient organization. Our business is about change and helping others improve their environment. I would like to leave you tonight with a part of a child's story that Carly Simon made into a song. It has often surfaced in my mind over the past month as I, like you, face this uncertain future.

The itsy bitsy spider
Climbed up the water spout
Down came the rain
And washed the spider out
Out came the sun
And dried up all the rain
And the itsy bitsy spider
Climbed up the spout again

I am sure this spider is a New Yorker!

HESC Update November 2001

Grants and Scholarships

TAP Modernization Continues - Student Record Maintenance (SRM) was recently added to Grants and Scholarships Web functions located under Transactions Processing. This new function will replace the WinPATH data entry screen currently used to create TAP Maintenance Transactions. HESC strongly encourages schools to use SRM to submit changes online.

Coming this winter, HESC will be adding individual online TAP certification within Student Record Maintenance. Future plans also include bulk certifications.

Web Updates - HESC's new Phase III Web-based loans screens are available on the Web. The major loans functions of Phase III include: Loan Summary, Anticipated Disbursement Date Changes, Hold and Release Changes, Loan Adjustments/Reallocations, Cancel/Reduce Disbursements, Borrower Inquiry/Update, Master Promissory Note (MPN) Location/Data, Enrollment Certification Data, and Loan Balance Data. For more information on this, please refer to EFAN Bulletin # 49 on the Web (you may also view EFAN Bulletin #47 on hesc.org under "Schools and Lenders", then click on "HESCWeb", and EFAN Bulletins).

E-MPN - HESC is planning to utilize the electronic MPN in early 2002. Additional details will be provided as soon as they become available.

HESC Administrative Workshops - Those who administer any of HESC's loan, grant, scholarship, or savings programs, should have considered attending one of the eight sessions offered statewide. Information on future trainings can be found at www.hesc.com

Workshop sessions will gave detailed updates on both TAP and loans application and account processing. There was also presentations on EFT disbursements, the NYS State College Savings Program, Loans Consolidation, and using the Internet to administer aid effectively.

News About the NYSFAAA Members on the Move . . .

Dan Wray (formerly of Sallie Mae) is the new Regional Director for College Loan Corporation in his home state of PA

Congratulations to Lisa Simpson of Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute - Sister Bernadine Hayes/Rusty Hopkins Service Award 2001.

Congratulations to Ed Reiman of SUNY Geneseo - Recipient of the NYSFAAA Founders Award 2001.

Mark Humbert (formerly of Monroe Community College) is the new Director of Financial Aid at SUNY Oswego.

Susan Romano (formerly with Finger Lakes Community College) is now a Financial Aid Counselor at SUNY Geneseo.

Karen Blankenburg (formerly of Elm Resources) has joined Educaid as their new Upstate NY Representative.

Katrina DelGrosso has been promoted to North Sales Manager with Nellie Mae.

Vince Scalise has been promoted to Senior Regional Director with College Loan Corporation.

Tonee Brown (formerly of Bryant & Stratton) is the new Director of Finance at Rochester Business Institute.

Jennifer Hayes is the new Financial Aid Counselor at SUNY Potsdam.

Katie Murray has been promoted to Assistant Director of Financial Aid at SUNY Potsdam.

Tony Thompson ("I Have Dream Program") has joined Pratt Institute as Assistant Director for Financial Information Systems and Technology.

May I See Your Photo I.D. Again? *By Dan Brent, Citibank*

I teach customer-service seminars so I have a high opinion of myself as an expert in that field. One of the points that risks getting overlooked in the arena of customer-service theory is the importance of your individual personality in customer interactions. It's like in the movies or a play. The remake of a story will feature the same plot and lines. But the personalities of the new set of actors create a whole different feel. You and this student may be replaying an old script. But it has never been done before by these principals! That's what gives it the freshness and interest. That's what keeps your job from getting old and boring.

I have a young friend, "CJ" (his real name is Chris), who has been sort of a Peace Corp worker without the Peace Corp organization. I think he's too free a spirit to get involved with or organized anything. He has a master's degree in education and has managed to find enough money to work in New Mexico (teaching Native Americans), India (working with disabled people), and Lesotho, Africa (teaching in a college). He's sensitive, generous, and bright – Mother Theresa with a passport. At a recent party, someone urged him, "Tell the story of your night in drag." CJ is a bit shy but, pushed by the group, he told the story.

One day when CJ was 19, he found a driver's license (read ID for being served alcohol) that had been lost by a young lady. Someone noted, "Look at that! She looks just like CJ." Well, one thing led to another and that evening CJ put on lipstick and a stuffed bra and, with some friends, took the license to a local bar. "Did you get served?" I asked. "Well, yes. At least the first time." "And after that?" (I'm the straight man.) "I think by then the bartender had heard my alto voice and decided that there was a problem. When I ordered again, he gave me a wry smile and said, 'I don't think so.'"

Nice try, CJ.

You may get away with being someone else, using someone else's style, for a very brief time. But eventually your charade doesn't work any more. You can give service to your students every bit as good as that given by any of your colleagues. But the style of your service won't be – and shouldn't be – identical with that given by your co-workers. If your own personality doesn't shine out, then your student customers have lost something in the interaction.

One of the "hot" topics for seminars these days is diversity. It's not just about respecting people who are different from you and recognizing stereotypes as such. It is that, of course. But much more than that, "diversity" is about appreciating how valuable it is to a group to have differences among its members. People with different cultural background and different talents and different life experiences endow a group with an

invaluable peripheral vision. But only if they let the diversity shine out! You personally are part of the diversity of your office – if you'll let your personal style be seen. To paraphrase the Sammy Davis song, "You've got to be you."

I took an art class once and the teacher kept telling me, "You're being a cartoonist. It's all outline lines. These things have three dimensions. Get inside them. Feel them. Paint with your gut!" One day late in the year, I produced in class what I considered to be my worst piece of the semester. The teacher startled me. "This is great! This is the first time all semester that we have seen the real you! You finally let go of the stupid lines and painted what your inner self saw!"

I didn't quit my day job. But in that experience, I learned something larger than painting. I learned that there is an inner self, a gut, that can express its best self in any job. There is, of course, a technical side to what you do. You want to get that right. But then there is also a personal side, a relationship side. This is where you and your student customer are doing the play as it's never been done before.

In that is the art!

Dan Brent is a Professional Development Officer with Citibank. He regularly offers workshops for Financial Aid Office staff and management people.



NYSFAAA has donated a total of \$3000.00 to the American Red Cross WTC 9/11 Relief Fund. Thank you to Executive Council and the Regional Member ship.

Private Sector Can Help Improve Education Access *By Carl Dalstrom, President and CEO, USA Funds*

Promoting financial access to higher education has been a national priority for more than 40 years. Although progress has been made in opening the doors to college to a wider segment of the U.S. population, financial-access problems persist for many otherwise qualified students who come from lower-income families.

In a February 2001 report, "Access Denied," the Advisory Committee on Student Financial Assistance concluded that the nation has made little progress toward closing the gap between the college-entry and completion rates of students from families earning less than \$25,000 annually and those from families with annual incomes above \$75,000. The committee, which was established by Congress to advise it and the U.S. Secretary of Education on student-aid policy, notes that only 6 percent of students from the lowest socioeconomic standing earn bachelor's degrees, compared with 41 percent from the highest socioeconomic level.

The advisory committee worries that changing demographics could exacerbate these college-access problems. For example, young people who are members of ethnic minorities are expected to account for more than 80 percent of the growth in the college-age population during the next 15 years. Many of these students will come from lower-income families that will have significant financial need to meet higher-education expenses. The committee projects that this influx of academically prepared but financially needy students will overwhelm existing federal, state and institutional financial-aid programs.

As a government advisory panel, the committee focuses primarily on government solutions to the higher-education-access problem. In fact, the federal government already provides nearly \$70 billion annually in aid to college students. I believe, however, that the private sector, as a chief beneficiary of a better-educated populace, needs to commit greater resources to help qualified students overcome financial barriers to higher education. USA Funds® is spreading the word that corporations and small businesses must take an active role in expanding higher-education access.

The private sector benefits because a better-educated work force is more productive, more mobile and more adaptable to economic change. In addition, because the median annual household income for college graduates is nearly twice the median income of high-school graduates, college graduates have the means to purchase more of the products and services that the private sector produces, and they pay more taxes to support local schools and vital community services.

USA Funds has made a commitment to triple its support of a national scholarship program to \$3 million for the 2002-2003 academic year. Our program targets students from families with annual incomes of \$35,000 or less. Up to half of our scholarship awards will go to students who are members of ethnic minorities or are physically disabled.

How can a corporate CEO or a small-business owner contribute to expanded higher-education access? In opinion pieces for business publications across the nation, USA Funds is listing several options for organizations to direct a share of their philanthropic dollars to need-based student financial aid:

- Contribute financial support earmarked for need-based scholarships to local colleges, universities and vocational training schools, especially those that supply the contributing organization with a significant percentage of its work force.
- Set up a scholarship fund through a local community foundation. In many such organizations, companies, associations, families and individuals can define the eligibility criteria and participate in the selection process.
- Establish a scholarship program based on financial need for employees and their children.
- Match contributions made by the company's employees to postsecondary institutions.
- Provide financial support to one of several national scholarship programs. Examples include Dollars for Scholars, a program of the Citizens' Scholarship Foundation of America (www.csfa.org); the United Negro College Fund (www.uncf.org); the Thurgood Marshall Scholarship Fund (www.thurgoodmarshallfund.org); the Hispanic Scholarship Fund (www.hsf.net); and the American Indian College Fund (www.collegefund.org).
- If our nation truly is headed toward a higher-education-access crisis, as the Advisory Committee on Student Financial Assistance foresees, employers shortly thereafter will face their own difficulties in finding educated employees, and producers will lose the opportunity to market their products to a group of potentially higher-wage-earning consumers. I believe it is important to communicate with businesses that a small private investment in enhanced higher-education access today promotes a stronger economy tomorrow.

Education Department Issues Guidance to Borrowers after 9/11 Attacks *By David Manning, USA Funds*

USA Funds® advises lenders, loan servicers and education institutions of U.S. Department of Education guidance regarding relief to education loan-borrowers who were victims of the recent terrorist attacks in New York City and Washington, D.C., and the related air crash in Pennsylvania.

The Department of Education has issued a Dear Colleague Letter that provides for mandatory administrative forbearance for certain borrowers affected by the disaster and offers guidance about processing loan discharges for borrowers who perished in the attacks.

Mandatory administrative forbearance

The Department has authorized Federal Family Education Loan Program (FFELP) lenders to grant mandatory administrative forbearance to borrowers who either reside in or, to the extent that the lender has knowledge, work in any of the five boroughs of New York City (Brooklyn, The Bronx, Manhattan, Staten Island and Queens), which have been designated a federal disaster area by President Bush. The mandatory administrative forbearance is effective from Sept. 11, 2001, to Jan. 31, 2002.

In addition, borrowers who were affected by the disaster, but reside or work in other areas of the country, are eligible for forbearance through Jan. 31, 2002, at the request of the borrowers or their

families. This forbearance may be granted without supporting documentation or a written forbearance agreement.

Based on the Department's guidance, USA Funds is suspending through Jan. 31, 2002, collection activities involving defaulted borrowers who, to the best of USA Funds' knowledge, reside or work in New York City. At the request of defaulted borrowers affected by the disaster who reside or work outside of New York City, USA Funds will suspend collection of their accounts for the same period.

The Department's letter provides for similar forbearance terms and curtailment of default collections for Perkins Loan borrowers.

Death claims

In the granting of death discharges, the Department advises FFELP lenders, guarantors and Perkins Loan schools to use "reliable information" of a borrower's death and to immediately suspend collection activities without contacting the borrower's family. Reliable

information may include obituary notices as well as published lists of the dead provided by government agencies or one of the affected airlines. The Department encourages FFELP providers and Perkins Loan schools to obtain a certified copy of the borrower's death certificate at a later date, without contacting the borrower's family.

Due-diligence deadlines

Because of the disruptions caused by the disaster, the Department is suspending enforcement of due-diligence deadlines for FFELP lenders and guarantors for the period beginning Sept. 11, 2001 through Oct. 31, 2001. The Department may extend this period.

Additional guidance

The Department also issued instruction regarding other areas of concern in the administration of the student-loan program following the recent disaster — including institutional reporting deadlines and loans held by borrowers called to active military duty.

You can access each letter at www.usafunds.org, the USA Funds Web site.

"...borrowers who were affected by the disaster, but reside or work in other areas of the country, are eligible for forbearance through Jan. 31, 2002..."

Region II CAAN Update *By John Smith, Roberts Wesleyan College*

CAAN activities in Region II are starting to shift into high gear. Many high school nights have already been scheduled, with many more to come in the next several months.

Region II is honored to have as it's CAAN 2002 spokesperson, Mr. Chet Walker, radio personality from WHAM, Radio 1180 AM's "Morning News with Beth and Chet". Mr. Walker has agreed to promote CAAN 2002 activities during Region II's week of "Ask the Expert" which is January 14th through the 19th.

During this week, he will make public service announcements, advising listeners of the "Ask the Expert" opportunity on the NYS-FAAA website, as well as the availability of assistance in completing financial aid applications via college financial aid offices.

Mr. Walker holds degrees in communications and psychology, and

a masters degree in Psychiatric Social Work. Besides his position at WHAM, he is also a professor of communications at Monroe Community College.

Addition to Susan's Region II Report

At it's October 25 meeting, Region II honored Dan Hunter, formerly of HESC, for his years of service to the region. Dan was given a "Star" Trophy for the stellar service he had provided and the words of inspiration he had so generously shared at numerous regional meetings.

Also, out-going regional officers Ed Reiman-SUNY Geneseo, Joe Bailey-GCC, Peggy Delaney-Colgate-Rochester Div. Sch., and Jessica Krocke-U of R were honored with "Star" paperweights. The region wanted to express it's appreciation to them for the service and leadership they had provided over the last several years.

EASFAA Federal Relations Update *Submitted by Beth Post, Union College and NYSFAAA Government Relations*

Dear NYSFAAA Colleague:

In conjunction with Representative Howard "Buck" McKeon's (R-CA) commitment to keep you informed of legislative activities of the Education and Workforce Committee, attached you will find two articles from this week's CongressDaily highlighting measures of regulatory relief from the Subcommittee on 21st Century Competitiveness (the article on H.R. 3086 has been edited and material added from a separate press release) .

The articles pertain to:

H.R. 1992, The Internet Equity and Education Act of 2001, which passed on the floor of the House of Representatives on Wednesday, October 10, 2001, and H.R. 3086, The Higher Education Relief Opportunities for Students Act of 2001, which was introduced on Thursday, October 11, 2001 with 72 Republican and Democrat original co-sponsors.

CongressDaily, Thursday, October 11, 2001

House Relaxes Restrictions On Online Higher Education

The House approved legislation Wednesday to allow greater access to and use of the Internet and other technologies in higher education, approving the Internet Equity and Education Act by a vote of 354-70. "By passing this bill, we've sent a strong message to colleges and universities that Congress truly is committed to relieving their regulatory burden," said Education and the Workforce 21st Century Competitiveness Subcommittee Chairman Howard (Buck) McKeon, R-Calif. The bill would modify current rules to allow colleges and universities to offer more than 50 percent of their classes through the Internet if they participate in the federal student loan program and their loan default rate is less than 10 percent. The bill--a similar version of which has been introduced in the Senate by Sen. Michael Enzi, R-Wyo.--is not without its critics. The House Wednesday defeated an amendment by Rep. Patsy Mink, D-Hawaii, that would have maintained stricter requirements for the number of instructional hours correspondence classes must provide and how college recruiters are compensated.

CongressDaily, Friday, October 12, 2001

McKeon Introduces Relief Measure To Active-Duty Students

House Education and the Workforce 21st Century Competitiveness Subcommittee Chairman Howard (Buck) McKeon, R-Calif., introduced legislation Thursday to provide college-loan relief for students in the reserves who have been called up for active duty. The bipartisan bill has 66 Republican and Democratic cosponsors. As during the Desert Shield and Desert Storm operations, the Education secretary needs a waiver from Congress to provide immediate relief to active-duty students with federal loans, as well as those active duty military being relocated, and students and borrowers directly affected by the attacks. H.R. 3086 would grant the Secretary such a waiver to address situations such as: reservists leaving their job and families may be relieved from making student loan payments for a time; victims' families may be relieved from receiving collection calls from lenders; and consecutive service requirements for loan forgiveness programs may be considered uninterrupted.

As the country continues to respond to the national emergency, this bill provides the Secretary with the authority to implement waivers deemed necessary and not yet contemplated. The Secretary needs the authority to act quickly to protect the interests of our students and the aid programs themselves. The Higher Education Relief Opportunities for Students Act of 2001 will give him the ability to do just that. The context of the waiver authority is strictly within the provisions applicable to Title IV of the Higher Education Act of 1965, as amended. Similar to the waiver authority provided for during Operation Desert Shield and Desert Storm, the Secretary may grant relief from provisions now in place governing the Title IV student aid programs for students, institutions of higher education, and student loan participants.

The authority of the Secretary to provide waivers authorized under this Act terminates on September 30, 2003. This gives Congress the ability to review the situation again to assess the need to continue such authority. The Secretary of Education will report to Congress on the impact of the waivers implemented as a result of this bill and he will also provide recommendations for changes to statutory or regulatory provisions that were the subject of the waivers invoked. Preliminary Congressional Budget Office (CBO) staff estimates indicate the bill would not impact the federal budget.

David Sheridan, Chair, EASFAA Federal Relations Committee

Tales From the Big City *by William Mack, CUNY*

There is an unnatural fascination with escalators in this town. Everywhere you go in The Big City you will find either an escalator or a revolving door or both.

It is almost as if residents of The Big City can't be trusted to walk up a flight of stairs.

Don't get me wrong. I am famous for taking the elevator up one floor. The escalator takes the waiting game out of my being lazy and is therefore much more convenient.

I have noticed there are several types of escalators in The Big City. The most common type is the "double wide". On this device there are rules. For example, if you are going to stand still for the ride you must stand on the right hand side of the step. This allows the Type A personalities to walk past you on the left side. This works most of the time because most people know the rule. While the rule is not actually posted in writing if you don't know the rule someone coming up behind you will be happy to explain it in one or two words.

The rule of often ignored

by couples who are currently dating and are still hanging all over each other. They insist on holding hands up the elevator. No amount of prompting from the rear can separate these lovebirds.

"If you once owned an ant farm and was fascinated at watching the ants then watching commuters bottleneck on to the subway escalators is for you."

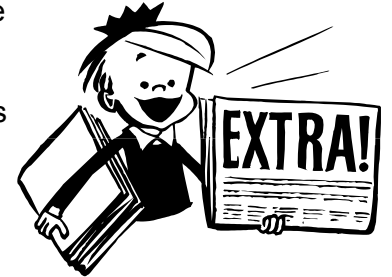
The system also doesn't work well when there is someone on the escalator who exceeds the device's "normal" design. But enough about me and my big butt.

Another type of escalator is the "single wide". On this device you can only fit one person per step. Unless the entire column of people chooses to walk the escalator everyone is stuck in the position they took when they boarded. Frankly, this shouldn't be a big problem, as the trip is usually about 30 seconds or less. Here in The Big City though they have installed "single wides" to all of the commuter bus gates in the Port Authority Bus Ter-

terminal (PABT). Many commuters have timed out their trip home to the second. If they arrive at the escalator to their gate and have found it is not moving quickly they could miss their bus. Waiting a half-hour at the PABT for the next bus shouldn't be traumatic except for two points. There is no place comfortable to sit at the PABT (by design, to discourage loitering) and if you need a bathroom you will find the homeless have camped out in the stalls at the PABT. At least they have in the men's room. I can't speak to what is happening in the ladies room.

Another type of escalator is the type found in Macy's, at 34th St. and Broadway. These are the escalators installed before development of sheet metal. They are wooden escalators and can be found all over the store. I once went to Macy's and took the elevator to the seventh floor. These antique escalators are actual tourist sites. At this point they are likely protected historic sites and as such cannot be removed.

They have installed escalators in many of the



subway stations. If you once owned an ant farm and was fascinated at watching the ants then watching commuters bottleneck on to the subway escalators is for you.

I was descending an escalator this morning when a co-worker tried to get my attention, just to say hello. I didn't notice. When on the escalator I get the "thousand mile stare". While I like to think I'm maintaining my "hickness", I am slowly becoming just another one of the "pod people". I never really thought it was possible to sleep standing up with my eyes open but here I am.

I hope Christmas brings you joy.

Bill Mack currently lives in NYC and works for CUNY Central. He has been transplanted here from Rochester, NY



*New York State Financial Aid
Administrators Association*

Conference 2002 by *Warren Hoffman and Bernice Anson*

The consensus from everyone in Region I who was at the Nevele in October is that our friends from Region V have continued the tradition of providing the NYSFAAA membership with a conference that was educational, inspirational and fun. We are confident that all who attended will agree. Our congratulations go out to Region V and the committee for a job well done!

We want to take this early moment to invite the entire membership to NYSFAAA XXXIV at the Adams Mark Hotel, here in Buffalo next October 22nd through 25th 2002. Region I and the conference committee are already hard at work to insure that we carry on the NYSFAAA Conference tradition that has now been passed along to us.

This is the first of many communiqués with the membership that you can expect during the next twelve months. Please feel free to contact either of us if you have any questions or ideas that you would like to see us incorporate into either the program or other conference events. We are truly looking forward to hosting the conference as you "Spread Your Wings in Buffalo" next October.

NYSFAAA History:

The New York State Financial Aid Administrators Association (NYSFAAA) was founded in 1968 by a group of people involved in the financial aid process. They, and others, felt a need for an association that would provide a unified representation and the means of communication among financial aid personnel with the higher education community, and would provide educational programs for the professional development of its members. Additionally, the association would act as a liaison to the regional association (Eastern Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators--EASFAA) and thus to the national association (National Association for Student Financial Aid Administrators--NASFAA.)

NYSFAAA

Committee Update: Conference 2002 Entertainment by *Leigh Fiorenzo of Hilbert College*

The 2002 NYSFAAA Entertainment Committee has been **feverishly** working on ideas to make the 34th annual conference a hit! The Queen city offers many attractions so the Committee is organizing a wide range of activities that will satisfy at least one of your tastes for fun! The Committee has come up with a variety of entertainment including live music, gambling opportunities, fortune telling, shopping excursions, art galleries, Buffalo's history, and a trip to Canada. The Committee is looking forward to packing in four fun-filled days for all participants attending the conference!



Niagara Falls at Night

**"Spread Your Wings in Buffalo"
October 22 - 25, 2002 for NYSFAAA 34**