

JUN 2023

# CAFAA NEWS

Official Newsletter of the Colorado Association of Financial Aid Administrators

## Meet Your CAFAA Sector Representatives

### COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE

The Sector Representatives are financial aid professionals who serve as the Board of Directors for CAFAA. Their primary responsibility is to represent the various institutions across the state through collaboration and networking, and to serve as a conduit of information between CAFAA and its members.

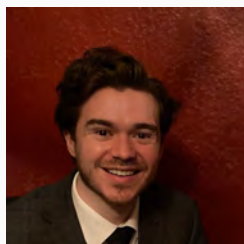
These individuals have a demonstrated understanding of the needs for the types of institutions they represent and a commitment to promoting and strengthening the financial aid community. Their role ensures that all our members needs and interests are represented.

In the following pages we will briefly introduce you to your Institutional Sector Representatives. Please take time to connect with these individuals and to reach out with any questions, concerns, or suggestions you may have.

### Caleb McKay

2 YEAR PUBLIC SECTOR REP- FRCC

Current Position: Financial Aid Coordinator  
Years in Financial Aid (or related field): 5 years



What is the most valuable thing you have learned in your career?

One of the most valuable things I've learned in my career is collaboration and leaning on others. Financial aid, and higher education as a whole, is a team effort. We all thrive when we support and build each other up, and at the end of the day, students and families are all better for it.

Why did you say "yes" to serving as a Sector Rep for CAFAA?

I decided to become a Sector Rep for CAFAA because I want to be an asset to the financial aid community in Colorado. I want to help

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CALEB MCKAY, CONTINUED

foster a supportive community and bridge gaps for those who work in financial aid. I also hope to expand my own network and work with people I may not have had the chance to meet otherwise.

What's your number-one goal as a sector rep?

My goal is to create an environment where we can learn, and build off each other. I want to learn from others and contribute to a collaborative and supportive community in Colorado. I also want to learn the best way I can serve the financial aid community in this role. I want to hear the feedback and suggestions from those in my sector and help those voices be heard.

If you could be any animal, what would it be and why?

I would be a working dog. I like to focus on a task and feel the reward of doing something right, but as a dog there are other benefits. Free food and housing, lazy naps in the sun, belly scratches (please ask before scratching my belly), playdates with other dogs. That's the life.

Let's Connect: [caleb.mckay@frontrange.edu](mailto:caleb.mckay@frontrange.edu)

## Adina Chavez



4 YEAR PRIVATE SECTOR REP -  
REGIS UNIVERSITY

Senior Financial Aid Counselor

Years in Financial Aid (or related field): I have been in Financial Aid professionally for 19 years and prior as a work-study for 5 years.

What is the most valuable thing you have learned in your career?

One of the most valuable things I've learned in my career is the ability to adapt to change. We never know what is being thrown our direction and the ability to roll with it and adjust is just part of the job. Even after being in Financial Aid for almost 20 years, there are still challenges that come my way.

Why did you say "yes" to serving as a Sector Rep for CAFAA?

I decided to become a Sector Rep for CAFAA because I think it is important to have a seat at the table and be a voice for the 4-year private schools in Colorado. There are very few of us and I believe it is important to bring our concerns forward. I also was made aware of the many improvements the board is making to enhance the CAFAA experience for its members. Being on the board is also a great way to network and meet others in the industry you wouldn't otherwise get a chance to meet.

What's your number-one goal as a sector rep?

My number one goal, as a sector rep, is to gain important information to take back to the schools I represent and my own institution and to bring any concerns forward.

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# A wise person once said...

CONNECTING WITH  
OTHERS IS REWARDING;  
IT MAKES US FEEL LIKE  
WE'RE NOT ALONE IN  
THE WORLD.

~JONAH BERGER





ADINA CHAVEZ, CONTINUED

If you could be any animal, what would it be and why?

If I could be any animal it would be a tiger. The reason is most are independent and free. They don't rely on others to provide for themselves and their families.

Let's Connect: [achavez@regis.edu](mailto:achavez@regis.edu)

## Michael Vigil

PROPRIETARY SCHOOL SECTOR REP -  
PLATT COLLEGE



Director of Financial Aid

Years in Financial Aid (or related field): 9 years

What is the most valuable thing you have learned in your career?

One of the most valuable things I've learned in my career is that the ability to adapt and embrace change are invaluable skills to have. The financial aid landscape is constantly evolving, and technology and practices are continuously transforming. It is crucial to be open-minded, flexible, and willing to adapt to new situations, ideas, and ways of doing things.

Why did you say "yes" to serving as a Sector Rep for CAFAA?

I decided to become a Sector Rep for CAFAA because I was looking for professional development and a supportive network within the financial aid community to benefit the students I serve.

What's your number-one goal as a sector rep?

To foster collaboration and communication among financial aid administrators in Colorado. By promoting collaboration, I can help facilitate a supportive network where administrators can learn from each other's experiences, collaborate on shared challenges, and collectively work towards improving the financial aid landscape in the state. This will strengthen the collective expertise of financial aid administrators, improve the quality of services provided to students, and ultimately contribute to the overall success of financial aid administration in the sector.

If you could be any animal, what would it be and why?

As a Director of Financial Aid, my choice would be a wise and playful dolphin. Their intelligence, adaptability, social nature, and playful spirit resonate with the qualities needed to excel in financial aid administration. By embracing the dolphin's characteristics, I aim to bring a splash of joy and effective problem-solving to the world of financial aid, making a positive impact on students' lives

Let's Connect: [michael.vigil@PlattColorado.edu](mailto:michael.vigil@PlattColorado.edu)

# Join us at the RMASFAA 2023 Annual Conference

OCTOBER 8-11  
FORT COLLINS, CO

MARK YOUR CALENDARS AND PLAN  
TO JOIN YOUR COLLEAGUES!





# FAFSA Simplification Fun Fact #1

THE DEPARTMENT OF  
EDUCATION HAS  
ANNOUNCED THAT THE 2425  
FAFSA WILL NOT BE  
RELEASED UNTIL "DECEMBER  
2023", NO EXACT DATE HAS  
BEEN RELEASED

HOW WILL THIS AFFECT  
YOUR INSTITUTION'S  
STUDENT AID OFFER  
MAILING STRATEGY?

## Beth Reynolds

4 YEAR PUBLIC SECTOR REP- CSU

Assistant Director, Special Programs & Student  
Employment Operations

Years in Financial Aid (or related field): I've worked  
in higher education for 22 years, with a 2-year Financial Aid hiatus into  
Career Counseling.



What is the most valuable thing you have learned in your career?

One of the most valuable things I've learned in my career is balance!  
balance! balance!

Why did you say "yes" to serving as a Sector Rep for CAFAA?

I decided to become a Sector Rep for CAFAA because CAFAA has been a  
huge chapter of my financial aid career since relocating to Colorado, and I  
have grown to love helping out this organization whenever and however I  
can, so when I was asked to serve this year, it was an easy "YES"! It's a  
great way to connect with colleagues across the state, and to build your  
own "toolkit" to help serve students at your own institutions more  
holistically and build your own professional network with peers that are  
working on the same hurdles you may be facing at your institutions.

What's your number-one goal as a sector rep?

I've thoroughly enjoyed volunteering in a variety of capacities, from  
presenting at conferences and professional development events, to

...serving in a variety of roles on the board, to planning and chairing the Association's 50th Anniversary celebration  
conference, and each opportunity has been both personally and professionally fulfilling. - Thinking about getting involved?  
Do it!

I'd like to be a resource for my colleagues at other 4-year public institutions, to help answer any questions they may have,  
but also to make sure that any concerns they're having are brought to the table and addressed. Additionally, I hope to make  
serving on the board less "scary" and encourage others to get involved (in whatever way feels most fulfilling for the  
individual) if they're thinking about it.

If you could be any animal, what would it be and why?

I'd be one of Cinderella's mice (didn't say it had to be a REAL animal! 😊) - they get to transform into horses and footmen  
and help get a princess ready for the ball, and torment the heck out of Lucifer the cat!

Let's Connect: [elizabeth.reynolds@colostate.edu](mailto:elizabeth.reynolds@colostate.edu)

We encourage you to stay tuned - next month we will introduce our Service Organization Sector Representative, Crystal  
DeLong with Citizens Bank and State Partner, Gayle Godfrey with CDHE. In the near future as the Board of Directors gains  
momentum, CAFAA members can expect these individuals to be reaching out to all of you to establish times and new ways  
to connect!



## Institution Spotlight

### COMMUNICATIONS CHAIR

Has your staff gone above and beyond to help your campus or surrounding community? Have you made a procedural change that has positively impacted First Gen students? Has your staff hosted over 100 Financial Aid related events in preparation for the next aid year? Or can one of your team members push an orange across a room in record time using only their nose?

If so then the Communications Committee wants to hear from you!

Each month this section has been dedicated as a space to have members highlight your office's, staff-member's, or institution's achievements and to celebrate our members' successes and contributions to the financial aid community as a whole.

Contributing an Institution Spotlight is simple and best of all ANYONE can contribute, not just Directors.

Follow these three steps to contribute:

1. Write a brief one-to-two paragraphs, include links to any relevant content
2. Include one to two photos (fun or serious)
3. Email it to our Communications Chair: [hdaugherty@coloradomesa.edu](mailto:hdaugherty@coloradomesa.edu)

If you have questions on contributing or need some additional guidance please do not hesitate to reach out.

## Financial Aid Professional Toolbox

### PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

There are many great resources and tools available to Financial Aid Professionals. Make sure you are utilizing these tools to stay up to date!

Some resources may require a specific log in to have full access and resources that require a purchase for full access to materials are noted with a \$.

[NASFAA - \\$](#)

[FSA Glossary](#)

[Colo Dept of Higher Ed](#)

[RMAFAA](#)

[FSA Handbook](#)

[CAFAA Financial Aid Toolkit](#)

[FSA Financial Aid Toolkit](#)

[US Dept of Education](#)

[CASFA Resources](#)

[StudentAid](#)

Non Financial Aid Resources

[Center for 1st Gen Student Success](#)

[Higher Ed Immigration Portal](#)

# Want to be included in our Institution Spotlight?

EMAIL HOLLY DAUGHERTY

[HDAUGHERTY@COLORADOMESA.EDU](mailto:hdaugherty@coloradomesa.edu)

CAFAA COMMUNICATION CHAIR & HISTORIAN



# EVENTS, UPDATES & ANNOUNCEMENTS

To have your event or announcement included please email [hdaugherty@coloradomesa.edu](mailto:hdaugherty@coloradomesa.edu)

## Volunteer With CAFAA

Events like the annual conference are put on with the help of volunteers like you! These volunteer opportunities not only help the organization, but they are also great additions to your personal resume. There are multiple committees within CAFAA for you to become involved with. Follow the QR Code to let us know you are interested.

CAFAA Committees:

- Financial Aid Awareness
- Professional Development
- Communications
- Conference



## Upcoming Events:

RMASFAA Annual Conference  
Fort Collins, CO  
OCT 8-10

CAFAA Spring Conference  
Colorado Springs, CO  
MAY 8-10

## Conference Surveys

It's not too late to let us know your thoughts about the '23 CAFAA Conference! Complete the surveys to let us know how to improve the conference for years to come.

- [Post Conference Survey](#).
- [Session Survey](#) - complete for each session you attended

## Congrats 2023-2024 CAFAA Board

The 2023-2024 CAFAA Board hosted our first meeting on June 12, 2023. We will share an update soon on the plan for the year ahead!

# Members

ADAMS STATE UNIVERSITY - AIMS COMMUNITY COLLEGE - ARAPAHOE COMMUNITY COLLEGE - BEL-RAE INSTITUTE OF ANIMAL TECHNOLOGY - CAMPUSLOGIC - CITIZENS ONE STUDENT LOANS - CO DEPARTMENT OF HIGHER EDUCATION - COLLEGE AVE. STUDENT LOANS - COLORADO CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY - COLORADO COLLEGE - COLORADO COMMUNITY COLLEGE SYSTEMS - CDHE - COLORADO GEARUP - COLORADO MESA UNIVERSITY - COLORADO MOUNTAIN COLLEGE - COLORADO NORTHWESTERN COMMUNITY COLLEGE - COLORADO SCHOOL OF MINES - COLORADO STATE UNIVERSITY, FORT COLLINS - COMMUNITY COLLEGE OF AURORA - COMMUNITY COLLEGE OF DENVER CREDIBLE - DENVER SEMINARY - DISCOVER STUDENT LOANS - EARNEST - ELM RESOURCES FORT LEWIS COLLEGE - FRONT RANGE COMMUNITY COLLEGE - FUNDING U - INCEPTIA IRON BRIDGE RESOURCES - LATIN AMERICAN EDUCATIONAL FOUNDATION - METRO STATE UNIVERSITY OF DENVER - MPOWER FINANCING - NELNET - NORTHEASTERN JUNIOR COLLEGE - PAUL MITCHELL THE SCHOOL DENVER - PIKES PEAK COMMUNITY COLLEGE PLATT COLLEGE - PUEBLO COMMUNITY COLLEGE - RED ROCKS COMMUNITY COLLEGE REGIS UNIVERSITY - ROCKY MOUNTAIN COLLEGE OF ART AND DESIGN - SALLIE MAE SCHOLARNET - SOFI - TECHNICAL COLLEGE OF THE ROCKIES - TRINIDAD STATE JUNIOR COLLEGE - UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO, BOULDER - UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO, COLORADO SPRINGS - UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO, DENVER - UNIVERSITY OF DENVER UNIVERSITY OF NORTHERN COLORADO - WESTERN COLORADO UNIVERSITY

**Stay tuned for more virtual events and ways to connect brought to you by our:  
Professional Development, Financial Aid Awareness Committees and Sector Reps!**

## We Want to Hear From You

Our Communications Committee is working hard on getting you up to date information. We will be updating our social media channels, website and blogs in the near future. If you have an idea for content we would love to hear from you:

- Holly Daugherty, Chair: [hdaugherty@coloradomesa.edu](mailto:hdaugherty@coloradomesa.edu)
- Veronica Valles, Co-Chair: [vvalles@regis.edu](mailto:vvalles@regis.edu)

Newsletter updates, including spotlight sections and upcoming events, must be submitted no later than the 15th of each month to be included in the following monthly newsletter