

# NEWS TO KNOW

## OCTOBER 2006

### **OSFA @ FASFAA**

Thank you to everyone that visited with us at FASFAA! We hope that you enjoyed the OSFA sessions, Cyber Café, and stopped by the Vendor area to visit with our staff. Also, congratulations to our door prize winners! We hope the Employee Recognition Panels will assist you in recognizing your leaders on campus!

- ❑ Marie Davis, FSU
- ❑ Rosa Vella, Pasco-Hernando CC
- ❑ Tiffany Palmer, Eckerd College
- ❑ Debbie Bennett, Concorde Career Institute
- ❑ Donna Denbo, William T. McFatter Technical Institute

### **Cohort Default Rate**

The US Department of Education recently announced that the national student loan default rate for FY2004 was 5.1 percent, representing a slight increase from FY2003's record low rate of 4.5 percent. At OSFA, we are pleased to announce that while the national student loan default rate increased, our cohort default rate dropped 0.1 percent! Statistics also show that the Community Colleges that utilize OSFA as their primary guarantor, experienced on average a 2.33 percent decrease in their cohort default rate in comparison to Community Colleges that utilize other guarantors who experienced on average a 0.19 percent increase.

If you would like more information on our aggressive Default Prevention and Aversion Programs, contact your local Outreach Representative today!

## **OSFA Default Prevention Seminar**

Date: October 6, 2006

Time: 8:30 AM – 1:30 PM

Location: Miami Dade College – Interamerican Campus  
627 SW 27 Avenue, Room 3103  
Miami, Florida

To learn more about this workshop (or to register), please visit the **NYFF website** today! Stay tuned for more information on additional workshops that will be scheduled for the Tampa, Orlando, Jacksonville, and Panama City areas.

## **Program Compliance Audit for State Student Financial Assistance Programs**

Now is the time for institutions to begin activities to comply with the Program Compliance Audit for State Student Financial Assistance Programs for the fiscal year 2005-2006 in order to satisfy requirements under Statute 215.97, Florida Single Audit Act, and statutes 1009.51, 1009.52, 1009.53, 1009.5385 and State Board of Education Rules 6A-20.0021. These Florida Statutes and rules require a biennial audit for State Student Financial Assistance programs and an annual audit of the Florida Bright Futures Scholarship Program. Need more info? Check out our **website**!

## **State Programs Calendar**

- ❑ **September/October 2006**
  - Term 1 Disbursement Eligibility Report (DER) due to OSFA 30 days after the last day of the PSI's drop/add period
- ❑ **October 2006**
  - Participating PSI disbursement deadline for the William L. Boyd, IV, Florida Resident Access Grant (FRAG) for Term 1

For more information on deadlines for the remainder of the year, please visit our **website**.

## **Welcome**

OSFA would like to take this opportunity to welcome Mr. David Sikes on board! David joined the OSFA Team as the Florida Bright Futures Scholarship Director. David can be reached at 850-410-5172 or via email at: [David.Sikes@fldoe.org](mailto:David.Sikes@fldoe.org).

## **Briefing on National Cohort Default Rates**

FSA has posted a briefing of the national cohort default rates released on Sept. 13. The briefing is available in [MS Power Point](#) and [PDF format](#). The briefing includes: a graph showing how this year's 5.1% cohort default rate compares to previous years' rates; a graph illustrating the decline in schools subject to sanctions due to high default rates; recent methods used to reduce default rates; a spread sheet showing default rates by institution type; and a graph showing the total federal student loan portfolio for FY 2005 by the types of loans issued.

## **Cohort Default Rate Guide**

The [Cohort Default Rate Guide](#), revised in August 2006, captures changes made since its initial publication in August 2001. Changes include those made on the Default Prevention & Management's web page and those resulting from the Higher Education Reconciliation Act of 2005 (HERA). Tables and examples have been updated, and some areas have been restructured for easier reading. This version is the primary reference tool to help schools understand the complete cohort default rate process-from the calculation through the challenge/appeal processes.

## **FGIC Guidelines**

The Department of Education has issued a [memorandum](#) regarding the First Generation in College (FGIC) Guidelines. These guidelines have been prepared to assist the community college foundations in promoting this program and awarding scholarships to eligible students.

## **Hurricane Discharges and Administrative Forbearance**

We have received the following information from the Department of Education concerning hurricane-related discharges and administrative forbearance:

“The Office of Postsecondary Education has conferred with the Department’s Office of General Counsel and we all agree that administrative forbearance should be granted those borrowers who are subject to hurricane-related discharges until the discharge is granted, consistent with existing 34CFR 682.211(f)(7), which relates to determinations of eligibility (and related processing) of all the existing FFEL loan discharges. Since the regulations anticipate this treatment with loan discharge applicants, we believe it is appropriate to also apply this approach to the hurricane-related discharges that have been authorized. As it relates to a borrower for whom only a portion of a loan will be discharged, borrowers should be informed as to what the administrative forbearance applies to and that it has not relieved them of payment requirements on the remainder of the loan. If repayment difficulties exist for those borrowers on the remaining portion of the loan that is not subject to administrative forbearance in anticipation of discharge, the borrower should be examined for any additional benefit they may qualify for on the remaining portion of the loan for which the borrower continues to be responsible.”

## **MYF Chat Events**

- ❑ October 19th
- ❑ January 9th
- ❑ April 10th
- ❑ July 17th

All chat Events are scheduled for 7 – 8 PM EST and will cover general financial aid, student loan, and money management. For more information, please visit the [MYF Chat Event website](#).

## **MYF PLUS Loan Guide**

Mapping Your Future's (MYF) parent PLUS loan guide is available in both [English](#) and [Spanish](#) on the MYF site. The guide is especially important to Spanish-speaking parents, as they apply for PLUS loans using the English Master Promissory Note. Perspective and current parent PLUS borrowers can read content page-by-page, download a print-friendly guide, or select from a variety of topics and resources.

## **National SMART Grant Update**

Dear Colleague Letter [GEN-06-06](#) provided the list of eligible academic majors under the National Science and Mathematics Access to Retain Talent Grant (National SMART Grant) Program. It has been noted that certain majors were inadvertently omitted. [GEN-06-15](#) provides an updated list. The Department has received public comments on the interim final rule that raise other issues related to the list of majors. Additional changes may be made to this list as the Department reviews those comments.

## **Renewal FAFSA Process**

The **2007-08 Renewal FAFSA Process Guide** is now available! This guide provides useful information to financial aid administrators about the 2007-08 renewal application process. A schedule of important dates and a sample of the Renewal Reminder are also included. FSA has made one significant change to the renewal application process for the 2007-08 cycle by eliminating the second Renewal Reminder distribution, which was introduced in 2006-07. Instead, a single Renewal Reminder distribution will occur beginning in mid-January 2007.

## **Dates to Remember**

[FASFAA](#) Region V Workshop  
October 17<sup>th</sup>  
Boca Raton, Florida

[FASFAA](#) Region IV Workshop  
October 19<sup>th</sup>  
Lake Wales, Florida

**FASFAA** Region I Workshop  
October 19<sup>th</sup>  
Pensacola, Florida

**EAC** Conference  
October 30<sup>th</sup> – November 2<sup>nd</sup>  
Orlando Florida

**FASFAA** Region II Workshop  
November 2<sup>nd</sup>  
St. Augustine, Florida

**NCHELP** Training Conference  
November 12<sup>th</sup> – 15<sup>th</sup>  
Dallas, Texas

Need more information? Check out their websites!

## **Mission Statement**

The Florida Department of Education, Office of Student Financial Assistance (OSFA), serves as a guarantor for the Federal Family Education Loan Program (FFELP), and the administrator of Florida's scholarship and grant programs. The OSFA Mission is to facilitate higher education access and services by providing exemplary customer attention, comprehensive financial aid information, and convenient and efficient products.

## **Philosophy**

As a public agency, OSFA has the ability to offer its partners and customers something few guarantors can: the ability to shape OSFA programs and services based on their specific concerns. Earnings generated from OSFA's loan programs are used to help fund scholarship and grant programs, financial aid workshops and publications, and to provide better services for our participants. When schools and students choose to use the OSFA guarantee for student loans, they are actually helping countless other needy and deserving students by investing in education programs. So, if a participant has a problem or suggestion, OSFA management listens and does whatever it takes to implement a solution that meets their needs. Public dollars deserve that kind of accountability in education finance.

## **OSFA Team Contact Information**

Ernest Smith  
Director of Market Development  
850-322-6498  
[Ernest.Smith@fldoe.org](mailto:Ernest.Smith@fldoe.org)

Lori Auxier  
Manager of Outreach Services  
850-212-2997  
[Lori.Auxier@fldoe.org](mailto:Lori.Auxier@fldoe.org)

Kelly Bernhardt  
Outreach Representative  
850-294-8299  
[Kelly.Bernhardt@fldoe.org](mailto:Kelly.Bernhardt@fldoe.org)

Robin Blank  
Outreach Representative  
850-264-6008  
[Robin.Blank@fldoe.org](mailto:Robin.Blank@fldoe.org)

Stephanie Durdley  
Outreach Representative  
850-322-6219  
[Stephanie.Durdley@fldoe.org](mailto:Stephanie.Durdley@fldoe.org)

Armando Salas-Amaro  
Outreach Representative  
850-321-6882  
[Armando.Salas-Amaro@fldoe.org](mailto:Armando.Salas-Amaro@fldoe.org)

## **NYFF Team Contact Information**

Jacqueline Hill  
Manager of Default Prevention Services  
850-212-1108  
[Jacqueline.Hill@fldoe.org](mailto:Jacqueline.Hill@fldoe.org)

Geoffrey Wynn  
Default Prevention Representative, North  
904-294-6896  
[Gwynn@randbsolutions.net](mailto:Gwynn@randbsolutions.net)

Margaret Joffe  
Default Prevention Representative, West  
727-458-9718  
[Mjoffe@randbsolutions.net](mailto:Mjoffe@randbsolutions.net)

Eddie Serrano  
Default Prevention Representative, East  
407-334-9942  
[Eserrano@randbsolutions.net](mailto:Eserrano@randbsolutions.net)

TBA  
Default Prevention Representative, South  
*(Please contact one of the other representatives until this position has been filled.)*

## **Finally**

Confidence in the institution's ability to determine our integrity, character, and truthfulness is of the utmost importance to OSFA. The Office of Student Financial Assistance wants to know and deliver what you seek in a partner. You have the right to choose. Together, we have the power to make a difference. Trust the Office of Student Financial Assistance to help you help your students. They are our future.