

# Strategic Plan

## 2018-2023



**Connecticut Association of Professional  
Financial Aid Administrators, Inc.**

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# CONNECTICUT ASSOCIATION OF PROFESSIONAL FINANCIAL AID ADMINISTRATORS, INC. (CAPFAA)

## *Who We Are ...*

CAPFAA consists of financial aid administrators from post-secondary institutions, other members of educational institutions, government agencies, and private and community organizations concerned with the support and administration of student financial aid. CAPFAA was established in 1969 as a means to serve the professional preparation of financial aid administrators and the interests and needs of students and their families through the financial aid process.

CAPFAA was incorporated in the State of Connecticut in 1986. CAPFAA, Inc., a 501(c)(3) organization, is identified as a non-stock corporation under its Certificate of Incorporation. Within the Certificate of Incorporation, the purpose of the Association is listed as follows:

1. To promote the professional preparation, effectiveness, recognition, cooperation, and association of:
  - a. college and university student financial aid administrators
  - b. and others in education institutions, government agencies, foundations, and private and community organizations concerned with the support and administration of student financial aid.
2. To serve effectively the interests and needs of students, faculties, government agencies, and program sponsors through the coordination of plans and programs pertinent to student financial aid.
3. To assist education institutions, foundations, government agencies, and private and community organizations to promote and develop effective programs of student financial aid.
4. To facilitate communication and cooperation among educational institutions and between these institutions and sponsors of student aid funds.
5. To promote such systematic studies, cooperative experiments, conferences and other related activities as may be desirable or required to fulfill the purpose of this Association.

Specifically, CAPFAA assists in promoting and developing effective programs of student financial aid. Additionally, CAPFAA facilitates communication and cooperation among educational institutions and sponsors of student aid funds by offering conferences and training sessions on important and relevant issues in student financial aid.

### *Introduction*

The 2013-2015 Strategic Plan (The Plan) for CAPFAA committed the Association to developing a plan that would support and guide the organization during a time in which student financial aid centered organizations were seeing shifts in financial aid programs and higher education in general.

To this end, goals and objectives were developed to...

- Ensure an organizational structure, governed by the Constitution and By-Laws that would support viability and the long term strength of the Association.
- Ensure that communications of the Association were done consistent with the organizational structure in a collaborative manner.
- Ensure professional growth and competency development of its members.
- Ensure fiscal integrity and stability of the Association.

In the fall of 2015, the Strategic Planning Committee's review of The Plan for 2013-2015 realized that goals and objectives were, for the most part, successfully achieved. Furthermore, the majority of the goals and objectives directly affected the policies and procedures of the Association, and were incorporated into the CAPFAA Policy and Procedure Manual. Ideas for new initiatives were beginning to emerge at that time.

Throughout the 2016-2017 and 2017-2018 periods, the Strategic Planning Committee observed changes in the Association. At the request of these Presidents, the committee was charged with drafting a new strategic plan for membership presentation at the CAPFAA Annual Meeting in June 2018. Taking into consideration commentary by the membership, an updated DRAFT of the Strategic Plan will be presented at the CAPFAA Annual Conference in October 2018 in conjunction with any proposed changes to the Constitution and By-Laws that relate to an Association response to a changing environment within Connecticut and the field. The FINAL Strategic Plan will be presented at the Annual Business Meeting in June 2019.

The Strategic Plan for 2018-2023 is centered on five major themes present in the Association's Letters of Incorporation. These relevant and timeless themes continue to serve CAPFAA well today.

The appointed Strategic Planning Committee, in consultation with the membership, has been tasked with recommending goals and objectives around these five themes that will position CAPFAA as a leading professional association dedicated to excellence in the delivery of student financial aid.

## **I. THE MISSION AND PURPOSE**

As affirmed by the Mission Statement of CAPFAA, Inc., this Association is poised to:

- Promote professional growth and development of its members in an atmosphere of collegial support and respect;
- Actively pursue the mentoring of its members and those young professionals who may wish to make Financial Aid their career goal;
- Support an industry-wide spirit of cooperation and communication; and
- Serve as a steward of the profession to ensure the ethical administration of student financial aid programs for students, families and the institutions we represent.

## **II. THE CORE VALUES**

The core values of CAPFAA are its guiding principles. They define what the Association stands for and are, therefore, of intrinsic value to Connecticut's financial aid community. Flowing from its tradition of professional excellence, the Association's core values are to:

- Develop student aid professionals as a collegial circle of intellectuals;
- Maintain a commitment to excellence in all that we do;
- Manifest the highest level of integrity, transparency and clarity;
- Support fairness and equity for students across all sectors of higher education;
- Promote the common good of society.

These core values guide the Association's members as they come together as a community of professionals to decipher common problems; share opinions, research, strategize; and discuss common needs, questions, and interests. As evidenced by this Strategic Plan, CAPFAA is committed to these values for the long term.

### **III. THE POPULATIONS OF THE ASSOCIATION**

As a professional association, CAPFAA is composed of three broadly defined membership groups:

- Active Institutional Membership, limited to persons engaged in the administration of student financial aid who are representing institutions of higher education in Connecticut.
- Associate Institutional Membership, limited to higher education institutions located outside of Connecticut, government agencies, and other entities whose primary purpose supports the administration of post-secondary financial aid.
- Retired Membership, limited to individuals who were formerly active members or association members in the field for at least ten years and are now retired.

CAPFAA serves distinct groups of individuals, including but not limited to:

- Student Financial Aid Administrators at post-secondary institutions;
- Students, faculties, government agencies, and student aid program sponsors; and
- Educational institutions, foundations, and private and community organizations.

### **IV. POSITIONING CAPFAA FOR THE FUTURE**

By achieving the goals and objectives identified within this Strategic Plan, CAPFAA is positioned as a leading professional financial aid organization locally, regionally, and nationally.

This Strategic Plan shall undergo periodic review and assessment by the Association's Executive Council to identify potential updates, provide metrics on measurable outcomes, and review membership feedback in an effort to maintain our commitment to excellence in the industry at the state, regional, and federal levels.

## **STRATEGIC PLAN 2018-2023**

### **GOALS AND OBJECTIVES**

- GOAL 1: Professional Excellence
- GOAL 2: Student Financial Aid Advocacy
- GOAL 3: Community Service / Public Affairs
- GOAL 4: Leadership / Communication
- GOAL 5: Financial Strength

### **GOAL 1**

**Objective 1: Reshape the Annual Conference to be the marquee event for professional development and networking of the membership.**

**Owner: Conference Committee**

Strategic Initiatives:

- Transition from December to earlier in the fall semester as identified from survey to membership as a more convenient time to participate.
- Maintain modest registration fees to allow for maximum member participation.
- Rebuild the Associate Institutional Membership and encourage new attendance from our neighboring state financial aid communities.
- Ensure the agenda includes the widest spectrum of relevant topics, and include activities that promote networking opportunities.

Measurable Outcomes:

- Attendance numbers compared to prior years.
- Member evaluations for sessions and activities that reflect positive professional educational benefit.

**Objective 2: Remodel the Training Committee and develop training activities that address specific needs of financial aid professionals of the Association.**

**Owner: Vice President, Training Committee**

Strategic Initiatives:

- Look to draw upon new talents and skills of committee members and trainers to address the changing landscape of training needs in the Association.
- Establish “Open-Door Training,” formerly “Front Liners Training”: Continue to develop programming for financial aid office staff, as well as other relevant higher education professionals that represent diverse groups of institutions.
- Reshape training efforts for new financial aid administrators, traditionally known as Comprehensive Training.
- Support “Up and Coming Training,” paired with a mentoring opportunity for financial aid professionals in coordination with the Mentoring Committee.
- Evaluate the structure of the “Tax Workshop”: In depth training on federal taxes in relation to need analysis.
- Address the perceived and assessed developmental needs of the members, recognizing categorical distinctions among members such as, experience level, institutional type, and level of administrative responsibility.

Measurable Outcomes:

- Attendance numbers compared to prior years.
- Member evaluations for sessions and activities that reflect positive professional educational benefit.



**Objective 3: Further the research, training, and support for graduate and professional student aid through the Graduate and Professional Concerns Committee.**

**Owner: Graduate and Professional Concerns Committee**

Strategic Initiatives:

- Open up lines of communication (in person and on line) that allows the graduate and professional financial aid community to share concerns and ideas, to respond to regulations and discuss best practices.
- Sponsor an annual CAPFAA Symposium that supports the interests of graduate and professional students.
- Coordinate with the Conference and Training Committees to deliver programming supporting the Graduate and Professional interests, as needed.

Measurable Outcomes:

- Involvement from Graduate and Professional constituents that support a broad range of thinking and professional excellence.
- Attendance numbers compared to prior years.
- Member evaluations for sessions and activities that reflect positive professional educational benefit.

## *Strategic Planning Goals & Objectives*

### **GOAL 2**

**Objective 1:** Expand CAPFAA’s opportunities for advocacy, communication, and engagement with state and federal officials in support of student aid and related policies.

**Owner:** State and Federal Relations Committee

Strategic Initiatives:

- Keep membership informed of important news and legislation related to student aid through the publication of “Cyber Brunch” and other electronic media including Facebook and similar social networking websites.
- Lead efforts for advocacy, communication, and engagement with state and federal legislators.

Measurable Outcomes:

- Enhanced relationships with legislative leaders.
- Membership kept apprised of legislative updates related to student aid.

**Objective 2:** Collaborate with EASFAA in support of student-facing initiatives and professional development opportunities.

**Owner:** EASFAA Representative

Strategic Initiatives:

- Survey membership regarding perception of EASFAA and its activities.
- Keep membership informed regarding EASFAA initiatives and activities.
- Encourage membership and participation from within CAPFAA to EASFAA.
- Share CAPFAA news and initiatives with EASFAA and collaborate where appropriate.

Measurable Outcomes:

- EASFAA representative ensures CAPFAA interests are shared with EASFAA Council.
- Positive feedback regarding EASFAA.
- Increased number of CAPFAA members joining EASFAA.

**Objective 3:** Collaborate with the Associate Membership who share concerns regarding student financial aid and affordability issues.

**Owner:** Associate Member Representative

Strategic Initiatives:

- Keep Associate Membership informed regarding Conference planning.
- Pioneer efforts to engage new Associate Members.

Measurable Outcomes:

- Positive feedback regarding vending at the Conference.
- Meet or exceed budget for number of Conference vendors.

**Objective 4: Convene meetings of institutional financial aid leadership as a means to provide leadership, discussion, and development.**

**Owner: CAPFAA President, Executive Council**

Strategic Initiatives:

- Keep the institutional leaders informed of the state of the association as representatives of their institutions.
- Promote conversation between member institutions and the association.

Measurable Outcomes:

- Generation of ideas and/or initiatives to assist association members.
- Creation of development opportunities between the association and membership.

## *Strategic Planning Goals & Objectives*

### **GOAL 3**

**Objective 1: Coordinate efforts with other state and regional organizations that have mutual mission and purpose.**

**Owner: CAPFAA Executive Council**

Strategic Initiatives:

- Reconstitute the CAPFAA Guidance Counselor Fair or similar event to strengthen relationships with secondary education professionals.
- Bring together CAPFAA and the Connecticut Chapters of the National Urban League to disseminate student aid information.

Measurable Outcomes:

- Programming will take place.
- Participation and feedback.

**Objective 2: Advance outreach to students concerning FAFSA completion, student financial aid, and college affordability (similar to College Goal Sunday)**

**Owner: FAFSA Day Connecticut Committee, Communications Committee**

Strategic Initiatives:

- Establish a committee to support FAFSA Day Connecticut.
- Continue to serve and embrace the mission of College Goal Sunday.
- Expand partnerships, programs, sites, and financial support as needed to sustain a long-term commitment to serve students.
- Coordinate communications and the CAPFAA website to assist high schools in making students aware of financial aid opportunities.
- Expand scholarship opportunities to students attending the FAFSA Day event.

Measurable Outcomes:

- Programming will take place.
- Participation and feedback.

**Objective 3: Expand the CAPFAA Scholarship program serving students attending institutions of higher education in the State of Connecticut.**

**Owner: President-Elect, Scholarship Committee, Golf Tournament Committee**

Strategic Initiatives:

- Hold the CAPFAA Classic Golf Tournament as a major fund raising event.
- Perform other fundraising efforts to generate funds in support of scholarships.
- Formalize the recognition of the scholarship recipients at the Annual Business Meeting.

- Work with Keybridge to develop a mechanism for students to upload scholarship materials through the CAPFAA website.

Measurable Outcomes:

- Sources of scholarship funds.
- Number of scholarship recipients.

## **GOAL 4**

**Objective 1: Sponsor a robust Annual Business Meeting.**

**Owner: Annual Business Meeting Committee**

Strategic Initiatives:

- Provide a platform for conducting the annual business of the organization.
- Enhance opportunity for recognition of our members and volunteers.
- Provide training and up-to-date information for our members.
- Formalize the recognition of the scholarship recipients.

Measurable Outcomes:

- Attendance compared to prior year ABM events.
- Event evaluations from attendees reflect a positive professional benefit.
- Membership has a clear understanding of the yearly business of CAPFAA.

**Objective 2: Enhance communication efforts to promote awareness and disseminate information to the Association Membership.**

**Owner: Secretary, Communication Committee**

Strategic Initiatives:

- Maintain the records, including minutes, of the Association as assigned.
- Annually review the processes by which the records of the Association are archived to ensure that continuity and order are maintained and that the site at which they are located guarantees responsible maintenance and accessibility as needed.
- Enhance the CAPFAA website and other electronic platforms as a major means of communication.
- Coordinate with other Association Committees to promote Association events and activities.
- Ensure that all Association publications and other methods of information dissemination enhance and/or encourage Association communication and information sharing among the members.

Measurable Outcomes:

- Feedback from the Association Membership that CAPFAA information is appropriately shared.
- Annual review would result in confident archiving and accessibility test.

**Objective 3: Appraise the CAPFAA Leadership Awards and ensure they reflect the mission and core values of The Association.**

**Owner: Past President, Constitution By-Laws and Association History**

Strategic Initiatives:

- Update the historical award plaques and display at annual conference and annual business meeting.

- Create the “Friend of CAPFAA” award.
- Add historical award recipient information to the CAPFAA website.

Measurable Outcomes:

- Recognition of CAPFAA award winners.
- Updated information on CAPFAA website.

**Objective 4: Assess the committees necessary to carry out the functions of the Association.**

**Owner: Executive Council and Designated Committees**

Strategic Initiatives:

- Re-establish the Diversity Committee (previously the Minority Concerns), to make recommendations on how to meet the needs of a diverse membership of professionals, as well as students.
- Create FAFSA Day Connecticut Committee, to meet the needs of students and families related to FAFSA completion and college affordability.
- Create a Finance Committee, to assist the Treasurer in providing financial oversight of the Association.
- Formalize a Golf Tournament Committee, to raise funds that will directly benefit students through the CAPFAA Scholarship Program.

Measurable Outcomes:

- Committees will establish themselves in the 2018-2019 period.
- Goals and objectives of the committees will develop during that period and beyond.

**Objective 5: Further support for the CAPFAA Mentoring Committee.**

**Owner: Mentoring Committee**

Strategic Initiatives:

- Welcome and acclimate new members to CAPFAA.
- Enhance the Mentee for a Day program.
- Provide CAPFAA events and activities that address the needs as identified by the membership.
- Select and recognize recipients for the Magic of Mentoring Award as appropriate.

Measurable Outcomes:

- Needs will be identified and supported.
- Feedback from the membership that reflects effective mentoring is occurring.

**Objective 6: Support a vibrant governance structure of the Association.**

**Owner: Past President, Nominations & Elections Committee, Constitution, By-Laws and Association History Committee, Strategic Planning Committee**

Strategic Initiatives:

- Encourage and support the members of the Association to run for office and/or to be active members of committees.
- Review prior years' event information and research member participation in events and try to encourage greater involvement
- Regularly review the By-Laws of the organization and bring forth recommended changes to the Association.
- Develop and continue to assess the CAPFAA Strategic Plan.
- Maintain the Association Policies and Procedures, updating as necessary.

Measurable Outcomes:

- Change in number of members running for an officer position.
- Change in number of members chairing or being involved in committee work.
- Annual report on status of Strategic Plan.



## *Strategic Planning Goals & Objectives*

### **GOAL 5**

**Objective 1: Focus on achieving an annual balanced budget without reliance on reserve funding.**

**Owner: Treasurer, Finance Committee**

Strategic Initiatives:

- Establish a Finance Committee, chaired by the Treasurer with an appointed co-chair, charged with the financial oversight of the Association.
- Approve Committee budgets at the annual Planning Retreat that align with normal operations and achievement of Strategic Planning initiatives.
- Review past and projected Committee revenue and expenses at Executive Council Meetings.
- Appraise CAPFAA's tax filing and financial review processes to ensure best practices are in place and a secure accounting environment exists.

Measurable Outcomes:

- Running the Association within a balanced budget.
- Assessment of Tax Filing Reviews.

**Objective 2: Maintain an investment of reserves to support the ongoing work of the Association.**

**Owner: Executive Council, Finance Committee**

Strategic Initiatives:

- Monitor long-term investments with periodic review.

Measurable Outcomes:

- Increase (or decrease) in long-term investment funds.

**Objective 3: Explore membership dues and member benefits to address the future development of the organization.**

**Owner: Membership and Directory Committee**

Strategic Initiatives:

- Research membership fee models to ensure a competitive and realistic structure to support the organization and its efforts.
- Explore the option for non-member registration fee for CAPFAA open forum type events.
- Review member benefits and educate all member and non-member institutions for expectations of CAPFAA.
- Encourage CAPFAA membership to institutions beyond our borders.
- Seek to increase membership annually, particularly in under-represented categories and sectors.

Measurable Outcomes:

- Volume of Associate Memberships by expanding across the Connecticut borders.
- Event attendance numbers because of Associate Member expansion.
- Annual dues figures because of Associate Member expansion.

**Objective 4: Evaluate the continued viability of sponsorship from Associate Members (beyond institutions of higher education) to help support the initiatives of the Association.**

**Owner: Associate Member Representative**

Strategic Initiatives:

- Increase Associate Member involvement at the CAPFAA Conference, Training, and fundraising events.

Measurable Outcomes:

- Associate Member participation at CAPFAA events.
- Sponsor dollars contributed toward fundraising events.

# STRATEGIC PLAN 2018-2023

## COMMITTEE / MEMBERS

CO-CHAIRS Heather Hamilton – Quinnipiac University  
Julie Savino – Sacred Heart University

### Executive Council Officers, Committee Chairs & Objective Owners

President – Steve McDowell, CSCU  
Vice President – David Blackmon, Yale  
President Elect – Melissa Stephens, WCSU  
Past President – Alex Muro, Yale  
Secretary – Jenny Burrell, UConn  
Treasurer – Vacant  
EASFAA Representative – Kellie Webb, Yale  
Associate Member Representative – Josh Hurlock, CHESLA

Annual Business Meeting: Josh Hurlock, CHESLA & Jenny Burrell, UConn

Communications: Fany Stubbs, Norwalk CC

Conference: Kellie Webb, Yale & Liz Schumacher, Saint Joseph

Constitution, Bylaws, & Association History: Vanessa Richmond, Porter & Chester

Graduate and Professional Concerns: Jackie Outlaw, Yale & Odette Franceskino, Quinnipiac

Membership and Directory: Luis Guaman, Norwalk CC

Mentoring: Jen Horner, ECSU & Katie May, Conn College

Nominations and Elections: Alex Muro, Yale

Scholarship: Melissa Stephens: WCSU

State & Federal Relations: Peter Terebesi, Higher Ed Executives

Strategic Planning: Heather Hamilton, Quinnipiac and Julie Savino, Sacred Heart

Training: David Blackmon, Yale