




MASFAA Membership Benefits

1. **Professional Development** - Learn and develop your professional skills. MASFAA has hosted numerous in-person and webinar trainings on relevant topics such as neurodiversity, financial literacy, NASFAA credentials, new-Mainer initiatives, and Maine resources such as FAME, MELMAC/MSSI, and other local non-profits. Some other professional development or leadership opportunities include joining a committee, becoming a board member, or representing Maine at the EASFAA regional council. Members also have access to other resources, including information and initiatives at the state, regional, and national level.
2. **Connections** - Connect with colleagues around the state and region to share ideas, policies and procedures, questions, and reflect and build on shared experiences. MASFAA hosts an informal Food and Facts meeting via Zoom on the first Wednesday of each month for members to connect and discuss the latest topics and trends. We also can invite members of our regional community who could share information about their institutional methodology, processes, and experience with various financial aid processing systems which can increase efficiency within the financial aid office.
3. **Representation at the Local, State, Regional, and National levels.** Advocate for the profession and the students you work with. There is power in numbers! A recent advocacy example includes sending a letter to the Department of Education Secretary Cardona to advocate for some alleviation in the administrative burden that financial aid offices are facing this year. Another example is requesting a meeting with Senator Susan Collins regarding member feedback and student testimonials around the FAFSA Simplification rollout. MASFAA members have reached out to local representatives to support LD 1284, which would mandate stand-alone financial literacy courses in the K-12 curriculum. MASFAA has also worked extensively with FAME to advocate for an increase in the Maine State Grant which provides much needed financial assistance and encourages students to enroll in Maine colleges.
4. **Opportunities to Give Back.** Strengthen our communities and colleagues. The MASFAA School Support Initiative Program (MSSI) partners high schools around the state with financial aid administrators to develop positive relationships, assist with FAFSA completion, and provide support to increase college enrollment. Other initiatives include ideas to increase financial literacy among high schoolers and partnering with nonprofits such as FAME, MELMAC, Maine Community Foundation and the United Way of Southern Maine.
5. **Staff Retention** - Feel supported. The population of Maine is aging and our state struggles with retaining our recent graduates within the workforce. We are seeing similar trends within the financial aid profession. To fully onboard a new financial aid administrator can take up to 18 months. Navigating constantly changing regulations and institutional challenges can be difficult, and a recent survey from CUPA-HR found that 1 out of 2 financial aid administrators were considering looking for other employment. Connecting with colleagues can help reduce burnout and members can also help pass down historical and institutional knowledge to those entering the profession. The cost in the annual MASFAA membership is a bargain compared to onboarding a new staff member!

Thank you for considering becoming a member or renewing your membership.


Jamie L. Santiago, M.S.
President