

2008 KASFAA Award Recipients

Presented April 3, 2008 at the Spring Conference in Topeka

Outstanding Service Award – Brent Carpenter

Brent's contributions to KASFAA exhibit breadth and depth. Brent has served the financial aid community for over fifteen years, and has been active in KASFAA since his neophyte days. Most recently, he served as our Associate Member At-Large and is co-chairing the 2009 RMAFSA Conference Planning Committee. He has also served on the following committees in various capacities: Associate Member, Awards, College Goal Sunday, Conference Planning, Corporate Development, Membership, and Welcome Project. While serving on these committees, he continued to be involved in the various activities and initiatives KASFAA supports, regardless of whether he was on that particular committee or not. One can rest assured that every detail will be covered when Brent is involved. He is well-respected and trusted among his peers and colleagues throughout the association.

Meritorious Achievement Award – John Pappas

John has done an outstanding job as Chair of College Goal Sunday. His leadership has resulted in one of the smoothest and most-organized events. He has taken care of so many of the details with publicity and marketing, raising funds, and putting together meetings – that it all has felt very seamless. These tasks take a lot of time and energy, and John has completed them with careful deliberation and good judgment. Thanks John for your willingness to promote such a worthy event in a top-notch way!

Hall of Fame Award – Carol Wirthman

Carol Wirthman has been an active and dedicated member of the financial aid profession and KASFAA for over twenty years. Carol has always prioritized customer service to students and schools over anything else. She has worked tirelessly to provide the best service possible, and she instilled this same dedication in every employee who has ever worked for her. Over the years, she has served KASFAA in so many ways and has always been willing to do anything that was asked of her. She has been instrumental in the success of many of the past KASFAA conferences, as well as serving on various other committees, especially College Goal Sunday.

Carol became a member of KASFAA in 1985 and during her tenure she has served on numerous committees at the state, regional, and national level. Her commitment to detail and follow through has made her a valuable asset –not only to US Bank but KASFAA as well. Carol's outstanding leadership and willingness to share has made her a great role model but also a mentor to several members of KASFAA. Although she has left our industry, she continues to provide guidance and advice.

Hall of Fame Award – Tom Melecki

When one thinks of Tom Melecki, you immediately want to smile! Tom has the wonderful capability to take massive amounts of painfully dry and boring information, and present it in a style that you not only remember, but truly enjoy. Of course, I am referring to the painfully dry makings of federal policy that takes place in our nation's capital. How Tom has managed to listen, and then relay this information, year after year still amazes me. His in depth knowledge and expertise of national matters has been most evident in his numerous presentations to our conference. Tom has been a friend and supporter of the financial aid profession, and certainly, KASFAA for many years.

Hall of Fame Award – Deb Byers

Deb must be commended and recognized for her long-standing service to the Kansas Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators. Deb has held numerous offices within the Association, including President, Past President, President Elect, and Vice President. She has also served as chair and co-chair of numerous committees, presented at multiple conferences, been a speaker at the 2003 Support Staff Workshop, served as a trainer for the KS High School Counselor Training Team, and is an annual volunteer for the College Goal Sunday program. Deb's dedication and service to the association has not gone unnoticed; she has been the recipient of a 20 Year Service Award in 2006 and an Outstanding Service Award in 1998.

Not only has Deb earned the praise and respect of her colleagues in the aid community, she is an incredible ambassador for WSU, a sought-after resource for regulatory interpretation on our campus, and known for her unyielding service to our University. In 2002, WSU President Donald Beggs awarded Deb the President's Award for Distinguished Service. In summer 2007, Deb was awarded the Financial Aid Key to Excellence award by the Office of Financial Aid staff for her dedication to students.
