Committee on Student Financial Assistance (COSFA)

Message from the COSFA chair

On behalf of my fellow COSFA members, we are looking forward to another productive and exciting year for our financial aid community.

First, some acknowledgments and introductions:

I would like to extend a sincere thank you to Jerel Arceneaux, our outgoing COSFA chair. His contributions to the committee have been invaluable. Jerel has been a committed and talented leader whose affable personality and commitment to our community is an inspiration. We are all immensely grateful for his leadership and innovative ideas.

Also, please join me in welcoming to our new committee members: Dr. Barbara Tharpe (COSDA Liaison), Cynthia Gonzalez (Midwest Regional rep), Meredith Schor (Northeast Regional rep) and Abdul Kazi (OSR Liaison). We are all looking forward to working with you.

I would also like to thank Marisa Miles and Wendy Clark for their continued efforts with COSFA as the Southern Regional rep and Western Regional rep, respectively.

The mission of COSFA is to provide guidance to our members and others on legislative and regulatory issues regarding the type, availability, and delivery of financial assistance to medical students. COSFA achieves its mission through:

- Reviewing reports from AAMC staff on the status of specific financial aid legislation and national AAMC data describing the distribution of financial aid to medical students.
- Assessing educational and support programs and activities in order to assist schools in counseling students about financing their medical education and the repayment of student loans.
- Collaborating with the AAMC’s FIRST (Financial Information, Resources, Services, and Tools) program.
- Identifying special projects related to issues of national importance and interest.
Participating in Professional Development Conferences.

This year, we will focus on:

Advocating around matters that affect medical schools and students, such as PSLF and GRAD Plus

Providing improved professional development opportunities for our members

Collaborating with other student affairs committees to tackle recurring issues in our communities, such as SAP, Standard Term definitions, etc.

Our community is defined by its engaged, interesting, diverse, and thoughtful members, and I truly value input from each of you. I welcome your ideas and suggestions about how we can best achieve our goals and advance our efforts. I’d also be interested in hearing about your personal or professional endeavors, accomplishments, service efforts, or life events you would like to share with the COSFA community.

Thank you, and here’s to another great year!

**Damien Jackson M.Ed.**
Director, Office of Student Finance,
Albert Einstein College of Medicine of Yeshiva University