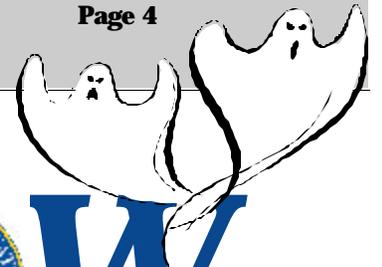
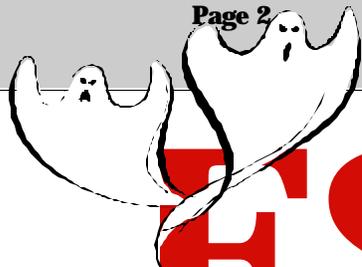




The Monthly Newsletter for FSA Staff



# FSA Now



Issue VII Volume V

October 2004

## Publications processes streamlined!

Written by Joe Aiello

Recently FSA's Communications Management Services held a two-hour training class in Washington's UCP to walk our "FSA Communicators" through the publication process FSA and the Department are now using.

### Who Should Use The Publications Procedures?

FSA Communications is requesting all FSA staff members use the same publication procedures when creating any type of informational material created for an external audience. These procedures regulate those publications, pamphlets, etc. that are disseminated to the public in mass quantities. These procedures do not pertain to OMB forms, training manuals, technical manuals or Web site information.

### The End Result!

By simplifying the processes, using the same writing guides, using the same procedures and getting on board with the Department, FSA will do a better job creating the best-in-business publications that simplify the complicated student aid process for all of our readers. To find out more about the publication process, visit <http://fsanet/library/pubprocess.html> or contact Joe Aiello.

## FSA plans new Enterprise Communications Strategy

Terri Shaw kicked off a new project to develop FSA's Enterprise Communications Strategy on Tuesday, Oct. 26. The objective is to transform FSA's current 'ad hoc' method of communicating into something more cohesive, consistent and strategic.

"We decided to step back and take an enterprise view of FSA's communications to ensure our customers, know who we are," Shaw explained. "We want to be the trusted source for student aid."

The Enterprise Communications Strategy will build FSA's image among its various audiences- students and parents, schools, FSA employees, Executive and Legislative Branches, Influencers/Intermediaries, etc.- as the trusted source of information on planning and paying for college. Initially, the Communications Strategy will dive into the first vertical- students and parents- and

over time develop communication strategies to better reach all of FSA's key audiences. See figure.

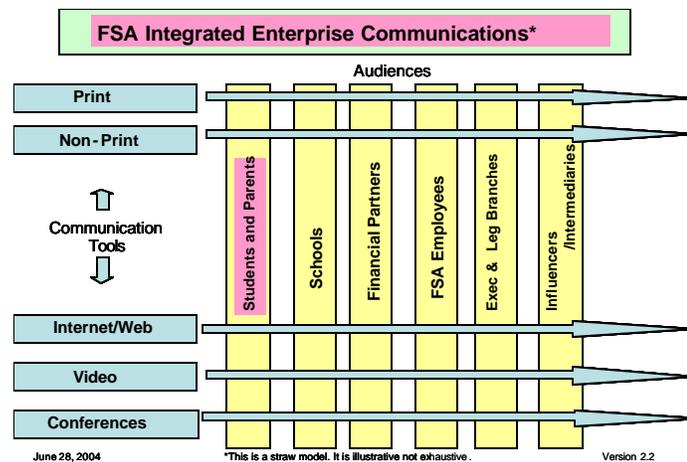
One main issue that the Enterprise Communications Strategy will address is the inconsistent look and feel of FSA's publications and Web sites. The strategy will find a way to align these publications and sites to clearly be identified with FSA. In addition, FSA will build an awareness strategy to help communicate

with FSA customers, particularly emphasizing underserved audiences.

Over the course of the next few months, FSA will assess the current state of communications within the organization.

In the next few weeks, our discovery stage will explore FSA through internal interviews, observations and reviews of all FSA materials.

Our landscape stage will research FSA's



Continued on page 3



**Julie Yeager Arthur**



**Institutional Improvement Specialist (Seattle)  
Western Regional Case Team, ASEDS**

**Best Costume:** A huge Halloween jack o'lantern that covered me from the top of my head to below my knees.

**Worst Costume:** As a kid, an ill fitting ghost costume (actually an old white sheet). I couldn't see through the eye holes and kept running into my fellow trick-or-treaters.

**Halloween Plans:** I plan to stay home and hand out candy to the neighborhood kids. I don't usually wear a costume, but I have some jack o'lantern earrings that are appropriate for the holiday.

*"In college, I won second place in a costume contest wearing the costume. After college, I wore the costume to a party where no one could figure out who I was—except the fellow who kept flirting with me. I eventually married him."*



**Patricia Edelson**



**ASEDS (NY)**

**Best Costume:** My personal best ever was that I was one of "Three Blind Mice."

**Worst costume:** When our sons were about five years old, my sister threw a Halloween party and dressed as a witch. She scared all of the kids and they all went home crying. There was no convincing them she was really "Larry's mother."

**Halloween Plans:** Stay at home and hand out candy while trying not to eat any.

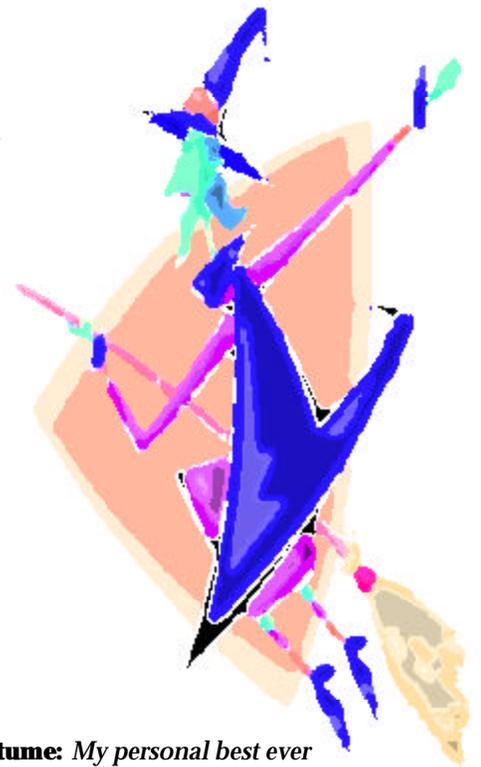
**Donna Hirth**  
Not pictured.

**Financial Partners (Chicago)**

**Best Costume:** A clown years ago

**Worst Costume:** A bum

**Halloween Plans:** Dressing up and participating in a Halloween party with relatives.



**FSA Hits the Halls is a monthly installment of a new column where we randomly ask FSA employees questions to find out a little more about our staff.**



# Ethics Matters by Sean Dent

## Hatch Act

Did you know that you are "Hatched" as a result of your federal employment? The Hatch Act prohibits federal employees from, among other things, engaging in political activity while on duty, in a government building or office, while wearing an official uniform, or using a government vehicle. Political activity has been defined as activity directed toward the success or failure of a political party, candidate for a partisan political office or partisan political group.

Examples of prohibited partisan political activities under the Hatch Act include: wearing partisan buttons and T-shirts while in a federal building or office; using government e-mail to distribute partisan materials (even when off duty); hosting a fundraiser in your home for a partisan political candidate; using an official title while engaging in partisan

activities; and displaying campaign posters or photographs in a federal building or office space. Please note that political cartoons, even satire, can amount to a Hatch Act violation – regardless of whether it was "only meant to be a joke." Therefore, the best course of action – especially over the next few days – is to contact the Ethics Division before engaging in any activity that could possibly trigger the Hatch Act. This is particularly important considering that the penalty for a proven violation of the Hatch Act ranges from a minimum 30-day suspension to a maximum penalty of removal.

As always, call Sean Dent at 202-401-6213 for advice tailored to your specific situation. For more detailed information on the Hatch Act, please visit the web site for the U.S. Office of Special Counsel at [www.osc.gov](http://www.osc.gov).

## Communications Strategy

Continued from page 1

external audiences, stakeholders and their environments to assess current needs. This exercise will research the trends, issues and concerns of FSA audiences.

Under our alignment stage, FSA leadership and key Department personnel will collaboratively reach a consensus on FSA's outreach strengths, exposures, and value proposition. A complete team effort among all FSA employees is vital to ensure this program is a success.

Finally in our platform segment of the project, the outcome of all the research will be used to develop a strategic plan for reaching all audiences. The strategy will serve as a roadmap in developing appropriate outreach tools and products across the organization to achieve the Enterprise Communications vision.

FSA hopes to have the new strategy in place by February. Implementation of the strategy across all of FSA's audiences is a multi-year plan.

To help fulfill the Enterprise Communications vision, FSA has procured the services of Low + Associates, JWT Education and ORC Macro.

## extra! Extra!

### Higher Education Act

President Bush signed the Higher Education Extension Act of 2004, H.R. 5185, on Oct. 25. The bill temporarily extends programs under the Higher Education Act (HEA) of 1965 without amendments. The extension was needed because Congress was unable to complete the reauthorization of the HEA this year. The one-year extension will give them time to finish the reauthorization in 2005.

# FSA Now

### Managing Editor

Chris Greene

### Writers

Joe Aiello

Chris Greene

Tara Young

### Layout/Production

Tara Young

FSA Now is a monthly newsletter for FSA Staff available on FSAnet. To share feedback or contribute ideas, e-mail FSA Communications.

FSA Now may contain news and information about commercial entities. Inclusion does not constitute an endorsement by the U.S. Department of Education of any products or services offered or expressed.

## CONFERENCE UPDATE

### EAC Dates:

Nov. 1-4 in Orlando  
Nov. 30 - Dec. 3 Las Vegas

### Orlando Registrants:

1,580

### Las Vegas Registrants:

2,290

### Total Registrants as of 10/25:

3,870

### AT THIS TIME LAST YEAR:

2,735

### For more information:

<http://edeworkshop.ncspearson.com/welcome.htm>

# From the Regions...

*FSA*Now is looking to highlight specific regional projects. Please let us know if you have any thoughts or ideas to include in *FSA*Now.

## Employee participates in Executive Leadership Program



Patricia Crisp of FSA's Dallas office has been selected to participate in the 2005 Executive Leadership Program (ELP). ELP is a rigorous year-long developmental program designed to develop future public service leaders through providing assessment, experiential learning and individual development activities and opportunities.

Dr. Crisp, an Institutional Review Specialist at FSA, first learned about the program and became interested in participating five years ago. This year when she read the

program announcement in *ED Notebook*, she sent an application to the selection panel along with a recommendation from her supervisor, Charles Johnson Jr.

Participants are required to design and implement a Leadership Development Plan, conduct senior level management interviews, shadow a senior-level manager, complete two developmental assignments outside their position of record, participate in team presentation activities and write a program impact paper outlining what they learned in the program.

"The most challenging part of this program is balancing my current workload, which does not go away when you enter this program, while coordinating the meetings and conference calls with other team members," she said.

Her project research also demands a lot of after-hours time commitment, she added.

This year's program began in early August and will end Sept. 2, 2005. Thus far, Dr. Crisp has attended orientation sessions and completed a leadership book review. Although the program is still in its early stages, Dr. Crisp says she already sees the success of the program.

"In the program, I interface with people from other departments and federal organizations which allow me opportunities to network, prepare advanced projects and enhance my individual and team management skills," she said.

The Center for Leadership and Management Graduate School USDA manages the program.

The ELP's objectives are to: provide public sector employees with a solid training and developmental foundation in leadership skills; encourage public sector organizations to prepare employees for leadership and managerial positions at an earlier stage in their careers; provide participants with an opportunity to assess their developmental strengths and developmental needs in relation to the Executive Core Qualifications; provide participants with an opportunity to observe public sector leaders as role models; and assist participants in becoming more effective in their roles within their respective organizations.



## International Training Sessions

### FFEL Training for Foreign Schools

FSA hosted 23 Australian schools, a New Zealand School and a London School for a three-day training session held at UCP Oct. 20-22.

The training, specially designed for foreign schools, familiarizes schools with the necessary information to offer and administer FFEL loans to its American students. Participating schools meet their regulatory requirement to attend a Department of Education training within one year of their approval to participate in the Title IV Programs.

"Foreign schools are eligible only to participate in the FFEL Program," said Deborah Tarpley of FSA's Denver office. "It is important for them to understand their responsibilities and what they need to do in order to provide loans to their American students in the right amounts and at the right time."

The program featured a variety of services including basic information for new participating schools, a panel of Guaranty

Agency representatives and a segment on cohort default rates.

The session will act as a pilot for the new training series that the Training and Information Services Division is planning to provide for other foreign schools in 2005.

The Australian Embassy was instrumental in setting up this training event.

### Default Training Prevention Scheduled in Puerto Rico

FSA and the Great Lakes Higher Education Guaranty Corporation will co-sponsor two default training prevention sessions in Puerto Rico the week of Nov. 15. The first will be held in San Juan and the second in Mercedita.

All schools in Puerto Rico were invited to attend. The training will include special sessions on default aversion practices, rescuing delinquent borrowers, best practices in default prevention and management and building a default management plan.