



# FSA Ombudsman News

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January 2004

*"It's not about who's right...it's about doing the right thing!"*

## Did you know:

- Ombudsman Assistance requests can be filed on-line through [www.ombudsman.ed.gov](http://www.ombudsman.ed.gov)
- The Department of Education's Closed School Unit does not maintain academic records or transcripts for closed schools. Students (or you) can contact the appropriate state agency to determine whether the agency was able to retrieve the student records when the school closed. To search for closed schools, go to the "Attending" tab under [www.studentaid.ed.gov](http://www.studentaid.ed.gov)
- FSA websites received 20 billion hits in FY 2003.

## FSA Ombudsman DC Staff: (202-377-3800)

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(See the Ombudsman Contact List for specialists in Kansas, Iowa, Chicago, Atlanta, San Francisco)

## Inaugural Issue

This is the inaugural issue of the FSA Ombudsman News. In its fifth year, the office helps resolve student loan disputes and other problems with federal student aid. Please send news or comments to [Linda.Hall@ed.gov](mailto:Linda.Hall@ed.gov).

## First Quarter 2004 Trends

Top Five Issues for Research Cases

1. Loan Cancellation/Discharge
2. Account Balance
3. Repayment Plans/Amounts
4. Consolidation
5. Default

## Tentative Sessions for the Student Loan Ombudsman Annual meeting:

"Dealing with Difficult Customers" (thanks to Tom Melecki -NSLP for the suggestion)

"Identity Theft" presented by OIG staff from the Department of Education

Send suggestions to [Lynel.McFadden@ed.gov](mailto:Lynel.McFadden@ed.gov).

## FY 2003 Agency Reports

Individual agency reports showing FY 03 case summaries were sent out in December. These reports are not published industry-wide. If you have not received your report, or if you want additional information, please contact Corwin Jennings at (202) 377-3291.

## Coming Events

**March 17-18** Student Loan Ombudsman meeting (following the NCHelp Debt Management meeting). Hilton Myrtle Beach Resort, Myrtle Beach, South Carolina. (843) 449-5000.

**March 29 – 31** FSA Spring Conference, New York City. For more information, go to: <http://edeworkshop.ncspearson.com>

## Food for thought....

Puzzled by a case? Looking for different points of view in the Ombuds community? Send in your (anonymous) case facts. We will put the case on the list-serve for comments and include responses in the next issue of FSA Ombudsman News. Please forward case facts to [Linda.Hall@ed.gov](mailto:Linda.Hall@ed.gov).

## Ombudsman Kudos to:

- ✓ Cathy Bridegroom (USA Funds) for sharing a list of contacts for each state's National Guard Bureau Student Loan Repayment Program. To get a copy, contact her at [cbridegr@usafunds.org](mailto:cbridegr@usafunds.org).
- ✓ All of you who (on behalf of your customers) raised case issues to this office. Scot Williams (EdFund), Grace Bartini (ASA), Elaine Brumback (Kentucky) and the list goes on...

## OmbudSpeak:

**col·lab·o·rate** (kə-lāb ə-rā-t)

*intr.v.* To work together, especially in a joint intellectual effort.

[www.dictionary.com](http://www.dictionary.com)