



National Association of FSA County Office Employees Midwest Area

Midwest Area Executive: Jackson Jones, MO
Programs: Jamie Garriot, IN Benefits/Emblem: Vacant
Legislative: Kay Lumsden, MI Scholarship/Awards: Marilyn Dunn, MO
Publicity: Tammy Eibey, IA County Office Advisory: Mary Roberts, IA
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Midwest Area Executive Exit Report Organizational Meeting Savannah, Georgia September 21-22, 2019

I was very thankful to have the unique opportunity to attend the 2019 Organizational Meeting in Savannah representing Jackson Jones, Midwest Area Executive. The only other Organizational meeting I had attended, prior to Savannah, was 2015 in Cedar Rapids as a NAFEC representative. I can say for a fact that my first organizational meeting was nothing like the weekend we spent in Savannah. As I was headed to Savannah, I'll admit that I was very anxious about what we would talk about and what actions needed to be made as I wanted to ensure that I did my best to represent both Jackson and our Midwest Area. I can assure you that everyone at the meeting was very welcoming of new faces and new ideas. The leadership that is in place including our NASCOE Executive Board, Area Executives, and National Program Chairs are a very hard-working, dedicated, and enthusiastic bunch. We are all ready to take the "bull by the horns" and dig in to get the work done.

Our first meeting of the weekend was the large group that included the Program Chairs, Area Execs, and the Executive Board. The brainstorming and ideas that were shared amongst the group was outstanding. One of the changes that came from these discussions was to expand the focus of the committee formerly known as the NAFEC Committee. This committee and chairs will now be called the County Office Advisory Committee. The focus of this committee will not only be to work with NAFEC, but also expand the outreach to other organizations that could work in conjunction with the county office. A discussion was also held that FSA is currently onboarding many new employees who may not truly know the role of the County Office, why we are County Office Employees, and the role of our County Office Committee. Donny Green is the new national chairperson for this committee, and he has a lot of energy and enthusiasm for the County Office system. I have no doubt in my mind that he will energize the area chairs and we will see some great information out of this committee.

Another item discussed was to research other means to electronically send funds for both membership dues and potentially reimbursements. All attendees to the Organizational Meeting are testing a new method that will hopefully bring efficiency to both those sending and receiving the funds. If this is successful, we could hopefully avert the complications with the postal system. Look for more on this in the future.

We also had the opportunity to hear an update from Hunter Morehead, Legislative Consultant, on what was happening on the Hill. He shared that the House had passed a continuing resolution funding the government through November 21. It is anticipated that the Senate will pass this when they meet next week. It was also noted that the House Ag Committee had a hearing with Deputy Undersecretary Bill Northey. Some thought-provoking questions were posed of Mr. Northey regarding FSA staffing and how many employees were needed to complete the task at hand. Title 1 programs, disaster and FSA (as a whole) were also discussed. This hearing is available on the internet if you have a few hours, take the time to watch it.

The Workload Analytics tool was another topic on the list. It was stated that DAFO instructed all SEDs to share this tool with their CEDs prior to September 30th. Those who have seen the workload analytics tool stated that it will be beneficial to assist with proper time coding at the county level. This tool will also give you an idea of

where your office stands based on a state and regional basis. Iowa training was held on September 24th and I hope all states have had the opportunity to see the tool and get the current data to review.

It was determined that the membership work group will be set up for 2019-2020. This work group has not been in effect since Brandon was a newbie to NASCOE possibly in 2005. The task force will consist of the President, Vice President, Membership Chairperson, Glenn Thomas, Area Membership Chairs, an Exec, and one new member from each area. The goal of this group is both to help boost membership but also look at new and innovative ways to reach future members.

The Executive Committee met and discussed everything from current policies, updates from special FSA committees (task force), Area Execs gave an update from their areas, and we discussed a plan for conference calls and Area Exec responsibilities. This meeting is to set the priorities and goals for the coming year within NASCOE. Our President, Brandon Wilson is looking forward to a positive group with lots of new ideas for the coming year.

We had the opportunity to tour the facility that will host the 2020 NASCOE National Convention. This will most definitely be one destination you will not want to miss. The hotel is top notch with some outstanding views of the river that has a lot of barge and container ship traffic. I'll admit that I didn't do my homework on Savannah prior to the Organizational Meeting and was blown away at the architecture, scenery, history, and the shops and eateries within walking distance of the hotel. The GACOE team is working on some great tours, a ride on the Georgia Queen, and a banquet in a beautiful ballroom plus much more. I can assure you that August 9-12 will be a convention you must attend. Another exciting offer is that the hotel will be extending a deal to NASCOE members for anyone who wants to stay for the remainder of the week or invite their families down to sightsee. The hotel room rates will be at a much lower rate than normal for the additional dates. Details on this will be coming soon! I want to encourage everyone to set the date for the 2020 NASCOE National Convention in Savannah, Georgia.

In closing, I was very impressed by the people I met, discussions that were held, and the work that was accomplished in 2 very long but productive days. I look forward to the opportunity to work with this outstanding team this year.

Respectfully submitted,

Mary Roberts, MWA Alternate Executive