

BC Welcomes New Financial Aid Director

Bainbridge College welcomed Financial Aid Director Debra Turner to the campus community at the start of Summer Term.

With 20 years of experience, she comes to Bainbridge from James Madison University (JMU) in Harrisonburg, VA, where she served seven years as associate director of operations in the Office of Financial Aid and Scholarships. She was responsible for \$75 million annually in financial aid funds.

Introducing Mrs. Turner to the Bainbridge College (BC) community, Interim Director of Student Affairs Michael Kirkland said, “She has enjoyed a stable career with steady advancement. Most important, she’s knowledgeable of the automation process and has great ideas, including a recent implementation of an imaging system at (James Madison).”



A supporter of community colleges, she began at BC June 2 and is working on an online student loan system to enhance and expedite the financial aid process for BC students.

“I am a supporter of two year colleges,” said the new BC financial aid director, who earned her Master’s of Business Administration from JMU and her Bachelor’s of Science in Business Administration with a concentration in accounting from the University of Virginia at Wise.

“My daughter just completed her associate’s degree at Blue Ridge Community College and has transferred to James Madison University to complete her bachelor’s degree. I feel two year colleges provide a great service by offering students the opportunity to obtain a credential (certificate, associate degree), transfer classes to a four year institution to obtain a bachelor degree or just take a class that interests them.”

The native Virginian born in a small town and who enjoys boating, reading and watching movies applied to BC because “I decided I was ready to pursue a director of financial aid position and wanted to look at colleges in the nine-state region that comprises SASFAA (the Southern Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators.” In addition to Georgia and Virginia, SASFAA includes Alabama, Florida, Kentucky, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina and Tennessee.

Before JMU she was assistant director of financial aid at Roanoke College and started her career as director of financial aid and academics for Education Systems Corp., an umbrella company for three colleges totaling 16 campuses in Virginia, Kentucky and Tennessee.

In addition to work in higher education, she has worked for a certified public accounting firm, and in government jobs that included being fiscal officer for the Area Agency on Aging and controller for a company that managed several hotels.