

The IASCOE CULTIVATOR



NOMINATIONS FOR BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF IASCOE



The Board of Directors consists of two directors from each district, one that is grade 9 or higher and one that is grade 8 or lower. The directors and alternates shall be elected from members in good standing. Nominations will be accepted through January 12, 2024. Once the nomination period is over, election ballots will be sent out.

Access the Nomination Form by Scanning the QR Code or by clicking the link.



<https://forms.office.com/g/WdqVutuWDF>

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NASCOE SCHOLARSHIPS

The NASCOE Scholarship portal is open for submissions.
The NASCOE Scholarship Program is designed to help defray expenses of NASCOE members, children, grandchildren, and spouses.

Take a look at the list below to find eight scholarship options that may be right for you. For more information, head over to [NASCOE.org](https://www.nascoe.org). You can also apply via the QR code provided below. Make sure to submit your application before January 15, 2024 at 11:59 PM ET.

Traditional Scholarship

Area: \$1,500
National: \$2,500

Open Continuing Education Scholarship

Area: \$500
National: \$1,500

Members Continuing Education Scholarship

Area: \$500
National: \$1,500

Continuing Education for Adult Children of Members Scholarship

Area: \$250
National: \$500

Part-time Scholarship

Area: \$125
National: \$250

Grandchildren Scholarship

Area: \$250
National: \$500

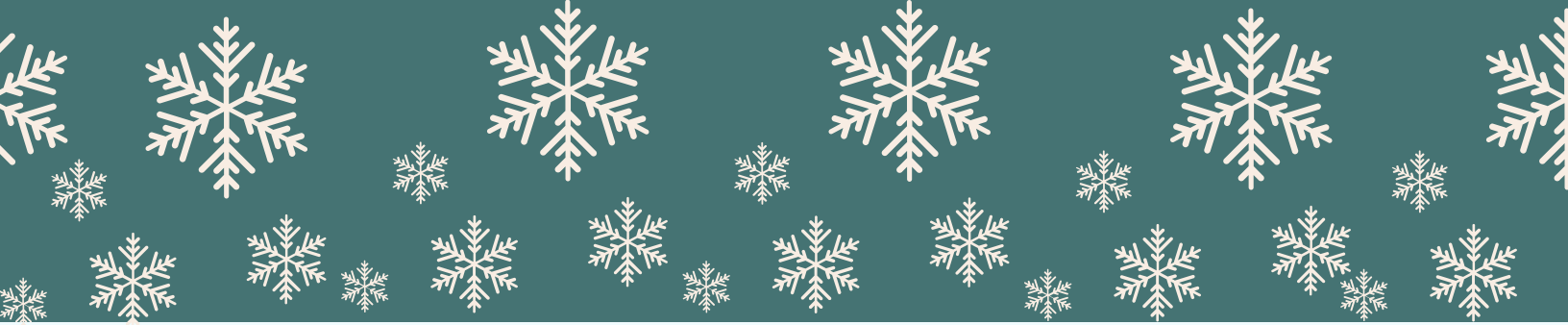
Associate Member Scholarship

Area: \$250
National: \$500

Vocational Scholarship

Area: \$250
National: \$500





HEAD TO THE HEARTLAND CONVENTION

Fundraising continues for the 2024 NASCOE Convention

Dates are still available for the pick-a-date calendar drawing. This fundraiser helps offset costs of hosting the convention. Check out the October issue of the IASCOE Cultivator or reach out to any IASCOE director for more information! Past issues of the newsletter can be found on the IASCOE website.

Thank you to our current 2024 NASCOE convention sponsors!


Platinum Sponsors



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IASCOE's Hiring, Development and Retention Team Year End Summary

It's been a big year for IASCOE's Hiring, Development and Retention (HDR) Team. IASCOE leadership heard that our members had identified concerns in hiring, training and retaining talent within Illinois FSA. We created this team with the goal of addressing these issues. We intentionally recruited members of this team from throughout the state with a good mix of new, intermediate and experienced CED's and PT's to gather multiple points of view and experiences. With great assistance from State Executive Director Scott Halpin, Administrative Officer Jean French and many other state office specialists we've identified and worked on many issues affecting all of us. We are not done and we are looking for your input and look forward to continuing to work for you this coming year

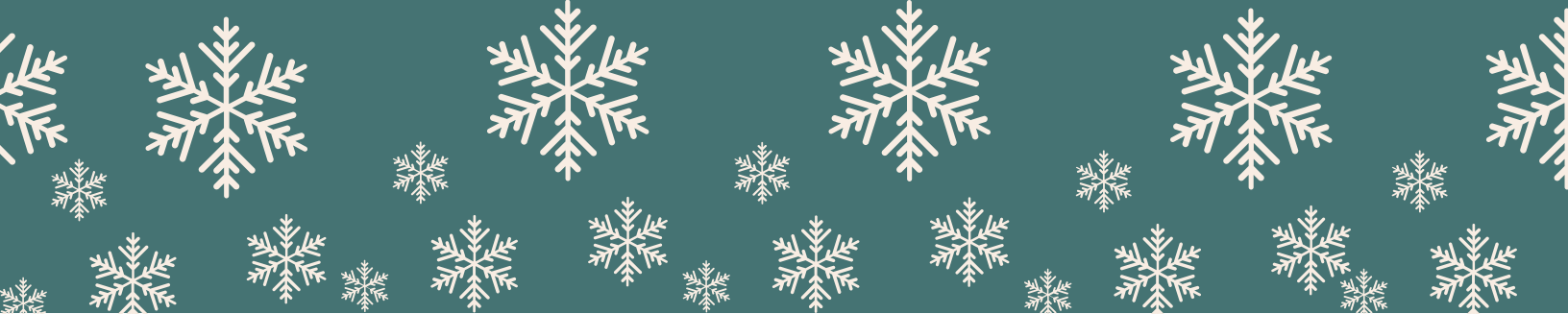
Hiring.



Hiring has been one of the biggest focuses of our team. For several years we have all had to deal with short-staffed offices. A renewed focus by the State Office (STO) Admin Team has helped us catch back up in our staffing numbers and we are nearing both our staffing levels and ceiling. While there are improvements that can still be made in the overall hiring process, the time it has taken to get employees on board from posting to first day is also improving. The willingness to try new things here in IL, has led to the largest Expanded CED class in the nation. We are happy that we have had successes, but know there is much more work we can do.

One major area that we have identified where more improvement can be made is in finding the best possible candidates for our positions. The HDR Team worked with the SED and AO to create an Outreach Team made up of Farm Loan and Farm Program employees from each district with full support from the STO. We have currently split our group into two main committees. The Events Team is working on building processes to identify likely events and track the results of our outreach activities. The Tools Team is building presentations, handouts and other items that we can use in our efforts. Recently we also developed and posted a survey on the IL SharePoint to help us identify where we have been successful in the past. The STO purchased display kits for each district and we are beginning to organize future events. Our hope is that with all of these efforts in identifying and recruiting good candidates proactively, we will have no problem in filling our future positions with quality individuals.





IASCOE's Hiring, Development and Retention Team Year End Summary

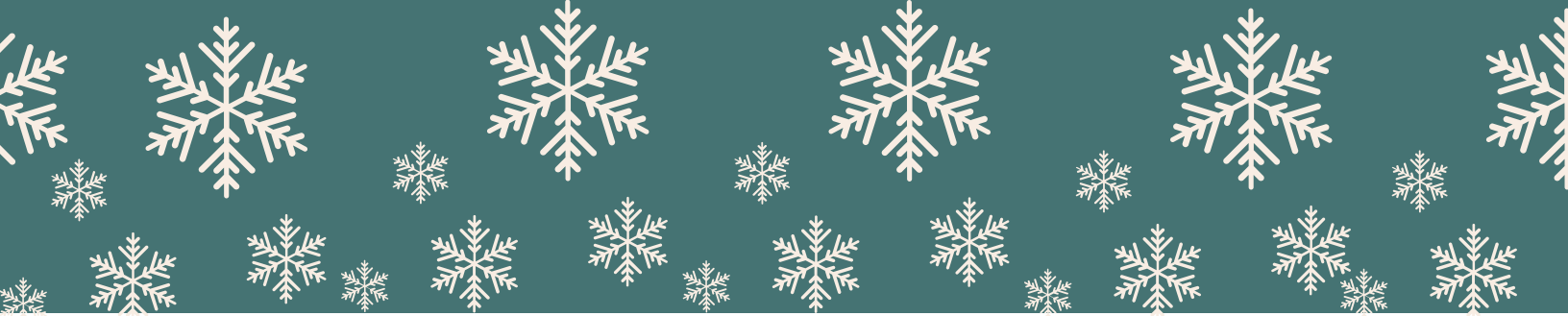
Development

Training has also been on the forefront of our efforts. We have been discussing training needs with the STO and are very supportive of the training they are planning on rolling out in 2024. The Manager's Training in Peoria earlier this year as well as the Counter Skills Training provided to PT's who were hired during COVID have been great starts at an ambitious plan to get us the training we need. New hires will be getting training during those critical first few weeks provided by our District Key PT's as well as from their District Advisors to ensure we can get them up to speed quickly. District Directors have also been encouraged to provide training to managers and PT's during Manager Meetings. Each STO section is also planning training activities throughout the next year. Finally, the Expanded CED's will be going through a new process since this has never been done on this scale before. We are excited to see how this will all come together and will continue to have conversations with the STO to provide any needed input or feedback.

Retention

We are hoping to ramp up our efforts in the retention area this coming year. We would love some input and feedback on items that members would like us to look into in more detail. In the meantime, I wanted to share some successes of the last year. We are grateful that many of our employees have had opportunities at promotions in the STO, the Farm Loan Officer Trainee program and Expanded CED positions. We have also appreciated the efforts FSA has made by providing a Group Retention Incentive for many County Office employees and by providing the Student Loan Repayment Program (SLRP) in 2023. National and State level workforce engagement teams have also been created to try to improve workplace satisfaction. Here in IL, this has led to some outside of the box thinking in recognizing the extra efforts that many of our fellow employees have been making.





IASCOE's Hiring, Development and Retention Team Year End Summary

In closing, our team is standing by to look into all issues Hiring, Development and Retention this coming year. We look forward to hearing from you and thank you for your commitment to FSA!

Travis D. Eisele
IASCOE Hiring, Development and Retention Team Chairperson



*Happy
New Year
2024*

