



**NCHER Annual Conference  
June 6-8, 2022  
The Desoto Hotel  
Savannah, Georgia**

**Embracing the Future – Together**

**Program Agenda**

*(Draft program as of March 31, 2022)*

**Monday, June 6, 2022**

**(All times Eastern)**

**8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.**

**Registration Open**

**9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.**

**Meeting of the NCHER Board of Directors**

The NCHER Board will meet to receive reports from the Chair, Treasurer, and President on the organization's advocacy, communications, and research strategies. The meeting is open to NCHER members.

**12:00 p.m. – 2:00 p.m.**

**Lunch and Time on Your Own**

**2:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.**

**Pre-Conference Meetings - Open to NCHER Members**

**2:00 p.m. – 2:45 p.m.**

**Looking Toward the Future: A Conversation with Industry Leaders**

Since 2010, many NCHER members have refocused their organizations and the services provided to students and families so that they are better positioned for success in the future either as federal student loan servicers, private education lenders, third-party servicers, or philanthropic foundations. In this pre-conference meeting, industry leaders will have an off-the-record roundtable discussion on their strategic approach to the wind-down of the Federal Family Education Loan Program and the necessary steps that it took to realign their public service mission with their core competency services in order to help students and their families.

Topics Covered:

- How do you know when it is time to refocus your organization and the services provided to students and their families? How do you begin the process and how do you measure success?
- What steps should an organization take to improve its governing structure to ensure proper functionality in today's environment?
- What should the NCHER membership be doing now to prepare for the continued wind-down of the federal legacy program?

**2:45 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.**

**Break**

**3:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.**

**Looking Toward the Future: Lessons From the Financial Services Sector**

Student lending – either from the federal or private side – has faced a wave of bad publicity over the last few years, led by consumer and progressive groups and regulators who are focused on increasing federal and state oversight over the industry. As part of this pre-conference roundtable discussion, a panel of experts from the financial services sector and meeting participants will share their experiences in dealing with federal and state regulators, how they effectively combatted misinformation from outside interests, and how their industries came out stronger in the end.

Topics Covered:

- How successful organizations navigated negative and delicate policy and political environments, similar to what the student lending community is facing or has faced over the last few years
- Successful strategies that various industries have put in place to mitigate misinformation and reputational risk

**4:00 p.m. – 5:30 p.m.**

**Time on Your Own**

**5:30 p.m. – 6:30 p.m.**

**Welcome Reception**

Recipients of the Jean S. Frohlicher Outstanding Service Award and the Chalmers "Gail" Norris Lifetime Achievement Award will be honored by the NCHER membership.

**Tuesday, June 7, 2022**

**(All times Eastern)**

**8:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.**

**Registration Open**

**8:00 a.m. – 9:00 a.m.**

**Continental Breakfast**

**9:00 a.m. – 9:15 a.m.**

**Conference Welcome**

The NCHER leadership will welcome members to the conference and briefly discuss the conference program for the day.

9:15 a.m. – 10:15 a.m.

### **Looking Toward the Future: A View from the Federal Level**

It has been a year and a half since the Biden Administration took office. Over the last 12 months, the White House and U.S. Department of Education has extended the federal payment, interest, and collections pause put in place to assist borrowers impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic; used its waiver authority under the HEROES Act to enact borrower friendly changes to the federal student loan program such as revisions to the Public Service Loan Forgiveness Program; formed two negotiated rulemaking panels to review and revise borrower defense to payment, gainful employment, and other rules, and issued Dear Colleague Letter GEN 21-03, which requires guaranty agencies to pause payments, interest accrual and collection activities for their borrowers who defaulted during the pandemic and assign those loans to the agency. Congress has largely completed its legislative agenda for the 117<sup>th</sup> Congress after passing the Consolidated Appropriations Act for Fiscal Year 2022 and finding itself unable to pass the Build Back Better Act – now action turns to the November election. This session will provide an update on federal developments and the outlook as we head into the second half of 2022.

#### Topics Covered:

- Movement on higher education policy in 2022
- Anticipated action by the Biden Administration on federal student loan repayment, negotiated rulemaking, Public Service Loan Forgiveness, student loan forgiveness, bankruptcy reform, and a potential procurement for a Unified Servicing and Data Solution on loan servicing
- Update on the political environment and November election

10:15 a.m. – 10:30 a.m.

### **Break**

10:30 a.m. – 11:15 a.m.

### **Looking Toward the Future: U.S. Economic Outlook**

With the cessation of the COVID-19 pandemic, the United States has seen record economic growth, leading to a dramatic drop in the nation's employment rate, significant labor market pressures, a rapid rebound in household debt, and major disruptions to the supply-chain. At the same time, the country is experiencing a dramatic rise in inflation, not seen since the early 1980s, resulting in higher interest rates. This session will provide an outlook on the national economy over the next six months and discuss recent developments impacting economic mobility and resilience.

#### Topics Covered:

- National economic outlook, including latest reports on consumer credit and lending, employment trends coming out of the COVID-19 pandemic, and impact of rising interest rates on inflation

- The Federal Reserve Bank of Atlanta’s work around economic mobility and resilience

**11:15 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.**

**Enrollment Trends in Postsecondary Education: Where Do We Go From Here?**

According to the National Student Clearinghouse Research Center, higher education enrollment fell 2.7 percent in the fall of 2021, following a 2.5 percent drop in the preceding fall. These enrollment losses as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic represent a two-year decline of 5.1 percent or 938,000 students since the fall of 2019. While undergraduate enrollment along fell by 3.1 percent, freshmen enrollment stabilized following a decline in fall 2020, up about 0.4 percent or 8,100 students. This session will review recent research and reports on postsecondary education enrollment, discuss current and anticipated trends at the public and private institutional level, explore the impact on federal and private student aid programs, and discuss how NCHER members can focus their efforts on reengaging at-risk and hard-to-serve students.

Topics Covered:

- Recent reports on college and university enrollment from fall 2019 to spring 2022, with a focus on both pre- and post-pandemic.
- Short- and long-term impact of declining enrollment on colleges and universities and federal and private student aid programs.
- NCHER members’ outreach to at-risk students and college-going families to discuss the importance of FAFSA completion and other important access and completion activities.

**12:00 p.m. – 1:30 p.m.**

**Lunch**

**1:30 p.m. – 2:30 p.m.**

**Current and Emerging Trends and Practices in Private Education Loans**

According to the latest reports, total outstanding private education loan debt currently stands as \$131.0 billion, 7.61 percent of total student loan debt. During this session, participants will examine and discuss the past, current, and expected trends in the private education loan marketplace.

Topics Covered:

- General capital finance updates
- Origination and refinancing trends
- Impact of the federal student loan payment pause and other federal developments on private loan origination and payment
- Impact of rising interest rates on private education loan programs
- Recent entrants into the private loan marketplace such as Income-Share Agreements
- Tax-exempt v. taxable bonds-related issues

**2:30 p.m. – 2:45 p.m.**

**Refreshment Break**

**2:45 p.m. – 3:45 p.m.**

**“Ask the Attorneys”**

The “Ask the Attorneys” panel has been a staple of NCHER conferences, providing an opportunity for conference attendees to hear first-hand from legal experts on those hot topics impacting the higher education finance industry. During this session, a panel of attorneys will respond to questions from the audience to discuss current and anticipated legal proceedings impacting federal and private student loans.

Topics Covered:

- Review 3-5 major cases that every NCHER member should be following
- Update on recent court cases impacting collection costs for guaranty agencies, borrower communication under the Telephone Consumer Protection Act, and other legal proceedings

**3:45 p.m. – 4:30 p.m.**

**Membership Meeting**

NCHER members will receive an update on items discussed at the Board of Directors meeting, including the reports of the Chair, Treasurer, and President.

Topics Covered:

- Federal advocacy priorities of NCHER and its membership
- NCHER’s short- and long-term financials
- Recent changes to the organization’s operations to ensure that the membership is better positioned for success in the future

**4:30 p.m.**

**Conference Adjourns**

**Wednesday, June 8, 2022**

**(All times Eastern)**

**8:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.**

**Registration Open**

**8:00 a.m. – 9:00 a.m.**

**Continental Breakfast**

**9:00 a.m. – 9:15 a.m.**

**Conference Welcome**

The NCHER leadership will welcome members to the conference and briefly discuss the conference program for the day.

**9:15 a.m. – 10:15 a.m.**

**Going on Three Years: The Impact of the Federal Student Loan Payment and Collections Pause on Students and Our Industry**

Because of the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security or CARES Act and subsequent Presidential memorandums, federal student loan borrowers have not had to make any payments on their federal student loans since March 13, 2020. The provision was recently extended until May 1, 2022. There is no policy basis for continuing to delay payment and

collections of federal student loans especially since the nation's economy continues to recover from the impact of the pandemic and every other pandemic-related provision has already expired. But progressives and consumer groups have stated that borrowers should not have to repay their loans until the Biden Administration implements a massive student loan forgiveness program and fixes the "broken student loan program." In this session, a panel of experts will provide an update on federal student loan payment restart, discuss the unintended consequences and long-term impact of an extended pause and the challenges faced by students and our industry, and highlight the support and opportunities that NCHER members can provide to student and parent borrowers as they face three years of nonpayment on their education debt and prepare for repayment.

Topics Covered:

- Quick update on the policy and political landscape on the federal student loan payment and collections pause.
- The long-term impact of a three-year payment pause on student and parent borrowers, including the difficulty in re-establishing communications and getting back into a standard routine of student loan repayment v. other expenses.
- The impact of the pause and collections pause on the student loan industry such as laying off – and then rehiring – important staff.
- How can NCHER members effectively support student and parent borrowers as they continue to prepare for repayment?

**10:15 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.**

**Examining Employee Retention and Development Efforts**

Every NCHER member knows that high-performing employees are the key to success, and that having to replace an employee can cost twice an employee's salary to find and train a replacement. Not only are there financial repercussions, high employee turnover can lower the knowledge base in a company and decrease performance and morale. The COVID-19 pandemic and the ability to work-from-home on a full-time basis, along with the Great Resignation, has had a major impact on employers across the country and their efforts to retain and develop a productive workforce. In this session, experts will talk about promising employee retention and development efforts, especially as employers begin requiring employees to return to work.

Topics Covered:

- Impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on employee retention
- Innovative programs that are being implemented by employers to increase employee retention and recruitment, especially for recent college graduates, and programs that are being offered to improve employee development, especially when it comes to utilizing remote technology

**11:00 a.m. – 11:45 a.m.**

**Navigating State Student Loan Servicing Licensing and Lending Laws**

Since 2015, a growing number of states have passed new laws establishing Student Loan Ombudsman Offices to represent the interests of borrowers on student loan-related matters and requiring student loan servicers to obtain a license to service federal and private student loans in their states. In this session, a panel of experts consisting of states and banking regulators will discuss their efforts on student loan servicing, including how to coordinate oversight and other enforcement activities across states.

Topics Covered:

- Update on current and anticipated state-level actions impacting federal and private student loan servicing and private education loan lending for the 2022 and 2023 state legislative sessions
- How state leaders can work with the NCHER membership to ensure proper administration of state laws while reducing compliance burdens and inconsistent policies and practices

**11:45 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.**

**Wrap Up and Closing Remarks**

**12:00 p.m.**

**Conference Adjourns**