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Diane Auer Jones has been confirmed by the Senate as assistant secretary for postsecondary education in the U.S. Department of Education. Jones will serve as the principal adviser to Secretary of Education Margaret Spellings on departmental issues pertaining to developing postsecondary education policies and legislative proposals. Prior to the appointment, Jones served the Department of Education as principal deputy assistant secretary for the Office of Postsecondary Education, a post she took over in May 2007. Before joining the Department of Education, she served as deputy to the associate director for science in the Office of Science and Technology Policy in the Executive Office of the President.

Three Michigan schools say their loan practices are legitimate

Responding to the letter sent by Secretary of Education Margaret Spellings to more than 900 colleges that have 80% or more of their student loans with a single lender, three Michigan schools have defended their student loan practices. Michigan State University College of Law, Alma College, and Lawrence Technological University claim that private lenders provide them with better deals than they would receive from federal student loan programs and that there is nothing wrong with the fact that most of their students use the same lender. Nineteen Michigan schools were included on the list of 921 schools that were allegedly dominated by a single loan provider.

Former Scripps financial aid director joins Trinity University

Former financial aid director at Scripps College in Claremont, CA, Sean Smith has been appointed as the director of financial aid for Trinity University. Smith will be responsible for overseeing the school's federal, state, and institutional financial aid programs. At Scripps College, Smith was involved in decision making for student enrollment and worked on development and implementation of financial aid plans to increase admissions. He also managed a program that disbursed more than \$15 million in financial aid annually. One of the leading private undergraduate institutions, Trinity College has an enrollment of 2,500 students.