**College Savings Foundation**

**Board Meeting**

**March 14, 2017**

**Charleston, SC**

Present: Kyla Michaud, Fidelity Investments; Mary Morris, Virginia529; Roger Michaud, Franklin Templeton; Bill Wostoupal, Northstar; Steve Piekara, Allianz Global Investments; Elizabeth Fontaine, MEFA; Rich Wolle, Franklin Templeton; Paul Curley, Strategic Insight; Mary Nickeson, DST; Tom Morgan, BlackRock; Stacey Belford, American Century Investments; Vivian Tsai, TIAA; Evan Mayhew, American Century Investments; Chris Werner, OppenheimerFunds; Chris McGee, Virgina529; Maria Manotok, Capital Research and Management; John Park, BlackRock

By Telephone: Deb Smith, John Hancock Financial Services; Peter Mazareas, Invite Education; Rich Polimeni, Bank of America/Merrill Lynch; Regina Carmon, College Savings Bank; Arthur Dunn, Boston Financial; Scott May, Franklin Templeton Investments

Consultants: Lynthia Romney, Romneycom; Randy Hardock, Davis & Harman; Barbara Pate, Davis & Harman; Kathy Hamor, College Savings Foundation

Chair Rich Polimeni called the meeting to order at 2:10 p.m.

**Chairman’s Remarks:**

Rich Polimeni thanked everyone who made it to Charleston in spite of the weather and looked forward to a good conference.

**2016 Annual Board Meeting Minutes:**

The minutes from the Board meeting held on December 13, 2016 were unanimously approved.

Rich asked for volunteers to serve with Tracy Zeigler as co-chair of the conference committee and Mary Nickeson and Deb Smith volunteered to serve as co-chairs.

**Financial Report:**

Treasurer Vivian Tsai gave the financial report. There is $486, 399 cash on hand and expenses are in line with the approved budget. The financial report was approved unanimously.

**LLRA Committee:**

Chris McGee started the report by welcoming Maria Manotok as the co-chair to the committee.

Barbara Pate gave an overview of what is happening in the House Ways and Means Committee. It is currently busy with the repeal and replacement of the Affordable Care Act. Simultaneously, the Committee republicans have been meeting regularly on the tax bill. The issue of Border Tax Adjustment is a controversial issue that they are dealing with. There seems to be a lot of enthusiasm among the House republican Ways and Means Committee Members for tax reform.

H.R. 529: Sponsored by Reps. Jenkins and Kind was introduced earlier this session and is similar to the one introduced in the last session. Rep. Jenkins hopes that this bill will be included in the tax reform bill. Revenue estimates for the bill are not available yet.

Randy Hardock spoke about part of the republican health care bill that expands HSAs. He mentioned this as it could impact what people are able to save in retirement and college savings accounts.

With regard to the tax reform bill, Randy reported that it is possible that the bill will contain provisions moving all IRAs to be Roth IRAs and increasing the contribution amount. There is also a possibility that the bill will repeal the age of 59 ½ from Roth IRAs so that distributions will be penalty free resulting in people being able to access these funds at any time. As discussed with the possible HAS expansion, this could impact what people do with regard to saving for retirement and college.

Chris McGee mentioned H.R. 625, EPIC that was introduced in the House. Provisions in this bill allow for the use of 529 funds for K-12 expenses. This was introduced in the previous session of Congress and did not go anywhere.

Chris presented the first draft of the Congressional leave behind drafted by Liz Fontaine and him. They went over the document and asked people to review and provide comments. Liz and Chris also discussed the Higher Education Act. They have reached out to CSPN about working together and coming up with an amount for the asset protection allowance. CSF is looking at its position on this as it waits to hear back from CSPN.

There was a discussion about finding champions in the House and Senate for future sponsorship and support of 529 legislation. This is a result of Rep. Jenkins announcing her retirement after this session of Congress.

**Conference Committee:**

Rich Wolle gave the report mentioning that there has been a great response from sponsors for this conference. The weather is resulting in cancellations of some attendees and speakers coming from the northeast. There was a discussion of having the speakers join by conference call or Skype. That capability will be reviewed with the hotel AV staff.

**Membership Committee:**

Rich Wolle gave the report. The conference presents the best opportunity for the year for new sponsors as CSF gives attendees a reduction of membership dues for the first year equal to the conference fees paid.

There was discussion about what to do with attendees who were unable to make the conference due to weather. CSF is still incurring costs for them based on the total number of attendees for the conference and other events. It was mentioned that CSF should consider giving a discount on membership fees based on conference fees paid or a discount on next year’s conference. CSF will wait to get the final costs for the conference before deciding what to do on this issue.

**Media Committee:**

Roger Michaud and Rich Polimeni gave the report. Roger mentioned the media strategy and press releases issued in the first quarter and thanked Lynthia Romney for doing a great job lining up media to cover CSF.

The media committee’s first quarter activities include:

**H.R 529 press release:**

CSF issued a press release applauding U.S. Representatives Lynn Jenkins (R-KS) and Ron Kind (D-WI) for introducing H.R. 529, known as the 529 and ABLE Account Improvement Act of 2017. It was distributed in key national media to include writers in Washington DC, Kansas and Wisconsin.

* Received interest by Beth Pinsker who writes syndicated “Your Money” column for ***Reuters.*** Prepared talking points and arranged interview for Rich Polimeni. Story ran February 3.
* Received inquiry from Jerilyn Bier of ***Financial Advisor***. Prepared and arranged interview for Rich Polimeni. This resulted in two stories, including one that ran in the March print version.

**Other Media:**

* **Money Sense Radio** interviewed Rich Polimeni extensively on 529s, with a focus on preparing to fund college when children are in high school. Included comments on gifting. Interview ran on two weekends in February.

**529 Press Release:**

* CSF issued a press release positioning 529 college savings plans as savings incentives leading to a path to higher education. It included new Strategic Insight data that 75% of 529 users were middle-income families of household income of $150,000 or less.

**2017 CSF Conference:**

* Conducted early and repeated outreach to national personal finance and higher education reporters to invite media attendance and present the topics covered demonstrating CSF’s thought leadership. Obtained some preliminary interest in reviewing documents by ***The New York Times***.
  + Created special pitch letters on sessions of interest, to include Sheila Bair, President of Washington College.
  + Conducted intensive local media outreach for educational and business print as well as broadcast media in Charleston.

**Marketing Task Force:**

Regina Carmon gave the report. The Board packets included a draft social media posting policy. Regina asked the Board to review it and provide feedback.

The policy also included a feature Ask the Expert initiative for CSF. That was reviewed and like the social media posting policy, Regina asked the group to get back with any comments.

**529 Administrative Issues Task Force:**

Arthur Dunn gave the report. He mentioned that he and co-chair, Scott May have communicated and plan to have either every other month or quarterly round table discussions on administrative issues.

**Data and Research Committee:**

John Park gave a report and mentioned that he is open to ideas from CSF members about issues for data and research on college savings.

**Next Board Meeting:**

June 22, 2017 at 1:00 p.m. in Washington, DC

The meeting was adjourned at 4:15 p.m.,