

The IT Guy

Meet Peter Simmon, Systems Architect

Working in a financial aid office is enough to give anyone a deep appreciation for the importance of technology systems, not to mention the value of a well designed program. If you've been lucky enough to meet College Assist's Peter Simmon, then your technology worries were likely put to ease immediately.

Peter is a systems architect in the Information Technology Department, where he has worked in various IT roles for almost eight years. School staff aren't always aware of his involvement, but he touches on a daily basis some of College Assist's most important technology products, from daily processing to a variety of origination through claims processes.

"During his tenure, Peter has recommended and made changes to the system that allowed our customers to be more efficient," says IT Applications Manager John Swanborg.

"Without his expertise, many improvements would have been postponed or delayed. He's been an important part of College Assist's ability to service new customers."

Unlike some of his IT colleagues, Peter's work is not



always behind the scenes – he also gets to meet and troubleshoot with his customers. He has visited and worked directly with schools, a facet of the job he finds especially gratifying. If a school uses CommonLine, is a new customer of College Assist, or simply needs help troubleshooting an interface, they can work directly with Peter to solve the problem.

Peter's specialty is a programming language called Assembler, which is what was used to write many of the IT systems. But his passion is designing new systems and devising changes to existing systems. After designing, he also programs and completes testing for his products.

"I don't want to put anything out there that doesn't work for my customers," says Peter.

Among other projects this year, Peter is putting his full docket of technology skills to work on College Assist's upcoming new comprehensive system, GuaranteePro™ (see page 3). He relishes the challenge and looks forward to help making it a seamless transition for his "end-users" – school financial aid offices.

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"What we like about the webinars," said Julia Alexander, Compliance and Training Officer, who conducts the financial aid webinars, "is that we still get to interact with our schools, and the schools get to interact with each other."

The user training webinars, presented by Client Services Representative Haley Majewski, have worked well for

the introduction of the new look and enhanced features of StudentLoanOnLine. According to Haley, additional sessions are planned both online and in-person.

If you have suggestions for future financial aid webinars, contact Julia.Alexander@college-assist.com, and for StudentLoanOnLine, Haley.Majewski@college-assist.com.