

Bob Martin:

My name is Bob Martin. I'm the PC products manager. I'm responsible for EDEExpress, Direct Loan tools, and SSCR, student status confirmation report, or enrollment reporting software, and my co-presenter this morning is Jody Sears, to my far right. Jody is a supervisor in the Application Processing Division, and she and I have worked together for many years on EDEExpress. The lady to my near right is Amy Aikers. She is the senior project lead for Vangent, Inc., which is our primary contractor. Amy builds the software, I approve it, so we're on the phone with each other several times a day. Many times, the conversation goes like this, "Amy, why did you choose to do it this way?" and she'll say, "Bob, you're such a loser. I told you about this." No, that doesn't happen. She thinks it, but she doesn't say it. The other lady we have up here, Kim Schreck, is our friend and colleague, and Kim was gonna come down and help us present but we're testing the Web products for the 11-12 award year and they're not done, and Kim stayed back to help out. So, those of you who are from – anybody from Region 10, the Seattle area, Idaho, in that area? Okay. Kim used to be a Direct Loan _____ there, and then came to work for us in D.C. Now she's going back to Seattle as a training officer. So, let's talk about EDEExpress.

Now, how many of you are brand new to financial aid? How many have actually read the Title IV regulations? Okay. If you're brand new, then you have a lot to learn, and you're not gonna learn it overnight, so don't get overwhelmed. You'll learn a little bit every day. I learn something new every day. Go to IFAP, look for Tools for Schools, and there's some Web-based training for EDEExpress in there that you can work at home, or anywhere you have a browser and can get to it, work at your own pace. There's also something in there called FSA Coach, which will walk you through Title IV, all the Title IV programs, and that will be very helpful for you. It'll give you at least some fundamentals to begin with, and then you can build on that as we go through.

I'm gonna digress. Here's our agenda for today. We'll do an overview, we'll talk to you some ins and outs of EDEExpress, point out a few things that EDEExpress will do, and maybe help save you some time. We'll talk about entry and export, import, and then we'll talk to you about some tools we have in there, like reports and query, browse, which we discovered that not too many people use, which we're gonna hopefully convince you to take a look at browse and use it a little more often, and then, the last part, I'll tell you about some of the things we're gonna do in the 11-12 award year. We make changes to the software every year. We don't want to but we have to, because times change, programs change,

legislation changes, other systems change, and we have to keep up with those changes, and then we'll talk to you about getting some additional help and then some additional training, both here and then elsewhere. I've already mentioned IFAP to you.

Two things I want to bring up, because we did this session and the one following it, which will be in the same room, is for experienced FAAs, and so we won't go into as much detail here as I will in the next session, but you're welcome to stick around for the next one if you'd like to, as well. But two things that came up in those two sessions yesterday that I wanted to talk to you about. The first one was, if you are planning on using EDEExpress to process Direct Loans with COD, then you must originate in EDEExpress. Don't go online at COD and originate your loans there. The reason is that you have nothing coming back from COD to sync up with in your database in EDEExpress. So, if you're gonna originate a loan, originate it in EDEExpress, send that off to COD, let them accept it. They will send you back a response telling you they've accepted it.

Now, if you're stuck and you can't get into EDEExpress or something of that nature, you could go online to COD and you could do a disbursement on that loan, and COD will automatically generate a Web-based response back to you, and you have something to import back into EDEExpress that will sync up your data with what's at COD. You understand? If you don't understand, see us afterwards and we'll explain a little better for you. You know, I'm talking but I'm forgetting to breathe while I'm talking. The other thing is how many are new to Direct Loans? All right, my email address is at the end of this slide presentation. I have a one-page cheat sheet that I did when I was working with Direct Loan schools previously. It's called Bob's Eight Steps for Staying Out of the Penitentiary, and if you email me, I'll send that to you, and there's just eight steps and everything feeds into those eight steps. Once you understand those eight steps, you've got it made.

Okay, EDEExpress. It's a fully integrated software package that allows schools to process packages and manage student financial aid. Records and everything is done electronically. Remember, we're trying to get you into the electronics business, not the paper business, so if you're one of those schools that still wants to process Master Promissory Notes and print them on campus, you need to rethink that strategy. We have a website where you can send people to go to execute their Master Promissory Notes, and you can set EDEExpress to tell COD to print out an MPN and send

it to that borrower, or print out a disclosure statement, which is really what they want. They don't want the MPNs because it's just boilerplate language. The disclosure statement is where all the money figures are, and you can set EDEExpress to tell COD to send that MPN and that disclosure statement to your borrower, and you're out of that business. That's a whole lot less work for you.

EDEExpress is award-year specific. That means that right now you should be operating in the 10-11 version, release 4.0, because last year we had four releases. Generally, we do two releases, but because of legislation or changes to our systems, we have to sometimes put it out in small pieces, and so we did four releases last year. We did five, I think, the year before, and we've done five and four the last few years. So, if you're a busy school, and you may be working in three different versions of EDEExpress, you may be finishing up one, you may be in the middle of 10-11, and then, if you have _____ for next year, you'll be working in 11-12 at the same time, okay? If you're not, then don't worry about it, but if you're one of those schools, and you know who I'm talking about, then you may be doing it in as many as three versions. But you cannot do an 11-12 award in the 10-11 software; it has to be an 11-12 award.

The URL you see down at the bottom of the screen is where we post our software. It's a free download. It's not free to create this software, believe me. It's quite an expensive proposition, but it's free to you. It's a tool we provide free to you to use to be able to process your financial aid. That's where you get it. Here's a suggestion: We have a hands-on session, it's Session 13, and we have a set of about 75 pages worth of exercises in there. If you want to take one of those home with you and then download EDEExpress, you won't have the same data that we have in those exercises, but the steps are the same, so you can practice the steps that you need to do. You can't finish every exercise, but it's a little tool.

Let's talk about the modules in EDEExpress. Everything to the right of that center axis there is what we consider to be Release 1.0, Global, apps and packaging. That's in Release 1.0. We generally developed that so we hit the street with it around January 1. Next year, it'll be January 3. We want you to have that so you can start processing applications immediately. Anything to the left of that is what we generally consider to be Release 2.0, which comes out in April or May, in that area, and that will have your Direct Loan, TEACH, and Pell Grant modules in it. Now, up until this year, under Pell Grant, we also had ACG, and National SMART Grant

programs. We don't have that anymore. It didn't get funded. The functionality for that is still in the software, and you may stumble across it, but don't try to originate an ACG or a National SMART award. It's a waste of time, because as soon as you try to send it in to COD, either we'll stop you from doing it, with a series of edits, or COD would reject it, so it's a waste of time to do it. We're leaving it in there. We sanitized the documentation and any references to those two grant programs, but we left the functionality in there. There is a possibility that it could be refunded at some point, and, if so, we're way ahead of the game.

Global, apps and packaging, to gather necessary information. If you'll look at Release 1.0, it's like eligibility stuff, and then Release 2.0 is your grants and loans. It's a good way to think about it. Anything that we do in excess of Release 2.0 is to get some functionality in there that we don't have ready or is not ready for us to give you. For instance, if you use Release 1.0 to do some packaging, the Pell tables that will be in Release 1.0 are last year's Pell tables, because we have to wait until the new Pell tables are ready. So, if they're not ready when January 3 rolls around, then what's going out there is last year's Pell tables, and if you're using packaging, you're packaging using last year's numbers. When we put out a release that has the new Pell tables in it, we'll tell you about it and we'll also remind you that if you have packaging, you'll want to go back and repackage those students so that the correct numbers are in there.

The goal is to give you a tool to help you get financial aid to your students in the fastest and easiest way possible. We think this is a great tool for doing that, and now I'll sit down and Jody is gonna come up and talk to you a little more.

Jody Sears:

Good afternoon, everyone. It's a pleasure to be here with you today, and a much smaller crowd than earlier this morning, and I'm also really happy to be here because there is one term I don't have to utter once, and that's asset threshold. I had to say that six times. Just roll that around and see how hard that is to say and not mess it up. Everything else is downhill from here, much easier. All right. This description, or this graphic up here is a really good high-level explanation of how the EDEExpress process works. You get data into EDEExpress, you get your records in a condition that you're ready to export them and send them to the processor, get them processed, and get them back into EDEExpress. That, in a nutshell, is the essence of the EDEExpress process. With a little more detail, I want to explain the very first step, where it says Enter to Import and Add and Update Data into EDEExpress. We'll talk about the ways that you get data into EDEExpress. The next

step that you'll want to take is, once you've created, for instance, origination records and disbursement records, you need to get those records ready to export to send to the processor, COD, and there's an export function in EDEExpress that allows you to get those records all pulled together into a file, and then is ready to transmit using EDconnect, which is a telecommunications software, that you send to your TG mailbox.

Now, I noticed when Bob asked if there were new financial aid administrators in here, I don't know if you're a new financial aid administrator at an existing school or if you're also a brand new school, but one of the things you do need to know is that if you are, for instance, a brand new school and a brand new financial aid administrator, you need to enroll in Participation Management, which is how you are able to send data back and forth. You're essentially signing up for electronic services in a secure way for federal student aid, and that allows you to send data back and forth to a secure mailbox, where the processors will come by, pick up that information, process it, put it back into your secure mailbox, and you're able to pull it back in. So, that was just a little quick bit of information for those of you who are brand new financial aid administrators. If you want more information, see me after the session today and I can direct you to the PC lab and give you some hints on what to ask for.

Anyway, once you've transmitted your exported file to your TG mailbox, the processor picks up that information, they process it and update the information, and then put the processed records back into your TG mailbox, and that includes also ISIR records. When students fill out a FAFSA form and include your school code, the ISIRs will also go to your TG mailbox. The next step is for you to use the telecommunications software again, which is typically EDconnect, and you receive that information out of your TG mailbox and into your system. Then, you need to go back into EDEExpress and import the processed records into EDEExpress, and that's essentially the EDEExpress process in a nutshell, and it just continues on and on, every day, all the time. You have to follow that process. So, understanding that is key to all the other steps that you're going to have to do.

The next thing I wanted to talk about is setup. Now, we're not going through all the explanation of all of the setups, but the first thing you do, once you install EDEExpress, is go to Tools and Setup, and you start establishing all the operating parameters for your school. That's how EDEExpress can work for a really, really big school, or a really teeny, tiny proprietary school, and

everything in between. It's the setups that you enter that allow EDEExpress to be customized to work exactly the way it needs to work for your school. One of the other things that we're actually demonstrating on this slide is you not only customize EDEExpress setups to operate for your school, you can actually set it up to operate for you, the user. The example I used yesterday was let's say you have a financial aid office of three people – somebody responsible for Pell, one responsible for packaging, and another person responsible for Direct Loan.

Now, each of you have a different reason to log in to EDEExpress, so you want to make EDEExpress work well for you for what you have to do. So, let's say you're the Pell person and you log in to EDEExpress. One of the things you're gonna want is for the default system display to work. Because EDEExpress works in modules, it comes with a default of I think application processing as the default for all the systems to display. Well, if you're doing the Pell, you probably want to have the Pell tab as the one that defaults to open when you log in to EDEExpress. It saves you a few clicks.

Then, you can also determine the report destination that you like. Some people like to print to screen, some people like to print right to the printer, some people like to print to file. You can establish the default for that setting that you prefer, as well. Returning to the dialogue box is another preference that you can set up for you, the user. If you import multiple times, and you want to return to the dialogue box instead of having that dialogue box go away after you do that function, that's another preference that you can set up, which, again, saves you a little time, saves you a few clicks here and there. But you can see how you can customize EDEExpress so that it works for you, the user.

The next step, after you've set up EDEExpress and you've set up you, the user, you have to start populating EDEExpress with data. There are three ways that you can do that. The first way is the manual entry. It's the least efficient way. It's the process you would use on a case-by-case basis, or, if you were making a complex change to a particular record, you would take advantage of going into the student's record and manually making changes in various fields of the record. The more common way to get lots of data into EDEExpress is importing the ISIR records, and, as I mentioned, when a student fills out a FAFSA and they use your school code, that's gonna generate an ISIR that's gonna go into your TG mailbox. When you receive that ISIR and then you import it into EDEExpress, importing the ISIR creates the demographic record for that student, plus it includes all the ISIR

data elements. But the demographic record we consider a global function. That demographic record is associated with the Pell origination records and the Direct Loan origination records, and even the packaging records. So, that demographic record, it becomes the foundation for all the other things that you're going to create.

Another way to populate EDEExpress in a very efficient way is if you're a combination school, in other words, you have another school system that you use in combination with EDEExpress. Is there anyone here that would fall into that category? Okay, a couple of you. Instead of duplicating the entry work that you do in your school system and then repeating it in EDEExpress, we provide the information and instructions in the **EDE** technical reference and in the COD technical reference to use record layouts that you can create from your school system to import into EDEExpress. We call those external add records, which adds records to the database, but you can also make changes to records that are already in there by using the record layouts for external change, and you can do that for originations, packaging and disbursements. So, again, I reference the EDE technical reference and the COD technical reference for you to get the record layouts in order to accomplish that, and that is certainly the most efficient way.

Before I go on, I'm on a mission. How many of you are aware of where to get the desk reference for EDEExpress? Not one hand? One hand. Two hands. Okay.

Bob Martin: Or know what a desk reference –

Jody Sears: Or know that EDEExpress actually has a desk reference. Everything that we're talking about today, I mean it's on the slides and it's just scratching the surface, and unless you've got a really good memory and can remember everything we've told you when we leave here, you need to look at the desk reference. Everything we're talking about and so much more is available in the desk reference. You go to FSA download. Do we have those on these slides, FSA down – write it down just in case it's not at the end of the slides. FSAdownload.ed.gov. The same place you get the EDEExpress software. You click on Software and Associated Documents, and then you click on the EDEExpress software to download, and you'll see a whole bunch of information, different documentation. You'll see the install guide, you'll see cover letters, and you will see the desk reference. The desk reference is a must have.

You either print it out, if you like to use the paper, or get it onto

your desktop, but that will show you everything and all the functionality about EDEExpress, because what we're finding is, particularly with new folks new to EDEExpress, you learn the basic functions but you never take advantage of the functions just beyond that. Every year, we're amazed to find people aren't using multiple entry, the single most important timesaving piece available to you. We've been here for two days, and I've already helped at least ten people in the hands-on sessions that haven't used multiple entry. It saves you so much time. So, that desk reference explains to you how to use it. You use it for updating your records, everything from disbursements to all kinds of changes that you can make to your record, instead of going into each individual record. So, the desk reference is your best friend and will save you hours of frustration.

All right. Next slide. I got off of my soapbox. All right. The next thing we're gonna talk about is what it looks like to create a demographic record, and the slide that you see here is gonna support what I'm gonna ask Amy to do in going into the software, so you can refer to Slide 9. What I'm gonna ask Amy to do is just open up the software so that we can create a new record. She's gonna go to File, New, and you'll see that she has a screen where she enters in a Social Security number, so she's just gonna put in a pretend one, and you can see that the system opens up to a blank EDEExpress record. What I want you to notice are all the tabs at the bottom. This demographic record is the first screen. You must complete the demographic record because this, as I said, becomes the foundation to all those other tabs. You can't get to any of the other tabs until you establish a demographic record.

So, whether you enter a demographic record manually, the way Amy is doing, or you import in ISIR, when you import the ISIR, it creates and saves a demographic record, plus it imports all the ISIR elements. But if you're using an external add because you have another system, and you import information into EDEExpress, again, it's also gonna establish the demographic record. Once Amy has completed enough of the fields in order to save it, you'll see that all the tabs on the bottom will enable, which means that you can now add to the student's record, and you can see they've all enabled. So, typically, after you've created the origination record, usually by the ISIR import, you're now ready to be able to create origination records. You've already got the demographic information, and then your next step would be to create grant and loan origination records, and, again, you can do that manually, not very efficient; we have ways where you can do that through the multiple process.

EDEExpress works compatibly with FAA Access to minimize some of the data entry that you might have to do. How many of you use FAA Access right now, have an FSA user I.D.? Okay, not everybody, so I'm gonna put in another PSA. If you would like to learn how to use FAA Access, I can't imagine that it wouldn't be helpful to you because you can do so many things with the students' ISIR, and viewing transactions, and things like that, through FAA Access. You can sign up through your primary destination point administrator to get access to FAA Access, and then you'll get an FSA user I.D. and you'd be able to log on. One of the things that EDEExpress does is work compatibly with that particular Web tool, and I'm gonna ask Amy if you'll just switch back to the software, if you click on the FAFSA tab, what could happen is if you've already got information for your student and you've established a demographic record, and you might be a school that either on a case-by-case basis or on a regular basis, you enter in FAFSA data for your student. When you create that demographic record in EDEExpress and then click the FAFSA tab, you'll be able to log into FAA Access, and you'll log right into the FAFSA entry page, plus everything you've already typed in the demo page will also be in the FAA Access FAFSA entry page, so you don't have to retype that information.

Another feature that we have, and I don't know how tricky it's gonna be for you to get out of that – it takes a few clicks when you're not actually tied to the Internet to get out of that. Another way that EDEExpress works compatibly with FAA Access is if you have to make a correction to a certain student's record. So, let's say you're in EDEExpress and you're in a particular student's record, and you've identified, perhaps through verification, that you need to make some changes to a student's record, all you have to do is click the student inquiry tab and, again, you'll get a log-in page for FAA Access, and, as soon as you get past your log-in page, you will be in that student's processed application if there's only one transaction. If there's more than one transaction, you'll land on the transaction page, you select the transaction you want to correct, and it saves you some steps not having to get out of EDEExpress and do all the steps that you would normally have to do to log-in to FAA Access. So, it's another way to be convenient.

Okay. Thanks, Amy. I'm keeping Amy on her toes going back and forth, so thanks so much. A very common way many EDEExpress users populate the database, as I've mentioned, is to do the ISIR import, and, as I said, when you do the ISIR import, you create the demographic record. The next step after that is to begin

making packaging records if you use a packaging module, but then to create Pell origination records, Direct Loan origination records, and TEACH origination records. This is something else I touched on just a little bit, but many schools use EDEExpress in combination with their campus systems, and we provide the record layout instructions – again, something I mentioned a little bit earlier – to create flat files that you can import into EDEExpress. In this example that we’re showing on the screen here, and this is why I wanted to mention it again, because we actually have a screenshot for you, we’re attempting to import Pell records that would have been created in another external system using the flat file record layouts. Once those flat file record layouts are created and you pull them out of your system, they’ll be stored in your **IM** data file, and it’s typically the default setting is to have them on your C drive, and EDEExpress will know to look in that IM data file when you execute the import for external data, and it’ll pull that information into EDEExpress.

There’s a distinct advantage that schools would want to use the external add process to add or update records in EDEExpress. For instance, your external system can import other forms of non-federal award amounts, and that can be included into the packaging module so that you can then package those other types of aid that are perhaps unique just to your school in the EDEExpress packaging module. And, following the record layouts, you can create Pell and Direct Loan, and TEACH origination records so that they’re complete, meaning they don’t need any other steps to add to that record in order to originate it. So, when you import that from your other system into EDEExpress, the record is ready to transmit immediately. It’s ready to export, and to that end, many schools use EDEExpress for that purpose, because EDEExpress creates records to send to COD in XML, and if your campus system doesn’t do that, and many campus systems don’t, several of those campuses use EDEExpress for one reason: It’s an XML translator. So, they transmit all of their campus data into EDEExpress, and then they can export out of EDEExpress in XML, which is what they need. Again, it’s a free piece of software to use, so it allows you that additional flexibility.

And I did run ahead of myself a little bit earlier, but you can obtain all the information that I’m referencing about record layouts from the technical references, again, the COD technical reference and the EDE technical reference. And the record layouts to create packaging, that actually has a different technical reference. To create packaging add and change records in EDEExpress, you would actually go to the EDEExpress packaging technical reference. Does

anyone in here curious about using EDEExpress for packaging? All right, there's like a half a hand. I would challenge you – okay, two and a half hands. I would challenge you to at least go, again, to FSAdownload and look at the EDEExpress packaging technical reference. Look at it, see if that is a better option than the one that you're currently doing. You have something to compare it to, and, again, it's a free piece of software, so it's worth looking at. I know that it's a very powerful tool and it's very flexible, so it might be something for you to consider, and the best way to get to know that packaging record, other than playing with it in EDEExpress, is to look over the technical reference. It explains to you how to do all of the setups. In packaging, the most laborious part of it is establishing all the setups, because, once you package records, that's a quick process. So, I encourage you to look at that. It has worksheets you can practice with a little bit. No harm, no foul. Give it a try.

All right. Once you've successfully created origination records in EDEExpress, your records will be in a status of R, which means that they're ready to transmit, and they're ready to send to the processor. When all of the records that are in ready status are, you've established that, and of course EDEExpress has reports and things like that, so you can check and find out what records are in ready status or ready to go. You just simply export the Export command, and as I mentioned, when you do that, all of the records that are ready to go, meaning all the data is provided and they meet all the edits so that they won't fail once you send them to COD. That's one of the nice things about EDEExpress. It won't let you export a record until all of the correct information is in all of the fields so that it won't fail at COD. When that happens, the records that are in ready status pull together into a file folder. I'm gonna ask Amy to quickly switch to the software and go to File, Export and select Pell or Direct Loan. What I want to show you is you have a lot of flexibility in how you export your records, so you have control.

If you're new to EDEExpress, one of the things that you like to feel comfortable with is knowing what you're gonna be sending. I mean you can certainly run reports and see what's in ready status, but let's say that you don't want to send all of your records. You could. You could send every origination record from every program all together in one file, even the disbursements. You could send everything that's ready to go into one file folder to the processor. But let's say that that doesn't work best for your office procedures, and you like to have things divided out, "I only want to send Pell origination records, then DL, then TEACH, and then I'll

send out the disbursement records.” However you want it to work, you have that control. It allows you to send it out by program, and Amy can select that, and then you can see you can select which program you want to export, or if you want to export them all, and, of those programs, do you only want to send disbursements or do you only want to send origination records. So, I wanted to show you that you have a great deal of flexibility here, and, in addition to that, you could pick which origination. If you only wanted to send Pell origination records, you could do that, and then you could select, “Of the Pell origination records, I only want to send two,” and you could pick them. So, you have a lot of flexibility and a lot of control.

When you’ve exported your records, the status of those records will change from R ready to B batched. Again, that’s how you can maintain and manage the record process in EDEExpress because you do need to know the status of your records. You need to know which ones are ready to go, you need to know which ones you sent that are in batch status, because eventually you need to see those come out of batch status, which means that you have to import the records that have been processed from the processor, and we’ll talk about that in just a moment. When you have your exported records batched and ready to go, that next step is to use the EDconnect software to send those records to your TG mailbox so the processor can pick them up and process them, and put the processed records back into your mailbox. You use EDconnect again to receive the records into your system. You’re not receiving them directly into EDEExpress, and some new folks tend to stumble on that. You simply receive them into your IM data file, and then the next step is to do the import process into EDEExpress.

So, again, I’m gonna ask Amy to flip back to the software so I can show you an import dialogue box, and just select Pell or Direct Loan is fine. Once you’ve done that receive request, you then go into the import dialogue box and you import, and just so you know, you will know what records you’ve received when you use EDconnect. It tells you what types of records you’ve received so you know what you have to import into EDEExpress. When you execute the Import command, you’ll identify the import type, in this case I know I’m pulling in some origination records for Pell, and Amy would click on the File button and then I would see records that would be ready to come in, and we don’t have any showing here, but that’s how you would identify it. When you finish the Import command, the records are pulled into EDEExpress and the status changes from B batched to A accepted, or E for a reject, and you would see a report to tell you why a record is

rejected. I spent a little bit of time explaining this process because, in essence, this is representative of the entire EDEExpress process and how you need to manage your records.

One last piece that I want to discuss is a little bit about external exports. For those schools who use EDEExpress in combination with your own school, we talked about you using your campus system to import information into EDEExpress, but once EDEExpress has received those processed records, you'll want to have a way to get that processed record information back into your campus system. You do that by creating external exports, and it's a two-step process, and you establish this when you do your setups when you install EDEExpress, but you identify what your systems requires as far as the fields in EDEExpress, for origination records and for disbursements records, what fields your system needs to receive in order to be updated. You'll do that by going to Tools and Setup, and going into File Formats, and you identify which fields you need to have pulled together in a record, and then you'll simply choose the second box is the dialogue box.

You will identify that, "I want to export an external export," and you identify the file format. You can create all kinds of file formats containing specific field groups that your system needs to receive, and you identify the file format, and when you execute that Export command, all the records that you want to receive, with just the fields you want to receive, will be pulled together into a file, into your CIM data file, and then your campus system can import what's in that CIM data file into your campus system so that you keep both EDEExpress and your campus systems in sync. A little hard to describe if you don't see it, but the principle is there. If that's something that you want to learn more about so that you can use EDEExpress in combination with your system, see us after. Okay, it's Bob's turn.

Bob Martin:

I got to select what we did, so I gave her all the hard stuff. I mentioned to you a while ago that we make a lot of changes to the software. We don't like to make changes, but we're often forced to, but we always take suggestions from you, and some of the big changes we made to the software over the years have been based on your suggestions. So, you can always email me or Jody and we'll listen to what you have to say. You may have a great idea but I can't get funding to do it, but it may show up a couple of years down the road, so don't be bashful. So, let me ask you this: For those of you that are new to EDEExpress, is what we're doing up here helpful to you, doing it this way, or would you prefer to see us actually go the website, download that software, load it up, stick some dummy data in there for you and show you how to

navigate through the software? Would that be more helpful? I'm not gonna do it today, but I'm gonna think about doing that next year, okay? I think the response was yes. I think I saw more yeses than no's, so let's take a look at doing that.

You know what? Because I'm not a technical person by trade, I fell into this job, and I'm as stunned as most of you that I'm still employed here, and I know that you saw the headlines yesterday that President Obama proposed freezing federal pay for two years, which we expected something of that nature. I'm just hoping they don't take it one step further and get personal and ask me to refund any money. I have been to many sessions like this, where everybody was talking over my head. I had not a clue what they were talking about, and so I don't want to fall into that trap, and if we're doing that, then I want to back up and reconfigure. So, I think next year for the beginners, let's do that, okay? And then, maybe you can guide us, or the new FAAs the next year can guide us as to things they would like to see, and we can just do it on ad hoc.

I'm gonna talk to you right now about some reports that are some of the tools that we have in EDEExpress. Remember that – okay, let me back up. One of the problems with doing this is trying to figure out what not to say, because there's so much information I could give you it would be too much for you. But one of the basic things that you probably don't know about is that all the data that you're bringing into EDEExpress through imports, and all the data that you're manually entering is all being saved in a single file. That file ends with .mdb, which means Microsoft database. Remember, EDEExpress is built on Microsoft Access. You don't have to have Access loaded up on your computer. We're gonna load it up for you when you download the software and load those portions of Access that you need, but everything you do in it are being held in tables inside that mdb file, so when we tell you to back up your database, what we're actually telling you is back up that one file, okay? The other files, the program files, you can get those, you can download them if you have to, but it's the data you input that is especially valuable to you, and that's what you need to be backing up.

Inside those databases is an incredible amount of good information, if you only know how to access it. Reports is one of the tools that we have in EDEExpress to help you access that data, and so we'll talk about a couple of them here. You can print these reports or you can just throw them up to the screen. Remember in the setup slide that Jody showed you, you had the choice; when

you use the printer icon and you're in the print dialogue box, do you first want to print it right to the printer, or do you want to just print it to the screen and see if it's something that you might want to print out a hardcopy. So, you have that choice, and you can do reports multiply, or what we call globally, in other words, a lot of different records at one time, or if you're inside a student record, you can do it singly just for that student. And we also have filtering capability and queries. Queries are something that we give you some every year because we know there are queries that you generally use all the time and we don't want you having to recreate them each year. Some of those queries we give you, you can modify for your own use, and then you can build some of your own.

The first report we'll take a look at is a student summary, and this is a student summary – is this individual? Yeah. This is a student summary of a single student. His name is David Periwinkle, and you can see that, first of all, the title of the report is right there. I don't know whether this little thing is gonna show up. Can you see a red dot there anywhere?

Audience: No.

Bob Martin: Okay. I wonder why it doesn't – okay, right there is the title to the report. So, if you're not sure what report you pick up off the printer, look there and that will tell you, and then you'll see there's a lot of good information there, including this right down here, which is what we call the _____ key, and you'll get used to that term as you get more heavily into working with EDEXpress. You'll see an EFC, if there is one. If we go to the next page, which is the second part of the Student Summary Report, you'll see that it chronicles what we have awarded this young man, and then you'll see down there at the bottom half, you'll see that we've given him about \$20,000.00 worth of financial aid, and if you look down at the bottom half, you'll see that he has a Direct Loan. What kind of loan is that? Anybody see that S in that loan I.D.? It's a subsidized loan.

You'll see that we have a loan amount approved of \$2,500.00. We've already made one disbursement on it of \$1,250.00. The net to the borrower. EDEXpress will calculate the net for you, and the net to the borrower in that instance was \$1,244.00. He also has a Pell award, a Pell grant of \$5,550.00, and we've actually disbursed so far \$2,775.00 of that annual award. So, you can see that individually from within a student record, you can get a lot of good information summarized for you in a couple of pages. You can do the same thing with numerous students if you wanted to.

The next report we'll talk about is a Processed Records List. In the software, you click on the Printer icon, and then you have a dropdown list of things you might want to print and in what module. List Process ISIRs is the way it's listed in the dropdown box, but if you'll notice it on the report, it doesn't say that. It says Processed Records List, and Amy and I were talking earlier this month about trying to change that so they match up, because it's not just processed records. It's actually processed ISIRs that we're looking at here. And then, you'll see down there that it gives a lot of information, Social Security number and names, comment codes, if there are any, transaction number, and the transaction type. In this case, the transaction type is 4A, which means it was an initial paper application. EFC, if there is one. You'll see that there's some C codes there, which means there's a conflict and has to be resolved, and then the verification column. None of these have been selected for verification, but the last column, that VTF, is verification tracking flag, and that's a formula. It's to spit out a number from a formula that determines the likelihood of an application being selected for verification. So, that's what one of the reports looks like.

Once you get into loans and grants, you're gonna see origination and disbursement lists that you can print from any of those three modules, and there's two bullets here that explain what's in each kind of list. Generally, origination lists include the name and the loan I.D., award I.D., and then record status is award amount and other information specific to that particular award. Disbursement lists, however, only have disbursement information on it, although they still have names and that kind of thing, and status codes. Now statuses are very important, because remember, when you're processing with COD, you're sending stuff to them and they're sending stuff back to you. If you send us something, we'll send something back to you. If we don't, there's a problem and you need to go in and look and see where the problem is. But when you send COD something, what we're gonna do is take a look at it and process it, and either accept it or reject it, and when we send it back to you, it's gonna have a status, and when you import that response into EDEExpress, it will update your individual records with the new status.

Upon that import process, we'll also print out what we call an Import Edit Report, so if you have some records in there that were rejected, that report will tell you, "You just imported 25 records and two of them were rejected," so you're gonna have to go in and open those two identified records up and see what the problem is,

why did COD reject them, fix them. When you fix them, they reset to R, which means ready to send, and the next time you send something to COD, EDEExpress will pick it up and send it back, we'll reprocess it again, and then accept it and send it back to you. Remember, especially with disbursements, there is no loan until COD accepts that first disbursement, okay? So, you can be sending me disbursement records all you want, but if I'm not accepting them, there is no loan. You're on the hook for that money if you've already given it out.

Okay, so let's take a look at another type of document, or printed report, and this one is List – Student Records in a Document. This one is important, especially in an office, where you might have a large office and you have different people handling different programs. You might have a Pell person, you might have a Direct Loan person, and if you work it right, if you set your office up right, you can have certain times of the day where only Pell data goes forward or goes to COD, and certain days where only Direct Loan data goes to COD, and if you divide it up that way, then it would be easy for you to track what's in each kind of document. But if you didn't know what was in a document – because it could have disbursements, it could have originations, it could have adjustments in it – you can go into print and you can print out List – Student Records in a Document, and you could print it out and it will tell you what's in that document.

Now, you'll see that in this case what we did is there's the document I.D., and remember we talked about something called browse, and I'll show you that in a minute. In browse, we also have a column in each tab which says Document Activity, so you would go in here, find the document you want to look for, and then you would print it out, and it will tell you all the records that were in that document. And in this case, what we have here is a bunch of disbursement records, because under origination we say N for no, and under change we say no, so this has to be disbursements, and if you flip over to the next slide, you'll see the bottom half of that report or the end of that report, where we have totals, and you'll see that we brought in 12 Direct Loan disbursement records and all of them were accepted – none were rejected. So, when we did that, we updated the statuses in EDEExpress, as well.

Okay, how do I work with just specific records? Well, we have a tool in there called queries. What a query does is allow you to _____ a huge group of records down to a small manageable group, or like group. Queries are available in each module, and you can use them when

you're printing or exporting, or when you're using multiple entry. It can have fixed values, or we can prompt you for the value you need to use when you're actually executing that particular query, and then we have those predefined queries that I mentioned that we put in there, hardcode in there for you every year so you don't have to keep recreating them.

How do I view a list of records? Okay, well let's go into browse. You use the browse function – Tools, Browse – and then you'll see you can pick whichever module you want to select – select Direct Loan – and there's Browse, and then you'll see all the records that are in there and it'll tell you the type of loan, all the information. If you scroll over, they can see all those different column headings. It's like we took that origination record in Express and then we put it in a format. But one of the great things about this is that if you take your cursor and you put it in a column heading and then do a right-click, this little box appears, and you can see that you can do a lot of things with that data. You can resort it, but one of the great things is down at the bottom there, if you like working in Excel, you can export that grid there to a file and work with it that way.

Okay. Now, here's the part I like in these presentations because I get to tell you what's coming next year, or what I'm getting ready to do to you next year. It depends on how you look at it. Sometimes, change can be traumatic for some people. We have a lot of changes coming 11-12. They're changes that were forced upon us by new legislation, and we've got to make these changes. We've also made some changes in the COD system, the Common Origination and Disbursement system. Does anybody not know what COD is? If you do, raise your hand. I'll explain it to you. That's where everything goes, where Pell and loan data goes to be processed. It's different from the Central Processing System. CPS is for eligibility determination, whereas COD is we've already determined these people are eligible, and now we have to process their awards and their loans. In 10-11, in the software Release 4.0 that you're working in now, you'll see that top box there if you're gonna open a record or you're gonna create a new record. In the 11-12 version, you're not gonna see that box anymore. You're gonna see the bottom one, and it'll be in the toolbar at the top of all the modules and at the top of every record.

The beauty of this is that if you're in one record and it suddenly hits you, "Wait a minute, I need to make this same change in another record," I can go ahead and open that second record. Now, if I've made a change in the first one, the software is gonna prompt me to save that change first before it'll let me go into that second

record, but it saves you two or three mouse clicks, because now, the way you have to do it is make the change in one, save it, close out, and then go back in, open that box up and find the next student. This way, you can do it – you'll still have the retrieve, or the ellipses button. Anytime you see a button there with three little dots in it, that's call an ellipses button. That means there's something there for you to look at and it's usually a list, a pick list for you to choose from.

When you're creating loans now in EDEExpress, you have to create one loan at a time, one loan type at a time, and so if you're gonna create a sub and an unsub for a student, you've got to create the sub or the unsub first, originate it, save it, get out, come back in, hit the box, hit the Plus or the Add button, and then pick a different kind of loan type. This year, you're gonna be able to choose whatever loan types you want at one time, and it will create those loan records for you. Now, you'll see there are two different imports represented here. The first one, the one to the left, is loan data ISIR, which means we're taking our ISIR information and we're moving it across into the Direct Loan module so you don't have to retype all that data. We're just taking the ISIR data and moving it over to Direct Loan. At the same time we do that, we have to tell the software what kind of loan we want to generate, or originate, or create, because you can create a loan and you can save that loan without originating that loan. In the FFEL world, you certify loans. In the Direct Loan world, you originate loans. So, get used to the term originate because that's what we use.

But we want to take advantage of the data we already have in the database to create those loan records, so in this case, you'll see the checkbox, and we have one checked there. We could check all four of those if we wanted to and it would create all four loan records for us when we made that import. On the other side, you'll see that it's an import – is that loan data packaging? My trifocals aren't – there's no light in this room. Loan data packaging, so what we've done is we've used the packaging module, and when we did our packaging process, it determined that we want to award this kid certain types of loans. So, now what we want to do is create those loans, so we're gonna move that data, just like we did from the ISIRs, but we're gonna move it from the packaging module into the loan module. If you don't tell the software what kind of loan you want or what type of loan you want to generate or create, the packaging software will look and see what's been awarded to that kid and it'll generate those loan types, or you could just stipulate it.

We had a regulatory change this year that says if you have a student that's eligible based on ability to benefit, then we want to know what that information is, and so we're adding five new fields to capture that data. We're adding them to the demo screen, because that's the only room we have, and you'll see a change on the demo screen where we're gonna add some tabs there so that we can capture all the information. We can't display it all at once to you, but there'll be some tabs there for you to see it. Now, what the law says is that if a kid is eligible because of the ability to benefit, then you have to report that information at the program level, not at the global level. We're gonna save it for you in the demo tab, that's the global level, and each time you send a record in to COD, where a kid has ATB information, we're gonna pick up that data and send it with it, so it's all done automatically for you and you don't have to worry about it. You'll just have to go in one time to enter the ATB data. If you had ATB data in there and then removed it, it doesn't matter. Express knows you had it in there at one time and it's gonna continue to report it, even though you think it's not there.

We're actually making a lot more changes than what we're telling you about here, but we just don't want to overwhelm you. Anytime there's a change to the ISIR data that's being collected, we have to change EDEExpress to handle that. A couple of changes that you heard about this morning in the general session, probably from my friend Jody over here, is we don't ask for your enrollment information anymore, and in EDEExpress we call that ISIR enrollment status. So, we have to remove that field. The other one, we changed the question, "Are you interested in work study or student loans?" and we changed that. We took the loans out of there, so now the question is, "Are you interested in work study?" so we have to change that field, as well, in the software. Little changes like that, that aren't always as evident as they might be, and then we've got a lot of changes coming up insofar as Direct Loans is concerned because between two years ago and today, we've made a huge leap.

Two years ago, we had something called DLEnote.ed.gov, which is where students would go and execute a Master Promissory Note, and then COD would pick that up, they would look at the note, make sure it was done correctly, and then we send you what we call an unsolicited MPN response. We modified that website to call it now studentloans.gov, and not only does the student borrower go there to execute his MPN, but the parents go there, as well, to fill out the PLUS application. Before, EDEExpress users had to fill that out in the software itself, and you can still do that if

that's what you prefer. We had to get that website up quick, and we were having to try to refine it as we move forward, so we're making some changes. When a parent goes out to studentloans.gov and does a PLUS application, we are gonna send you a file called – the message class is CRSP file, and it means that a parent has gone out there and execute a PLUS loan. When you import that into EDEExpress, we will build that loan record for you, then you're gonna have to determine if the loan amount that the parent is asking for is correct, if it's the correct amount. You can modify that field if you need to.

That's what we instituted last year. This year, what we're doing is instituting a change that will allow that parent to modify that loan that he wants, or she wants. We're also modifying it in case there's an issue with credit. When you do a PLUS application, there are two things you're gonna be looking for. You're gonna be looking for whether COD accepted that PLUS application itself, and then you're gonna be looking for what we call a credit status, and we'll send two things to you telling you about it. If a parent has denied credit initially, or accepted credit initially, we could override that based on some information that came up after that, and so you have to be able to handle that. And you have to know our software needs to know the same status codes that COD is sending out, and so that means we have to add some things, plus we have a current status of X, which means pending, and COD has been sending X forever, and last year, they decided to change that X to a P. Well, I can't use P in Express because P already means Printed in Express, so what we're doing is we're gonna ignore the P and continue to display it as X. There's not a lot for you to worry about; we'll do it behind the scenes.

If you need more training, and I suspect many of us do, go to our Session 13, which is the hands-on thing. There's a set of exercises there, and you can pick the set that you want to work. You don't have to work from Page 1 to the back. If you're just interested in Pell, go to the Pell exercises and work those. If you're interested in learning about Direct Loan tools, just go to those and work those. We're doing it again tomorrow. We had one session yesterday that was packed, so they gave us two rooms bigger than this room, and they were both packed this morning. So, tomorrow morning we'll do it again in two different rooms, and so, if you're interested, come on over there and we'll have people in the room, and as you're working these exercises, if you have questions, and if you have a question that has nothing to do with the exercises, we'll come by where you're sitting and try to answer them for you. Right after this session, in this room, Jody and I and Amy will do

another session, which will go a little more in depth about some of the things we've talked about here, so if you're not overwhelmed, then stick around. If you are, some of the things that we'll discuss there, next year you'll be in a better position to understand.

If you're gonna be using Direct Loan tools to help you reconcile Direct Loan information, then go to Session 16, which is very much in depth. It's gonna be done by Chuck Hirman, who used to work for us as a team lead for Direct Loan tools, and each year I ask him to come back and do this session because he's so good at it; a lot of good information there. There's also the PC lab. For those of you that are new, you need to memorize the number, 800-330-5947. That's your first line of defense. That's the CPS/SAIG technical help desk. That's your help desk, the financial help desk, not student help desk, and so if you're having trouble doing something in EDEExpress or just setting it up, call that number and someone there will walk you through it. They're very good at what they do, and they'll be in our hands-on session and they're also in the PC lab down there, so if you just want to sit down and have somebody show you something on EDEExpress, go to the PC lab and they'll be happy to do that.

I mentioned the FSA tech training, and you can get to that through IFAP. How many don't know what IFAP is? IFAP is a website that means Information for Financial Aid Professionals, and everything you need to know, you can find going there and it will lead you to everything else. There's the URL for FSAdownload.ed.gov. That's where our software is. How many have never been on that site? Okay. The desk reference is a handy guide, but it's about this thick. When we first started with EDEExpress, they were little tent things that you put on your desk and they were like six or seven pages of thick cardboard and they were real handy. Now it's a novel, but it's a very comprehensive novel and it's a very good guide, so when you get back to your workstations, you can download it from FSAdownload and just leave it on your desktop and refer to it if you need some help.

Cover letters just tell you this is the new version of the software, this is what you need to do; these are the changes that we're making. Installation guides also come with it that tell you how to load it up, and if you're in one of those schools where you're networked, then you need to let a professional IT person do it. There is the Web-based training I mentioned on IFAP, as well as other publications, and then within EDEExpress software, there is what we call **Help Tech**, and you'll see the button that says Help up at the top. If you're in a particular field and you're not sure

what to do, just hit F1 and Help Tech will pop up relative to that field. There's that 800-number that I was talking about. If you prefer to email them, then there's their email address. They'll be there 8:00 to 8:00, Monday through Friday, Eastern time. I was supposed to tell you that you're not supposed to answer your phones when we're in here. I was also supposed to tell you that if you need medical assistance, somebody will be here, but the person who was supposed to provide it I see is not in the room, so I'd help you. If you want a Power Point of this or any other presentation, they will be on the conference website when you get back to your home stations, and you can download them there, if you'd like.

The other thing I want to tell you is that usually we hand out evaluations and we ask you to fill them out. This year, we're gonna email them to you, so you'll probably get an email that says, "Please go here and do your –" If you enjoyed this presentation, then my name is Bob Martin. If you want to complain, my name is Jody Sears, and we'd be happy to hear from you. We do answer our phones and answer our email, and I get emails from everybody, from lots of people throughout the year that need help, so I'll help you as best I can. If I can't help you or I don't have time, I'll get somebody to help you. Do we have, what, ten minutes? We have about ten minutes. If you want to ask questions about anything, we'll be happy to entertain them and see if we can provide accurate answers. Yes, ma'am?

Audience: _____ EDEExpress _____ reconciliation?

Bob Martin: Can it do what?

Audience: Is there any way that _____ to make the process of Pell reconciliation any easier?

Bob Martin: Yeah. We –

Audience: **Because** I saw when you went to reports and you said you could right-click and have – the problem I have is _____ request _____ Pell _____ the format is just crazy _____ –

Bob Martin: No, you shouldn't have to do that. You probably need to go –

Audience: _____ and they said _____ formatting _____ –

Bob Martin: Well –

Audience: – so if you'll tell me, I can go to –

- Bob Martin:* – I’m not sure what you asked for, but anything that COD spits out, EDEExpress can handle.
- Audience:* Okay.
- Bob Martin:* So, if your version of EDEExpress is not handling it, there’s something wrong.
- Audience:* _____ I’ve requested straight from COD, the Pell file.
- Bob Martin:* Oh, a year-to-date file?
- Audience:* **Right.**
- Bob Martin:* Okay. EDEExpress can handle a year-to-date file, so what I would suggest is go to the PC lab and tell somebody down there on the EDEExpress table exactly what you just told us, and they’re gonna walk you through the steps, and then you’ll be able to identify what you’re doing wrong or what’s wrong with that file. And if that doesn’t work, then what they might have you do is actually send them the file –
- Audience:* Well I can do it, it’s just that it’s so time consuming because I have to strip out all the erroneous –
- Jody Sears:* Do you print it from EDEExpress?
- Audience:* No, I’m getting it from COD.
- Jody Sears:* Oh, okay. So, you’re not getting something you can import into EDEExpress to print, and that’s what we’re getting –
- Audience:* Right.
- Jody Sears:* – and you can do that. You can request a year-to-date from within EDEExpress, and that’s a request that goes out to COD, like an export, and then they put one in your TG mailbox, and then you import it into EDEExpress and it prints like a beautiful report.
- Audience:* So, when I import it from EDEExpress, that’s when I can _____ request _____ that way.
- Bob Martin:* Right.
- Jody Sears:* Yeah, and it prints very nicely. So, I would encourage you to go to the PC lab so you can see a demonstration of that.
- Audience:* Okay. All right.

Bob Martin: Right. It may be delimited in a way you're not prepared to, or you can't handle it, or something like that. It's a simple fix.

Audience: _____ I know there's got to be a simpler way than what I'm –

Bob Martin: Yeah.

Audience: – _____ take that and –

Bob Martin: We're trying to make everything as automated as possible. We don't want you to have to do a whole lot of manual work. Any more questions? Yes, ma'am?

Audience: Could you please clarify what purpose of _____ disbursement file is? After a school has disbursed the funds to the student and pulled money down from G5, and then that date is what _____ disbursement date for each student record? Is that what the disbursement file does?

Bob Martin: Well, you send the disbursement file. You send the file to COD telling them, "On this date, I gave this kid this amount of money."

Audience: That's what I wanted to clarify.

Bob Martin: Yeah.

Jody Sears: Yes.

Bob Martin: What COD does with that is they process it, and then they have to accept that. They're sending you then a response with an A status, which is what you want. Once you import that response into Express, it updates the status on the student record to A. See, the purpose with Direct Loans is to get to a booked status as quickly as possible. For those of you that aren't aware, you can have accepted disbursement but that disbursement is not yet booked. You can have an accepted origination record – in order to book a Direct Loan, you need an accepted origination record, you need an accepted MPN, and you need an accepted first disbursement record. Once we have all three of those, then we book that record, and booking only means that responsibility for that loan shifts from you to me, okay? It's now our responsibility. Now, you may have subsequent disbursements on that same loan, but what we will do is we will accept that subsequent disbursement and book it, as well, and give that to our servicer. So, now our servicers are talking to your borrowers, okay? So, that's why you want to book those loans as quickly as you can. It may not happen for the subsequent disbursement until the second semester, or whatever. It may be several months down the road, but that's generally what

you're trying to do. Now, there are certain lists that you can get from COD that you go in and request, and you don't do it through Express. You have to do it online. But if they're sending you disbursement data back, it's probably a response to something you sent them. Now –

Audience: _____. I just wanted clarification for everything _____ record _____ –

Bob Martin: Yeah. Okay. There is a new list that COD is gonna generate, and it's an amalgam of several lists that are now available. I'm not gonna confuse people with it, just be aware that it's coming and it's mostly for schools who are not familiar with DL who are coming from the FFEL world, and they were looking for data that's already in the EDEXpress database but they didn't know it was there, so we created a report for them. It's not ready yet, but it will be. Yes, ma'am?

Audience: What are the advantages of using EDEXpress if you only have a few students over just using COD and _____?

Bob Martin: Okay. Remember my first admonition when I first started. If you're gonna use EDEXpress to process Direct Loans, then make sure you originate. You don't have to. If you have five kids and you're not doing any Pell, and you're just doing five loans a year, then don't use EDEXpress. Go do it up online at COD. Just remember that COD has everything now, that they're controlling the process. EDEXpress allows you to control the process, okay? But if you're doing that few loans, it's probably not worth using EDEXpress.

Audience: We do about a hundred, so it's still not worth it, I don't think.

Jody Sears: Oh, yeah it is.

Bob Martin: Remember that the idea of Direct Loans was that a kid could walk into your school today and have a SAR in his hand, and you can request that ISIR or you can get an ISIR, you can do a demo record, you can do a loan origination record, and you can do a draw down and pay him today. That's the flexibility that Direct Loans affords you, and you're not relying on someone else to do all that for you. You decide when you're gonna draw down funds. We have lots of schools that disburse institutional funds and then they draw down to reimburse themselves. There's a risk involved there because it's not a loan until we say it's a loan and we accept it, but a lot of folks – I just got the high sign to stop, so if you have additional questions, we're gonna be in this room the next session,

too, so we're probably just gonna hang here, so come up and ask us. Thanks for attending.

Jody Sears: Thank you.

[End of Audio]