



**Olivia DiBiase**

Director of Financial Education & Outreach  
AFSA Education Foundation

## Education

Bachelor of Arts  
International Relations & Anthropology  
University of California, Davis

## Lagniappe:

### A Little Something Extra

I started my career in education, albeit in a much different capacity than my current role. After graduating from college, I spent two years in Morocco as a youth educator with the Peace Corps which reinforced my interest in public service and capacity building work. After moving to Washington, DC, I began working with a nonprofit credit counseling association and really delved into the world of personal finance, credit counseling, and financial education. Over the years, I've grown my expertise and experience doing everything from grant-writing to program development and evaluation to teacher training – all in support of building more financially capable communities and individuals.



## Personal and Family Finance

Olivia DiBiase currently serves as the Director of Financial Education and Outreach at the AFSA Education Foundation. In this role, she has the pleasure of getting to leverage her experience to grow the reach and impact of financial education resources to meet the ever-changing needs of learners and educators across the country.

### Uniqueness of Career Journey

Working in financial education, I have the unique benefit of interacting directly with so many different organizations, government agencies, educators, and individuals who are deeply committed to promoting personal financial literacy. It's a topic that impacts everyone and it's inspiring to learn about (and sometimes be a part of) the work that different groups are doing to build financial capability, resiliency, and knowledge. A benefit of working in small, nonprofit organizations over the past decade is that I have had so many opportunities to work on different projects in a variety of roles – writing grants, developing new education programs, evaluating program impact, delivering trainings, and so much more.

### Inspiration for Career Choice

My motivation for pursuing a career in financial education stems from a combination of personal experiences and a desire for my work to have a meaningful impact. My time as a youth educator with the Peace Corps was a formative experience that highlighted the importance of education in empowering individuals with valuable knowledge and skills. This experience inspired me to seek out opportunities where I could continue to make a positive difference through education and support.

### Skills Vital to Success in Career

Especially for individuals at the beginning of their career paths, an eagerness to learn, grow, and adapt quickly are all such valuable skills to have. I think they really help to lay the groundwork for longer-term career success and allow for strengthening of other skills around relationship-building, collaboration, strategic thinking, and leadership.

### Best Advice to Someone Considering This Career

I would recommend finding ways to engage with local community-based organizations committed to building financial education or economic stability – either professionally or through volunteer efforts. Beyond giving back to your community, volunteering can be a great way to better understand your own interests and how you may want to leverage that into a professional career.

### Recommended Educational Preparation

I think a combination of education and experience are helpful to prepare for working in financial education or for a nonprofit. A degree or training program that exposes you to core financial and economic concepts is helpful. Additionally, practical experience through internships, volunteering, or community engagement are invaluable opportunities to gain hands-on experience and apply your knowledge in real-world settings.

### How the Field Has Changed Over Time

In my observation, it seems that organizations are increasingly taking a more holistic approach to developing financial education resources, recognizing how financial knowledge and behaviors are interconnected with many other aspects of people's lives. Additionally, changes in technology have allowed for new and more engaging digital tools that enable more personalized and accessible learning.

### Projected Changes in the Future

In the future, I see the field expanding with the increased adoption of personal finance education standards in K-12 curricula. As more states recognize the importance of equipping students with essential financial literacy skills from an early age, I expect that there will be a more standardized and integrated approach to teaching personal finance across schools.