The NCSL Legislative Staff Sections and Networks annually present Legislative Staff Achievement Awards to recognize staff excellence in supporting the work of a state legislature and strengthening the legislative institution. Each staff section may make two awards, and each decides the criteria for its awards. The staff chair of the NCSL Standing Committees also may name two award recipients. Examples of accomplishments recognized by the Legislative Staff Achievement Award include, but are not limited to:

- Helping to improve the effectiveness of the legislative institution.
- Supporting the legislative process and the mission of the legislature.
- Exhibiting a high degree of professionalism, competence and integrity in serving the legislature and the public.
- Contributing to the work of the National Conference of State Legislatures.
- Demonstrating expertise in a particular field.
- Contributing to existing knowledge.
LIST OF RECIPIENTS

Standing Committee Staff Chair’s Awards
Cheryl Reinhart, Staff Attorney, Arkansas General Assembly
Miriam Fordham, Legislative Committee Analyst, Health and Welfare Committee, Kentucky Legislative Research Commission

American Society of Legislative Clerks and Secretaries (ASLCS)
Ann Cornwell, Secretary and Director of the Arkansas Senate
Bruce F. Jamerson, Clerk, Virginia House of Delegates and Keeper of the Rolls of the Commonwealth (posthumous)

Leadership Staff Section (LSS)
Mechelle Miller, Director, Rural Caucus, Louisiana House of Representatives

Legal Services Staff Section (LSSS)
Jery Payne, Senior Staff Attorney, Colorado Office of Legislative Legal Services
Anne Sappenfield, Senior Staff Attorney, Wisconsin Legislative Council

Legislative Education Staff Network (LESN)
Frances Ramirez-Maestas, Director, New Mexico Legislative Education Study Committee

Legislative Health Staff Network (LHSN)
Nolan Langweil, Health Care Fiscal Analyst, Vermont Legislative Joint Fiscal Office
Miriam Fordham, Legislative Committee Analyst, Health and Welfare Committee, Kentucky Legislative Research Commission

Legislative Information and Communications Staff Section (LINCS)
Chuck Truesdell, Assistant Public Information Officer, Kentucky Legislative Research Commission

Legislative Research Librarians Staff Section (LRL)
Robbie LaFleur, Director, Minnesota Legislative Reference Library

National Association of Legislative Fiscal Offices (NALFO)
John O’Brien, Director, Texas Legislative Budget Board
Cathy Higgins, Budget Analyst, Tennessee Office of Legislative Budget Analysis

National Association of Legislative Information Technology (NALIT)
Linda Pittsford, Deputy Director and Senate Affairs Liaison, Information Systems Division, Texas Legislative Council
Idaho Legislature’s GEMS Development Team

National Legislative Program Evaluation Society (NLPES)
Janice Mueller, State Auditor (retired), Wisconsin Legislative Audit Bureau
Georgia Department of Audits and Accounts, Performance Audit Operations Division

National Legislative Services and Security Association (NLSSA)
Ted Blazel, Wisconsin Senate Sergeant at Arms

Research and Committee Staff Section (RACSS)
H. Pepper Sturm, Chief Deputy Research Director, Research Division, Nevada Legislative Counsel Bureau
STANDING COMMITTEE STAFF CHAIR’S AWARDS

Cheryl Reinhart, Staff Attorney, Arkansas General Assembly

This award recognizes Cheryl Reinhart for her dedicated service to the Arkansas General Assembly and her active participation in NCSL. Cheryl works for the Arkansas Bureau of Legislative Research as a legislative attorney for the House and Senate Education Committees, and as the staff attorney for the legislative oversight committee responsible for the Arkansas Lottery Commission. Before joining the bureau in 2005, she practiced law in the areas of business and corporations, securities and real estate.

Along with solid knowledge of education law and education issues facing state legislatures, Cheryl brings a great deal of enthusiasm and creativity to her work as staff chair of the NCSL Standing Committee on Education and co-chair of the Steering Committee for the Legislative Education Staff Network. She is always friendly and willing to take on new challenges and projects and is a great example of how much staff contributes to the standing committees.
Miriam A. Fordham, Legislative Committee Analyst, Health and Welfare Committee, Legislative Research Commission, Kentucky

This award recognizes Miriam Fordham for excellence in service to the Kentucky Legislature and to the NCSL Standing Committees. Miriam currently serves as a legislative committee analyst with the Health and Welfare Committee at the Legislative Research Commission in Kentucky, where she staffs the Subcommittee on Health Issues and Aging and the Medicaid Oversight and Advisory Committee and works on legislative matters pertaining to health, public health and Medicaid policy issues. Previously, she served as a staff economist with the agency.

Miriam has been actively involved in NCSL for many years and currently serves as the staff chair of the NCSL Health Committee and the chair of the Legislative Health Staff Network’s steering committee. Her knowledge of health policy and competence are evident in her work in both positions. Miriam is warm and approachable and brings a strong sense of collegiality and team work to the NCSL Standing Committees.
The American Society of Legislative Clerks and Secretaries recognizes Ann Cornwell for her outstanding contributions to the Arkansas Senate and her distinguished service to ASLCS and NCSL. Ann has served in the Arkansas Senate since 1980 and was elected secretary in 1994. She has served in every leadership role available to principal ASLCS members, including president, secretary-treasurer, executive committee member and ASLCS committee chair. She also served on the 2010 Mason’s Manual Commission and was a member of NCSL’s Executive Committee and the Legislative Staff Coordinating Committee.

Ann is well-respected by members of the Arkansas Senate, her staff and her legislative colleagues across the country. She is an expert in parliamentary procedure, research, finance, human resources and visitors’ services. Her recent accomplishments and contributions to the Arkansas Senate include implementing a computerized voting system, orchestrating a major renovation of the Senate Chamber, and continually modernizing the technological impact on the efficiency and effectiveness of the Arkansas General Assembly. She is honored with this award for her professional and hardworking demeanor, her knowledge of the legislative process and her dedication and commitment to the legislative institution. She has contributed greatly to the Arkansas Senate, NCSL and ASLCS.
With profound sadness and great admiration, respect and affection, the American Society of Legislative Clerks and Secretaries recognizes Bruce F. Jamerson for his distinguished service to the Virginia House of Delegates and his many contributions to ASLCS and NCSL. Bruce served in the Virginia House for more than 35 years and was elected Clerk of the House and Keeper of the Rolls of the Commonwealth in 1991. He was the fourth longest serving clerk in the history of the Virginia House of Delegates in terms of continuous service, dating back to 1619. He served in every leadership role available to principal ASLCS members, including president, secretary-treasurer, executive committee member and ASLCS committee chair. He also served on NCSL’s Legislative Staff Coordinating Committee.

Bruce was the consummate legislative professional and a protector of the legislative process and the institution. He was an invaluable source of knowledge, especially about parliamentary procedure, and provided inspiration and encouragement to his staff and his colleagues across the country. One of his most significant accomplishments as clerk was serving on the Executive Committee of Virginia’s Capitol and Extension project, where he helped to guide the renovation and expansion of “Mr. Jefferson’s Capitol.” He also had the pleasure of helping to plan the joint session of the Virginia General Assembly to welcome the Queen of England, Elizabeth II, to the newly restored state capitol. He is honored with this award for his hard work, enthusiasm and dedication to the Virginia House of Delegates, ASLCS and NCSL. He exemplified the highest standards of public service. For those who were fortunate to work with him, Bruce’s significant accomplishments and dedication will inspire and guide us in the future.
The Leadership Staff Section recognizes Mechelle Miller for her contributions to the Louisiana House of Representatives and the Leadership Staff Section of NCSL. Mechelle has been an integral member of the Louisiana House staff for more than three decades. She began her long and productive term of service in 1980 as a docket clerk. She became a secretary for the legal division in 1985, and has served with great dedication and effectiveness as administrator of the Rural Caucus of the Louisiana Legislature since 1987.

Mechelle has been very active with the Leadership Staff Section for more than 20 years. She has served with distinction on several of its committees, including the bylaws, finance and fundraising, program development, and outreach committees. She has held several leadership positions, including serving as chair. She also has hosted several LSS meetings, including the annual professional development seminar. She accomplished all of this while simultaneously raising two beautiful and successful twin girls, Markelle and April, as a single mom.

LSS is honoring Mechelle for the second time; she also received the award in 2001. Her expertise, institutional knowledge, leadership and friendship have been invaluable to the section and to her colleagues in Louisiana. LSS thanks her for tirelessly giving of time, self and resources to contribute to its success.
Jery Payne, Senior Staff Attorney, Colorado Office of Legislative Legal Services

The Legal Services Staff Section recognizes Jery Payne for his long and valuable service to the Legal Services Staff Section as the editor of *The Legislative Lawyer*. He began writing articles for *The Legislative Lawyer* in 2001. Jery became the managing editor of the publication in 2004, which also includes serving as an officer of the Legal Services Staff Section. He has overseen the transition from a paper to an online publication. Jery chairs the Legal Services Newsletter Committee and serves on the Legal Services Technology Committee.

Jery is known in the Colorado General Assembly for his professional and hardworking manner. He began working as a staff attorney in the Office of Legislative Legal Services in 1999, and now serves as a senior staff attorney. Drafting bills and amendments is his main duty, but he also writes legal opinions, advises members, staffs committees and reviews the rules of executive agencies, among other responsibilities. He also is very involved with several projects to improve his office's procedures, with an eye toward greater efficiency and better customer service. Jery also has written articles for *The Loophole*, a journal published by the Commonwealth Association of Legislative Counsel, and for *Colorado Lawyer*, a journal published by the Colorado Bar Association.
The Legal Services Staff Section recognizes Anne Sappenfield for her professionalism and integrity in serving the Wisconsin Legislature. Anne has worked for the Wisconsin Legislative Council since 1994. She has developed a great deal of expertise in the field of children and family law. In addition, she has worked in the fields of criminal justice, education and insurance. By working with Legislative Council study committees, which involve legislators and citizen members, she has contributed toward the laudable goals of increasing knowledge of legislators on particular topics and educating the public about the workings of the Legislature.

Anne’s support of the legislative process and her help in improving the effectiveness of the Wisconsin Legislature are reflected by how well-respected she is in both parties and both houses of the Legislature. Whether she is working on a controversial issue or a relatively minor one, she exhibits the type of nonpartisan professionalism that is required of those who work for the Legislative Council. Her written work and her involvement at committee meetings contribute greatly to the effectiveness of the Legislature.

Anne’s involvement with the National Conference of State Legislatures has been primarily with the standing committees; she has served as staff vice-chair and staff chair of the Human Services Committee. Anne currently serves as staff chair of the NCSL Standing Committees. She also serves on the Website Review Task Force of the Legal Services Staff Section. Her hard work, dedication and enthusiasm are apparent in everything she does for her Legislature and for NCSL.
Legislative Staff Achievement Awards, 2011

LEGISLATIVE EDUCATION STAFF NETWORK (LESN)

Frances Ramirez-Maestas, Director, New Mexico Legislative Education Study Committee

Frances Ramirez-Maestas is receiving the 2011 Legislative Education Staff Network Recognition Award in honor of her outstanding service to the legislative process through active involvement in the New Mexico Legislative Education Study Committee, the NCSL Education Committee, the Education Commission of the States and LESN.

Frances was hired by the Legislative Education Study Committee (LESC) in August 1997, became deputy director in 2000, and the director in October 2008. Members of her LESC staff note her achievements as:

- Enhancing the national profile of the LESC which, at every opportunity, she identifies as a unique legislative entity, being a permanent bicameral, bipartisan committee focused exclusively on education.
- Accommodating the personal needs of staff members while maintaining, if not enhancing, the quality of work performed.
- Consistently supporting public education by insisting that schools, school districts and the Public Education Department adhere to the requirements of law; by opposing unfair or unwarranted assaults on the law, whether fiscal or programmatic; and by reminding all involved that whatever is done must benefit children first.

Paul Headlee, principal budget and policy analyst for the Idaho Legislative Services Office, who nominated Frances for this award, wrote:

Frances is an active member of the LESN and often provides critical information to its members through the listserv or by simply picking up the phone to help a fellow legislative colleague in a different state receive timely information during a legislative session. In fact, after my first meeting with Frances at an LESN forum in Phoenix, she later provided me with in-depth information about public school employee health insurance benefits that I used to answer questions from education committees in my state. Additionally, she is a past staff chair of the NCSL Education Committee, a past member of the LESN Steering Committee from 2007 through 2009, and worked on the LESN Steering Committee Strategic Plan.

The Legislative Education Staff Network is pleased to recognize Frances Ramirez-Maestas for excellence in service to the state of New Mexico and the Legislative Education Staff Network. LESN is honored to present Frances with the LESN Recognition Award on this the 25th anniversary of LESN.
Nolan Langweil, Health Care Fiscal Analyst, Vermont Legislative Joint Fiscal Office

LHSN is pleased to recognize Nolan Langweil for excellence in service to the Vermont Legislature and to the Legislative Health Staff Network. Nolan is the health care fiscal analyst for the Vermont Legislative Joint Fiscal Office (JFO), where he staffs both the House and Senate on health care reform, Medicaid, and other health care and human services related budget and policy issues. He has worked for JFO since 2007. Previously, he worked for the Connecticut Department of Mental Health and Addictions Services, the Seattle-King County Department of Public Health, and various non-profit organizations.

Nolan is currently serving his third term as staff vice-chair for the NCSL Health Committee and has served on LHSN’s steering committee since its inception. He was instrumental in the formation of the Legislative Health Staff Network, and is a constant driving force in its evolution. He regularly initiates ideas and suggestions to further advance the goals of the Network. Nolan’s enthusiasm and dedication to the values of the Legislative Health Staff Network help make it the successful endeavor that it is. LHSN applauds Nolan!
Miriam A. Fordham, Legislative Committee Analyst, Health and Welfare Committee, Legislative Research Commission, Kentucky

LHSN is pleased to recognize Dr. Miriam Fordham for excellence in service to the Kentucky Legislature and to the Legislative Health Staff Network. Miriam currently serves as a legislative committee analyst with the Health and Welfare Committee at the Legislative Research Commission in Kentucky, where she staffs the Subcommittee on Health Issues and Aging, and the Medicaid Oversight and Advisory Committee, and works on legislative matters pertaining to health, public health and Medicaid policy issues. Previously, she served as a staff economist with the agency.

Miriam has been actively involved in NCSL for many years and currently serves as both the staff chair of the NCSL Health Committee and the chair of the Legislative Health Staff Network's steering committee. She is always eager to share her knowledge by moderating and presenting at LHSN meeting sessions and webinars. Miriam’s positive attitude and deep understanding of the health policy issues with which state legislative staff grapple make her a valuable asset to the Legislative Health Staff Network. LHSN applauds Miriam!
Chuck Truesdell, Assistant Public Information Officer, Kentucky Legislative Research Commission

The Legislative Information and Communications staff Section recognizes Chuck Truesdell for providing LINCS and NCSL with the same level of outstanding service that he shows as a public information officer in the Kentucky Legislature. Chuck has been Assistant Public Information Officer with the Kentucky Legislative Research Commission since 2003. Prior to joining government service, Chuck was a journalist at The Ledger Independent in Maysville, Ky.

An active member of LINCS since 2005, Chuck served as a secretary/editor of the newsletter, The Voice, and as vice chair before becoming the current chair. As chair, Chuck has provided professional development opportunities for LINCS members while boosting participation in the staff section and attendance at the annual professional development seminars. Chuck also serves on NCSL’s Legislative Staff Coordinating Committee.
The Legislative Research Librarians Staff Section honors Roberta “Robbie” LaFleur for her professionalism, competence and integrity in serving the Minnesota Legislature, and for her continuing contributions to the work of NCSL through her commitment to LRL. Director of the Minnesota Legislative Reference Library, Robbie is committed to documenting the Legislature and issues in Minnesota. The Minnesota Legislative Reference Library has developed several important databases covering information on legislators and legislative statistics, and is committed to ongoing and retrospective digital archiving of legislative and state government reports.

Robbie has participated in LRL activities since the early 1990s. She was a member of the LRL Executive Committee from 2001-2004. During her tenure on the LRL Executive Committee, she served on the Professional Development Task Force. As chair-elect, she organized the professional development seminar held in Bismarck, N.D., in 2002. She was the LRL staff section chair in 2002-2003.

In addition to her LRL leadership roles, Robbie has taken an active role in NCSL meetings as a speaker and presenter. She has served as a judge for the LRL Notable Documents Award and was one of the judges for the first LINCS/NALIT Online Democracy Award in 2005. She served on the NCSL Assessment Mission to the Algerian Parliament in January 2006.

In related work, Robbie was awarded the Peter S. Popovich Freedom of Information Award by the Minnesota Chapter of Professional Journalists in 2008 for her long-term promotion of access to state documents and legislative information for the Legislature and citizens. She is a member of the Minnesota Library Association and a board member of the Minnesota Coalition on Government Information. Robbie continues to be an active, responsive and enthusiastic member of LRL, and LRL looks forward to her continuing service to legislative librarianship.
NALFO recognizes John O’Brien, whose leadership and dedication is demonstrated over the course of his 29-year career to the great benefit of the Texas Legislature. As director of the Texas Legislative Budget Board, he oversees the second largest state budget and the largest fiscal staff of all the states. His leadership and management have earned the greatest respect of his colleagues, staff and legislators. He is committed to staff development through his support of the Texas Fiscal Officers Academy. An expert in education finance, John has been instrumental to the Texas Legislature in solving the budget gaps it has faced during the past unprecedented, fiscally turbulent years.
NALFO recognizes Cathy Higgins, whose dedication is demonstrated over the course of her 23-year career in Tennessee state government. Cathy has served the legislature as principal research analyst for the House Finance, Ways and Means Committee, where her impressive work there led to her being hired by the Legislative Budget Office. At the LBO, she is a resource to the General Assembly on Transportation, Labor, Economic Development, Agriculture and other issues. Cathy is one of those unique staffers who provides a bridge between the branches, who can provide the right information at the right level in the legislative environment, and who can build systems that others can readily use. Cathy is indispensable both to the Legislative Budget Office and the Tennessee General Assembly.
Linda Pittsford, Deputy Director and Senate Affairs Liaison, Information Systems Division, Texas Legislative Council

The National Association of Legislative Information Technology recognizes Linda Pittsford for her dedicated service to the Texas Legislature and her outstanding contributions to NALIT and NCSL. Linda is deputy director and Senate affairs liaison in the Information Systems Division at the Texas Legislative Council. She previously led the Computer Support Center, which provides hardware/network control services, help desk support, training and documentation, end-user acceptance testing, and computer consulting services to the Texas Legislature and other legislative agencies. She began her career at the council as a computer trainer.

Linda has been actively involved in NCSL and NALIT. She has served in all the leadership roles within NALIT and has facilitated and spoken at numerous NALIT sessions. She plays a key role in sharing the technical expertise and information technology advances in the Texas Legislature, and is interested in and knowledgeable about legislative information technology trends in other states.

Linda is an active participant in NCSL’s Legislative Staff Coordinating Committee (LSCC). She is a vice chair of the Strengthening Legislative Staff Work Group. She also serves as a vice chair of the Communications, Financial Services and Interstate Commerce Committee. She previously served as chair of LSCC’s Staff Section Officers.

Linda hosted the 2009 NALIT Professional Development Seminar in Austin, giving a great deal of personal time and her heart and soul, to provide NALIT members with a quality professional development opportunity during difficult economic times. Linda’s personal warmth and enthusiasm never wane. We are pleased to recognize Linda Pittsford with the 2011 NALIT Legislative Staff Achievement Award.
NALIT recognizes the Idaho Legislature’s GEMS Development Team, under the direction of Application Development Manager Norma Clark, for its work in developing the Idaho Legislature's Government Electronic Management System (GEMS). In addition to Norma, the team includes Noreen Chen, IT systems analyst/database administrator; Michael Ramshaw, IT programmer analyst; and Kelly Reister, senior IT programmer analyst.

Six years in development, GEMS was designed to provide a single, integrated system that includes bill drafting and tracking, creation of subject and code indexes, daily documents necessary to the operations of the Idaho House and Senate, print publications and Web publishing. By streamlining and integrating the legislative process, the system makes it possible to enter data only once, then to create a multitude of products—from draft bills to final journals—with increased accuracy and efficiency. The GEMS team followed a comprehensive timeline for development and testing and met or exceeded every milestone. Programming was done in-house and costs were kept low. The transition to GEMS during the 2009 legislative session was seamless, and the system was deemed an overwhelming success by legislative leadership and staff. The team developed new committee applications and document templates for the 2011 session. The project team currently is surveying staff users and is developing a list of possible new applications and enhancements.

The GEMS team coordinated this tremendously successful undertaking from start to finish and epitomized the highest level of professional staff standards. The team is dedicated to the premise that stakeholders should be thoroughly involved in every aspect of development. Manager Norma Clark brought a tremendous intellect and natural curiosity to her approach in problem solving that can’t be taught, and always exhibits a sense of humor and an approachable style that make staff and legislators comfortable and confident when working with her. Norma has been a member of NALIT since the 1980s.
The 2011 NLPES Outstanding Achievement Award is presented to Janice Mueller for her contributions and service to the field of legislative program evaluation and to NLPES. Ms. Mueller’s career in nonpartisan legislative service began in November 1976 when she became a legislative fiscal analyst with the Wisconsin Legislative Fiscal Bureau. In 1981, she went to work at the Wisconsin Legislative Audit Bureau where, until 1985, she would oversee evaluations of state agencies and programs as a program evaluation supervisor. After serving as special assistant to the director of the Medical Assistance program, she returned to the Legislative Audit Bureau in 1989 as the executive assistant to the state auditor and participated actively in the fieldwork, drafting and editing of the bureau’s program evaluation work until her appointment as Wisconsin’s first female state auditor in March 1998.

Since becoming state auditor in 1998, Ms. Mueller has supported the bureau’s active involvement in NLPES through the participation of Kate Wade, program evaluation director, and Scott Sager, program evaluation supervisor, as members and chairpersons of the NLPES Executive Committee. In 2007, she volunteered to be the team leader of an NCSL-coordinated peer review of the Hawaii State Auditor’s Office. Under her leadership, the bureau hosted the 2008 NLPES fall training conference.

During her tenure as state auditor, Ms. Mueller worked innovatively to promote the use of nonpartisan, independent, objective audits and evaluations in the legislative policy process. She expanded the use of the bureau’s Web site as a tool for publishing reports and initiated podcast audio summaries to accompany major report releases. As the bureau’s statutory authority was expanded, she also directed creation and implementation of a toll-free Fraud, Waste, and Mismanagement Hotline, which began operation in April 2008.

Ms. Mueller contributed to the advancement of the field of program evaluation through her roles in various national organizations, including the U.S. Comptroller General’s Advisory Committee on Government Auditing Standards and the National State Auditors Association.
Georgia Department of Audits and Accounts, Performance Audit Operations Division

The NLPES Executive Committee is pleased to announce that the Georgia Department of Audits, Performance Audit Operations Division has been chosen to receive the 2011 NLPES Excellence in Evaluation Award. The award judges gave the division high marks in its overall demonstration of the division’s impact, body of work, and many contributions to the field of evaluation for the four-year period 2007-2010.

The division was recognized for the impact of its reports identifying revenue sources and reducing costs, improving management and oversight, and providing valuable information to the Legislature. For example, the division’s reviews of special license plates and user fees resulted in the Legislature passing a law that increased fees that will generate approximately $90 million. The division demonstrated that its body of work has encompassed a broad variety of topics, from drug courts to workers’ compensation. In addition, the division has made significant improvements in its internal processes and worked to establish relationships with decision makers. Recognizing that its reports have many audiences, the division increased the use of summaries, clear narratives, and graphics and charts to make reports more usable. The division has also made significant contributions to the field of evaluation by its continued participation in NLPES, and by promoting the field of legislative evaluation as a career to graduate students.
Ted Blazel's unflappable demeanor and commitment to the Wisconsin Senate was particularly important during the events that began in Madison in February. Ted played a key role in addressing unprecedented challenges in terms of security, maintenance of public access, management of his own staff, and delivery of services. His strong relationships with his staff and with legislators and staff on both sides of the aisle helped the Senate maintain some semblance of normal operations during the height of the challenges it faced. Although some protesters hurled insults upon him, Ted did not let that affect his commitment to ensuring that the Senate’s security needs were always balanced against the public’s right to be heard. He was the Senate’s primary point of contact with the various law enforcement jurisdictions that responded to the events at the Capitol. He excelled at communicating the Senate's needs to law enforcement and seeing that those needs were appropriately met.

Elected Senate Sergeant at Arms in 2003, Ted has served in that capacity for the past eight years. He also has been an active NCSL and NLSSA participant, serving on the NLSSA Executive Board as a First Trustee, and has chaired several staff section committees. He currently chairs the NLSSA Technology Committee.
H. Pepper Sturm, Chief Deputy Research Director, Research Division, Nevada Legislative Counsel Bureau

Pepper Sturm is the chief deputy research director of the Research Division of Nevada's Legislative Counsel Bureau. He has worked for the Nevada Legislature for more than 20 years, beginning as a policy analyst in 1987, and has dedicated his career to public service.

Pepper has been the chair of the Research and Committee Staff Section for the last two years and has served on the RACSS Executive Committee since 2005. He has been a leader in planning the agendas and programs for RACSS fall seminars and annual meetings and frequently serves as a speaker and moderator for RACSS programs. His guidance in directing the staff section through difficult economic times has ensured stability, steadfastness and continuity of leadership for RACSS members.

Pepper's commitment to providing professional development opportunities for RACSS members led to regular sponsorship of webinars during the years the staff section was unable to hold an annual professional development seminar. Under Pepper's leadership, RACSS was the first of the staff sections to use grants from the LSCC to provide online training for legislative staff.

Pepper has been a stalwart in supporting the work of NCSL. In addition to his work with RACSS, Pepper has served as chair of the Legislative Education Staff Network (LESN), and as staff chair of the NCSL Education Committee in 1998. Pepper's work on education issues is nationally recognized, and his willingness to share his expertise earned him a Legislative Staff Achievement Award in 2001 from LESN. Pepper also has shared his expertise with colleagues in other nations, serving as a trainer on international projects to provide assistance to research and policy staff in developing nations.

Pepper's values of generosity, inclusion, professionalism and courtesy have been demonstrated in his work for RACSS, the Legislative Counsel Bureau, and the Nevada Legislature. It is with the deepest affection and appreciation that RACSS honors Pepper Sturm with the 2011 Legislative Staff Achievement Award.