January Newsletter

About YNP

*NCSL’s Young and New Professionals group is a network dedicated to creating connections within and across state legislatures.*

*YNP offers legislators and legislative staffers a group of peers to share ideas with in strengthening state legislatures – as a place to work, gain experience and give back. Join YNP to network with other young professionals, advance your career and develop your leadership capabilities. Have Influence as a YNP Member and join one of NCSL’s Professional Staff Associations or Standing Committees. Staff Association and Committee involvement allows YNPs to represent their legislature, take on new initiatives and work with other professionals across state lines.*

Welcome back!

Most state capitols are bustling with the start of a new legislative session. NCSL’s Young and New Professionals program is here to support young and/or new legislators and legislative staff in the important work they do. Here are some resources to leverage as you tackle the important work of your state legislature:

**Research:** NCSL conducts bipartisan 50-state research on a wide spectrum of policy issues. [Our experts](#) work to answer your questions and give you unbiased, comprehensive information as soon as you need it. **Pro Tip:** Create a free NCSL login to access special resources only available to state legislators and legislative staff.

**Bill Tracking:** Through NCSL, you can find [current legislation](#), with bill status and other bill information, in the 50 states, Washington, D.C., Congress and Puerto Rico (powered by State Net/LexisNexis: [Register](#) for the free upcoming webinar). NCSL staffers also track pending and enacted state legislation through 50-state searchable databases covering a variety of issues.

**NCSL State Liaisons:** Each state has a dedicated NCSL staffer who can help connect you with research or resources related to your policy interest. [Connect with us](#) for help at any time.

**Professional Staff Associations:** There are [nine professional staff associations](#) associated with NCSL, each offering opportunities for professional development and networking with your legislative peers.

**Standing Committees and Task Forces:** The NCSL [Standing Committees](#) meet two times each year and allow legislators and staff to benefit from the experiences of other states in shaping public policy, experimenting with new laws, and managing the legislative institutions.
LegisBriefs: These two-page reports are the most concise and comprehensive discussions of critical policy issues you’ll find anywhere. **NCSL produces four LegisBriefs each month**, complimentary to all state legislators and legislative staff.

Our American States | An NCSL Podcast: **Hear compelling conversations** that tell the story of America’s state legislatures, the people in them, the politics that compel them and the important work of democracy.

YNP Spotlight

Ethan Stiles is the chief of staff to Georgia Senate Majority Leader Mike Dugan. We asked Ethan to share his experience working for the Georgia General Assembly including what to expect in 2020.

**How long have you been with the Georgia General Assembly?**
Collectively, I have worked with the General Assembly for a year and six months. As chief of staff, I have served a little over a year.

**What made you want to work in the Georgia General Assembly?**
I was first exposed to the General Assembly in Spring of 2016. My role in the governor’s office placed me around the state Senate regularly, ultimately pushing my interest with the legislature.

**What advice do you have for a young or new professional just starting their time in a state legislature?**
Identify critical mass to your position, and perfect any and all process around it. I had no template on my debut to my current role, so I had to do a ton of research and dive in to the mechanics and responsibility of our office. Granted, it took a few months, but we were finally able to figure out how our office should successfully exist, and it has made our operations increasingly successful.

**What “hot issues” are you working on this coming session?**
Hot issues in Georgia will include tax infrastructure assessments and healthcare initiatives. Georgia is an interesting place when it comes to state revenues—while we are having a prosperous economy, our revenues have systematically declined. Trying to figure out how to set an equitable tax structure while ensuring no lapse in state services will be at the forefront of this year’s legislative agenda.

Just like many other states, healthcare and access to it have required the intense attention of our legislature. Figuring out access, both proximal and fiscal aspects, will be a top contender in our legislative package.

**What’s one of your favorite places or features in the Georgia State Capitol Building?**
One of my favorite areas in the capitol is the office of the majority leader. Leader Dugan has, undoubtedly, the best office décor and premier office location in the building. He has great views of Liberty Plaza—our primary outdoor event location.

**How do you spend your time outside of your work at in the Georgia Senate?**
I am an avid outdoorsman—I fish, kayak, and shoot sporting clays regularly. I’ve also restored a few vehicles, my favorite being a limited-edition Jeep Grand Wagoneer.
Leverage Your NCSL Policy Expert

Margaret Wile is a policy director in Health and Human Services in NCSL’s DC office where she works on state-federal affairs. Her focus is on federal human services and behavioral health policy and regulations. Margaret helps staff NCSL’s Health and Human Services (HHS) Committee that is comprised of over 300 legislators and legislative staff from across the country who help craft and vote on NCSL’s HHS policy. As part of this role, Margaret and the DC HHS team compile and distribute a monthly HHS Newsletter that tracks any federal policy on HHS topics through the three branches of government. In addition to her federal work, Margaret is the state liaison to Massachusetts, and she is also the co-lead for the YNP network along with her Denver counterpart, Beth Hladick.

Before working in the DC office, Margaret worked in NCSL’s Denver office for three years in the Health Program where she worked on maternal and child health and behavioral health policy. Prior to her work at NCSL, Margaret worked in the Massachusetts Legislature for the Joint Committee on Mental Health, Substance Abuse and Recovery where she served as the committee’s research analyst. It was in the Massachusetts Legislature where Margaret initially connected with NCSL as a staffer.

NCSL can be a big and overwhelming organization to understand (think the three-ring circus of policy wonks!), but YNP can be a great entry point for many people to learn more about NCSL, the services we can provide and connecting you with other legislators and legislative staff around the country.

If you have any policy questions or wish to be added the Health and Human Services Newsletter – Email Margaret!

Save the date! NCSL Legislative Summit

It’s not too early to mark your calendar for the next Legislative Summit, Aug. 10-13, in Indianapolis. Join your colleagues at this annual gathering of state lawmakers and legislative staff to explore innovative policy solutions and gain professional development. Plus, targeted skills sessions and a fun networking reception for to meet your fellow young and new professionals serving across state legislatures.

Questions? Want to be added to the newsletter distribution list? Have feedback or suggestions on what professional development support you need in your legislature? Have a suggestion for a YNP legislator or staffer we should highlight? Email ynp@ncsl.org!