Serving as the chair of the LRL staff section this past year has been an incredible honor and a great pleasure. A heartfelt thank you to everyone who has contributed to the LRL this year, whether by participating on a committee, contributing to Newsline, serving as a regional director, responding to questions on the listserv, or promoting legislative libraries in your state.

The LRL is a true community of professionals, always willing to generously share their time and knowledge with others. This teamwork has been one of the strengths of our community since legislative librarianship developed as a distinct field more than a century ago.

We often talk about how much has changed in our field in recent years, but our core purpose has been surprisingly constant. In 1922 the Dallas Morning News ran a long article by Texas legislative reference librarian Octavia Rogan, titled "Some Experiences in Legislative Reference Work." As Octavia Rogan saw it, "The purpose of legislative reference libraries is to furnish a labor saving device to the legislators," an observation that is more relevant than ever. With so much information readily available online, legislators and legislative staff can do their own research, but a skilled librarian can do the job better and more quickly. We know how to search, how to assess sources, and where to find the answer when it doesn't turn up in the first page of Google results.

Rogan also knew the importance of reaching out to colleagues, writing "Legislative reference librarians keep in close touch with other legislative reference librarians," and celebrating the speed with which a well-placed telegram could bring vital information just when it was needed. The technology has changed, but the principle remains the same.

We will have some excellent opportunities to network and to learn about issues new and old at the Legislative Summit in Boston, Aug. 6 - 9 and at the LRL Professional Development Seminar in Helena, Mont., Sept. 13 - 16.

LRL co-sponsored programming at the Summit includes sessions on expecting the unexpected, developing critical thinking skills, selecting research methods, and dealing with change. We will also be touring the Massachusetts State Library and visiting the JFK presidential library. At the PDS, we'll explore topics such as being a state employee during difficult times and dealing with unexpected challenges. We'll learn about the Montana constitutional convention, and innovative programming from the Montana State Library and Law Library and the Montana Historical Society. I hope you can attend both meetings!

Catherine
LRL Presents: the 2017 Notable Documents Awards Winners

The annual Notable Documents Awards are presented by the Legislative Research Librarians Staff Section.

The award was established in 1998 to recognize excellence in state documents that explore contemporary topics of interest to legislators and staff and present substantive material in an outstanding format.

This year’s winners are as follows:

**Economy**
- **Business Ready Community Program** – Wyoming Legislative Service Office
- **Climate Solutions and Economic Opportunities** – Minnesota Environmental Quality Board
- **History, Public Policy, and the Geography of Poverty: Understanding Challenges Facing Baltimore City and Maryland** – Maryland Department of Legislative Services, Office of Policy Analysis

**Education**
- **Allotment-Specific and System-Level Issues Adversely Affect North Carolina’s Distribution of K-12 Resources** – North Carolina General Assembly, Program Evaluation Division
- **Arizona School District Spending: Fiscal Year 2016** – Arizona Office of the Auditor General
- **Distribution of State Funds for K-12 Public Education** – Idaho Office of Performance Evaluations
- **Recess and Physical Education (K-5)** – Kentucky Legislative Research Commission

**Intergovernmental Relations**
- **State Jurisdiction in Indian Country** – Idaho Office of Performance Evaluations

**Legislatures**
- **Report of the Legislative Salary Council** – Minnesota Legislative Salary Council

**Public Health**
- **Opioids: Preventing and Addressing Prescription Drug Abuse** – Office of Minnesota Attorney General
- **Prescription Drug Costs: Maximizing State Agency Purchasing Power** – New Mexico Legislative Finance Committee

**State Comparison**
- **Hands-Free and Distracted Driving Laws in Other States** – Kansas Legislative Research Department
- **Hands-Free and Distracted Driving Laws in Other States** – Kansas Legislative Research Department

**Notable Document Award Judges:** Elizabeth Lincoln, Minnesota, Chair; Sabah Eltareb, California; Ingrid Hernquist, New Jersey; Molly Riley, Minnesota; and Jenna Steward, Louisiana. June 1, 2017

Contact Elizabeth Lincoln at elincoln@lrl.leg.mn or Megan McClure at megan.mclure@ncsl.org if you have questions.
The annual Legislative Staff Achievement Award was created by the Legislative Staff Coordinating Committee to recognize excellence in supporting the work of a state legislature and strengthening the legislative institution. Each staff section associated with NCSL may name up to two recipients—individuals, teams or legislative offices—for recognition each year. Recipients of the awards are presented with a plaque and are recognized by the NCSL Staff Chair during the legislative staff luncheon at the NCSL Legislative Summit.

The Legislative Research Librarian Staff Section is happy to announce that immediate past LRL chair and co-head librarian at the Connecticut Legislative Library, Jennifer Bernier and director of the Minnesota Legislative Reference Library, Elizabeth Lincoln are the 2017 Legislative Staff Achievement Awards.

Jennifer Bernier has served for many years as librarian with the Legislative Library of the Connecticut General Assembly, rising to co-head librarian. Her many duties include providing research and reference assistance to members of the Connecticut legislative community; tracking appointments and mandated reports; and providing instruction on legislative research and subject research; and training and mentoring new staff. As a leading member of the Connecticut Legislative Library team, she has made an invaluable contribution to the smooth operation of the library and to the legislative process. Bernier has been an active member of the LRL staff section for many years. She served as a regional director from 1993-2001 and again from 2005-2009. She was elected secretary in 2013, and subsequently served as vice-chair, chair, and immediate past chair. Bernier has given her time and talents freely to help promote legislative research libraries, working tirelessly to increase communication among members and to promote professional development opportunities. Her energy and enthusiasm have helped raise the profile of legislative librarians within NCSL and encouraged more active involvement within the LRL.

Elizabeth Lincoln has provided outstanding support to the Minnesota Legislature in the Legislative Reference Library for 24 years in progressively responsible roles. She was hired in 1989, then became senior librarian, head of reference, deputy director (in 2000), and acting director before being named director in 2013. In these roles, she has made information available to legislators, staff members and citizens in a variety of traditional and innovative ways. These include responding to information requests using print and online resources, helping to develop, organize and manage the legislative web site; and creating or contributing to databases of historical legislative information (including member biographical information, Legislative Time Capsules, and mandated reports). In her role as director, she oversees a large and outstanding nonpartisan library staff with expertise in state policy issues, the history of legislation, and the historical activities of the Legislature. Among her strengths is the ability to manage and deliver traditional content in technologically creative ways. She is a humble and much-loved manager. Lincoln also has been a major contributor to the work and spirit of LRL and NCSL as a whole, and is truly someone who signs up for the hard jobs. She was LRL chair in 2009-10 (after her secretary and vice chair stints) during which time she was also active on the Legislative Staff Coordinating Committee. She’s been chair of the demanding Notable Documents Committee since 2013 (having served on the committee since 2005) and is LRL Central Northern Regional director. She was a member of the Elections committee for the By-laws rewrite in 2013. Lincoln has been generous and tireless in service to the staff section. Her contributions includes a number of LRL/NCSL programs over the years, such as co-creating the 2010 “Creating Legislative Member Databases” webinar (now posted on the NCSL site) and presenting on the development of the Minnesota web page. In addition, her library hosted the 2009 LRL Professional Development Seminar and the LRL portion of NCSL’s 2014 Summit. The Legislative Reference Library blogged both conferences with participation and guidance from Elizabeth. These blogs were a great gift to those of us unable to attend the programs in person.
Congratulations to Teresa Wilt, Our New LRL Secretary

Please join us in welcoming the new LRL secretary for 2017-2018, Teresa Wilt from Nev! You may recognize Wilt from the listserv, or as a previous winner of the LRL Legislative Staff Achievement Award in 2015. She has served the Nevada Legislature since 2000 and was appointed as the legislative librarian in 2013.

Besides serving state legislators, staff and the public as a legislative librarian with the Nevada Research library, Wilt has been highly engaged with LRL and NCSL activities for a number of years.

The Executive Committee looks forward to working with Wilt as LRL continues striving to provide our members with appropriate, timely, and innovative programming and products as well as support and comradery among peers.

Welcome, Teresa!
Big Ideas in the Big Sky
Get Ready for the LRL PDS in Helena, Mont.

The 2017 LRL Professional Development Seminar will be hosted in beautiful Helena, Mont. Sept. 13-16! Come to Big Sky country and see the beautiful Capital city. Meet and network with your legislative library peers from across the nation in the beautiful setting of Helena! While in Montana, you can plan your trip to visit Glacier and Yellowstone National Parks and follow the Lewis and Clark Trail.

Sonia Gavin, our Montana librarian has been busy planning an exceptional and engaging agenda with a wide array of speakers and topics. While in Helena, LRL will be touring the Capitol, going on a historical “train” tour of Helena and for a final hurrah on Sunday we will be joining the Gates of the Mountains boat tour up the Missouri River, following the footsteps of adventurers, Louis and Clark!

We hope to see you there! If you have any questions or need help with anything, please contact NCSL liaison to LRL, Megan McClure (303) 856-1355.

Agenda
Information and Registration
Meet Eric Glover, New Librarian at the Idaho Legislative Research Library

Eric Glover joined the Idaho Legislative Research Library in summer 2016 as Legislative Librarian. His duties include oversight of the library, providing research and reference services, cataloging, collection maintenance, and indexing. Before joining the library, Glover served as public services librarian and interim co-director of the law library at Concordia University School of Law in Boise, Idaho. Before that, he served in the legal profession as a judicial law clerk, deputy prosecuting attorney, deputy attorney general, and attorney in private practice. Make sure to say “hi” to Eric at the PDS in Helena!

The Legislative Research Library is part of the Idaho Legislative Services Office, Research and Legislation Division. We are nonpartisan legislative support staff for the Idaho Legislature, and provide research and bill drafting services for Idaho state legislators. The library is also the repository for legislative history records of Idaho laws.

A sample of documents housed in the Legislative Research Library

The “vault” at the Idaho Legislative Reference Library

Front desk and stacks in the Idaho Legislative Reference Library
Attendees at the Legislative Staff Coordinating Committee meeting, held in Santa Fe in April enjoyed interesting and productive discussions focused on ways to reach out and meet the needs of legislative staff. The Staff Section Officers Workgroup discussed plans for professional development seminars and Summit sessions. The Legislative Institutions Subcommittee reviewed updated versions of documents to help legislative staffers better understand the structure and benefits of NCSL.

The subcommittee is also reviewing potential topics for articles and videos highlighting the contributions of legislative staffers to the legislative process. The Professional Development Subcommittee reported on efforts to develop a certificate program for legislative staffers, while the Strategic Planning Workgroup highlighted efforts increase outreach and encourage legislative staff to participate in NCSL. The Information Technology subcommittee is exploring using LinkedIn to promote greater engagement between staff section members, and developed a webinar focusing on best practices for producing webinars.

Did You Know?

The NCSL Executive Committee is composed of 63 members: Seven officers, 30 at-large legislators, four regional legislators from the Council of State Government, six ex officio members, and 16 legislative staff.

The LSCC is made up of the NCSL staff officers, legislative staff serving on the NCSL Executive Committee, the staff officers of the NCSL Standing Committees, two officers of each of the ten staff sections, and four discretionary appointees.

The Our American States podcast is where you 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.

Episodes currently available include:

Federalism: The “Hamilton” State Legislative Mix Tape
Conversations, Business Cards and Handshakes: Preparing to Engage at Summit
Online Sales Tax
Leadership in the Legislature
State Marijuana Policy
State News &
LRL Member News

The LRL Executive Committee is planning a session for the upcoming PDS in Montana. The session, titled, “Expecting the Unexpected” seeks stories and conversation about emergencies, surprise special sessions, security threats, natural disasters etc that called for staff to think on their feet, cope and act proactively in intense and unpredictable situations. Hear from colleagues about how they prepared for, dealt with or found solutions for unexpected situations.

We asked you, if you had any situations that called for you to expect the unexpected.

Atlantic Northern Region
Regional Director: Christine McCluskey, Connecticut

Connecticut–Jennifer Bernier, Carrie Rose, and Christine McCluskey, Connecticut Legislative Library

When a roof leak caused soggy ceiling tiles to fall here in the Connecticut Legislative Library a few years ago, we moved our reference collection out of harm’s way, but were not able to move the copier before it was damaged. And when, after last fall’s election, our 36-member Senate split evenly between Republicans and Democrats for the first time in 125 years, we spent weeks analyzing data from old Senate journals, scrolling through newspapers on microfilm, and compiling historians’ descriptions of what happened in the 1890s to both respond to and anticipate questions about legislative procedure in this unusual scenario.

Central Northern Region
Regional Director, Elizabeth Lincoln,

Minnesota–Elizabeth Lincoln, Legislative Research Library

In 2017, the Minnesota Legislative Reference Library received an appropriation to digitize 28,000 tapes of legislative committee hearings and floor debates. The Minnesota Historical Society can no longer accommodate the 18,000 tapes currently housed there and began making plans several years ago to return the tapes to the Legislative Reference Library. The 2017 appropriation allows the digitization of all existing legislative hearing and floor debate tapes. Digitization of these audiotapes will make the primary records of the Legislature accessible to anyone at any time and preserves these recordings into the future.

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Montana—Jennie Stapp, Montana State Library

Jennie Stapp, the Montana State Librarian, reports that the Montana State Library is facing a substantial budget cut of $990,000. The reduction reflects 16 percent of the total budget and will result in the loss of 12 positions. The library will merge the Talking Book Library with the Digital Library and will close a reading room in order to focus on the more heavily used digital resources.

Wyoming-Matt Swift, State Law Library

Matt Swift, Wyoming State law librarian, reports that the library opened the Wyoming Supreme Court Judicial Learning Center in January 2017. The new Learning Center contains interactive and static exhibits that teach children and adults about the law. Center exhibits include Judge for a Day, an interactive map that explains the court systems in Wyoming, You Be the Judge, judicial milestones, and an opportunity for visitors to decide how they would rule in a case if they were the judge. A corresponding website jlc.wyo.gov allows statewide access to the Learning Center materials.

Central Southern Region

Regional Director: Molly Otto, Colorado

Colorado—Molly Otto, Joint Legislative Library, The Colorado Joint Legislative Library

Since the Colorado Joint Legislative Library is located in the Colorado State Capitol building, Colorado State Patrol (CSP) deputies are assigned to secure the building and its tenants and monitor activities around the Capitol.

As our first line of defense, CSP deputies staff two secured public entries to the building, where people are screened before entrance. Each staff member has a silent alarm button at their desk, to summon CSP if needed. CSP texts building tenants when there are possible "disruptive" events occurring near the Capitol, and CSP also conducts evacuation drills for Capitol tenants several times a year.

Oklahoma-Christine Chen, Oklahoma Department of Libraries

Expecting the unexpected. Well, we are facing less money to spend (budget cut again) and fewer workers (employee retiring) in the new fiscal year. I guess our goal will be do what we can to meet the demand and promote more online resources instead of PR in person.

Current event, ongoing event. The Oklahoma Capitol building is under renovation and might be finished in 5-6 years.

Call for State News questions: Have a question or series of questions you are curious to know about your colleagues and their institutions? If so, please email Megan McClure with your State News question suggestions.

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Training new staff can present a myriad of challenges and logistical issues. How do you train someone when you already have your plate full with your daily duties? How do you train staff in the middle of a session? Or on a shoestring or non-existent budget? Below is a list of NCSL resources to help you train new and old staff without overstretching your time, ability and budget!

**Webinars:**

- NCSL Bill Information Service - for legislators and legislative staff only (this webinar is held on a monthly basis as an introduction to the NCSL Bill Information Service)
- Working Smarter Not Harder
- What I Wish I Knew When I Came to the Legislature
- Top Challenges and Best Advice for working in the Legislative Environment
- Moving On Up! Advancement, Promotion and Lateral Movement
- Ten Ways to a Great Webinar
- Legislative Staff Training Programs: A Look at Diverse Approaches Across the Nation
- The Keys to an Effective, Engaging Presentation

**Podcasts:**

- Federalism: The “Hamilton” State Legislative Mix-Tape
- Brain Science for Legislators and Legislative Staff
- State of State Legislatures: 2017

**Blogs:**

- What’s in a Recipe for a Bill?
- Great Managers Aren’t Born
- Going Whole Hog in the Colorful World of Legislative Vernacular
- Colorado LegiSource: A Great Way to Reach and Teach Legislators
- NCSL’s Staff Training and Professional Development Website

**Other Resources:**

- Learning the Game: How the Legislative Process Works

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Anne Rottman, Library Administrator from Missouri told us of a resource LRL members may be interested in:

It is the [State Agency Database Project](http://example.com) that contains links to public databases created by the state governments of all 50 states and DC on various topics.

Thanks for sharing, Anne!
NCSL Publications

Note: Legislators and legislative staff are entitled to a free copy of all NCSL publications. You will need your NCSL password to download the documents from NCSL. If you don’t have a password, you can create one on NCSL’s website.

LegisBriefs

July 2017

- Relaxing School Sunscreen Restrictions | Vol. 25, No. 28
- Tackling Solar Energy’s ‘Soft Costs’ | Vol. 25, No. 27
- Sexual Harassment Policies and Training in State Legislatures | Vol. 25, No. 26
- Closing the Opportunity Gap in Early Childhood Education | Vol. 25, No. 25

June 2017

- Ranked Choice Voting | Vol. 25, No. 24
- Limiting Bill Introductions | Vol. 25, No. 23
- Late State Budgets | Vol. 25, No. 22
- Tackling Rural Hospital Closures | Vol. 25, No. 21

May 2017

- Protecting Pipelines from Excavation Damage | Vol. 25, No. 20
- Improving Access to Care with School-Based Health Centers | Vol. 25, No. 19
- 10 Tips for Using a Task Force to Modernize Elections | Vol. 25, No. 18
- Federal and State Efforts to Promote Manufacturing | Vol. 25, No. 17

News from LRL’s Liaison

Hello LRL,

I just wanted to let you all know that the LRL Portal on the NCSL website is updated regularly at least two or three times a month, with any news I think you all may find interesting. Webinars and training opportunities, NCSL documents and reports, research and news along with notices for awards, and the LRL newsletter are all things that have recently been up on the portal. I encourage you to think of the LRL portal as a way to keep up with what’s going on with LRL and your peers as well as happenings at NCSL that you might find useful.

Another great resource is the Legislative Staff Services portal. I also keep this page updated with information, training opportunities, newsletters from other staff sections, and other NCSL research documents and news.

Also, I am working on collecting staff profiles for NCSL’s State Legislatures Magazine. We are seeking to highlight legislative staff. Do you have some work or a project you’ve been working on that you are proud of or that your library peers would find interesting? Do you have a colleague who you think is just great and want to recognize? Do you have a great legislative story you want to tell? Let me know! NCSL wants to get the word out!

- Megan McClure