

LRL Newsline | Fall/Winter 2018

12/5/2018

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Newsline is the newsletter of the Legislative Research Librarians Professional Staff Association.

Chair's Corner



Welcome to the Fall/Winter 2018 issue of Newsline!

By Betsy Haugen, LRL Chair 2018-2019

I am excited and honored to be the 2018/19 LRL chair. I have been a librarian with the Minnesota Legislative Reference Library for nearly 17 years, the past four years as Reference Services Manager. Minnesota LRL has a proud history of staff participation on the LRL executive committee—both Robbie LaFleur (past director) and Elizabeth Lincoln (current director) have served as past LRL chairs. I am also fortunate to have had several great mentors, including Jennifer Bernier (Connecticut) and Julia Covington (North Carolina).

The 2018 Joint LRL/RELACS Professional Development Seminar in Harrisburg, Pa. in early October was a wonderful start to my year as chair. Twenty-one librarians and researchers attended enriching sessions at the beautiful Pennsylvania Capitol. This Newsline includes many write-ups on the PDS and the 2018 Legislative Summit. We hope those who were unable to attend these recent meetings will find our recaps helpful—and maybe inspire you to attend in the future. Learning comes from not just the sessions we attend, but from the side conversations held with colleagues. Both conferences offered two LRL Dutch treat dinners and two tours. Picking up on new ideas from colleagues at these casual gatherings are just as valuable as formal events.

I truly appreciate the opportunities NCSL's professional meetings give me to work and socialize with knowledgeable staff from around the country. I'm visiting states I've never been to, strengthening relationships with my librarian colleagues and furthering the goals of an organization dedicated to empowering legislative staff. I highly recommend the leadership experience afforded by serving on the LRL executive committee and encourage anyone interested in learning more to please contact me.

I'm looking forward to an exciting year with LRL filled with great programming.

- Betsy

Mark Your Calendars

The [2019 NCSL Legislative Summit](#) will be held Aug. 5-8, 2019, in the welcoming city of Nashville, Tenn. Those of you who know long-time LRLer Eddie Weeks know he will be a great host. Nashville boasts an extremely walkable downtown with great food and music options on every block. Please consider joining us next summer.

For those who like to plan ahead, the 2019 LRL PDS will be hosted by the award-winning Maine [Law and Legislative Reference Library](#). Senior law librarian Jessica Lundgren and her team in Augusta are already working hard on potential sessions and speakers. The dates will be Sept. 22-26, 2019.

A Super PDS is in the works for 2020 in Atlanta, with six staff professional development associations committed to participating. Join colleagues from RELACS, NALFO, LINCS, NLPES, LSS and, of course, LRL. The last time NCSL put together a Super PDS was in 2000 in Madison, Wis. We'll let you know more details as planning continues over the next year.

Recognize Your Colleagues



NCSL is collecting "shout-outs" to legislative staff that will be posted on NCSL's website during the upcoming December Legislative Staff Week. Please tell us about a great legislative staffer you know!

MY NAME & STATE: _____

I'M GIVING A SHOUTOUT TO (NAME) _____

FROM (STATE) _____ BECAUSE: _____

Thank You and Welcome!

We would like to thank the following LRLers: Julia Covington (North Carolina), outgoing LRL chair; Sonia Gavin (Montana), NCSL Executive Committee; Robin Boatright Stalder (Louisiana), outgoing Gulf Coast regional director; and Eric Glover (Idaho), outgoing West Coast regional director. We really appreciate your service to LRL!

LRL 2018-2019 Regional Directors:

- Atlantic Northern | Director: Christine McCluskey, Connecticut
- Atlantic Central | Director: Annette Haldeman, Maryland
- Gulf Coast | Director: Bethany Reisch, Louisiana (NEW)
- Great Lakes | Director: Debbie Tavenner, Ohio
- Central Northern | Director: Elizabeth Lincoln, Minnesota
- Central Southern | Director: Amanda Keys Norman, Texas
- West Coast | Director: Lindsay Pealer, California (NEW)

Legislative Staff Achievement Awards

By Jennifer Bernier (Connecticut)

On behalf of the LRL Staff Achievement Nominating Committee (many thanks to Sabah Eltareb (CA) and Eric Glover (ID) for their help), it is my honor to announce the [2018 recipients](#):

Juan Carlos Ortega Cruz, Director, Legislative Library of Puerto Rico (posthumous)

It is with bittersweet enthusiasm that LRL awards Juan Carlos Ortega Cruz, posthumously, the Legislative Research Librarians' 2018 Legislative Staff Achievement Award. Juan Carlos became active representing the Puerto Rico legislative library in NCSL about 2006 and was a valued and memorable part of LRL until his untimely death in the fall of 2017. Always friendly and smiling, Juan Carlos was the perfect ambassador for Puerto Rico. He loved attending LRL meetings and getting to know the members from all over the United States. He was very responsive to questions posed on the LRL listserv. He was wide open and generous, inviting us to visit his homeland that he loved. Juan Carlos had the



true service ethic of a librarian and took helping people very seriously. This was evident not only in his regular presence on the LRL listserv, but also in conversations in which he would share stories from his own library back home. He had worked for the Library of Congress for a time and was justifiably proud to have served our national library. Juan Carlos embodied the spirit of librarianship and hometown pride, and his loss to LRL will be felt for some time by all of us accustomed to his cheery presence on the listserv and at meetings. Juan Carlos would have been so proud to have been honored by his friends and colleagues in LRL with the Legislative Staff Achievement Award.

Maine State Law and Legislative Reference Library



The Maine State Law and Legislative Reference Library has created the [Law and Legislative Digital Library](#) (LLDL) and other digitization projects that have expanded and streamlined access to huge volumes of the library's most requested information. These accomplishments demonstrate the library's commitment to excellent service and its values of teamwork, resourcefulness and creativity. Library staff follows well-documented, efficient processes and every staff member contributes.

The Maine State Law and Legislative Reference Library has 12 staff members representing 159 years of service to the Maine Legislature that have made numerous contributions to professional library associations including the Law Librarians of New England, the American

Association of Law Libraries, the Maine Library Association, the Maine State Bar Association and the Law Librarians of New England. It has agreed to host the 2019 NCSL LRL professional development seminar and has sent participants to the seminar in 2015 and 2017. The library's reference staff meets annually with visiting NCSL representatives and contributes to the LRL listserv.

Note from Betsy: At the Legislative Summit in August, NCSL honored staff from all the staff sections, including a rotating slide show with staff photos during the **Salute to Staff Luncheon**. To see all legislative staff recognized for Excellence in Service to Legislatures, please visit the [Legislative Staff Awards 2018 web page](#).

LRL at the 2018 Legislative Summit | Los Angeles (July 30-Aug. 2)



Ten librarians were able to attend the 2018 Summit: Julia Covington, LRL Chair (North Carolina), Ingrid Hernquist (New Jersey), Sonia Gavin (Montana), Betsy Haugen (Minnesota), Teresa Wilt (Nevada), Lindsay Pealer (California), Erin Brown (California), Sabah Eltareb (California), Elizabeth C. Taylor (South Carolina), Lena Lee (South Carolina) and our intrepid NCSL liaison, Megan McClure, and her daughter, Claire.

The LRL professional association held two casual Dutch-treat dinners. Tuesday night, the group ate at Blue Cow Kitchen and Bar in the artsy, northern end of downtown and Thursday night, after the Huntington tour, we had wonderful Thai food at Saladang Garden in Pasadena. The conference closing event at Paramount Studios was a lot of fun—we ate well and got autographs from faux Hollywood celebrities! Thank you to our hosts in sunny Los Angeles.

What's Your Blind Spot?

By Sabah Eltareb (California)

Kicking off the NCSL Legislative Summit, LRL co-sponsored the Professional Development Preconference, Supercharge Your Talent Legislators and Legislative Staff, that featured three sessions: What's Your Blind Spot?; The Balanced Life: Your Most Productive Self at the Legislature; and How to Conquer Your Fear of Failure and Minimize Your Risk.

I was intrigued by the title and description of the first session—after all, for anyone on a quest for self-improvement, who wouldn't want to learn more about our blind spots and how they impact decisions we make, conversations we carry and our behavior towards others? Even better? The presenter, Paul Meshanko, was to share tips for how we could learn to spot our hidden preferences and find strategies to overcome these blind spots when working with colleagues.

A lovely breakfast was served, and I was initially surprised that the handout on the table was titled "Blindsided: Understanding and Managing Unconscious Bias." Yet, as Paul's presentation unfolded, the pieces started falling into place as he delved into the psychology and science of bias, defining bias in a way that de-stigmatized the term, highlighting the differences between conscious and unconscious bias, and offering strategies for recognizing and minimizing those blind spots we all have.

Hearing that bias is inescapable because it feels "natural" to the brain felt a little strange. As an informational professional trained to be as even-handed and objective as possible when working on a request, admitting to a bias seemed guaranteed to get me kicked out of the club. Until I broadened out my understanding, I hadn't realized that having biases allows us to interact with the world, seeing and responding to things we encounter frequently enough in certain ways, and leaving our brains free to concentrate on those that we don't. It's our brain's way of conserving energy. Pretty clever, right?

Paul provided a quick reference guide to 19 bias types, along with a description of each. And while being biased is perfectly normal and a coping mechanism for the brain to handle what would otherwise be an overwhelming amount of stimuli, Paul stressed the need to be mindful and recommended six steps to manage our biases:

1. Pause and be mindful; recognize when decisions are being made on "auto-pilot."
2. Create as many alternatives as possible.
3. Make it safe for people to share different perspectives and dissenting opinions.
4. Identify decisions that may be overly influenced by emotion.
5. Attempt to "create space" to minimize the impact of decisions.
6. Be prepared to change course if new information suggests that a different path will lead to better results.

It still feels funny to think about bias in a totally new way. I appreciate the opportunity to do so and to be more mindful in managing my own.

LRL Tour of Loyola Law School Campus and the William R. Rains Library

By Betsy Haugen (Minnesota)



Tuesday afternoon, our group (including Niamh Corbett, a librarian from Perth, Australia!) visited nearby Loyola Law School and the [William M. Rains Library](#). The library is one of the largest private law libraries in the western United States, with a physical collection of more than half a million volumes and 30 staff members. Library director Dan Martin, along with librarians Amber Madole and Alejandra Hernandez Perez, led us around the award-winning Frank Gehry-designed campus.

As we toured several unique buildings, we were able to see many pieces of the school's large art collection. Notable artwork included paintings by Walter Gabrielson, Arthur Beaumont (official U.S. Navy artist), Lita Albuquerque, Karla Klarin and many others.

Centrally located in the Peter M. Tiersma Special Collections room is the desk of Joseph Scott, a prominent British-born attorney and community leader in Los Angeles in the early 1900s. His service to the community was so varied and important that he earned the nickname "Mr. Los Angeles." Dan said he considers the desk a work of art because it is so

emblematic of the law.

Robert L. Shapiro, a lawyer famous for serving on the legal team that successfully defended O.J. Simpson in 1995, received his J.D. from Loyola Law School in 1968. Following the Simpson trial, he donated more than 50 boxes of transcripts, videos, magazines articles and other case-related items to Loyola. Several commentators on the trial have donated materials as well, resulting in a huge collection centered around the historic case.



The Loyola Law School campus and library had it all—unique architecture, great art, a welcoming and knowledgeable staff and even an awesome resident cat!

Salute to Legislative Staff Luncheon: Play-by-Play Leadership Lessons with Amy Trask

By Erin A. Brown, librarian (California)

I attended my first NCSL Legislative Summit this summer. There were many highlights, but one session, Salute to Legislative Staff Luncheon: Play-by-Play Leadership Lessons with Amy Trask, really stood out.

Trask, former CEO of the Los Angeles Raiders and current chairwoman of The Big3, was a powerhouse; a no-nonsense, confident woman who reminded us to embrace the words “to thine own self be true” when dealing with our work environments—a phrase I actually put to use in my personal life, as well. Being true to oneself means not compromising your beliefs, ethics or integrity to suit someone else’s needs or ego.

One of Trask’s outtakes was “stop thinking about the fact that you’re a woman,” which stood out to me and is something that (luckily) has never been an issue for me in my current workplace. Her point though, was to keep plugging away, putting in the work and using facts and evidence to make your case. That way, no one can take your work ethic and integrity from you even if you’re told no.

I left the session in awe of Trask and her dealings with Al Davis (of all people!) because, really, I am a 49ers fan and we just don’t do Raider Nation! Seriously, though, my awe of her was due to how she was able to overcome obstacles to reach the height of her profession while remaining humble. She spoke of making mistakes but not being hampered or deterred by them. I believe many of us can get caught up and even become paralyzed by our fear of making mistakes or being wrong. Trask’s point—and something I try to remember—is that those errors afford us the opportunity to learn and grow.

Being Nonpartisan: The Art of Navigating a Political Landscape

By Teresa Wilt (Nevada)

Description: Legislative staff often are required to work with legislators from all political parties. Discuss ways to navigate political waters and remain impartial during this roundtable.

Moderator: Othni Lathram, Alabama Legislative Services Agency

This was not a presentation, but more of a guided discussion. Some of the points and suggestions made by the audience, who were a mix of staff and legislators, included:

- The tone has to be set by leadership.
- Take a data-driven approach.
- Use this approach: Advocates say X. Critics say Y.
- Focus on process.

From a legislator: Develop personal relationship with staff, and ask staff their opinions and for them to be devil's advocates.

When you get a very targeted question, answer a bigger question than was asked; give context.

Watch for "gotcha lines" or "gotcha graphics" which can be used out of context and cause issues.

When hiring new staff, be very specific in interviews about what is expected; have a strong "inoculation" at beginning.

From a former litigator: We have to represent the interests of our client to the best of our ability, whether the legislature or a legislator; advise them of unintended consequences.

Trust/honor the process and the rules of the legislature.

Recommended reading from a legislator: "The Righteous Mind: Why Good People Are Divided by Politics and Religion" by Jonathan Haidt

Ethics in the Legislature: How to Avoid the Danger Spots and the Tools for Avoiding Them

By Ingrid Hernquist (New Jersey)

The workshop at the Legislative Staff Breakfast on July 31, 2018 was entitled "Ethics in the Legislature: How to Avoid the Danger Spots and the Tools for Avoiding Them." It was presented by Marianne M. Jennings, professor, W.P. Carey School of Business, Arizona State University, and was co-hosted by LRL.

Jennings first presented the "scary slides" which were composed of a list of unethical politicians including Congress members, governors and state legislators from 2001-2018. She then offered a list of what people can learn from these politicians, stating that nothing that was done was a close call and all were clear ethical lapses. Further, those involved, as well as others, were aware of their ethical lapses in each incident.

Jennings pointed out "danger spots" and how to recognize them so as not sink yourself. First, she recommended to be attuned to your own ethics. It is easy for one white lie to turn into many day-to-day white lies. Neurologists have found it is easier to continue to lie once you start with the first lie. Second, avoid "the hook." When you know a powerful person is doing something unethical but don't report it, that person has you "hooked" and you are now part of the problem.

She then presented tools for avoiding "the hook," including:

- Talk to the person about the risk of his or her actions and present a risk analysis. Don't underestimate the probability of the truth coming out and know that when it does come out there is a dissipation of trust.
- Keep pressure in check and consider what pressure can do to reasoning, objectivity and ethics.
- Consider the concept of "credo v. chalk line." Credo defines who you are. You can demonstrate to people that you know how to follow through and be ethical. Don't fall into the either-or conundrum.
- Spend other people's money as if it is your own.
- Watch out for jumbled interest conflicts.
- Stay away from Facebook at work and be careful with emails.
- If you see something, say something. Don't get trapped by the "bystander effect."
- Keep it simple. Think simply and act simply. If you were on the other side of the situation, would you want somebody to do the unethical act to you?

LRL Presents: 2018 Notable Documents Awards Winners

By Ingrid Hernquist (New Jersey)

The annual Notable Documents Awards were presented by the LRL Staff Section to recipients at the LRL Business Meeting and Award Ceremony in Los Angeles during the 2018 Legislative Summit. This year, judges received 80

documents from 21 states. Many outstanding documents were submitted, and it was difficult for the judges to choose the winners, but 13 awards in seven different categories were selected.

The Notable Documents Award ceremony was well-attended, and the award recipients were truly pleased to be recognized for their excellent work. This year's winners:

Education

- [Meeting Current Standards for School Nurses Statewide May Cost Up to \\$79 Million Annually](#), North Carolina Assembly Performance Evaluation Division
- [Overview of Achievement Gaps in Kentucky Schools](#), Kentucky Legislative Research Commission Office of Education Accountability
- [The State of Education for Latino Students in Ohio](#), Ohio Latino Affairs Commission

Intergovernmental Relations

- [Tribal Nations in Montana: A Handbook for Legislators](#), Montana Legislative Services Division and Margery Hunter Brown Indian Law Clinic

Legislator's Guide

- [California's Tax System: A Visual Guide](#), California Legislative Analyst's Office
- [Evaluating How to Cut Minnesota's Business Taxes: A Primer](#), Minnesota House Research Department
- [Senate Day Calendar 2018](#), Alaska Senate Secretary's Office

Public Health

- [The Opioid Epidemic: Nebraska's Response to a National Crisis](#), Nebraska Legislative Research Office
- [Opioid Use Disorder – Access to Medication-Assisted Treatment](#), Georgia Department of Audits and Accounts, Performance Audit Division

Seniors Policy

- [Residential Care](#), Idaho Office of Performance Evaluations

Transportation

- [Minnesota Tolling Study Report: Modern Tolling Practices and Policy Considerations](#), Minnesota Department of Transportation

Youth Policy

- [Collection of Evidence-based Practices for Children and Adolescents with Mental Health Treatment Needs, Sixth Edition \(Senate Document No. 6., 2017\)](#), Virginia Commission on Youth
- [Unaccompanied Homeless Youth Performance Measures and Population Estimates](#), Washington Joint Legislative Audit and Review Committee





*Notable Document Award Judges: Elizabeth Lincoln, Minnesota, chair; Eric Glover, Idaho; Ingrid Hernquist, New Jersey; Elaine Settergren, Minnesota; and Jenna Steward, Louisiana.
June 26, 2018*

Huntington Library Tour



By Julia Covington, North Carolina Legislative Library

On the last afternoon of the Legislative Summit, the Legislative Research Librarians traveled to Pasadena for a real delight: a behind-the-scenes tour of the Huntington Library.

The Huntington is considered one of the largest and finest research libraries in the nation, with more than 9 million items. The collection includes rare books, manuscripts, maps, photographs important for the study of British and American history, literature, art and the history of science, medicine and technology.

Munger Research Center

Anne Blecksmith, head of Reader Services at the Huntington, led us through the Munger Research Center. We began with a look at the first of the library's two reading rooms—the Ahmanson—where registered, qualified scholars, known as readers, come from around the world every year to use the space's rare materials.

One of the most heavily used archives at the Huntington is the papers of science fiction writer Octavia E. Butler. Butler, a native of Pasadena who died in 2006, bequeathed her papers to the library. Another heavily used archive is the Jack London collection, which, with more than 60,000 items, it is the world's largest collection of the writer's works.

Next, we toured the Rothenberg reading room, which is also open to Huntington readers and houses the library's reference collection and current periodicals.

Our tour ended in the library work room, where we got to meet some of the other staff members and saw examples of fascinating items pulled by Blecksmith. Highlights included historical Los Angeles county court records, many on the topic of water rights, and papers of African-American civil rights attorney and journalist Loren Miller. Finally, we viewed examples of papers from California immigration attorney You Chung Hong, who assisted many Chinese Americans who were barred from returning to the United States during the "Chinese Exclusion" period.

A small portion of the Huntington collection is on view in the Library Exhibition Hall. More than 1,000 of the library's manuscript collections are included in the Huntington's online catalog and are searchable in OCLC's WorldCat. Detailed descriptive records of nearly 200 of these are posted on the Online Archive of California (OAC), and more than 3,000 images from the medieval collections are available in the Digital Scriptorium.

Following our tour, the group dispersed and spent the remainder of the time visiting the library exhibition hall, art collections and gardens.

Library Exhibition Hall

The library exhibition hall showcases many of the Huntington's unparalleled materials, such as early editions of Shakespeare's works including a first folio, the Ellesmere manuscript of Chaucer's "Canterbury Tales," the Gutenberg Bible in vellum, and the 50-inch tall "double-elephant folio" edition of Audubon's "The Birds of America."

Art Collections

The Huntington art collections encompass both European and American art and are displayed in two galleries: the Huntington Art Gallery and the Virginia Steele Scott Galleries of American Art. We were treated to many famous works, from Thomas Gainsborough's "The Blue Boy" and Thomas Lawrence's "Pinkie" to American classics by Mary Cassatt, Edward Hopper, Andy Warhol and Frank Stella.

Botanical Gardens

The Huntington botanical gardens were the last highlight of the afternoon. We wandered around the exquisite gardens covering 120 acres that feature more than a dozen specially landscaped areas such as the Japanese Garden, Desert Garden and Chinese Garden. Our last stop was the Conservatory, a 16,000 square-foot greenhouse that comprises three habitats: a tropical rain forest, a cloud forest and a carnivorous plant bog. There were many stunning orchids, unusual palm trees and a pond featuring giant Amazon water lilies. The Huntington Conservatory is also home to an Amorphophallus titanum or "corpse flower," a rare blooming, unusual plant, nicknamed Lil' Stinky for its strong (some would say repulsive) odor.



Our afternoon at the Huntington was wonderful! The library tour was informative and interesting and everyone appreciated the opportunity to visit the art galleries and the gardens. If you ever have the opportunity to visit Pasadena, the Huntington is a must-see experience.

2018 LRL Professional Development Seminar | Harrisburg, PA (Oct. 4-6)



Twenty-five legislative research librarians from across the nation joined with colleagues from the Research, Editorial, Legal and Committee Staff professional association (RELACS) for a packed professional development seminar in Harrisburg, Penn.

The majority of sessions occurred in the beautiful Pennsylvania Capitol with plenaries held in the House Chamber. Sessions covered everything from primary source and archival research, ethics and civility, the LRL 5 Minutes of Fame and tours of the Pennsylvania State Museum and the Pennsylvania State Library. Many thanks for our gracious hosts in Harrisburg, Melissa Hershey and her staff in the Senate Caucus Services office and Evelyn Andrews, George Soule and Donna Wheeler in the Senate Library.





Read below for short descriptions of sessions and tours.

Ethics and Civility

By Betsy Haugen (Minnesota)

Mark Quiner, director of the [NCSL Center for Ethics in Government](#), opened the Joint LRL/RELACS PDS with a thought-provoking discussion relevant to all of us working in the legislative environment. The session was designed to help us explore our ethical values and how to use those values to help us guide our decisions and actions in the workplace and beyond.

We watched a beautiful video from Mutual of Omaha called “[An Unlikely Friendship](#)” that told the story of two very different individuals: Bob Vander Plaats, president and CEO of The Family Leader, an American social conservative political organization in Iowa, and former One Iowa Director Donna Red Wing, a prominent national voice of LGBTQ activism. Despite often advocating for very different positions, they learn to respect each other. Donna says: “We can disagree without being disagreeable.” The video very effectively conveyed the benefits of civility.

If you want to learn more about the session, please visit the free [NCSL events app](#) to find Mark’s detailed slides with helpful links.

Panning for Primary Source Gold: Historical Methods in Legislative Research

By Teresa Wilt (Nevada)

Our speakers, Jillian Slaight and Staci Duros of Wisconsin’s Legislative Reference Bureau, each hold a Ph.D. in history. They shared how they have been able to use the skills developed from their academic backgrounds in their work with the legislature, focusing on two case studies: 1) researching post-Civil War era veterans’ services in an attempt to bring legislative history to life, and 2) investigating the background of a mural in the Wisconsin State Capitol to illustrate how to develop the history of a physical object. They suggested using archival sources in our research to provide richer details, help us tell a more interesting story and better engage our audience.

Jillian spoke about her study of post-Civil War era veterans’ services and related legislation. She used veterans’ letters to the Wisconsin Adjutant General’s Office to illuminate the reality of their experience attempting to get state assistance with federal pensions after the Civil War. Jillian recommended the following:

- Record your observations.
- Analyze your sources’ structure and language.
- Follow your nose.

Staci discussed her work researching a mural in the Supreme Court’s section of the Wisconsin State Capitol. By studying “The Appeal of the Legionary to Caesar Augustus” through historical texts and letters from the architects, the Capitol Commission of Wisconsin and judges, she was able to provide considerable context to the painting.

Staci's conclusions:

- Atypical physical materials make great starting points for historical research.
- Sometimes, the archives do not have definitive answers to your questions.
- The narrative itself, though, is engaging and represents a new facet of Wisconsin history that has not been explored.

Archival Alchemy: Transforming Original Research into Engaging Narratives

By Eric Glover, Idaho Legislative Research Library

Jillian Slight and Staci Duros, legislative analysts at Wisconsin Legislative Reference Bureau gave an excellent presentation on writing and editing techniques. Expanding upon an earlier presentation on historical research, this presentation focused on incorporating primary and secondary sources in your writing, revision and peer-editing. Below are some of their writing and editing tips to keep in mind:

1. Writing: Paint a visual picture to bring the reader into the experience. Instead of quoting secondary sources, paraphrase to use your own voice. And balance primary and secondary sources so as to not mentally exhaust the reader.
2. Revision: Take some time between writing and revision; read your draft out loud and out of order; decipher the main point of each paragraph in a succinct statement or phrase; and list those main points in the form of an outline to review.
3. Peer-editing: When someone edits your work, encourage them to identify three strong points as well as three areas of improvement, since people are often reluctant to criticize.

You can access the PowerPoint slides of the presentation in PDF format at [NCSL's website](#)

Senate Library Tour and De-Escalation Session



Participants in this session were first treated to a tour of the Pennsylvania Senate Library by the library's staff, where they saw a brand-new exhibit on the history of the Senate and the Senate Library. The exhibit cases include information about early Pennsylvania Senate speakers, documentation of the Senate's early activities by the printed legislative record, and several of the past librarians of the Senate who serve as gatekeepers to the Senate's institutional and legislative past. We also heard from Senate Library staff about the nature of their work and the types of questions they answer there.

We then moved into the adjoining Senate Caucus Room for the presentation "De-Escalation Techniques to Consider When Dealing with Potentially Violent People in the Workplace" given by Dan Billings, director of security and chief sergeant-at-arms for the Senate of Pennsylvania. Dan shared many great tips for front-line staff who deal with the public and took questions from participants. He also provided a number of suggestions for further reading, including "The Gift of Fear," "The Micro Expressions Book for Business" and "Give 'Em the Pickle."

—Mary Paynton Schaff, Legislative Services Liaison, Washington State Library



Pennsylvania State Museum Tour



The second day of our LRL PDS began with a tour of the Pennsylvania State Museum. After an exciting ride up the museum's freight elevator (the only conveyance that could accommodate our large group), the tour guide took us through the museum's "Anthropology and Archeology" section. This gallery hosted various exhibits and displays that explored Pennsylvania's early Native American cultures and included a recreation of the archeological site where many of the museum's artifacts were recovered.

We also took a quick walk through the "Life Through Time" gallery, which included both preserved specimens of a mastodon and several species of dinosaurs, as well as full-scale dioramas of pre-historic plants and animal life. Our visit ended with some free time to explore the museum's other galleries on our own, before we had to be on our way to the next exciting tour of the day.

—Jenna Steward, Massachusetts, MLIS

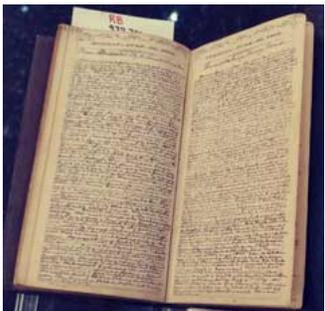
Pennsylvania State Library Tour



By Donna Wheeler, Pennsylvania Senate Library

Our excursion to the Pennsylvania State Library began with introductions of librarian Kathy Hale, the supervisor for Public Services and Government Documents, and Iren Snively, the librarian for Rare Books. The library's selection of rare books is kept in the basement where they are secure and the environment is carefully controlled. We were required to wipe our feet and leave our belongings in lockers. This section includes the Assembly Collection, Pennsylvania Imprints, Miscellaneous Rarities dating back to the 1400s and the Pamphlet Collection. We also saw numerous first-edition graphic novels that were donated to the library.

Next, we visited the newly renovated law library and the seven-level main library. In order to see everything in the library, we would have to walk 25 miles throughout all the aisles!





The Perks of Being a Wallflower: Navigating parties as a Nonpartisan

By Beth Coale, Maryland Department of Legislative Services Library

Moderator: Holly Vaughn Wagner, Delaware

Panelists: Vincent C. DeLiberato, Jr., Pennsylvania; Jennifer Fletcher, Alaska; and Deborah Gottschalk, Delaware

The 2018 PDS wrapped up with a very insightful session for both RELACS and LRL attendees that discussed the difficulties of maintaining a sense of nonpartisanship while working in what can be, at times, very partisan environments.



In our professional positions, many of us are faced with uncomfortable situations when we are expected to complete tasks related to legislation that goes against core personal beliefs. Some of us lead relatively nonpartisan personal lives, or have successfully developed coping strategies, and therefore do not often struggle with the stress created by internal moral conflicts at work.

The nature of this session allowed for some wonderful exchange of personal experiences and ideas. Some key points presented by both panelists and audience members worth mentioning include:

- To maintain our credibility as legislative employees, we must work and conduct ourselves with neutrality and confidentiality—it is our job.
- Be respectful of others to gain respect for yourself.
- Objective statements are much more effective and productive than argumentative statements.
- You cannot be afraid to advocate for yourself if your rights as an employee are in jeopardy. Be clear when doing so, so that the issue is about being treated fairly as a professional in the workplace, not about making any sort of political statement.
- Hiring practices should stress the nonpartisan nature of the work.
- Never allow a politician to convince you to provide partisan work on his/her behalf.

LSCC Update

LSCC Update from Betsy Haugen (Minnesota)

Legislative Staff Coordinating Committee (LSCC) Fall Meeting Report

LRL officers serve as members of the [LSCC](#) to represent the interests of legislative staff in the governance of NCSL. Most staff sections designate their chair and vice-chair as the official representatives to the LSCC. Each year, four additional staff are appointed as members-at-large to the LSCC. The LSCC meets four times a year.

LRL Chair Betsy Haugen (Minnesota) attended the fall NCSL Executive Committee/LSCC meeting held Sept. 7-8 in Portland, Maine. Below is an update on what was discussed.

Full LSCC Meeting

NCSL is amending the LSCC bylaws to reflect a name change for the nine staff sections. They will now be referred to as "Professional Staff Associations."

A Super PDS to take place in 2020 in Atlanta has officially been set. All professional staff associations are asked to prepare a list of what their group deems as essential for their participation, as well as general expectations for the PDS. LSCC members are asked to have these lists ready for the January LSCC meeting in New Orleans.

Legislative Institution Subcommittee

Greg Fugate, chair, discussed the two most important tasks for the subcommittee for this year: updating the [NCSL Model Code of Conduct for Legislative Staff](#) and the [Guide for Writing a State Legislative Personnel Manual](#). These documents are dated, so working on updates ensures they will remain relevant and useful resources for all legislative staff. Greg joked: "Trying to revise both documents may be ambitious, but no one said that serving on LSCC is for the weak!"

The subcommittee's ultimate goal is to have revised documents ready for the June meeting, with roll out of the new documents at the Legislative Summit in Nashville. Any staff who would like to contribute thoughts and ideas on gaps, opportunities for content updates, etc. on either document, should please send their ideas to any subcommittee member.

The subcommittee will also work with NCSL to determine appropriate features of "Legislative Staff Week" and further establish schedule and topics for "What Staff Know" and "Tools of the Trade" articles for State Legislatures magazine.

NCSL Staff Chair Quarterly Update

By [John Heining](#), NCSL staff chair

Executive Director

Long-time NCSL Executive Director Bill Pound informed the Executive Committee in September that he intends to retire no later than August 2019. The NCSL officers, of which I am one of seven, have retained an executive search firm, Kittleman & Associates, to assist the Executive Committee in finding the next executive director. Kittleman will help develop a job description, identify qualified applicants, and narrow the applicants down to a handful of semi-final candidates. The semi-finalists will be interviewed separately by a panel of legislative staff (selected by me), a panel of legislators (selected by the NCSL president and president-elect) and the NCSL officers.

If everything works out the way we hope, a final candidate will be presented to the Executive Committee for approval before the 2019 Legislative Summit. Please know that my intention is to ensure that the new executive director will have

a deep appreciation for staff's role in state legislatures and NCSL.

Strategic Plan

It is difficult to know what kind of executive director an organization needs without knowing where the organization is going, and NCSL has not substantially updated its strategic plan in several years. Because of this, developing NCSL's strategic plan will be an integral part of the executive director search. The same firm assisting with the executive director search will also be assisting NCSL do a strategic plan over the next several months. Discovery for this effort will involve focus groups at the [NCSL Capitol Forum](#), individual telephone interviews, exercises at the Winter 2019 Executive Committee/LSCC meeting and conference calls. Again, we hope a final product will be presented to the Executive Committee for approval before the 2019 Summit.

New Leadership

If you haven't yet, please do congratulate [Martha Wigton from Georgia](#). She is this year's staff vice chair, and her accomplishments next year will undoubtedly eclipse my own. In addition, as always, we have a great LSCC and Executive Committee this year.

Staff Chair Goals:

Here are [my goals](#) for LSCC this year. Among the highlights:

- A new emphasis on outreach and recruitment.
- The development of a senior staff leadership training.
- Re-bidding the co-sponsor contract for the Legislative Staff Management Institute (LSMI).
- Developing a product to assist state legislatures when they engage in federal litigation.
- Updating several documents, including the Model Code of Conduct and NCSL's Guide to Writing a Personnel Manual.
- Initial planning for the 2020 Professional Development Seminar, where six of the nine professional staff associations are participating.
- Laying the groundwork to implement a pilot legislative staff certificate program.

State News and Member News



California

- News from the [CA Research Bureau](#) (aka CRB—part of the CA State Library):

The CA State Library has been digitizing California Governor Executive Orders—back to the year of statehood—1850. These documents are currently available in the biographical information we have on CA's governors in our [Governor's Gallery](#). The Library plans to create a separate searchable database for these Orders—along with other gubernatorial documents. One of our CRB librarians, John Cornelison, will be involved in creating the data dictionary for this project.

- The CA State Library is testing out extended public desk hours—remaining open until 5pm (vs 4pm)—at our Information Services Desk. Several of our CRB staff—librarians and researchers—are helping to staff the desk as part of a rotational pool.

- One of our librarians, Chris Berger, will be retiring in December after 30 years of service with the CA State Library! In addition to working in CRB, Chris has worked in the Information Services section and the [Library Development Services Bureau](#). He also worked on the Library Automation Office Retrocon Project. We are really going to miss him—but wish him the best on the next, new chapter of his life!

Lastly, CA Leg Counsel – new unit in our agency called the Workplace Conduct Unit. We are getting a whole new library collection set up for them. We just acquired a new subscription to Law360. We also had a brand new Library Intranet page go live this summer. Erin and I are pretty proud of it. I'm presenting at the California Library Association annual meeting next week on legislation passed in CA that has caused the release of thousands of prisoners in the state, and how public libraries can help facilitate their transition back into society.

Connecticut

From Jennifer Bernier, Carrie Rose and Christine McCluskey at the Connecticut Legislative Library:

The Legislative Library has a new website that features a libguide for each legislative committee. We plan to soon add libguides on more specific topics. We are also wrapping up the first complete reorganization of the library's physical space since it was built 30 years ago. If you are in Connecticut, please stop by and visit!

Louisiana

Poynter Library:

Tutorial videos: We have created a series of short tutorial videos that instruct visitors on various search aspects for both our library and our legislature's websites. Tutorials thus far include:

- [Using the Library's Databases](#)
- [Finding a Bill on the Legislature's Site](#)
- [Bill Page's Content and Information](#)

This is an ongoing series, and we are always brainstorming topics for more tutorials that would better enrich our users' access and understanding of the information the library and the legislature offer.

Cases Database: We've finished developing and have entered a first set of records in our new court cases database. The database is intended to bring together and identify for access various court case files that have been kept by librarians for one reason or another over the years. Most of the cases involve the legislature, or parts of the legislature. The database will allow access to scanned pleadings, research, correspondence, and administrative files for the cases (where available) that aren't otherwise accessible through a legal database to which we subscribe. Access will be limited to staff and depending on the nature of each document.

—Frances Thomas

Maine

From Elaine Apostola, deputy director of the Maine State Law and Legislative Reference Library:

The Maine State Law and Legislative Library welcomed two new employees recently. Andrew Roache joined us as an associate law librarian and Christine Davis is a new library assistant. Also, we are pleased to announce that the library is a 2018 recipient of the National Conference of State Legislatures' Legislative Staff Achievement Award for digitization of millions of pages of Maine legislative documents. We all look forward to seeing you next Fall in Portland, Maine for the NCSL LRL annual meeting.

Minnesota

From Elizabeth Lincoln

Minnesota Legislative Reference Library staff are excited to announce a new [searchable database](#) of 29,000 legislative audio files covering 1991-2003!

Until recently, tracking down the history of legislation often involved a trip to the [Legislative Reference Library](#) (LRL) or the [Minnesota Historical Society](#) (MHS)--or both! Before the Legislature began recording meetings digitally in 2004, all audio was recorded on cassette and reel-to-reel tapes. Interest in researching these primary materials has not waned--legislative staff, state agency staff, attorneys, and private citizens continue to use these rich primary research materials. But, the tapes were inconvenient to use and they took up enormous amounts of space at LRL and MHS.

A 2017 [appropriation](#) allowed the Legislative Reference Library to undertake the digitization of 29,000 audio tapes. This [digitization project and resulting database](#) enhances the [existing collection of digital hearings and floor sessions](#), making these valuable primary records of the Legislature accessible to anyone at any time and preserving them into the future. Researchers are now able to listen to all committee hearings and floor sessions back to 1991.

Missouri

[Rachel Alexander](#) is the new legislative librarian for the state of Missouri. Rachel received her bachelor of science in biology and political science before pursuing her master's in information science and library technologies. She has previously worked in the University of Missouri's Health Sciences Library as a graduate assistant. In the past two months, the Missouri Legislative Library has updated its website, created a Facebook page to stay engaged with library users and developed a strategic plan for the next year that addresses best practices for updating the library.

Nevada

Jan Wolfley retired in February after 27 years with the Research Library. While we miss Jan, we are happy for her and also excited to welcome Ali Jobe, who joined us in May, returning to Nevada after a year at the Soldotna Public Library in Alaska.

Oklahoma

We hired a new government documents librarian this August and are seeking another law librarian right now. Our library director will retire early next year, and the library board is currently looking for new candidate. Also, we just held our first book festival on Oct. 20, <https://okbookfest.org/>
—Christine Chen, administrative librarian, Oklahoma

Tennessee

I've been doing outreach to new and existing staff (and trying to raise the library's profile) through a series of "Lunch and Learn with a Librarian" talks for legislative staff. The first one was in May 2018 on "The History of Legislative Staffing in Tennessee" and corresponded with NCSL's Legislative Staff Week.

After the success of that event, our AV department began recording the talks and placing them on [YouTube](#).

The talks have gone well; the last one, on Oct. 16, was titled "The Spooky Stories and Unexplained Mysteries of the Tennessee State Capitol."

—Eddie Weeks

Resources for Staff Training

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 nonexistent budget? Below is a list of NCSL resources to help you train new and old staff without over stretching your time, ability and budget!



Archived Webinars

Using Data Visualization to Improve Messaging: To draw attention to work that incorporates issues and convinces others to be proactive, a message must be clearly and accurately articulated. The webinar will provide a brief synopsis on how people see and understand information from data displays. It will provide fundamentals on how to present good data visualizations and discuss the importance of using the appropriate colors and charts to engage the audience.

- **Writing Memorable Analysis:** Legislative staff write to convey facts without adding bias. Advertisers use writing tactics that captivate the reader and push a product or an idea. But are there techniques used in advertising that will help legislative staff make their writing more engaging? Learn how to enhance the impact of your writing by examining it through the lens of an advertisement. Reshape some of the key techniques advertisers use to help you to reach your audience without adding bias.
- **Sexual Harassment Prevention:** Legislatures across the country are taking a renewed look at their anti-sexual harassment policies and procedures. Hear from two legal experts on the best way to approach this difficult topic.
- **The American Court System:** Between the two court systems (federal and state), the levels of courts within each system (trial and appellate), and the odd terminology (*amicus curiae* brief) it is difficult to understand how the American court system works. This session will cover the basics of how a case proceeds through the courts.
- **Be the Change: Culture, Leadership and Self Reflection:** Working in the legislature can be intense with long hours, looming deadlines and competing priorities. Patrick Sullivan, director of Montana's State Professional Development Center, is an expert on how to prevent this hectic environment from leading to a siloed team. Whether you are a new or veteran staffer, join us for this webinar to learn more about the context of the inward mindset as it applies to workplace culture and how you can have an impact on the effectiveness of your team.
- **Public Service in Difficult Times:** The public sector, legislatures included, has faced intense criticism and scarce resources for many years now. There are techniques available to public employees to not only cope with these challenges but to thrive. This webinar explores various ways in which legislative staff can expand their capacity and practice self-care in challenging times. The key is to transform our mindset from one that is in "survival mode" to one that seeks ways to be helpful and solution oriented.
- **Speaking with Authority:** This professional development webinar, co-hosted by NCSL's Young and New Professionals (YNP) group and Women's Legislative Network, aims to help participants learn to increase self-awareness and personal brand when communicating daily. Whether you are a legislator headed into session or a legislative staffer gearing up for January, we all need to be concise, clear and credible. Ditch those phrases and words that undermine your authority, replace them with words that have impact making you the expert.
- **Keys to Effective and Engaging Presentations:** Presenting complex information to colleagues and policymakers in a concise manner is a challenge—whether you have an hour or 10 minutes. Learn from communications coach Marianna Swallow the steps to delivering an effective presentation and speaking like a pro. She shares the keys to designing an effective presentation, tips to revise and sharpen your talk, and strategies to make your delivery compelling.

Upcoming 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)

Podcasts

- **Mindfulness: Legislative Staff Elixir:** Working in state legislatures is a very demanding job. State legislative serve in an institution where workload changes can come often and swiftly. The shifting nature of legislation and the mixture of public opinion, rules, procedures and process make session work stressful. But for the estimated 30,000-plus legislative staff that work in legislatures during session, most will tell you the work is rewarding.
- **State Capitol Symbols, Traditions and Styles:** Every state capitol is unique—but with some interesting similarities. We'll dive into traditions, symbols and decorative features you can find in these impressive structures across our country. Our two guests have extensive experience and will share their knowledge with us on this episode of "Our American States."
- **Tackling Sexual Harassment in the Legislature:** Sexual harassment, spurred primarily the #metoo movement, has been front to the forefront of every sector—including government. In this episode, we talk with three experts to get a sense of what types of changes are happening in state legislatures and to find out what types of best practices they should consider.
- **The Best Jobs of My Life: Legislative Staff Reflect:** About 31,000 people work for state legislatures, serving in a variety of jobs. The National Conference of State Legislatures is celebrating Legislative Staff Week. So we decided to take this opportunity on "Our American States" to interview three legislative staffers and find out more about what it's like to work for a legislature in today's political environment. They tell us about their jobs, how they got there and why it's the best job they've ever had.
- **Federalism: The "Hamilton" State Legislative Mix Tape:** Robin Vos, a Republican and the speaker of the House of Representatives in Wisconsin, and Dan Blue, a Democratic Senator from North Carolina, share their viewpoints on the state of federalism today, nearly 230 years after "The Federalist Papers" were published.
- **Brain Science for Legislators and Staff:** Working in the legislative arena is not always easy. There are long hours, long stretches of sitting at a desk, a need to multitask and often a lack of sleep. Stacy Householder of the National Conference of State Legislatures shares six brain rules designed to help legislators and legislative staff be more effective. Her recommendations are based on research and its relevance for those working in legislative chambers.
- **Conversations, Business Cards and Handshakes: Preparing to Engage at Summit:** With 5,000-6,000 legislators, legislative staff and those interested in public policy expected to descend on Boston for the 2017 Legislative Summit, our guest today recommends being prepared to being engaged.

Magazine Articles

- **Reorient Your To-Do List to Unlock Your Productivity Potential:** The start of a new legislative session offers the chance for a fresh start. To do things differently this time around, to create new (ideally good!) habits and routines. To make better use of time with the hope of feeling slightly less depleted at the end of the session.
- **Yes, No, Maybe So:** Monthly feature on ethics questions pertaining to state legislatures
- **The State of Federalism Today:** NCSL Executive Director Bill Pound offers a historical perspective on federalism

Blogs

- **The Oxford Comma: Grammar, Lawmakers, and (or Lawmakers and Courts):** Why such a fuss about the Oxford Comma?
- **Debating: Legislatures at a Galnce:** Everything you need or want to know about legislatures.
- **Listen Up! Learn the Skills of Good Listenening:** By focusing only on what you're saying, chances are good that you're not hearing.
- **Who's Rules are They Anyway?** Legislatures may turn to several sources when making parliamentary interpretations—for example, their state constitutions, chamber rules and statutes. These documents do not always

cover every parliamentary nuance that a chamber may face, however.

- **Sexual Harrassment Policies and Interns:** Legislatures around the country are grappling with the issue of sexual harassment – but how are interns protected by state policy? Several internship administrators were asked what guidelines and resources are available to student interns.
- **To Speak or Not to Speak? That is the Question:** Billy Fallon, a professor in the School of Communication at San Diego State University, was quick to answer this question at a session of NCSL's Young and New Professionals (YNP) group at the Capitol Forum. "There's no question: the answer is to speak."
- **Functional Federalism:** Our American federalism creatively unites states with unique cultural, political, and social diversity into a strong nation. The 10th Amendment is the cornerstone of constitutional federalism and reserves broad powers to the states and to the people. Federalism protects liberty, enhances accountability and fosters innovation with less risk to the nation.

Other Resources

- **Tips for Making Effective PowerPoint Presentations:** Slideshows are quick to produce, easy to update and effective to inject visual interest into the presentation. However, slideshows can also spell disaster even for experienced presenters. The key to success is to make certain your slideshow is a visual aid and not a visual distraction.

NCSL Publications

LegisBriefs

November 2018

- [The Big Data Revolution](#) | Vol . 26, No. 44
- [States Look to Drug Donations to Improve Access to Medication](#) | Vol. 26, No. 43
- [Preparing for Alzheimer's in America's "Age Wave"](#) | Vol. 26, No. 42
- [Tobacco Prevention and Cessation](#) | Vol. 26, No. 41

October 2018

- [License Suspension for Student Loan Defaulters](#) | Vol. 26, No. 40
- [Addressing Children's Mental Health](#) | Vol. 26, No. 39
- [Improving Early Learning: State Legislative Actions in 2018](#) | Vol. 26, No. 38
- [Quality Afterschool Programs Maximize Positive Outcomes](#) | Vol. 26, No. 37

September 2018

- [Growing Interest in Urban Agriculture](#) | Vol. 26, No. 36
- [More States Taking Action on Short-Term Rentals](#) | Vol. 26, No. 35
- [Putting the Brakes on Idling Vehicles](#) | Vol. 26, No. 34
- [Women's Legislative Caucuses](#) | Vol. 26, No. 33

August 2018

- [State Safe Bicycle Passing Laws](#) | Vol. 26, No. 32
- [Home Visiting: Improving Children's and Families' Well-Being](#) | Vol. 26, No. 31
- [A Look at Competency-based Education in K-12 Schools](#) | Vol. 26, No. 30
- [State Remedies for Costly Prescription Drugs](#) | Vol. 26, No. 29

July 2018

- [Electric Vehicle Incentives and Fees | Vol. 26, No. 28](#)
- [Securing Voter Registration Systems | Vol. 26, No. 27](#)
- [2020 Census: Everyone Should Be Counted, But How | Vol. 26, No. 26](#)
- [Improving Occupational Licensing with Sunrise and Sunset Reviews | Vol. 26, No. 25](#)

NCSL Member Toolbox

Members Resources

- [Get Involved With NCSL](#)
- [Jobs Clearinghouse](#)
- [Legislative Careers](#)
- [NCSL Staff Directories](#)
- [Staff Directories](#)
- [StateConnect Directory](#)

- [Terms and Conditions](#)

Policy & Research Resources

- [Bill Information Service](#)
- [Legislative Websites](#)
- [NCSL Bookstore](#)
- [State Legislatures Magazine](#)

Accessibility Support

- [Tel: 1-800-659-2656 or 711](#)
- [Accessibility Support](#)
- [Accessibility Policy](#)

Meeting Resources

- [Calendar](#)
- [Online Registration](#)

Press Room

- [Media Contact](#)
- [NCSL in the News](#)
- [Press Releases](#)

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