Chair's Corner

Welcome to the Summer 2021 issue of Newsline!

By Eric Glover (Idaho), LRL Chair 2020-2021

As I sit down to write my final article as chair, I must look at how far we have come over the past year and a half. We have had to contend with the COVID-19 pandemic, which affected the way we lived and worked. We also saw the impacts of the pandemic on our state legislatures and our libraries. Despite all of that, we have learned to adapt to these changes, and I strongly feel that we stand in a better place today as librarians.

The annual LRL business meeting was held virtually on Monday, Aug. 2. Our meeting included networking activities, updates on future LRL and NCSL meetings, and an opportunity to recognize and honor the recipients of the LRL Staff Achievement Award and Notable Document Awards.

NCSL Base Camp 2021 will take place Tuesday through Thursday, Aug. 3-5. This premier online learning event for legislators and legislative staff will feature around 30 sessions on topics ranging from knowledge management to a behind-the-scenes look at the role and challenges of a legislative parliamentarian. I hope you will be able to take advantage of this excellent opportunity to learn from policy experts, legislators and legislative staff.

I would like to welcome Jessica Lundgren (Maine) and Lindsay Pealer (California) as new members of the LRL executive committee. Jessica was selected by the committee and ratified by the LRL membership to fill the vacant secretary position back in March and will move to the vice chair position following the LRL Business Meeting. Lindsay has served as an LRL regional director for the past three years and will begin her term following the business meeting.

In closing, I want you to know how honored I have been to serve as your 2020-21 chair. As I move into the role of past chair, I want to thank our current past chair, Teresa Wilt (Nevada), for her dedication and service to LRL. I look forward to supporting our new chair, Ingrid Hernquist (New Jersey), as well as the entire executive committee.

--Eric

Mark Your Calendars

NCSL Legislative Summit
- Reconnect, innovate and prepare by joining your state legislative colleagues from across the nation at the 2021 Legislative Summit, Nov. 3-5, in Tampa, Fla. LRL is working to arrange a library/archive tour and Dutch treat dinner for members who attend.

Webinar: Oct. 13, 2021: Redesigning Written Reports for Interactive Viewing

2022 Staff Hub ATL
- Coming in the fall of 2022: Staff Hub ATL brings together legislative staff from six staff associations (LRL, LINCS, LSPA, NLPES, NALFO and RELACS) for learning, networking and innovative idea sharing. Keep an eye out for more details.

LRL Business Meeting

Along with opportunities to network with your legislative library peers from across the nation, attendees at the LRL Business Meeting on Monday, Aug. 2 recognized this year’s LRL Legislative Staff Achievement Award winner, Betsy Haugen and the recipients of the 2021 Notable Document Awards. We thanked current chair Eric Glover for his service during such an atypical year, said a farewell to LRL immediate past chair Teresa Wilt as she moves off the executive committee, and offered hearty welcomes to incoming LRL chair Ingrid Hernquist and vice-chair Jessica Lundgren and new secretary Lindsay.
Pealer. Plus, updates on future LRL and NCSL meetings. One of the networking prompts was to tell folks about what you've been reading, watching and listening to. We took those suggestions and built a list for other LRL members to find suggestions for entertainment from their peers! Here's the document.

Congratulations to the 2021 LRL Legislative Staff Achievement Award Recipient

LRL is thrilled to announce that Betsy Haugen of the Minnesota Legislative Reference Library has been chosen to receive the LRL Legislative Staff Achievement Award for 2021!

Betsy's unwavering commitment to the Minnesota Legislature, Minnesota Legislative Reference Library, NCSL and the Legislate Librarian Staff Association is widely known and recognized among her peers. She has spent over 20 years with the Legislative Reference Library, where her strength as a leader and her commitment to a collegial atmosphere are evidenced in the growth of the staff she supervises and the cultivation of strong relationships with other legislative offices. Betsy has been instrumental in the continued development of the Minnesota Agencies Database, which has grown from 500 to nearly 1,200 records.

During her many years with LRL, including service on the executive committee from 2016 to 2019 and with the NCSL Legislative Staff Coordinating Committee, Betsy has developed and participates in sessions for Professional Development Seminars, the NCSL Legislative Summit and so much more. She's well respected by those who participate in NCSL staff associations and known for her leadership and mentorship mindset. Her patience, warmth, energy and leadership have touched many across the nation.

Winners of the 2021 Notable Document Awards:

By Elizabeth Lincoln, chair, Notable Document Awards Selection Committee

LRL is thrilled to announce the winners of the 2021 Notable Document Awards! My fellow judges—Ingrid Hernquist (New Jersey), Jenna Steward (Louisiana), and Molly Riley (Minnesota)—and I had two favorites this year. We Definitely Struggle . . . The Worry is Always There. Improving the Health of People Living in Deep Poverty is a compelling look at research on how poverty impacts health including recommendations toward moving Minnesotans out of deep poverty. Another interesting report, Louisiana Women’s Incarceration Task Force: Final Report and Recommendations, examines the glaring differences between women and men's incarceration experiences in Louisiana and includes a series of comprehensive policy suggestions. Eleven documents were chosen in six categories from 44 total entries submitted by 16 states.

The 2021 NDA recipients are:

- **Communications**
  - Delivery of Broadband Services in Unserved and Underserved Areas of the Commonwealth — Pennsylvania Joint State Government Commission

- **Corrections**
  - Louisiana Women's Incarceration Task Force: Final Report and Recommendations — Louisiana Women's Incarceration Task Force

- **Environmental Protection**
  - 2020 New Jersey Scientific Report on Climate Change — New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection
  - Pollinator Health — Wisconsin Legislative Council

- **Labor and Employment**
  - Report of the Workgroup on Harassment, Sexual Assault and Misogyny in New Jersey Politics — Workgroup on Harassment, Sexual Assault and Misogyny in New Jersey Politics
  - Challenges With Telework During the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency: Executive Branch Agencies — Louisiana Legislative Auditor

- **Public Health**
  - Food Insecurity: A Legislative Research Office FAQ — Nebraska Legislative Research Office
  - We Definitely Struggle ... The Worry Is Always There. Improving the Health of People Living in Deep Poverty — Minnesota Department of Human Services

- **Public Safety**
  - Municipal Police In-Service Training: Funding and Cooperation Across the Commonwealth — Massachusetts Office of the State Auditor

Notable Document Award judges: Elizabeth Lincoln, Minnesota, chair; Ingrid Hernquist, New Jersey; Molly Riley, Minnesota; and Jenna Steward, Louisiana. June 21, 2021.

Welcome Jessica Lundgren

While she's been on the job as LRL Secretary for the last few months, LRL would like to officially welcome Jessica Lundgren to the executive committee:

Jessica Lundgren is senior law librarian with the Maine Law and Legislative Reference Library and graciously stepped up to finish out the remainder of the secretary position left vacant by the departure of Travis Moore from the Nebraska Legislature. As of the LRL Business Meeting on August 2nd, she is now LRL vice-chair. She has extensive experience with the staff association having planned and hosted the 2019 LRL PDS in Portland/Augusta. And we're so excited to have her on the LRL leadership team!

Welcome Lindsay Pealer

LRL welcomes our new secretary Lindsay Pealer of California!

Lindsay is currently the Supervising Librarian at the Office of Legislative Counsel in Sacramento, California, where she has been at her current position since December of 2014. Lindsay loves assisting the deputy attorneys at the OLC, who provide a wide variety of legal support services to the state legislature and Governor. She has a multitude of library experience; working as a professional librarian since 2008, when she graduated with her MLIS from Kent State University. Previously she was the Senior Librarian for the California Department of Corrections, and prior to that was the Reserves Manager for The New School in New York City. In her free time she enjoys reading, travel, hiking, yoga, and attending live music. Lindsay has served as the West Coast Director for LRL since 2018, participated in multiple LRL/NCSL activities including the Summit in Los Angeles and the LRL PDS in Maine along with multiple virtual information and networking calls.

Eddie's New Book!

International librarian of mystery, Tennessee legislative librarian and former LRL Chair Eddie Weeks has published a new book!

A History of Tennessee Statutory Law: Compilations, Codifications, and Complications

From Eddie: This book was a labor of love. I have worked with the Tennessee Code Annotated for over 25 years and have always greatly enjoyed trips through its history, finding when statutes were first added and finding when language was changed. What always surprised me the most, though, was finding history lines for sections of the code dating back as far as 1715, more than 80 years before the state of Tennessee existed, more than 60 years before the United States existed. Where did these laws come from, and how did they become a part of the current Tennessee Code Annotated?

During the COVID-19 lockdown, I put serious effort into creating this book, outlining what I knew and what I could find online. Upon returning to the Legislative Library, I was able to use its resources to flesh out this book, learning a great deal along the way and spending many sleepless nights writing what I had learned. The result is exactly what the title says, "A History of Tennessee Statutory Law," from the earliest compilations of those laws, through the three official codifications of those laws, and some of the complications that happened along the way.

And no other book on the history of Tennessee statutory law includes the phrases "His Excellency the Palatine," "Law Sheep" and "The Shadow of Nazi Domination," all in the table of contents.

Congratulations Eddie!

Finding Connection: Celebrating a Bicentennial in 2020

By Kate McBrien, Maine state archivist; submitted by John Melendez-Barden, director, Law and Legislative Reference Library

In 2020, the state of Maine recognized its bicentennial of statehood with a variety of programs and initiatives. The Maine State Archives (MSA) and the Maine Law and Legislative Reference Library (LLRL) contributed to the bicentennial by highlighting collection items important to Maine's founding and development. MSA holdings include many of the state's founding documents and those of early statehood. Highlighting the collection are the first journals of the Maine State Legislature, from 1820 to 1845. Previously unpublished, these journals document the legislative process and debates of early statehood. To make the journals more easily accessible, MSA and LLRL staff committed ourselves to digitizing and jointly transcribing and sharing these important records.

Just as commemoration of the 200th anniversary started, the COVID-19 pandemic put the state into lockdown. In fact, March 15, 2020, celebrated in Maine as Statehood Day, was the day the governor announced the first stay-at-home orders.

With in-person bicentennial events indefinitely postponed, the MSA and LLRL shifted our focus to projects that would make items accessible online. The journal digitization project met that need perfectly. With the additional step of transcribing the journals, we also made them searchable and accessible to people who use screen readers. But providing access alone, though a big step, was not enough.

Researchers also needed to be able to find the journals and to understand their context. MSA staff not only posted the journals in our digital repository, but also put our catalog online, making it accessible to the public for the first time. MSA also resumed adding catalog records to the University of Maine System union catalog, allowing all the holdings to be more discoverable.

The legislative journals serve as a rich resource for the events and issues they document. Maine's statehood in 1820 and status as a free state was contingent on allowing Missouri into the Union as a slave state, known as the Missouri Compromise. The journals document how the new state dealt with these circumstances and how the state's official position toward slavery developed until the Civil War. The project allowed MSA to provide access to the journals during a time when much of the nation grappled with the many difficult questions around the history of slavery. Access to the contents of the journals allowed for our materials to add information and context.
The journals also continue to add to the ongoing discussions of Maine’s relationship with the Indigenous peoples who live within the place now called Maine. Early legislative journals are the official document of that relationship’s development and the decisions that were made, many of which have ripples that are still felt today. Providing wide-ranging access to the journals online allowed all people affected by these past decisions to have access to the official record. The journals had only been available previously by coming to the MSA in person or having access to the microfilm copies available in a handful of libraries in the state.

The pivot to online access through the COVID-19 pandemic impacted everyone in the archives field. MSA worked with the LLRL to bring the bicentennial celebrations online, and to try to meet the moment surrounding protests in the summer of 2020. The MSA uses the archives’ collection to add background and context to larger conversations, as well as provide access to people wherever they were. Our legislative journal digitization project greatly changed how the public interacts with the archives and its collection now and into the future.

Library Question

We asked our members the following questions:

1. Did your legislature/chamber/office allow teleworking before March 2020?
2. Was telework offered or mandated once shutdowns began in March 2020?
3. Will telework policies be implemented and/or amended once COVID restrictions have been completely lifted in your state (will telework continue to be offered or disallowed)?
4. Can you provide a sample of your policies if you have them and are able to share?

Click here to read all of the responses

LRL Member News

California Research Bureau
The California Research Bureau is moving materials, equipment and supplies out of its Capitol branch library in July in preparation for the Capitol’s renovation project.

California Office of Legislative Counsel
The Office of Legislative Counsel is moving materials, equipment and supplies out of its Capitol branch library in July in preparation for the Capitol’s renovation project.

Hawaii
We have a new librarian, DeAnna Kan, who started with us in December 2020. She was a librarian at the Department of Public Safety.

Idaho
New hire: Justin Pasin, research assistant.

Louisiana
Librarian Robin Stalder is now an attorney for the House Committee on Natural Resources and the Environment. Michael Smith is our new librarian.
Maine
Our library assistant, Jonathan D. Williams, is retiring after almost 33 years of service. The Maine State House, including the Law and Legislative Reference Library, reopened to the public the last week of May.

Michigan Legislative Service Bureau
Michael Campana left the Michigan Legislative Service Bureau. Shanda Greco, is the interim Research Services Division director.

New Mexico
We had 1 staff member, Moya Melody, retire at the end of June and hired Emily Thomas as new library staff.

Oklahoma
We had 1 staff retire at the end of June and we are in the process of hiring more staff for several divisions in the library.

Tennessee
Legislative librarian and former LRL Chair Eddie Weeks had his first book published! “A History of Tennessee Statutory Law: Compilations, Codifications, and Complications,” is available through store.lexisnexis.com.

Resources for Staff Training

**Upcoming Webinars**
Redesigning Written Reports for Interactive Viewing: COVID-19 has drastically affected the work of legislative staff, including the way legislative staff prepare reports for the legislature. Legislators are busier than ever, many are working remotely, and much of what they read is accessed on a computer screen. Redesigning lengthy written documents as interactive digital tools requires an understanding of how to synthesize data and use visually descriptive tools to convey information. This session will explore ways to redesign written reports for interactive online viewing.

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).

**Archived Webinars**
- 2021 NCSL Base Camp Recorded Sessions: Base Camp sessions are available for 30 days after the end of the meeting (8/5/2021) for everyone who registers. Click the link then use the email address you registered with and the password is NCSL2021 to access.
- Legislative Staff Webinar Directory: A comprehensive and regularly updated list of archived NCSL webinars for legislative staff across a wide array of subjects, including COVID-19, sexual harassment prevention, making, designing meaningful presentations, and much more.
- **Virtual Meeting | 2020 Census Update Meeting**
- **Webinar | Inside the United States Code**
- **Webinar | Tips for Effective Testimony**
- **Webinar | 2021 State Policy 101**
- **Webinar | Managing, Leading and Growing During Uncertain Times**
- **Webinar | Legislative Staff Week Webinar | The Value of Public Service**
- **Webinar | NLPES Research Methods That Rock**
- **Webinar | The ABCDE Method: A Tool for Maximizing Productivity**
- **Virtual Meeting | Let’s Zoom**
- **Webinar | De-escalation Techniques for the Legislature**
- **Webinar | Be the Change: Culture, Leadership and Self Reflection**

**Podcasts**
- Building Democracy; The Story of Legislatures: A special 6-part miniseries of Our American States that seeks to tell the often unknown stories and characters in the development of American State Legislatures. Hear from experts from both in and outside of the legislatures as we explore the fascinating history behind American Representative Democracy.

**State Legislatures News**
- 6 Tips for Being a Successful Legislative Staffer: Learn top tips from 5 staffers with over a century’s worth of experience between them.
- 2021 Session Prep: Resources for Legislative Staff: A compilation of recent webinars to help you maximize your productivity and communicate to the best of your ability
- Toolbox for Legislative Staff: A collection of all of the Staff Toolbox articles from State Legislatures magazine.
- 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.

Other Resources
- Article: Virtual Meetings Don't Have to be a Bore
- New and Improved Legislative Staff Model Code of Conduct
- New Legislator Civics Talking Points Card and Civics at NCSL Resources Page

LegisBriefs

April
- Preventing Military Veteran Suicides: State Policy Options
- Supporting and Sustaining Rural Hospitals

May
- Increasing the Minimum Wage
- States Explore Oral Fluid Testing to Combat Impaired Driving

June
- Early Detection, Diagnosis and Treatment Through Newborn Screening

July
- Manufacturing Out Way into The Future
- Curbing Rising Rates of Infectious Diseases
- Immigrant Essential Workers and COVID-19