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Mark Your Calendar

- 2017 NLSSA Training Conference Sept. 24-29 Reno, NV

NLSSA Philosophy

The underlying philosophy of the National Legislative Services and Security Association is to see that all of the logistical services that are provided to legislators, staff and the public, function well. It is the position of NLSSA that all legislative personnel should be concerned about good order and about providing needed services to everyone participating in the legislative process. Maintaining order, protecting the Capitol and its occupants, dealing with visitors, serving committees, providing supplies, media, lobbyists, ADA, providing tours, maintaining buildings and grounds, accounting, administration, postal services, arranging parking, managing pages and interns, running errands, etc., must all be seen as part of a whole in serving the needs of a legislature. While the duties of individual members of the Association may differ, there are many common threads that hold the group together. Whether in services or security, members agree that their jobs are to serve the legislature and to help people make use of public access to the legislature.

The association develops training programs that are designed to assist members with security issues, personnel matters, member services, information distribution, and compliance with federal mandates.



Why NLSSA?

Virginia J. Drew, New Hampshire State House Visitor Center director

The sergeant-at-arms of the California Assembly, Tony Beard, held an organizational meeting in 1973 to bring together security and services staff members from other capitols. While he realized there are differences in how government operates in the capitols, he also realized there were many common issues, questions and concerns we all have in our respective legislatures. As the years have gone by, it has become increasingly apparent that the safety and security of our buildings is of paramount concern. Article I of the NLSSA Bylaws states:

It is the purpose of the National Legislative Services and Security Association to improve the coordination, cooperation and communication among individuals serving state legislatures as sergeants at arms, security officers, law enforcement officers and others in an administrative, service or security related capacity who are not otherwise eligible to join other staff affiliates of the National Conference of State Legislatures.

NLSSA hosts training conferences every year and since 2007, I have been extremely fortunate to attend these important education sessions. The opportunity to network with others who work in capitols is one of the many important benefits of NLSSA Training conferences. The 2016 conference held in Washington, DC, was attended by staff from Alabama, Colorado, Florida, Hawaii, Kansas, Kentucky, Louisiana, Montana, Nebraska, North Carolina, New Hampshire, Nevada, Oregon, South Carolina, Texas, Virginia, Vermont, Washington, Wisconsin and Wyoming. There were also many from our northern neighbors of the Canadian provinces, including British Columbia, Ontario, Nova Scotia and Alberta. Sergeant-at-Arms Chaka Asigri of the Parliament of Ghana has attended many of our conferences and we were fortunate to have some new international attendees, from Nigeria, Kenya, Hong Kong and the United Kingdom. We were honored to hold many of meetings in the U.S. Capitol building and given a special inside view to our national capitol. It was a wonderful opportunity to see our government buildings from an insider point of view.



Sergeant-at-Arms Chaka Asigri of the Parliament of Ghana

For those who have not had an opportunity to attend an NLSSA conference, they might not know what they are missing, but after attending their first conference, attendees are always anxious to participate in more! The association assists us all in the safety and continuity of operations whether you are directly involved with security, building preservation, tourists or information services. Encourage staff from your state as well as your neighboring states to join our association!

Opening of the 2016 NLSSA Conference

Rick DeLeon, Senate sergeant-at-arms, Texas

U.S. Capitol, Washington, D.C.
North Congressional Meeting Room



NLSSA President Chuck Williams, South Carolina Senate opened our conference by introducing the newly appointed police chief of the North Carolina Legislature, Chief Martin Brock. Congratulations Chief Brock! Williams also recognized Colonel Steve Pike of the Virginia Capitol Police. Pike was recognized and honored by commandant of the Marine Corps, General Robert B. Neller, for his efforts in helping a young combat Marine reunite with his K-9 partner – OOOH-RAHH!!! Colonel Pike! Rod Welsh, sergeant-at-arms, Texas House, introduced Jim Moorehart, deputy sergeant-at-arms for the U.S. Senate. Moorehart gave some very welcoming remarks. He emphasized the importance of safety and continuity of government. Moorehart also entertained a brief Q&A. Frank Larkin, sergeant-at-arms for the U.S. House of Representatives, also gave some welcoming remarks and opened the floor for a brief Q&A. A great big thanks to both these gentlemen for taking the time visit with NLSSA. NLSSA was divided into two groups for a tour of the U.S. Capitol. The tour was extremely informative and very well organized.



NLSSA attendees touring the Capitol



Stephen T. Ayers

Architect of the Capitol, Stephen T. Ayers, was named the 11th architect of the Capitol in 2010 after being nominated by President Barack Obama and confirmed by the Senate for a 10-year term. He is responsible for the facilities maintenance and operation of the historic U.S. Capitol Building, the care and improvement of more than 553 acres of grounds, and the operation and maintenance of 17.4 million square feet of buildings. He is responsible for the care of all works of art in the Capitol under the direction of the Joint Committee on the Library and is responsible for the maintenance and restoration of murals, outdoor sculpture and other architectural elements throughout the Capitol complex. The architect of the Capitol is a member of the Capitol Police Board along with the House and Senate sergeants-at-arms. The role of architect of the Capitol brings together Ayers' passions for public service, architecture and history.

Protester Tactics and Devices Overview

Colonel Anthony S. Pike, chief of police, Division of Capitol Police, Virginia

Presenter: Martin Brock, chief of legislative police, North Carolina



The presentation by Chief Martin Brock was timely and important for those who work at our state capitols providing services and security to their government officials, employees and visitors. It has become extremely important for the public to have the ability to peacefully protest at our capitol complexes. Without question, some acts of civil disobedience create unique challenges for public safety officials as we try to maintain the freedom of access for all. This presentation provided those in attendance with tried and true solutions to effectively handle protest and sit-ins that are occurring more frequently at our state capitols. I was impressed with the knowledge and hands-on experience Brock demonstrated during his interactive presentation. The type of devices that are currently used by some protesters can create a serious risk of injury if not properly handled by public safety officials. The presentation created a good amount of dialogue from those attending as it was very apparent many have faced similar challenges this past year.

Department of State Presentation on Refugee Resettlement Program

Ted Blazel, Senate sergeant-at-arms, Wisconsin

The U.S. Department of State presented a talk on the United States' Refugee Resettlement Program. The talk by Kelly Gauger and Erin Hottel presented the policies and procedures for refugee resettlement in the United States. Their talk provided insight into the background and challenges faced by communities of refugees that our states may deal with in the future. The United States is looking to accept 100,000 refugees in the United States in 2017.

Refugees are citizens of foreign countries who the United States deems in need of protection and relocation to the U.S. The criteria for refugees in need of relocation is stringent and covers areas where individuals and groups face or fear persecution because of their race, religion, nationality, political opinion or membership in a particular social group.

Refugees face a long and difficult path to resettlement. The refugees must follow certain steps to be resettled in the U.S. First, the refugees must be recognized as a group in need of protection. Most refugees are also registered with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, a U.S. embassy or authorized nongovernmental organization. The U.S. works with refugees who cannot return to their countries of origin and cannot settle in other countries for further fear of their safety. Once refugees are selected for relocation they face a rigorous background check by the U.S. Refugees Admissions Program that uses resources from multiple local and international agencies to ensure the validity of the applicant's claims and that they pass a national security background check. Once they pass those checks they are put through an interview process and a medical exam. Upon completion of the complete background check the refugee becomes eligible for resettlement.

Once a refugee is allowed to settle in the U.S., they are put in a community that has resources available to them in terms of employment, housing and other social services. Social services are generally provided by local charities and faith-based communities. The Department of State works closely with the local governments to ensure the refugees will be welcome and not prove an undue burden on their resources. The refugee enters the U.S. with a refugee status but after one year of being in the United States, a refugee is able to apply for permanent residence and after five years, full citizenship.

Federal Protective Services

Mark Arras, director of security/sergeant-at-arms, Washington

Tony Misher delivered a high-energy overview of the function of the Federal Protective Services, the training and qualifications of their personnel, and a variety of tools and processes available for use for critical infrastructure risk assessment. In the hour-long presentation, he displayed an impressive understanding of physical security concerns and described how a variety of common vulnerabilities could be mitigated with specific countermeasures. He added an overview of Crime Prevention through Environmental Design, Threat Analysis and Risk Management methodologies, and closed with a description of the alarming and looming threat of cybersecurity issues. Links were provided to locate pertinent information for the class, and much of the information will be very helpful if used by members of the class.

Overview of the Training Conference August 2016

Virginia J. Drew, New Hampshire State House Visitor Center director

Putting together a training conference is not an easy task, especially when the people working on it all live in different states. NLSSA gives a very special thank you to Rod Welch, of Texas for his organizing this huge undertaking! Also special thanks to Steve Pike, Martin Brock and our special NCSL staffer, Diane Chaffin!



International Members are guests at the 2016 State Dinner in Washington, D.C.

During the opening ceremony, NLSSA members gave a memorial for Pennsylvania member, Harold Roach, who passed away this past year. We also recognized our international guests and members who journeyed from all corners of the world to join us in our national Capitol. The U.S. Capitol is the largest entity of its kind in the country and close to 1,000 security personnel work in its complex. Effective communication and coordination between all staff and legislators is integral to running a smooth operation. Stephen Ayers, architect of the Capitol, was appointed by the president for a 10-year term and he oversees not only the 600 acres of historic grounds and buildings, but also the artwork, placement of collections, the physical structure, visitor services and serves on the Capitol Police Board. He ensures that there are uplifting and educational tours for the more than 2 million visitors to our

Capitol. During his explanation on how they effectively move people through the wait lines at security, he told us how they used the Disney Company to provide strategies in safely moving people. He explained that the vast majority of construction on the improvements of the building are done at night to avoid environmental issues, noise, and odors. They offered alternative tours during some of the renovations (I used the techniques he shared with us in my home State House this fall!) and used social media to provide updates, documentation, photographs and video of the project.

On our second day of the conference, Ken Scheer presented Leadership in Times of Conference. He opened his session by highlighting the issues faced by those who supervise others and reminded us to develop our skill set daily. "Stay outside the box! You can't lead inside a box!" and "Lead from the front." These two quotes were a strong message from his session. He noted that communication, trust, positive relationships, and reaching out to others make great leaders. Scheer has done presentations to our association in the past and they are always inspirational to all. One final quote he gave: "Having character is not the same as being a character."

Retired Florida Sergeant-At-Arms Ernie Sumner had a chance to speak to us and noted that he learns something every time he goes to our training conferences even as a retiree!

In the afternoon we had a great presentation by Tony Misher, Federal Protective Service, through the Department of Homeland Security. He gave an overview of national security and included initiatives in regards to cybersecurity, emergency preparedness, active shooter response planning, as well as issues with drones. He recommended that all states create a Design Basis Threat Report, especially as older buildings do not have progressive building collapse standards and other technology to protect the facility. Another important recommendation was that all capitols should have a Facilities Security Committee that includes all departments in the building with quarterly meetings.

The Visitor Services staff had an overview of the Nuts & Bolts of Touring the Capito” by Tony Fontana. It was a wonderful opportunity to see how we could do things to improve what we do in our own buildings as with the tourists, guests and legislators.

Members had several brief, informative presentations that afternoon. Jose Ortiz of Texas spoke about a cyber-incident and how it was handled. He explained the importance to not infringe on constitutional rights and make sure the legislative process is not interrupted. Jim Gottshall and Craig Mattei, Department of State staff, presented the complexities of managing visiting dignitary and embassy members. They offer diplomatic and consular immunity seminars and graciously took time to answer questions from NLSSA members as well as give us advice on policies that would assist us. Other presentations given are highlighted in articles by NLSSA members.

On the third day, Jim Melton, South Carolina sergeant-at-arms, gave an overview of the officer shooting of Walter Scott and how it was handled by their state leaders. He also explained how they dealt with the murder of one of their state senators and the Confederate flag removal protests. These tragedies were national news and he was able to provide us with a lot more information of how the legislature handled it.

Michael Balboni, President and Managing Director of Redland Strategies presented After the Gunfire: How Do We Put Lives Back Together? He outlined the stages that everyone goes through after an emergency or violent event and discussed psychological first aid and media management. He gave us an overview of trauma and PTSD.

Thomas Connell, senior production manager for Tyco Fire Protection, offered an overview of statistics and presentation on active shooter solutions. He provided some sobering statistics: From 1999 through February 2016 there were 163 school shootings, 215 fatalities and 308 wounded with the reminder that the most recent national shootings were not included.

In the afternoon, we were given one of the most raw and stark views into an active shooter event. Kristina Anderson, of the nonprofit Koshka Foundation for Safe Schools presented Lessons Learned as a Survivor of the Virginia Tech Tragedy. Anderson gave a poignant and detailed description of the events on April 16, 2007—the Virginia Tech Shooting. It lasted only 11-12 minutes and 11 students in her classroom as well as her teacher were killed. There were 30 people in total killed during this horrific event, with many injured. Anderson was shot three times. She stressed the importance of active shooter training for all and stressed that they should include scenario-based options with joint training with emergency personnel. She also noted that there should be victim tracking and family notification after an incidence and gave many websites to obtain more information. Gene Deisinger, managing partner of SIGMA Threat Management, provided the background and explanation on how things played out during the shooting. He gave lessons learned to create new protocols and policies and the importance of training for active threat response. He noted that the

injured victims survived in large part due to the medical training of the first responders. The importance of ongoing counseling availability for victims, witnesses, and responders is extremely important.

The final day of the conference began with a presentation on Protestor Tactics by NLSSA member Martin Brock, chief of the North Carolina Capitol Police. An International Roundtable on Security and Visitor Services was facilitated by Brian Hodgson, sergeant-at-arms, Alberta, and Canada. There was a lot of discussion from all and it illustrated that many of our issues in our own buildings are the same all over the world. Communication within buildings is always a struggle. There was a lot of discussion on dealing with mentally ill and irate citizens. We discussed the use of duress buttons and the importance of understanding warning signs. Policies and training are necessary for all to be aware of how to handle events. On a side note, it was slightly humorous that one of the biggest struggles of capitol security is PARKING! Everyone had a “parking nightmare” story, but again just one more issue that is shared worldwide.



The afternoon involved the Annual Meeting of NLSSA with region reports, elections, reports on the budget, planning for the 2017 training conference and committee reports. New officers were elected. Each evening of the conference members were able to meet informally to network and share issues from their capitols and jobs.



2016 – 2017 Executive Board take their oath of office



L to R – Jim Melton, Senate sergeant-at-arms, South Carolina; Rick DeLeon, Senate sergeant-at-arms, Texas; and Rod Welsh, executive director, State Preservation Board, Texas.

2016 Awards



Chuck Williams, chief deputy sergeant-at-arms, South Carolina, and recipient of the Tony Beard Award.



Dennis Clark, sergeant-at-arms and recipient of the John Everhardt Award

Serve and Secure is the newsletter of the National Legislative Services and Security Association (NLSSA), a staff organization of the National Conference of State Legislatures (NCSL).



NATIONAL CONFERENCE
of STATE LEGISLATURES

The Forum for America's Ideas

William T. Pound, Executive Director

Diane Chaffin
NCSL Staff Section Liaison to NLSSA

7700 East First Place
Denver, Colo. 80230

444 North Capitol Street, N.W., #515
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2016 – 2017 Executive Board

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