



NALIT

National Association of Legislative Information Technology

Fall 2008

National Conference of State Legislatures ♦ 7700 E. First Place ♦ Denver, CO 80230 ♦ 303-364-7700

Time flies! I've just barely managed to catch my breath from New Orleans and Louisville, and here we are at Thanksgiving already. The stores are full of Christmas stuff, the radio is playing nothing but carols, and we've had our orientation for new legislators. January, and the start of the 2010 (can you believe it?) legislative session, are bearing down on us at a great rate of speed.

This has turned into a very tough year. The turndown in the global economy has affected each of us, both personally and professionally. Budgets are being cut back, staffing is being reduced, and projects are being deferred. We will have to make many difficult choices over the next few months and years.

CHAIR'S CORNER by Duncan Goss

On the brighter side, the application of information technology can be used to improve efficiencies and thus save money in many areas; we can anticipate that there will be some interesting opportunities over the next few years. To take one simple example, in Vermont our existing electronic document distribution infrastructure has allowed us to reduce the number of paper copies of documents that we produce.

We have heard from many states that it will be difficult to travel to conferences and meetings this year, particularly to the Professional Development Seminar in Honolulu. The Executive and Planning committees will be working hard to develop programs for both meetings that provide enough value to justify the trips, but we know it will be difficult to convince the Powers That Be.

One very good argument for your attendance is that you are needed to serve as a presenter, coordinator, or moderator. Over the next few months, the PDS planning committee will be working to develop sessions, and they will be looking for your help. Keep this in mind when they call!

The Legislative Summit will be in Philadelphia this year. Again, your Executive Committee will be working to develop a program which provides you with solid information to take back to your respective states.

In a related note, I have been appointed to the LSCC Professional Development subcommittee. In this position, I will be working on the planning for the overall Summit program, not just the NALIT program. I welcome your suggestions and input.

My thanks to Gary Schaefer and Linda Pittsford for their help and support this year. Gary, as immediate past chair, has been an incredibly useful resource for me, and Linda, as vice-chair, has a wealth of practical knowledge and experience for me to draw upon. Our new Secretary, Dave Larson, has gotten this issue of the newsletter together in record time. He's only waiting for me to finish this letter before sending it off to the printer.

Finally, I would like to take this opportunity to thank Joel Redding and Steve Landers for their work in bringing about a truly excellent Professional Development Seminar in Louisville. I was particularly pleased at the number of first-timers at this meeting. I hope to see you all again at many future meetings.

Duncan Goss, Vermont
Chair, NALIT Executive Committee

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National News from LSCC

By Gary VanLandingham, NCSL Staff Chair
Director, OPPAGA, Florida

The Legislative Staff Coordinating Committee (LSCC) is working on several major projects to strengthen NCSL's services to legislative staff. As you may know, the LSCC is comprised of two representatives of each of the ten staff sections, plus staff who are serving on the NCSL Executive Committee. The LSCC recently met in September for its first meeting of the year; it will meet in January, May, and July as well.

Rest assured that LSCC meetings aren't a junket. The meetings are pretty grueling—the first meeting of the day begins at 7:30 am and various subcommittee and working group meetings last until 6:30 pm that evening and then again the next morning, followed by Executive Committee meetings throughout this second day. So, folks don't go to LSCC meetings to hang out, but instead often look forward to getting back to their day jobs where the pace is somewhat saner (at least on a good day).

Currently, the LSCC is working on several major initiatives:

- The Legislative Institutions subcommittee is assessing major trends that are affecting legislative staff nationwide, including the pending retirement of Baby Boomers, technology changes, economic stresses, and increasing partisanship and term limits. The subcommittee will develop strategies to help legislatures address these challenges and guide NCSL activities in future years.
- The Marketing and Outreach subcommittee is developing better ways to market NCSL's services so that legislative staff and legislators understand what NCSL can do for them and how they can best get involved with the organization.
- The Professional Development subcommittee is working to strengthen NCSL's training programs for legislative staff, including options for expanding programs for staff entering management positions as well as those beginning their legislative careers.
- The Technology subcommittee is working to develop a capacity to deliver high quality professional development programs via the

internet to staff that cannot travel to NCSL meetings.

- The Staff Section Officers subcommittee is working to ensure that staff sections receive needed support from NCSL in hosting professional development seminars. The committee is also working with the technology committee to identify ways that the staff sections can use e-learning technology to deliver skills development programs for staff who perform specific functions in their legislatures such as committee research and program evaluation.
- The Standing Committees workgroup is working to strengthen the role of legislative staff in NCSL's Standing Committees, which meet three times a year to develop NCSL's lobbying position on federal issues.
- The Member and District Staff Training workgroup is developing a prototype seminar that will be held next spring for member and district staff.
- The Strategic Planning workgroup is establishing plans to accomplish to goals of Nancy Cyr, who will serve as Staff Chair next year.

It is truly an honor to serve as your staff chair this year. NCSL is the premier organization for legislative staff, and it provides a wealth of opportunities to learn, share information, and meet colleagues and make friends who share our role in supporting representative democracy. This fall, I and the other national officers (Nancy Cyr, Staff Vice Chair, and Sharon Crouch-Steidel, Immediate Past Staff Chair) have had the pleasure of visiting each of the ten staff section's professional development conferences. Each of the meetings was superb, and showed the talent and dedication of legislative staff.

If you have any questions or suggestions for LSCC programs, feel free to contact me at gary.vanlandingham@oppaga.fl.gov. You can get more information on all of NCSL's programs for legislative staff at its website at www.ncsl.org.

Mark Your Calendar

NALIT at the NCSL Legislative Summit
July 20-24, 2009, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
<http://www.ncsl.org/summit>

“Agile” Software Development: What Is It, and How Can It Help Development Teams?

By Carol Nemir, Applications Section Coordinator
Texas Legislative Council

“Agile” is one of the latest buzzwords of the software development industry, and agile software development was discussed by several states at the NALIT Professional Development Conference in Louisville this past September. But what exactly *is* Agile Development? This article gives an overview of agile development and discusses why the Texas Legislative Council is taking a serious look at adopting agile methodologies for some of its application development projects.

Overview

Agile development is a disciplined approach to software projects that accepts change as a natural part of the process. It includes a set of project management processes that promote transparency, communication, and team work, as well as a set of engineering practices that promote quality, adaptable architecture, and automation of repetitive tasks such as unit testing and deployment.

Key elements of agile project management include:

- A “product owner” works in conjunction with the development team throughout the project to set priorities and define what is to be built.
- Production-quality software is delivered in small iterations (ideally a two to four week time period) based on priorities set by the product owner.
- Requirements and estimates are initially captured only at a high level in order to define scope. Detailed requirements and estimates are captured on a “just in time” basis and only at the level of detail needed to fulfill the requirement.
- Changes to requirements are expected and even welcomed, though the product owner is asked to prioritize the changes in relation to remaining work.
- A collaborative approach between all stakeholders is essential. Ideally, teams are located in an open team work area in order to foster collaboration.

- Team communication is essential. Daily “stand-up” meetings are used to track project status and ensure all team members are informed.
- Some of the key engineering practices that help to foster agile development include:
- Test-driven development ensures that quality assurance and testing are addressed each iteration. Requirements are defined with test cases in mind, and test cases are written before code is written. Unit tests are automated, which results in a suite of tests that can be easily run when any change is made to the system.
- The use of object-oriented design principles is important in agile development. Good object-oriented design will simplify the code, reduce dependencies, and promote reusability, making changes less risky and easier to implement and test.
- Using automation where appropriate will help reduce errors, eliminate repetitive manual processes, and shorten development time. Examples of processes that can be automated (with the right tools) include initial code generation, code evaluation, unit testing, and the build process.

Transitioning to Agile Development at the Texas Legislative Council

Though the Texas Legislative Council has not conducted a fully agile project, several project teams at the council have adopted and seen value from some of these key elements of agile development. These include automated builds, team work areas, and working with clients to prioritize requirements and changes throughout the project. The council is considering adopting a full agile approach for certain projects in order to address some of the challenges that occur with the traditional waterfall approach.

A few of the challenges currently faced by council development teams are:

- Defining detailed system requirements at the beginning of the project is difficult and time consuming and can establish unrealistic expectations for the project. In addition, it is cumbersome to keep the requirements document up-to-date, as they change throughout the project, and documentation writers and testers must rely on this document. The just-in-time

agile approach to requirements definition is expected to alleviate this problem.

- Clients are shown screen shots, and possibly prototypes, while the application is being developed, but they often don't have the opportunity to provide feedback on a working product until the end of the project. This often results in changes at the end of the project, when it is more costly and risky to introduce change. Using the agile approach, clients would be able to use and evaluate a working version of the application as part of each iteration. This would allow changes to be identified earlier.
- Testing is manual and cumbersome. Full system testing does not occur until the end of the project. If a project is running behind, testing is usually cut short. It is difficult to ensure that changes to an application do not introduce new problems. Test-driven development and automated testing will help to alleviate this problem.
- Extended team members, such as DBAs and documentation writers, are often not fully informed of the project status throughout the project. Their participation is heaviest at the beginning of the project (during requirements definition and system design) and at the end of the project (during testing and final documentation). The daily status meetings, team-based emphasis, and short iterations of agile development should help to keep these team members engaged throughout the project.

Moving Forward

To ensure a successful adoption of agile development methodologies, the council is using the following strategies:

1. Start small. Identify one or two pilot projects and staff them with team members who advocate agile methodologies.
2. Work with all departments that are involved in development projects to understand the full effect of adopting a new methodology.
3. Partner with organizations that are using agile methodologies. The council is partnering with other Texas state agencies as well as consultants in the agile field to understand how agile will best fit within the organization. Additionally, the NALIT PDS conference allowed council

staff to connect with development teams from other legislative support organizations.

4. Commit to provide training for project managers, developers, product owners, and testers.

Finally, a successful adoption of any software development methodology will recognize that not all projects are the same, and that what works for one development team or client group will not necessarily work for others. 🍷



2008 NALIT Professional Development Seminar: Report from Louisville

By Joel Redding, Legislative Research Commission, Kentucky

Over the years, Steve Landers and I have attended some great NALIT professional development seminars featuring topics that were always pertinent, and social events that were always interesting and entertaining. With this in mind, we knew the bar would be set pretty high for us when we decided to host the 2008 PDS in Louisville.

With the increasing dependence that our staff and legislators place on electronic communications and collaborative online tools for connecting with their constituents, it was appropriate that we once again held our PDS jointly with our colleagues from the Legislative Information and Communications Staff Section.

Our PDS got off to a great start with the data security pre-seminar. Jim Greenwalt took on the task of preparing our pre-seminar and he got

some great and informative speakers. Randy Vickers with the Department of Homeland Security started off our day discussing data security from the national perspective. After Randy's opening discussion, we spent the rest of the day hearing from various states about their efforts at enhancing legislative data security.

We finished off our pre-seminar day at Lucky Strike with some great food, fellowship and bowling (well, the bowling may not have been that great for some of us). Whether you bowled or not, there was plenty of space and opportunity for everyone to re-connect and catch up with old friends.

On our opening day we were honored to have Louisville Mayor Jerry Abramson welcome all of our attendees to Louisville. We also had the privilege of hearing from Mr. René True, Executive Director of ConnectKentucky, about the efforts of ConnectKentucky to expand broadband internet connectivity to all areas of our state. This is a topic of great interest as it relates to expanded communication throughout the Commonwealth of Kentucky and was also of interest to our attendees as a model program to take back to their own states.

This year we added a GIS track in addition to our normal Management and Technical tracks. The new track was well received and well attended. We offered sessions on *Preparing for 2010 Redistricting*, *Making the Case for GIS* and *Detailed Demographics of Legislative Districts*. Speakers included Richard Leadbeater of ESRI, Kent and Kim Anness of Kentucky's Division of Geographical Information and Deirdre Bishop of the U.S. Census Bureau. We hope that we can continue to offer the GIS track at future PDS's.

Thanks to all of our great speakers and coordinators we were able to offer some really great sessions at our PDS. *Office 2007: Should I Stay or should I Go*, *Wireless Personal*

Devices, VOIP and New and Emerging Technologies: When, If and How, just to name a few. Based on the comments we received and the attendance at all of the sessions, we think the planning committee did a great job in choosing the topics for the sessions.

On Friday we visited the State Capitol in Frankfort. Lt. Governor Daniel Mongiardo (who is a doctor from Eastern Kentucky) spoke to the NALIT group about the importance of broadband in connecting doctors and hospitals. We then took a tour of the Capitol Building and ended in our House Chamber for a demonstration of our Bill Book system. Senate President Pro Tempore Katie Stine and House Majority Caucus Chairman Charlie Hoffman then welcomed the group to Frankfort.

After the Capitol visit we went to Buffalo Trace distillery for lunch and a tour. After a very informative tour of the distillery we were treated to a grid tasting, led by Trace's master distiller. We had a chance to sample some of their products at various stages of the distilling process. Some people enjoyed themselves more than others, but I think everyone had a good time.

Again this year, Dennis Loudermilk brought some of his fine woodcraft to raffle for charity. This year the proceeds of Dennis's raffle went to the WHAS Crusade for Children in Louisville, a local charity dedicated to special needs children. This year's raffle raised \$150.

Our closing event was a dinner cruise held aboard The Belle of Louisville. This event was sponsored by Propylon. We could not have planned for a more perfect event if we tried. The weather was beautiful, the food was great, and we got to relax for a few hours and talk with friends. It was a great ending to a great week. ☺

Handouts

Seminar handouts are available online at www.ncsl.org/programs/lis/nalit/handouts.htm#2008pds

2008 NALIT Award Recipients: Legislative Staff Achievement Award and Online Democracy Award

NALIT awards underscore the association's commitment to high standards of professionalism and service to the legislative institution. Each year, NALIT awards Legislative Staff Achievement Awards to individuals, teams or legislative offices. In addition, each year the LINC/S/NALIT Online Democracy Award recognizes one state legislative website that stands out for making democracy user friendly.

Recipients of the awards are presented with a plaque and are recognized by the NCSL Staff Chair during the legislative staff luncheon at the NCSL Annual Meeting.



The 2008 recipient of the NALIT Staff Achievement Award was Gary Wieman, Network Manager, Legislative Technology Center, Nebraska. Gary served an unusual two terms as NALIT chair in 2006 and 2007 due to an unexpected

vacancy and has served in a number of other staff section offices. Over the last ten years, NALIT members have benefited from Gary's involvement as coordinator, moderator or presenter for an extraordinary number of sessions. Gary has also been a member of the NCSL Legislative Staff Coordinating Committee's Technology Subcommittee and E-Learning and Technology Review Committee and has represented NALIT at international meetings.

Gary's contributions to the Legislative Technology Center include responsibility for the administration, management and security of all hardware, software and resources that make up

the legislature's network. In the 10 years he's been at the legislature, Gary has played a major role in the modernization of the system. Gary assisted in the design and implementation of the legislature's voting board and journal systems, and developed requirements and implementation procedures for the laptop systems in the legislative chamber. His other responsibilities include developing and maintaining the security, disaster recovery and appropriate use policies and drafting the legislature's technology budget. NALIT is pleased to recognize his many contributions.



The 2008 Online Democracy Award was earned by the Texas Legislature. The Texas Legislature's website was

honored for its wealth of information on the members' pages, search capabilities, streaming video and audio services and an outreach to kids. In addition, this site is easy to navigate, making it friendly to the novice user and valuable for the experienced user. Congratulations to the 2008 award recipients.

A call for nominations for the 2009 NALIT Legislative Staff Achievement Award and the Online Democracy Award will be sent to the NALIT listserv in Spring 2009. Criteria for the awards and other information is available at www.ncsl.org/programs/lis/nalit/award.htm.

Understanding NCSL

NCSL is a bipartisan organization that serves legislators and staffs of the nation's 50 states, its commonwealths and territories. It has a complex governing structure that oversees many different subgroups with different functions and purposes. These subgroups include the Standing Committees, Staff Sections (of which NALIT is one), and the Legislative Staff Coordinating

Committee. These groups, and the NALIT members who serve in them, have an important role within NCSL that is not always easily understood.



The NCSL Executive Committee

NCSL is governed by an Executive Committee made up of 60 elected members, most of whom are legislators or legislative staff. The Executive

Committee and officers supervise and direct NCSL, its committees and publications; implement policy; and supervise the disbursement of funds.

The seven officers are: president, president-elect, vice president, and immediate past president (who are legislators); and staff chair, staff vice chair, and immediate past staff chair (who are legislative staffers).

Two NALIT members have held the highest legislative staff leadership position within NCSL. **Sharon Crouch Steidel**, Systems Director of the Virginia House, served as Staff Chair in 2007-08 (and currently serves as immediate past chair) and **Jim Greenwalt**, Director of Information Systems, Minnesota Senate, served as Staff Chair in 2004-05.

NALIT members who have been elected or appointed to serve as members of the NCSL Executive Committee include **Tim Rice**, Director of the Illinois Legislative Information System, **Gary Schaefer**, Information Systems Coordinator for the Louisiana Senate, and **Michael Adams**, Director of Colorado's Legislative Information Services.

NCSL Standing Committees

NCSL has 12 Standing Committees that are composed of both legislators and legislative staff who are appointed by the leadership of the legislatures. The Standing Committees serve as the main organizational mechanism for NCSL members and are devoted to subjects of particular interest to all state legislatures. The Standing Committees allow legislators and staff to benefit from the experiences of other states in shaping public policy, experimenting with new laws, and managing the legislative institution.

NCSL policy positions and lobbying efforts in Washington, D.C. are also guided by the committees. Both legislators and legislative staff serve in leadership roles on the Standing Committees. Each biennium, presiding officers and staff directors in all member legislatures are asked to appoint members to each of the committees.

The NCSL President appoints a legislator to serve as overall Chair of the Standing Committees and at least two legislators to serve as vice chairs. Likewise, the President appoints legislators to serve as chair and vice chairs of each Standing Committee. The NCSL Staff Chair appoints a legislative staff member to serve as overall Staff Chair of the Standing Committees and two or more staffers to serve as overall vice chairs. Additionally, the Staff Chair appoints staff members to serve as Staff Chair and Staff Vice Chairs of each Standing Committee.

Current NALIT members who have been involved in NCSL Standing Committees include **Michael Adams** of Colorado, who currently is a Staff Vice Chair of the NCSL Standing Committees. **Tim Rice** of Illinois currently serves as a Staff Vice Chair of the Legislative Effectiveness Committee. In addition, **Dave Larson** of Kansas served as Staff Chair of the Communications, Financial Services and Interstate Commerce Committee in 2004-05 and as Staff Vice Chair in 2003-03 and 2003-04. **Lou Adamson** of South Dakota was Staff Chair in 1999-2000 for the Communications, Technology and Interstate Commerce Committee and Staff Vice Chair in 1998.

Legislative Staff Coordinating Committee (LSCC)

The LSCC, a subgroup of the NCSL Executive Committee, oversees the legislative staff division of NCSL, coordinates the work of the 10 staff sections, promotes the professional development of legislative staff, reviews and evaluates NCSL services to legislative staff, and advises the NCSL Executive Committee.

The LSCC is composed of the legislative staff members elected to the Executive Committee, the overall staff chair and staff vice-chairs of the NCSL Standing Committees, two officers from each of the 10 staff sections, and four discretionary members appointed by the Staff Chair.

Duncan Goss, Vermont; and **Linda Pittsford**, Texas, as NALIT's current Chair and Vice Chair, are members of the LSCC. **Gary Wieman**, Nebraska, is currently serving a discretionary appointment to the LSCC. **Michael Adams** of Colorado, as a Staff Vice Chair of the NCSL Standing Committees, is also a member of the LSCC.

The 10 **Staff Sections** (associations, like NALIT, that are generally organized by job function) and two staff networks provide training, professional development, networking, and information-sharing for different legislative staff disciplines. Each staff section, like NALIT, elects officers who oversee each group's activities and professional development seminars. 

Frequently Asked Questions About NCSL

How do I get involved in a staff section?

Getting involved is easy. Contact a staff section officer or the NCSL staff section liaison and ask to be included. The NCSL web site (www.ncsl.org) has a link to each staff section. Each staff section's link includes a list of the staff section officers. The telephone works also. Call NCSL and indicate you want to participate in a staff section. You want to be in—YOU ARE IN!

How do I get involved in a Standing Committee?

Contact a Standing Committee legislative staff officer or NCSL Standing Committee liaison and indicate your interest in being a member of the committee. The NCSL web site has a link to each Standing Committee that lists the officers and NCSL liaisons. Your staff director must appoint you to a Standing Committee.

I am not allowed to travel to meetings. Can I still participate in a staff section or Standing Committee?

Absolutely. Travel is limited for most legislative staff. The staff sections conduct many meetings via conference calls and chat rooms and disseminate most of their information electronically. The Standing Committees also communicate using listserves, e-mail, and chat rooms and conduct educational programs using video conferencing.

Video tapes, audio tapes, power point presentations, and compact discs of a variety of sessions at NCSL meetings are also available. Program materials are also available on the NCSL website.

All staff sections and Standing Committees recognize the importance of reaching as many members as possible and welcome ideas and input from all.

Can I be involved in a Standing Committee and a Staff Section at the same time?

Yes.

Do I have to be appointed to a Standing Committee to participate in meetings and activities?

No. Committee meetings, the Fall and Spring Forums, and the NCSL Annual Meeting are open to all legislators and legislative staff, regardless of committee membership.

If I am a member of a staff section, can I attend a professional development seminar sponsored by another staff section?

Yes, with certain exceptions. If a staff section seminar has a program of interest for you, you are welcome to register and attend the seminar.

Why should I get involved in NCSL?

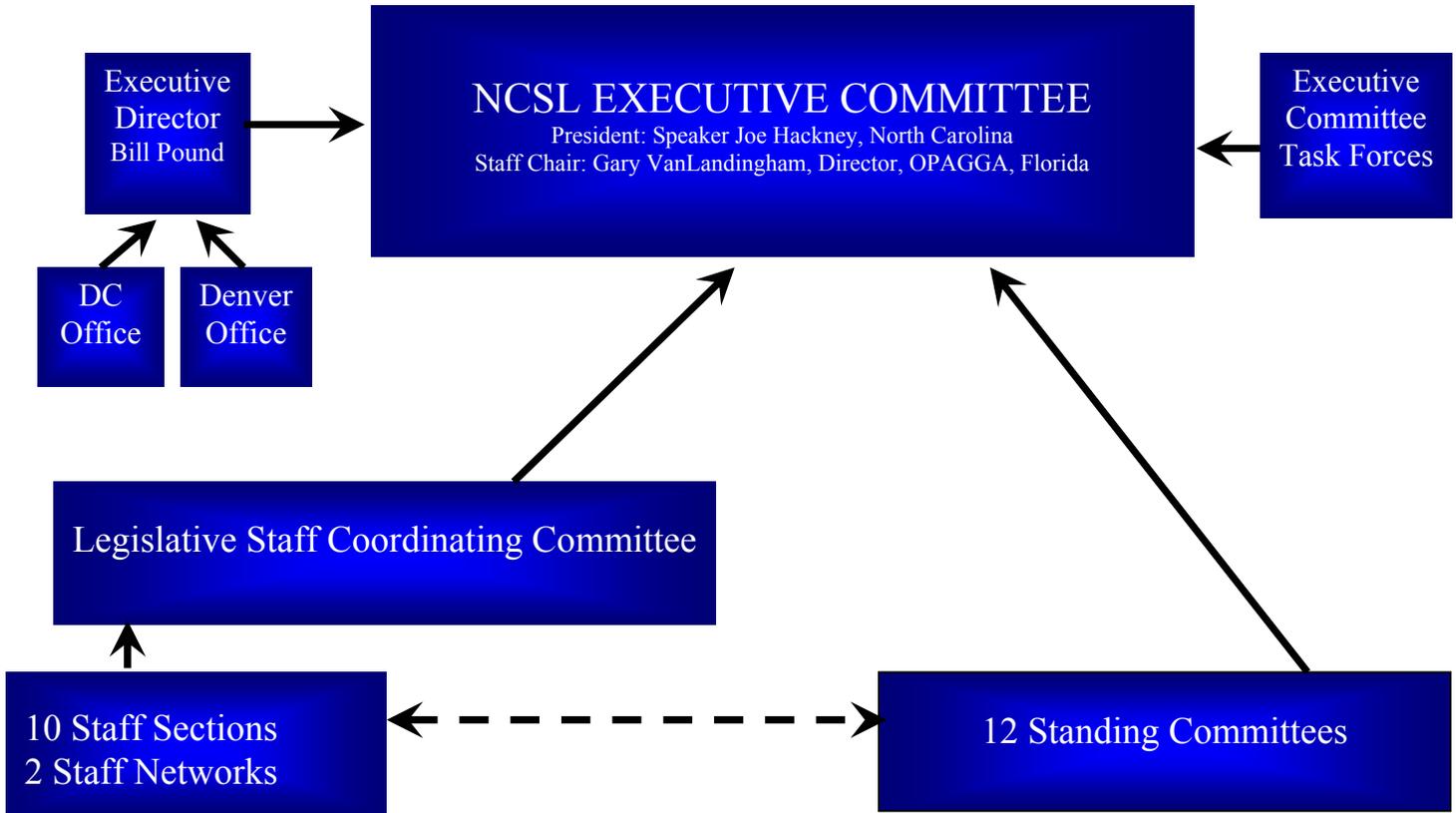
State legislatures are like no other organization. Through NCSL, legislative staff can share with and learn from their counterparts in other states, who understand the unique interactions, demands, process, and work product of the legislative environment. Knowledge, networking, professional development, and fun are just four of the reasons to become involved in NCSL.

Think about it. Explore the NCSL web site. Talk to colleagues and legislators in your state who have used NCSL. Contact your NCSL liaison. Then take the plunge; make the call; send the e-mail.

Excerpted from "Discover NCSL: A Beginner's Guide to Understanding the Organization of the National Conference of State Legislatures," available at www.ncsl.org/public/execlscc/DiscoverNCSL.htm. 

National Conference of State Legislatures

Organizational Structure 2008-09



American Society of Legislative Clerks & Secretaries (ASLCS)
 Education Network (LESN)
 Leadership Staff Section (LSS)
 Legal Services Staff Section (LSSS)
 Legislative Information and Communications Staff Section (LINCS)
 Legislative Research Librarians (LRL)
 National Association of Legislative Fiscal Offices (NALFO)
 National Association of Legislative Information Technology (NALIT)
 National Legislative Program Evaluation Society (NLPES)
 National Legislative Services & Security Association (NLSSA)
 Personal Staff Network
 Research and Committee (RACSS)

Agriculture and Energy
 Budgets and Revenue
 Communications, Fin. Svcs. & Interstate Commerce
 Education
 Environment
 Health
 Human Services and Welfare
 Labor and Economic Development
 Law and Criminal Justice
 Legislative Effectiveness
 Redistricting and Elections
 Transportation Services



2009 NALIT Professional Development Seminar September 9-12, 2009 in Honolulu, Hawaii

What do St. Paul, Minnesota; Baton Rouge, Louisiana; Sacramento, California; Richmond, Virginia; Springfield, Illinois; Carson City, Nevada; Harrisburg, Pennsylvania; Burlington, Vermont; Rapid City, South Dakota; Washington, D.C.; and Louisville, Kentucky have in common? You've been to these host state cities for past NALIT Professional Development Seminars...so why not Honolulu? The 2009 NALIT Professional Development Seminar will be hosted by the Hawaii Legislature, September 9-12, 2009, at the Waikiki Beach Marriott Resort in Honolulu, Hawaii.

Hotel rates have been negotiated at a low rate of \$177 single/double, and affordable airfares have been spotted by potential attendees. We hope you will accept Hawaii's invitation to attend the 2009 Fall Professional Development Seminar.

TENTATIVE SCHEDULE			
Wed., Sept. 9	Thurs., Sept. 10	Friday, Sept. 11	Saturday, Sept. 12
<u>Pre-Conference Training Seminar:</u> GIS for Legislatures	Offsite Site Visit: Tours, Briefings: State Capitol Five Minutes of Fame	General Session Security: Data Recovery/ Hard Drives	Management Track Email as Public Record/ Retention Policies <hr/> Technical Track Web Applications/ Web Development
<u>Pre-Conference Training Seminar:</u> GIS for Legislatures	Site Visit, Tours, Briefings: State Capitol State Demos	Management Track Enterprise Architecture in the Legislature <hr/> Technical Track Open Source Security Tools for Windows	Management Track Constituent Management Systems <hr/> Technical Track Software Development/ Programming
Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch
<u>Pre-Conference Training Seminar:</u> GIS for Legislatures	Walking Tour: Supreme Court, Art Museum	Management Track Web Streaming and Transcription Services <hr/> Technical Track AGILE Software Development	Management Track Staff Development & Training <hr/> Technical Track Security: Viruses and Malware
General Session or Roundtables	Walking Tour: Supreme Court, Art Museum	Management Track Disaster Recovery <hr/> Technical Track Virtualization	
<i>4:30-6:30 pm</i> Exhibitors Reception	Offsite Social Event: Luau	<i>8:00 pm -10:30 pm</i> NALIT Pub Quiz Night	

NALIT: Our Purpose

1. To promote the exchange of ideas and information on all aspects of legislative information systems. This includes, but is not limited to, the management and technical development of these systems.
2. To provide a network of information exchange among persons involved in providing management and technical support for legislative information systems.
3. To provide improved communications and foster better relations between legislative information systems management and staff, and the legislators and legislative staff they serve.
4. To promote the service of the Association membership on the various committees, subcommittees, task forces, etc., of NCSL.
5. To enhance the professionalism of the members of the Association through activities supporting the purposes noted above.

Call for Newsletter Articles

Publishing this newsletter would be impossible **without your participation.**

What kind of articles do we need?

- Descriptions of IT-related projects undertaken by your office.
- Reviews or studies that your office has done on IT-related issues.
- IT-related policies or systems implemented in your state (not just by your office) that affect legislative IT operations.
- Anything at all that you think would be interesting to your peers in other states.

No word limit (or minimum). A typical article is two or three single-spaced pages, but longer or shorter articles are fine. The more articles we have, the better the publication!

Editor's Corner

It is my favorite time of year. It's starting to get cold and snowy. I like snow. It's hunting season. If it flies or has antlers, it dies. My recreational ice hockey league is in full swing. He shoots, he scores! I wish. The best holidays of the year are back to back, Thanksgiving and Christmas. The only thing that half way changes my opinion is that the legislative session is just around the corner. Too much to do and not enough time to get it done. Although some might argue with my assessment that this is the best time of year, few will argue that there isn't enough time to get ready for the session.

The legislative institution and our support of it is the common bond that brings all NALIT folk together. It is a privilege for me to be your newsletter editor this year. Of course I don't do this job alone. All of those who contributed articles to this issue are to be thanked. Contributing their time and skill to write down an article is one of the best ways to express your support of NALIT.

As I look ahead, this year may be a tough year for each of us. Budget cuts are rampant. Travel may be difficult. But sharing our experiences and knowledge through the newsletter can still take place. I encourage each of you to contribute. Send me an article and I'll make you famous. Thanks.

Dave Larson, Kansas, Editor



2008-2009 NALIT Committees

2009 NALIT Staff Achievement Awards Committee

Co-Chairs: Gary Wieman, Nebraska & Maryann Trauger, North Dakota

The annual Legislative Staff Achievement Award was created by the Legislative Staff Coordinating Committee to recognize excellence in supporting the work of a state legislature and strengthening the legislative institution. Each staff section associated with NCSL may name up to two recipients—individuals, teams or legislative offices—for recognition each year. The NALIT Staff Achievement Award Committee solicits nominations and recommends award recipients for the 2008 NALIT Legislative Staff Achievement Award, based on criteria outlined on the NALIT website.

2009 Nominating Committee

Chair: Gary Schaefer, Louisiana

The NALIT Nominating Committee consists of three members who compile a slate of nominees for the offices of Chair, Vice-Chair and Secretary. This slate is submitted by the Chair of the Nominating Committee for a vote of the general members of the Association at the NCSL Annual Meeting. Nominees are elected by a simple majority of the general members of the Association present and voting.

IT Survey Committee

Chair: Ann McLaughlin, Delaware

Committee activities include evaluating the information presently in the survey, and updating the types of information in the survey. The committee issues reminders to members to update their information within pre-determined time frames (e.g., quarterly, annually), and decides the best means for presentation on the NALIT website. The committee will also develop additional methods and activities to enhance the value of the survey information.

Web Site Redesign Group

Chair: Scott Darnell, South Dakota

The Web Site Redesign Committee provides guidance on the organization and design of the NALIT website as undergoes changes as part of a larger redesign effort for the NCSL Website.

Marketing and Outreach Committee

Chair: Becky King, Kentucky

Committee activities primarily include the continuation of outreach efforts to members of other staff sections and inactive NALIT members. Efforts are made to encourage inactive NALIT members to become involved again by issuing invitations to the NCSL Annual Meeting and the PDS, and for newcomers by developing an information packet explaining the benefits of our organization. Development of mentoring programs and other new activities enhance the purpose of this committee.

LINCS/NALIT Online Democracy Award Committee

NALIT Co-Chairs: James Fasoli and Lynda Cerrano, New Jersey

The Online Democracy Award is sponsored by NCSL's Legislative Information and Communications Staff Section (LINCS) and the National Association of Legislative Information Technology (NALIT). Each year, the committee considers nominations from official legislative sites developed and maintained by or under the authority of (a) a state legislature, (b) a legislative chamber, or (c) an officially-recognized legislative partisan caucus.

IT Standards Committee

Virtualization Subcommittee

Chair: Alan Osborne, Tennessee

Green IT Subcommittee

Chair: Lorie Johnson, Arkansas

Voting Systems Subcommittee

Chair: Jason Montgomery, Illinois

Members of the committee are the Executive Committee Officers and Directors. The committee monitors other states' technology activities. It utilizes experts in those states to form issue/technology-specific subcommittees, which provide information and personal experiences on technology. Subcommittee activities include: evaluating new and existing technologies and processes, providing positive and negative aspects involved with implementing a new technology, providing estimates for implementation and offering an unbiased opinion that NALIT and other NCSL staff sections can use as a source of information.

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