The NCSL Legislative Staff Sections and Networks annually present Legislative Staff Achievement Awards to recognize staff excellence in supporting the work of a state legislature and strengthening the legislative institution. Each staff section and network may make two awards, and each decides the criteria for its awards. The staff co-chairs of the NCSL Standing Committees also may name two award recipients. Examples of accomplishments recognized by the Legislative Staff Achievement Awards include, but are not limited to:

- Helping to improve the effectiveness of the legislative institution.
- Supporting the legislative process and the mission of the legislature.
- Exhibiting a high degree of professionalism, competence and integrity in serving the legislature and the public.
- Contributing to the work of the National Conference of State Legislatures.
- Demonstrating expertise in a particular field.
- Contributing to existing knowledge.
2012 RECIPIENTS

American Society of Legislative Clerks and Secretaries (ASLCS)
Ramona Kenady Line, Chief Clerk, Oregon House of Representatives
Stephen Arias, Chief Clerk, New Mexico House of Representatives

Leadership Staff Section (LSS)
Terri Franks-Smith, Chief Fiscal Officer, Idaho House of Representatives
Arnold “Arnie” Sowell, Policy Director, Office of the Speaker, California Assembly

Legal Services Staff Section (LSSS)
Deborah Haskins, Deputy Director, Office of Legislative Legal Services, Colorado General Assembly
Richard Taff, Chief Legislative Attorney, Legislative Commissioners’ Office, Connecticut General Assembly

Legislative Education Staff Network (LESN)
Jan Yamane, Deputy Auditor/General Counsel, Office of the State Auditor, Hawaii Legislature

Legislative Health Staff Network (LHSN)
Mark Andrews, Policy Analyst, Utah Legislature

Legislative Information and Communications Staff Section (LINCS)
Jay Pearson, Legislative Education and Development Project Manager, Virginia House of Delegates

Legislative Research Librarians Staff Section (LRL)
Kristin Ford, Legislative Librarian, Legislative Reference Library, Idaho Legislature
Shelley Day, Legislative Information Liaison, Legislative Research Library, Office of Legislative Research and General Counsel, Utah Legislature

National Association of Legislative Fiscal Offices (NALFO)
Sarah Franklin, Senior Research Associate, Legislative Research Unit, Illinois General Assembly

National Association of Legislative Information Technology (NALIT)
Jonathan Palmore, Senior Assistant Clerk-Technology, Virginia Senate
Steve Dustin, Heather Kohler and Gopali Nanda, Office of Information Systems, Department of Legislative Services, Maryland General Assembly

National Legislative Program Evaluation Society (NLPES)
Phil Leone, Director, Joint Legislative Audit and Review Commission, Virginia General Assembly (retired)

National Legislative Services and Security Association (NLSSA)
Carl Barnhart, Acting Assistant Director, Pennsylvania House of Representatives
Kevin Kuroda, Sergeant-at-Arms, Hawaii House of Representatives

Research and Committee Staff Section (RACSS)
John Cannon, Managing Policy Analyst, Office of Legislative Research and General Counsel, Utah Legislature

Standing Committees
Melissa Calderwood, Principal Analyst, Legislative Research Department, Kansas Legislature
Karl Aro, Executive Director, Department of Legislative Services, Maryland General Assembly
The American Society of Legislative Clerks and Secretaries recognizes Ramona Kenady Line for her outstanding contributions to the Oregon House of Representatives and her distinguished service to ASLCS and NCSL. For the past 40 years, Ramona has dedicated herself to protecting the integrity, traditions and process of Oregon’s House of Representatives, ensuring transparency and fairness of the process. She is recognized with this award for performance of her duties as nonpartisan chief clerk, her extensive knowledge of the legislative process and her love for the legislative institution.

Since her election as chief clerk in 1985, Ramona has served in every ASLCS leadership role available to principal members, culminating in her 1994 -1995 presidency. She is a long-time member of the Mason’s Manual Commission, a graduate of the Legislative Staff Management Institute and a recipient of ASLCS’ Joseph A. Beek Distinguished Service Award. She has served as staff chair of NCSL, as a member of the NCSL Executive Committee, and as a member of the NCSL Foundation for State Legislatures. Ramona has traveled on behalf of the Trust for Representative Democracy, visiting Central American democracies and working in Palestine training fellow clerks on how to serve their parliaments.
The American Society of Legislative Clerks and Secretaries recognizes Steve Arias for his outstanding contributions to the New Mexico House of Representatives and his distinguished service to ASLCS and NCSL. Steve is currently the fourth longest serving clerk or secretary in the country; he was elected chief clerk in 1983. Prior to his election, he spent 18 years as a legislative employee.

Steve has been an active and influential member of ASLCS since 1983, serving with distinction three times on the Executive Committee, including his current position as an appointed principal, and was a member of the 2000 Mason’s Manual Revision Commission for three years. One of Steve’s remarkable contributions to ASLCS and NCSL is his role in establishing and maintaining a relationship with international colleagues in Mexico and Central America. The Mexican clerks formed their society, the Association of Chief Clerks of Mexico’s State Legislatures and the Federal District of Mexico (ANOMAC), with encouragement from ASLCS more than a decade ago. Steve’s participation and leadership at that time laid the groundwork for a mutually beneficial relationship with ANOMAC that continues today. Steve is a well-known and highly regarded figure at ANOMAC annual meetings. He is an ambassador of good will who represents ASLCS with grace and dignity.
The Leadership Staff Section recognizes Terri Franks-Smith with the 2012 Legislative Staff Achievement Award for her contributions to the Idaho House of Representatives and the Leadership Staff Section of NCSL. Terri began working for the speaker’s office in 1973 and has served nine speakers. As chief fiscal officer, Terri administers the House budget and handles legislator compensation and expenses, accounts payable, human resources, payroll and benefit administration. She also is responsible for various contracts, leases and the legislative social calendar. She has managed numerous building projects and has a vast historical knowledge of the capitol and its furnishings. Her institutional knowledge of the Idaho Legislature spans almost four decades. Terri is known for her professionalism, discretion and loyalty. Throughout her career, she has endeavored to preserve the legislative institution and to pass her love of it on to her colleagues.

Terri has been active with LSS since 1995, and was a long-time member of the Executive Committee. She has participated on nearly every LSS standing committee, including chair of the Bylaws Committee. She demonstrates her commitment to LSS and NCSL by frequently attending professional development seminars and the Legislative Summit. She mentors LSS members by sharing her insights and experiences, both within and outside of legislature, and befriends newcomers who need help navigating their way into LSS. She is responsive and always ready and willing to assist the staff section. In her words, participating in NCSL and LSS has given her a broader perspective of the legislative arena and allowed her to create lasting friendships.
Arnold “Arnie” Sowell, Policy Director, Office of the Speaker, California Assembly

The Leadership Staff Section recognizes Arnold “Arnie” Sowell with the 2012 Legislative Staff Achievement Award for his contributions to the California Assembly. Arnie has served for several years under several speakers, including the Honorable John Pérez, the Honorable Karen Bass, the Honorable Fabian Núñez and, before working for Governor Gray Davis, the Honorable Willie Brown Jr. His contributions to policy development and legislative accomplishment have helped transform the role of legislative staff in California. He was instrumental in bringing together stakeholders in the Legislature, the governor's office and the private sector to craft and pass legislation on climate change. Because of this expertise, and through his part in creating the Green Collar Jobs Council, he also is at the forefront of efforts to ensure that California takes full advantage of opportunities that arise in the emerging green economy. He also has been instrumental in various initiatives to help ensure that veterans and their families receive benefits, services and security.

Arnie is known for his invaluable insight and counsel on virtually every piece of legislation that moves through the capitol. In addition, his networking, team-leading and problem-solving abilities daily demonstrate the best qualities legislative staff have to offer. He is a true leader in maximizing the effectiveness and inclusion of legislative staff in the policymaking process. He leads efforts to make the capitol building more efficient and environmentally sound. In addition, Arnie devotes great time and effort to mentoring and developing the next generation of legislative staff. Be it the speaker’s staff, policy committee staff or personal staff, he is constantly sharing his expertise and experience to help them grow and rise to meet the challenges they face.
The Legal Services Staff Section recognizes Deborah Haskins with the 2012 Legislative Staff Achievement Award for her contributions to the Colorado General Assembly and NCSL. Deborah has a long and distinguished career with the Colorado General Assembly. She has drafted many complicated and high-profile bills in health, social services programs, Medicaid, tort reform and, most recently, civil unions. Deborah also oversees administrative rule review, one of the office's major functions, and acts as the office's liaison to the General Assembly's Committee on Legal Services, the office's oversight committee, for rule review. For several years, Deborah has taken the lead in designing and organizing the office's new employee training program and in helping to organize and present the orientation program for new members of the General Assembly. She also is responsible for overseeing updates and rewrites of the office's drafting manual and, as a member of the office’s management team, helps make decisions and set direction for the office.

Deborah also has provided significant and valuable service to LSSS as a member of the NCSL Executive Committee, a member and chair of the Program Planning Committee, chair of the Awards and Nominations committees, and staff section chair. As a member of NCSL’s Legislative Staff Coordinating Committee (LSCC), she served on various LSCC subcommittees, including the Staff Section Officers’ Subcommittee, and was responsible for the orientation program for first-time legislative staff attendees at the San Antonio Legislative Summit. In addition, Deborah has had substantial responsibility for planning and hosting NCSL meetings held in Colorado, including the NCSL Executive Committee/LSCC, LSSS professional development seminars, and visiting delegations of international legislators and legislative staff at the Colorado Capitol.
The Legal Services Staff Section recognizes Richard Taff with the 2012 Legislative Staff Achievement Award for his contributions to the Connecticut General Assembly and NCSL. Richard has provided long and valuable service to the Connecticut General Assembly, the Connecticut legal community and the public. He has served for 31 years as attorney for the Judiciary Committee and is a leading authority on criminal law in Connecticut. In addition to drafting clear, concise, well-structured and well-researched bills, Richard serves as the Legislative Commissioners’ Office’s (LCO) “go-to” staffer on drafting issues; reviews bill drafts prepared by other attorneys; and trains and mentors new LCO attorneys on bill drafting, legislative process and legislative rules. Richard also drafted portions of LCO’s Attorneys Bill Drafting and Legislative Procedures manuals and provides ongoing bill drafting training to LCO attorneys.

Richard has lectured on bill drafting and legislative process at the University of Connecticut School of Law and Yale Law School and wrote an article on statutory construction for Connecticut Lawyer, a journal published by the Connecticut Bar Association. Richard’s advice as an expert on Connecticut legislative procedure is sought and relied upon by legislative leaders. Many of his suggested substantive and technical changes to the Joint Rules of the Senate and House of Representatives have been adopted, including changes to improve the legislative process. Richard also serves as LCO librarian, maintaining and adding to the office's historical collection of legislative and case law books. He advocated for and served on a workgroup that developed new signage at the Legislative Office Building to improve public access. Richard’s LCO career defines the role of a legislative attorney in the legislative process, setting the standard for dedication, commitment, integrity, excellence, initiative and innovation.
The Legislative Education Staff Network is pleased to recognize Jan Yamane for her excellence in service to the Hawaii Legislature and to LESN with presentation of the 2012 LESN Recognition Award. Jan has combined her knowledge in audit standards and legal acumen with a quick learning curve on education issues to assist in audits that have policy implications. Within her office, Jan has led attempts to solidify unfettered access to information and data, challenging the U.S. Department of Education in its interpretation of the federal Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act.

Jan is actively involved with LESN. She served on the LESN Steering Committee as an NCSL and Education Commission of the States’ appointee between 2006 and 2009. In that capacity, she led the network in the arduous and time-consuming task of developing a strategic plan. Jan graciously volunteered to research, guide and direct this work over a two-year period. Her hard work has endured as the network’s three-year strategic plan was revised in 2012. Jan also has been an invaluable participant in network policy discussions relating to the federal No Child Left Behind Act and the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act. Jan has served on the NCSL Executive Committee and is active in the National Legislative Program Evaluation Society. In addition, Jan has provided targeted guidance and direction to her New Mexico colleagues in formulating legislation to codify the requirements for a P-20 data educational system. In nominating Jan for the LESN Recognition Award, Frances Ramirez-Maestas, director of the New Mexico Legislative Education Study Committee, notes that, “Jan’s experience and expertise in education policy have contributed to the sustained development of legislative education staff across the states. As legislative staff and LESN member, I recognize Jan for her professionalism, competence and integrity in her service to the Legislature and to the public.”
The Legislative Health Staff Network recognizes Mark Andrews with the 2012 Legislative Staff Achievement Award for his contributions to the Utah Legislature and NCSL. Mark is a policy analyst with Utah’s Office of Legislative Research and General Counsel. Over the past 24 years, he has provided nonpartisan staff support to various committees of the Utah Legislature, including committees dealing with health and human services issues, taxation and redistricting. Mark served as a staff officer of NCSL’s Standing Committee on Health for five years. He also has played a leadership role in LHSN for many years and is currently a member of its Steering Committee.
Jay Pearson, Legislative Education and Development Project Manager,
Virginia House of Delegates

The Legislative Information and Communications Staff Section recognizes Jay Pearson with the 2012 Legislative Staff Achievement Award for his contributions to the Virginia House of Delegates and NCSL. Jay serves as the director for the Virginia House of Delegates Information and Communications Services Office. He has worked with the House of Delegate’s Clerk’s Office since 2002. Jay’s responsibilities as director include scheduling and coordinating chamber presentations; researching, compiling, revising and producing General Assembly demographic resource materials; handling inquiries and conducting legislative research; supervising production of copies of legislation for members’ use on the House floor in coordination with the daily House calendar; and compiling and preparing for clerk’s certification requested statutes, Acts of Assembly and legislative records.

Jay is an active member of the Legislative Information and Communications Staff Section. He currently serves as LINCS chair and previously served as vice chair. He is a member of the Legislative Staff Coordinating Committee (LSCC) and is a co-chair of the LSCC Staff Section Officers Team.
Kristin Ford, Legislative Librarian, Legislative Reference Library, Idaho Legislature

The Legislative Research Librarians Legislative Staff Achievement Award recognizes Kristin Ford’s strong and dedicated service to the Idaho Legislature and her profession, as well as her many years of tireless service to LRL. Kristen has served as legislative librarian for the Idaho Legislature since 1999. In addition to research, cataloging and indexing, she conducts legislative research classes for law students and CLE seminars for attorneys, participates in new legislator orientation and assists the public with legislative history research. She staffed the Idaho Citizen's Commission on Redistricting in 2011-2012, designing the website, writing the guidelines and providing information for the commission. Kristin has authored several articles that were published in Legal Reference Services Quarterly and contributed an article, "Researching Uniform and Model Laws," that appeared in West Group's Perspectives: Teaching Legal Research and Writing. She also co-authored an article with two Idaho senators on the judicial use of legislative history that was published in the Idaho Law Review.

Kristin has been active in the Legislative Research Librarians Staff Section, serving one year as chair and another three years in other staff section offices. She served as a regional coordinator and as a member of the Core Collection Update Committee. Her contributions to LRL also include serving for six years on the Notable Documents Committee, which she currently chairs. Kristin also has served on the NCSL Legislative Staff Coordinating Committee and was featured in the project highlighting legislative careers.
Shelley Day, Legislative Information Liaison, Legislative Research Library, Office of Legislative Research and General Counsel, Utah Legislature

The Legislative Research Librarians Legislative Staff Achievement Award recognizes Shelley Day’s service to the Utah Legislature and her tireless efforts to promote legislative information for legislators, citizens and students. Shelley has been with the Utah Office of Legislative Research and General Counsel since 1991, and has served as the legislative information liaison and manager of the research library since 2000. She conducts research on policy issues for committee studies and legislation, conducts customized training, provides project guidance for legislative interns and constituent services, and contributes to the production of major legislative publications. Shelley has been the webmaster of the Utah State Legislature since 1995. The Utah legislative website received the Roy B. Gibson Freedom of Information Award from the Utah Headliners Chapter of the Society of Professional Journalists in 1998, and NCSL's first Online Democracy Award in 2005.

Shelley has played an active role in NCSL's Legislative Research Librarian staff section, serving as chair and as an officer for an additional three years. She has planned and served as faculty for numerous LRL sessions at the Legislative Summit, LRL professional development seminars and online webinars, including "Researching Legislative History and Intent" and "Creating Databases for Statutorily Mandated Reports." Shelley also has served as the Utah coordinator for NCSL's America's Legislators Back to School Program and represented LRL on the Legislative Staff Coordinating Committee, Outreach Work Group, Technology Subcommittee and E-Learning Subcommittee.
Sarah Franklin, Senior Research Associate, Legislative Research Unit, Illinois General Assembly

The National Association of Legislative Fiscal Offices recognizes Sarah Franklin with the 2012 Legislative Staff Achievement Award for her contributions to the Illinois General Assembly. Sarah has worked for the Illinois Legislative Research Unit for nine years. She conducts general research for legislators and authors the Illinois Tax Handbook for Legislators, a compilation of information about every major tax in Illinois.
The National Association of Legislative Information Technology recognizes Jonathan Palmore for his service to the Virginia Senate and his contributions to NALIT. Jonathan has been active in both NALIT and the American Society of Legislative Clerks and Secretaries, serving on panels at the professional development seminars of both staff sections as well as at the NCSL Legislative Summit. He currently serves as a NALIT director and has previously served on various NALIT committees. He is always willing to share his ideas and expertise with his colleagues in other states.

Jonathan also is a strong team member of the Virginia Senate who always considers the needs of the agency and the senators. He is constantly striving to find solutions to problems and make technology more flexible to meet the demands of his customers. Jonathan recently was instrumental in moving the Senate from a Lotus platform to a Google platform. He and his team spent hours to make the transition as seamless as possible. The new system is flexible, clean and allows members to move easily between the calendar and bill status, and also permits them to make and access notes more easily than with the old system. In addition, the new system has been integrated with the voting system that the Senate previously developed, giving members immediate access to floor votes. Senators were happy with the solution, and the number of members using the chamber automation system increased immediately. This new calendar program is a prime example of how Jonathan constantly strives to use technology to enhance the process and provide more flexible programs for members and staff.
The National Association of Legislative Information Technology recognizes the team of Steve Dustin, Heather Kohler and Gopali Nanda from the Office of Information Systems in the Maryland Department of Legislative Services for their active participation in NALIT and their contribution to a successful redistricting process during the most recent Maryland legislative session. Although software available today allows analysts to draw districts that comply with population requirements, the real problem is that translating the census codes for blocks into legislative language is painstaking work, requiring a tremendous amount of data input and rigorous proofreading and editing. Any errors require technical amendments to be drafted and adopted on the Assembly floor, thereby slowing the process and potentially creating more controversy on an already controversial issue.

Staff of the Office of Information Systems were asked if they could design a solution to remove human error from the drafting process and whether it could be accomplished in the two and one-half months before the regular session convened. Steve Dustin, Heather Kohler and Gopali Nanda took on the task and built an application using Excel and the bill drafting system to convert reports generated by the redistricting software into spreadsheets. The application worked flawlessly. Legislative editors and proofreaders could find no errors in any of the redistricting bills prepared for introduction. The new application, which runs as an Excel macro, can create the bill language in approximately 40 minutes to an hour. This programming work was essential to a successful redistricting process during the regular session. It clearly improved effectiveness by saving countless hours of manual input in the drafting process and eliminated the need for technical amendments to correct typographical errors. The team was able to quickly comprehend the logic behind creating a working application, test it and put it into production—all within eight weeks.
The National Legislative Program Evaluation Society recognizes Phil Leone with the 2012 NLPES Outstanding Achievement Award for his contributions and service to the field of legislative program evaluation and to NLPES. Phil joined the Virginia Joint Legislative Audit and Review Commission (JLARC) in 1974. In 1986, he was appointed by the General Assembly as JLARC director, and he served in that capacity for the next 24 years.

Phil actively participated in NLPES and in the evaluation field. He was on the NLPES Executive Committee from 1980 to 1986, serving one term as chair. Phil also served on the NCSL Executive Committee from 1987 to 1990. In addition, he served as a member of the NCSL Legislative Institution Task Force (1992-1993) and on the NCSL Working Group on Pension Reform (1994-1995). In 1997, he was appointed to the prestigious Advisory Council on Government Auditing Standards of the General Accounting Office. Phil was a moderator and presenter at numerous NCSL meetings and was a member of the NCSL Fiscal Affairs and Oversight Committee from 1989 until his retirement in September 2010.
The National Legislative Services and Security Association recognizes Carl Barnhart with the 2012 Legislative Staff Achievement Award for his contributions to the Pennsylvania House of Representatives and NCSL. Carl is the acting assistant director of the Pennsylvania House of Representatives and has been a member of NLSSA since 2001. He served on the NLSSA Executive Board as a trustee from 2004-2009 and currently serves as vice chair of Region 3. Carl also is a life member of the Rahway First Aid Emergency Squad and a recipient of the Rahway First Aid Emergency Squad John Glennon Humanitarian Award.

Carl has performed his role within NLSSA with honor and distinction. As a member of NLSSA's executive board, he has been active in outreach and cultivating NLSSA membership, as well as planning and providing training for NLSAA members. He is always eager to share his extensive knowledge and expertise in legislative security management and presents a unique perspective on the many issues facing NLSSA. Carl is a highly dedicated individual in both his job and his work within NLSSA. Well-respected among his colleagues, he is known for his strong principles, sense of fairness and warm personality.
The National Legislative Services and Security Association recognizes Kevin Kuroda with the 2012 Legislative Staff Achievement Award for his contributions to the Hawaii House of Representatives and NCSL. Kevin is the sergeant-at-arms of the Hawaii House of Representatives and has been an active and engaged member of NLSSA from the beginning, when he sat in on an Executive Board meeting as a new member in 2004. He served as the Region 1 chair from 2006-2008, and currently serves as the treasurer and chair of the Budget Committee.

Kevin has performed his role within NLSSA with honor and distinction. In his role as NLSSA treasurer, he has proven to be dependable and has done an excellent job maintaining the budget and facilitating membership dues. He also has been an avid photographic contributor to the NLSSA newsletter. Kevin has distinguished himself in his job through his dedication and professionalism. Well- respected among his colleagues for his efforts within NLSSA, he is known for his warm and friendly personality.
The Research and Committee Staff Section recognizes John Cannon with the 2012 Legislative Staff Achievement Award for his contributions to the Utah Legislature and NCSL. John serves as the managing policy analyst in the Utah Legislature’s Office of Legislative Research and General Counsel. In this position, he manages the 11 policy analysts and several interns, and works with the director and other managers to guide the overall direction of the office. John joined the office in 1992. His committee staffing assignments have been primarily in the areas of local government, state government operations, election laws, rules and redistricting. During the 2011 redistricting effort, John guided a large staff of map drawers, attorneys and others who helped the Legislature draw boundaries for state legislative, congressional and school board districts, and oversaw implementation of an on-line citizen’s map-making program that allowed greater citizen participation in the redistricting process. In his capacity as staff to the House Rules Committee, John is considered the “go-to” staffer for all questions relating to legislative rules and processes.

John possesses a unique array of superior technical skills combined with a first-rate political acumen and an unassuming and down-to-earth demeanor, great sense of humor and compassion for others. Although he is now ending his career with the office to pursue other opportunities, he leaves behind a legacy of quiet, competent service to the Utah Legislature. John is a long-term and active member of the Research and Committee Staff Section and it is with great affection and appreciation for his service that RACSS presents him with the 2012 Legislative Staff Achievement Award.
NCSL STANDING COMMITTEES

Melissa Calderwood, Principal Analyst, Legislative Research Department, Kansas Legislature

The staff co-chairs of the NCSL Standing Committees recognize Melissa Calderwood with the 2012 Legislative Staff Achievement Award for her contributions to the Kansas Legislature and to NCSL. Melissa is a principal analyst for the Kansas Legislative Research Department, a legislative agency that has as its main function providing nonpartisan, objective research and fiscal analysis for the Kansas Legislature. Her current assignments include staff for the House and Senate Financial Institutions and Insurance committees, the Senate Public Health and Welfare Committee, the Joint Committee on Arts and Cultural Resources, the Joint Committee on Health Policy Oversight and the Health Care Stabilization Fund Oversight Committee. Melissa joined the department in 2002 and served for two years as a fiscal analyst before assuming her current position.

NCSL has afforded Melissa many opportunities for professional development, beginning with a skills development seminar for fiscal analysts and continuing with training provided by the Research and Committee Staff Section when her position changed. Melissa has served on NCSL’s Financial Services Committee and continues to be active on the NCSL Communications, Financial Services and Interstate Commerce Committee (CFI), where she has served twice as both a staff-vice chair and staff chair, moderating issue forums and helping lead CFI business meetings. In addition to her work with the CFI Committee, Melissa serves as a steering committee member of the Transforming Health Care Through Technology Partners Project and participates in the Legislative Staff Health Network.
The staff co-chairs of the NCSL Standing Committees recognize Karl Aro with the 2012 Legislative Staff Achievement Award for his contributions to the Maryland General Assembly and NCSL. In 1997, Karl was named executive director of the newly created Department of Legislative Services that was formed by consolidating three former staff agencies. He first joined the legislative staff in 1979 as a bill drafter and research analyst, eventually serving as the deputy director and director of the Research Division in one of the predecessor agencies. His special area of expertise is redistricting and reapportionment, for which he was lead legislative staff in 1981-82, 1991-92, 2001-02 and 2011-12.

A 1993 graduate of the Legislative Staff Management Institute, Karl has been an active member of the Research and Committee Staff Section, serving as vice-chair in 1997-98 and chair in 1998-99, and as chair of the Planning Committee for the 1997 professional development seminar for senior research staff. He served on the NCSL Legislative Staff Coordinating Committee (LSCC) and was chair and vice-chair of its Task Force on Staff Development, and was chair of the Task Force on Legislative Staff Management. Karl served as a member of NCSL’s Executive Committee from 2000 to 2003, and also served as staff chair of the Legislative Effectiveness Committee (2002-2003) and as staff vice chair (2004-2005) and staff chair (2005-2006) of the Redistricting and Elections Committee. He currently is a staff co-chair of the Legislative Effectiveness Committee. Karl also has been actively involved with NCSL’s efforts to help parliamentary staff and other stakeholders develop and improve their legislative institutions.