Chair's Corner

By Cindy O'Dell, NALIT Chair, 2018-19; Service and Support Manager, Legislative Research Commission, Kentucky

Greetings NALIT members! As my year as chair has drawn to a close, I am both happy and sad. Serving in NALIT has presented me with a unique opportunity for growth and I am truly thankful to have experienced it. It has been wonderful to get to know so many great people who are talented and professional information technology staff and dedicated public servants.

NALIT members have been generous with their time and have worked tirelessly to provide quality sessions for both the annual Legislative Summit and the upcoming Professional Development Seminar. In addition to professional development topics we have worked on policies, procedures, bylaws, and a new logo for NALIT. Thanks to the sponsorship of NCSL, and to speakers Jeff Ford and Mike Norris, we also held a successful cybersecurity webinar. I hope to see more webinars from within our midst over the coming years as well.

It takes many volunteers to make the work of NALIT progress – from annual award committees, planning committees, seminar and webinar presenters, and the Nominating Committee who presents a slate of officers for the upcoming year.

Thank you to my fellow officers of NALIT who served on both the Executive Committee and the Professional Development Seminar Planning Committee: Jeff Ford, vice chair; Soren Jacobsen, secretary; and Kyle Forster, past chair. Each of you have assisted me and guided me along this path.

Thank you to the six directors. Each year, the new NALIT Chair appoints three directors to serve a two year term. Along with the officers, these directors, serving staggered two-year terms, complete the Executive Committee. The directors work on policies and procedures, webinars, and planning NALIT offerings at the Annual Legislative Summit. Jim Bell, New York Senate; Doug Farr, Utah; and Brian Hansen, Alabama completed their two year commitments at the end of the Legislative Summit, and we thank you for your service. Guillermo Cordon, Louisiana House; Michael Ganesan, Kentucky; and DeLynn VanDriel, Washington; are completing their first year of service. Thank you for all of the conference calls, emails, suggestions, and votes. You've been a great team, and I hope you've enjoyed it!

Thank you to the Professional Development Seminar Planning Committee, including the officers; Idaho Host State Chairs Glenn Harris and Soren Jacobsen; and committee members Scott Darnall, South Dakota; Adam Ford, Missouri House; Amber Snyder, Texas; Kelly Stallings, North Carolina; and Ronda Tentarelli, Washington. The work of the PDS Planning Committee continues right up until the seminar Oct. 1-4 in beautiful Boise, Idaho. The committee has worked hard to put together a well-rounded agenda with something for everyone. Your time and insight are vital to the success of the PDS, and I appreciate each and every one of you.

I also extend gratitude to the NALIT members of the Online Democracy Award Committee; Tim Banaszak, Alaska; and Paul Pak, Massachusetts; and to the Legislative Staff Achievement Award Committee: Joel Redding, Kentucky; Dave Burhop, Virginia; and Vinay Dattu, Tennessee. Thank you to Kyle Forster, North Dakota; Terri Clark, Kansas; and Linda Wettstone, Virginia Senate for the essential work of the Nominating Committee.

To all the members of NALIT, thank you for the listserv responses, the participation in conferences and seminars, in surveys, webinars, and a logo design contest. I hope that each of you have found this organization as beneficial as I have. Keep up the great work!

Last but far from least, to our constant advisor, supporter, planner, troubleshooter, and sometimes magician, NCSL Staff Liaison to NALIT Pam Greenberg—I am forever grateful for everything you do. None of this would be possible without you!

I hope my term as chair has helped encourage and support others within NALIT. I commend our next group of officers and their leadership as they endeavor to continue moving NALIT forward. Again, I am so thankful to each of you and blessed to have had this opportunity. I look forward to continuing to learn and grow from one another in this great organization!

Best regards,
Cindy

Legislative IT Profiles

Starting with the Winter 2016 edition of the NALIT Newsletter, we began a series of articles profiling legislative IT offices. Since then, we've highlighted IT offices in 19 states: Alaska, Colorado, Hawaii, Idaho, Illinois, Indiana, Kansas, Kentucky, Maine, Minnesota Office of the Revisor, Montana, North Carolina, North Dakota, Ohio, South Dakota, Tennessee, Virginia and Wyoming. This edition highlights Alabama.

Alabama

By Brian Hansen, IT Director, Alabama

The Alabama Legislature is a bicameral body made up of the House of Representatives and the Senate. The 105 members of the House and the 35 members of the Senate are elected to serve four-year terms.

The Alabama Legislature convenes in regular annual sessions limited to 30 meeting days within a period of 105 calendar days as set forth in the constitution. Special sessions of the Legislature may be called by the governor, with the proclamation listing the subjects which the Governor wishes considered. Special sessions are limited to 12 meeting days within a 30-calendar day span. Typically, there are usually two meeting or "legislative" days per week, with the other days devoted to committee meetings. Convene and adjourn times are set buy the adoption of a motion on the floor of each body.

The Legislative Computer Center (LCC) is a non-partisan joint legislative department, overseen by the Clerk of the House of Representatives and the Secretary of the Senate. The LCC consists of a staff of 11: one director, one systems administrator, one network administrator, one trainer/application support technician, one programmer/analyst, two PC/application support technicians and one hardware/audio technician.

The LCC provides technical support for all aspects of the legislative process and for the members and staff of the House of Representatives, Senate and Legislative Services Agency totaling approximately 400 people.

The Alabama Legislature website is www.legislature.state.al.us.

Contribute Your State's Profile

Please consider contributing information about your office for the next edition of the newsletter. Here is some of the information to include in your state's IT profile narrative:

- What is your normal legislative assembly schedule?
  - o Convene and adjournment schedule.
  - o Any constitutional limitations on legislative days.
  - o Session types.
- How many members and staff are supported by IT?
  - o Number of legislative members by chamber.
  - o Number of full and/or part time legislative assembly staff, including types of staff.
  - o Number of council staff.
  - o Any offsite locations supported.

- Do you have IT staff that support specific chambers or caucuses? If so, what does the IT staff support versus overall IT support staff?
- What areas of IT does your office support, and how many staff support each area?
- Do you support "bring your own devices" or do you provide equipment to members and staff?
- How is your IT organization governed?
- Major project information.
  - Any major projects in progress that you want to share?
- Provide a website link to your IT or office website.

Send your newsletter articles to Nate Rohan, NALIT Secretary for 2019-20, at Nate.Rohan@legis.wisconsin.gov.

NCSL Webinars On-Demand

In May, NALIT sponsored a webinar: Cybersecurity Inside State Legislatures, featuring NALIT Chair Cindy O'Dell, manager, Service and Support Center, Legislative Research Commission, Kentucky, as moderator for the webinar. Cindy initiated and coordinated the webinar for NALIT.

Speakers for the webinar were Jeff Ford, chief technical officer, Legislative Services Agency, Indiana; and Michael Norris, cybersecurity administrator, LEG-TECH, Washington.

Jeff and Mark spoke about how legislatures are dealing with cyber threats, including what kinds of funding, staffing, training, preparation and policies are needed to respond. Their presentations are available on the web and the webinar is available to view view on-demand.

NCSL has recorded webinars on a wide variety of topics. Links to the archived webinars and upcoming webinars are available here.

NALIT has a New Logo!

Grace White, GIS analyst/cartographer for the Wisconsin Legislative Technology Service Bureau (LTSB), submitted the winning logo in the National Association of Legislative Information Technology's (NALIT) April 2019 logo contest.

Contest applicants were asked to design a logo that would represent NALIT members and the association's purpose and mission, and which would also:

- Complement or harmonize with the new NCSL logo so that both logos could work well when used together.
- Be appropriate and flexible enough to be used in a variety of ways, such as on web pages, lapel pins or T-shirts, on social media and in print publications.
- Have a limited number of colors, with a design that can work in black and white as well as color.
- Have typography and details that are readable and visible, even on small-screen mobile devices.

"Grace has an incredible eye for design," says Jeff Ylvisaker, director of the LTSB. "She created LTSB's logo, designs user interfaces for software applications and websites, and creates beautiful maps for the Wisconsin Legislature. We're honored that she won and very proud of her!"

More than 160 members of NALIT cast their votes, with the winning logo receiving a clear majority of the vote. The new logo will replace the old logo, which dates to a similar contest in 2004.

Register now for the NALIT Professional Development Seminar in Boise, Idaho, Oct. 1-4, 2019. **www.ncsl.org/nalit2019**

Congress Turns to State Legislatures for IT Ideas

By Pam Greenberg, NCSL

"States are a great laboratory of wonderful ideas," U.S. Representative Tom Graves (R-Ga.), vice chair of the Select Committee on the Modernization of Congress, said in Juy during a hearing on "Modernizing Legislative Information Technologies: Lessons from the States." The hearing featured testimony from top legislative technology officers from Washington and California.

Members of the select committee, five of whom are former state legislators, heard from Mike Rohrbach, chief information officer and director of information technology for the Washington Legislature, and Diane Boyer-Vine, legislative counsel and head of the Legislative Data Center in California.

Rohrbach spoke first, highlighting ways the Washington Legislature encourages citizen engagement in the legislative process. "Increasingly, citizens want a consumer-quality experience when interacting with their government," he said. Signing up to testify before a committee should be as easy as booking a hotel room, tracking a bill should be as easy as tracking a package, and citizens should be able to do both from a phone or tablet, he added.

The Washington Legislature has worked to make its website accessible and compatible with mobile devices. Citizens can subscribe to receive emails or text notifications on bills, topics and committee hearings, and they can use real-time legislative information from the legislature's Web Services. Remote video testimony means constituents who live far from the capitol can testify at legislative hearings.

Rohrbach also described services that support the legislative process—in the chamber, in committees or anywhere and anytime legislators or staff need information. The legislature is using cloud services for email, documents, collaboration sites and disaster recovery. Cybersecurity training is custom-tailored for the legislature. Multifactor authentication was just implemented in the legislature this year (a "big deal," Rohrbach noted) to help prevent unauthorized access to legislative information.

Boyer-Vine described California's "Member Portfolio" web application. Members can access all types of legislative information on iPads, including letters of support or opposition to bills, messages, staff and caucus recommendations, the daily file schedule and real-time vote information.

She also described the "As Amends the Law" feature: Each time amendments to a bill are adopted, the bill as amended is posted on internal and external websites. In addition to showing the different versions of the bill, the feature also shows the changes to the underlying existing law.

Following the hearing, the Select Committee presented 24 recommendations, including restructuring IT services and resources, making cybersecurity training mandatory for members, and requiring all broadcasts of House proceedings to be closed captioned. The select committee also recommended adopting a standardized format for legislation that would show bill changes, visualizations, and analyses of legislative text.

New NALIT Liaison

Please welcome Kae Warnock as NALIT's new liaison! After serving more than 20 years as the NALIT staff liaison, Pam Greenberg will be moving out of that role after the NALIT Seminar in Boise in October. Pam will still be working with NALIT members, however, researching legislative IT issues, in addition to continuing to cover cybersecurity, privacy, and other technology-related issues.

NALIT's new liaison, Kae Warnock, has been with NCSL since 1987. She is a policy specialist in NCSL's Legislative Staff Services Program and also serves as the NCSL liaison to the Research, Editorial, Legal, and Committee Staff association. Kae has given presentations on leadership skills, goal setting, capitol restoration, continuity of government, research techniques and civic education. Her topical areas include: bill drafting, code revision, capitol restoration and renovation, and continuity of government.

To ensure a successful transition, Kae and Pam will be working closely together over the next few months. Kae can be reached in NCSL's Denver office at 303-856-1553 and at kae.warnock@ncsl.org.