



The Journal

National Network of Law School Officers

www.NNLSO.org

Fall 2009
Newsletter

Executive Director's Report



Here we are again. At this writing the temperature in Houston has not hit triple digit as yet – I won't even venture a guess as to the number of triple digit days we will have

by the time you receive the *Journal*.

In spite of the economic problems many of our institutions are facing, we AACRAOans and NNLSOans came to Chicago in April, 2009, to meet and network with our peers. It seems like only yesterday – where did the time go? Remember the windy, rainy, cold days; the umbrellas being turned inside-out; the numerous shuttle rides from the hotel to the convention center; the visits with all the tremendous corporate sponsors in the exhibit hall; the freebies from those corporate sponsors? Time does fly when you are having fun – and who could have more fun than law school administrators. After all we all love the law!!

Prior to the 2009 Annual Meeting, the NNLSO Executive Committee (EC) met in an executive meeting to approve the incorporation of the National Network of Law School Officers (NNLSO). Once this business item was completed, the EC met to ratify the election results for the 2009-2011 NNLSO Executive Officers and Board Members. The Nominations and Elections Committee comprised of Jerri Cunningham, Oral Hope and Maryam Isles, did a fantastic job in not only soliciting nominations, but also in conducting the election, counting the

votes and reporting to the Executive Committee. The N&E report was given by Jerri and ratified by the Executive Committee. The Executive Committee was then joined by the newly elected Board members and the area representatives to continue the preconference executive meeting.

As always, I wish **all** of you had been able to attend the Annual Meeting in Chicago this past April, 2009. NNLSO was well represented at the AACRAO meeting. NNLSO presented extremely timely sessions and because of this, we did not have too much of an opportunity to go to non-law school sessions. Several of our sessions were standing room only. I know we all left the meeting rejuvenated and excited about what we learned at the different sessions.

We heard from Camille DeJorna, representing the ABA Section on Legal Education. We were given information on how law schools try to level the playing field for students facing a variety of issues. We learned about issuing digitally signed, certified pdf transcripts. Janet Ward informed us how to get organized – and Yes it is OK to say NO! Julia Yaffee and Hollis Kulwin presented their Facebook and Beyond session. AACRAO was so impressed with the proposal that they made the presentation a webcast. What a tribute to our NNLSO program session committee. I want to once again thank the NNLSOans that stayed for the early morning last session on Thursday – we were enlightened with the importance of providing a high quality of customer services in the Registrar's office.

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Dean's Corner - "Be a Leader Where You Live"

By: Bradley J.B. Toben
Dean
Baylor Law School

"Leadership is not about titles; it's about creating results and in the process, motivating and even inspiring others."

So much literature on leadership focuses on "the leader" and assumes that one person at the helm can – is expected to – assure the success and forward movement of an institution. While a leader does bear ultimate responsibility for the health and progress of an enterprise, I believe that *each colleague on a team* must conceptualize his or her position as one of leadership within their particular bailiwick.

Indeed, the culture of a workplace – its tenor, shared assumptions and values – is molded through each person on a team committing to be a leader within his or her sphere of influence and operation. But how can a professional staff team member be a leader within the context of his or her particular responsibilities and place within the organization?

Over the years, I have seen that the following principles can help anyone become a leader – an effective one – within their sphere of influence. Leadership is not about titles; it's about creating results and in the process, motivating and even inspiring others.

▶ Be aware of the "they" syndrome. Many – maybe even most – people go through life with a notion that "they" will take care of it." Most often, those relying on "they" to take care of matters have only the vaguest notion of whom "they" are, but hold a conviction that if things don't go right, "they" will get it done, will repair the damage, will assume the blame or will otherwise insulate an institution or others from harm. Real maturity as a leader – as a person – comes when you realize that the "they" is you and you must assume responsibility for getting whatever it is that needs to be done accomplished.

▶ No institution is perfect. Always keep in mind the 80/20% rule. Eighty percent of your time and the time of your colleagues almost always will be spent keeping the institution stable and operating smoothly. The other 20% of each day must be dedicated to moving the institution to new points of achievement. This 20% is the difference between merely "keeping the lights on" and exercising leadership in your position to advance the profile and strength of your institution.

▶ Leaders are willing to take on opposition to remain true to mission or to get the big project or task done. Malcolm Muggeridge, the 20th century theologian, philosopher and journalist, observed: "Never forget that only dead fish swim with the stream." However, when you step to the fore to take a position, make sure you have picked a worthy goal. Don't die on a mole hill. And if you have picked a worthy goal . . . remember Tom Petty and "I Won't Back Down."

▶ No good thing or project gets done unless a leader or leaders on the team are worrying about it when they get up and worrying about it when they go to sleep. Goals are not accomplished by committees; goals are accomplished by individuals who fully commit themselves to worrying incessantly about a goal or project until the desired end is accomplished – sometimes an end that can be attained within a brief time, but sometimes one that can take years to accomplish. And remember Winston Churchill: "Never, never, never give up."

▶ Know what is really important in the long run and what the key priorities are in your position. Everything else is secondary (and won't even be remembered by most). Most of us have an easy familiarity with the names of our nation's outstanding

presidents, but does anyone remember the name of Harry Truman's vice-president? FDR's first two vice presidents? Woodrow Wilson's? Theodore Roosevelt's? Abraham Lincoln's first vice president? Thomas Jefferson's two vice presidents? Our culture does not assign importance or bearing to secondary matters. Never confuse tasks or undertakings that you "enjoy" doing or that are easy with that which must be done to achieve important ends, even if you don't enjoy going down that road.

▶ Once you have all the facts and have considered them carefully and have as much possible knowledge and understanding of the landscape upon which you are acting . . . do something now . . . decide now. Don't let a matter or decision on something just sit if nothing further is going to be added to the mix. Do something. Delay in itself is a bad decision. There is not going to be a "perfect" time to make a decision. There may be exceptions to this, but they are fairly rare. A decision is not going to get any easier. If you frustrate people relying on you by failing to make a decision, that can lead to others not only being disappointed, but also resentful.

▶ No one ever accomplished anything griping. Don't gripe. Spend your time looking for and creating solutions. Also, realize that your "gnat" may be someone else's elephant (and realize this is true about folks further up the line – your elephant may be their gnat). Treat even the "gnat" matters with due attention and sincerity, but do keep perspective about what is important and what is not. Don't just take responsibility when things go wrong; be able to articulate why things went wrong and what will be done specifically to remedy the situation. Remember that when things go wrong, it's not a reflection on your self worth; it just means you have to come at it from another angle or with greater resolve.

▶ Realize that most accomplishments happen in a series of steps. This will make even daunting undertakings do-able. Keep the ball in the air each day on each of the tasks before you. Set interim deadlines. Intentionally set aside regular blocs of time to do the things

that you don't "have to do" (no one will notice if you don't do them) . . . but that you nonetheless need to do to move matters forward.

▶ Listen a whole lot and then listen some more. You're surrounded by a bunch of really bright people who will give you a lot of great ideas, even if the good ones are sometimes mixed among not-so-great ideas. Very graciously indulge the latter and benefit from the former. Welcome, and as appropriate, rely upon the input and advice of others. Good ideas do not have to be your ideas. In fact, until you start getting good ideas from others (and giving them credit for it), you will significantly curtail your leadership potential.

▶ Balance keeping an open mind with abiding by your own firm convictions. Don't be cow-towed into doing something that just does not seem or feel right, even if others say it is the way to go. Sometimes only the lead dog in an area of expertise or endeavor can fully see what lies ahead on the landscape (and you need to realize this and be comfortable with this fact when you are the lead dog).

▶ Spread credit for good results very liberally, but sincerely. People know when they are being patronized. Create a strong sense that the enterprise is a team effort that requires the good work of everyone based upon having a genuine equity interest in the enterprise. And . . . the person who will take the time to pick a gum wrapper off the floor is the one who has that genuine equity interest in the enterprise.

▶ Treat everyone with respect and kindness whether they are the president or the custodian. Show appreciation when a person takes initiative to offer help, a suggestion, or support. Even when in disagreement, let the other person know how much you respect their opinion and input. They are all people and inherently worthy of respect.

▶ Understand that influence – and the wherewithal to accomplish good ends that

comes from it -- comes not from formal titles or from the exercise of formal powers, but from positive, nurtured relationships, reliability, integrity, open-mindedness to divergent perspectives, a highly focused work ethic and, most importantly, serving the needs of others.

► Nurture your gift of encouragement, or develop it if you do not have it. Use it every day and use it liberally. So much can be accomplished by having a foundation of healthy relationships upon which your gifts of gentle persuasion, tact and diplomacy may play out effectively.

Finally, keep in mind that while leadership is a combination of vision, integrity, empathy, humility, work ethic, tenacity and experience, most importantly, a leader is a *servant*. Create a culture of high expectations, attention to detail, kindness and service – by being a consistent example yourself of each of these attributes. To succeed as a leader, you must embrace the concept of being a servant. In fact, genuine servanthood will bring your greatest satisfaction not only in leadership, but in life as well.

In Memory of Wally Walker

May 14, 1945-May 22, 2009

With the passing of Wally Walker, a huge piece of NNLSO history goes with him.

In 1978, Wally was hired as the Registrar for Golden Gate University Law School. He immediately became active in the American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers (AACRAO).

Wally wrote, "When AACRAO, the American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers, held its annual Convention in Miami, FL, in 1978, an "idea" came to mind to those law school registrars and admissions officers who participated in one of AACRAO's professional schools workshops. They had such a good exchange of information that they said, in effect, "We should do this more often!"

"The following year, at the AACRAO Convention in Chicago, plans for a network organized within AACRAO, but adapted specifically for law school registrars and admissions officers, was discussed in further detail. And finally, in 1980 when AACRAO met in New Orleans, this group of law school officers reached a consensus and said, "Let's do it." The organization, named the National Network of Law School Registrars and Admissions Officers, and referred to by its acronym NNLSO, was founded officially.

In 1984, it was written by the then Executive Director, Barbara King, "Although many law school officers were instrumental in organizing and establishing NNLSO, one particular individual, Wally Walker, referred to by some members as Mr. NNLSO Himself, is remembered as the founders' man-of-the-hour."

Wally was recognized for his contributions to NNLSO when he was honored by the organization as the first life member.

Sleep well Mr. NNLSO! Thanks for paving the way for us.

Executive Director's Report (continued from page 1)

We had admissions and registrar's roundtables where we discussed a myriad of useful topics for law school administrators. I don't know how we are going to top our presentations next year but your NNLSO EC is working on making this happen.

As you know, NNLSO conducts a salary/staff survey every two years. This year we learned something new - the membership was not too keen on releasing their salaries. I solicit any recommendations on types of questions to ask when we do this survey again to garner this information. This important information has been used by the membership to negotiate staff or salary increases. Nicole Waterman conducted the survey this year and presented the results in the opening session. You can also find the results of the 2009 survey on the NNLSO website - www.nnlso.org.

I want to thank Jerri Cunningham for all the efforts she put in to make our sessions, luncheon and social events informative and memorable. NLSO folks are hard working, but we also know how to have a good time. We once again managed to take time out from the vast informative sessions to attend the NNLSO social held at Miller's Pub. A fun time was had by all.

At the annual business meeting, I was given the opportunity to recognize outgoing and incoming officers, board members, and area representatives. We would not have a NNLSO organization if not for this group. I also want to thank their respective law schools and Deans for allowing them to devote their time and energy to make our organization the success it is. Please allow me to introduce you to the new Board. The Executive Director, NNLSO *Journal* editor, and four Board positions were up for election. Elected were Lylene Pilkenton (South Texas College of Law), Executive Director; Courtney Hennigan (University of California, Davis); four board positions - Pam Forcum (Texas Tech University); Valerie Harper (Duquesne University School of Law); Ben Hoffman (University of North Dakota); and Nicole Waterman (University of California, Davis). Appreciation plaques were given to outgoing Board members, Michael Johnson and LeAnn Steele. I want to give a special acknowledgement and appreciation to LeAnn Steele. LeAnn served on the NNLSO Executive Committee from 2003-2009 as a Board member and 2002-2003 as a Regional Rep. Thank you, LeAnn, and Wake Forest for your unselfish support of NNLSO.

Mark your calendars now to attend the 96th Annual AACRAO meeting **April 22-25, 2010 (Thursday-Sunday)** at **Ernest N. Morial Convention Center, New Orleans, Louisiana.**

While one of the primary goals of the NNLSO Executive Committee is to plan relevant, informative sessions for the Annual Meeting, we also try to determine the best ways in which to meet the needs of our membership. Please let us know what you expect and need from us. How can we assist you in doing your job better?



*NNLSO Executive Committee
Business Meeting 2009*



*NNLSO Board Members
Ben Hoffman and Roberto Koch*

Did you realize that the NNLSO EC has set aside funds to offset expenses for regional meetings? We realize that not everyone can attend the annual meeting. Please consider arranging for and hosting a regional meeting. You can receive \$500 to go toward your regional meeting. Please contact a member of the Executive Committee or your Area Representative if you want to hold a meeting. We also welcome any suggestions or ideas to make NNLSO a better customer service organization for you.

Please consider running for office, presenting a session, serving as a facilitator. **Become involved!** Our organization is only as strong as YOU MAKE IT.

Thanks again for the opportunity to serve as your Executive Director. My email is lpilkenton@stcl.edu if you want to volunteer or discuss any issue. I hope you had a restful, less stressful summer. **I hope all of you took a vacation. Everyone needs a time to reflect, refresh, revitalize.**

Lylene Pilkenton, NNLSO Executive Director
Registrar Emerita and Development Officer
South Texas College of Law



NNLSO Board Members
Business Meeting 2009

Get to Know Your Regional Representatives



Nancy Hamberlin
Law School Registrar
Brigham Young University
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Mountain West Region

My name is Nancy Hamberlin and I currently represent NNLSO as the Regional Representative to the Mountain West Region. For the past 32 years I have been the Law School Registrar at Brigham Young University, J. Reuben Clark Law School and have had the privilege of being involved with NNLSO as a member of the board, secretary/treasurer, and various other capacities. In March, 2009 I was asked to be a regional representative and accepted readily as I feel the NNLSO is a network of colleagues who care about improving student services and making the law school experience as easy as possible for students.

The Mountain West Region is comprised of 11 schools from the top of Idaho to New Mexico and as the representative, I extend a sincere invitation to fellow colleagues within this region to be active participants in NNLSO where you will find others who understand and share the pressures of deadlines and enforcing school policy and procedure.

We welcome you to share in our journey of learning and growing.

Ashley Gray
Director of Admissions
Northern Kentucky University
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Mid-South Region

Hi – My name is Ashley Gray and I am the Director of Admissions at Northern Kentucky University Chase College of Law. Since 2002, I have served in various admissions positions at the College of Law. I received my B.A. in Psychology from the University of Kentucky and my J.D. from Northern Kentucky University. Currently, I am pursuing my M.A. in Adult & Higher Education, with an emphasis in Counseling, from Morehead State University. I hope to be finished this summer and then I will be off on another educational journey!

In my free time, I volunteer for the Kentuckiana Pug Rescue and regularly provide a foster home to dogs in need.

I am one of the regional reps for the Midsouth region. This region is home to eight states and twenty-nine law schools.



Maureen Carver
Assistant Dean for Student Records and Registrar
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Northeast Region

Maureen Carver is the Assistant Dean for Student Records and Registrar at Villanova Law School, a Senior Consultant with AC, and has more than 24 years of experience in law school administration, college admissions, and law firm attorney recruitment. Maureen began her career at her alma mater, Loyola University New Orleans, in the Admissions Office. During her time at Loyola University, she was exposed to all aspects of admissions from recruitment to data systems administration, with chief responsibility for recruitment of non-traditional and under-represented students.

Bridgette Waines
Registrar
Florida Coastal School of Law
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Southeast Region

From Transcript Clerk to Enrollment Services Counselor to Program Administrator to Registrar, my experience in higher education spans over 16 years. I hold a Master's Degree in Management with a concentration in Higher Education from Carnegie Mellon University in Pittsburgh, PA. I have been the Registrar at Florida Coastal for over 6 years.

My life right now is my teenager who is 15 years old and my wonderful husband. I love amusement parks, especially roller coasters. I am honored to be a part of such a wonderful group of professionals and will do whatever it takes to be an effective area representative.



Felisha McCaster
Law School Registrar
Saint Louis University
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Midwest Region

Hello Best in the Midwest! My name is Felisha McCaster and I am the School of Law Registrar for Saint Louis University. I have been in this position for eight years and I'm lovin' every minute of it! Before I was Registrar for Saint Louis University School of Law, I was the Executive Assistant for the Dean of Institutional Advancement at Henderson State University for seven years. This position entailed minority recruiting as well as working with the University Development Office.

I am a mother of three, I have a 23 year old daughter who teaches at one of the area high schools, my oldest son (18) just graduated high school and will be attending college this fall, and my youngest son (17) will be graduating from high school this year. In my spare time I enjoy spending time with my "mini-me" 2 year old grand-daughter.

Being a Regional Representative is something I am proud of, when I accepted this position last year along with that came this horrific economic crisis and just like many of you, our university started looking for ways to cut costs...I don't know about you but for some reason my work-load doubled. I know it has been hard for many to ask for travel money to attend NNLSO meetings, trust me, I understand, I had to cancel some of my meetings. But please take the time to read what NNLSO and what we stand for and what we are about if you are unfamiliar with the website, I am attaching the link <http://nnlso.org/>.

I will not let the economy keep me from representing you this upcoming year! I look forward to meeting each of you, hopefully at the next AACRAO meeting. We are a fun bunch but we take our role as leaders very seriously.

Thank you for taking the time to read about me and I look forward to meeting you soon.

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National Network of Law School Officers

To further the growth of NNLSO and to foster networking and information sharing, a website and electronic discussion list are available.

The NNLSO website is <http://nnlso.org>. Paid members of NNLSO may obtain the password to restricted areas of the website by contacting the [Secretary/Treasurer](#).

The NNLSO [electronic discussion lists](#) are hosted by the Washburn University School of Law.

National Network of Law School Officers email list: nnlso@lists.washlaw.edu

We're on the Web!

Visit us at:
www.nnlso.org

Executive Officers & Governing Board 2009- 2010

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Staff Salary Survey

Results of the 2009 NNLSO staff/salary survey are available on the NNLSO website <http://nnlso.org/> for NNLSO members only.
Not a member yet... JOIN NOW and take advantage of great information like this survey!