

CONTACT



Newsletter of the National Staff Organization

November 2005

NSO Members Retreat to Sarasota

Program offers NSO members a variety of advocacy training experiences

The Sarasota Hyatt will become advocacy central when union members gather for the **2006 NSO Winter Advocacy Retreat**, January 12-14. This year's retreat offers participants a wide variety of sessions covering all aspects of Union advocacy. The diverse program schedule includes many new and exciting trainings along with perennial favorites.

When selecting trainings, Vice President for Program Lynn Adler not only looks for variety but balances professional and associate staff issues as well.

"The continued success of this retreat is due to the talented NSO members who volunteer to share their advocacy skills," said NSO President Chuck Agerstrand. "It seems every year is better than the last. Lynn does a phenomenal job of organizing a program that fits the needs of our members."

The NSO Presidents Meeting will be held Thursday, January 12 at 2:00 pm. All affiliate presidents or their designees are encouraged to attend this meeting to receive important information on critical issues, affiliate services and upcoming events.

Other sessions on Thursday include a Trainer's briefing, CBC meetings and other NSO committee meetings. Please check with your affiliate president or the appropriate committee chairpersons for details.

For more information see Program Overview on page 2.



**2006
NSO Winter
Advocacy Retreat
January 12-14
Sarasota, FL**

Ad·vo·ca·cy (ăd2 vY-kY-sç) *n.* Active support, as of a cause, idea or policy.

Mullins Retires as Editor

30 years of service comes to an end

For over 30 years, Bob Mullins made *Contact*, *RAnted* and *RAved* and told *WAR* stories on behalf of the National Staff Organization. His retirement as the NSO Contact Editor and Webmaster is the end of an era.

"One of the burdens as president is seeing someone you care about and respect, retiring from their duties within NSO," said NSO President Chuck Agerstrand. "Bob's stepping down was not welcomed news. He will be missed."



As editor and webmaster, Bob communicated vital information to NSO affiliates. His coverage, not only of national NSO meetings, but state activities contributed to the pride and tradition of unionism that NSO members hold in such high regard.

"It goes without saying, we would not be as successful as we are, if it were not for Bob's tremendous contribution to this Union," said Agerstrand. "As a friend and colleague, we owe Bob a great deal of gratitude for all that he has done on behalf of NSO."

Bob retires from his responsibilities with NSO much like he fulfilled his duties--in a professional and unassuming manner. When asked how he was going to occupy his new found time, he replied "with my sons and grandchildren." Their gain is our loss. Good luck, Bob, and thanks!

NSO-RA Moved to California

RA finds its way to San Jose

The NSO-RA, originally scheduled for New Orleans, is moving to the Fairmont Hotel in San Jose, CA. The annual business meeting will be held as scheduled June 9-10, 2006. Information on hotel reservations and other pertinent details will be available in the NSO Contact and on the NSO website in the near future.

NSO 2006 Winter Advocacy Retreat Program Overview

Thursday, January 12

8:00 am

*NSO Frank Morrissey
Memorial Golf Tournament*

2:00 - 5:00 pm

Early Registration

2:00 - 3:30 pm

Presidents Meeting

3:30 - 4:00 pm

Trainers Meeting

5:30 - 7:00 pm

NSO/ORG "Solidarity" Reception

Friday, January 13

7:30 - 9:00 am

Registration

7:30 am - Continental Breakfast

8:30 - 9:00 am

Opening Remarks

Chuck Agerstrand, NSO President

General Session

Are We United?

Responding to Intergenerational Issues

Dennis Krueger, NSO Retired

11:00 am - 1:00 pm - Lunch

1:00 - 3:30 pm

Retreat Series 100

6:00 - 7:30 pm

Networking Champagne Reception

Saturday, January 14

8:00 am - Continental Breakfast

8:30 am - 11:00 pm

Retreat Series 200

11:00 am - 1:00 pm - Lunch

1:00 pm - 3:30 pm

Retreat Series 300

Pre-Registration Required

Please complete a registration form for each participant.

Registration forms due

Wednesday, November 16, 2005 to:

**Mary Henson, NSO Secretary
c/o Michigan Education Association
1216 Kendale Blvd., PO Box 2573
East Lansing MI 48826-2573
517.622.1892 (NSO Fax)**

Hotel Reservations

NSO has reserved all available rooms at the Hyatt; however, it is important that you **reserve only the number of rooms your affiliate will actually need.** The block of rooms is reserved under the National Staff Organization. Room rates are \$140 single/\$150 double.

Rooms are available on a first-come, first-served basis, and reservations can be made anytime via the internet by logging on <http://sarasota.hyatt.com/groupbooking/nsog>

Room reservation cutoff date is **December 12, 2005.** Anyone making reservations after that date may be sent to an 'overflow' hotel and/or charged a nonconference room rate.

If you encounter problems in making a reservation, call Hyatt Sarasota Reservations Manager Carolyn Williams at 941.953.1234, ext. 1190, Monday-Friday between 8:30 am and 5:00 pm.

If you make a reservation and need to cancel the room, please contact Lynn Adler instead of the hotel. This gives us the opportunity to do a name exchange on the reservation instead of the room going public.



NSO Golf Tournament

The 7th Annual NSO Frank Morrissey Memorial Golf Tournament will be held Thursday, January 12. The Four-Person Scramble will begin at 8 a.m. A registration form was included in the Retreat mailing. For more information contact Butch Santicola at 724.601.0974 or by email at PapaButch@verizon.net.

Full-Day Sessions

New Sessions Highlighted

Be Careful What You Ask For—Writing Contract

Language (#203-303) Topics include in-depth discussion on the bargaining process from beginning to end such as information gathering, timelines and writing strong language. (40 participants)

Organizing for Power to Bargain/Crisis Bargaining in NSO Affiliates (#210-310) Prepare members for bargaining, including possible strategies and tactics prior to a staff strike. A thorough discussion of organizational power and how to build it will be an interactive part of the session. (40 participants)

Sometimes You're the Bug...Sometimes You're the

Windshield (#205-305) This session is designed to train union advocates to 'talk like a leader' in any given situation. The emphasis is on interaction with news media and media relations. Topics include 'framing' your message, utilizing the media to your advantage and mock interviews of real situations faced by staff. (30 participants)

Half-Day Sessions

New Sessions Highlighted

Advanced Grievance Processing (#102, 213) Designed for participants who are knowledgeable about the basics of grievance processing. Grievance processing from beginning to end including arbitration preparation. Please bring a copy of your staff contract.

Assertiveness and Bargaining...A Powerful Combination (#104, #306) Based on the model described in Ury and Fisher's *Getting to Yes*, this profile offers a simple framework for thinking about one's negotiating style and the likely effect of that style in negotiating situations. It is strongly suggested that bargaining teams attend this session together.

Bargaining Issues: How to Manage Them at the Table (#105) This session will review how to identify and manage your bargaining issues in order to achieve an equitable settlement, primarily from a traditional focus with a short review of interest-based bargaining.

Creative Strategies to Reduce Health Care Costs (#107, 302) Employers are becoming more aggressive on health care benefits. This session will provide creative strategies to affiliates who are fighting a battle in maintaining current health care benefit levels while reducing those benefit costs.

Defined Benefit Retirement Plans (#106) Interactive discussion of Section 415 caps on early retirement, COLA, vesting, life expectancy by gender and race, purchase of prior credit, conversion to Defined Contribution Retirement Plan, plan termination, GATT and simulates the costs of funding a Defined Benefit Retirement Plan.

Defined Contribution, 401K, and Choosing a Financial Planner (#206)

What are the ingredients of a good Defined Contribution Plan or 401(K) plan? How does your plan compare with a model plan? Do you have the knowledge to choose where your money should be invested, now or in retirement? Do you know how to select a competent financial planner or advisor? Come to this session to get the answers to these questions and more.

Developing Strategies for Bargaining Insurance (#207, #313) This session will focus on strategies to employ in bargaining insurance benefits. The primary focus will be on knowing how plans work, what information is needed for bargaining and reviewing CBC standards and goals as it pertains to benefits. (30 participants)

Dysfunction in the Workplace I (#110) Participants will learn the indicators of workplace dysfunction, how to sort out various conflicts and how to develop strategies for overcoming the dysfunction. (35 participants)

Dysfunction in the Workplace II (#309) An in-depth look at workplace dysfunction. Special attention will be given to staff-to-staff conflicts and when the situation calls for outside intervention. Real life situations will be used to demonstrate techniques and skills. (35 participants)

Employee Rights (#214, #307) This session will examine employee rights, the American with Disabilities Act, harassment on the job and civil rights of employees. Knowing your rights makes for a better work environment.

Health Insurance Plans ABC...123—What Does it All Mean To Me? (#109, #311) This session will focus on the new plan designs of health insurance, including "consumer-driven" high deductible health plans, flexible spending accounts, healthcare savings accounts and healthcare reimbursement accounts. A review of post-employment health care will also be discussed as it relates to HRA plans. (50 participants)

How the Internet Puts More Power Into the Hands of the Union Advocate (#202, #304) This workshop will involve the use of the computer in the day to day activities of union employees. The focus will be on websites that will provide useful information to assist the union advocate. An extensive list of websites will be provided and a "live" online access of selected sites will be demonstrated as part of the presentation.

Introduction to Bargaining (#103, #308) Topics include an overview of traditional and interest-based collective bargaining, getting ready to bargain by concentrating on building a productive bargaining team and preparing the members to organize for settlement, writing proposals and counterproposals, table etiquette and resources for negotiators.

Session Topics cont., pg. 4

Just Because You're Paranoid Doesn't Mean That They Aren't Out To Get You: Addressing Workplace Privacy (#112, #208) Learn how to protect your workplace privacy, including the protections afforded by the law, as well as how to bargain contractual language to further protect you and your colleagues. (40 participants)

Partners in Advocacy: Gaining Power by Building Solidarity (#101, #204) This session will detail a relational organizing and communications program to increase the NSO affiliate's power to deal with management at the bargaining table and elsewhere.

Reality 501: Bargaining Retirement & Post Employment Health Care Issues (#211) Compare pensions and health care using NSO research, costing proposals, the impact of plan design changes, internal organizational issues, review important documents, discuss the FASB pension rules and updates rules governing pension plans. Bring a copy of your contract, the employer's audited financials, FASB funding data, and any pension funding documents you have. (30 participants)

So You've Got A Crisis? Preparing for Crisis Communications (#108, #312) Designed for affiliates preparing for bargaining or anticipating other potential crisis situations. Participants will communications mechanisms for use with members and nonmembers. (25 participants)

Subcontracting, Confidential Employees and Bargaining Unit Work in the Private Sector (#111, #201) This workshop will address the growing problem of bargaining unit work being subcontracted out and the use of non-bargaining unit employees doing bargaining unit work.

Treasurers' Workshop (#113) Filing of Labor Department (LM-2, 3 or 4) reports, IRS 990s, financial and Labor Department auditing will be addressed in this session and how to develop an investment strategy for union assets.

Understanding Just Cause, Due Process, and Progressive Discipline (#209, #314) The principles of just cause, due process and progressive discipline in advocating the rights of members who are subjected to discipline and/or termination of employment; and what constitutes discipline are discussed in this session.

Using NSO Research (#114) This session will provide a practical look at what is available from NSO Research (and NEA Research such as the Huttleston Report, if available). The focus will be on how to understand and use the data, how to generate exhibits to support your positions, and what to use and not use.

Your Union and Its Legacy (#301) What does it mean to be a union member today, your responsibilities and commitments? Unions look to change to survive and its changing role to enhance its power relationships with employers. During this period of change, a union must maintain its purpose while providing the leadership and methods to succeed.

National Staff Organization



With pride, commitment, tradition and advocacy to lead, promote, defend and secure the rights of its members.

NSO Executive Committee

Chuck Agerstrand, President

Marius Ambrose

Lynn Adler

Vice President for Defense

Vice President for Programs

Mary Henson

Evelyn Smith

Secretary

Treasurer

Cheryl Singleton, Region 1

Butch Santicola, Region 2

Emmitt Jimmar, Region 3

John Stephens, Region 4

Ed Helvey, Region 5

Ron Goldenstein, Region 6

Rosemary Wolf, Region 7

Robert Blackwell, At-Large A

Ruth Ivory, At-Large B

Vera Stafford, Financial Advisor

www.nationalstaff.org

NSO Calendar of Events

NSO Executive Committee

January 10-11, 2006

NSO Winter Advocacy Retreat

January 13-14, 2006

Sarasota Hyatt, Sarasota, FL

NSO Executive Committee

March 30-31, 2006

TBD

NSO National Bargaining Conference/Pension Training

April 21-22, 2006

TBD

NSO Executive Committee

June 6-7, 2006

NSO Representative Assembly

June 9-10, 2006

Fairmont Hotel, San Jose, CA

The NSO Contact is an official publication of the National Staff Organization.

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2006 NSO Winter Advocacy Retreat Registration Form

Name _____

Staff Union _____

- Professional Staff
 Associate Staff

Position in Staff Union: | President

- Vice President
 Bargainer/Negotiations
 Grievance Chair/Committee Member
 Other _____

Mailing Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Office Phone _____ Home Phone _____

Office Email _____ Home Email _____

Do you plan to attend the Solidarity & Networking Champagne Receptions? Yes No

Special Needs Request: _____

Please choose what sessions you want to attend.

	SERIES 100	SERIES 200	SERIES 300
<i>Example</i>	<i>112</i>	<i>201</i>	<i>309</i>
1 st Selection			
2 nd Selection			

SUBMIT THIS FORM NO LATER THAN WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 16, 2005 TO:

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c/o Michigan Education Association
1216 Kendale Blvd., PO Box 2573
East Lansing MI 48226-2573
517/622-1892 (NSO FAX)

