

# NATIONAL STAFF DEVELOPMENT AND TRAINING ASSOCIATION

AN AFFILIATE  
OF  
THE AMERICAN PUBLIC HUMAN SERVICES ASSOCIATION

**A** Brief History:  
Written in celebration of 10 Years  
as Your Professional Association (1997)

## **A**n Idea takes Hold: 1983

---

The setting was a weeklong national meeting held in Washington, D.C. and sponsored by the federal government. The purpose of the occasion was to review and disseminate results of the American Public Welfare Association's (APWA) three-year project on AFDC Management Development. The time was July 1983.

In the course of the networking that surrounds any such national forum, a number of participants who were responsible for staff development and training at their agencies expressed the need for an organization that would support the management and delivery of staff development and training on local, state, and federal levels.

Brought together by Joan Carrera, whose federal agency, the Department of Health and Human Services Administration for Children and Families, hosted the meeting, the group formed a committee to spearhead the establishment of the support organization they envisioned. Serving on the committee were Ralph A. Adams; Elaine Archangelo; Margaret Brice; Grace Clark, who served as chair; Dolores M. Clayton; Dana N. Courtney; Wendell Cox; Jon S. Crosbie; Gilbert M. Fisher III; Shirley O. Harris; Sonja F. January; Alvin Katz; Gale A. Mattison; Buel E. McDaniel; James P. McGroarty; Delores Phillips; and Yolanda Lenier Rinaldo.

Because the committee believed that a staff development and training organization could be an effective and useful affiliate of the APWA, they petitioned the APWA on July 29, 1983, to establish an American association of staff development directors in public welfare agencies. In February of 1984, the APWA board of directors acceded to the request to form a new affiliate and gave the organizing committee a year to determine the extent of interest in an association.

Grace Clark (Maryland) developed and administered a questionnaire to which 81 individuals nationwide responded, encouraging the group to proceed with establishment of the affiliate. Thus was born the National Staff Development and Training Association.

## **T**he Official Organization Begins Its Work

---

In May of 1984 an interim leadership committee was formed with Grace Clark as chair. Grace worked diligently to build the NSDTA. Through her devoted efforts and those of the executive committee and board, the APWA board of directors approved NSDTA bylaws on December 5, 1985.

On January 23, 1986, the NSDTA voted in its first slate of officers: Grace C. Clark, president; Robert E. Hayes, Jr. (Texas), first vice president; Alvin Katz (New Jersey), second vice president; and Jon S. Crosbie (Massachusetts), secretary.

On September 1 of that year, the new organization conducted its first official board meeting in Washington, D.C.

## **N**SDTA as APHSA Affiliate

---

The NSDTA became one of nine APHSA affiliates, each of which represents a different function in health and human services:

1. American Association of Food Stamp Directors
2. American Association of Public Welfare Information Systems Management
3. American Association of Public Welfare Attorneys
4. Association of Administrators of the Interstate Compact on the Placement of Children
5. National Association of Hearing Officials
6. National Association of Human Service Quality Control Directors
7. National Association of Public Child Welfare Administrators
8. National Association of State Medicaid Directors
9. National Staff Development and Training Association

The NSDTA's membership is unique, however. Members belong to agencies interested and involved in training professionals in the human services, and they represent a variety of disciplines, including child welfare, temporary assistance, child support enforcement, Medicaid, adult services, and others. They include state, county, and private agency staff developers, as well as faculty and staff of academic social service training projects and institutes.

## **N**SDTA Restates Its Mission, Creates Vision Statement

---

In 1997, the board of directors reformulated this organization's Mission Statement to read:

*'NSDTA builds professional and organizational capacity in the human services through a national network of membership sharing ideas and resources on organizational development, staff development, and training.'*

The board also added the following Vision Statement to guide its activities:

*'The National Staff Development and Training Association (NSDTA) has a vision of competent and caring people in effective organizations creatively working together to improve the well-being of society's children, adults, and families.'*

## Celebrating Our Presidents

---

In any organization, leadership is important. Those who have led the NSDTA as president are:

Grace Clark, whose early organizing leadership easily earned her election as NSDTA's first president, a position she held from 1984-1988; under her tenure the organization began to forge its direction and instituted its history of successful annual conferences.

Robert E. Hayes Jr., who served one term, from 1989 through 1990, and was a critical force on the board until his retirement.

Noe LaFramboise (New Jersey), who served a productive term as president in 1991 and 1992 during the early conference-development days; he then became past president and chair of the nominations committee and talent scout for new board members, and brings continuity to board thinking and planning.

David P. Wegenast (New York), who as president-elect in 1992 served as conference chair: he served as president from 1993 to 2000. During his tenure, the annual conference grew in attendance and stature, the newsletter evolved and grew and a number of resources were produced for members.

Mary Urzi, (North Carolina) became president in January 2000

## Developing Resources for Members

---

Among the resources developed to keep NSDTA members informed about the latest policies and best practices governing training in the human services are:

1. Handbook of Federal Policy Materials Related to Public Human Services Training Funding, by Ronald K. Green, J.D., A.C.S.W., Chair, NSDTA Public Policy Committee.
2. A Key to Success: Guidelines for Effective Staff Development of Training Programs in Human Service Agencies, NSDTA Standards and Evaluation Committee.
3. Videotape: "Creating a Satellite Training Network," Oklahoma Department of Human Services, NSDTA Technology in Training Committee.
4. *Instructor Competency Model*, NSDTA Standards Committee.
5. *Web Site Directory for Social Services Training*, NSDTA Technology in Training Committee.

Also planned is a resource book on training evaluation to be produced by the evaluation committee.

## Celebrating the Annual Conference

---

Thanks to the NSDTA's annual conferences, the organization has become a model for the best in human service staff development and training in the United States. With the 1997 annual conference returning to the scene of this organization's first official conference in Washington, D.C., we celebrate the tenth of these vital and successful learning and networking experiences sponsored by the NSDTA. Their dates and locations have been as follows:

May 3-5, 1988 .Washington Plaza Hotel, Washington, D.C.

April 30-May 3, 1989 .Sand's Hotel, Atlantic City, New Jersey.

June 10-13, 1990 .Hyatt Orlando, Orlando, Florida.

September 15-18, 1991 .Hyatt Oakbrook, Oakbrook (Chicago), Illinois.

August 30-September 1, 1992 .Loew's L'Enfant Plaza, Washington, D.C.

November 7-10, 1993 .Trump Castle, Atlantic City. New Jersey.

September 25-28, 1994 .Holiday Inn Crowne Plaza, New York, New York.

September 10-13, 1995 .Parc 55 Hotel, San Francisco, California.

September 29-October 2, 1996 .Francis Marion Hotel, Charleston. South Carolina.

September 28-October 1, 1997- Westin Washington D.C. City Center Hotel. Washington, D.C.

September 27 –October 30, 1998, Radisson Hotel, New Orleans, Louisiana

October 16 –October 20 1999, Double Tree Hotel, Portland, Oregon

August 20-23, 2000, Crown Plaza, New York City, N.Y.

October 6 – 10, 2001, Denver, Colorado

This association is grateful to and salutes all the individuals—members, as well as their institutions and staffs—who have worked so hard to plan, coordinate, and deliver these exciting events, as well as all those who presented conference workshops to enhance their colleagues' professional development.

## Celebrating NSDTA's Super Human Resources

---

Among the many members who have over the years made important contributions to the association are:

Grace Clark, whose incomparable leadership and dedication to this organization have been cited above.

Jon Crosbie, who served for several years as vice president and, as editor, was responsible for publication of the first NSDTA newsletter,

Alvin Katz, who served on the board from its inception until his retirement in 1994 and who brought Noe LaFramboise to the board.

Mary Urzi (North Carolina), who has been a faithful member of the board for many years; her efforts have been critical to bringing to fruition the publications. *A Key to Success: Guidelines for Effective Staff Development '37 Training Programs in Human Service Agencies and Instructor Competency Model,*

Jane Berdie (Colorado), a long-time board member who has provided much needed continuity to the board and contributed fundamentally to developing a succession of annual conference workshops on evaluation,

James McGroarty (Virginia), who with Grace Clark, is one of two original founding members still serving on the board.

Joan Carrera (Washington D.C.), who though not a founding member, played a distinguished role as the point person for federal training efforts for many years and joined the board in 1990.

Dennis Barry (Connecticut), who doggedly encouraged production of a variety of resources for members and capably chaired the technology committee.

Ronald Green (South Carolina), chair of the public policy committee since 1992, whose efforts have ensured that the voice of the NSDTA is now heard on Capitol Hill and that national organizations seek the Association's opinion on legislative proposals, federal regulation, and program reviews.

Roz King, former coordinator of conferences for the APWA, who aided the Association in its early days of conference planning, and APWA staff Carmen Nazario and Linda Wolf, who provided outstanding support services in NSDTA's formative years.

Doris Pollard, current conference coordinator, whose careful attention to detail ensures both successful conferences and the day-to-day functioning of the organization.

Peter Miraglia (New York), active member of the public policy committee, who ably chaired the 1994 conference held in New York City.

Joyce Poirot (California), who joined the board in 1993 and immediately set out to organize the West Coast to sponsor the 1995 conference in San Francisco. She also instigated the founding of a California NSDTA chapter that has become an active state association sponsoring statewide workshops.

Lynne Hofmann (California), who currently serves as first California NSDTA chapter president and works energetically to build NSDTA membership on the West Coast.

Linda Shivers (South Carolina) whose energy as chair sparked the planning and presentation of the 1996 conference in Charleston, South Carolina.

It is hoped that the potential realized by the California chapter will be replicated by other states or consortia of states in order to address staff development needs with greater immediacy and closer to members' geographic locations.

## **W**ork by Board, Officers, and Staff Makes NSDTA Work

---

The work of the Association gets done at national board meetings held four times a year, through conference calls criss-crossing the country, e-mail, postal mail, telephone, fax, and—according to one creative board member—inspired dreams! The board is a busy, committed group, all of whom work hard for the organization's members and to ensure quality in the human services through training and program development.

Without its executive committee and staff, the Association could not function. Present officers are David Wegenast, president; Noe LaFramboise, past-president; Rose Marie Wentz (Washington), first vice president; Dennis Barry, second vice president (recently resigned); Mary Urzi, secretary. Staff is made up of Doris Pollard, APWA, and Cheryl Bell, Center for Development of Human Services, SUNY Research Foundation, Buffalo State College.

While some board members hold office, others serve as committee chairs or members, host national conferences, or facilitate workshops. In the latter category are Dennis Barry; Jane Berdie, Freda Bernotavicz (Maine); Donnella Bishop-Ward (Illinois); Joan Carrera; Andrew Catbagan (Colorado); Grace Clark; Nancy Dickinson (California); Steven Ferrer (New York); Ronald Green; Nancy Hall (North Carolina); Norma Harris (Montana); Ronald Hughes (Ohio); Darlene Lawson (Tennessee); Peter Miraglia; Welker Mitchell (Florida); Jo Newell (Pennsylvania); Ana Pagan (California); Joan Richardson (Texas); Paula Saltaformaggio (Louisiana); Mary Urzi; David Wegenast; Rose Marie Wentz; and Ronald Young (Arkansas).

As can be seen through this brief commemorative, the history of the NSDTA involves the dedicated efforts of active members from across the country working together. The result is a dynamic, vital, growing organization that is a force for national collaboration and one that provides leadership in staff development and training in the human services at the local, state, and national level.