



July 2022



2022 NSO RA Highlights

By: Catherine Alexander, NSO Retired

The 2022 National Staff Organization Representative Assembly was held on June 10-11 in Anaheim with 243 delegates in attendance. Delegates conducted the business of the organization which includes receiving reports, passing a budget, electing representatives and voting on new business items (NBI's).

Delegates received reports from elected leaders and committee chairs [[click here to view the reports - you must log into NSO website](#)], held elections, and heard from a keynote speaker on the first day. Additionally, President Brad Darjean addressed the body reminding us that “in highly stressful times, we need to stand in solidarity despite our differences.”

CEO and co-founder of REthinc, Kate Gerson, keynote speaker picked up on the theme of “solidarity despite differences” and led the delegates through exercises to create dialogue between individuals who may view things differently. Her exercise led to a burst of energy in the room as delegates engaged in meaningful dialogue with each other. Gerson informed the delegates that in the social justice community we are just as capable of weaponizing our values and replicating injustice within our own community as others.

She said seeing only ‘one right way’ to address issues is a key feature of how we are all impacted by white supremacy and this needs to change. She wrapped up her talk with suggestions on shifting how we see conflict, using the potential of relational power, trusting intentions and identifying your right way vs. my right way.

Delegates re-elected all current officers and region directors for regions 2,4, 5 and 6. At the conclusion of the first day, delegates attended the Solidarity Reception for an opportunity to network and socialize.

The second day began with Darjean providing status updates on the NBI's passed by the 2021 RA. These included the creation of a Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Committee, implementation of a quarterly newsletter, development of additional opportunities for associate staff to share and confer with each other, and other issues.

Darjean awarded Joe DiVincenzo, retired from the Staff Organization of New York (SONY), the Emil Oxfeld award for his work over the years mentoring, training, and advocating for NSO and its members with integrity, honor and commitment. In his comments, DiVincenzo reminded the delegates they are replaceable at work, but not at home and need to make sure they schedule time for family.

The rest of the day was spent debating and voting on the 2022 NBIs and the proposed budget. NBI's ran the gamut from the creation of a fifth Coordinated Bargaining Council to calls for NSO to support common sense gun laws. For a complete list of the 2022 NBI's that were passed by the delegates, [[click here - you must log into NSO website](#)]. The proposed 2022-2023 budget was passed by the delegates with \$5 annual dues increase for professional staff and \$2.50 for associate staff. The RA concluded with points of personal privilege from various delegates and the Karen Cherry Disaster Relief Fund selecting the winners for this year's raffle prizes.

The 2023 Representative Assembly will be held in Atlanta, on June 8-10, 2023.

We outfitted New Jersey UniServ Director Tom Hayden with a camera and set him loose at the 2022 NSO RA. Here are a dozen of his best shots!



RFP = You and Me

By: Jesse McDaniel, Alabama PSO

NSO members benefit from quality training every year at the Winter Advocacy Retreat, which we call WAR College. Sessions often begin as a member's idea or topic of interest, which they develop into a training proposal, submit and are selected via a request for proposals (RFP) process managed by Vice President for Program John Avouris.



Here are three examples:

- At-Large Director Justin Zartman started training years ago because he wanted to share insights he gained from working for the National Labor Relations Board. Over the years his interest evolved into arbitration training, which regularly does for the benefit of NSO.
- Pennsylvania associate staff Jill Toy developed a training proposal related to social media and tools to enhance association communication after attending an associate staff forum held in conjunction with the 2019 Representative Assembly. In 2022, Jill co-led a session geared toward associate staff issues in the workplace.
- Illinois professional staff Cardina Johnson now leads on topics such as professional/associate staff relations after being asked by a colleague to help facilitate a training they wanted to do. Cardina says she gets a sense of

gratification from helping her union family.

Do you have an idea for a training course you think should be offered at WAR College? All NSO members interested in sharing their expertise and talents with others are encouraged to submit proposals by July 22, deadline. You can find details on the RFP process by [clicking here](#). The next WAR College is scheduled for Jan. 12-14, 2023 in San Diego.

NSO COMMEMORATES JUNETEENTH

The new NSO Diversity, Equity & Inclusion (DEI) Committee created a video message that hopes to ground member commitment and continue the struggle toward collective liberation for all Black people across the global diaspora.

Rose Tapp, California, Chairperson
Tina Dove, Maryland
Gina Gullo, Pennsylvania
Matt Ryg, Minnesota
Gabriel Tanglao, New Jersey



A MESSAGE FROM NSO PRESIDENT BRAD DARJEAN

The National Staff Organization has been hard at work building a stronger, responsive, and more diverse organization to meet the challenges of a modern union.

The past few years have presented unique circumstances, but our members and affiliates have conquered these challenges and solidified their resolve to become a 21st century union.

Please take a few minutes to watch NSO's "Year in Review."

The video highlights the benefits of NSO membership, showcases our signature programs, and celebrates some of our biggest victories from this past year. We premiered this video at the 2022 NSO Representative Assembly and I'm proud to share it with you now. .

For our "veteran" members, I hope this video enables you to see value in your union: the value of advocacy, the value of representation, and the value of diversity.

For our "newcomers", I hope this video enables you to see opportunity: the opportunity to learn and the opportunity to participate.

As we look forward into the remainder of 2022 and beyond, I look forward to growing our union with you and our 4,000 fellow members.



WHO IS YOUR NSO SPECIAL SERVICES COMMITTEE AND WHAT ARE THEY DOING?

By: LaTasha Ball, Ohio Associate Staff

LaTasha Ball – Ohio associate staff

Karen “Skip” Perry – New Jersey associate staff

Kristi Baker – Alaska Associate Staff

Norma Reaves – North Carolina professional staff

Patrice Rust Logan Zequiell – Colorado associate staff

Mission: "To add value in membership by offering information, benefits and services to NSO members and their families."

Duties: Provide hospitality services and research activities in cities where NSO events are held.

At the RA: The committee tapped into our members' well-being and offered a qigong warm-up and all registered delegates were entered into a random drawing for a wellness gift basket.

- **Qigong**, pronounced “chi gong,” involves using exercises to optimize energy within the body, mind, and spirit, with the goal of improving and maintaining health and well-being.
- **What could NSO Special Services offer to make your membership more valuable?** A suggestion box was used at the RA to get member ideas of things that could be offered at NSO events.

Upcoming Regional CBC: The committee will be on hand to provide information on local attractions.

The committee is working on providing an updated directory of union-friendly merchants, vendors, and access to print shops for use by affiliates.

NSO Defense Recap

By: Mike Boyer, NSO VP of Defense

NSO Vice President for Defense Mike Boyer's report for the NSO Representative Assembly recaps a year of legal and negotiation assistance the National Staff Organization conducts on behalf of its members. The report gives insight into issues members of the NSO state affiliates are dealing and how the NSO is working to protect the rights of all members. Here are some highlights:

TENNESSEE: The Tennessee Staff Organization filed a grievance due to statements made by TEA Management that they were going to require members of the TSO bargaining team to use “Union Leave” under Article 11, Section F of the collective bargaining agreement for sessions during the workday. There was a long-standing past practice of allowing TSO staff to bargain during the day.



MISSISSIPPI: Management hired an “American Rescue Plan Coordinator” and negotiated a salary separate and much higher than that for other staff members in the bargaining unit. NSO filed a Unit Clarification. Management immediately capitulated and placed the position in the unit at the right salary and benefits level. The coordinator subsequently resigned.

NEASO: A grievance is headed to arbitration. NEA has begun taxing reimbursements for technology staff in violation of long-standing past practice and collective bargaining agreement language.

KANSAS SO: Two separate grievances are headed to arbitration regarding employee communications with EA leaders.

WASHINGTON: NSO is representing the affiliate in an arbitration where one bargaining unit member was able to negotiate his own salary increase for “extra duties.” An additional arbitration involves the termination of a probationary staffer. NSO is also representing a staffer who has filed a gender discrimination complaint against a manager who field a racial discrimination complaint against the staffer.

MAINE: Internal candidate was denied a position due to a job requirement that did not exist at time of posting.

ILLINOIS: Management settled during an arbitration break to place an employee who was set up in a temporary position for longer than the CBA allowed. A matter headed toward arbitration involves a 15-day suspension for an employee accused of “serious misconduct.”

CONNECTICUT: Impact negotiations on the decision of management to close all field offices underway. The CEA Board of Directors passed a “civility” policy which likely will affect staff discipline and evaluation without negotiation. This matter is headed to arbitration.

NORTH CAROLINA: Completed and arbitration for NCSO with a new employment category for “apprentices” but there is disagreement – despite specific language – on the roles of apprentices. Briefs have been filed.

GEORGIA: Arbitration revolving around management’s engagement in “surface bargaining” over issues revolving around the addition of new UniServ positions and the impact on current employees.

PENNSYLVANIA: “Several issues involving misbehavior by management are being dealt with.”

ARKANSAS: The AEA changed the title of the “director of public affairs” to a “manager of public affairs” and moved it out of the bargaining unit upon the retirement of the director. Issue is developing.

MARYLAND (FSO) Arbitration scheduled over hiring for a vacant position and additional issues. MSASO, meanwhile, is working with PSA to become a wall-to-wall.

FLORIDA: A default/dismissal granted in favor of NSO after the employer refused to comply with the NLRB ruling defining a director as a member of the bargaining unit.

NSO Officers

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VP of Programs - John Avouris
Secretary - Dawn Basurto
Treasurer - Eric Watson-Urban

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