



## **National LTAP/TTAP Association**

### **Annual Report**

### **July 2007 – July 2008**

### **Annual Conference Edition**

#### **Hello NLTAPA Members,**

The NLTAPA Officers and Executive Committee members are pleased to provide you our second annual Association report for the period of July 2007 to July 2008.

This has been a very busy year for our volunteer work groups. We are thankful for their service and hope the outcomes of their work will provide valuable tools to help each of you more effectively meet the needs of our local agencies.

At the meeting last summer in Chicago, Marie Walsh, the newly elected NLTAPA President, outlined some of the areas that she believed were of strategic and operational importance to NLTAPA and the LTAP/TTAP community. These included:

- Reauthorization;
- Increased focus on local road safety;
- Relationships with external entities;
- And, assistance to the Centers in procuring resources to operate more effectively and efficiently.

With these areas in mind, the NLTAPA Executive Committee and the Work Groups designed and implemented their work plans. The NLTAPA Work Groups operated at a new level of intensity, which naturally led to other opportunities that had to be considered in light of the aggressive work group plans that had been laid out. A new NLTAPA ad hoc work group for road safety was formed which immediately began work to consider how LTAP/TTAP can provide more leadership, advocacy and technical assistance to our customers in the complicated area of local road safety.

#### **Reauthorization: A Big Word with Huge Implications**

The NLTAPA Executive Committee met with representatives of FHWA, AASHTO, NACE, ARTBA, and APWA in the fall of 2007 in Washington, DC to discuss the reauthorization of SAFETEA-LU. These partners provided insight into the complex nature of reauthorization and how the unpredictable process could impact not only LTAP/TTAP, but transportation in the United States as we know it now. These same partners made similar presentations at the NLTAPA Business Meeting at TRB so that the Association at large could better understand the challenging and complex process. The need for LTAP/TTAP to remain visible as a valued partner and provider of services to the local transportation community was made clear during these meetings. The role for NLTAPA to enhance this visibility and strengthen LTAP's reauthorization position also became more apparent. Immediate strategies included strengthening NLTAPA's relationship with FHWA offices and other partners and using the External Communications Work Group to immediately provide information directly to our partners, as well as to the LTAP/TTAP Centers, for use in educating other stakeholders and decision makers.

NLTAPA represented the LTAP/TTAP Program at formal and informal meetings of national transportation leaders across the country. Telling the story of LTAP/TTAP's commitment and service to the transportation community is always important, particularly during this critical time as reauthorization strategies and initiatives are developed. Presentations were made by NLTAPA representatives at many of these meetings, while other meetings were more informal. Some of these

groups included FHWA's Office of Highway Safety; The Highway Safety Partner's Venture Group, AASHTO committees, Governor's Highway Safety Association; NACE, APWA, Council of University Transportation Centers; ARTBA, TRB, AAA Foundation, ATSSA, and individual FHWA offices. In addition to these national level efforts, individual LTAP/TTAP Centers made numerous presentations and contacts on behalf of the whole LTAP/TTAP community.

Many of the national transportation organizations have formalized their reauthorization positions and included local road safety, workforce development and other issues important to our local customers. LTAP is mentioned positively in AASHTO's and NACE's initiatives. Still, more work remains to be done. As our good friend and current president of NACE, Sue Miller, says, "If you're not at the table, you're probably on the menu."

### **Tools to Help Tell the LTAP Story – The External Communications Work Group Really Gets Moving!**

The need for updated LTAP/TTAP materials for use in outreach and educational activities was identified early. The External Communications Work Group developed a series of educational briefing sheets which provide impressive LTAP data and highlight national accomplishments and partnerships with local agencies and our State DOTs. The work group provided a list of suggested educational activities to each center to help spread the news about the LTAP/TTAP program as we move closer and closer to reauthorization. These briefing sheets have also been provided directly to LTAP partners and stakeholders.

A feature article on the LTAP/TTAP program will appear in a winter issue of Public Roads Magazine. This issue will be distributed during TRB. This article was prepared with input from NLTAPA and LTAP Centers and highlights the many activities and accomplishments of the program over the past 25 years. LTAP/TTAP will also be highlighted in

the Real Solutions section of the NHI 2009 catalog.

### **Emphasis on Safety – The Right Thing at the Right Time**

Safety on "all public roads" as described in SAFETEA-LU was a call to action by all entities involved in road safety. The inclusion of all public roads encouraged road safety stakeholders to consider the entire transportation network including locally owned, "off-system" roads when planning for and implementing safety improvements. Many LTAP/TTAP Centers have been actively involved in road safety for years while others have more limited programs. Nearly all LTAP/TTAP Centers provide some type of road safety related training and technical assistance. However, with an increased interest and emphasis on local and rural road safety across the country, the opportunities for LTAP to participate in stepped-up local road safety programs were pursued by NLTAPA. NLTAPA began our efforts by increasing communication and interaction with the FHWA Office of Safety. This relationship has always been strong, and FHWA's dedication of two positions to local road programs has allowed new initiatives to begin. The new FHWA staff, John Dewar and Karen Timpone jumped in to represent local road issues to FHWA and to assist LTAP and NLTAPA in our safety efforts.



NLTAPA also continued to participate in a highway safety group that meets several times per year in DC, and includes key stakeholders from a broad array of transportation agencies and

associations. Representing NLTAPA, Marie Walsh made a formal presentation on safety considerations at the local level and participated in numerous discussions at these meetings on behalf of LTAP/TTAP. The new NLTAPA President will represent LTAP/TTAP at future meetings. The invitation for NLTAPA to participate came directly from Jeff Lindley, FHWA Associate Administrator for Safety and his interest in local road safety is clear. Funding for NLTAPA to participate in these meetings was provided through FHWA OPCD.

For too long, local and rural road safety has been considered as an afterthought in many states. However, with up to 60% of fatalities occurring on local and rural roads, a national spotlight is now shining more brightly on these problems. LTAP/TTAP is uniquely situated to participate in these local safety initiatives. In many cases we must be a leader and advocate for the appropriate attention and resources to be devoted to local issues. Solving road safety problems often requires a multi-disciplinary approach and strong relationships to overcome jurisdictional boundaries, as well as good technical skills. NLTAPA recognizes this and believes that LTAP/TTAP has the skills and relationships necessary to meet the challenge, and, in fact, is a critical part of the solution.

### **NLTAPA's Safety Work Group**

NLTAPA formed an-ad hoc work group to begin investigating how NLTAPA can best promote local road safety and strengthen LTAP/TTAP position as a leader in the local road safety area. The group is finalizing its mission and objectives and has already worked on a website with critical safety resources. It has selected crash data collection, management and use as a foundational issue to be considered this year. The group is becoming a focal point for transportation stakeholders to request information or feedback on local road safety related issues and has responded to a variety of requests. FHWA's Office of Safety participates in the group which improves communication and provides a direct link between Center efforts and national initiatives. The Secretary of the AASHTO

Sub Committee on Safety Management also participates on the Work Group which provides a link to the state DOT safety efforts. Representatives from NACE and other local stakeholder groups will be asked to join the group as the 2008/2009 work plan is developed.

### **NLTAPA Partnerships**

The NLTAPA Partnership Committee is still working towards more effective ways to communicate and work with our current partners and evaluate future partnerships and relationships. Currently NLTAPA's most effective partnerships continue to be with the National Association of County Engineers and the American Public Works Associations. Several LTAP representatives are actively participating on committees for these two associations. The NLTAPA Executive Committee traveled to Portland, OR and held its spring meeting in conjunction with the annual NACE Conference. This proved to be such a success that it was decided that the 2009 spring meeting of the NLTAPA EC will be in Illinois with NACE. The APWA current President, Larry Frevert will address the LTAP Conference in Breckenridge and a number of NLTAPA members will represent LTAP/TTAP at APWA's annual Congress in New Orleans in August.

A new initiative for the upcoming years will be to strengthen LTAP's activities within the AASHTO committee structure. Kevin Burke, the incoming NLTAPA President is from a Center located within a DOT which may provide a new opportunity with AASHTO. The partnership committee is always looking for helping hands when it comes to evaluating future partnerships and managing our current ones. If you have questions or would like to volunteer please contact Jim Grothaus, MN LTAP, at 612.625.8373 or [jgrothaus@cts.umn.edu](mailto:jgrothaus@cts.umn.edu).

## Products and Resources

Most, if not all, of this workgroup's efforts in the past year have been related to the ongoing needs assessment. After compiling the results of each region's needs assessment performed during the spring of 2007, results were presented at the Chicago national conference last year. A follow-up survey of the Centers during the winter of 2007-2008 helped prioritize the most pressing needs of the Centers. The top five topics identified and presented at the NLTAPA general business meeting at TRB in January 2008 were, in order: *Asset and Pavement Management for Local Agencies*, *Low Cost Road Safety Improvements*, *Pavement Maintenance*, *Erosion Control and Storm Water Pollution Prevention*, and *Basic Roadside Safety*. Centers were also asked about their preferred audience levels and delivery formats and whether they had materials to share for each topic.

The workgroup also surveyed the NACE Board of Directors using a similar format. The results from NACE were relatively close to those from the LTAP/TTAP, indicating our perceptions of unmet Center needs are close to those of one of our primary customers – good news.

With assistance from FHWA's OPCD, available training materials for the top five topic areas were solicited and collected from the Centers. Four Centers volunteered to enter the collected information into a database housed at the FHWA's Clearinghouse using the format compatible with that proposed by the National Transportation Training Directors (NTTD) and the Transportation Curriculum Coordination Council (TCCC): Ohio LTAP – *Pavement Maintenance*; Florida LTAP – *Basic Roadside Safety* and *Low Cost Safety Improvements*; Maryland LTAP – *Asset and Pavement Management Systems for Local Agencies*; and Wyoming LTAP – *Erosion Control and Storm Water Pollution Prevention*. The data entry process will serve as a test of the database that will be made available for entry of available materials by all Centers.

The Work Group plans to present these compilations at the national conference in Breckenridge and post contributed materials electronically on a password-protected FTP site – those materials that are not available electronically will have to be obtained through the Center that provided them. Contact information and a description of the materials should be available in the database for all submitted materials. The next step will be to start collection of the available materials for the other 15 priority areas. Subject matter expert groups may be convened to review material or to address high priority areas such as asset management. The Products and Resources Work Group will continue to coordinate these compilations and review efforts. The Work Group welcomes your comments on their progress as well as your participation in the process.

## Professional Development for NLTAPA Members

The Professional Development Work Group developed several new programs including a New Director's Roundtable, which was held during TRB and will be again at the National Conference in Breckenridge. New directors had the opportunity to interact with experienced LTAP/TTAP directors and staff and FHWA representatives in an information session. The Work Group Chair also worked with FHWA and the Clearinghouse (CH) to plan and implement a Professional Development Roundtable Series, formerly LTAP 101, in response to feedback from former conference participants. This program was introduced as one of the Monday pre-sessions in Breckenridge.

Laura Melendy, Work Group Chair, also worked closely with FHWA and the Clearinghouse to develop a comprehensive strategy for orientation and ongoing training for new staff members and new directors. This orientation will include the option for an on-site meeting and visit including FHWA, LTAP and NLTAPA representatives to help new LTAP/TTAP personnel fast track their learning curves. The first orientations are anticipated to be conducted in the fall of 2008.

## **Coordination with FHWA-OPCD and our New LTAP/TTAP Program Manager**

While FHWA and NLTAPA have different roles in the LTAP/TTAP Program, we have many opportunities to cooperate and support each other's efforts that make the best use of our limited resources – time, money, and expertise. Over this past year, NLTAPA has worked closely with the staff at the FHWA-OPCD resulting in better communication and collaboration on some very important efforts. We welcomed our new LTAP/TTAP Program Manager, Denise Saunders, who while still learning about the LTAP/TTAP program, facilitated the collaborative efforts and enabled NLTAPA to improve our productivity and effectiveness. FHWA has funded travel for the NLTAPA President and EC members to enable our participation at key meetings of FHWA and our other partners. Denise, along with FHWA's Clark Martin and Mike Burk, has all worked closely with NLTAPA to support the efforts of the Work Groups. The business plan developed by FHWA provided focus and clarity to FHWA's programmatic efforts involving the Centers and showed strategic alignment with many of NLTAPA's efforts. While Joe Toole, always a vocal proponent of LTAP/TTAP, spent several months away from the Office of Corporate and Professional Development as FHWA Acting Executive Administrator, his support of LTAP continued. He was welcomed back recently by his own staff, and by NLTAPA as well! NLTAPA looks forward to a continued cooperative and collaborative relationship with FHWA's OPCD.

The LTAP Clearinghouse (CH) has been developing many products and services for our LTAP/TTAP members including an on-line PAR reporting tool, a trainer database, a training resource database and a members-only section of the National LTAP/TTAP website for member only resources. NLTAPA has provided input to the CH efforts through the CH Steering Committee and the CH has provided regular updates to the NLTAPA Executive Committee.

## **From the Incoming President Next Year... 2008/2009**

Kevin Burke of Illinois will be the new NLTAPA President, Donna Shea the President-Elect and either Dan Cady or Jim Grothaus will be the Vice President (based on the results of the recent election to be announced at the NLTAPA Business Meeting).

The NLTAPA Officers will meet in September for a planning retreat and finalize Association goals and strategy for the upcoming year. In preparing for his term as president, Kevin Burke offers the following areas as focus for the association:

- 1) Build on our formal partnerships with AASHTO, APWA, and NACE.
- 2) Education of stakeholders in advance of the next reauthorization of the federal transportation bill.
- 3) Continue to be a primary advocate for safety at the local level.
- 4) Make LTAP and TTAP Centers the primary conduit for technology transfer to local agencies.

Kevin also indicated that NLTAPA's Executive Committee will continue to adapt our goals and priorities based on the input from the LTAP/TTAP members. In order to continue to grow as an organization, NLTAPA needs the assistance of every LTAP/TTAP Center. Individuals will have many opportunities to become involved with national efforts this coming year. The new officers and the Executive Committee encourages everyone to get involved and direct the future of the association.

## **Gratitude from the Outgoing President!**

I would like to extend my sincere thanks to the officers and elected representatives who comprise the NLTAPA Executive Committee for their dedication and extraordinary efforts over the last year on behalf of the Centers. They are:

*President-Elect – Kevin Burke, IL*  
*Vice President – Donna Shea, CT*  
*Region 1 – Janet Leli, NJ*  
*Region 2 – Bernie Alkire, MI TTAP*  
*Region 3 – Ed Stellfox, MD*  
*Region 4 – Larry Sellers, AL*  
*Region 5 – Jim Grothaus, MN*  
*Region 6 – Doug Wright, OK*  
*Region 7 – Lisa Harris, KS*  
*Region 8 – George Huntington, WY*  
*Region 9 – Laura Melendy, CA*

EC members (present and past) extended their leadership and committed even more time to the NLTAPA Work Groups to accomplish the work of the Association. Work Group chairs are:

*Internal Communications – Janet Leli*  
*Partnerships – Jim Grothaus*  
*Products and Services – George Huntington and Ed Stellfox*  
*Professional Development – Laura Melendy*  
*External Communications – Donna Shea*  
*Road Safety – Bruce Drewes, ID*

My appreciation to our partnership liaisons:

*APWA – Dan Cady, NE*  
*NACE - Ken Skorseth - ND*  
*AASHTO – Doyt Bolling, UT*  
*Salt Institute – Kathleen Schaefer, MN*

Thank you to all of the LTAP/TTAP staff members who served on our NLTAPA work groups and responded to requests for assistance. At last count, over 100 individuals participated in some way in NLTAPA sponsored initiatives and over half of the Centers have been active in the past year. The Association exists for you, and we need your support and input to be relevant and productive.

Get involved and let us know how we can help you. There are no shortage of NLTAPA activities, so don't be shy!

I would also like to thank FHWA-OPCD and the LTAP Clearinghouse for their continued support of the LTAP/TTAP program and for working closely with the Association in helping us to meet our goals:

*Joe Toole*  
*Mike Burk*  
*Clark Martin*  
*Denise Saunders*  
*Cameron Ishaq*  
*Roger Dean*  
*Alison Black*  
*Lisa McCluskey*  
*Sarah Crane*

I truly enjoyed the opportunity to get to know the staff in the FHWA Office of Safety and to work with them to strengthen the LTAP focus on road safety. A special thanks to Beth Alicandri for her support and interest in LTAP. And, special thanks to the more than 35 LTAP/TTAP volunteers who dedicated their time to putting together this fantastic LTAP/TTAP conference in Breckenridge.

I am deeply grateful to NLTAPA for allowing me to serve as president. It has been a great honor to represent LTAP/TTAP to our partners and stakeholders and to work on behalf of the Association. I honestly believe that LTAP/TTAP is one of the best programs around, providing an unparalleled level of service to an under-served customer group. What better mission and job can one hope for? The people I have met and the friendships I've been lucky enough to make during this year have enriched the experience and my life. I would do it all again!

Sincerely,

Marie B. Walsh  
Louisiana LTAP  
NLTAPA President, 2007-2008

**REGIONAL MEETING HIGHLIGHTS**

Over the years, regional meetings have been a great way for Centers to share information and best practices. In recent years they have also provided an opportunity to communicate with the Centers about national LTAP efforts initiated by NLTAPA or FHWA and to get Center input on those efforts.

This year NLTAPA sought member input on several topics: Identifying the top five priorities for training courses and resources, information on how centers promote their programs and interact with partners at the state and local level, centers needs for professional learning for their staff, and resources NLTAPA can provide to accomplish these professional development goals.

**LTAP Regional Highlights 2008**

These highlights were prepared by the regional representatives. Thanks to Janet Leli, the Chair of the Internal Communications Work Group, for her help compiling this section. It is easy to see why LTAP has become such a valued partner to our local, state and national stakeholders. The activities and accomplishments presented here speak for themselves!

**Region 1.....**

Region One’s April meeting was hosted by the Rhode Island Center at the great W. Alton Jones Conference Center in Newport, RI. Some highlights from the Centers included the New York LTAP Center’s recently developed guidebooks and training materials; the topics included: Highway Standards for Low-Volume Roads, Work Zone Traffic Control for Local Roads, and Complete Streets- Planning Safer Communities. The Connecticut LTAP showcased that it received funding through the Transportation Enhancement Program to develop a “Designing Pedestrian –



Bicycle Facilities in CT” training program. Three sessions of the 2-day trainings were held in the Spring of 2008. The New Jersey LTAP developed a Memorandum of Understanding between their LTAP program and several strategic partners to outline and adopt shared goals for providing assistance to local agencies in NJ; and also completed a Peer Exchange in the last year. The New Hampshire LTAP sponsored a Mutual Aid Conference in May, 2008. The NH Center is also hosting the website for the NLTAPA Safety Work Group, collecting safety resources from all the LTAP Centers. The Vermont LTAP Center announced their 2008-2009 Management Academy for Municipal Leaders. Vermont also continues a series of very successful Road Supervisors meetings to discuss local issues. Maine LTAP has been actively involved in FHWA's High Risk Rural Roads Program (HRRRP) for several small towns in Maine that exhibit high crash numbers. By working directly with Maine DOT's Safety Office, they have been allocated a significant amount of funds to improve many local roads to reduce run off the road crashes. The meeting was a great networking opportunity for everyone to catch up and share best practices, and we also discovered the little-known fear Cameron Ishaq has of deer!

**Region 2.....**

The Region 2 meeting in Tulsa, OK was hosted by the Oklahoma, TTAP. Lisa Harris from the NLTAPA Executive Committee participated to listen to concerns of the TTAPs. Major items included developing a communication plan to insure good relations between LTAPs and TTAPs, a process to share training activities, and increasing the awareness of tribal training needs and problems. The regional meeting also provided the members of an opportunity to plan and coordinate activities related to the National Tribal Transportation Meeting to be held in Tulsa during November, 2008.

**Region 3.....**

No report available.

**Region 4.....**

A lively discussion on partnerships at our regional meeting led to each center relating their continued efforts to build better relations with our local partner chapters.

In Alabama, Larry Sellers discussed his efforts to make contact with the state representative of the APWA, NACE and AASHTO. Larry also reported the departure of John McCarthy. The Alabama T2 Center was asked to conduct a new program for the Alabama FHWA office on “Older At Risk Drivers.” They will be working with the AARP to help find instructors for this program. NC LTAP is very proud of their new agreement with the North Carolina Chapter of APWA. NCAPWA has six divisions, each of which holds an annual conference, in addition to the State Chapter Conference and Equipment show. NCLATP is now formally involved in helping plan and facilitate these events. Georgia LTAP has spent a lot of time on reorganization this year and has not offered as many routine services as normal. One of the new things in the works is a mandatory Bridge Maintenance class for local governments that will affect over 360 municipalities. Florida LTAP has had a very successful year as represented by the following numbers: 239 training sessions; 3,948 participants and 57,698 newsletters circulated. Major projects included the Safety Circuit Rider Program, Product Demonstration Showcases, and a new UTC partnership.

**Region 5.....**

Regions 5 and 8 gathered in Boulder, Colorado on May 5th and 6th. The following Centers were in attendance: Colorado, Indiana, Michigan, Minnesota, North Dakota, South Dakota and Wisconsin. Additionally, a nice group from FHWA OPCD. It was great a time to get together and share some stories and new ideas.

Reauthorization was a common theme during the updates from the NLTAPA EC and the FHWA OPCD staff. It became clear that Minnesota and Montana might have some influence when it comes to the next six-year transporation bill both

states have high ranking officials in the senate and Congress. These two individuals would be: U.S. Representative James L. Oberstar, Chairman of the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure and Senator Max Baucus, senior member of the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee.

The technical topics that were covered included: Sign Retroreflectivity, Update on FHWA efforts regarding a geotextile manual and a presentation from Mike Hughes, Vice President The Keystone Center and Director of the Center for Science and Public Policy. Mr Hughes shared his experience working a Minnesota county and other public agency stakeholders on conflict resolution workshops. A variety of interesting questions came from this session.

The meeting was adjourned on time and weather/friends/food and hospitality from Colorado LTAP (Renee and Lindsay) was great.

**Region 6.....**

Region Six met in Oklahoma City, OK May 28<sup>th</sup> and 29<sup>th</sup>, 2008. Attending were NLTAPA President Marie Walsh and David McFarland from Louisiana, Howard McCann from Texas, Mark Bradley from Arkansas, and Mike Hinkston and Region 6 NLTAPA Executive Committee representative Doug Wright from Oklahoma. Also in attendance were Denise Saunders and Cameron Ishaq from FHWA and Alison Premo-Black from the LTAP Clearinghouse.



The first morning of the meeting featured presentations by each of the states about their

program’s activities and new initiatives undertaken since our last regional meeting. A lively discussion was held and many ideas were bandied about. In the afternoon Denise and Cameron updated those present on the latest from Federal Highways Administration. Also, a presentation was made by representatives from the Oklahoma City Convention and Visitors Bureau. Because Region 6 will host the 2010 NLTAPA Conference, this regional meeting was held in Oklahoma City so that region members could see and consider it for this purpose. After the presentation, a tour was given of the Bricktown area of OKC. The second morning of the conference started with a briefing from Alison about Clearinghouse activities. This was followed by a session on LTAP partnerships. Five individuals representing various organizations in Oklahoma gave presentations on their relationship with Oklahoma LTAP. The meeting concluded with Marie reporting on the activities of the NLTAPA Executive Committee and her efforts as President.

**Region 7.....**

LTAP Region 7 met June 4-5, 2008 in Excelsior Springs, MO. The meeting started with Center highlights.

Missouri-LTAP is continuing to build their program and numbers of courses. They are developing shared training with MoDOT. Director Heath Pickerill reported an improved relationship with the state chapter of APWA, and APWA’s involvement in the Center’s new road scholar program. MO-LTAP’s Dan Ratermann is executive director of the state’s NACE affiliate. The Center is also continuing to improve its newsletter. Nebraska LTAP provides many services to their state Department of Roads. The Center hosts all the NHI courses for the DOR, handles all registrations for local bridge inspector policy program, keeps a list of trained bridge inspectors, and is the “help desk” for DOR for PONTIS. The Center will host two NHI bridge inspection courses a year—required in Nebraska. They will also develop a one day refresher course. The Center also teaches erosion control for the state and locals, using MN Extension materials.

Dan Cady will be chairing APWA’s National Education Committee, which is being reorganized. Iowa LTAP has a new newsletter editor, Sabrina Shields-Cook, who described coverage of the Center’s 25th anniversary and a new series on shop safety. Director Duane Smith presented a new training program, Iowa’s Public Employees Leadership Academy, which will include online and some face to face training. Iowa also added a new position—local roads safety liaison—who will assist the Center’s safety circuit rider. This position is partly funded by the DOT. Kansas LTAP celebrated its 25th anniversary with a two-day advisory board retreat and a reception with guest speakers including the Kansas Secretary of Transportation and FHWA Kansas Division Administrator. Kansas continues to expand its road scholar program, now at three levels and with four partners including APWA, NACE affiliate, Kansas Association of Counties and KDOT. Program Manager Pat Weaver said Kansas will be developing educational materials for elected officials in the coming year, and some new training programs, posters and fact sheets.

**Region 8.....**

With the upcoming merger with Region 7, this is the last Region 8 update. Of course, the big news is the national conference in Breckenridge, Colorado. Be sure to thank Renée and Lindsay for all their work hosting the conference.

Our annual regional meeting was held in conjunction with Region 5 in Boulder May 5 & 6. We’ve met with Region 5 on and off over the past few years and have enjoyed holding our meetings with them, both in Colorado and Minnesota. At our regional meeting we got an update and overview



from the FHWA’s OPCD from Clark Martin. Cameron Ishaq discussed the new online PAR/CAR and activities of the Clearinghouse. Further plans were made, both for the national conference in July and our regional Local Road Advisor’s Conference

in October in Rapid. We also heard from Roger Surdahl and Marilyn Dodson of FHWA’s Lakewood, Colorado Resource Center – they are developing a reference manual on geosynthetic design and construction guidelines (NHI Course No. 132013 and FHWA Pub. No. NHI-06-116, February 2007 draft). We also heard from Greg Schertz, also of the Lakewood Resource Center, on his efforts on the new sign retroreflectivity standards. Other topics of discussion included safety efforts ongoing at our individual Centers, Minnesota’s conflict resolution program, and ways of developing proposals for local roads. Overall it was an educational experience with lots of information exchanged, both as part of the formal agenda and in sidebars during breaks, meals, and so on.

The new North Dakota Center is getting its feet on the ground as Dave Levi and Gary Berreth learn more about the program and their role in it. As dictated by geography and demographics, our region has a lot of incentive to develop distance learning methods and North Dakota is playing a major role in this effort.

With our merger with Region 7 right around the corner, we look forward to working with the Nebraska, Iowa, Missouri, and Kansas Centers more in the future. Goodbye, Region 8: Hello, Region 7! Could we come up with a catchier region name?

**Region 9**.....  
Region 9 centers have been up to a lot of good lately. Centers in our region have developed new training classes; been involved in their state’s SHSP process; worked with local agencies to take advantage of HSIP & HRRRP grant funding; worked on Product Demonstration Showcases; became involved in a national “Technology Transfer” training project; and Hawaii hosted their first-ever, outrageously successful “Construction Career Day.”

The most pressing issue for Region 9 centers is funding. We’re all facing adjustment to the declining purchasing power of our flat LTAP

funding. While we’re all grateful that the allotment is not decreasing, we are still forced to decrease delivery of services and training due to LTAP funding not keeping pace with escalating costs, salary creep and inflation. In order to maintain core services, many centers in the region are implementing cost saving measures, such as cutting staffing back to part time, purchasing fewer items for the training library, and moving toward electronic dissemination of publications and resources. Additional partnering efforts are also being explored to leverage resources during challenging financial times. We are all watching federal reauthorization intently and are all agreed that the single most important thing FHWA can do for us this year is help secure adequate funding so we can keep doing the great things we’re doing.

Another important issue raised at our regional meeting was how to manage the library in a way that effectively gets the resources where they are needed. Centers in the region are also challenged with staffing issues: at least two centers are having difficulty in recruiting individuals that want a part time job and have the requisite background required. Peggy Sue Benson is now Coordinator of the Idaho LTAP, replacing Ruthie Fisher who left the position on November 1, 2007. Pamela Pyle is the new Business Manager of the Utah LTAP, stepping in after Keri Shoemaker left for a position in the Theater Department. Laura Melendy was named Director of the California LTAP after Linda Howe-Steiger retired last year.