



USOMBUDSMAN

Promoting and supporting fairness, accountability, and equity in government through the public sector ombudsman...

Summer 2004

Inside This Issue



- Silver Anniversary Conference 1
- President's Page 2
- A Transformational Environmental Policy 3
- Federal Government Applications Available 4
- Committee & Chapter Reports 5
- People, Places, & Events 6
- Benefits of Attending USOA Annual Conferences 7
- Twenty-Five and Counting: Interview with Marshall Lux 8
- 2003-2005 Board Members 9
- 2004 New Members 10

Contact USOA:

Lori Squires, CAE
 Business Manager
 Heather Paris
 Graphic Designer
 8345 University Blvd., Suite F-1
 Des Moines, IA 50325
 515-225-2323 (o)
 515-225-6363 (f)
 usoa@usombudsman.org

THE SILVER ANNIVERSARY CONFERENCE IS COMING SOON!

Make new friends and reconnect with old ones at the USOA's 25th Annual Conference, October 19-22. We will be "Building Bridges to Meet Tomorrow's Challenges" in Portland, Oregon, The City of Roses. Join representatives of ombudsman offices that have been around since the founding of the USOA a quarter of a century ago and people brand-new to the profession to share the tips and tools of the trade. We'll hone our communication, conflict resolution and investigation skills and share ideas about office management issues that affect governmental ombudsman offices of all types.



Our main program begins Tuesday evening with a reception at the conference venue, the Historic Heathman Hotel in downtown Portland. Two pre-conference workshops—the New Ombudsman Orientation and Mediation and the Art of Public Policy Facilitation will be held Tuesday morning. Wednesday and Thursday will have all-day presentations on topics such as the Anatomy of an Investigation and Alternative Ways to Resolve Complaints, but there may be some time for some tax-free shopping at Nordstroms down the block. Thursday night we'll take a short streetcar ride for an informal dinner and socializing at the Bridgeport Brewing Company in Portland's Pearl District. Please see http://www.usombudsman.org/ServicesActivities/25th_USOA_Reg_Pack.pdf for the full proposed schedule and conference registration form.

If you can extend your stay a little longer, you could visit nearby Mount Hood and the Columbia River Gorge or the Oregon Coast. Your hosts in the City of Portland Office of the Ombudsman would be happy to provide you with information and assistance to make your visit to the Pacific Northwest wonderful. We hope you'll be able to come. The early registration deadline is August 31.



.....

PRESIDENT'S PAGE

By Robin K. Matsunaga
USOA President
Ombudsman, State of Hawaii



Dear colleagues and friends,

I hope this newsletter finds each of you in good health and spirit. On behalf of your Board of Directors, I would like to thank each of you for your membership in and support of the USOA. We truly appreciate the fact that in spite of the difficulties you may be facing with your time and budget, you have chosen to allocate a significant portion of your limited resources to the USOA.

I hope that if you have not already done so, you will start making plans to attend this year's conference, our 25th conference, which is being hosted by Michael Mills and Becky Chiao at the Heathman Hotel in Portland, Oregon. The Conferences and Training Committee, under the leadership of Gerald Papica, has put together an excellent program that features a hands-on, participative approach. I am looking forward to seeing you there.

One of the benefits that come with being President is the opportunity to share with you through this letter my thoughts and feelings about matters relating to the USOA and the ombudsman institution. Today, I would like to share with you some ideas that I have developed based on my observations and experiences during the past five years as a member of the USOA Board of Directors. For those of you who have come to know me, you may be thinking "Oh no, what is he going to suggest now?" I must admit that such a reaction would not be without basis, as I have made a few brow-raising suggestions over the years. But I hope you understand that those suggestions were born from my desire to strengthen and protect the long-term interests of the USOA and the ombudsman institution. I am bringing these ideas to your attention now so that if you choose to discuss them, we can do so at the annual meeting in Portland in October.

The first idea I would like you to consider is an amendment to the USOA Bylaws to remove the term limits of Directors. Removing the three consecutive term limit would return the right to the voting members of the USOA to elect the persons they feel could best lead the USOA into the future. While some may argue that term limits ensure "new blood" on the Board, I feel that it prevents the membership from reelecting a Director who has been doing a good job and who is willing to continue doing so. I don't believe we need term limits to get rid of a Director who is not doing a good job, because we have the power to elect someone else to replace that Director at the next election. The best current example I can provide is Ron Adcock, who I feel has done an excellent job as our Secretary and Treasurer. I don't know if Ron would be interested in serving another term; but if he were, I would liked to

have had the opportunity to vote for him again.

Like Ron, I am also in my third and final consecutive elected term on the Board. Therefore, to prevent the perception that the amendment is designed specifically to benefit the two of us, I would suggest that the amendment have an effective date of July 2005, which is after the close of the next election.

The second idea I would like you to think about is increasing the annual membership fee for voting members from \$100 to \$150 and for associate members from \$75 to \$100. I would guess that for many, just the suggestion of raising the membership fee might be distasteful. However, please consider the following. The annual membership fee is one of two primary sources of revenue for the USOA, the other being the annual conference. Our membership fee, in comparison to those of other professional organizations, is quite reasonable and has not increased for many years. Even with the increase I have suggested, our membership fee will continue to be among the lowest. I believe that the benefits members currently receive are well worth the increased amount I have suggested, and by increasing the fee, we should be able to not only continue to provide members with those benefits but also to increase them.

The third idea, and final for now, is for the USOA to increase the use of electronic methods to distribute our newsletters, conference registration, and other notices and forms. The costs of printing and postage continue to rise, and more and more organizations are turning to the Internet as the primary means of communicating with their membership. We could experience significant reductions in our annual expenses if we were to utilize our web site and e-mail as our primary means for communicating with you. However, there are a number of Board members who are concerned that the membership may prefer receiving the newsletters and other announcements in printed hard copy, rather than via our web site. Perhaps a poll sometime in the near future might be appropriate to determine how the majority of you actually feel about this.

If you care to discuss these ideas further, or if you have other ideas that you would like me to consider, please do not hesitate to contact me via telephone or e-mail. Or better yet, come and see me at the Heathman Hotel in Portland at our 2004 Annual Conference in October.

In closing, I want to thank the members of the Board of Directors for their continued support and for donating their time and energy to benefit the USOA, its members and the public sector ombudsman institution.

Best regards,

Robin K. Matsunaga
President

.....

THE MANY VOICES OF THE OMBUDSMAN: WHAT WE HAVE LEARNED ABOUT THE PUBLIC SECTOR OMBUDSMAN PRACTICE

Editor's Note: This article by former national Environmental Protection Agency Ombudsman Bob Martin introduces a new occasional feature in the US Ombudsman; various ombudsmen will provide us with their individual perspectives on "ombudsmanry." If you would like to contribute your ideas, or submit your own article, please email Stina Santiestevan: Stina@ombud.ci.detroit.mi.us

"A TRANSFORMATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY"

By Robert Claplanhoo Martin

*"Always do what is right. It will astonish most people and surprise the rest."
Mark Twain*

For nearly ten years, it was my duty and privilege to represent American citizens and communities as the National Ombudsman of the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). The historical purpose of the Ombudsman centuries ago in Europe was to stand between the King and the people as an intercessor. The purpose of the Ombudsman today is to stand between the people and the large, powerful institutions of modern day society.

The Ombudsman function established by Congress within the EPA stood as a true mediating influence between American communities harmed by toxic waste sites and the scientific bureaucracy responsible for protecting the health and the environment of those communities. The Ombudsman function was an intercessor for the people with the senior management of the government and, correspondingly, with the large corporations often responsible for toxic sites in communities.

On the one hand, the Ombudsman functioned in a complex technical world inside the EPA full of environmental scientists and risk assessments. On the other hand, the Ombudsman also functioned in a world outside of the EPA facing penultimate questions: Will citizens truly be heard? Will communities have a meaningful role in situations where their health and environment are at stake? Will justice be done for the toxic harm done to children and the degradation of the environment? Will right be done?

This was the crucible within which the Ombudsman function helped shape environmental policy. Perhaps the most sig-

nificant environmental policy accomplishment of the Ombudsman function was to always seek that government do what was right for the people. That is, to stand firmly so that citizens might be truly heard, that communities could have a meaningful role when dealing with large corporations responsible for contaminating their neighborhoods, and that government science be thorough and sound.

"Justice is truth in action." Benjamin Disraeli

This represents a transformational paradigm to influence the making of environmental policy. The functional criterion of this paradigm are openness, transparency and meaningful involvement. These attributes serve to drive the percolation of the truth. This paradigm works very much, therefore, like an Archimedes screw – a scientific device made of a tube bent spirally around an axis and used to raise water. This transformational paradigm operates to raise the quantum of truth in the formulation of environmental policy, much like the Archimedean instrument works to raise a quantum of water. And, when truth is in action between communities and the government, then environmental justice may be done. Government then can fulfill its appropriate role of assuring the common good in the making of environmental policy.

The EPA Ombudsman function served to advocate for this kind of transformational paradigm for environmental policy making over and against a more rigid transactional kind of paradigm for environmental policy making. The characteristics of the latter include views that place the truth of citizens outside of the calculus of technical decision making and leaves no place for the contribution which scientific anomalies can make to our understanding of vexing toxic problems. In so doing, the Ombudsman function questioned, often at a basic level, the standards governing permissible problems, concepts and explanations that EPA would allow for at many toxic sites, leading to valuable scientific discoveries.

To be clear, it is not the case that we must oppose legitimate undertaking of transactions by government in managing the environment. We must every day support effective procedures and methods that make for appropriate environmental transactions, such as remedial investigations, feasibility studies, remedial designs, risk assessments and records of decision, to name a few.

What must be opposed is when such legitimate transactional tools become translated through the exclusive currency of politics, power and money in the forum of government. And, such transactional mechanisms must never become divorced from truth, justice and the fundamental due process rights of citizens.

In sum, the Ombudsman function inside the EPA operated as a structural anomaly within what has become a more rigid transactional paradigm. By striving within the system for right and truth and the ultimate empowerment of the American

continued on page 4

.....

continued from page 4

citizenry to set the course for definition of environmental policy at both the community level and the national level, the Ombudsman function may have indeed set in motion a fundamental change in the cycle of how government forms environmental policy.

Simply put, in the purely transactional model of environmental policy making, what is possible drives what is right. In the transformational model of environmental policy making advocated by the Ombudsman function, what is right drives what is possible to accomplish.

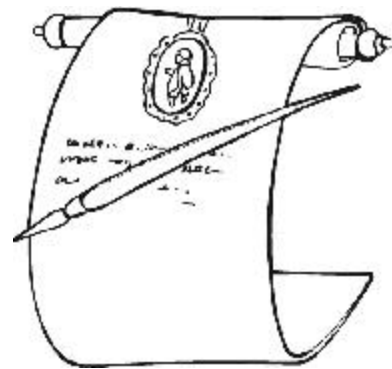
The tangible evidence of the outcomes of the Ombudsman transformational paradigm may be seen in changed EPA decisions and approaches in communities across the nation: radioactive wastes moved out of Denver following Ombudsman questioning of leaving such waste in place; displacing thermal incineration in Houston in favor of a more innovative technology; and, a second look at environmental contamination in New York City following the collapse of the World Trade Center as a result of Ombudsman elucidation of further scientific understanding.

When a transformational paradigm of environmental policy making is adhered to, the public and the government engage in an upward spiral of truth and programmatic results that benefit the common good. When a transactional paradigm of environmental policy making is rigidly followed, the public and the government are likely to find themselves in a downward

spiral of narrow-mindedness and even deception that does not allow for sound science and the assurance of the public welfare.

To the extent the Ombudsman function always provided a choice for transformational relationships between American communities and the government, it may have contributed toward a more sustainable path for development of environmental policy and a more just future for all those who must live with the tangible impacts of such policies.

We always have the power of choice and are responsible for choosing our path wisely. We would do well to affirm a path that encourages transformational relationships between “we the people” and our government. We have the great fortune in our nation for being responsible for the government we have created.



FEDERAL GRANT APPLICATIONS AVAILABLE ONLINE

By Ruth Cooperrider
USOA Vice President
Deputy and Legal Counsel
Iowa Citizens Aide / Ombudsman

The USOA and individual ombudsman offices have at times considered seeking grants for offices or programs.

As of November 7, 2003, all federal agencies are required to post on line all competitive grant opportunities.

Grants.gov presently has information for more than 900 available grant programs involving all 26 federal grant-making agencies. The website provides information in a standardized format across these agencies and features a search tool to help applicants find potential funding opportunities.

The cross-agency website also simplifies the application process by allowing applicants to download, complete and submit applications for specific grant opportunities.

You can access the website at <http://www.grants.gov>.



.....

COMMITTEE & CHAPTER REPORTS

Outreach & Development Committee

By Becky Chiao
USOA Board Member
Deputy Ombudsman
Office of the Ombudsman, City of Portland

The Outreach committee contacts City, State and Federal entities which are considering establishing an ombudsman office. We generally refer people to our website and the USOA Model Act and Standards and rely on our chapter chairs to provide specific information about particular subject matter areas such as Children and Families and Corrections. Current proposals on the Outreach Committee radar screen are pending bills to establish a Peace Corps Ombudsman, Children's Ombudsman Offices in Michigan and Pennsylvania and various local proposals in Tacoma, Redding, and Hamilton County Ohio. Our goal is to provide information that will lead to the creation of independent ombudsman offices or enhancement of existing offices with the necessary investigation and reporting powers.

Children & Families Chapter

By Karen Grace-Kaho, Chapter Co-Chair
Ombudsperson
Ombudsman for Foster Care
California Department of Social Services

Several Children & Families ombudsmen recently attended the ABA conference on Children and the Law in Washington D.C. The hosts were Howard Davidson, ABA Center on Children and the Law, and Karen Grace-Kaho, California State Ombudsman for Foster Care.

The ABA Center on Children and the Law has published the book "Establishing Ombudsman Programs for Children and Youth: How Government's Responsiveness to Its Young Citizens Can be Improved" (1993; 220 pages, \$34.95 Order #549-0245 at 1-800-285-2221) and maintains a child-ombudsman list serve (subscribe at: www.abanet.org/child/discussion.html).

Those representing ombudsman offices provided brief update reports. Some highlights include:

- MO program: Awaiting Governor's signature for legislative recognition (part of child welfare reform bill)
- NJ program: Only 8 months old, has 18 staff and a budget of \$2 million/year; they are working on a children's health project, addressing conditions of detention and post-adjudicative care for kids in the juvenile justice system; have two staff working only on handling institutional abuse allegations; obtained outside legal counsel to help in an investigation of a major child welfare agency/adoption case that garnered national publicity; and have had outside lawyers train their staff in conducting depo-

- sitions
- Toledo, OH: Child welfare agency has ombudsman position (now vacant); it was noted that some states have such positions labeled as a "constituent complaint unit", and someone suggested it was important to improve interactions with and coordination among these and the independent children's ombudsmen
- VA program: Now has an ombudsman within their Department of Juvenile Services for complaints that are related to the 8 state juvenile facilities
- NY: legislative staff person from NY indicated that a children's ombudsman ("Child Advocate Office") bill has been sponsored in that state, following a well-attended New York City event that advocated for this
- TN child ombudsman agency: Has one more year of federal Juvenile Justice Challenge Grant funding available to them; they address all children in state custody, including children in foster care, group care, juvenile justice settings, and relative placements; we were informed that this agency has "read-only" access to on-line records of children in custody
- MI: The Director of the Michigan program (the 4th ombudsman since the program was created) has spoken to the PA legislature about creation of a similar program there
- WA program: Doing 480 investigations/year from complaints that come into their office; they are hoping to facilitate a "summit" meeting on evidence-based assessments and treatment for children and parents involved in the child welfare system
- Sacramento, CA: The child welfare agency ombudsman informed us about a unique 6-week course they provide for people from the community wishing to better understand the child protection services system and its processes (a "CPS Citizens Academy")
- CT program: Has authority to initiate lawsuits and to intervene in individual juvenile court cases; they chair the state child fatality review program; they partnered with the state Attorney General on several case investigations and reports; they did a study of the costs incurred in one case of a maltreated child, through that child's 18th birthday, where necessary wrap-around family preservation services were not provided (that systemic cost was \$1.8 million)
- Los Angeles County, CA: The Emancipation Ombudsman described a unique program she created, now several years old. She "grew up" in foster care, so she has a thorough familiarity with the system; her office addresses housing needs; there is also a provision for foster kids to appeal terminations of their independent living housing benefits

The remainder of the meeting was a discussion of a variety of issues. Howard Davidson was interested in hearing how programs might be effective agents of systemic child welfare system improvements, e.g., through ombudsmen involvement in their state's Child and Family Service Review (CFSR)/

continued on page 6

.....

Committee & Chapter Reports Con't.

continued from page 5

Program Improvement Plan (PIP) process.

Finally, there was some discussion of continuing network opportunities and resources for children's ombudsman programs. The next USOA conference is in Portland, OR on Oct. 19-22. One reason mentioned for better networking among programs is that children's ombudsmen often deal with issues and cases that involve other states or are inter-jurisdictional in nature.

Howard Davidson agreed to add links to all children's ombudsman websites on the Center's own website. He also encouraged people to use the child-ombudsman list serve that the ABA has created.

Howard Davidson also informed the meeting participants about an excellent new "Family's Guide to the Child Welfare System," which is available at: http://gucchd.georgetown.edu/documents/AFamilyGuideFINAL_WEB_VERSION.pdf.

Children's ombudsmen are also reminded about two other resources:

- (1) The children's ombudsman program directory maintained by the RI Office of the Child Advocate (complete as of 2003):

<http://www.child-advocate.state.ri.us/Ombudsman2003.htm>

- (2) Children's ombudsman program information and state-by-state program chart prepared by the National Conference of State Legislatures (latest version, May 2004): <http://www.ncsl.org/programs/cyf/ombuds.htm>

Member Services Committee Report

by Stina M. Santiestevan, Chair

USOA Newsletter: While the last issue of the "USOmbudsman" newsletter proudly announced a third edition of the newsletter, with plans to try for quarterly issues this year, we are scaling back operations of two issues yearly for the time being. Economic pressures are the culprits: While the writing and editing is done on a volunteer basis, the USOA pays for layout and mailing and those costs are increasing. Simultaneously, our revenues have been decreasing as public sector ombudsman offices are closing or being forced to drastically cut their expenses. Thus for the foreseeable future, we continue to "tighten our belts," while trying to maintain essential services to USOA members.

USOA Members-Only Listserv: The recently established Members-Only Listserv has been suffering neglect lately. It was established for USOA members to use when communicating with each other, whether "just us" discussions on controversial or sensitive issues, for meeting announcements, or for questions and inquiries to the USOA membership list as a whole, etc. Using this listserv may be particularly useful just prior to the Portland

Member Services Committee Report con't.

Conference in October, as Chapters and Committees determine whether to meet, and if so, when and where to meet at the Conference.

Crisis Management Team: This sub-committee, co-chaired by Linda Lord-Jenkins and Stina M. Santiestevan, continues to be available to assist USOA member offices in crisis. Contact Linda Lord-Jenkins at 907-269-6291, Linda_Lord-Jenkins@legis.state.ak.us, or Stina Santiestevan at 313-224-7146, Stina@ombud.ci.detroit.mi.us.

People, Places & Events

GOODBYE TO BECKY CHAIO

Rebecca (Becky) Chiao, Deputy Ombudsman, Portland, Oregon Office of the Ombudsman and USOA Board Member, has accepted a position with the City of Portland as a Civil Rights Claims Investigator with the Risk Management Division. Becky has done exemplary work for USOA, including drafting the USOA Standards and serving as Chair of the Outreach & Development Committee. We'll miss you, Becky, and good luck in your new career!

Evelyn Rinzler- USOA Board Member, Activist and Advocate, Dies at 87

Evelyn Rinzler, who began a long career as champion for civil rights and social justice as a student activist at New York University during the 1930's, died of non-Hodgkin's lymphoma at her home in Walnut Creek, CA on January 8, 2004, according to a report in the *San Francisco Chronicle*, January 18, 2004. Evelyn Rinzler worked in race relations and management at New Jersey's McGuire Air Force Base, then in 1981 moved to northern California where she worked first at the Travis Air Force Base, then for fifteen years at Contra Costa Legal Services Foundation, where she represented clients in medical rights cases.

In 1998, at the age of 81, she was awarded the job of ombudsman for the Contra Coast Health Plan, which served several hundred thousand people. In this role she continued to fight for medical and social security rights for elders, minorities, and other populations who had been initially denied benefits and needed expert representation, finally retiring at the age of 87 on January 1, 2004. Evelyn will be deeply missed by all USOA members and others fortunate enough to have known her.

Errington (Tony) George Green

Jamaica's first parliamentary Ombudsman, and his wife, Gloria, renewed their wedding vows at the Stella Maris Roman Catholic Church in Kingston, commemorating 50 years of marriage, according to the *Jamaica Observer*, March 4, 2004.

.....

THE BENEFITS OF ATTENDING USOA ANNUAL CONFERENCES

By Gerald R. Papica, Ed.D.
USOA Director of Conferences & Training
Ombudsman-Juvenile Justice Unit,
Tennessee Commission on Children & Youth

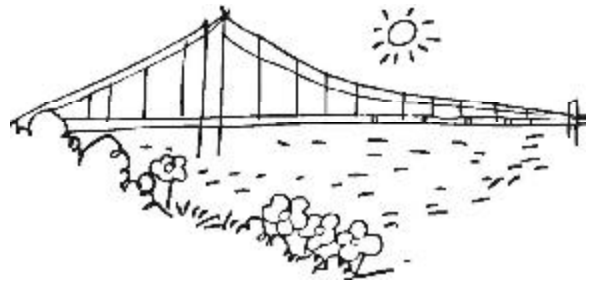


For 25 years, USOA has provided support to its members in a variety of ways; one of the most significant and popular is our yearly gathering. On October 19-22, 2004, the annual conference in Portland, Oregon marks the Silver Anniversary of the Association. On a personal note, apart from this celebratory moment, the autumn event also signifies my 4th consecutive year of conference participation. My involvement in planning, facilitating, and conducting workshops during conferences in Concord (NH), Chicago (IL), and Honolulu (HI) were borne out of personal and organizational needs. In this article, I hope to convince the readers that attending a USOA conference is a win-win scenario. Simply stated, it is fun, educational, and beneficial to the work that you do.

These past few years, I have come to the conclusion that the conference has a dual purpose, with intrinsic and extrinsic values. First, the conference serves as a retreat from the norms of a buzzing office. For a few days, at least, the routine work seems to stop, as I focus on the conference itself. Additionally, the annual event gives me an opportunity to ponder upon a lot of things related to my own motivation and inspiration as an ombudsman. By observing and talking to like-minded individuals, who seem to do their job with ease and confidence, my commitment to do a better job is always strengthened.

Being an ombudsman implies shouldering a heavy responsibility. Trying to appease primary clients and others related to a case is an ongoing task designed for the truly steadfast individual. This is not a job for the fainthearted worker! It takes someone with a lot of stamina to demonstrate accuracy and resoluteness with one's investigative findings. Courage to do the job right is gained by exactly knowing what to do and what to say. In essence, the conference is the ideal training ground for learning the skills of the trade, as well as a character-building exercise.

Most of the legitimate, thriving professions are maintained by an accrediting body. As I see it, running an ombudsman office without any organizational affiliation or support is undesirable and counterproductive. USOA is an organization that provides guidelines and standards used in a public sector ombudsman office. Various topics discussed in the conference highlight cutting edge approaches and best practices in the field. To hear how others effectively deal with challenges in their work setting is something that cannot be learned by reading textbooks or journals.



The annual conference also allows its members to share "trade secrets." The opportunity to dialogue with experienced ombudsmen is priceless. As USOA responds to its members' needs and wants, the association's course of actions in the forthcoming months are defined. Conference attendees are encouraged to let USOA know what they want discussed or presented in future conferences. Active participation has been the hallmark of the USOA, and all members' voices are sought out and listened to. I really like the idea that this is an organization of members who actually do something to maintain the vitality of the group. The degree of one's involvement helps to determine the degree of advantage gained from joining the association.

Find the time and means to join us in October. "Building Bridges to Meet Tomorrow's Challenges" is this year's conference theme. The "bridge" we have to "build" refers to the ideas and skills you will get while attending various workshops or sessions. The annual event is an experience you do not want to miss. Most definitely, it is everybody's turn to learn while relaxing. Is this not a win-win situation?

.....

TWENTY-FIVE AND COUNTING: INTERVIEW WITH MARSHALL LUX, NEBRASKA PUBLIC COUNSEL/ OMBUDSMAN

By Stina M. Santiestevan
USOA Director of Member Services
Assistant Ombudsman
Detroit Office of the Ombudsman

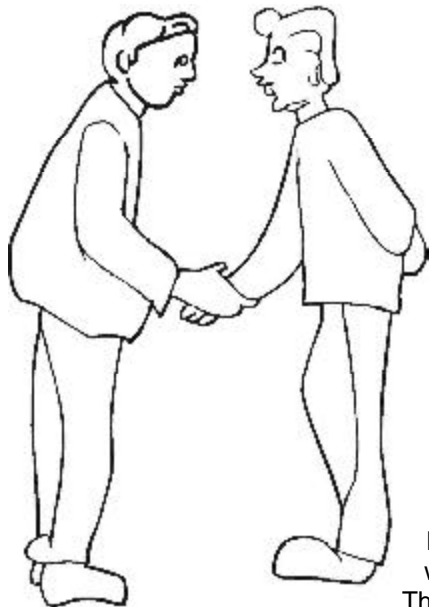
In 1979, Nebraska's first Ombudsman, Murrell McNeil, made an inspired decision. Although the job seeker before him was applying for the position of Deputy for Corrections, McNeil decided to appoint Marshall Lux to General Deputy Ombudsman instead. In 1981 when McNeil retired, Marshall Lux was appointed Ombudsman for the State of Nebraska, and he remains in that position to this day.

Thus, Marshall Lux, past President and member of the Board of Directors for USOA, is celebrating his twenty-fifth anniversary with the Nebraska Office of the Ombudsman this year, and we join in the chorus of congratulations.

When queried as to his proudest achievement, Lux characteristically focuses on the office rather than himself. "I think the most important accomplishment was to increase the office resources, especially in terms of staffing. We went from four staff members to nine. Of course, the case load has more than doubled over those same years."

Lux also admits to some justifiable pride regarding the office's report on the state of medical care in the Nebraska corrections system. The report resulted in significant reforms in medical care for prisoners, which had been in a state of severe decline previously.

But, there are also challenges in the Nebraska Ombudsman's Office. High on Lux's list of continuing frustrations is securing access to government records and gathering information from state agencies. "We can go for a period of time without argument [from the agencies], but then they come up with a new excuse for denying or delaying access to information. Sometimes [the denial itself] can become a distraction, and we have to keep our eye on the ball: What are the facts of the case?"

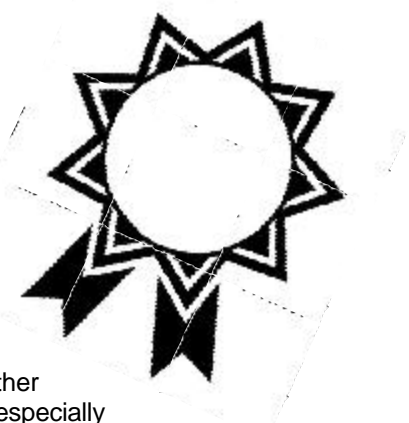


Looking back on his twenty-five years, Lux has learned some valuable lessons. "If you're in one of these [ombudsman] positions, although you don't have direct power to change policy, you do have significant influence to be critical and draw attention to urgent issues."

"That power, however, must be used judiciously, especially in the way you conduct yourself and express your views publicly. You must be seen as being steady, objective, and not too quick to 'cry wolf'."

"While sometimes you do have to dramatize the issue at hand, be sure you can back up your assertions; it increases the credibility of the office, which should be one of the top objectives for any ombudsman."

In addition to his twenty-five productive years in the Nebraska Ombudsman Office, Marshall Lux has been an active and valuable USOA member. Besides serving as President and Board member, he also helped draft the official USOA Model Act, and worked diligently on the effort to craft American Bar Association ombudsman standards. The USOA offers heartfelt thanks for all his hard work and best wishes for the future.



.....

USOA BOARD OF DIRECTORS 2003-2005

Directors

President

Robin K. Matsunaga, Ombudsman
State of Hawaii, Office of the Ombudsman
465 S. King Street, 4th Floor
Honolulu, HI 96813
808-587-0770
FAX 808-587-0773
robin.matsunaga@ombudsman.state.hi.us
www.ombudsman.state.hi.us

Vice-President

Ruth Cooperrider, Deputy and Legal Counsel
Iowa Citizens' Aide/Ombudsman
Ola Babcock Miller Building
1112 East Grand Avenue
Des Moines, IA 50319
515-281-3592
Fax 515-242-6007
Ruth.cooperrider@legis.state.ia.us
<http://staffweb.legis.state.ia.us/cao/>

Secretary-Treasurer

Ron Adcock, Ombudsman
Office of the Ombudsman
N.H. Dept. of Health & Human Services
129 Pleasant Street
Concord, NH 03301
603-271-6941
Fax 603-271-4632
radcock@dhhs.state.nh.us
www.state.nh.us/dhhs/ocom/oombud.htm

Director - Membership

Alexander Keenan, Deputy Ombudsman
Office of the Ombudsman
Transportation Security Administration
400 7th St. SW
Washington, D.C. 20590
571-227-2380
FAX 571-227-1387
alex.keenan@tsa.dot.gov

Director - Member Services

Stina Santiestevan, Assistant Ombudsman
Detroit Office of the Ombudsman
114 Coleman A. Young Municipal Center
2 Woodward Avenue
Detroit, MI 48226-3413 USA
313-224-7146
FAX 313-224-1911
Stina@OMBUD.ci.detroit.mi.us
www.ci.detroit.mi.us/ombudsman

Director - Outreach & Development

Rebecca Chiao, Deputy Ombudsman
Office of the Ombudsman, City of Portland
1221 SW 4th Avenue, Room 320
Portland, OR 97204
503-823-0919
FAX 503-823-3530
bchiao@ci.portland.or.us
www.ci.portland.or.us/auditor/ombudsman

Director - Conferences & Training

Gerald Papica, Ed.D., Ombudsman
Office of the Ombudsman for Children & Families
Tennessee Commission on Children & Youth
710 James Robertson Parkway, 9th Floor
Nashville, TN 37243-0800
615-532-1572
FAX 615-532-1591
gerald.papica@state.tn.us
www.state.tn.us/tccy/ombuds/html

Ex Officio Members

Children & Families Chapter Co-Chairs

Karen Grace-Kaho, Ombudsperson
Ombudsman for Foster Care
California Department of Social Services [www.dss.ca.gov]
744 P Street MS 9-025
Sacramento, CA 95814 USA
916-653-4296
Fax 916-651-6568
Karen.Grace-Kaho@DSS.CA.GOV

Mary Meinig, Director Ombudsman

Washington State Office of Family and
Children's Ombudsman
[<http://www.governor.wa.gov/ofco/ofcohome.htm>]
6720 Fort Dent Way, Suite 240
Tukwila, WA 98188
206-439-3870
Fax 206-439-3877
mary.meinig@OFCO.WA.GOV

Corrections Chapter

Oscar Harriott
Deputy Ombudsman for Corrections
NE Public Counsel/Ombudsman Office
State Capitol, Room 807
P.O. Box 94712
Lincoln, NE 68509-4712 USA
402-471-2035
Fax 402-471-4277
OHarriott@unicam.state.ne.us

.....

USOA BOARD OF DIRECTORS 2003-2005

Ex Officio Members Continued

Healthcare Chapter

Roberta Opheim, Ombudsman
Ombudsman for Mental Health & Mental Retardation
121 7th Pl. E., Ste 420 Metro Square Bldg.
St. Paul, MN 55101
651-296-7831 FAX 651-296-1021
Roberta.Opheim@state.mn.us
[www.ombudmhr.state.mn.us]

Municipal Government Chapter

Michael Mills, Ombudsman
Office of the Ombudsman, City of Portland
1221 SW 4th Avenue, Rm 320
Portland, OR 97204
503-823-0144 FAX 503-823-3530
mpmills@ci.portland.or.us
[www.ci.portland.or.us/auditor/ombudsman]

Public Schools Chapter Co-Chairs

Pamula Thomas, Ombudsperson
Customer Help Center
Cincinnati Public Schools [www.cps-k12.org]
2651 Burnet Avenue
Cincinnati, OH 45219
513-363-0122 FAX 513-363-0125
thomasp@cps-k12.org

Miriam Beltran, Ombudsman
Ombudsman Office, Chicago Public Schools
[www.csc.cps.k12.il.us/ombuds]
125 S. Clark - 2nd Floor
Chicago, IL 60603 USA
773-553-1002 Fax 773-553-1001
mbeltran@csc.cps.k12.il.us

USOA Business Office

Lori Squires, CAE, Business Manager
Dynamic Resources
8345 University Blvd., Ste. F-1
Des Moines, IA 50325
Phone 515-225-2323 Fax 515-225-6363
usoa@assoc-serv.com
www.usombudsman.org

Editor's Note: For USOA Board of Director's contact information, please visit www.usombudsman.org.

2004 NEW MEMBERS

USOA was pleased to welcome the following new members in 2004. (Please note: all titles are "ombudsman" unless otherwise indicated.)

Judith C. Bruner

Campus Ombudsperson
Office of the Ombudsman
9500 Gilman Drive
La Jolla, CA 92093-0016
858-534-0777 (o)
858-822-0840 (f)
jbruner@ucsd.edu

Michael Cash

Ombudsman
Office of the Ombudsman for Children & Families
Tennessee Commission on Children & Youth
710 James Robertson Parkway, 9th Floor
Nashville, TN 37243-0800
615-532-1688 (o)
615-532-1591 (f)
michael.cash@state.tn.us

Dan Hamill

Ombudsman/Mediator
Plant Services
Kaiser Baldwin Park
1011 Baldwin Park Blvd.
Baldwin Park, CA 91706
626-851-6448 (o)
dan.r.hamill@kp.org

Kellijo Jeffries

Ombudsman
Stark County Department of Jobs & Family Services
220 E Tuscarawas Street NW
Canton, OH 44702
330-452-4661 (o)
330-451-8153 (f)
jeffrk@odifs.state.oh.us

Jeffrey A. Keating

Analyst
Office of the Ombudsman, State of Hawaii
465 S. King Street, 4th Fl
Honolulu, HI 96813
808-587-0770 (o)
808-587-0773 (f)
jeffrey.keating@ombudsman.state.hi.us

Susan Leith

Ombudsman, Citizenship & Immigration Canada
Office of the Ombudsman, CIC
365 Laurier Avenue West
Ottawa, ON K1A 1L1
613-941-1785 (o)
613-941-1803 (f)
susan.leith@cic.gc.ca

.....

2004 NEW MEMBERS CON'T.

Lynne Martinez
Ombudsman
Office of Children's Ombudsman
124 West Allegan Street, Suite 100
Lansing, MI 48933
517-373-3077 (o)
517-335-4471 (f)
martinezls@michigan.gov

Mary McEniry
Ombudsman
Office of the Child Welfare Ombudsman
301 W. High Street, Room 840
Jefferson City, MO 65102
573-522-8686 (o)
573-522-6870 (f)
mary.mceniry@cwo.mo.gov

Clara Patterson
Agency ADR Specialist
USAID/EOP
1508 Iverson Street
Apt. #101
Oxon Hill, MD 20745-4007
202-712-5663 (o)
207-216-3370 (f)
cpatterson@usaid.gov

Kristina Patterson
4 Holden Row #1
Charlestown, MA 02129
781-383-4129 (o)
781-383-0228 (f)
kjp66@comcast.net

Beverly Reeves
District Ombudsman
Austin School District Ombudsman Office
1111 W. 6th St, Suite A230
Austin, TX 78703
512-414-9882 (o)
512-414-9962 (f)
breeves@austin.isd.tenet.edu

Kent Rhodes, E.d. D
Ombudsman
Office of the Dean Graduate School of
Education & Psychology
6100 Center Drive
Los Angeles, CA 90045
310-568-5600 ext 2554 (o)
310-568-5755 (f)
krrhodes@pepperdine.edu

Kelly Whiteman
Director
Department of Administration
402 W. Washington Street W478
Indianapolis, IN 46204
317-234-3190 (o)
317-233-5022 (f)
ombud@idoa.state.in

Carolyn Williams
Ombudsman
The Office of the Ombudsman
3301 Gun Club Rd
West Palm Beach, FL 33406
561-682-6335 (o)
561-682-5390 (f)
cwilliam@sfwmd.gov

John Williams, Esq.
District Ombudsman
South Florida Water Management District
3301 Gun Club Road
West Palm Beach, FL 33406
561-682-6128 (o)
561-682-0066 (f)
jwwillia@sfwmd.gov

USOA WELCOMES NEW BUSINESS MANAGER

On June 1, the USOA Board of Directors hired Lori Squires of Dynamic Resources, Inc., an association management firm located in Des Moines, Iowa, to serve as the USOA's Business Manager. Ms. Squires has extensive experience managing professional associations and is a Certified Association Executive. She has been a professional association manager for 24 years and was recently elected by her peers as the President of the Iowa Society of Association Executives. Feel free to contact Lori with any questions or comments you may have at usoa@assoc-serv.com or 515-225-2323.

USOA EDITORIAL INFORMATION

The purpose of USOMBUDSMAN is to communicate the activities, goals, and mission of the United States Ombudsman Association and to publish diverse information and views on matters significantly related to the Ombudsman profession. Statements of fact and opinion are the sole responsibility of the author and do not express the opinion or endorsement of the USOA unless they are specifically identified as USOA policy.

Please send mailing address corrections to USOA, 8345 University Blvd., Suite F-1, Des Moines, Iowa 50325.

For information regarding content of USOMBUDSMAN and/or submission of articles and announcements, please contact the editor: Stina Santiestevan at Stina@OMBUD.ci.detroit.mi.us.

Special thanks to Stina for her efforts on behalf of USOA.



United States Ombudsman Association
8345 University Blvd., Suite F-1
Des Moines, Iowa 50325

USOMBUDSMAN is published by the United States Ombudsman Association. The newsletter is the property of USOA; articles may be reprinted with permission. Comments, photos, and news items are welcome. The Board of the USOA acts as the editorial board for this publication.

Founded in 1977, the United States Ombudsman Association is a 501(c)(3) professional association devoted to the promotion of public sector ombudsmanship that represents fairness, equality, and justice in public administration. USOA's web site, www.usombudsman.org, is a ready resource in our association and its activities, contact with the board and members through the online Member Directory, reference materials related to the ombudsman profession, association records, and links to other associations. Current USOA members can log-in to the "Members Only" page by creating an individual password to utilize the directory and references.

USOA sponsors the OMB_GOV listserv as a service to public sector ombudsman offices across the United States and around the world. The purpose of the listserv is to promote the free exchange of ideas about the public sector ombudsman institution. The list is open to anyone who provides governmental ombudsman or complaint resolution services at the local, state, federal, or international levels. This includes academics studying the governmental ombudsman institution and voting and associate members of the USOA, the Canadian Ombudsman Association, or the International Ombudsman Institute. We encourage all staff and managers of governmental ombudsman or government complaint resolution offices to subscribe. If you wish to subscribe, visit http://usombudsman.org/list_subscribe.cfm and fill out the form. You will receive an automatic welcome response.

© 2004