

# School Social Work Association of America

## Conference and Board News



### **School Social Work Association of America**

Leadership and Legislative Institute  
Washington DC

The School Social Work Association of America recently held its annual SSWAA Leadership/Legislative Institute: “*Advocacy for the 21st Century*” from July 18-21 2010.

The Institute was attended by 44 school social work leaders from 24 states and 21 State Associations and included the SSWAA Board of Directors and staff. Over the 4 days, we enjoyed the opportunity to participate in a variety of workshops, panel presentations and legislative advocacy with House and Senate representatives and their staff (pictured below is the Michigan State Association participants with Senator Debbie Stabenow, MSW Michigan State University 1975, at their meeting in her Senate Office).



### **SSWAA Institute Agenda**

**Sunday, 7/18:** Registration; Discussion of SSWAA State Affiliates and Delegate Assembly proposals; Workshop: “State and Federal Budget Issues” (Joel Packer & David Shreve); SSWAA Reception

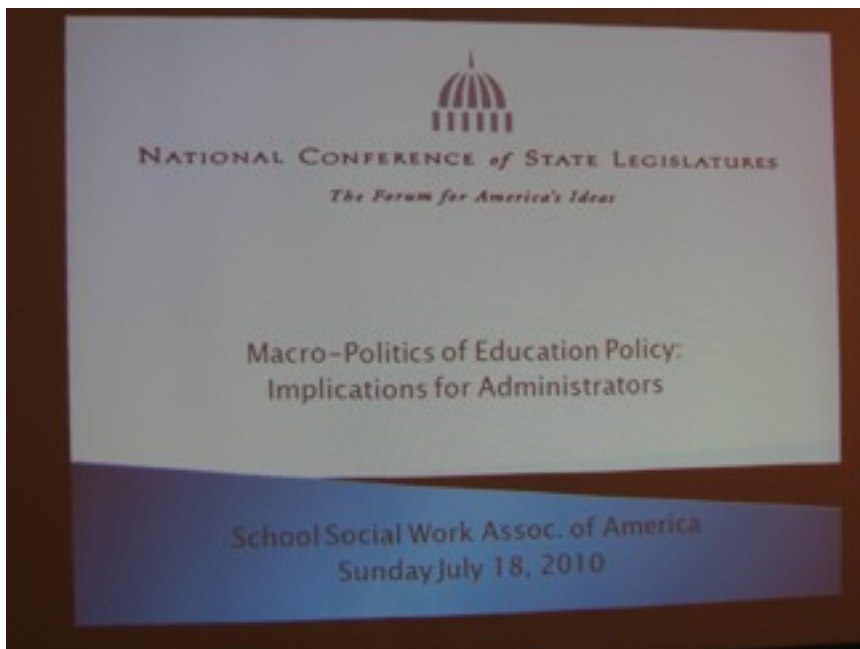
**Monday, 7/19:** Continental Breakfast; Discussion of SSWAA Governance Issues; “Partners in Advocacy” NAPSIO Panel Discussion; Buffet Lunch; Workshop: “Advocacy Training / Preparation for Capitol Hill Visits” (Richard Spring and Myrna Mandlawitz)

**Tuesday, 7/20:** Capitol Hill Breakfast; Capitol Hill visits with House and Senate members/staff

**Wednesday, 7/21:** Debriefing Session on Capitol Hill Visits; Workshop: “Using Social Media to Advocate and Organize for School Social Work” (Hilary Goldman)



# SSWAA Leadership and Legislative Institute Agenda



The Institute participants heard from a variety of experts and speakers from several national organizations relating to educational funding, legislation, collaboration and using media to promote school social work. The Institute included a workshop regarding State and Federal Budget Issues presented by Joel Packer who is the Executive Director, Committee for Education Funding ([www.cef.org](http://www.cef.org)); and David Shreve, the Federal Affairs Counsel for the National Conference of State Legislatures ([www.ncsl.org](http://www.ncsl.org)).



A panel (left) representing the Alliance of Pupil Services Organizations delivered a presentation. The panel consisted of representatives from the American Federation of Teachers (AFT), National Association of School Psychologists (NASP), American Counseling Association (ACA), American Music Therapy Association (AMTA) and the National Association of School Nurses (NASN). They discussed their different organizational structures, legislative priorities and collaboration efforts with other partner national organizations including SSWAA. Please review their very informative and helpful website at ([www.napso.org](http://www.napso.org)).



Several other trainings/workshops were presented on "Legislative Advocacy" by Myrna Mandlawitz and Richard Spring. Hilary Goldmann who is Director of Governmental Affairs with the International Society for Technology in Education ([www.iste.org](http://www.iste.org)), made a presentation on the "Use of Social Media to Advocate for School Social Workers." In addition, there were several general sessions for discussion and feedback regarding the future direction of SSWAA and the various state organizations.

## SSWAA Legislative Workshop and Capitol Hill Visits

In addition to the Institute presentations and general sessions regarding the direction of SSWAA, a workshop was presented by Myrna Mandlawitz (SSWAA Governmental Relations Director) and Richard Spring (Michigan) which addressed the legislative process and how to advocate for school social work. On Tuesday, over 40 participated in a Capitol Hill breakfast sponsored by Senator Patty Murray (D-WA) and the American Federation of Teachers. The rest of the day was spent on our scheduled meetings with House and Senate members and their staff regarding school social work issues (see Howard's report).



## SSWAA Member Report

I just returned from attending a day at the annual SSWAA Leadership and Legislative conference in Washington, D.C., this year with representatives from some 24 states. On Tuesday, some 40 School Social Workers "stormed the hill", Capitol Hill that is, to meetings with the staff of both the House of Representatives and Senate. Among the topics discussed in these meetings were as follows:

1. Reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (currently known as "No Child Left Behind).

a. Conform and change the terminology of Pupil Services Personnel or Related Services Personnel to "specialized instructional support personnel".

b. Establish the Office of Specialized Instructional Support Services in the U.S. Dept. of Education. Currently there is no point of contact or leadership in the Dept. of Education for services provided by "specialized instructional support personnel.

c. Fully integrate specialized instructional support personnel into the general education system.

d. Identify students with academic and behavioral challenges early and provide targeted interventions before considering a referral for special education services.

e. Require schools to determine and to assess the availability of social and mental health services for students as part of the school improvement plan.

2. "Increased Student Achievement Through Increased Student Support Act"

This legislation's purpose is to increase the number of school social workers, school counselors, and school psychologists in areas served by low-income school districts.

3. Support to the continuance and expansion of the Elementary and Secondary School Counseling Program. "School Counseling services" are provided by school social workers, school counselors and school psychologists to address barriers to learning and to promote a safe learning environment. Whereas the Dept. of Education "Blueprint" for ESEA reauthorization recommends consolidating this program with several other programs, the position of SSWAA is to urge Congress to maintain the integrity and priorities of this program, preferably as it is currently configured.

4. Strong support for the Education Jobs Fund that would provide \$10 billion dollars to maintain and prevent further losses of education-related jobs, including early childhood, elementary and secondary teachers, and **specialized instructional support personnel**. Hopefully this bill could restore some of the School Social Work positions that have already been lost this year due to budgetary concerns in CA.

I was very impressed with the training provided by Myrna Mandlawitz, government relations staff for SSWAA, and Richard Spring, legislative chair, for their in-depth insights on how to effectively "lobby" our representatives. There was also a presentation by a panel of five members of the National Alliance of Pupil Service Organizations on collaborative advocacy for specialized instructional support personnel. NAPSIO, as the organization is currently known, has some thirty national organizations represented for the purpose of shared advocacy for support personnel. Of interest, is that Myrna Mandlawitz is co-chair of this organization, and the other co-chair is Dominic Holt, who is the Legislative Representative for the American Counseling Association who has an MSW from the U. of Michigan. Therefore, the social work perspective is well represented in this forum.

Now, more than ever, is the time to support our State and National organizations as they struggle to represent our interests at the State and National level. Clearly, if we don't have a seat at these tables, we can easily be overlooked. Don't just sit back and wait for someone else to do it for you, join your State and National SSW organizations today if you have not already done so.

Best wishes,

Howard Blonsky

School Social Workers in Maryland



## SSWAA BOARD MEETING REPORT

The SSWAA Board of Directors held 4 work sessions during the Summer Leadership/Legislative Institute. The Board listened to a presentation by Richard Wong, Executive Director of the American School Counselor Association regarding Policies of Governance. Afterwards the Board reviewed the 3 Staff reports: Executive Director (Financial Report/Organizational Contacts/Projects/Membership and Legal Issues), Governmental Relations (Legislation and Organizational Contacts/Partnerships) and Conference Planner (St. Louis Conference Report/2011 Conference Update). The agenda also included a review of the current SSWAA By-Laws and Constitution, E-Bell/Website and the New SSWAA Framework Proposals which will include a new State Partnership Agreement that will include a State Delegate Assembly, Redesigned Dues Structure, SSWAA Board Reorganization and SSWAA Constitution and By-Laws Changes..all which will go the membership for a vote in the fall, 2010. The next scheduled SSWAA Board meetings will be in Philadelphia this fall and again during our National Conference in Myrtle Beach, South Carolina March 30-April 2 2011. If you have any questions or items for discussion, please contact us at [www.sswaa.org](http://www.sswaa.org) on the SSWAA Leadership page.



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## SSWAA STAFF

The School Social Work Association of America (SSWAA) would like to introduce the three staff members that serve the interests of individual school social workers, state associations and our national organization. Our new **Conference Planning Director** is Dot Kontak (Missouri); **Governmental Relations Director** is Myrna Mandlawitz ( Washington DC); and the **Executive Director** is Frederick Streeck (Washington). They may be reached through our website: [www.sswaa.org](http://www.sswaa.org) on the About US/Leadership page.





## *Meet Us by the Sea!*

For the

# 14th National School Social Work Conference

The School Social Work Association of America would like to invite you to be a part of our 2011 National School Social Work Conference to be held in sunny Myrtle Beach, South Carolina beginning on Wednesday, March 30, 2011 to Saturday April 2. Earn up to **21 CEUs** including such topics as ethics, Response to Intervention, bullying, evidence based practice interventions, crisis response, psychiatric disorders, diverse populations, autism and much, much more.

We will be staying at the Embassy Suites which offers spacious two-room suites at \$144/night that are equipped with mini refrigerators, microwaves, 32" LCD televisions, a sleeper sofa, and private balconies with ocean views. Guests of the Embassy Suites Hotel can enjoy a *complimentary breakfast buffet* each morning and *Manager's Reception* each evening. For the budget conscious, Kingston Plantation has more private two bedroom Condos and Villas that can sleep from 4-8 including kitchens and washer/dryers that are available for \$134/night and ocean view condos from \$194 - \$204/night. (Villas and Condos do not qualify for breakfast or the Manager's Reception offered at the Embassy Suites.) For more details or to make a reservation, checkout the websites: [http://embassysuites.hilton.com/en/es/groups/personalized/myreses\\_swa/index.jhtml](http://embassysuites.hilton.com/en/es/groups/personalized/myreses_swa/index.jhtml) and <http://www.kingstonplantation.com/> and enter the group/convention code where requested (Group Code: SWA). Or call 1-800-876-0010 and be sure to mention the SSWAA Conference (Group Code: SWA) to receive the discounted rates. Reservations must be made by **March 8, 2011**.

**Register by September 15, 2010 and take advantage of  
REDUCED Conference Fees!**

**Register Today!** <http://www.sswaa.org/ConferenceRegistration.asp>



During our meetings at the Hart Senate Office Building, Theresa and I witnessed a demonstration and civil disobedience supporting the Dream Act (HR 1751) which has been awaiting Congressional approval since its submission in 2009.



Please refer to [www.dreamact.info](http://www.dreamact.info) and [www.advocacy.collegeboard.org](http://www.advocacy.collegeboard.org) (Policy Areas/Projects).

## Membership Information

**SSWAA IS YOUR ADVOCATE  
FOR SCHOOL SOCIAL WORK PRACTICE**

Membership information and application forms can be found on our website at:

[www.sswaa.org/index.asp?page=72](http://www.sswaa.org/index.asp?page=72)

[www.sswaa.org](http://www.sswaa.org)

Regular/Associate is \$120

Student/Affiliate or Retired is \$60

