

RSEA HONORS 2017 CHAPTER MEMBERS OF THE YEAR

RSEA members were honored as Chapter Members of the Year during the 2017 Annual Chapter meetings held in March. These 8 honorees will also be recognized at the RSEA Statewide Conference that will be held at the downtown Holiday Inn in Alexandria, Louisiana, October 4-6, 2017.



CYNTHIA SCHEXNAYDER
Acadiana Chapter



LINDA D. MCMAHON
Alexandria Chapter



BETTY KNOX
Baton Rouge Chapter



SYLVIA ANN L. SAVOY
Lake Charles Chapter



JUDITH M. MCILWAIN
Monroe Chapter



BEATRICE AUGUST
New Orleans Chapter



JOHN KENNETH MENDOW, JR.
Northshore Chapter



ROBERT BAKER, JR.
Shreveport Chapter

RSEA MEMBER HIGHLIGHTED: VICTOR DENNIS, JR.



Re-Entry Solutions Hall of Fame Gala and Reception include (from left) Rev. Sterling Terrell, Victor Dennis, Kelsey Osman, Anthony Mangun, Evelyn Edwards, and Eugene Scriber. (Photo: One Eye Photography)

Mr. Dennis was one of 8 individuals chosen to be inducted into Re-Entry Solutions Hall of Fame at a Gala Reception held on April 28 in Pineville, Louisiana. Re-Entry Solutions is a non-profit organization that assists people making the transition back into the community following arrest and incarceration. They focus on helping the individuals find employment and

housing as well as addressing emotional issues and helping to keep families together whenever possible.

Victor is a retired U.S. Air Force veteran and a retiree from the Louisiana Department of Health and Hospitals. Victor has served in many volunteer efforts through the years including, Habitat for Humanity, Family Counseling Service, Central Louisiana Homeless Coalition, United Way of Central Louisiana, Aftercare Ministry International, Central Louisiana Human Service District Advisory Council, National Alliance of Mental Health and Save the Dairy Barn.

Mr. Dennis serves in the role of RSEA's Immediate Past-President, and as Alexandria's Chapter President. He plays an active role in our operations including Louisiana Legislation retiree issues. He is also the 2017 RSEA Conference Chair.

Congratulations to Vic!

You're a pro at travel. But do you know about MASA?

Medical Air Services Association (MASA) is the premier provider of pre-paid medical transportation assistance. In fact, people all over the world trust MASA to transport them during a medical emergency at home and abroad.

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800-258-7041
or visit
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State President's Message

State Employees Day was celebrated on May 3rd. I hope the word is getting out that State Employees are truly public servants and many have given the best years of their lives to serve others. We appreciate all our active and retired State Employees. You are the most "giving" people I know because you continue to do volunteer work to help others. Thanks for all you do.

We continue to build strong with our "On the Grow" membership campaign. The question is "WHO DO YOU KNOW"? I am asking our members to sit down and write down the names of all the state employees that you worked with. A script is being prepared that will help you call your friends and ask them to become a member of RSEA. It is as simple as calling 1-866-938-0961 and a staff member can sign you up over the phone! Also, call me or your Chapter President and we can help you in getting your friends signed up. There is strength in numbers and we are becoming stronger and stronger!

Mark your calendar for the State Conference on October 4-6 in Alexandria. The Conference flyer on page 5 gives you the information you need to register. This is going to be a special time when you will be treated like royalty. We will be honoring all our Chapter members of the year. The conference is an economical way to have a fun vacation and also attend informative sessions. You will learn how to be healthy, wealthy, and wise. The conference committee is working diligently to make this a fun time for everyone. We are going to "Celebrate good times – come on – it's a celebration".

See you at the Conference!!!

Parting thought – "Be glad of life because it gives you the chance to love and to work and to play and to look at the stars" – Henry Van Dyke

Bonita Hearne, MSW, LCSW



Executive Director's Message

"ON THE GROW"

MEMBERSHIP CAMPAIGN:

RSEA is currently conducting a membership campaign entitled, "On the Grow."

Through this campaign we are striving to grow our membership, creating a stronger voice and organization to work for our members. This campaign is underway and will continue throughout 2017 and further. During this campaign, we plan on conducting Phonathons with volunteers in RSEA's 9 chapter areas, and using other various methods to spread the word that RSEA is "On the Grow." We need you to help us! If you know of a recent retiree, consider asking them to join RSEA, or become a volunteer, we need your help.



Membership, Pass it on!

Updates:

RSEA has recently upgraded its telephone system. When you call the RSEA office, with the press of a button, you can be transferred to 1) Office of Group Benefits (OGB) for your health insurance questions and premiums that are taken out of your LASERS retirement check, 2) Association of Member Benefits Advisors (AMBA) for questions regarding programs and insurance they offer such as dental and vision plans, and 3) Louisiana State Employees' Retirement System (LASERS) for questions regarding your retirement check, and profile updates such as address, and telephone number changes. Of course, you can press "0" for the RSEA office to have your membership and other questions answered. We feel that this update will enable us to better serve RSEA members.

You also may want to have these numbers for reference. They are as follows:

Important Telephone Numbers:

RSEA	1-866-938-0961
OGB:	1-800-272-8451
AMBA:	1-800-258-7041
LASERS	1-800-256-3000

Support lifelong learning!

It will stimulate your mind, body and spirit -

Arlette R. Rodrigue, Ph.D., CFRE



RSEA Legislative & Governmental Affairs Director's Message



The 2017 Regular Legislative Session adjourned June 8th and was immediately followed by a Special Session. Given it was a fiscal session and that there were a limited number of retirement bills that were pre-filed, our primary concern was focused on proposed legislation that might attempt to raise revenue by taxing retirees' income. The retirement and other bills that were being monitored by RSEA included HB 33 (Pearson); SB 8 (Peacock); SB 6 (Smith); SB 11 (Peacock); and HB 55 (Carter).

Once the session started, we began to track additional legislative instruments of interest including: SCR 22 (Mizell); SR 123 (Milkovich); HB 685 (Hodges); HB 456 (Abramson), and HB 1 (Henry). RSEA testified at the Civil Service Commission and supported the new pay plan, insofar as it provided for the employee pay raise and established new/higher pay schedules.

Unfortunately, HB 1 did not pass during the regular session, along with some other money bills, giving rise to the need for the 2nd Special Session of 2017. The pay plan and raise(s) must still be approved by Governor Edwards, in order to be implemented. It is questionable as to whether or not he will approve the pay plan/raises without the corresponding legislative appropriations to fund this expenditure. The results of the **2017 2nd Special Session** are not known at the time of this writing. Regular Session results follow.

Frank Jobert, Jr.

BILL	POSITION	OUTCOME
HB33 - Pearson	Support	Passed

Systems Impacted: All State and Statewide Systems

Clarifies that the Chairs of the House and Senate Retirement Committees may each authorize legislative staff to attend executive sessions of state and statewide retirement system board meetings; and now contains a provision that a person found in violation of the State Ethics Code concerning misuse of public funds is ineligible to serve on a retirement system board of trustees.

HB 456—Abramson	Opposed	Failed
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Systems Impacted: All State Retirement Systems

Provides for a calling of a "limited" Louisiana Constitutional Convention to be convened to make changes to fiscal provisions in the state

constitution. It was later amended to include state retirement systems' investment management decisions & to change benefit provisions for new hires after December 31, 2019.

SB 8 – Peacock	Support	Passed
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Systems Impacted: All State and Statewide Systems

Provides for correction of membership enrollment errors. Within 30 days of discovery of the error, the process of correction must be initiated. The employer must pay any amount necessary to the correct retirement system to provide service credit, if the amount transferred is insufficient. The accrual rate of the correct system is used to calculate the employee's benefit.

2017 Other Legislation of Interest to RSEA:

SB 6 – Smith	Support	Passed
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Systems Impacted: Office of Group Benefits (OGB)

Proposed law retains present law but changes quorum requirement for any action taken by the board from eight to six members.

SB 11 – Peacock	No Position	Failed
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Systems Impacted: Teachers' Retirement System of Louisiana (TRSL) and Louisiana School Employees' Retirement System (LSERS)

Provides for the re-designation of the Teachers' Retirement System of Louisiana to the Teachers' Retirement Plan (TRP) and the Louisiana School Employees' Retirement System as the Louisiana School Employees' Retirement Plan (LSERP) as qualified defined benefit plans under present law. Provides for the establishment of TRSL as a qualified defined benefit plan for the purpose of providing the administration and maintenance of both the Teachers' Retirement Plan (TRP) and the Louisiana School Employees' Retirement Plan (LSERP). Proposed law also provides for technical changes to present law to allow the re-comprised board of trustees to administer both TRP & LSERP. Provides for the transfer of all administrative functions from LSERS to TRSL within a two-year period after the effective date (7/1/17) of proposed law.

SCR 22 –Mizell	Support	Passed
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Systems Impacted: All State and Statewide Systems

Memorializes or requests that the U. S. Congress consider eliminating the Social Security benefit reductions or offsets—the Windfall Elimination Provision (WEP) and the Government Pension Offset (GPO).

SR 123 Milkovich	No Position	Passed
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Requested that the state retirement systems post their investment reports on their website.

HB 685-Hodges	Opposed	Failed
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Legislation Impacts: Louisiana Deferred Compensation Plan

Originated as HB 549 and dealt with the Louisiana Deferred Compensation Plan's board composition, a "voluntary cash contribution" account, investment options, and reporting requirements to the legislature. RSEA opposed this measure, except for the addition of the House and the Senate Retirement Committees' Chairmen to the Louisiana Deferred Comp Board of Trustees.

RSEA 9TH ANNUAL CONFERENCE

October 4-6, 2017

RSEA Red Carpet Event:

Life is a Stage!

Pre-Conference Workshops include:

- AARP Driving Class*
- Kenthouse Tour*
- Paint Class*
- Shuttle to the Mall

**Indicates additional registration fee for this workshop.*

General Sessions include:

- Little Attitudes Make a BIG Difference
- 2017 Benefits Update
- A Look in Louisiana's History: The Death of a Princess

Concurrent Workshops include:

- Spicing Things Up
(Not what you're thinking – it's really about spices!)
- Chair Exercising
- Line Dancing
- What do I need to Learn Before I Get Old?

Downtown Holiday Inn

701 Fourth Street, Alexandria, La 71301

Lodging Rates (plus taxes/fees):

- Hotel - \$109.00
(includes breakfast; single or double occupancy)

For Reservations Call:

800-HOLIDAY (465-4329) OR
HOTEL DIRECT 318-541-8333

(Ask for RSEA 2017 Convention – Group Code: RSE)

Registration Fees

- RSEA Member and/or RSEA Guest (1) - \$50 each
- Non-Member - \$70 (includes RSEA Membership)

RSEA 2017 CONFERENCE REGISTRATION FORM

Name: _____ Guest Name: _____

Retired From (Agency): _____ Year: _____ Veteran Yes/No: _____

Address: _____

Email:* _____ Telephone: _____

*Agree to share email address with conference vendors.

____ Are you a breast cancer survivor?

REGISTRATION FEES DUE IN ADVANCE:

\$ <u>50 / 70</u>	Member / Non-Member Registration Fee	\$ _____	Add Paint Class (\$35 per person)
\$ _____	Guest Registration Fee (\$50)	\$ _____	Total Enclosed
\$ _____	Add Tour (\$15 per person)		

*(AARP Driving Class \$15 Members/\$20 Non-Members,
fee is collected at the door the day of class.)*

Mail Completed registration form and check to:

RSEA Foundation, 9412 Common Street, Suite 7, Baton Rouge, LA 70809

Questions: Call 225-933-1309 or email tabs1@bellsouth.net



OGB UPDATE

OGB Cautions Members Against Scams

The Office of Group Benefits has received reports from members who have been called or had a door-to-door solicitation from individuals claiming to be affiliated with OGB. In many cases, these solicitors call themselves “OGB Benefit Advisors” and ask for money to be sent directly to them in order to enroll in a health plan. It’s important to remember that **OGB representatives will never come to your home and will never ask you to send money directly to the agency or a representative.** If you receive a suspicious call, visit or letter, please contact OGB to confirm that it is legitimate. You can contact OGB between 8 a.m. and 4:30 pm Monday through Friday by calling **1-800-272-8451**.

Live Better Louisiana

The deadline to qualify for a \$120 premium credit on your 2018 health plan is approaching. To be eligible, you must complete a checkup and the Personal Health Assessment by **Aug. 31, 2017, and be enrolled*** in an OGB Blue Cross health plan in 2018. If you completed the requirements for a previous year, you must do it again to receive the credit in 2018.

The two step process is as follows:

1. Take your online Personal Health Assessment (PHA) at www.bcbsla.com/ogb.
 - a. If you need help or don’t have Internet access, call 1-800-392-4089
 - b. Retirees should answer questions about your workplace with “Does not apply to my job” or “Neutral.”
2. Get a Preventative Checkup** at a Catapult Health clinic held across Louisiana
 - a. Sign up at www.timeconfirm.com/OGB or call 1-877-841-3058
 - b. Retirees may go to any clinic, but ones marked on the online scheduler as “retirees welcome” are specifically designed with retirees in mind.

**Dependents are not eligible for the premium credit.*

***You may also complete the preventative checkup at your primary care physician’s office by asking your doctor to fill out the Catapult Primary Care Provider form located under Resources>Forms>Live Better Louisiana at info.groupbenefits.org.*



RETIRED STATE EMPLOYEES ASSOCIATION
“WORKING TODAY FOR YOUR TOMORROW”

RSEA APPRECIATES YOUR CONTINUED MEMBERSHIP!



We would like to ask you to help us! Instead of sending in a personal check for dues, please consider signing up to have your dues automatically deducted from your monthly retirement check. This one change greatly reduces overhead costs for RSEA and gets you directly signed up as an active member.

During our annual membership campaign held in the month of October please consider utilizing lasers payroll deduction for RSEA dues.

A GREAT VALUE AT \$1.50 A MONTH!

UPDATE FROM LASERS

July 1 Benefit Payment Falls on Saturday

Retiree monthly “paper” benefit checks for LASERS members are mailed for delivery on the first of each month. For members using direct deposit of benefit checks, the funds are guaranteed to be in your bank or credit union on the **first business day** of the month. Since July 1 falls on a Saturday, receipt of your funds can be affected by your financial institution’s rules when the first falls on a weekend or holiday. In these cases, please contact your financial institution directly for information on when your funds will be made available to you. That decision is made by your financial institution, not LASERS.

Hurricane Season is a Reality; *Are You Prepared?*

Are you receiving your benefit payment through direct deposit? If so, you are well on your way to being prepared for hurricane season. If not, take an important step by enrolling now. Direct deposit can give you peace of mind and help LASERS guarantee that your funds arrive on time. Direct Deposit Authorization forms are available for download on the LASERS website at www.lasersonline.org or LASERS can mail them to you. Sign up today and never worry again about receiving your paper check during storm season!

Nominations Close July 11 in LASERS Board Election

Nominations will be accepted by LASERS in the 2017 Board of Trustees Election until July 11, 2017, 4:30 p.m. Central Time. Every two years, LASERS members cast their ballots for candidates for the thirteen-member Board of Trustees. In this election, three seats will be filled by active members and one by a retired member. Voting will occur in September and October and results certified and published by the Board in November.

If you are interested in running for the Board, you may obtain a nominating petition from the LASERS website, www.lasersonline.org, or by calling LASERS at 1.800.256.3000 or 225.922.1131 in the Baton Rouge area. The election rules, schedule of

events, and additional information about the Board are available on the LASERS website.

A third party vendor experienced in handling balloting for public pension systems will conduct the LASERS 2017 Board of Trustees Election. LASERS members will receive election ballot packets by mail, and will be able to vote by mail, telephone, or the Internet. We encourage your participation in this important event.

Register for the Retiree Workshop via Webinar on July 26

Join us for an online webinar **Wednesday, July 26, 2017, as LASERS hosts a workshop for retirees only.** Presenters will include the LASERS Executive staff, Office of Group Benefits, EMPOWER Retirement, RSEA, SHIP, and more. Registration is required for our webinar. Those who join online will see PowerPoint presentations and hear each presenter live through their computer. However, webinar attendees cannot actually see the presenters. LASERS recommends that webinar attendees have strong Internet connection and computer speakers to avoid any connection and audio issues.

To register for the workshop via webinar, follow this link:

<https://lasersonline.org/retirees/workshop-registration/>

If you have questions about registering, please contact us. We look forward to having you join us online for the Retiree Workshop on Wednesday, July 26!

Did you Miss the LASERS Presentation at the RSEA Meetings?

If you missed your chapter meeting during the RSEA tour, a video of portions of the LASERS presentation (from the Baton Rouge meeting) is available to view on our YouTube page. LASERS Executive Director Cindy Rougeou gave an update on the System, touched on the current Legislative Session, and shared some vital information for both retired and active members. Follow this link to view the presentation: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KtA7hyiLgzM>



Memories of the 8th Annual RSEA Conference 2016 –

“Celebrating 50 Years”

Join us October 4-6, 2017 for our next RSEA
Conference – Complete the registration form on page 5
today! Let’s learn, live, meet new friends,
and just have fun at the 2017,

“RSEA Red Carpet Event: Life is a Stage!”



Working Today for **Your** Tomorrow

The New
Louisiana Voice

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