

RSEA HONORS 2018 CHAPTER MEMBERS OF THE YEAR

Featured below are the RSEA members who were honored as chapter Members of the Year during the 2018 Annual chapter meetings held in March.



JOAN JEFFRIES
ALEXANDRIA CHAPTER



VERA BLAKES
BATON ROUGE CHAPTER



JAMES DARRELL RICHARD
LAFAYETTE CHAPTER



SONYA TREBUCQ
NEW ORLEANS CHAPTER



JERRE PERRY
SHREVEPORT CHAPTER

RSEA PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



Spring is here! We greet the new season with hope and enthusiasm. RSEA continues to be dedicated to preserving and adding benefits to its members. That is accomplished only by the dedication and hard work of the Board and Staff. We welcome Jimmy Anthony, our

new Administrative Director (formerly Executive Director). He is in charge of the operations of the office, membership drive, and assisting in legislative issues. Jimmy came on board on February 1st and brings over 40 years of experience in State service. He has just returned from a state tour of the Chapter meetings. The office staff consists of Laurie Roche, Office Manager and Linda Price, Communication and Membership Coordinator. Laurie handles the finances, organizes information for Board meetings, participates in Board Meetings, and all other duties needed to ensure the smooth operation of the office. Linda is the friendly voice you hear when you call in. She is primarily responsible for keeping the membership information up to date but also lends a hand in other duties as needed. Frank Jobert continues to serve as our Legislative and Governmental Affairs Director and serves on the Office of Group Benefits Board. Frank is very busy now watching several bills that could affect our benefits. Frank always goes "beyond the call of duty" and recently received a letter of commendation from the President and Board for his exemplary work.

We have just finished a tour of the State attending the annual Chapter meetings. What a joy it is to meet so many wonderful active and retired State Employees. I will borrow a phrase from Shreveport's Chapter Member of the Year, Jerre Perry, who said State Employees are the "greatest workforce in the world"! A great big "thank you" goes to the Chapter Presidents, their officers and volunteers who work diligently to provide the best places, refreshments, and programs while staying on a budget. Many volunteer hours go into making the Chapter meetings a success. (I will have to go on a diet after enjoying so much seafood, barbecue, and beignets!)

Please "save the dates" of September 11-12, 2018 for the State Conference. We are returning to the Paragon! The theme this year is "The Future is Now"! What a wonderful way to have a great mini-vacation.

The Conference will be fun and informative with

an emphasis on learning all the benefits available to you. Watch you e-mail and newsletter for additional information.

See you in Marksville!!!

Bonita Hearne, MSW, LCSW

ADMINISTRATIVE DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

First, I would like to thank all of our RSEA members who attended one of our Chapter meetings this year. I attended them all, and really enjoyed meeting so many wonderful retired state employees as well as some active state employees. To say that I learned a lot from these meetings would be an understatement, as I have only been on the job since the 1st of



February. I too am a retired state employee, having served 40 years with the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries. The thing that I was most impressed with from attending these meetings was the sense of pride that we, as state employees, have in our service to our state. I hope that this continues with our current and future state employees. You can help ensure this, by spreading the word that RSEA not only serves retirees, but actives and futures also. Invite as many as you can to join our Association and see what we do every day for all state workers, both retired and active. Together we can make a difference and the more members we have the stronger RSEA is and the louder our voice.

I also want to thank the RSEA Board of Directors for giving me this opportunity to serve you and hopefully make a meaningful and positive difference in your lives. I am very impressed with all of our board members and the considerable time and effort that they devote to RSEA. Their motivation and devotion is evident and much appreciated and is driving me to do as much as I can for you. Next time you have the opportunity to speak with one of our board members, please convey your heartfelt thanks for their service, as this is what drives them.

One of the tasks that I was assigned by the Board was to find new benefits for our members. I am currently

looking to find out why retirees are not allowed to participate in Flexible Spending Accounts (FSA). This is an Internal Revenue Service pretax spending account used to pay for out of pocket medical expenses. Congressman Ralph Abraham's office is investigating this issue for us and hopefully we can get Congressional support to have this IRS regulation amended to include retirees.

Jimmy Anthony
Administrative Director

RSEA LEGISLATIVE & GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

The 2018 Louisiana Legislative Session has already begun. This year's Regular Session began at noon on



Monday, March 12th, and must end no later than 6:00 p.m. on Monday, June 4th. While this session is not deemed as a "fiscal" session, it still appears to be that the main focus of this session is balancing the budget, in the face of the so-called "fiscal cliff." As of this writing, it

still remains to be seen if yet another special session will be called to find approximately \$650 million in new revenue, and/or whether to renew all or a portion of existing temporary taxes set to expire June 30, 2018 and/or to encounter severe budget reductions in healthcare, higher education and corrections. Stay tuned!

With respect to retirement legislation, only a few bills directly impacting LASERS are in the hopper. The most important and most prominent retirement measure being proposed is Senate Bill 14 (Barrow Peacock). This measure, brought at the request of LASERS, is a "hybrid" retirement plan for newly hired employees effective January 1, 2020. It is a combination of the traditional LASERS "defined benefit" plan with a "defined contribution" component also imbedded in the new retirement plan.

The plan is designed to provide portability of benefits to the so-called millennial generation of workers in state government, who tend not to stay too long in one place of employment. This plan only impacts LASERS' rank and file employees. It does not include hazardous-duty personnel or judges. As of this writing, the bill has passed out of the Senate Retirement Committee by a vote of 4-1 and out of Senate Finance

by a vote of 6-3 in favor. The bill is now headed to the full Senate (floor) where it will probably be voted on next week, and will require a two-thirds vote for passage before it goes the House of Representatives.

Editor's Note: As of this printing, SB 14 is sitting on the Senate Daily Digest under "Senate Bills 3rd Reading and Final Passage Subject to Call": SB 14 ran into considerable opposition from the AFL-CIO and teacher unions, causing the Governor to withdraw his support for SB 14. It appears the legislation is not going to move forward in the 2018 regular legislative session.

RSEA has adopted a position of "support" for this plan with a caveat. RSEA's mission is "to advance the quality of life of current and future retired state employees who have given of their talents to the State of Louisiana." That means our focus is on career state employees who will one day become our state retirees. We are more interested in preserving and enhancing the benefits for career employees than we are in taking care of those who are transient employees who come and go. Our goal is to attract and retain a trained, reliable, and career-oriented workforce.

Therefore, the "caveat" is that we would like the plan to be optional for newly hired employees. If an individual is not longing to be a career employee, than perhaps he or she would be better off with the "hybrid" plan. If on the other hand, the new employee is seeking a life-long career in state government, than perhaps they would opt for the current "defined benefit" plan. Let the employee make the decision as to the plan that's best for them, and let them not be forced into one plan or the other!

Elsewhere in this newsletter, you will find some other legislative instruments impacting LASERS that RSEA is tracking and with our RSEA Board positions duly noted. Also, there will not be a COLA this year, as insufficient monies are available in the Experience Account to fund one.

Lastly, with regard to your Office of Group Benefits premium forecast for the policy plan year beginning January 1, 2019, The OGB Policy and Planning Board voted unanimously at its recent meeting to recommend NO rate increases on health insurance premiums for the year 2019. This is still subject to legislative oversight approval but looks very favorable at this time.

Frank Jobert, Jr.

RSEA Legislative & Governmental Affairs Director



RSEA Member Honored with Rosemary Award



The Alzheimer's Services of the Capital Area has honored Gina Rossi of the Office of Aging and Adult Services with their annual Rosemary Award. This award was based on over 10 years of volunteering and her dedication to the development of Charlie's Place Respite Center. Gina volunteers her clinical expertise to help design policies and procedures, and participated in the further growth of Charlie's Place II in Gonzales. She also provides leadership as the Team Captain for the annual LDH Walk to Remember. Through her team building LDH has raised over 20,000 for Alzheimer's in the local area. She has recently been chosen to serve as the moderator for the 25th Annual Alzheimer's Education Conference in April.

2018 Proposed Legislation Impacting LASERS/Retirement with RSEA Positions

SB 14 – Peacock

Systems Impacted: LASERS

Provides for a new hybrid retirement plan for rank-and-file members whose first employment making them eligible for membership in LASERS occurs on or after January 1, 2020. See article about this plan.

RSEA Position: Support with Amendments

HB 11 – Ivey

Systems Impacted: State and Statewide Systems

Makes the members of the Public Retirement Systems' Actuarial Committee (PRSAC), or their designees, fiduciaries of the state and statewide retirement systems while acting in such capacity.

RSEA Position: Neutral

HB 12 – Ivey

Systems Impacted: State and Statewide Systems

Requires PRSAC, upon approval of a system valuation, to submit the approved valuation to the legislature, along with all additional assumptions and valuations that were submitted. The legislative auditor shall submit a summary of the disparities between the various assumptions and valuations.

RSEA Position: Neutral

HB 21 – Ivey

Systems Impacted: State and Statewide Systems

Adds four members to PRSAC – two members of the House of Representatives appointed by the Speaker of the House and two members of the Senate appointed by the President of the Senate.

RSEA Position: OPPOSE

HB 23 – Ivey

Systems Impacted: State and Statewide Systems

Provides that no system shall invest more than twenty-five percent of its total portfolio in alternative investments.

RSEA Position: OPPOSE

HB 24 – Ivey

Systems Impacted: State and Statewide Systems

Requires actuaries for the systems and for the legislative auditor to use uniform reporting standards, as prescribed by PRSAC, in presenting discount rates and assumed rates of return to the Committee.

RSEA Position: Neutral

HB 34 – Pearson

Systems Impacted: State and Statewide Systems

Requires a state or statewide retirement system with investments in international markets to allocate a portion of their investments to a terror-free fund, rather than a terror-free index fund.

RSEA Position: Support

HB 37 – Brown

Systems Impacted: LASERS

Provides for a disability benefit equal to 100 percent of final average compensation for members of the Hazardous Duty, Corrections Primary, Corrections Secondary, Wildlife and Harbor Police plans who are totally and permanently disabled in the line of duty by an intentional act of violence. Provides a 3 percent permanent benefit

increase every other year.

RSEA Position: Support

HB 42 Jones & HB 43 Pearson

Systems Impacted: LASERS and ROVERS

Provides for the merger of the Registrars of Voters Employees' Retirement System into the Louisiana State Employees' Retirement System.

RSEA Position: Neutral

SB 3 – Peacock

Systems Impacted: LASERS

Provides for a 100 percent survivor benefit for Hazardous Duty Plan members killed by an intentional act of violence.

RSEA Position: Support

SB 10 – Peacock

Systems Impacted: LASERS

Adds firefighters in the Department of Agriculture and Forestry to the Hazardous Duty Plan.

RSEA Position: Support

SB 13 – Peacock

Systems Impacted: State and Statewide Systems

Provides that the chair and vice chair of PRSAC shall rotate between the Speaker of the House of Representatives, or his designee, and the President of the Senate, or his designee, biennially. Also, removes PRSAC from the Department of the Treasury.

RSEA Position: Neutral

SB 17 – Peacock

Systems Impacted: State and Statewide Systems

Updates certain provisions related to the purchase of military service to comply with federal law, including the Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act (USERRA).

RSEA Position: Support

HB 500 – Abramson

Systems Impacted: State and Statewide Systems

Calls for a limited constitutional convention to convene on Jan. 6, 2020, to be composed of 117 delegates, 3 elected from each senate district. Proposal Includes Retirement (Article X Section 29) and Education matters and could have a detrimental impact on your retirement benefits.

RSEA Position: OPPOSE

RSEA Annual Conference Announced

The Conference Committee has announced that the RSEA Annual Conference will be held on September 11 -12th 2018. We have had a majority of our conference attendees comment that the Paragon in Marksville was the best site for the conference, we heard you and are acting on your request.

This year the conference will be held over a two-day period. If you attended the annual meeting of your Chapter you were given a short briefing and a flyer on the conference. Here's is a brief note on what we are planning.

What: 2018 RSEA Conference Theme: The Future is Now—Retirement Living 2018

Where: Paragon Casino and Resort, Marksville, Louisiana

When: September 11, starting at 1:00 pm and ending 3:00 pm September 12

Registration Fee: Members \$40.00, Guest \$50.00

Rooms Rates: Regular rooms \$99.00 plus tax, Atrium rooms: \$109.00

What to expect: AARP Driving Program beginning at 2:00 pm and Bingo starting at 7:00 pm on the 11th, Breakfast, Lunch, LASERS/OGB Round Table, Keynote Speaker: Humorist and Educational Entertainer, AMBA Representative explaining benefits programs, Door Prizes.

What is available: Golfing, Gambling, Movies, Delicious food, visiting with friends.

I am counting on you being present for our conference in Marksville in SEPTEMBER !!!

Conference Committee



RSEA 10TH ANNUAL CONFERENCE

SEPTEMBER 11-12, 2018

The Future is Now—Retirement Living 2018

Sessions Include:

- LASERS/OGB Benefits Update
- AMBA Representative
- Keynote Speaker: "Pete" Reardon, Humorist and Educational Entertainer

Activities Include:

- Bingo
- AARP Driving Program **
- Breakfast and Lunch
- Door Prizes



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www.paragoncasinoresort.com

Lodging Rates (plus taxes/fees):

- \$99.00 North & South Towers
- \$119.00 Atrium

For Reservations Call:

- (800) 642-7777 — Ask for the 2018 RSEA Convention Group Rate—**RSES12G**
- To receive this special rate you must reserve your room by: 8/21/18

Registration Fees:

- RSEA Member—\$40
- Non-Member and Guests—\$50

RSEA 2018 CONFERENCE REGISTRATION FORM

Name: _____ Guest Name: _____

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

Address: _____

Email:* _____ Telephone: _____

** Email address will be shared with conference vendors.*

_____ I am Interested in Playing Golf on September 11th (afternoon)

REGISTRATION FEES DUE IN ADVANCE:

\$ _____ \$40 Member / \$50 Non-Member Registration Fee (** AARP Driving Class fee is collected at the door the day of the class. The cost is \$15 Members/\$20 Non-Members)

\$ _____ \$50 Guest Registration Fee

\$ _____ Total Enclosed

Mail Completed registration form and check to:
RSEA Foundation, 9412 Common Street, Suite 7, Baton Rouge, LA 70809
Questions: Call (225) 930-0961 or email janthony.rsea@gmail.com
www.RSEALA.org



LASERS UPDATE

Pop-Up: When to Change Your Retirement Option to the Maximum Benefit

Are you eligible to increase your monthly benefit if you are a retiree with a beneficiary who passed away? Ask yourself these simple questions:

- When I retired, did I select an option to pay a monthly benefit to someone else if I died?
- If my beneficiary died, did I complete Form 10-07: Application for Change in Retirement Benefit Due to Death of Beneficiary, and submit that form to LASERS? Form 10-07 is available on the LASERS website.

If you have questions about changing to the Maximum Benefit option in the case of a beneficiary predeceasing you, call a LASERS Benefits Analyst at 800.256.3000 or 225.922.0600 in Baton Rouge.

Register to Attend LASERS July Retiree Workshop

On Wednesday, July 25, 2018, LASERS will host a workshop for retirees only. Retired members may attend in Baton Rouge or optionally register to watch online. Presenters will include the LASERS Executive and Education staff, Office of Group Benefits, EMPOWER Retirement, RSEA, AMBA, and more.

Those who join us online will see PowerPoint presentations and will be able to hear each presenter 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.

Registration information will be coming soon!

OGB UPDATE

It's Live Better Louisiana time again!

The Office of Group Benefits' Live Better Louisiana program is underway for 2018! Now is your chance for a no-out-of-pocket health check-up in a calm, non-doctor's office environment.

If you attended one of the Spring RSEA Regional meetings, you had the opportunity to learn more about the program from OGB and Catapult employees. If you missed visiting with OGB and Catapult, here's a brief breakdown of how you can save \$120 annually on your health insurance premium.

How it works

Retirees may attend a wellness check-up at locations across the state through August 31, 2018. During these check-ups, trained nurses from Catapult Health will take your weight, measure your waist and take a drop of blood for testing. You will then have a chance to speak to a nurse practitioner about your results. If needed, Catapult will help you find or make an appointment with a primary care physician and

refer you to any health services programs you may qualify for.

Why get a preventive health checkup?

Your preventive checkup will give you accurate information about your health and your risks related to diabetes, heart disease and stroke. A certified Nurse Practitioner will answer your health care questions and the results of your checkup will be sent to your primary care physician. If you don't have a primary health care provider, the clinic staff can help you find one. If needed, you will also receive a Personal Action Plan that will help you reduce your health risks and improve your quality of life.

Remember, to be eligible for the health plan premium credit in 2019, you must complete a Catapult Health clinic* by Aug. 31, 2018, and be policyholder on an OGB Blue Cross health plan in 2019. If you completed the requirements for a previous year, you must do it again to receive the credit in 2019**.





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OGB UPDATE CONTINUED

To find a clinic near you and sign up for an appointment, visit www.timeconfirm.com/ogb or call 1-877-841-3058. Retirees may go to any clinic not marked "for employees only," but ones marked on the online scheduler as "retirees welcome" are specifically designed with retirees in mind.

For more information about the Live Better Louisiana wellness program, visit www.bcbsla.com/ogb and follow the Live Better Louisiana link.

* 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 www.groupbenefits.org or www.bcbsla.com/PCPform.

**The premium credit will be applied with your January 1, 2019, premium billing.



RETIRED STATE EMPLOYEES ASSOCIATION

"WORKING TODAY FOR YOUR TOMORROW"



Working Today for **Your** Tomorrow

The New
Louisiana Voice

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