

NPEA Options

National Pension Education Association

VOLUME 22

SUMMER 2007

ISSUE 1

FROM THE

PRESIDENT'S DESK



Terry O'Connor

I hope your summer has been good. Many of you have just completed legislative sessions and are preparing to implement new administrative rules; some have recently processed record numbers of pension inceptions. Here at TCDRS, the Texas County & District Retirement System, we've also had a busy summer. We completed a critical review of the way we do business with our members, and what and how we communicate. TCDRS has just begun an ambitious Business Process Redesign project. One of our many goals is to provide targeted education based on life events and career milestones that can affect members' benefits.

A universal responsibility for public pension funds is to insure that our members have all the information they need to prepare and make the best decisions for their retirement. The demographics of our membership are changing ... so is the definition of retirement. New customer service models and improved technologies are changing the way we will provide retirement education and planning tools for our members in the future.

The NPEA Annual Conference is a vehicle to bring together those retirement system

professionals responsible for delivering communication and pension education together with their counterparts from across the country. With the addition of other industry experts, it becomes an exceptional opportunity to learn about improving and expanding member education initiatives.

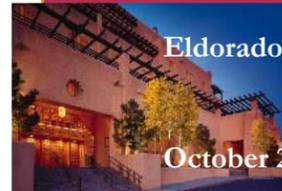
Santa Fe, New Mexico, the site of this year's conference, inspired our theme: The Art of Retirement Planning. At the foot of the Sangre de Cristo Mountains, Santa Fe is a 400-year-old city rich with art, history, and culture. Known as "the city different," it's currently the third hottest art market in the U.S., with almost 300 art galleries, over a dozen museums, many boutiques and great restaurants scattered among its narrow winding streets and centuries-old adobe buildings. When you see the stunning landscape you'll understand how artists are inspired here. Plan to join us in Santa Fe from October 20 to 24 to find your own work inspiration as you learn about the latest issues, trends, and challenges we all face.

Changes at NPEA

Much has changed with NPEA since last year's conference. We've grown. Membership in the organization is at an all time high; over 90 public pension systems across the United States are participating in NPEA. Don't forget to share the NPEA experience with other retirement systems. Word of mouth is the best way to increase our membership. And each new member system brings additional talents and experience for the rest of us to draw on.

A focus of the conference is on technology and education. This newsletter is now electronic; just one example of how technology is shaping the member education process.

2007 CONFERENCE PREVIEW Santa Fe, New Mexico



Eldorado Hotel

October 20-24, 2007

Last year, the NPEA Board added an administrator position to NPEA to conduct much of the ongoing business of the organization. Dave Daly, former NPEA Board Member and President, continues to contribute to NPEA through his work in this capacity.

We've just launched our new NPEA Member Network, a terrific online resource for NPEA member systems. Located in the Member's Only section of the NPEA website, the NPEA Member Network will be a valuable tool for you to tap into a network of retirement professionals to exchange information, ask how other systems have addressed problems or challenges, and to share your experiences and perspectives with your peers.

I look forward to seeing you at the conference where this exchange of information continues to be one of the most valuable parts of your NPEA membership.

WHAT'S INSIDE:

- ◆ New Networking Opportunities
- ◆ Conference Preview
- ◆ Conference Agenda
- ◆ Communication, Education, Motivation
- ◆ Santa Fe Facts

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Mark Your Calendar!

2008 NPEA Conference
October 25-29, 2008
Hyatt Fisherman's Wharf Hotel,
San Francisco, CA

New Networking Opportunities

NPEA has recently joined three organizations - the Center for Retirement Research at Boston College, the National Financial Education Network and the Statewide Public Pension Organizational Network (SPPON). These partnerships will provide our member systems with access to more industry resources to help members make informed retirement decisions and to encourage them to take an active role in the effort to maintain their retirement benefits.

The Center for Retirement Research was established nine years ago to promote research on retirement issues and deliver those findings to the general public and to industry policy and decision makers.

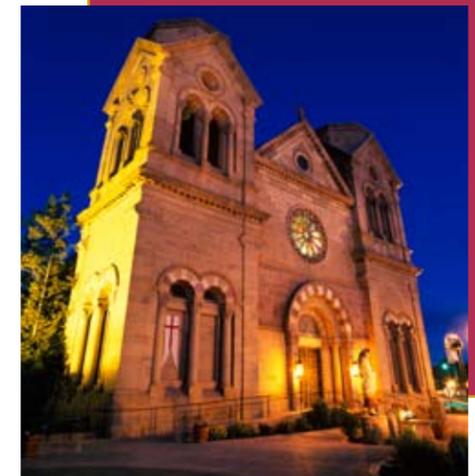
The Center's research programs include four main areas that affect retirement income: 1) Social Security; 2) employer-sponsored pension plans; 3) savings; 4) labor trends among older workers. Their research also seeks to understand human behavior behind those retirement decisions to study practical solutions, not just theories. NPEA members will be emailed the latest publications as they become available.

The inaugural meeting of the National Financial Education Network took place this spring in Washington, DC. The network was created by the Department of the Treasury and the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) to bring together contacts from state and local governments and national public organizations that are providing financial education programs to the public.

NPEA will be actively involved in the network as we look for better resources for objective personal financial information for our members.

The Statewide Public Pension Organizational Network was recently formed as an industry "think tank" that will meet annually to discuss pension related issues. It will also serve as a clearinghouse for professionals who will be available to contribute to our newsletters and participate in conferences.

We will be discussing these new relationships in more detail at our annual conference in Santa Fe.



NPEA Annual Conference Preview - October 20-24, 2007



Dr. John Pelizza - "Communicating by Mind and Body"

Dr. John Pelizza, nationally known speaker and author on wellness, change process, stress management and personal growth, will inspire us to communicate with mind and body.



Keith Brainard, "Bringing Positive DB Messages Home to Our Members"

Keith Brainard, NASRA research director, will provide us with the information we need to encourage our members to join the effort to maintain our current defined benefit plans.

Plus ...

- **Dr. Steven Sass** of Boston College's Center for Retirement Research, will discuss some of the Center's recent publications, including the Social Security Fix-it Book, a guide to issues and proposals for a long-lasting solution to that problem.
- **Peter Hapgood**, President of Public Pensions, Inc., will discuss the need for and how retirees can develop a sound financial plan in retirement in his "Winning the Retirement Game" presentation.
- A panel of experts discuss financial education programs at the local, state and national levels
- Systems Roll Call where we share what's happening at the state and local levels
- Round table discussions of today's relevant topics affecting the way we communicate with our members
- A variety of networking opportunities with our counterparts throughout the country to better prepare us to meet the changing needs of our members

Jeff Thredgold, CSP - "Economic and Financial Outlook for Tomorrow's Pension Educators"

Jeff Thredgold, CSP, the only economist in the world to have earned the CSP (Certified Speaking Professional) designation, will display his unique approach to deliver our conference keynote presentation on a common sense discussion on the economy, money and success in the 21st Century.



Robert Klausner, "Making Sense Out of Complex Pension Issues"

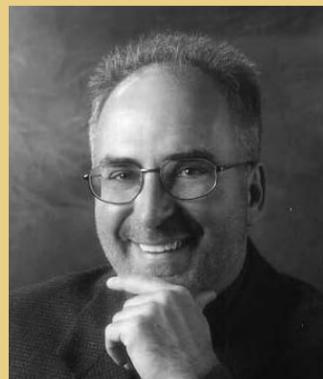
Robert Klausner, Esq., who specializes in representing public pension funds and consulting state and local government entities on retirement issues, will bring us up to date on the current complex pension legal decisions.



InFRE Workshops

The International Foundation for Retirement Education (InFRE) will offer continuing education courses:

- "A Comprehensive Approach to Retirement Education: The Retirement Well-Being Model"
- InFRE's New Retirement Knowledge Questionnaire and Retirement Readiness Research Results



Bill Acheson - "Guerilla Tactics for Effective Presentations"

Bill Acheson, who electrified us last year with his non-verbal communication presentation, returns this year to teach us the "Guerilla Tactics for Effective Presentations."

WHO SHOULD ATTEND

- Retirement Benefit Counselors
- Communications/Education Staff
- Seminar Presenters
- System Trustees and Directors
- Staff new in the benefit areas
- Staff contemplating or in the process of developing retirement education programs

WHY YOU SHOULD ATTEND

- Network with your colleagues from other systems.
- Find out what other systems are doing in retirement education.
- Display the latest educational materials from your system.
- Hear what the experts are saying about the issues and hot topics that will affect the retirement of your members.
- Receive continuing education credits for your International Foundation of Retirement Education (InFRE) certification.
- Return home reenergized and retooled to better meet the needs of your members.



CONFERENCE AGENDA

Santa Fe, New Mexico • October 20-24, 2007

Saturday, October 20

- 10:00-11:30 a.m. Board Meeting
- 1:00-4:00 p.m. Conference Registration
- 4:00-5:00 p.m. Pre-Conference Workshop
"Setting the Record Straight; Meeting Today's Media Challenges"
David Daly, NPEA Administrator
John Cardillo, Manager, Public Information Office,
New York State Teachers' Retirement System
- 6:30-7:30 p.m. Opening Reception

Sunday, October 21

- 8:30-9:00 a.m. "Beat the Actuarial Tables" 3-Mile Run or 2-Mile Walk.
If you would like a little exercise to start your day, join your fellow NPEA participants for a very light run or walk. Led by Dearld Snider and Ronda Peterson, Public School and Education Employee Retirement Systems of Missouri
- 10:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m. Conference Registration
- 10:00-12:00 Noon InFRE Workshop
"A Comprehensive Approach to Retirement Education: The Retirement Well-Being Model"
John Nelson, Ph.D. candidate at the University of Wisconsin, creator of the Retirement Well-Being Model, and coauthor of *What Color Is Your Parachute? For Retirement*
- 1:00-3:00 p.m. InFRE Workshop
InFRE's New Retirement Knowledge Questionnaire and Retirement Readiness Research Results
John Nelson, Ph.D. candidate at the University of Wisconsin, creator of the Retirement Well-Being Model, and coauthor of *What Color Is Your Parachute? For Retirement* and Tom Holubik, Instructor and Adjunct Professor at Texas Tech University
- 3:30-4:45 p.m. Pre-Conference Workshop
"Leveraging Technology in Pension Education"
NPEA Professional Development Committee

Sunday, October 21 (continued)

- 4:45-5:15 p.m. NPEA Professional Development Committee Meeting
- 6:00-8:30 p.m. Presentation and Dinner
"Communicating by Mind and Body"
John Pelizza, Professor of Health Education, The Sage Colleges

Monday, October 22

- 7:30-8:30 a.m. Continental Breakfast
- 8:30-4:30 p.m. System and Vendor Exhibits
- 8:30-9:00 a.m. Conference Welcome
Terry O'Connor, NPEA President
- 9:00-10:00 a.m. "Economic and Financial Outlook for Tomorrow's Pension Educators"
Jeff Thredgold, Economic Futurist,
Thredgold Economic Associates
- 10:00-11:00 a.m. "Bringing Positive DB Messages Home to Our Members"
Keith Brainard, Research Director, NASRA
- 11:00-12:00 Noon "Making Sense Out of Complex Pension Issues"
Robert Klausner, Esq., Klausner & Kaufman, P.A.
- 12:00-1:00 p.m. Lunch - (Provided)
- 1:00-3:00 p.m. NPEA Systems Roll Call, What's Happening around the Nation
- 3:30 - 4:30 p.m. Roundtable Discussions - Today's Relevant Topics

(Dinner on your own)



Tuesday, October 23

- 7:30-8:30 a.m. Continental Breakfast
- 8:30-4:30 p.m. System and Vendor Exhibits
- 8:30-9:30 a.m. "The Social Security Fix-It Solution"
Dr. Steven Sass, Associate Director for Research,
Center for Retirement Research at Boston College
- 9:30-10:45 a.m. "Financial Education/Literacy Panel: A Look at Financial Education Programs at the Local, State and National Levels"
- 10:45-11:45 a.m. "Winning the Retirement Game"
Peter Hapgood, President, Public Pensions, Inc.
- 12:00-1:00 p.m. Lunch - (Provided)
- 1:00-2:30 p.m. "Guerilla Tactics for Effective Presentations,"
Bill Acheson, Communication Professor, University of Pittsburgh
- 2:30-3:30 p.m. Concurrent Breakout Sessions:
1. Making the Grade in Financial Education: One System's Transcript
Barbara Beermann, Sr. Training & Educations Specialist,
Missouri State Employees Retirement System
2. Actuarial 101 - Easy to Understand Basics for Non-Actuaries
Kenneth Alberts, Gabriel, Roeder, Smith & Company
3. To be Announced
- 3:30-4:30 p.m. Concurrent Breakout Sessions:
1. Making the Grade in Financial Education: One System's Transcript
Barbara Beermann, Sr. Training & Educations Specialist,
Missouri State Employees Retirement System
2. Actuarial 101 - Easy to Understand Basics for Non-Actuaries
Kenneth Alberts, Gabriel, Roeder, Smith & Company
3. To be Announced
- 6:00-8:30 p.m. Dinner Event - Los Mayas Restaurant

Wednesday, October 24

- 8:30-10:30 a.m. Breakfast and Annual Business Meeting

TO REGISTER You can register for the conference online at www.npea.com.
You can also make the hotel reservations by calling (800) 955-4455.

COMMUNICATION, EDUCATION, MOTIVATION

Building a Retirement Education Program

Retirement planning is changing. Early retirement, longer life expectancy, working in retirement, the uncertainty of maintaining defined benefit plans and economic volatility have created a new retirement reality. The results are more decisions to make, more available choices to consider, a greater need for objective professional advice, including financial education initiatives.

To meet these changing needs of our members, our challenge today is to build a pension education program to: 1) communicate using a multi-media approach; 2) educate by providing information and awareness at each career stage; and 3) motivate our members to take action and make the right decisions for a successful retirement.

Web casts, video-conferencing, blogs and tools that haven't been developed yet will continue to play a vital role in pension education and the retirement decision-making process. Look at the number of hits our websites get when legislation affecting retirement benefits is pending or implemented.

However, we shouldn't overlook the importance of the print media and the personal contact we have with our members. We recognize that people learn by different methods and we should work to expand these areas also. In the world of modern technology, people still value and find comfort talking to a living person.

When our systems began preretirement programs, the focus for many years was to assist those closest to retirement, and indeed we were successful and did a commendable job preparing the first wave of baby boomer retirements. We now have to broaden the scope of our efforts to include those at the beginning of a career and continuing up to and throughout retirement.

Our goal is to never have someone at the end of a career say something like, "I wish I had known this earlier, I would have done things differently." We must determine the issues that should be addressed at each career stage and design the most appropriate vehicle for delivering that service. For example, financial planning considerations early in a career discussed in an online video, will give way to more non-financial concerns presented in a seminar format during the retirement process.

Providing information also goes beyond creating an awareness of alternatives and decisions to make. Often we overload participants with so much material, they are overwhelmed into inaction. We have to motivate and show them how to use the information effectively to be able to adjust to changes and make decisions, sometimes in a very narrow window. For example, early retirement incentives offer an opportunity to illustrate different retirement incomes and bring the reality of retirement much sooner than expected.

Each year for the last 17 years, the Employee Benefit Research Institute (EBRI) conducts a survey of 1,000 people between the ages of 25 and 65 to determine their attitudes and behavior about retirement, savings and investments. The ranking of the sources used and how helpful each was considered can be valuable in shaping our educational programs.

2007 EBRI Retirement Confidence Survey		
Retirement, Savings and Investment Decisions Sources	Used	Most Helpful
Employer/retirement plan materials	73%	15%
Financial professional	64%	40%
Family/friends/coworkers	62%	18%
Benefit statement	61%	5%
Internet	52%	6%
Newspapers/magazines	49%	4%
TV/radio	32%	2%
Computer software	28%	<.5%
Seminars	21%	1%
Online investment services	19%	1%

The good news is the respondents are using a variety of print, personal and online services, including retirement system benefit materials and statements. In the most helpful column, advice from professional financial advisors (40%) received the highest percentage. Retirement plan materials (15%) ranked third behind family, friends/coworkers (18%). The internet (6%) and annual benefit statements (5%) were used by more than half, but ranked low in helpfulness.

These findings should reinforce our efforts to do a better job of making the information we provide more helpful for our members. They're using it, so let's take advantage of that.

The annual benefit statement, for example, can be both an effective retirement planning tool and an account summary. Retirement benefits for different dates and conditions can be helpful in determining the best time to retire. Option amounts and contribution choices can also assist in other important decisions at retirement. For younger members, death benefit and disability projections must be reviewed before making decisions about private coverage.

Financial advisors are playing a vital role in retirement, savings and investment decisions. We can provide a valuable service to our members by giving them guidelines to follow to obtain objective sound advice that is in their best interest.

The National Financial Education Network mentioned on page 2 of this newsletter may in the future give us access to agencies and organizations our systems can partner with for this advice.

Keys to Effective Communication

- Use a positive approach
- Write actively
- Make it personal
- Inject humor where possible
- Customize it for your members
- Motivate them to take action
- Use Plain Language

A successful program begins with targeting a particular demographic group and determining the appropriate media and content. Use the rules of effective communication to motivate members to take the necessary steps and make the right retirement decisions.

Remember you can work within your budget by using the many resources available in the public and private sectors. We have all borrowed ideas and materials from each other. Networking in our industry will continue to be important for our success.

Conference Fees

Attendee.....	\$650
Spouse / Guest.....	\$125
Vendor.....	\$1,500
Vendor Staff.....	\$650

You can register for the conference online at www.npea.com.



Hotel Information: This year's conference will be held at the Eldorado Hotel and Spa, Santa Fe, New Mexico.

Making a Reservation: You can reserve rooms by calling **(800) 955-4455**.

To guarantee a room at the conference rate of \$199/night single or double occupancy, you must make your reservations by September 20, 2007. Reservations confirmed with a credit card will be charged one night room and tax deposit by the hotel, which is refundable up to 72 hours prior to date of arrival.



SANTA FE FACTS:

Dates

Saturday, October 20, 2007 to
Wednesday, October 24, 2007



Location



Eldorado Hotel and Spa
309 West San Francisco St.
Santa Fe, New Mexico 87501

The Eldorado Hotel will grace us with their "art of hospitality." This stately landmark, located just a few footsteps from the historic Plaza in the heart of

the city, has been renovated and decorated with beautiful southwestern art work throughout the interior. The exterior is fashioned in Pueblo-revival architectural style. Hotel registration is linked to the NPEA website www.npea.com. You can call the hotel at (505) 988-4455. Room Rate \$199.

What to Wear

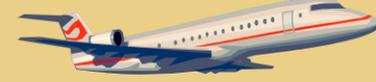
Pack business casual for the conference and a jacket or sweater for the cool evenings. Also, because Santa Fe is 7,000 feet above sea level, visitors should wear sunscreen during the day and drink plenty of water so they don't become dehydrated.

Weather

The weather in October in Santa Fe will be a high in the 65° - 70° range and a low between 35° - 40° degrees.



Transportation



You should fly into Albuquerque International Sunport and take a shuttle



for the one hour ride to Santa Fe and the hotel. You can make reservations with the Sandia Shuttle by calling (888) 775-5696 or online at www.sandiashuttle.com. The cost is \$25 one way or \$45 round trip.

What to Expect

Santa Fe, the oldest capital city in America, combines the cultural sophistication of an urban center with the centuries-old traditions and heritage. The outdoor festivals and markets draw collectors from around the world. Galleries, museums and fine restaurants are all destinations to soothe stressed nerves and cast their magical spell over every visitor.

NPEA

National Pension
Education Association

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