

## From the President's Desk ...



Judy Price Utley

## We Were Indeed Inspired

It was another "this was the best conference ever" this year as we marked the 30th anniversary of NPEA October 16-20 in Incline Village, Nevada.

The conference theme "Inspiring Pension Education to Greater Heights" was not only appropriate for this year, but will very likely extend into future years given the changing landscape of public pensions. Our role as pension educators will be increasingly demanding and vital as we look for ways to meet new challenges and threats to our systems and benefits. We will continuously seek

inspiration to take pension education and communication programs to new levels so our members and the public will have a better understanding of the value of public pensions.

We designed this year's conference to bring together speakers and topics covering a wide range of issues including, the core components of successful pension planning, the annual discussion of public pensions on the state and national levels, and the latest tools, technology and strategies to be effective communicators – all of this in an inspiring scenic setting.

Keynoters Mark Goldstein, Tom Lussier, Robert Klausner, Ken Alberts, Tripp Frohlichstein, Mary Kusske, and Mary Futrell delivered passionate informed messages and connected with us in ways that can serve as role models for us to relate to our members. We must also recognize the contributions of Betty Meredith and the InFRE team, the board members and participants who shared their experiences and led sessions that greatly enhanced the agenda.

**NOTICE:** The 2011 NPEA membership invoices have been mailed. If you did not receive an invoice, you can find one on our web site, [www.npea.com](http://www.npea.com), on the "Membership" page. The fee remains \$500 per system, and we would like payment by March 31.

The underlying theme throughout the conference was communications - recognizing the importance of crafting the right messages for all stakeholders in this time of change and reorganization. Failure to do so could have disastrous effects for public pensions.

The conference guide with the complete agenda, session descriptions and speaker bios is available on our web site [www.npea.com](http://www.npea.com). Copies of the sessions' PowerPoint presentations can also be accessed in the secure member area of the web site.

These are difficult times for our industry and we know that some states and systems have travel restrictions. However, the attendance numbers this year were encouraging and we hope that will continue in the years to come.

Information about our 2011 conference will be on our web site in the spring. (See page 4 for a conference preview.) We appreciate the continued support of systems that recognize NPEA's efforts to be a valuable resource in assisting public employees maintain their pension benefits and plan for a successful retirement.

## Looking Ahead to Naples

A tentative agenda and registration information for our 2011 annual conference in Naples, Florida, October 22-26 will be available online in late spring. However, there are some things you can do now that will help us in our planning.

First, as we have done the last two years, we ask that you let us know if you plan to attend this year's conference. It may be early, but having this information now in the planning process allows us to make

arrangements within our budget and continue to keep costs reasonable.

Concerning attendance, if you know colleagues in other systems in your state or locality who don't participate in NPEA or who haven't attended a conference recently, take a few minutes to talk to them about the value of becoming active in NPEA and the networking opportunities of our annual conferences. Your testimony can help new staff members become aware of all that NPEA has to offer.

Also, you may be working with vendors or consultants who may have an interest in our organization. Encourage them to seek information about the benefits of joining and attending our conferences.

Second, think about participating in the conference as a presenter to share a system best practice or showcase an innovative program. The tremendous success of our conference each year is due in large part to the pertinent information shared by a faculty of industry experts and NPEA members. Please contact us as soon as possible if you would like to present this year so we can determine how it best fits into the agenda.

Round table/breakout sessions also provide the opportunity to address and exchange information in smaller settings about the most pertinent issues that many of you are facing today. Let us know if there is a topic that you would like to include on this year's program.

Please contact David Daly, NPEA Administrator, at [dave.daly@npea.com](mailto:dave.daly@npea.com) to discuss the 2011 annual conference.

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Help us Plan for the 2011 Conference!

If you plan to attend, let us know by sending an email to:

[dave.daly@npea.com](mailto:dave.daly@npea.com)



Naples Beach Hotel  
Naples, FL  
October 22-26, 2011

# Case Study: NYSTRS In-House Video

*The following case study was shared in the education/communication technology showcase at last year's annual conference. It is an excellent example of the networking and information that you can bring back to your systems to help you better serve your members.*

## Where We Were

In 2006, the New York State Teachers' Retirement System (NYSTRS) hired an outside firm to produce the 13-minute educational video "Retirement Countdown" at a cost of nearly \$20,000. Over the past two years, NYSTRS has produced five new videos on a variety of topics for a total cost of under \$5,000.

## How We Did It

We brought production in-house by hiring a person with video production expertise, renting equipment as needed, and purchasing inexpensive video editing software.

## Staffing

We hired Tim Mack, who has the knowledge, skills and industry contacts to create high quality videos in a cost-effective manner.

Since we already were using Adobe products, we decided to upgrade to Adobe Creative Suite 4 Master Collection, which contains the video production component Adobe Premiere Pro as well as Adobe After Effects, which offers additional flexibility with graphic manipulation. The cost of the entire CS4 package was approximately \$2,000.



After using the CS4 package, it became apparent a beefed up computer was necessary to efficiently run the video editing software. We were able to remain in the Dell PC family and simply upgrade to a desktop unit with a larger hard drive. The new computer cost about \$4,000, but the existing machine was repurposed within the organization so the residual value of the older machine partially offset the cost of the new one.

We rented a high definition commercial grade video camera for a fraction of the purchase cost of approximately \$3,000, new.

That said, there are consumer grade HD cameras on the market that you can use, but the quality won't compare to that of the commercial grade cameras.

## Your Options

The approach we use works for us.

However, there are options available to you.

If your video needs are sporadic, you may want to simply hire professionals and be prepared to pay for the quality.

If hiring someone with video expertise is not possible, there are various ways to educate and train existing staff. On-line tutorials, training classes and video editing software are plentiful. With trusted sites like Adobe, creativecow.com and Lynda.com only a few clicks away, knowledge is in reach. A time commitment to self education is necessary and there will undoubtedly be a learning curve. You may find, though, that creating a quality product is easier than you think.

Considering we live in a "YouTube Generation," testing the video waters is worth the gamble and your investment will become more apparent with each new video.

## Contact Information

Tim Mack: (518) 447-2910 or [tmack@nystrs.state.ny.us](mailto:tmack@nystrs.state.ny.us)

John Cardillo: (518) 447-4743 or [jcardill@nystrs.state.ny.us](mailto:jcardill@nystrs.state.ny.us)

## Back to the East Coast in 2011

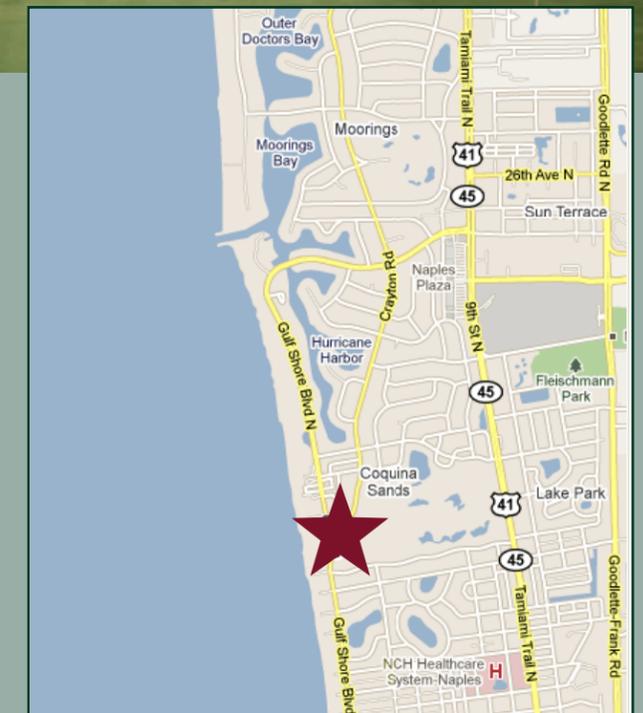
This year's annual conference returns to Southwest Florida's Gulf Coast October 22-26 at the Naples Beach Hotel. The hotel, site of the highly successful 1999 NPEA annual conference, is located 40 minutes from the Southwest Florida International Airport in Ft. Meyers (RSW). Shuttle transportation information will be available along with conference registration material in the summer of 2011.

For budgeting purposes, the conference room rate will be \$189 per night and we expect that the conference registration fee will be in the \$650-\$700

range, which continues to be among the lowest conference fees in the industry.

We hit the ground running after returning home from the 2010 conference and are busily putting together what we expect to be another "this was the best ever" annual conference this year.

Mark your calendars, make sure your system pays the 2011 NPEA membership dues (see page 1) and look for a tentative agenda and registration information on our web site, [npea.com](http://npea.com).



# NPEA

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