

The CSG West Legislative Service Agency & Research Directors (LSA/RD) Training Seminar provides nonpartisan legislative staff leaders from the western states the opportunity to gather to share best practices and advance their skills through professional development sessions. Members of the LSA/RD Committee met for their annual training seminar in Santa Fe, New Mexico October 14-15. The meeting was led by LSA/RD Committee Chair Raúl Burciaga, Director of the New Mexico Legislative Council Service, and Vice Chair Joe Kolman, Director of Legislative Environmental Policy for the Montana Legislative Services.

Twelve of the thirteen western member states were represented at this year's meeting, welcoming new and returning members alike to learn, exchange ideas, points of view, and experiences. The meeting opened with a session on strategies for balancing the expectations, needs, and goals of legislative agencies, legislators, and leadership as well as methods of navigating potential areas of discord. Looking towards the future, members shared both the history of the redistricting processes in their states, as well as plans for 2021. A moderated discussion explored different approaches of addressing ethical questions to support legislators and legislative institutions. Building on work during the 2018 meeting, members delved deeper into understanding the models of professional social styles including practical applications to improve workplace communication and management. The conversation then transitioned to methods of building higher performing teams through sincere recognition and appreciation.

Members participated in an interactive leadership development workshop focusing on active, thoughtful presence in a world filled with competing demands and evolving needs. Next, members heard from Dr. Gabriel Sanchez, a professor of political science at the University of New Mexico, on demographic trends in the West. Addressing the topic of succession planning, a panel of members

discussed what they have learned, what they wished they had known, and how to improve the transfer of knowledge. Wrapping up the meeting was a case study offering a real-world example exploring different approaches to resolving conflicts unique to the positions of the committee members.

CSG West is grateful to the participation of members and sponsors at this year's meeting and look forward to continued engagement at the 2020 LSA/RD meeting in the Lake Tahoe area.

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