

# NSO CONTACT

The pride, commitment, tradition and advocacy to lead, promote, defend and secure the rights of its members.

February, 2006

Chuck Agerstrand, President

## NSO Welcomes Newest State Affiliate

### Virginia associate staff seeks bargaining assistance

After several years of lackluster results at the bargaining table, VEA/OSS President Allison Herndon convinced her colleagues to consider affiliating with NSO. "For years now, we've basically presented a wish list to the executive director and frankly very few of our wishes were ever granted," said Herndon. "If we were ever going to improve our salary and working conditions, we needed help."

Herndon was familiar with NSO's programs through the VEA professional staff and arranged for NSO Regional Director Butch Santicola (PA) and NSO Merger Organizing Committee member Bonnie LePage (MA) to make a presentation to the VEA headquarter's associate staff.

"Butch and I knew we might meet some resistance," said LePage, a Massachusetts Associate Staff member. "But we also knew NSO offers the kind of assistance that would benefit them and we were determined to bring them on board."

Their presentation on how working with NSO could help level the playing field at the bargaining table was a success

and within days the group had voted to become NSO's newest affiliate. "This is a dynamic group," said Santicola. "They're excited about being a part of NSO and we're excited that they made the choice to affiliate with us."

In accordance with the NSO constitution, VEA/OSS made application for affiliation to the NSO Executive

Committee. Their request was granted prior to this

year's Winter Advocacy Retreat.

"We welcome this new state affiliate to the NSO family," said NSO President Chuck Agerstrand.

"When a new affiliate is formed, we are all strengthened."

Herndon and Vice President Donna Hamilton attended the 2006 Retreat and were impressed with

the quality of the trainings, but according to Herndon, the opportunity to meet other union members turned out to be equally rewarding. "I've never felt more welcomed in my life. I know this will be a learning experience and when its all said and done I hope I'll be able to give back to NSO in the future by assisting other union members."



NSO President Chuck Agerstrand



Allison Butch Donna

## Arbitration Success is in the Details

### Ambrose offers suggestions for optimum results

One of the most important services NSO offers its state affiliates is assistance with grievances and arbitrations. According to Vice President for Defense Marius Ambrose there are several basic steps NSO affiliates can take for optimum results.

**Ask NSO for assistance early in the process.** NSO affiliates make their own decision concerning grievances and whether or not they go to arbitration. If you believe a grievance may proceed to arbitration then contact your NSO regional director immediately, who in turn, will contact the Vice President for Defense.

"Contacting your regional director as soon as the demand for arbitration has been filed gives me the opportunity to search for an advocate who will best represent your

interests," said Ambrose.

**Follow your procedure to the letter.** It doesn't matter how in-depth the evidence is or how egregious the violations are, if you don't follow your negotiated grievance procedure the case can be lost on a technicality.

It's unfortunate how many arbitrations are dismissed because of something as basic as not meeting the timelines. These types of losses can damage your credibility with your members as well as giving management an

opportunity to denigrate the grievance process.

**Weigh the short and long term ramifications of negative arbitration results.** Decisions based on the political climate within our state affiliates often influence

*...if you don't follow your negotiated grievance procedure the case can be lost on a technicality.*

*See Arbitration/pg. 2*

## Arbitration, cont.

our decision to take an issue to arbitration. It's very important that NSO affiliates carefully review the merits of a grievance at the pre-arbitration level. Arbitration decisions should be based on merit not data. Affiliates should determine, among other things, whether the grievance affects a class of employees or does the grievance potentially raise a question better left unanswered. These and other issue related questions should be answered and the potential implications carefully weighed by the affiliate prior to taking the grievance to arbitration.

If, after careful consideration, the affiliate does decide to take the case to arbitration, NSO will pay the expense of the advocate and reimburse the affiliate 50% of the costs of the arbitration as well as the AAA filing fee. To receive reimbursement, the affiliate must submit both an Arbitration Subsidy Request Form and an Arbitrator Evaluation Form plus photocopies of the arbitrator's bill. NSO does not pay for travel or lodging costs for witnesses nor does it pay for court transcripts without prior approval.

"NSO supports our state affiliates in their efforts to maintain their contracts," said NSO President Chuck Agerstrand. "Contact your regional director and we will make sure you receive the assistance you need."

## 2006 NSO Calendar

### NSO Pension Benefits Committee

March 10-11 - Hyatt Islandia, San Diego, CA

### NSO Executive Committee

March 30-31 - Hyatt Regency, Naples, FL

## National Bargaining Conference

**Surviving Chaos: Lead, Promote,  
Defend and Secure**

5:00 pm, Friday, April 21 thru  
Saturday, April 22

Grand Hyatt, Denver, CO

Registration materials available after March 6

### NSO/NCSEA

### Labor-Management Summit III

May 9-10 - TBA, Chicago, IL

### NSO Executive Committee

June 6-7 - Fairmont Hotel, San Jose, CA

### NSO Representative Assembly

June 9-10 - Fairmont Hotel, San Jose, CA



**NSO Executive Committee  
2006 Winter Advocacy Retreat**

**Butch, Mary, Marius, Ed, Cheryl, Ron, Robert, Chuck, John,  
Jimmar, Evelyn, Ruth, Rosemary, Lynn**

## National Staff Organization



**The pride, commitment, tradition and  
advocacy to lead, promote, defend  
and secure the rights of its members.**

### NSO Executive Committee

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Marius Ambrose

Lynn Adler

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*Vice President-Programs*

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Ruth Ivory, At-Large B

Vera Stafford, Financial Advisor

[www.nationalstaff.org](http://www.nationalstaff.org)

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