



**President's Report
2011 - 2012
Steve Clifton, NCSSMA President**

It has been an honor to serve as your NCSSMA President this past year. My objectives when I was elected in October 2011 were:

- ✓ To build collaborative and productive working relationships;
- ✓ Use the resolutions adopted during the annual meeting as a guide for the Executive Committee;
- ✓ Tell NCSSMA's story, plainly and logically;
- ✓ Advocate for a positive SSA budget scenario;
- ✓ Focus attention on innovation and technology, including the use of SharePoint;
- ✓ Continue our efforts with organization succession management planning;
- ✓ Encourage active participation and support from our membership;
- ✓ To strengthen NCSSMA as an organization.

And the NCSSMA mission continues to be my guiding principle:

"Dedication to improving management and program administration in SSA by assuring that the knowledge and experience of front-line management are included in all phases of agency planning and decision-making."

Greg Heineman and Bob Duncan, both former NCSSMA Presidents, retired on June 1, 2012. Greg served as President from 2007-2009 and Bob served as President from 1988-1990. We pay tribute to their leadership, offering our sincere thanks and appreciation for their valuable contributions to NCSSMA, the agency and the American public.

While writing my article for the June 2012 FrontLine edition to recognize the achievements of Greg and Bob, I realized that many of the challenges we face today are not unique or even new. Dominant issues during Bob's tenure as NCSSMA President included excessive and continuing staff reductions in field offices and budget struggles. Greg's initiatives included efforts to increase field office staffing, suggestions for legislative action, and cost-saving ideas.

Oftentimes we seek direction from the past to help guide us with our current challenges. Frequently, we discover that these are not new trails we travel, it just feels that way. Others that have preceded us have been down the same path.

We have been very active this year as an organization with a mind toward the objectives and NCSSMA mission statement outlined. There is still more work to be done and challenges

confronting us. The following summarizes our significant accomplishments since October 2011.

NCSSMA Workgroup Participation: NCSSMA has actively participated in many workgroups this past year. We continue to offer our front-line perspective on issues that affect field offices and teleservice centers.

- Quality Workgroup—Billie Armenta (Executive Officer)
- MI Coordination Project Plan—Melissa Vincent-Bennett (CSSMA)
- N8NN Steering Committee and Care 2020 Management Council—Andrea Wahle (NCSSMA TSC Representative)
- OQP Steering Committee—Paul Gilfillan (NCSSMA Secretary)
- National eServices Advisory Council (NeAC)—Bruce Fraley (ARMA)
- Cooperative Efforts Workgroup—Rick Wodowski (PRMA)
- iCoordinator Workgroup—Scott Hale (NCSSMA Vice President)
- VIP Rewrite Workgroup—Michelle Ponce (DRMA) & David Lescarini (ARMA)

NCSSMA Communication with Agency Leadership: NCSSMA continues to have a robust and productive working relationship with agency leadership. We continue to provide our input on SSA operations and the administration of the agency.

- We met with Commissioner Astrue twice his past year to discuss issues important to NCSSMA members. I met with the Commissioner on March 5, 2012 and December 14, 2011 and was accompanied by Scott Hale, Rachel Emmons, and Joe Dirago (NCSSMA Past President). We discussed budget implications, our meetings on the Hill and with other organizations, security issues, morale, electronic services, service delivery and goals, and hiring/staffing.
- On July 17, 2012, Deputy Commissioner Carolyn Colvin met with Scott Hale, Rachel Emmons, Joe Dirago, and me. We discussed a wide range of issues including staffing, service delivery goals, budget, and electronic services.
- In June 2012 and March 2012, the Executive Committee met with DCO executives including Mary Glenn-Croft (Deputy Commissioner for Operations), Theresa Gruber (Assistant Deputy Commissioner for Operations), OES, OAS, and OTS.
- There were many conference calls with agency leadership throughout the year and we continue to provide suggested topics for the DCO Manager Calls.
- NCSSMA provided input and feedback on many issues including: Direct Express; Standard Position Descriptions for the OO, OS, ADM and DM positions; reducing barriers to online services; transfer of appeals by SRs; security and emergency preparedness on the Employee Awareness Training Program; the appointed representative SSA-1695 process; evaluation of MySSA; management meetings; WUPWY feedback; automation and systems availability issues; cost-saving ideas; third-party centralization, numi-lites, and space allocation standards.

NCSSMA on the Hill: Legislative representatives and agency leaders continue to view NCSSMA as a credible and effective advocate for the SSA budget. In the past year, NCSSMA had many meetings on the Hill including:

- Office of Management and Budget meeting in September 2012 to discuss the SSA FY

2013 and FY 2014 budgets. Scott Hale and Rachel Emmons attended this meeting with me. We also met with staff from the House Labor-HHS Appropriations Subcommittee to discuss the FY 2013 agency budget.

- In July 2012, Scot Hale, Joe Dirago, Rachel Emmons, and I, met with staff from the Senate Finance Committee, House Ways and Means Social Security Subcommittee, and the Senate Labor-HHS Appropriations Subcommittee regarding the FY 2013 SSA budget.
- NCSSMA submitted a statement for the record in April 2012 regarding SSA's FY 2013 funding to the Senate Committee on Appropriations, Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services, Education and Related Agencies.
- Capitol Hill visits in March 2012 attended by the full NCSSMA Executive Committee (17 members) for over 20 meetings that included: House Budget Committee, House Social Security Subcommittee, House Labor-HHS Appropriations Subcommittee, Senate Labor-HHS Appropriations Subcommittee, and the Senate Finance Committee.
- I provided oral and written testimony in January 2012 at the Committee on Ways and Means Subcommittee on Social Security for the hearing on SSDI Program Combatting Disability Waste, Fraud and Abuse.
- In December 2011, meetings were attended by Scott Hale, Joe Dirago, Rachel Emmons and me with staff from the House Ways and Means Social Security Subcommittee, and the Senate Finance Committee.

NCSSMA Interaction with Key Groups: In keeping with our mission, NCSSMA continued our interaction with a number of key groups.

- The Social Security Advisory Board (SSAB) met with Scott Hale, Joe Dirago, Rachel Emmons and me in July 2012. We discussed quality concerns, program simplification suggestions, budget ramifications, third party and attorney representative issues, cost-saving measures, and service delivery challenges.
- Rachel Emmons and I met with the Government Managers Coalition (GMC) in March 2012. We discussed federal employee legislation, the labor-management council, OPM retirement backlog, attrition, and private sector versus federal pay.
- NCSSMA co-signed over a dozen letters sent by the Federal-Postal Coalition, the GMC, and the SSA Advocacy Group. The topics of these communications included advocating for federal employees; the FY 2013 budget for SSA; opposition to federal employee pay freezes, staff reductions, and cuts to benefits; the OPM retirement claims processing backlog; the payroll tax holiday; opposing repeal of FERS sick leave; and support of Flags for Fallen Federal Employees.

Membership Communication: We continued to communicate with our membership to keep them abreast of significant issues, concerns, and organization initiatives.

- The Communications Committee continued to issue quarterly editions of FrontLine, our electronic newsletter, addressing matters important to our membership. In March 2012, Bethany Paradis stepped down as the longtime Chair of the Communications Committee as was replaced by Patty Maddox. Also, Charlene Morales replaced Kay Rhoads on the FrontLine Editorial Review Board. Our thanks to Bethany and Kay for their hard work on FrontLine and with NCSSMA.

- The NCSSMA SharePoint site continues to evolve and become an important and effective communication vehicle for our organization. This past year a major initiative involved the rollout of the site to the regional associations and respective NCSSMA committees. Scott Hale, Lisa Chrabolowski, and Michelle Ponce were instrumental in the development and evolution of the NCSSMA SharePoint site.
- Over the past year, Rachel Emmons and I have had the pleasure of attending the Regional Management Association Annual meetings. I had the opportunity of presenting the NCSSMA perspective and receiving regional feedback in return at the following meetings:
 - New York Region Management Society (NYRMS);
 - Chicago Social Security Management Association (CSSMA);
 - Atlanta Region Management Association (ARMA);
 - Kansas City Management Association (KCMA);
 - Philadelphia Region Management Association (PRMA);
 - New England Social Security Management Association (NESSMA);
 - Dallas Region Management Association (DRMA);
 - San Francisco Region Management Association (SFRMA).
- Rachel Emmons and Aaron Hunter of the Greystone Group prepared and issued numerous legislative reports to our membership this past year. These reports communicated critical Capitol Hill information on Social Security related hearings, legislation affecting federal employees, and budget issues.

As I have said before, at the end of the day, it really is about us, as an organization, as federal employees, and as dedicated public servants. It is about what we do as group, day in and day out, without glamour, glory or personal enrichment beyond the quiet satisfaction of making a difference in people's lives.

This common experience binds us together as members of a vibrant, strong, and proud organization. Our collective efforts make us highly credible and tremendously effective. We are only as strong as our membership, and the passion and commitment that you display in serving the American public.

Steve Clifton
NCSSMA President