

2022 National Association of State Approving Agencies Summer Training & Business Meeting

August 20th - 26th, 2022



**Back Together Again:
Sharing. Working. Succeeding.**

**Embassy Suites by Hilton
San Antonio Riverwalk-Downtown
125 East Houston Street
San Antonio, TX 78205**

CONFERENCE INFORMATION & POLICIES

EMERGENCY CONTACT



On the back of your name badge please write name(s), phone number(s) for the person(s) who we may contact in case of an emergency.



PHOTOGRAPHY AND VIDEO RECORDING

Audio and video recording, streaming, or broadcasting of any type during any part of our program is prohibited unless expressly consented to in writing by NASAA. Photography is permitted unless explicitly prohibited by a presenter at the commencement of their session. By appearing at or attending the Conference, Attendee agrees that NASAA and its authorized representatives may conduct interviews and may take photographs and/or record video directly or indirectly of you at any time during the event. You authorize NASAA all rights necessary to record Attendee during the event and to use any or all portion of such photographs or video recordings at any time in the future for educational, informational, commercial or any other business and in any form and waive right or approval of the uses and any claim for compensation. Members who do not wish to be photographed will have a different colored lanyard and should be mindful to avoid posed photos.



EVENT SURVEY

Please complete the survey. Scan the QR Code. You may also contact any member of the Conference Planning Committee with feedback and suggestions.



CONNECT ON SOCIAL MEDIA

Use the following event Hashtags: #nasaasummer

Facebook:

<https://www.facebook.com/NASAAVETSEducation/>

LinkedIn:

<https://www.linkedin.com/company/natl-assoc-of-state-approving-agencies>

Website: <http://www.nasaa-vetseducation.com/>

PROGRAM, ACTIVITY OR EVENT CHANGES

NASAA reserves the right to make policy, program, event and schedule changes, additions or cancellations for any reason. Speakers are confirmed when listed but may be subject to change due to illness or other unexpected conflicts.



Agenda

SATURDAY, AUGUST 20, 2022

Travel Day for members needing to travel from longer distances, etc. Sleeping rooms are available at the conference rate.

SUNDAY, AUGUST 21, 2022

Meeting Rooms Listed Below
(Business Casual Attire)

3:00 pm - 4:00 pm	Military Transition Assistance	Conference Planning	Constitution and By Laws
	Torrence Joseph (LA) <i>Aztec</i>	Rebecca Ryan (RI) <i>Texas Room B</i>	Everette Jackson (MD) <i>Texas Room A</i>
4:00 pm - 5:00 pm	Honors & Awards	Professional Development	Audit
	Andy Pieper (IL) <i>Texas Room B</i>	Gwen Hacker (KY) <i>Aztec</i>	James Henley (MO) <i>Texas Room A</i>

MONDAY, AUGUST 22, 2022

(Business Casual Attire)

8:00 am - 9:00 am	Registration Check-in	Liaison Activity <i>Majestic Pre-function</i>	
	Frank Myers (SC) <i>Majestic Pre-function</i>		
8:15 am - 10:15 am	Communications	Flight	
	Lily Snyder (GA) <i>Texas Room B</i>	Deb O'Neill (WSAC) <i>Texas Room A</i>	
9:00 am - 10:00 am	New Member Orientation		
	Gwen Hacker (KY) and Laura Bach (WSAC) <i>Aztec Room</i>		
10:00 am - 10:30 am	BREAK <i>TBD</i>		
10:30 am - 12:00 pm	IHL/NCD	Contract/Cooperative Agreement	Automation & Technology
	Larry Graves (WI) <i>Aztec Room</i>	John Murray (WTECB) <i>Texas Room A</i>	Melissa Triplett (OH) <i>Texas Room B</i>

MONDAY, AUGUST 22, 2022

12:00 pm - 1:00 pm	LUNCH (on your own)			
1:00 pm - 3:00 pm	Legislative David Salgado (UT) <i>Majestic Ballroom C</i>	OJT/Apprenticeship Ed Godfrey (MN) <i>Texas Room A</i>	Archives & History Lisa Deneen (OR) <i>Texas Room B</i>	
2:00 pm - 3:00 pm	Welcome, Cooperative Agreement, Q&A (for new Directors) Janice Fisher, Chief, Agreements & Federal Programs and VACO Staff <i>Aztec Room</i>			
3:00 pm - 3:15 pm	BREAK			
3:15 pm - 4:45 pm	Region Meetings			
	West Cheryl Iannello (CA) <i>Aztec Room</i>	South Cleo Wallace (LA) <i>Majestic Ballroom C</i>	East Jennifer St. Jean(VT) <i>Texas Room A</i>	Central Marisol Birth (NB) <i>Texas Room B</i>
4:45 pm - 5:00 pm	BREAK			
5:00 pm - 6:00 pm	Executive Board Meeting Michelle Hill, NASAA President (VA) <i>Majestic Ballroom C</i>			
6:00 pm - 8:00 pm	President's Reception Michelle Hill, NASAA President (VA) <i>Room: Majestic Ballroom Pre-function</i>			

TUESDAY, AUGUST 23, 2022

Majestic Ballroom
(Business Attire)

7:30 am - 8:15 am	Registration Frank Myers (SC) <i>Pre-function 1</i>	Liaison Activity <i>Pre-function 1 and 2</i>
8:15 am - 8:45 am	Opening General Session	Michelle Hill (VA) NASAA President
	Presentation of the Colors	Luther Burbank High School JROTC
	Pledge of Allegiance	Andrew Martin (WI)
	Invocation and Moment of Silence	Cleo Wallace (LA)

TUESDAY, AUGUST 23, 2022

	Welcome Remarks	David Salgado (TX)
8:45 am - 9:15 am	Keynote Address	Thomas Palladino NASDVA
9:15 am - 10:15 am	Education Services Update	James Ruhlman (USDVA)
10:15 am - 10:30 am	BREAK	
10:30 am - 11:30 am	Statutory Approval Requirements	Janice Fisher (USDVA) Larry Graves (WI) Andrew Martin (WI)
11:30 am - 12:00 pm	NASAA General Session 1 Nomination of Officers (NASAA Members Only)	Michael Criscuolo (CT) NASAA Past President
12:00 pm - 1:15 pm	LUNCH (on your own) / Past President's Lunch	
1:15 pm - 2:30 pm	Risk Based Survey (RBS) Training	Larry Graves (WI) Michele Mendola (USDVA)
2:30 pm - 3:30 pm	Safeguarding the Integrity of the GI Bill®	Patrick Dworakowski (USDVA) Tom Alphonso (USDVA) Michael Marks (USDVA) Ben Berck (CELO) Michele Mendola (CELO)
3:30 - 3:50 pm	BREAK & NASAA Group Photo	
3:50 - 4:50 pm	Safeguarding the Integrity of the GI Bill (cont'd)	

WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 24, 2022

Majestic Ballroom
(Business Attire)

7:30 am - 8:30 am	Liaison Activity <i>Pre-function 1 and 2</i>	
8:30 am - 9:00 am	NASAA General Session 2 Election of Officers Regional Officer Elections (NASAA Members Only)	Michael Criscuolo (CT) NASAA Past President

WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 24, 2022

9:00 am - 10:15 am	Committee Report Outs (NASAA Members Only) schedule on page 6	Committee Chairs
10:15 am - 10:30 am	BREAK	
10:30 am - 11:40 am	Committee Report Outs (cont'd) (NASAA Members Only)	Committee Chairs
11:40 am - 12:00 pm	Announcement of Elected Officers New Members Introduction (NASAA Members Only)	Michael Criscuolo (CT) Regional VPs
12:00 pm - 1:15 pm	LUNCH (on your own)	
1:15 pm - 1:45 pm	Updates to Compilation Report and Cooperative Agreement	John Murray (WTECB) Stephen Rudnick (OK)
1:45 pm - 2:30 pm	Compilation Report and JPRG	Frank Myers (SC)
2:30 pm - 3:00 pm	85/15 Best Practices	Michelle Hill (VA)
3:00 pm - 3:15 pm	BREAK	
3:15 pm - 5:00 pm	NASAA General Session Open Discussion (NASAA Members Only)	Michelle Hill (VA)
6:30 pm - 7:00 pm	Reception <i>Pre-function 1</i>	
7:00 pm - 9:00 pm	Awards Ceremony and Banquet <i>Majestic Ballroom</i>	

THURSDAY, AUGUST 25, 2022

Texas Room
(Business Casual Attire)

8:00 am - 11:00 am	Executive Board Meeting Elected Officers and Committee Chairs	President Elect
--------------------	--	-----------------

FRIDAY, AUGUST 26, 2022

Travel Day for those members who need to travel longer distances, etc.

COMMITTEE REPORT SCHEDULE/CONTACT INFO

9:00 am - 9:10 am	Apprenticeship and OJT	Ed Godfrey (MN) edward.godfrey@state.mn.us
9:10 am - 9:15 am	Audit	James Henley (MO) James.Henley@dese.mo.gov
9:15 am - 9:25 am	Automation & Technology	Melissa Triplett (OH) melissa.triplett@dvs.ohio.gov
9:25 am - 9:35 am	Communications	Lily Snyder (GA) saals@vs.state.ga.us
9:35 am - 9:45 am	Conference Planning	Rebecca Ryan (RI) Rebecca.Ryan@riopc.edu
9:45 am - 10:00 am	Constitution & By Laws	Everette Jackson (MD) EveretteD.Jackson@maryland.gov
10:00 am - 10:15 am	Flight	Deb O'Neill (WSAC) debbieo@wsac.wa.gov
10:30 am - 10:40 am	Honors, Awards, Membership & Alumni	Andy Pieper (IL) andrew.pieper@illinois.gov
10:40 am - 10:55 am	IHL & NCD	Larry Graves (WI) Larry2.Graves@dva.wisconsin.gov
10:55 am - 11:15 am	Legislative	David Salgado (UT) dsalgado@utah.gov
11:15 am - 11:25 am	Military Transition Assistance	Torrence Joseph (LA) torrence.joseph@la.gov
11:25 am - 11:35 am	Professional Development	Gwen Hacker (KY) gwen.hacker@kctcs.edu
11:35 am - 11:40 am	Archives and History	Lisa Deneen (OR) lisa.deneen@odva.oregon.gov
11:40 am - 12:00 pm	Regional Vice Presidents Report Outs	Marisol Birth (C- NE) marisol.birth@nebraska.gov Jennifer St. Jean (E- VT) Jennifer.StJean@vermont.gov Cleo Wallace (S- LA) cleophus.wallace@la.gov Cheryl Iannello (W- CA) Cheryl.Iannello@calvet.ca.gov



Scan this QR code to
join a committee.

PRESENTER BIOS

[Thomas Alphonso, Assistant Director of Policy and Procedure, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs](#)

Mr. Alphonso serves as the Assistant Director for Policy and Procedures in the Veterans Benefits Administration's Education Service. In this role, he oversees legislative implementation, regulatory amendment development, and policy and procedure formulation for all VA educational assistance benefits programs (commonly referred to as "GI Bill" programs).

He is a graduate of the United States Military Academy and served as an Army officer for six years in both the Infantry and Finance Corps. During his service, he was stationed at Fort Benning, GA; Fort Jackson, SC; and Yongsan Army Garrison, Republic of Korea.

Tom holds a B.S. in Philosophy and Literature from the United States Military Academy; an M.A. in Finance from Webster University; and a J.D. from Boston College Law School. He is currently an inactive member of the Massachusetts Bar and is a previous member of the New York Bar.

Tom currently lives in Washington, DC, with his wife, Meghan, who is a staff attorney with VA's Office of the General Counsel, Benefits Law Group, and his two daughters, Siobhan and Niamh. He is originally from Saint Bernard, LA, a suburb of New Orleans.

[Ben Berck, CELO, Central Region, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs](#)

Ben Berck retired from the Air Force in 2008 after serving 24 years as a Ground Radar Technician and later as a Space and Missile Operations Officer. He began his VA career as an ELR and was promoted to Lead ELR, Supervisory ELR, and for the past 5 years served as the Chief Education Liaison Officer of the Central Region responsible for 11 states and 43 staff members.

[Michael Criscuolo, Director, Connecticut State Approving Agency](#)

Mr. Criscuolo began working at the Connecticut Office of Higher Education (OHE)/State Approving Agency (SAA) in February, 2010. As SAA Director, he is responsible for the approval and oversight of institutions and their programs so qualified veterans, and their dependents, may use their VA educational benefits at their school or training facility. His agency participates in outreach and career fairs throughout the year to promote the use of the GI Bill®.

Mr. Criscuolo served the National Association of State Approving Agencies (NASAA) as President. He has served NASAA as Vice President, Chair of the Communications Committee, Vice-Chair of the Professional Development Committee, Chair of the Conference Planning Committee, East Region Legislative Committee Representative, NASAA's East Region Vice-President, a member of the Compliance Survey Redesign Working Group, and as a representative on the Joint Advisory Committee, which was established to provide a standing forum for the resolution of issues related to the mutual responsibilities of the VA and SAAs for the effective administration of educational benefits to veterans and their dependents.

Locally, he serves as the Co-Chair of the Community Veterans Engagement Board and as a member of the Military & Veterans Support Coalition. In 2015, he was designated as the CT OHE's representative to serve on the Military Occupational Specialty Task Force, responsible for developing recommendations to improve the acceptance of military training towards licensure requirements and college credit.

[Patrick Dworakowski, Ed.D. Assistant Director, Oversight & Accountability, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs](#)

Dr. Dworakowski joined the United States Department of Veterans Affairs (DoVA), VBA, Education Service as the Assistant Director, Oversight & Accountability after serving in multiple senior leadership positions in the Department of Defense and public education systems. Primary responsibility for the DoVA, Education is to Safeguard the Integrity of the GI Bill education benefits through the execution of Compliance, Enforcement, and Protection programming. The GI Bill distributes over \$12B annually to eligible beneficiaries attending approved education and training programs.

During service in the DoD Education Activity, his primary responsibilities were to strategically plan, direct, and coordinate PK-12 education initiatives and programs that supported 81,000 students across the world. As a DoD civilian voluntary deployment in support of Operation Enduring Freedom, he served as the Deputy Director, Development, International Security Assistance Force, HQ, Kabul, Afghanistan. Primary responsibilities focused on socio-economic development in collaboration with the Ministries of Education/Higher Education.

Dr. Dworakowski served multiple public education communities focused on children and families in both leadership and specialized positions: Chief Executive, Principal, Director, and Teacher. He also held part-time positions in higher education as an Adjunct Professor and Research Assistant.

Before completing his formal education, he spent seven years as an enlisted sailor in the United States Navy stationed aboard the U.S.S. John F. Kennedy (CV-67) as an aircraft director, firefighter, and training coordinator. Subsequently served at Naval Air Station Whiting Field supporting student aviators and leading a fire, crash, and rescue crew. He spent two deployments at sea including Operation Desert Shield and Storm and earned multiple decorations and awards during his service.

Dr. Dworakowski holds a Doctor of Education, Leadership, Duquesne University, Master of Science, Educational Administration, Franciscan University, and a Bachelor of Science in Education - Special Education, Slippery Rock University.

He is married and the proud father of two daughters and a son who reside in Northern Virginia.

[Janice Fisher, Chief, Agreements & Federal Programs, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs](#)

Janice Fisher grew up in Niagara Falls, NY and received a Bachelor of Arts degree from State University of New York at Buffalo, Magna Cum Laude. She had an extensive Human Services career before beginning with VA at the Buffalo RPO as an Education Case Manager in 2001. Janice was promoted to Management and Program Analyst at VA Central Office in 2005 and moved to DC locality. She received a promotion to Chief, Contract Management Team in 2008 (name change of team to Agreements & Federal Programs several years ago). She lives in Pasadena, MD with her husband Bill; they have three children and four grandchildren. Janice enjoys reading, traveling, camping and watching suspenseful series like Jack Reacher and most recently Yellowstone in free time.

[Larry Graves, Education Consultant, Wisconsin State Approving Agency](#)

Larry Graves serves as an Education Consultant with the Wisconsin State Approving Agency. He is the chairperson for NASAA's IHL/NCD Committee and has recently led training presentations for the FY23 Risk-Based Compliance Survey model. Prior to joining the SAA in 2017, Larry spent 16 years working in public higher education, last serving as Registrar and Director of Admissions for the former University of Wisconsin Colleges. An Air Force veteran, Larry has a MS in Training & Organizational Development and BS in Technology Education from the University of Wisconsin-Stout.

[Michelle Hill, NASAA President, Virginia State Approving Agency](#)

Michelle Hill works as a Veterans Education Manager for the Virginia SAA and services as the current NASAA President. Prior to working for the Nevada and Virginia State Approving Agencies, she worked as a School Certifying Official with several Nevada schools and aided veterans and students with Title IV funding for over a decade. In addition, she worked in various management and supervisor roles within higher education. Her prior knowledge with VA education benefits and the inner workings of a school, allowed for a smooth transition in working for the SAA in July 2016.

In July 2021, Michelle relocated to Virginia where she was able to continue her work as part of the SAA team with the Virginia Department of Veteran Services. Throughout the years, she has continued to take an active role in serving those that have served our country and participating in many veterans' events taking any opportunity to share her knowledge of the VA Education benefit program.

Prior to her current NASAA role as President, Michelle served as Vice President, Communications Committee Chair, Military Education Chair, Vice-Chair of the Legislative Committee, and as a member of the Constitution and Bylaws, OJT/Apprenticeship, and Audit committees. Some highlights of her prior projects include helping to create NASAA's Facebook page, LinkedIn page, NASAA's internal Blog communication system, Storytellers podcast, website management, NASAA mentorship program and as a pilot state for the Risk Based Survey project while with the Nevada SAA.

[Michael Marks, Chief, Approvals, Compliance & Liaison Team, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs](#)

Michael Marks is the Chief of Approvals Compliance and Liaison Division overseeing strategically planning, operational and tactical procedures to ensure proper oversight of approved education and training programs.

Michael has had a very successful career at the Veterans Administration since 1999 as a Claims Examiner in Education Division. He has moved through progressively more responsible positions to reach the current position he holds today. During his career, he has served as a Compliance Survey Specialist; Education Liaison Representative for various states; Coach for Education Services Unit and the Work Study Team. Previously, he served as the Chief Education Liaison Officer for the West Region Approvals, Compliance & Liaison Division.

Michael joined the US Army and served from 1988 to 1992. After separation from active duty, he continued his military service with the Army Reserves until retiring in December 2008 at the rank of Master Sergeant.

Michael attended Northeastern State University in Tahlequah, OK graduating cum laude in 1998 with a Bachelor of Science in Business Administration.

Michael, his wife Pauline, and daughter Torea live in Broken Arrow, Oklahoma.

[Andrew Martin, Education Consultant, Wisconsin State Approving Agency](#)

Andrew has been an Education Consultant with the Wisconsin SAA since February of 2020. In that time, he has become an active member of NASAA, currently serving on the IHL/NCD Committee and being the central region representative to the Legislative Committee.

Prior to joining the SAA, Andrew spent a decade in the K-12 education space, including a year as an AmeriCorps volunteer and substitute teacher. He spent eight years as a high school social studies teacher in the Milwaukee Public Schools where he was an active member of various district-level policy committees, as well as member and chairperson of a statewide teacher-member organization's legislative committee.

Andrew happily resides in the heart of Milwaukee, WI with his wife and two-year-old son.

[Michelle Mendola, CELO, East Region, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs](#)

Michele Mendola began her career with the Department of Veterans Affairs in March 1995, as a Veterans Claims Examiner. Throughout her VA career, she worked as an Education Case Manager, Senior Veterans Claims Examiner, Supervisory Veterans Claims Examiner, and has been the Chief Education Liaison Officer for the East Region Approvals Compliance and Liaison Division since October 2011. In this role, she is responsible for the management of Approval and Compliance activities for 3346 training institutions covering 13 states and the District of Columbia. The Division is comprised of 43 employees committed to protecting the integrity of the GI Bill®. She appreciates her mission and is proud to provide her very best to our Veterans and their dependents.

[John Murray, Management Analyst, Washington- WTECB State Approving Agency](#)

John Murray is currently a Management Analyst with the State Approving Agency at the Washington Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board. John was born and raised in Seattle, is retired from the U.S. Navy, and now makes his home in Lakebay (on the Key Peninsula).

[Frank Myers, Assistant Director and Program Manager, South Carolina State Approving Agency](#)

Frank Myers has worked for the South Carolina as the Program Manager and Assistant Director for the past 19 years. Frank graduated from Battery Creek High School located in Beaufort, South Carolina at the age of 17 and enlisted in the United States Army right after high school with his dad having to sign his enlistment papers. Frank is a Desert Storm veteran and retired from the Army in 2002. He was hired with the SC SAA just two days after his retirement from the military.

Frank holds an M.B.A. from Saint Leo University, a B.A from Excelsior College and an A.S from Rockland Community College.

Frank has been NASAA treasurer since 2012. He has held the office of NASAA Contract Committee Chair and Vice Chair and serves as a member of the Conference Planning, Honors and Awards and Professional Development Committees. He has also served on 12 JPRG's with NASAA. He is the recipient of two NASAA Presidential Awards, two NASAA Star Awards, and multiple Certificates of Appreciation.

[Thomas Palladino, Executive Director, Texas Veterans Commission](#)

Thomas Palladino was selected as the Executive Director of the Texas Veterans Commission on October 1, 2010. In this position he is responsible for directing the overall administration of the agency and provides leadership for all stakeholders within the State of Texas to accomplish its mission which is to advocate for and provide superior service to veterans that will significantly improve the quality of life for all Texas Veterans, their Families, and their survivors. Tom Palladino is the most recent President of the National Association of State Directors of Veterans Affairs (NASDVA.)

He retired as a Colonel from the U.S. Army in September 2009 after 27 years of service (1982-2009). During this time Tom Palladino served in both the active U.S. Army and the Texas Army National Guard as an Active Guard Reserve officer.

As an Armored Cavalry Officer during the Cold War, he served in the 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment (Blackhorse) and patrolled the East-West Germany border in the Fulda Gap. He also served as an Armored Cavalry Troop Commander in the 3rd Armored Cavalry Regiment (Brave Rifles) at Ft. Bliss, Texas.

In the Texas Army National Guard, Tom Palladino served under the Adjutant General where he provided needed support and assistance to Texas National Guard Soldiers, Airmen, and military family members. He coordinated a state-wide collaborative partnership among all federal, state, and local organizations to enhance benefits and services for all military veterans and their families in the State of Texas.

He also served as an Associate Professor of Military Science (Army ROTC) at the University of Texas at Austin and an Associate Professor in Government at Austin Community College. As a Texas Public School Social Studies teacher, he taught High School and Middle School students in the Austin and Pflugerville Independent School Districts.

Tom Palladino's education includes a BA in Political Science from Providence College and a MA in Political Science from Southwest Texas State University, Texas. Additionally, he possesses a Texas Secondary Education Teaching Certificate and Texas Public School Principal's Certification.

[Stephen Rudnick, State Approving Officer, Oklahoma State Approving Agency](#)

Stephen Rudnick serves in the role of a State Approving Officer with the Oklahoma Department of Veterans Affairs State Approving Agency (ODVA SAA). Mr. Rudnick has served with ODVA SAA since it began operations in 2019 and served in the same capacity with the Oklahoma State Accrediting Agency (OKSAA) from 2017, until its sunset in 2019. During his time with ODVA SAA and OKSAA, Mr. Rudnick has strived to ease workloads, simplify challenging processes, and foster better communication between SAA, the VA, and the Veterans education community. Mr. Rudnick provides frequent training presentations to schools and professional organizations including Oklahoma Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators (OASFAA), Oklahoma Veteran Education Specialist Association (OVESA), National Association Of Veterans' Program Administrators (NAVPA) and others. Prior to his role in SAA, Mr. Rudnick was a School Certifying Official at the University of Oklahoma - Outreach, where he served students in online programs and at campuses worldwide. Mr. Rudnick brings with him broad experience in higher education, technology & trade, private enterprise, and volunteerism. He enjoys a scholarly interest in the laws, regulations, and the policies and procedures that govern the administration of VA education benefits. Mr. Rudnick prides himself in being part of a community of Veteran's Education Specialists and is dedicated to serving School Officials. When he isn't focused on VA Education, Mr. Rudnick spends his time providing a free youth archery program; being the PTA President's

first Gentlemen and Watch D.O.G.s coordinator at his children's school; volunteering at Kerr Scout Ranch; attending his children's dance and Special Olympics competitions; and napping.

[James Ruhlman, Deputy Director of Program Management, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs](#)

James Ruhlman was appointed as the Deputy Director of Program Management within the Veterans Benefits Administration's Education Service in October 2017, and he has been a VA employee since July 2001.

James directs and monitors the activities within Education Service's Oversight & Accountability and Policy & Procedures portfolios. Relevant tasks include the development of agency rules, information collections, policies, legislative proposals, views and cost estimates for proposed legislation, as well as the implementation of statutory changes, court decisions, and policy changes, and the enforcement of relevant laws and regulations governing GI Bill benefits.

Prior to joining Education Service in 2007, he served in various positions at the Atlanta Regional Processing Office (RPO) including Education Case Manager, Senior Education Case Manager, and as RPO Training Coordinator.

James is an alumnus of Penn State Erie, The Behrend College, and Emory University where he studied Political Science. Originally from Warren County, Pennsylvania, he currently resides Montgomery County, Maryland.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Conference Planning Committee Members

Rebecca Ryan	Committee Chair - NASAA Vice President	RI
Charles Bryant	Committee Vice Chair	TX
Frank Myers	Committee Member - NASAA Treasurer	SC
Laura Bach	Committee Member	WSAC
Raymond Baker	Committee Member	IN
Marisol Birth	Committee Member	NE
Leanna DeKing	Committee Member	AZ
Gwen Hacker	Committee Member	KY
Cheryl Iannello	Committee Member	CA
Angela Lee	Committee Member	DC
Andrew Pieper	Committee Member	IL
Cleo Wallace	Committee Member	LA
David Salgado	NASAA Legislative Chair & Team	TX
Annie Walker	NASAA Immediate Past President- Special Guest	VA

Special NASAA Guests

Thomas Palladino, Executive Director, Texas Veterans Commission
Charles Catoe, Division Director Program Operations, Texas Veterans Commission
Luther Burbank High School JROTC

Embassy Suites by Hilton San Antonio Riverwalk-Downtown

Sharon Estep
Barbara Baird
Sabrina Saucedo
Oscar Medrano

GI Bill® is a registered trademark of the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA). More information about education benefits offered by VA is available at the official U.S. government Web site at <https://www.benefits.va.gov/gibill>.

SHARE YOUR FEEDBACK



Please use the camera on your mobile device to scan the QR codes to complete the event survey anonymously. Your feedback helps us to continually improve our events and grow as an association.