# NATIONAL TRAINING INSTITUTE

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF STATE APPROVING AGENCIES

MAY 12TH - 16TH, 2025

EMBASSY SUITES

12 6th Street

Minneapolis, MN 55402

## TUESDAY, MAY 13TH, 2025

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| **7:30 - 8:00 am** | **Registration** | Tramaine Carroll-Payne (VA)<br>NASAA Treasurer |
| **8:00 - 8:15 am** | **Welcome to NTI / Opening Address** | Rebecca Ryan (RI)<br>NASAA President |
| **8:15 - 9:00 am** | **Introductions** | Gwen Hacker (KY)<br>NASAA Professional Development Chair<br><br>Bill Schroeder (OH)<br>NASAA Professional Development Vice Chair<br><br>Dr. Ed Godfrey (MN)<br>NASAA Central Region Vice President<br><br>Josh Martin (VA)<br>Supervisory Compliance & Liaison Specialist (SCLS) |
| **9:00 - 9:45 am** | **Legislative Updates** | Dr. Joseph Wescott (NC)<br>NASAA Legislative Liaison<br><br>Dr. Ken Hanson (TN) |
| **9:45 - 10:00 am** | **BREAK** | |
| **10:00 - 11:00 am** | **History of the GI Bill®** | Dr. Joseph Wescott (NC) |
| **11:00 - 11:45 am** | **Statutes and Regulations** | Dr. Ken Hanson (TN) |
| **11:45 - 1:00 pm** | **LUNCH (On your own)** | |

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| **1:00 - 3:00 pm** | **Working an IHL Approval (Accredited and Non-Accredited)** | Rebecca Ryan (RI)<br>Frank Myers (SC)<br>NASAA Immediate Past President<br>Dr. Ed Godfrey (MN)<br>Jesse Martinez (VA)<br>Education Liaison Representative (ELR) |
| **3:00 - 3:15 pm** | **BREAK** | |
| **3:15 - 4:00 pm** | **Working an IHL Approval Continued** | Rebecca Ryan (RI)<br>Frank Myers (SC)<br>Dr. Ed Godfrey (MN) |
| **4:00 - 4:30 pm** | **IHL Breakout Session** | ALL FACULTY |
| **WEDNESDAY, MAY 14TH, 2025** | | |
| **8:00 - 9:30 am** | **Working an NCD Approval** | Rebecca Ryan (RI)<br>Frank Myers (SC)<br>Dr. Ed Godfrey (MN) |
| **9:30 - 10:00 am** | **NCD Breakout Session** | ALL FACULTY |
| **10:00 - 10:15 am** | **BREAK** | |
| **10:15 - 11:15 pm** | **Flight Program Approvals** | Bill Schroeder (OH)<br>David Salgado (TX)<br>NASAA Vice President<br>Kathy Snyder (NM)<br>NASAA West Region Vice President |
| **11:15 - 12:00 pm** | **Flight Breakout Session** | ALL FACULTY |
| **12:00 - 1:00 pm** | **LUNCH** | |
| **1:00 - 1:45 pm** | **Working an OJT/Apprenticeship Program Approval** | Torrence Joseph (LA)<br>NASAA Apprenticeship and OJT Chair<br>Tramaine Carroll-Payne (VA) |
| **1:45 - 2:30 pm** | **OJT/APP Breakout Session** | ALL FACULTY |

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| 2:30 - 3:15 pm | **Closing Time: Suspensions and Withdrawals** | Tramaine Carroll-Payne (VA) |
| 3:15 - 3:45 pm | **BREAK** | |
| 3:45 - 4:45 pm | **LACAS and Prep Courses: Table Exercises** | Gwen Hacker (KY)<br>Cheryl Iannello (CA) |
| **THURSDAY, MAY 15TH, 2025** | | |
| 8:00 - 9:15 am | **Common Approval Mistakes: Oops and Bloopers** | Dr. Ken Hanson (TN)<br>Cheryl Iannello (CA)<br>Josh Martin (VA)<br>Supervisory Compliance & Liaison Specialist (SCLS) |
| 9:15 - 10:30 am | **Supervisory Visits** | Bill Schroeder (OH)<br>Crystal Standifer (SC)<br>Risk Based Survey/Supervisory Visit Chair |
| 10:30 - 10:45 am | **BREAK** | |
| 10:45 - 12:00 pm | **Risk-Based Surveys** | David Salgado (TX)<br>Crystal Standifer (SC) |
| 12:00 - 12:45 pm | **RBS Breakout Sessions** | ALL FACULTY |
| 12:45 - 1:45 pm | **LUNCH** | |
| 1:45 - 2:45 pm | **Navigating VA Systems – Citrix / Salesforce** | Lily Snyder (GA)<br>NASAA South Region Vice President |
| 2:45 - 3:30 pm | **Q & A Session/Fun Facts Reveal** | ALL FACULTY |
| 3:30 - 4:30 pm | **Graduation** | Rebecca Ryan (RI) |

## SHARE YOUR FEEDBACK

Please use the camera on your mobile device to scan the QR codes to complete the daily surveys.

**May 13th**

**May 14th**

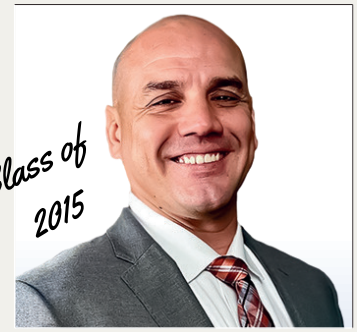
**May 15th**

# NTI FACULTY

**Gwen Hacker**
NASAA Professional Development Chair

**Bill Schroeder**
NASAA Professional Development Vice Chair

**Rebecca Ryan**
NASAA President




**David Salgado**
NASAA Vice President

**Frank Myers**
NASAA Immediate
Past President

**Ed Godfrey**
NASAA Central Region Vice President

**Tramaine Carroll-Payne**
NASAA Treasurer

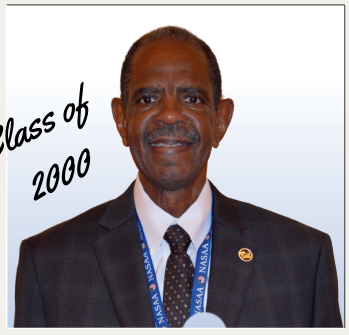
**Joseph Wescott**
NASAA Legislative Liaison

**Kathy Snyder**
NASAA West Region Vice President

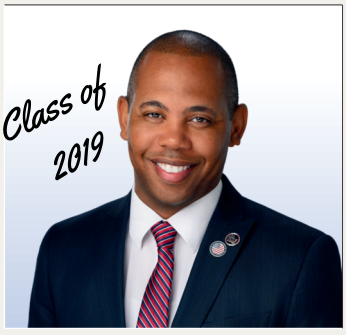
**Cheryl Iannello**

**Crystal Standifer**
Risk Based Survey/Supervisory Visit Chair

**Ken Hanson**




**Cleophus Wallace**




**Torrence Joseph**
NASAA Apprenticeship & OJT Chair

**Lily Snyder**
NASAA South Region Vice President

**Josh Martin**
VA Central Region SCLS

**Jesse Martinez**
VA Central Region ELR

**Tramaine Carroll-Payne**
NASAA Treasurer
Virginia State Approving Agency

Tramaine Carroll-Payne is employed with the Virginia Department of Veterans Services, Veterans Education, Transition and Employment Directorate as the Deputy Director of Education Programs. She oversees the Virginia Military Survivors and Dependents Education Program, Military Education and Workforce Initiatives and the Virginia State Approving Agency (SAA).

Tramaine has been employed with the Commonwealth of Virginia for 19 years. Her first six years were spent at J. Sergeant Reynolds Community College is the Veterans Advisor and Student Success Center Coordinator. Tramaine began teaching as an Adjunct Instructor in 2008, guiding incoming students through the college experience. Tramaine received her B.S. in Mathematics from Saint Paul's College and her M.A. in Educational Leadership and Policy Studies from Virginia Tech. She also holds a Graduate Certificate in Academic Advising from Kansas State University.

Tramaine is a native of Richmond, Virginia, where she enjoys spending time with her family, traveling, and reading good books.

**Ed Godfrey, PhD**
NASAA Central Region Vice President / NASAA IHL & NCD Committee Chair
Minnesota State Approving Agency

Ed Godfrey has worked for Minnesota Department of Veterans Affairs for 9 years, 8 of which have been with the State Approving Agency. He is also an administrator for the Minnesota GI Bill.

Prior to MDVA, Ed spent entirely too long in college. As an undergraduate at Gustavus Adolphus College in Minnesota, he double majored in Physics and Religious Studies with a minor in Philosophy. He pursued his graduate studies at Temple University in Philadelphia where he studied Japanese and Indian Buddhism, Sāṃkhya/Yoga philosophy, and the depth psychology of Carl Jung.

Somewhere in there he joined the Army Reserve with the Army Military Police Corps. Signing up for "one weekend a month, two weeks a year" under the Clinton Administration, he ended up getting deployed for nearly three years. '99-'00 he spent in Germany conducting garrison law enforcement (backfilling for the MPs that went to Bosnia/Kosovo), and '03-'04 he spent in Iraq conducting convoy escorts and enemy prisoner of war operations.

Now working for Minnesota SAA, he finds these two seemingly disparate threads of his life—higher education and military service—coming back to nestle together almost poetically.

With the SAA, he found himself compulsively drawn to NASAA where he is the Central Region Regional Vice President, IHL/NCD Committee Chair, and former Apprenticeship/OJT Committee Chair and still a member. He's on the Professional Development Committee (obviously), and the Conference Planning Committee.

**Gwen Hacker**
NASAA Legislative Director / NASAA Professional Development Committee Chair
Director, Kentucky State Approving Agency

Gwen Hacker (KY) is the Executive Director of the Kentucky State Approving Agency for Veterans Education.

Prior to her current position, Gwen worked in the higher education and non-profit sector in various roles such as Director of Admissions, Coordinator of Transfer Admission, and Development Manager. Gwen earned two undergraduate degrees Summa Cum Laude from Midway University, a Bachelor of Arts in English and an Associate of Arts in Computer Information Systems. In 2010, Gwen completed her graduate studies and earned a Master of Education (M.Ed.) Magna Cum Laude in Higher Education Administration from Vanderbilt University in Nashville, Tennessee. Gwen focused her graduate research on college student development and institutional advancement. In NASAA, Gwen currently serves as the Legislative Director, Chair of the Professional Development Committee, member of the Military Transition Assistance Committee, member of the Conference Planning Committee, and member of the Executive Board. In her free time, Gwen enjoys rooting for her University of Kentucky Wildcats. GO CATS!

**Ken Hanson, EdD**
Director, Tennessee State Approving Agency

Ken serves as the Director of the Tennessee State Approving Agency (TN-SAA) at Tennessee Higher Education Commission (THEC) and has been with THEC for over 7 years. Prior to the current position, he served as the Assistant Director of Adult Learners initiatives and focused on Tennessee Reconnect program, Veterans Reconnect grant, LEAP grant, (grants totaled $17M in contracts) and developed the Tennessee Servicemember Opportunity Portal (TN-SOP.tn.gov). the TN-SOP listed course credit at Tennessee public higher education schools for evaluated prior military experience. Prior to serving at THEC, he was the Director of Adult Learners and Veterans Affairs and School Certifying Official at Volunteer State Community College in Gallatin, TN.

Ken retired from the US Air Force at the rank of Major having served nearly 23 years as both enlisted and an officer (Mustang). During his time in the military, he taught M/HH-60 Helicopter Flight Engineer flight training and was a program manager/curriculum developer for three flight programs. As an officer, he taught Professional Military Education at Squadron Officer School for Air Force captains. Later he was the Leadership department Chair for the Squadron Officer School and Air and Space Basic Course for lower ranking officers. During a deployment to Iraq, he assisted in developing the Iraqi Air Force Academy curriculum and taught English as a second language to Iraqi Air Force trainees.

Ken is married to Sandra, (Navy veteran), and they have three children, Ashlee, Amber, and Zach.

**Cheryl Iannello**
Director, California State Approving Agency

Cheryl Iannello has served with the California State Approving Agency for Veterans Education for the past eight years, beginning her tenure as an Education Specialist and currently holding the position of Assistant Deputy Secretary and Chief of Postsecondary Education for the State of California. Prior to her state role, she was the Director of Veteran Student Services at a private institution, overseeing Veteran support services across all four campuses.

With over four decades of experience in higher education, Cheryl has held numerous leadership positions, including Director of Education and Campus Director. She holds an Associate of Arts in Marketing and Distribution, a Bachelor of Science in Business, and a Master's Degree in Education with a focus on Curriculum and Instruction.

Cheryl is actively engaged with the National Association of State Approving Agencies (NASAA), where she currently serves as the West Region Alternate Vice President and is a member of several key committees.

**Torrence Joseph**
NASAA Apprenticeship and OJT Committee Chair
Louisiana State Approving Agency

Torrence Joseph is an Educational Program Consultant for the Louisiana Department of Veterans Affairs, State Approving Agency (SAA).

Torrence has over 20 years in education, earning his Bachelor of Science degree in Environmental Science from Louisiana Tech University, Alternate Teacher's Certification from Southeastern Louisiana University, and Master's degree from the University of Southern Mississippi in Educational Leadership. He has worked in various educational roles, including teacher, disciplinarian, assistant principal, and principal.

He has over 20 years served in the U.S. Army and is a member of the Louisiana Army National Guard, where he holds the rank of Major. He enlisted in 1993 as a combat engineer and following a break in service, commissioned as a healthcare administrator and logistician. Past assignments include being a platoon leader, plans officer, company commander, state medical operations officer and Battalion Executive Officer. His current assignment is Deputy Commander of the Louisiana State Medical Command. He has been deployed to Iraq in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation New Dawn, as well as in support of COVID-19 response for the city of New Orleans and various hurricanes, most recently Hurricane Francine in 2024.

**Josh Martin**
Supervisory Compliance and Liaison Specialist (SCLS)
VA Central Region

**Jesse Martinez**
Education Liaison Representative (ELR)
VA Central Region

**Frank Myers**
NASAA Immediate Past President
Director, South Carolina State Approving Agency

Frank Myers has worked for the South Carolina State Approving Agency for the past 22 years and is currently serving as the Director. 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.

Note: The Army recruiter had Frank's dad to signed two separate contracts to join the Army. The first contract was for an aviation mechanic and the second contract was for food service. Frank completed basic training and was excited about becoming an aviation mechanic. Frank was told by the drill sergeant that he was going to be a cook and that they do not have orders for him to become an aviation mechanic. The Army recruiter had pulled a fast one over on Frank's dad. The Army needed food service workers and the rest is history.

Frank's first nine years of his Army career was in food service. He served his next 11 years in protocol. Frank was hand selected in 1997, by Lieutenant General, Daniel W. Christman, Superintendent, of the United States

Military Academy, West Point, NY.

Frank was the first non-commission protocol officer assigned to West Point. Frank spent his last five years at West Point with a zero-execution assignment error rate!

Frank's duties as a protocol officer entailed the following:

- Worked with the state and federal secret service agents for President-Bill Clinton, Vice President-Al Gore, President-George Bush, First Lady-Hillary Clinton, and other dignitaries.
- Coordinated and Developed itineraries in support of dignitaries and social functions.
- Coordinated and planned all events relating to hospitality requirements for all dignitaries.
- Assisted the Disbursement Officer in the proper use and accountability of appropriated and non-appropriated funds in support of official visits and social functions.
- Escorted President-Bush during the 2001 Army vs Navy Football game.
- Arranged travel for the official West Point staff to attend home and away Army Black Knights Football games.

Frank is a Desert Storm Veteran and has retired from the Army in 2002. He was hired with the South Carolina State Approving Agency just two days after his retirement from the military.

Frank received numerous awards throughout his military career. His highest military award is the Legion of Merit.

Frank is a GI Bill® recipient. He 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 on the Dean's list and graduated Cum Laude multiple times.

Frank served as the National Association of State Approving Agencies Contract Chair (Two-years) Treasurer (10-years) and is the immediate Past President (August 2022-2024).

Frank is married with three children.

**Rebecca Ryan**
NASAA President
Director, Rhode Island State Approving Agency

Rebecca was hired as the first full time SAA Director in Rhode Island in 2013 and her present title is Director of Compliance and Student Protection for the RI Office of the Postsecondary Commissioner. She is proud to have developed an active and engaged SAA in the smallest state, even serving as the host for the Summer Business and Training Meeting in 2017. Over the years, Rebecca has served as member of the Archives and History and IHL/NCD Committees, JPRG Representative, NTI Faculty, Vice Chair of the Contract/Cooperative Agreement Committee, Alternate VP and Vice President for the East Region, and NASAA Vice President for three years. She is most proud of the seven conferences she helped plan during that time. She is the recipient of multiple Certificates of Appreciation, NASAA Star Awards and the NASAA 2022 and 2024 President's Awards.

Prior to joining the SAA, Rebecca spent several years working as a certifying official at Johnson & Wales University. She has a B.A. in History and American Studies and an M.A. in American and Modern European History from Providence College. She is a lifelong Rhode Island resident and has two young daughters who think it's pretty cool that their mommy is "the president."

**David Salgado**
NASAA Vice President
Director, Texas State Approving Agency

David Salgado is the Veterans Education Department Director at the Texas Veterans Commission. David served 10 years in the U.S. Marine Corps with deployments in Iraq and Afghanistan. He is grateful for the opportunity to work with Veterans, service members, and their families here in the great state of Texas.

**Bill Schroeder**
Ohio State Approving Agency

William (Bill) Schroeder has served as the Education Consultant for the Ohio Department of Veteran Services (ODVS) since January 2007.

Prior to joining ODVS, Bill worked as Director of Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University campus in Brunswick, Maine, from 2003-2007.

Bill is a retired U.S. Navy Chief Petty Officer, serving on active duty for 22 years. During his military career, he completed seven deployments and numerous overseas detachments working.

**Katherine Snyder**
NASAA West Region Vice President
Director, New Mexico State Approving Agency

Katherine (Kathy) Snyder serves as the Director of the New Mexico State Approving Agency (NMSAA), a bureau within the New Mexico Department of Veterans' Services. She has worked for the NMSAA since April of 2019. Prior to her time with the NMSAA, Kathy worked for the Florida State Approving Agency (Florida SAA), a bureau within the Florida Department of Veterans' Affairs, since September of 2010.

Preceding her time with both SAAs, she worked in the higher education community for several years at a state college in Florida where she was Interim Director of Financial Aid and primary School Certifying Official. Kathy had not planned on leaving the college; however, during a Supervisory Visit in 2010 – conducted by the then Bureau Chief of the Florida SAA, she was asked, "Would you ever be interested in working for the Florida SAA?" And so it began.

Some of Kathy's roles within the National Association of State Approving Agencies (NASAA) include: current Executive Board member as West Region Vice President; former Secretary; former Chair of the Flight Training Committee of which she is still a member; Apprenticeship/OJT Committee member; Automation and Technology Committee member; and Honors & Awards Committee member and former Chair.

**Lily Snyder**
NASAA South Region Vice President / NASAA Contract/Cooperative Agreement Chair
Director, Georgia State Approving Agency

Lily Snyder started working for the Georgia SAA in 2006 as a part-time Secretary while attending Georgia State University. In the last 18+ years, she worked her way up, becoming Director in 2024. Over the years, she has seen a multitude of changes with NASAA and VA Education Benefits, from the passage of the Post-9/11 GI Bill® to the Dole Act and everything in between. In NASAA, Lily is the South Region Vice President,

Contract/Cooperative Agreement Chair, and serves on the Communications and Conference Planning Committees. She enjoys making NASAA's visual communication 'pretty' from agendas to newsletters.

She has a BBA in Accounting and an MPA from Georgia State University. In her free time, she is the emotional support human for her Chihuahua, Anya, and cat, Yasha. She also enjoys exploring the world with her amazing friends, including New Zealand, Peru, Thailand, India, Nepal, Europe, and Japan.

**Crystal Standifer**
NASAA Risk Based Survey/Supervisory Visit Special Committee Chair
South Carolina State Approving Agency

Crystal Standifer joined the South Carolina SAA as a Program Coordinator in December of 2021. Prior to joining the SAA, she served her country for 22 years in the United States Air Force as an Education and Training Manager. Her final active duty assignment was with the 388th Fighter Wing, Hill Air Force Base, Utah where she was the F-35 Maintenance Training Superintendent. She currently serves as Chair of the RBS Special Committee. She has a M.A. in Executive Leadership, B.A. in Management and two A.S degrees. She resides in South Carolina with her husband, an Air Force veteran, and is the mother of two adult sons.

**Cleophus D. Wallace**
Director, Louisiana State Approving Agency

Cleophus D. Wallace has worked as a professional in education resource and administration for over 38 years, including teaching, administration, and leadership positions with national and state organizations.

Cleophus is the Director of the Louisiana State Approving Agency (SAA) within the Louisiana Department of Veterans Affairs (LDVA) and holds a Masters of Education degree in Administration and Supervision from Southern University and additional studies at Louisiana State University, both located in Baton Rouge, Louisiana. He is a member of the National Association of State Approving Agencies (NASAA) and served as Regional Vice President of the South Region. He has over sixteen successful years as regional vice president.

The SAA facilitates efforts in safeguarding quality education and training programs for veterans or eligible persons, ensuring greater education and training opportunities, and protecting the integrity of the GI Bill®.

In his roles at LDVA and NASAA, Cleophus approaches his work with both a spirit of teaching and as a procedural tactician. He successfully applied his experience to lead the NASAA South Region in annual national business and training conferences.

Cleophus lives in Baton Rouge, Louisiana with his family and volunteers time in his church.

**Joseph Wescott, EdD (NC)**
NASAA Legislative Liaison

Joseph W. Wescott II (Joe) is the current Legislative Liaison for the National Association of State Approving Agencies (NASAA). Previously he also served as Legislative Liaison in the office of the Secretary of the North Carolina Department of Military and Veterans Affairs and is the National Higher Education Consultant for the American Legion. Previously, he served two terms on the Department of Veteran's Affairs (VA) Advisory Committee on Education and he has served as NASAA President, Vice President and Legislative Director. Wescott was Executive Director of the North Carolina State Approving Agency (NCSAA) for almost a decade, an agency he now supervises in his role as NCDMVA Legislative Liaison. Prior to his service at the NCSAA, Wescott served in various leadership roles in higher education including director of the office of Planning, Policy and Evaluation at Brunswick Community College, federal relations analyst/government relations

representative for Duke University and an adjunct instructor at several colleges and professional organizations. Dr. Wescott is a veteran, having served on active duty as a combat officer in the US Army. Earlier, he attended Wake Forest University on a four year Army ROTC scholarship, graduating with honors. He holds advanced degrees from Wake Forest University and North Carolina State University, including the doctorate in Higher Education Administration. In addition to other duties, Wescott serves as an Adjunct Professor in the Department of Leadership, Policy, Adult and Higher Education at NC State University. He serves on several national boards including the Council on College and Military Educators, the George W. Bush National Task Force on Higher Education and the Wake Forest National Alumni Council. Dr. Wescott has written several articles and books on history and higher education topics including veterans' employment and the history of the North Carolina Community College System. He has also coauthored two major reports released by the American Legion on online learning and education oversight. In 2010, Dr. Wescott was elected to the North Carolinian Society for service to his home state and in 2013 to the Honorable Order of Kentucky Colonels for service to the state of Kentucky.