



GAVEL

THE NEWSLETTER OF
THE STATE LEGISLATIVE LEADERS FOUNDATION

40 years

Education • Inspiration • Excellence

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EXECUTIVE EDUCATION

UCLAAnderson
School of Management

Keeping the American Dream Alive: Jobs, the Economy and Rebuilding America's Future

It wasn't that many years ago that a major U.S. corporation had a policy of not firing any employees. And it wasn't that long ago that most parents could reasonably expect that, with hard work, their children would be better off financially than they were. But now, three years into the worst economic downturn since the Great Depression, Americans are hurting and our expectations for the future have been downgraded along with the nation's credit rating. Though there have been recent positive indicators, unemployment remains high and economic growth anemic. The gap between the wealthy and everybody else is the highest it has been since the age of the Robber Barons.

For many Americans, the American Dream seems to be distant and unattainable.

There are numerous reasons for the faltering economy and disappearing middle class, but voters want answers, not excuses or blame or bickering. SLLF and the UCLA Anderson School of Management will deliver those answers during our 2012 Economic Summit, *The American Dream in the 21st Century: Jobs, the Economy and Moving Forward*, on **March 8 - 10**.

This critical program, at one of the country's leading business schools, will leap beyond political dogmas and simple, but often false, answers to take a hard and pragmatic look at economic policies and strategies for job creation. Led and facilitated by a faculty of premier economists and scholars from around the country, the program sessions will explore routes that states can take to get their economies back on track and help restore the American Dream for all Americans. Legislators will hear from their colleagues in leadership about initiatives and policies they are implementing in their states and communities. And we will consider how collaboration among the public and private sectors and the academic community can create jobs and rebuild optimism about our economy and our country.

Legislative Leaders and Advisory Council members can register on our website (www.sllf.org). See program announcements on our Facebook page. And join us in March in Los Angeles.

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The Oldest Democracy Meets the Largest Democracy SLLF Takes Delegation of Leaders and Educators to Education Conclave in India

In December, SLLF President Stephen G. Lakis and Vice President Marcia VanderVoort boarded an Air India flight along with twenty legislative leaders, more than a dozen university officials and a dozen or so members of the corporate community, and flew to India. The purpose was a high-profile education summit co-sponsored by SLLF, the Alliance of US India Business (AUSIB) and D.Y. Patel University in the cultural and educational center of Pune. The program was dedicated to opening the lines of communication and expanding cooperation between institutions of higher education in India and the United States.

India is the world's second most populous country and the world's largest democracy. Its population and its economy are both growing at rates much greater than those of the developed world. And yet India faces significant challenges as it tries to move into first world status. Its people suffer from some of the highest poverty and lowest literacy rates in the world. Its government struggles to overcome corruption and public mistrust. Its cities are bursting at the seams with people that they cannot employ, house or feed sufficiently, while India's rural areas (more than seventy percent of the country's population) are caught in perpetual cycles of subsistence farming using 19th century (or older) tools and technology.

However, visionary leaders like Dr. P.D. Patel, Chancellor of D.Y. Patel University and Dr. Vishwanath D. Karad, Founder and Executive President of the Maharashtra Institute of Technology, are determined to use higher education to help India overcome these daunting challenges. At present, less than one in six Indians has access to higher education. The goal is to increase that proportion to one in three (over thirty percent) within the next twenty years. To achieve this goal on its own, India would need to create 1,500 more universities and fifty thousand new community colleges and technical schools. The country already faces a profound shortage of qualified faculty which would only be exacerbated by such growth.

The answer to meeting the growing need without compromising quality may lie in virtual and real cross-national collaboration with established faculty and universities in the United States and around the world. This collaboration can take a variety of forms, including coordinated curriculums, satellite campuses, joint distance virtual classrooms, and collaborative faculty research. While such collaborations will not be easy, failure to work together could doom higher education in both countries.

"If education provides training that is not useful to society, it is of little value."

Dr. V. Prakash, Director of Research, Development and Innovation, JSS-MVP

"If we don't fix the education system, we will be adding mouths to feed without adding hands to work."

Dr. Narendra Jadhav, Planning Commission of India

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While we may assume that only India would benefit from such collaboration, Dr. Tyler Stovall of the University of California at Berkeley notes that such activities are increasingly significant for American universities as states continue to slash higher education budgets. Under the new paradigm, tuition, much of it provided by international students, is the primary source of higher education revenue. And there is also the collateral benefit to American students of being part of an international student body which will better prepare them for the diverse world that awaits them after graduation.

Higher education in the U.S., India, and the rest of the world is likely to be multinational, collaborative, interactive and high tech. As the earth gets flatter, it is critical that everyone, from rural farmlands to inner city tenements, have access to a quality higher education. This conference may well be a first step, albeit a small one, in that direction for India.



2012 LEADERSHIP FORUM
Restoring the People's Trust in Government

May 17-19, 2012
 Providence, RI

STATE LEGISLATIVE LEADERS FOUNDATION

BROWN

It's easy to blame government for whatever we are unhappy about. It's even easier when so many public figures are being investigated, arrested, indicted or convicted of some activity that betrays the public's trust. While the actual number of perpetrators is a very small percentage of public servants, these few erode trust in all public officials, a trust that is critical to effective representative democracy. Something must be done to rebuild that trust and restore public confidence in all legislators.

This May 17 - 19, SLLF and the faculty at Brown University will host a leadership summit on *Restoring the People's Trust in Government*. We aim to do our part to fix this crisis of public confidence in government and to assure that legislative leaders will be motivated to act in accordance with the noble goals and objectives that led them to seek public office in the first place.

Join us for a program that gets at the core of representative democracy and reinforces our belief that there is no better form of government. We expect legislative leaders to return to their states and their legislatures energized and inspired.

Watch for additional information about this vitally important program. If you have any suggestions or questions regarding the program, contact Dr. Thom Little at sllfthom@aol.com.



SLLF Welcomes New Directors

The State Legislative Leaders Foundation is pleased to announce three new members of the Board of Directors.

We would like to welcome to the Board **The Honorable W. Ken Martinez**, Majority Leader of the New Mexico House, **The Honorable Robert W. Nutting**, Speaker of the Maine House, and **The Honorable John A. Pérez**, Speaker of the California Assembly.

The Honorable P. Eric Turner, Speaker Pro Tempore of the Indiana House of Representatives, was selected to serve as the Vice Chairman of the Board.



Hon.
W. Ken
Martinez



Hon.
Robert W.
Nutting



Hon.
John A.
Pérez



Hon.
P. Eric
Turner

2011 Elections Bring Leadership Changes

Although only a few states held elections this fall, the consequences of those elections on legislative leadership were quite striking. While Democrats and Republicans held and solidified their majorities in New Jersey and Louisiana respectively, there were big changes in Mississippi and Virginia.

In Mississippi, Republicans gained a majority in the House and added two to their majority in the Senate, while also winning the governor's race. Republicans will have unified control of the Magnolia state for the first time since 1873. With the election of a new majority, Republicans in the House chose **Representative Phillip Gunn**, who is finishing his second term in the House, as its nominee to be Speaker. In the Virginia Senate, Republicans are poised to take control of the tied chamber, with Republican Lt. Governor Bill Bolling casting the vote to give total power to the Republicans for the first time since reconstruction. Republicans have chosen **Senator Tommy Norment** to serve as Majority Leader over the divided chamber. If elected to the post, he will replace Democrat Dick Saslaw.

In Arizona, Senate President Russell Pearce, who was recalled by the voters, will be replaced by **Senator Steve Pierce**. In Louisiana, the only state where the governor plays a significant public role in selecting legislative leaders, Governor Bobby Jindal has thrown his support behind **Representative Chuck Klecky** for Speaker of the House and **Senator John Alario** for President of the Senate. In Iowa, where Senate Democrats held onto a two-seat majority by winning a hard fought special election, **Senator Jerry Behn** will replace Senator Paul McKinley as Republican Leader.

SLLF Welcomes New Advisory Council Members

On the Advisory Council side, we proudly welcome the **Nuclear Energy Institute (NEI)**, the **Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation**, **McDonalds Corporation**, the **Mark Anthony Group**, the **National Beer Wholesalers Association**, **Amgen**, and the **Motion Picture Association of America**. Welcome aboard and we look forward to working with you for many years to come!





2011 HEALTH CARE SUMMIT

Unusual Suspects: Using Technology to Build Partnerships that Will Improve Health and Health Care in America



Prescribing Technology for What Ails America's Health Care System

When it comes to health care, we, as a nation, are not getting our money's worth. We spend much more on health care than any other industrialized nation and get less, on average, for that expense. Among developed nations, the US is at or near the bottom in infant mortality and life expectancy, and near or at the top when it comes to preventable deaths, obesity, diabetes and heart disease.

This past fall, SLLF and Johns Hopkins Medicine co-sponsored their first annual summit on health care called *Unusual Suspects: Using Technology to Build Partnerships that Will Improve Health and Health Care in America*. The program focused on what state leaders can do to encourage the growth and distribution of health information technologies that cut costs, maintain quality and expand access to health care.

Experts from Hopkins and elsewhere urged state policy-makers to encourage the application of proven communications technologies, the open access of secure patient data, and the expansion of technologies to develop better digital medical support, evaluation and treatment.

An additional highlight of the summit was the morning spent on wellness, wherein legislators and other participants learned important basics of living longer and healthier. They were introduced to techniques for minimizing stress, lowering blood pressure, and decreasing cholesterol levels. And they were given some important advice: get regular check ups, exercise, eat better, and spend more time outside. Small changes in lifestyle can have a significant impact on one's quality of life and longevity.

Our second annual health care oriented program in partnership with Johns Hopkins will take place on Sept. 13 - 15, 2012.

Visit our website to view program presentations and other information from this invaluable summit.

"I am so impressed by the quality of SLLF programs. They provide us access to extraordinary presenters who provide information that promotes great discussion on how to develop and then implement good public policy."

— Speaker Gordon Fox, Rhode Island

Congratulations to Roberta Duane - Celebrating 25 years with SLLF



Roberta has been a devoted and integral part of the Foundation's success and growth over the past two and a half decades. While she has been involved in one capacity or another with a wide range of SLLF activities - including editing the **Handbook of State Legislative Leaders** and the **National Speakers Directory** - you probably know her best as the driving force behind our always popular and enlightening Spouses Programs.

Be sure to send her your congratulations!

New Jersey Assemblyman and SLLF Board Member Alex DeCroce Dies in Statehouse



On Monday, January 10, 2012, the state of New Jersey lost an outstanding public servant and SLLF lost a good friend when **Assemblyman Alex DeCroce** died unexpectedly at the statehouse following the final vote of the legislative year. DeCroce, the Assembly Minority Leader, served in the Assembly for more than two decades. He was elected to the SLLF Board of Directors in December, 2010.

A mentor to New Jersey Governor Chris Christie, DeCroce was a longtime advocate for victim's rights, and a strong supporter for the pension reform bill that Christie signed into law last year. Noted one colleague, "Assemblyman DeCroce had many gifts. Perhaps the most compelling were his generosity, his compassion, and his good old-fashioned political instincts."

According to SLLF President Stephen G. Lakis, "We all lost a dear and valued friend. I will always remember Alex's winning smile and his dedication to the people of New Jersey. He loved being a legislator and always enjoyed the company of his colleagues from across the nation. Smart, honorable, engaged and sincere—the epitome of an exceptional public servant."

Assemblyman DeCroce leaves behind his wife, three children and three grandchildren. He will be sorely missed by all, but perhaps we can take some small comfort in the fact that he died as he lived, serving the people of the state that he loved.

GAVEL

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SLLF 2012 Calendar

March 8-10

Economic Summit

The American Dream in the 21st Century: Jobs, the Economy and Moving Forward

UCLA Anderson School of Management
Los Angeles, California

May 17-19

Leadership Forum

Restoring the People's Trust in Government

Brown University
Providence, Rhode Island

July 9-12

Emerging Leaders Program

Inspiring the Future Political Leaders of America

Darden School of Business, University of Virginia
Charlottesville, Virginia