USOA 2018 Annual Conference

OMBUDSMAN: BLAZING A TRAIL TO FAIRNESS

Portland, Oregon

Conference Host: Oregon Secretary of State Small Business Advocacy Conference Hotel: Marriott Courtyard Portland City Center

Pre-conference | September 24 and 25, 2018 Conference | September 26, 27 and 28, 2018



USDA DIRECTORS

President Robin K. Matsunaga Ombudsman Office of the Ombudsman State of Hawaii

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Membership Ruth Miles Small Business Ombudsman, Tribal Liaison Oregon Secretary of State

Outreach and Development Amy Calderwood Ombudsman King County Ombudsman's Office Greetings and welcome to Portland and the 39th Annual USOA Conference!

Oregon takes her western heritage seriously. Pioneers blazed a trail through an unknown and often treacherous wilderness to settle in the extraordinary place that is now called Oregon.

Like those pioneers, the evolution of the ombudsman practice has, in many ways, blazed a trail to more fairness in government, education, and the private sector.

We're thrilled that you're here and hope you enjoy the carefully curated conference sessions, presenters and speakers. This conference was strategically designed to stimulate new insights, challenge your thinking, and add value to your work.

Circling the wagons isn't just a historical practice; it can help you connect with an extremely valuable support system now and throughout your career. We encourage you to reach out to new faces to strengthen your USOA network.

In addition to the concurrent and plenary sessions, the conference will include an Opening Reception on Tuesday evening and a Networking Event on Thursday evening for conference attendees. These events are included in the full conference registration, so we look forward to seeing you there.

If you have questions or need assistance during the conference, don't hesitate to talk with us now or during the conference. If you'd like to explore Oregon while you're in town, <u>contact Ruth</u> or <u>her team</u> for help with arrangements.

Sincerely,

Robin K. Matsunaga President USOA Board of Directors 808-587-0770 robin.matsunaga@ombudsman.hawaii.gov

Kristie Hirschman Co-Chair Conference Planning Committee 515-281-3592 kristie.hirschman@legis.iowa.gov

Ruth Miles Conference Host and Co-Chair Conference Planning Committee 844-469-5512 or 503.871.3168 cell ruth.miles@oregon.gov

Pre-Conference

(separate registration/fees required)

:: New Ombudsman Training (2 day training) Breakfast, lunch, breaks and materials included Mon 8-5 and Tue 8-5

:: Unreasonable Complainant Conduct (1 day training, offered twice)

Breakfast, lunch, breaks and materials included Mon 8-5 *or* Tue 8-5

Full Conference

(all activities included in registration fee)

:: Opening Reception (included in conference registration) Tue 5:30-7:30 pm

Wednesday

- :: Conference Opening, 8:15 am
- :: Fundamentals of a Fair Investigation, 9:30 am
- :: Luncheon and Keynote, 12:00 pm
- :: A Tale of Two Reports, 1:30 pm
- :: How Not to Give Legal Advice, 1:30 pm
- :: Town Hall Meeting Supporting Fairness, 3:15 pm
- :: USOA Chapter Meetings, 3:15 pm
- :: IOI Meeting, 5:30 pm

Thursday

- :: Lessons from the Field, 8:15 am
- :: Communicating Transparency and Change, 8:15 am
- :: Advancing Racial Equity, 9:30 am
- :: Lunch and USOA Annual Meeting, 12:00 pm
- :: Expediting Fairness, 1:45 pm
- :: Navigating the Audit Trail, 3:30 pm
- :: Tell Us A Story, 3:30 pm
- :: Networking Event, 6:00 pm

Friday

- :: Communicating Effectively with People in Poverty, 9:00 am
- :: Conference Closing, 11:45 am

schedule at a glance



Early conference and pre-conference registration is highly recommended. Founded in 1972, the United States Ombudsman Association is the national organization for public sector ombudsman professionals. USOA is also North America's oldest national ombudsman association with members from ombudsman offices in local, state, and federal government, and affiliated ombudsman offices in the US and Canada. Under its bylaws, USOA is organized to function exclusively to support members, education, and charitable purposes.

USOA exists to help ombudsmen and ombudsman organizations improve their operation and services throughout the United States and Canada. Additionally, USOA focuses on education, training, prudent practices, and social means to promote as well as encourage the establishment of ombudsman offices at the state, local, national, and international levels.

about USOA



Ombudsman: Blazing a Trail to Fairness Pre-conference Options

May be Subject to Change

Pre-conference #1

Monday and Tuesday, September 24th and 25th (Two-day training) 8:00 am – 5:00 pm

New Ombudsman Training

This popular two-day workshop is designed for individuals who are relatively new to the role of government ombudsman.

Faculty includes general jurisdiction legislative ombudsmen and executive branch/agency-specific ombudsmen with more than 90 years of collective experience in their respective offices.

Participants will learn about the origin, characteristics, and standards of an ombudsman office. Instructors will discuss basic intake, interviewing and investigation techniques, report writing, and will present a case study to enable participants to apply knowledge to practice.

The workshop will examine the role of the ombudsman in promoting an ethical climate in our organizations as well as review ethical challenges an ombudsman may face.

Participants will also have the opportunity to discuss best practices, time saving tips, and tools of the trade with this group of experienced, seasoned ombudsmen.

Instructors:

Kristie Hirschman – Ombudsman, Iowa Office of Ombudsman

Linda Lord-Jenkins – Retired Ombudsman, State of Alaska Robin K. Matsunaga – Ombudsman, State of Hawaii Gerald R. Papica – Ombudsman Program Director, TN Commission on Children and Youth

Pre-conference #2

<u>Monday, September 24th OR Tuesday,</u> <u>September 25th</u> <u>8:00 am - 5:00 pm</u> <u>This is a one-day workshop. Attendance is capped at</u> <u>40 each day so register early!</u>

Dealing with Unreasonable Complainant Conduct

Unreasonable complainant conduct (UCC) can take up an inordinate amount of an agency's time and resources.

Participants will learn the strategies developed as part of a joint project by the nine Australian Parliamentary Ombudsman offices to deal with UCC.

This very popular and world-renowned one-day workshop will provide participants with specific strategies and skills to effectively and confidently deal with unreasonable complainant conduct.

It is designed for staff who come into contact with, or respond to, complainants or customers who display unreasonable conduct, as well as supervisors and senior management responsible for setting complaint handling policy. The workshop will also examine participant examples of unreasonable complainant conduct.

Participants will learn:

- Strategies for managing UCC;
- Key messages for complainants/clients/staff;
- Ways to support staff in implementing UCC strategies; and
- Staff health and safety considerations

Instructor:

Donald Sword – Educator and Advocate, New South Wales, Australia

Ombudsman: Blazing a Trail to Fairness

Detailed Conference Schedule

Tuesday, September 25th

5:30 pm – 7:30 pm Opening Reception - Courtyard Marriott, Portland City Center

Wednesday, September 26th

7:30 am – 5:00 pm	Registration
8:15 am – 9:15 am	Conference Opening and Welcome Remarks
9:15 am – 9:30 am	Break

9:30 am – 11:45 am Plenary Session 1 (Break 10:30 am – 10:45 am) Fundamentals of a Fair Investigation

This session will provide a roadmap to help participants determine whether their – or someone else's – investigation is fair and thorough. The session will cover how to maximize the chances that an Ombudsman investigation, big or small, will withstand scrutiny. Segments include:

- Fundamental investigative principles;
- Planning, including issue identification, and setting timelines;
- Interviewing, including preparing, conducting and recording an interview, assessing credibility, and dealing with vulnerable witnesses; and
- Dealing with documentary and digital evidence.

Presenter: Gareth Jones, Director, Special Ombudsman Response Team, Office of the Ombudsman of Ontario

11:45 am – 12:00 pm Break

12:00 pm – 1:15 pm Lunch & Keynote

Ombudsman Function: A Vital Independent Aspect of A Democratic System

Society is increasingly fast paced and complex. People often stand alone in relation to large institutions in society such as multiple levels of government as well as large corporate interests. Without access to a dispute resolution mechanism like an Ombudsman function, individuals find themselves in inequitable positions relative to such governments and corporations regarding life's vital issues.

Robert J. Martin, the former National Ombudsman of the United States Environmental Protection Agency in Washington DC, will review his experience under three different Presidential Administrations from 1992 to 2002 of addressing protection of the health and environment in the United States. A properly structured Ombudsman can level the playing field between individuals and their government. The sine qua non of an influential Ombudsman function that helps the public is independence. Independence of the function properly serves, together with a representative legislature and a strong press, to equalize the inequitable position individuals often find themselves in relative to their own governments and large corporate type interests. **Speaker:** *Robert Martin, CEO and Founder of Tartoosh LLC and former National Ombudsman for the United States Environmental Protection Agency*

1:15 pm – 1:30 pm Break

Detailed Conference Schedule, *continued*

1:30 pm – 3:00 pm Concurrent Session 1/A

Perseverance, Persuasion and Leveraging the Power of the Press: A Tale of Two Reports

This session is a case study in perseverance and persuasion and will offer practical advice on leveraging the power of the press. The Portland Ombudsman issued two critical public reports revealing serious problems with the City's 911 system. The first report generated significant public interest and media coverage; however, the agency remained resistant to the Ombudsman's recommendations and sought to discredit the Ombudsman's findings. The second report generated even more public interest and media coverage, and was positively received by City leadership. City leaders publicly acknowledged the validity of the findings and adopted an action plan to begin addressing the concerns raised in the reports. This session will discuss the origin, progress, and results of the investigation into the 911 system. It will illustrate how doggedness, creativity, and a carefully planned media strategy can overcome bureaucratic resistance and result in meaningful change. **Presenters:** *Margie Sollinger, Ombudsman, City of Portland and Tony Green, Deputy Ombudsman, City of Portland*

1:30 pm – 3:00 pm Concurrent Session 1/B

How Not to Give Legal Advice

It's inevitable that you'll get legal questions, regardless of your specific area of practice. Those questions are often easy to identify. But how do you keep yourself from straying into giving legal advice? Where do you draw the line? Amanda Caffall will shine a light on the juncture between providing objective assistance as an ombudsman and giving legal advice. Attendees will learn what legal advice is, how to avoid giving it, and when to appropriately refer to qualified counsel.

Presenter: Amanda Caffall, Founding Executive Director and Staff Attorney, The Commons Law Center

3:00 pm – 3:15 pm Break

3:15 pm – 5:00 pm Concurrent Session 2/A

USOA Chapter Meetings

USOA members have different areas of authority, interest, and expertise in their jobs. For this reason, a number of specialized chapters are organized within USOA to share experiences, resources, accomplishments and to problem-solve. This time also allows chapter members to develop a plan of action for the upcoming year. You do not have to be a chapter member to attend any of these meetings.

- Children and Families
- Public Safety
- Education

- Federal
- Healthcare
- Municipal

3:15 pm – 5:00 pm Concurrent Session 2/B

Town Hall Meeting – Supporting Fairness

Ombudsmen are particularly dependent upon our colleagues for their support, wisdom and experience. USOA provides the infrastructure and contacts to assist individuals and offices to make these connections. If you're new to the organization or always wanted to better understand how it works, this session is for you. USOA's President, Robin Matsunaga, will lead a panel of Board members in discussion and field questions about USOA, its history, mission, and opportunities for member involvement, as well as answer questions regarding topics of interest to attendees.

5:30 pm – 6:30 pm International Ombudsman Institute Meeting

Detailed Conference Schedule, continued

Thursday, September 27th

8:15 am – 9:15 am Concurrent Session 3/A

Starting an Ombudsman Office: Lessons from the Field

Starting a new ombudsman office and maturing the program can be more like a game of chutes and ladders than a carefully executed plan to make government more responsive. Trying to find that perfect case management system, hire staff, create a website, report effectively or fight off an attack to your independence? Don't reinvent the wheel. Hear from veterans and newbies on strategies to start and grow an office. **Moderator:** *Linda Lord-Jenkins, Retired Ombudsman, State of Alaska*

Panelists: Michael Mills, Project Manager, Oregon Solutions, National Policy Consensus Center. Hatfield School of Government, Portland State University

Ruth Miles, Tribal Liaison and Small Business Advocate, Oregon Secretary of State Traci Shinabarger, Chief Child and Family Ombudsman, State of Montana

8:15 am – 9:15 am Concurrent Session 3/B

Communicating Transparency and Change

In an effort to increase transparency, the Office of Colorado's Child Protection Ombudsman (CPO) launched a new website in July 2017. The website allows the public the opportunity to access and interact with the CPO's casework directly. Session participants will learn how to incorporate transparency and communication initiatives into their strategic planning to engage citizens and stakeholders in the ombudsman process. In addition, participants will learn how to effectively synthesize investigations and findings into relatable materials and how to most affectively present information on different platforms – including websites, media coverage and social media – for improved outreach and effective reporting.

Presenters: Stephanie Villafuerte, Ombudsman, Office of Colorado's Child Protection Ombudsman Jordan Steffen, Communications and Policy Director, Office of Colorado's Child Protection Ombudsman

9:15 am – 9:30 am Break

9:30 am – 11:45 am Plenary Session 2 (Break 10:30 am – 10:45 am) Advancing Racial Equity: The Role of a Government Ombudsman

This interactive session will introduce racial equity and the historic role of government in creating inequities based on race; and, focusing on structural and institutional racism, discuss how ombudsman can advance racial equity. Participants will learn how to communicate about racial equity and how to use a racial equity lens. **Presenter:** *Amalia Alarcón Morris, Government Alliance on Race & Equity, West Project Manager*

11:45 am – 12:00 pm Break

12:00 pm – 1:30 pm Lunch and USOA Annual Meeting and 2019 USOA Annual Conference Announcement

1:30 pm – 1:45 pm Break

1:45 pm – 3:15 pm Plenary Session 3

Expediting Fairness: Resolving Systemic Issues in a Timely Manner

The time gap between helping individual complainants and doing a full systemic investigation and report can be quite lengthy. The overall impact of helping individual complainants can also be limited. In July 2017, Canada's Taxpayers' Ombudsman introduced a new mechanism to resolve systemic issues, without having to proceed with a full systemic examination, called a Request for Service Improvement (RFSI). The presenter will showcase several examples of RFSIs that she carried out over the past year. Through the presentation, attendees will learn about the new process and its benefits, and determine how to identify issues that may be good candidates for this process.

Presenter: Sherra Profit, Taxpayers' Ombudsman, Canada Office of the Taxpayers' Ombudsman

3:30 pm – 5:00 pm Concurrent Session 4/A

Navigating the Audit Trail

Ombudsman offices exist to look into the inner workings of agencies when citizens complain about the agencies' mishandling of cases, unfairness, inefficiency, and delays. However, what happens when the ombudsman is subjected to the same scrutiny? The presenter will share her office's experience with a nine month audit of her office's operations by the Michigan Office of Auditor General. This session will focus on the benefits of being audited, what the process itself can teach an ombudsman office, and how those who do not understand the ombudsman's unique role come to view our office.

Presenter: Orlene Hawks, Ombudsman, Michigan Office of the Children's Ombudsman

3:30 pm – 5:00 pm Concurrent Session 4/B

Tell Us a Story

The art of inquiry involves collecting facts, documenting events, and marshalling evidence. When finished, we usually put what we've found into a report. Reports are often weighty and earnest—but they can also be dense and dull. Most of all, reports can fail to have the impact we hope for because we often fail to truly engage the reader. Why? As renowned writing teacher Roy Peter Clark puts it, "Reports convey information. Stories create experience." Stories bring situations to life, hold readers' attention, and introduce more humanity to your writing. This session will illustrate five time-tested storytelling methods you can use every day to merge the integrity of a report and the power of narrative together — all with an eye to telling an unforgettable story that makes a difference.

Presenter: Brent Walth, Assistant Professor, University of Oregon School of Journalism and Communication

6:00 pm – 9:00 pm Networking Event Plaza del Toro, 105 SE Taylor St, Portland, OR 97214

Friday, September 28th

(Note later start time)

9:00 am – 11:45 am Plenary Session 4 (Break 10:30 am – 10:45 am) Communicating Effectively with People Living in Poverty

Understanding the realities of poverty is essential to helping people gain access to the government services they need. Society's depiction of people living in poverty perpetuates myths and stereotypes that are difficult to overcome. Ombudsman's offices can lend crucial assistance to impoverished people struggling to find fairness from the system. Lynda Coates provides an invaluable perspective as an insider who was able to move out of generational poverty. Communicating effectively with people living in poverty requires understanding how economic conditions shape access to opportunities, motivation, and hope. In this presentation, Lynda shatters the myths of poverty in America and offers strategies and solutions for better connecting, communicating, and helping people in need.

Presenter: Lynda Coates, Gold Star Speaker with Communication Across Barriers

11:45 am – 12:00 pm Conference Closing

Conference attendance certificates will be emailed to attendees.

REGISTRATION FEES INFORMATION Online registration at <u>usombudsman.org</u>

There are three separate registration options:

1. Full Conference, 2. Pre-Conference (three options), 3. Guest Reception & Banquet Tickets Please take note of the cancellation policy on page 13

Contact <u>usoa@assocserv.com</u> for information on group rates and registration assistance.

FULL CONFERENCE REGISTRATION

Full Conference Registration Fees September 26, 27 and 28, 2018 Includes the Tuesday evening reception, Wednesday and Thursday breakfast, lunch, and breaks, Thursday networking event and a break on Friday morning.		
	On or before September 3	After September 3
Member	\$475	\$525
Non-Member \$600		\$650
Student*	\$400	\$400

*Proof of full-time enrollment is required.

Registrants may register to receive conference materials in a binder, on a flash drive or as part of the event app. We cannot guarantee availability of binders for registrations made after September 3.

Single-Day Conference Registration Fees September 26 or 27, 2018 Single day registrations for Wednesday and/or Thursday – includes breakfast, lunch, and breaks.		
	On or before September 3	After September 3
Member	\$225/day	\$250/day
Non-Member	\$250/day	\$275/day

Single-Day Conference Registration Fees September 28, 2018 Single-day registration for Friday – includes breakfast and morning break.			
On or before September 3 After September		After September 3	
Member	\$100	\$125	
Non-Member	\$125	\$150	

PRE-CONFERENCE REGISTRATION

Pre-Conference #1

Pre- Conference Registration Fees "New Ombudsman Training" September 24 <i>and</i> 25, 2018 (two-day training)			
The pre-conference registration fee – includes breakfast, lunch and breaks on Monday and Tuesday.On or before September 3After September 3			
Member	\$375	\$425	
Non-Member	\$475	\$525	
Student*	\$350	\$350	

*Proof of full-time enrollment is required.

Pre- Conference Fees #2

Pre-Conference Registration Fees "Dealing with Unreasonable Complainant Conduct" September 24 or September 25, 2018 This is a one-day workshop. Attendance is capped at 40 each day so register early! The pre-conference registration fee – includes breakfast, lunch, and breaks.			
On or before September 3 After September 3		After September 3	
Member	\$275	\$325	
Non-Member	\$325	\$375	

Reception and Banquet Fees for SINGLE-DAY REGISTRANTS AND/OR GUESTS

Reception and Banquet Tickets		
Opening Reception - Tuesday Evening, September 25	\$25	
Networking Event - Thursday Evening, September 27	\$60	

General Information

Dress/Attire

The dress/attire for the conference is business casual.

Hotel Accommodation Courtyard Marriott Portland City Center 550 SW Oak Street Portland, Oregon 97204 Hotel Number: 503-505-5000 Hotel Reservations (reference USOA 2018 Annual Conference room block): 800-606-3717 Courtyard Marriott Portland City Center

Hotel Reservation Link

Book your group rate for USOA 2018 Annual Conference

The negotiated group rates pre-tax are as follows:

Room	Single Rate	Double Rate
Standard King	\$179	\$179
Double Queen	\$199	\$199

Hotel room rates are subject to applicable state and local taxes, currently 13.3% and a 2% Tourism Improvement District Assessment fee.

Please book directly with the hotel no later than Monday, September 3. This is the cut-off date for the USOA room block. After the cut-off date, the hotel will release unused rooms to the public. All reservations received after September 3 will be accepted on a space availability basis only, *at the best available rate.*

PLEASE NOTE – if you are booking rooms before September 21 or after September 29, you should call the hotel to book the room nights outside of the block period to get the negotiated rate. Group rate may be given, based on availability.

AIRPORT & GROUND TRANSPORTATION

Find comprehensive information on transportation options from PDX online.

Additional options include MAX light rail (from airport to within a block of the hotel) and two popular ride-sharing services, <u>Uber</u> and <u>Lyft</u>.

Points of Interest & Nearby Attractions

- Want an outdoor experience? <u>Kayak, canoe or rent a SUP Board</u> and hit the Willamette River for some fun in the sun.
- Go ride a bike, run or walk the beautiful, riverfront Eastbank Esplanade.
- Explore <u>Washington Park's</u> forest trails, museums and gardens.
- <u>Multnomah Falls</u> and the <u>Columbia Gorge National Scenic Area</u> are an incredible day trip. Rent a car or ride the <u>Columbia Gorge Express</u>.
- Oregon is famous for pinot noir, but you'll find incredible varietals that come from all over the world. Rent a car for the day or consider <u>booking a day tour</u>. <u>Wine flies free</u> on Alaska Airlines, but only for mileage club members.
- There are <u>11 craft distilleries</u> within a <u>bike ride</u> of the conference hotel. Find <u>breweries</u> and <u>cideries</u> nearby, as well.
- Can't get enough of Oregon and need to bring something home? Try <u>MadeHere PDX</u>, <u>Portland Leather Goods</u>, or look for a variety of local goods <u>here</u>. From skin care to brownie mix made with crickets (it's a thing), we've got you covered.
- Food carts are a huge thing. Want to try the latest and greatest? <u>Take a tour with Portland's resident expert</u>.

Conference Reservation Cancellation & Refund Policy

Notice of cancellation must be made in writing. Cancellation by telephone will not be accepted. Notice of cancellation may be e-mailed to <u>usoa@assocserv.com</u>. If you cancel your reservation, we encourage you to send a substitute to take your place. Please contact the USOA Business Office @ <u>usoa@assocserv.com</u> of any changes so we can arrange for a correct name badge and certificate.

If you cannot find a replacement, the following cancellation policy will apply:

Cancellation on or before August 15 Cancellation from August 15 to September 7 Cancellation after September 7 100% refund, less \$25 cancellation fee 50% refund, less \$25 cancellation fee No refund

USOA reserves the right to change programs and conference offerings at any time as warranted and without prior notice

A note about marijuana...

Oregon has legalized the use and sale of marijuana for medical marijuana card holders and for limited recreational use (smoking in public is illegal). The US Government still considers marijuana to be a Schedule 1 drug and illegal to grow, possess, sell, or imbibe. The conference hotel has a smoke-free policy. If your travel is paid for by your employer, they may have policies in place regarding the use of recreational drugs at work or while traveling for work.

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QUESTIONS?

E-mail ruth.miles@oregon.gov or kristie.hirschman@legis.iowa.gov