



NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF CONFIDENTIAL ADDRESS PROGRAMS

*Our mission is to strengthen, collaborate, and represent the interests of state confidential address programs from across the nation.*

## MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT – DIANNA UMIDON

“Diversity is about all of us, and about us having to figure out how to walk through this world together.”

- Jacqueline Woodson

NACAP Members,

As I mentioned at the annual conference, there is no model ACP and there probably never will be.

To some that may seem like an unusual statement. But, it's a true one nonetheless. Why? Because every state's laws are different. Every state's needs are different. And, every address confidentiality program, if it is operating effectively, accommodates the needs of its service population in the manner consistent with that state's government and with the resources available to it. There is no one-size-fits-all. The importance of understanding this fundamental notion cannot be overlooked. In fact, our Bylaws were recently modified to include principles that encompass this very idea.

That being said, we formed this association with a desire to come together in thought about some important ACP topics that affect us all - some ACP basics, if you will. We will never agree about every aspect of service delivery our ACPs provide. Each state is autonomous. We will never completely mirror each other. That is simply an impossibility. We can, however, determine some best practices together - sound ideas of what an ACP should and should not look like.

The question is, how do we reconcile the understanding that there is no model ACP with the desire to determine best practices?

Broken down, a best practice pertains to one aspect, one piece - not the whole. It is one small piece of a much bigger picture. Although there will never be a model ACP, there will be ACPs that utilize best practices in their service delivery. Some states will utilize more than others. It's up to the state to decide what is best for them. In doing so, the uniqueness of the state program will not be lost. The diversity among us will remain, but we will have decided as a group what some basic fundamentals are so that when others take a quick glimpse into our world in an attempt to understand it they will see a thread of consistency. So in essence, best practices are pieces of a model ACP and pieces are the most we can ever expect. Any more than that, we lose our individual identity. Any less, as a group we lack definition and credibility.

During the next year we will begin to define best practices. I encourage you to become engaged in this important process. Expect to hear more about this in the very near future!

Kind regards,

Dianna Umidon

## Second Annual NACAP Conference a Success!



*Strategies for Success* was an appropriate name for the second annual NACAP Conference held in Virginia Beach, September 25-27, 2017. Thirty three attendees and presenters took part, and 22 states were represented. Two states that are not members of NACAP sent participants to the conference to learn more about it!

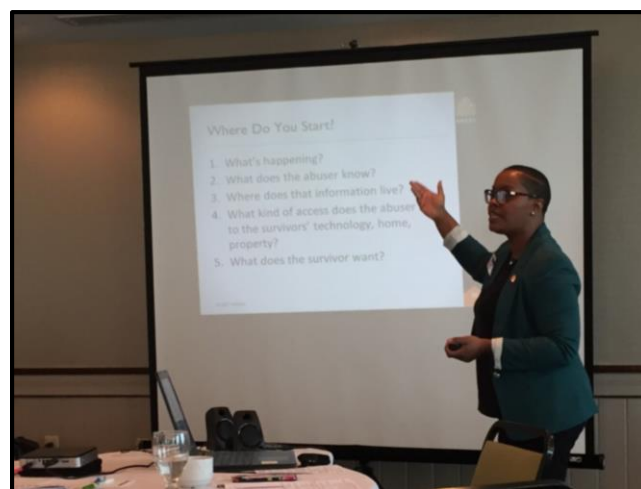
A welcome and networking event was held on-site early Sunday evening allowing attendees travelling from all over the country to meet and greet each other, just as tropical storm Maria began to generate red-flag surf outside the beachfront venue.

Opening the conference, Cynthia Hudson, Chief Deputy Attorney General of Virginia, reminded us that by the time people are enrolled in our state ACP programs, they are on the “other side” of their trauma and are starting a new beginning that we should protect at all costs legally.



Cynthia Hudson delivers opening remarks.

A lively keynote titled *Intimate Partner Violence in a Digital Age*, was presented by Audace Garnett, Technology Safety Specialist at the National Network to End Domestic Violence, Safety Net. She reminded us that it is not realistic to expect survivors to manage their lives without the aid of technology. Ms. Garnett informed us of stealth tactics abusers use to continue to stalk and terrorize survivors during and after their escape and suggested safe work-arounds and ways to spot suspected hacking. For resources, visit [nnedv.org/content/safety-net](http://nnedv.org/content/safety-net).



Keynote Speaker Audace Garnett.

A second keynote was presented by DeVon Simmons, Re-entry Coordinator for the Virginia Office of the Attorney General. Mr. Simmons pointed out that there are strategic steps required to reach our goals and checking each one off our list is a means to get there. Remember, all you have to do is make toast!

Tuesday's opening keynote, *Exploring Opportunities for Enhancing Address Confidentiality Programs*, was delivered by James D. Wilson, Director of Addressing & Geospatial Technology for the United States Postal Service. Mr. Wilson answered our questions regarding confidentiality of Change of Address records at USPS and suggested solutions and offered to work with NACAP to craft policy that will help protect the addresses of ACP participants.



Keynote Speaker James D. Wilson.

The day wrapped up with a keynote by Matthew Benson, Director of Veridus LLC titled, *Be Heard: Strategies to Control the Message & Manage the Media During a Crisis*. Mr. Benson offered current examples of PR catastrophes and used them as lessons of how we could manage difficult situations within our programs.

Breakout sessions on Monday and Tuesday included: *ACP 101, Retention Schedule – Is it Time, Walking the Tightrope of Staff Hiring, Connecting Through Newsletters, Data Collection, Lessons Learned about Databases and IT Support, Strategies for Mail Processing, Grant Writing 101, Ask a Mail Carrier, and Home Purchases & Confidentiality.*



Mail Processing exercise in *Strategies for Mail Processing* session.

The final day focused on how best to sustain NACAP. Shannon Freeman, Program Coordinator for the Virginia Office of the Attorney General led us through exercises designed to assist us in identifying ways to promote and grow the association and benefit member states.

The Membership Meeting followed and included President Dianna Umidon reviewing the Annual Report, board elections, and closing remarks. The conference offered many areas for professional enrichment in this unique field, forward movement in policy direction for NACAP, and most importantly, the opportunity to connect with others who understand the complexities of this work and can offer assistance and collaboration with these unique issues – a Strategy for Success!

## Election Results

Per NACAP Bylaws, Officers and At-Large Members shall be elected at the fall annual conference by the members of the Association. This year, Dianna Umidon (MN) was elected President, Colleen Overton (WA) was elected Secretary, and Nicole Ladner (ME) was elected as an At-Large Member. All terms are for two years from the date of election. The Board would like to thank the Elections Committee for collecting nominations, dispersing election information, and managing the ballots. The 2017 Election Committee members were Emma Craig (MD), Melanie Poole (OH), and Brenda Sites (MO). The Board would also like to extend special thanks to Melissa McMenemy (VA) who ended her term as Secretary.

## Committee Updates

### **Bylaws & Membership Committee**

#### *Dianna Umidon - Chair*

This committee of four continues to meet via teleconference every other Friday and has accomplished quite a bit over the past several months. Committee members worked to modify the bylaws, passing along final suggestions to the Board for approval in July. Outreach to past members and nonmember states continues to be a work in progress, as well. There is more work to do on this committee. Please think about joining the team!

## Stakeholder Solutions Committee

Jackie Cash – Chair

On July 26, 2017, the Stakeholder Solutions committee met with the Department of State, Bureau of Consular Affairs, regarding the use of designated substitute addresses on passport applications as a “permanent address.” During this meeting, the Department of State verbally clarified that using a designated substitute address (including those states that use PO Boxes as a substitute address) is allowable as a permanent address on a passport application. The Department of State explained their obligation to vet passport applicants and a potential ACP solution was discussed. In preparing for a solution, the committee asked member states for information about confirming program participation. On September 21st the committee sent a letter to the Department of State, requesting a written response and outlining the proposed solution. We received an immediate response stating that they will prepare a written confirmation, which will be shared with NACAP membership.

## Member Update

### Ashcroft Celebrates 10 Years of Safe at Home Address Confidentiality Program

August 28 marked the 10th anniversary of Missouri’s Safe at Home address confidentiality program. Secretary of State Jay Ashcroft invited program application assistants from across the state and a former program participant to join him in commemorating the program and sharing their experiences with the program over the last decade.



Pictured are Carol Cromer (former Safe at Home participant), Brenda Sites (Program Manager), and Secretary Ashcroft. (Photo courtesy of the office of the Missouri Secretary of State)

“Participants in this program have often had their lives uprooted by fear, and Safe at Home is here to help protect them from the threats they face every day,” Ashcroft said. “For 10 years, this office has worked to protect every single participant, and we will continue to provide those safeguards to reduce the potential for further abuse.”

If your state organization would like to be included in this section in the future, please send a detailed email to [info@nacap.org](mailto:info@nacap.org). We appreciate your contribution!

## Been There, Done That

*This column highlights program process questions submitted to NACAP and summarizes the answers provided by member states in an effort to share best practices and service delivery possibilities. If you would like to know how other states have handled a certain issue, please submit your question to [info@nacap.org](mailto:info@nacap.org).*

Brenda Sites, Safe at Home Program Manager (MO) sent in the following question:

*“When we receive service of process by mail or in person for a participant in Missouri, our rules say we are supposed to forward it by certified mail to the participant. In Missouri, the definition of certified mail ‘includes certified mail carried by the United States Postal Service, or any parcel or letter carried by an overnight, express, or ground delivery service that allows a sender or recipient to electronically track its location and provides record of the signature of the recipient.’*

*Do you have any procedures that require mail to be sent certified and require a signature? If so, how do you send it and how do you get confirmation?”*

The question here is not how the service of process itself is handled, rather if other states have any requirement to send mail to participants by certified mail or mail that requires the participant’s signature. For states that are required to use certified mail, the question is, how is that accomplished so that the participant’s real address continues to be protected?

Of the responses received, only Iowa is required to forward service of process by certified mail.

Massachusetts forwards one of two required copies of service to the participant by overnight mail.

Colorado, Maine, Minnesota, and Oregon have no requirement to use certified mail for forwarding purposes.

Washington has internal program procedures outlining the process for sending a certified letter to a participant, but has not used it recently.

No state mentioned any recommendations for receiving delivery confirmation without connecting a participant's signature with their actual address.

If you have suggestions for managing this issue, please send them to Brenda at [brenda.sites@sos.mo.gov](mailto:brenda.sites@sos.mo.gov) and consider sharing with the group. We can all learn from each other!

## Safe at Home Act Introduced

Address confidentiality program (ACP) participants may soon have the opportunity to use the substitute address designated by their state program with federal government agencies and federal courts. Earlier this year, the Missouri Safe at Home program participants were put at risk by a judge's ruling that required a participant to release her address. As the program evaluated ways to strengthen and increase protection for participants, Missouri Secretary of State Jay Ashcroft resolved that participants should have the ability to use the substitute address not only at the state level, but also with federal agencies and courts. In July, Secretary Ashcroft and Minnesota Secretary of State Steve Simon introduced a resolution at the National Association of Secretaries of State (NASS) Conference that called upon the federal government to recognize state address confidentiality programs. The resolution passed unanimously.

Both secretaries of state have continued to seek support for legislation requiring federal agencies and courts to accept the substitute address of ACP participants, at the same time, allowing programs to maintain their autonomy and current confidentiality procedures while expanding each program's protections.

U.S. Senator Roy Blunt and U.S. Representative Jason Smith drafted language with two primary goals:

1. All federal government agencies and the courts must accept the substitute address of a participant in a state-sponsored address confidentiality program in place of a participant's home, work or school address.
2. If a federal agency or court has a need for a participant's confidential address, they would be required to request that information directly from the state program by following any procedures that state has set forth for releasing participant information.

Bills were introduced in the U.S. Senate and U.S. House of Representatives on September 28<sup>th</sup>. [S. 1889](#) was sponsored by Sen. Roy Blunt (MO), Sen. Amy Klobuchar (MN), Sen. Shelley Moore Capito (WV), Sen. Claire McCaskill (MO), Sen. John Cornyn (TX), Sen. Richard Blumenthal (CT) and Sen. Margaret Wood Hassan (NH). [H.R. 3887](#) was sponsored by Rep. Jason Smith (MO), Rep. Kyrsten Sinema (AZ), Rep. Vicky Hartzler (MO), and Rep. Joseph P. Kennedy III (MA).

The NACAP Board reviewed the bill draft and identified some recommended modifications that can be addressed during the legislative process. Overall, NACAP is supportive of the initiative and believes it will make our member programs more effective. NACAP will continue to keep members apprised of future action on the bill. Members are also encouraged to review the bill and to give NACAP any feedback you may have.

## Suggestion Box

The Communications Committee would like to hear from you! If you have any comments, questions, or suggestions for the next newsletter, be sure to drop us a line at [info@nacap.org](mailto:info@nacap.org).

Melissa McMenemy (VA), Chair  
 Kim Reynolds (CO)  
 Melanie Shellenberger (IA)  
 Corey Ann Howard Jackson (KY)  
 Nicole Ladner (ME)  
 Brenda Sites (MO)  
 Melanie Poole (OH)