

# State & Local Government



# Benefits Association

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## “State’s On-Line Benefits Enrollment System Exceeds Expectations”

by  
Phil Kraft, Employees Benefits Council,  
Oklahoma

In what some state employees are calling “the best year ever for on-line benefits enrollment,” the option period for Plan Year 2005 has proven successful for the State’s new on-line benefits enrollment system. This is the second year the Employees Benefits Council has made the on-line system available to more than 35,500 active state employees. As the benefits office for state employees, the Employees Benefits Council completed the 2005 option period during the last week of October with 40 percent (14,197) of statewide employees choosing their benefits on-line. The benefits system was first made available to employees during last year’s enrollment period with only 13.5 percent (4,752) of employees enrolling on-line.

The benefits system is fully customized with built in eligibility rules and IRS regulations pertinent to the numerous plans offered in the State’s flexible benefits program known as *SoonerChoices*. It is one of the most comprehensive public sector benefits systems of its kind in the nation. It is estimated the new system will save the State hundreds of thousands of dollars annually by improved efficiencies to users including over 200 statewide benefit coordinators, carriers, agency staff and active state employees. During the Quality Oklahoma Team Day awards ceremony held at the State Capitol Building in

May 2003, the benefits system earned the Quality Oklahoma Red Tape Reduction Award and also a Governor’s Commendation.

Commenting on the 2005 enrollment period, Mr. Mitch Parsons, Executive Director of the Employees Benefits Council said, “There are several reasons this year’s option period on-line enrollment was so successful. First, a more aggressive communication effort about the on-line enrollment option was made by the Employees Benefits Council this year. This effort included automatically issuing every state employee an on-line enrollment identification, password and an instructional pamphlet as part of their individualized enrollment packet. Second, more state agencies realized the advantages of this method of enrolling employees and embraced it more enthusiastically than last year. Finally, word spread among employees about this new and easy method of enrollment. This is evidenced by a survey conducted by the Employees Benefits Council as part of the enrollment process. Ninety-eight percent of employees completing the survey said they would recommend the on-line enrollment to other employees and 92 percent rated their overall experience as ‘Good’ or ‘Very Good.’ I couldn’t be prouder.”

The system uses state-of-the-art technology to provide a user friendly environment, a convenient method to access benefits related information, faster online data entry, more effective interface with other state agencies and contracted health carriers, and far superior accounting and reporting capabilities. Employees appreciate the advantages of using the on-line benefits enrollment system. It allows the employee to view, select, calculate differences between various plans, enroll and change their benefits twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week during the option period by using a web browser.



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# The President's Letter

The holiday season is here and for some that also means open enrollment and/or the beginning of a new fiscal year. For SALGBA, this is a busy time of year as well. The Board of Directors recently met in Scottsdale, AZ, the site of our 2005 annual conference. A full agenda of committee and chapter activities were discussed, including member services and conference planning.

SALGBA will soon be launching an intensive marketing campaign to increase the awareness and recognition of SALGBA as **the association for public entity employee benefit professionals**. To meet that goal, the Member Service Committee is working with a marketing consultant to assist in developing this campaign. It will include a membership drive with an incentive plan to recognize jurisdictional and associate SALGBA members who recruit new members into our association. The incentive plan will be introduced in our next newsletter..so stay tuned.

The Board and the Conference Committee are busy planning for the 2005 annual conference to be held April 24-27 in Scottsdale. You can learn the latest information on hot topics, tools and techniques for your benefit plans from each morning's keynote speaker and in breakout sessions throughout the day. Sessions will address prescription drugs, legislation, GASB, wellness programs, retirement plan issues, health care innovations and management. The conference hotel, Scottsdale Plaza Resort, offers convenient meeting space plus a variety of amenities for your use: five swimming pools, racquet ball court, tennis court, a health spa, and Arizona's largest outdoor Jacuzzi. A shopping center and several restaurants are within walking distance. Scottsdale is a wonderful destination offering the Sonora Desert, predictable sunshine, award-winning dining, art and shopping districts, and 200 of the world's finest golf courses. Plan now to come learn and rejuvenate you and your benefit plans! You can register on line at [www.salgba.com](http://www.salgba.com).

Thank you for your continued support and participation in SALGBA. The Board of Directors and I wish you a safe and happy holiday season.



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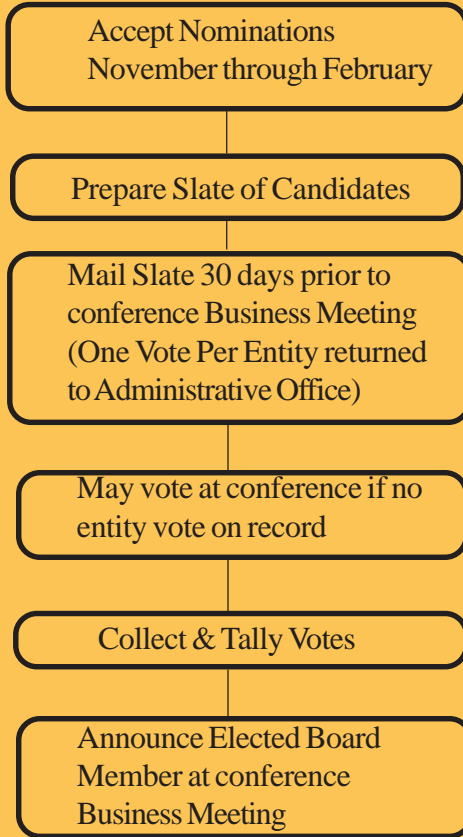
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## SALGBA Board Member At-Large Election Process



CGBA Applications will be mailed in December along with an updated version of the CGBA Guidelines.

### SPONSOR/EXHIBITOR 2005 PROSPECTUS

**Sponsor/Exhibitor Prospectus Forms will be mailed out in this month.**

## The State of Things

February 2005 issue will feature the

## Pacific Region



**Alaska**



**California**



**Oregon**



**Hawaii**



**Washington**

**2005 Conference Agenda, Scottsdale Arizona, April 24- 27**

**Sunday, April 24, 2005**

7:30 am - 4:00 pm	<b>Exhibits Open</b>	<i>Sunday Events</i> {Golf and Optional Tour(s)}
Noon - 6:00 pm		Registration Opens
5:00 pm - 6:00 pm		First Time Attendee Reception
6:00 pm - 8:30 pm		Opening Night Reception, Exhibits, and Networking

**Monday, April 25, 2005**


7:30 am - 8:15 am	<b>Exhibits Open</b>	Continental Breakfast in <b>Exhibit Hall</b> , Registration Opens		
8:15 am - 10:00 am		<i>Welcome &amp; Opening Session</i> , Cindy Kirk, SALGBA President Dr. Loren Scott, President, Loren C. Scott & Associates, Inc.		
10:00 am - 10:30 am		Break in <b>Exhibit Hall</b>		
10:30 am - 11:45 am		General Session <i>"Telemedicine an Innovative &amp; Practical Approach to Healthcare Delivery"</i>		
12:00 pm - 1:00 pm		Lunch Break		
1:00 pm - 2:00 pm		<i>"Pushing the Borders on Prescription Drug Purchasing"</i> Paul Strebe, Health Policy Analyst, State of Minnesota	<i>"Consumer Driven Health Plans: An Employers Perspective"</i> Steven Miller, City of Las Vegas, NV	<i>"Legislative Update"</i> Kathryn Bakich, The Segal Company
2:15 pm - 3:15 pm		<i>"Trends in State Government Employee Benefits"</i> Stanley Wisniewski, President Workplace Economics, Inc.	<i>"Tailored Health Behavior Change: Reaching Large Populations Cost Effectively"</i> Victor J Streicher, PhD University of Michigan, Health Media, Inc.	<i>"GASB"</i> Tom Vicente, Aon Consulting
3:15 pm - 3:45 pm		Break in <b>Exhibit Hall</b>		
3:45 pm - 5:00 pm		Roundtable <i>"Alternative Leave Plans"</i> Barbara Holthaus, Staff Attorney, Office of General Council, The University of Texas System	<i>"Health Awareness-In-house Clinics &amp; Wellness Programs"</i> Robby Neill, Garland, TX	<b>REPEAT SESSION:</b> <i>"Pushing the Borders on Prescription Drug Purchasing"</i> Paul Strebe, Health Policy Analyst, State of Minnesota

**TUESDAY, April 26, 2005**

7:30 am - 8:00 am	<b>Exhibits Open</b>	Continental Breakfast in <b>Exhibit Hall</b> , Registration Opens		
8:00 am - 9:15 am		Tuesday Keynote Session, Rob Epstein, M.D., Medco Health Solutions		
9:15 am - 9:45 am		Break in <b>Exhibit Hall</b>		
9:45 am - 10:45 am		<i>"Pharmacy Plan Design"</i> Sean Brandle, Segal Co.	<i>"Business Case for Wellness...A Case Study for the City of Indianapolis"</i> Colin Kebo, City of Indianapolis & Sally Stephens, President, Spectrum Health Systems	<i>"Reining in Healthcare Costs Through the Strategic Management of IT and Operations"</i> Dr. Jacob Kuriyan, President, Physmark, Inc.
11:00 am - 12:00 pm		<i>"Why Can't Government be Cutting Edge"</i> Richard Johnson, Segal Co.	<b>REPEAT SESSION</b> <i>"Consumer Driven Health Plans: An Employers Perspective"</i> Steven Miller, City of Las Vegas, NV	<i>"Fiduciary Responsibility for Retirement Plan Sponsors"</i> Marilyn R. Collister, National Director, Regulatory Policy, Great-West Retirement Services
12:00 pm - 1:15 pm		<i>Awards Luncheon</i>		
1:30 pm - 2:30 pm		<i>"Radiology: The Fastest Growing Cost in Healthcare"</i> Dr. Allen, Medsolutions	<i>"Cannonball Run"</i> Steve Schramm & Michelle Jaross with Mercer Health & Benefits, LLC; Susan Strickler, State of Arizona; Robin Orchard, Orchard Medical Consulting	<i>"Retirement Session"</i>
2:30 pm - 3:15 pm		Break & Door Prize Drawing in <b>Exhibit Hall</b> , (Must be Present to Win)		
3:30 pm - 4:30 pm		<i>"GASB 45 Preparing for the Valuation &amp; Financial Reporting"</i> Kevin Russell Mercer Health & Benefits LLC	Jurisdictional Meeting Topic: <i>"RFP Process"</i>	Associate Meeting Topic: <i>"ROI"</i>
6:00 pm		Evening Gala Event at the Corona Ranch, Roundtrip Transportation Provided		

**Wednesday, April 27, 2005**

8:15 am - 9:00 am	<i>Jurisdictional Members Breakfast &amp; Business Meeting</i> , (Grand Prize Drawing—Must be Present to Win)
9:15 am - 10:15 am	General Session <i>"Healthcare Research, Now &amp; Beyond the Horizon"</i>
10:30 am - 11:30 am	Wednesday Closing Keynote Session, Leslie Norwalk, CMS
11:30 am	ADJOURNMENT & FAREWELL, <b>WE WILL SEE YOU NEXT YEAR IN LOUISVILLE, KY—APRIL 28-MAY 2</b>



Go “Beyond the Horizon”  
with SALGBA  
at the  
2005 Conference  
in Scottsdale, Arizona

**Conference Dates**  
**April 24th- April 27th**

Salgba Room Rates: \$ 91

Scottsdale Plaza Resort  
[www.scottsdaleplaza.com](http://www.scottsdaleplaza.com)  
7200 N. Scottsdale Road  
Scottsdale, Arizona 85253  
Phone: 480-948-5000

*You must call for reservations at the group rate!*

More Information to Follow...  
Look in the February Newsletter and on the Website for more  
information on the SALGBA 2005 Conference



## New Members

### **Health Media, Inc.**

David Gregorka, Vice President

Email: [dgregorka@healthmedia.com](mailto:dgregorka@healthmedia.com)

Ted Dacko, CEO

Email: [tdacko@healthmedia.com](mailto:tdacko@healthmedia.com)

Sarah Stephens-Winnay, Director, Marketing

Email: [sswinnay@healthmedia.com](mailto:sswinnay@healthmedia.com)

130 S. First Street

Ann Arbor, Michigan 48104

Phone: 734-623-0000; Fax: 734-623-0003

### **Boards of Education Self-funded Trust (BEST)**

Cindy Downey, Health Plan Director

Email: [cdowney@best-healthplan.com](mailto:cdowney@best-healthplan.com)

1200 Grant Street

Denver, Colorado 80203

Phone: 303-302-2710; Fax: 303-302-2711

## Member Updates

### **Vermont League of Cities & Towns**

*Delete: Suzanne Schittina*

*Add: Kim Gauthier*

*Email: [kgauthier@vlct.org](mailto:kgauthier@vlct.org)*

### **Oklahoma Group Insurance Board**

Lori Poteet

*Phone: 405-717-8809*

### **City of Garland, Texas**

*P.O. Box 460873*

*Garland, Texas 75046*

### **State of Kansas**

*Delete: Linda De Coursey*

*Add: Harry Bossi*

*Email: [harry.bossi@da.state.ks.us](mailto:harry.bossi@da.state.ks.us)*

### **State of New Jersey**

*Delete: Janice Nelson*

*Add: Christine Servis, Chief of Health  
Benefits Bureau*

*Phone: 609-633-7546; 609-633-298*

## SALGBA Stars...

Congratulations to the following SALGBA Members for your outstanding achievements!

Martha Rider, Director of Risk Management for Fort Bend County, TX was named Texas PRIMA's Risk Manager of the Year.

Glenn Rainey, Director, Institute of Government at Eastern Kentucky University received the distinguished Pugliese Award for outstanding service in the Public Administration profession.

Please send achievement announcements for publication to Tina Scott at [tina.scott@eku.edu](mailto:tina.scott@eku.edu).





# State and Local Government Benefits Association

...the premier organization for public sector benefits professionals

## Membership Application

### Membership Descriptions

The Secondary Member is a reduced fee for additional members from the same entity however there must be a Primary Member from the entity on file or applying.

#### **Jurisdictional Member**

A public sector entity actively engaged in administering an employee benefits program. Jurisdictional members may vote at the annual business meetings and are eligible to serve on the Board of Directors.

- Local Government     School/University     State Entity     Other: \_\_\_\_\_
- Primary Entity Member     Secondary Entity Member
- \$195    \$50

#### **Associate Member**

A consultant organization, insurance company or other professional group that is a seller of employee benefits services, not a purchaser. Associate Members do not vote or serve on the Board, except in the nonvoting capacity of Associate Member Advisor, but are encouraged to serve on committees.

- Vendor/Consultant     Other (Please explain) \_\_\_\_\_
- Primary Associate Member     Secondary Associate Member
- \$300    \$150

Organization \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

Position/Title \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, Zip \_\_\_\_\_ Telephone \_\_\_\_\_

Fax \_\_\_\_\_ Website \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

### Payment Information

The annual membership fee is due with this application. Payment may be made by check and payable to SALGBA, or by credit card. In order to pay by credit card please contact the administrative office.

Please submit completed application with payment to:

SALGBA  
 Institute of Government  
 113 McCreary Hall, ECU  
 521 Lancaster Avenue  
 Richmond, KY 40475-3102  
 Phone: 859-622-2535; Fax: 859-622-4378  
 salgba@salgba.com

NONPROFIT EDUCATIONAL ORGANIZATION TAX IDENTIFICATION NO. 57-0752871
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*Colorado Association of School Boards (CASB) Offers New Health Coverage Pool*



by  
Cindy Downey, Health Plan Director  
Board of Education Self-funded Trust (BEST)

Providing affordable employee benefits can often be a frustrating endeavor for school boards and one of the biggest budget busters for school districts is health insurance. Each year it seems there are fewer choices available to the districts and the costs continue to increase. School districts throughout Colorado have voiced these concerns year after year. CASB heard these concerns and over the past two years has worked to create the *Boards of Education Self-funded Trust (BEST)*, a program designed to provide quality benefits and stabilize costs. The BEST Health Plan became effective July 1, 2004. Currently the plan covers approximately 3300 participants, including retirees.

CASB's goal was to deliver a program to members with a level of service and quality that will be difficult to match, and through ongoing risk identification and management, hold down the rate of increase through the coming years. Ken DeLay, the Executive Director of CASB, feels the creation of BEST offers a program that is available to meet the needs of large and small districts throughout the state of Colorado and has competitive rates, quality care, and consistency of service and prices.

Risk management assessments, wellness programs and operational efficiencies are integral parts of the program. Some of the smaller districts on their own have been unable to afford these types of programs. Becoming part of a larger group that already offers these services can enhance the use of the dollars that they are spending toward healthcare costs. BEST operates under the philosophy that the member is one of the last untapped resources in the arena of healthcare utilization and cost management, and as a result of this philosophy the program offers incentives to members who utilize their wellness programs and take advantage of risk management.

**Editor**

**Debbie Juul**

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