



Technology Exchange

VOLUME 34, ISSUE 2
SUMMER 2022



LTAP at 40: Celebrating Local Communities Across the United States

By Rudynah Entera Capone (LA) and Adam Howell (NY)

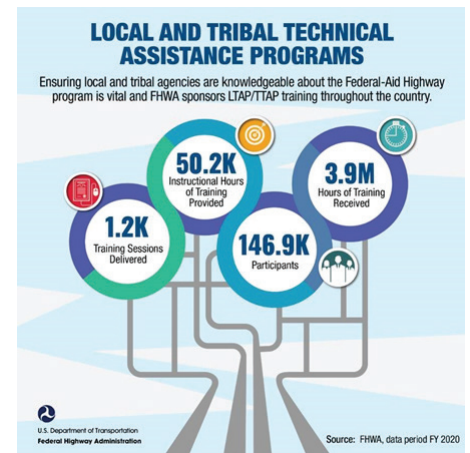
LTAP is celebrating its 40th year of serving local transportation agencies in every state, Puerto Rico, and Native American lands. Unless you are an engineer or public works personnel from a parish (county) or municipality, you are probably unfamiliar with what LTAP means or how this unique “program for the locals” came about.

December 23, 1981, is a red-letter day for LTAP centers across the nation. It was when President Ronald Reagan signed House Bill 4209 into law that officially established the Rural Technical Assistance Program (RTAP), which later became the Local Technical Assistance Program (LTAP) after the program was expanded in 1991 to include urban areas and “rural” became synonymous to “local.” Each of the 50 states in the US developed its own LTAP center that operates under a flagship university or the state’s Department of Transportation (DOT).

Initially, the program was allocated \$5 million for numerous projects related to rural transportation agency assistance with the establishment of state “centers” being just one (albeit the largest). LTAPs across the nation are providing resources and training to help meet these workforce development and agency administration needs. Whether it is vocational training, basic safety courses, or management and leadership education, LTAP centers develop resources to meet these needs.

LTAP’s Early Beginnings Start in New York

While the LTAP system is celebrating 40 years of formalized federal support for local transportation training and education, the idea’s roots go back much further. In the late 1800s, diverse coalitions of interested groups formed the early “Good Roads Movement” signifying that the nation understood there was a critical need to invest in infrastructure outside of dense urban areas. In New York, this interest in supporting local roads coalesced at Cornell University where a group of experts and professionals came together for a “Good Roads Week” conference held on campus in 1905. Over subsequent years, Cornell University held several more conferences and events dedicated to local roads in New York, which led to the creation of the Annual School



LA LTAP staff during the 2020 Louisiana Transportation Conference (from left): Leo Marretta, Christopher Melson, Rudynah Capone, Courtney Dupre, and Steven Strength. Mia Bosco and Emma Ball (not pictured) joined the team just recently.

IN THIS ISSUE

- 2 Director's Corner
- 3 Tips and Tricks for Online Meetings
- 4 LPESA Conference Highlights
- 5 Combating Roadway Departures
- 7 LTAP Training News

Visit www.louisianaltap.org
for our current classes,
training requests,
free resources,
and much more...

cont. on pg. 6

"Doing What Works—Old and New"

By Steven Strength



Here at Louisiana LTAP, we get lots of questions from local agencies about our programs and the technical assistance we offer, and many of those questioners are seeking solutions to everyday challenges faced by the whole spectrum of road managers and engineers. As we commemorate 40 years of the LTAP program, highlighted in this newsletter, answering these questions lies at the heart of LTAP's

mission. Interestingly, the answer to most is pretty simple—"Do what works!" Our mission is to share the experience of others, whether it be a subject matter expert such as Dwight Hutchinson instructing a class in Heavy Equipment Safety, teaching our locals how to set an advisory speed using a Ball Bank Study to reduce roadway departure crashes, or getting ideas on a bridge management program from an expert panel at the LPESA conference. (Spoiler alert: Read more about these topics elsewhere in this newsletter!) Implementing common sense solutions drives the LTAP agenda, and doing what works, while maybe not as enticing as discovering a new medical cure, can be every bit as satisfying, especially when it directly benefits the community where you live and the people you work with.

Having said that, LTAP is also about new solutions that work—and that's where innovation comes in. The LTAP Build a Better Mousetrap competition, held every year, promotes innovation at the local level. Lafayette Parish submitted two projects to the national competition this year, and we are excited to see the results later in July. One area in which we all need to figure out solutions is the precipitous rise in highway deaths and serious injuries. Over 1,000 of our fellow Louisianans died in crashes in 2021, a record-breaking year, and this is simply not acceptable. LTAP has crash data profiles and other tools to help you address this problem, along with nationally proven safety countermeasures to implement, many of which are low cost. While the solutions are proven, the challenge is to get local engineers, planners, managers, and elected officials involved in new ways. Many local agencies have launched safety efforts in cooperation with DOTD and our Regional Safety Coalitions, but we need more of you to get involved in making safety a primary concern in any decision you make. What ideas do you have for getting your agency involved in road safety?

Have an enjoyable and safe summer!



My First Year with LTAP

Hello! My name is Emma Ball. I am a communication disorders major at LSU and will begin my sophomore year in August. I have been working at LTAP since I started my freshman year. I am enjoying my time here, and so far, I have acquired some skills that I would have otherwise never achieved.

Emma Ball, LTAP student worker

On Advancing Skills

As a state government employee for 8 years now, I have been fortunate to be given opportunities to advance my knowledge and skills. Recently, I just received my eLearning Architect Certification that was offered through the statewide Comprehensive Public Training Program (CPTP). The course taught us theories and practical skills useful in creating eLearning courses. As a capstone project, we designed our original eLearning class on a topic of our own choosing. I look forward to putting this new skill to great use in our future training endeavors at LTAP. Thank you, DOTD and LTRC for this wonderful opportunity!

Rudynah Entera Capone, LTAP Innovation and T2 manager



LTRC's Associate Director for Technology Transfer and Training Mary Leah Coco (right) congratulates Capone (left) for earning her new certification.

Tips and Tricks for Online Meetings: Moderators and Presenters

By Steve Strength and Chris Melson

In our last newsletter, we shared several tips to improve your online trainings and meetings. We wanted to provide a follow-up article to share suggestions specific to moderators and presenters. Please see below:



- If you are a moderator, practice the various features of your online meeting platform with a co-worker before the meeting. Learn how to admit and mute attendees, add co-hosts, switch, and share screens, etc. Even if you are familiar with the software, there are frequent updates which can change its operations—including frequently added new features.
- If your meeting will include formal presentations, provide time before the meeting for the presenters to test their audio and video. It is also recommended to have a copy of their presentation slides, just in case the presenter is unable to share their screen.
- As a presenter, be sure to call into the meeting early—and test your audio and video (see above). Before the meeting, be sure to have the latest version of the software on your computer. Depending, this may require contacting your agency's IT support.
- If possible, have a back-up option for your audio and video. For example, this could include dialing into the meeting and using your phone, if there are issues with your microphone.
- As a moderator, use multiple monitors for easy sharing of documents. Keep your meeting organized; be able to monitor the chat and waiting room, take notes, and share documents.
- Always have an agenda and keep it in a window ready to share whenever no one else is presenting. This is important even if you sent out the agenda in advance. Be ready to share handouts, even if you sent those out ahead of time too.
- Encourage participants to stay on mute when not speaking. If your platform allows you to put people on mute, use it and unmute them when it is their turn to speak. Mute will help deter feedback on the line as well. Likewise, if your platform allows you to turn off video, use that as needed too (e.g., if a participant's video is distracting when someone is presenting).
- Encourage attendee engagement throughout the meeting through multiple venues: the chat pod, encouraging speaking, reaction buttons, or periodic questions/polling. It is easy for participants to be side-tracked and multitasking; know how to engage and facilitate input from your audience.
- Consider recording the meeting, webinar, or training as warranted. Be sure all participants know that they are being recorded and how the recording will be used. In some settings, recording the meeting may deter discussion or receiving feedback. However, it can be a useful tool when developing meeting notes, sharing with those who were unable to attend, or widely distributing the recording to share knowledge/information (e.g., with formal presentations or trainings).

We hope the above is useful. Be sure to check out our more general tips and tricks for online meetings in the *Spring 2022* edition of our newsletter. Remember that online platforms are just another tool in the toolbox and shouldn't replace every meeting or interaction. Always use the most effective venue for the purpose of the meeting. Good luck!

Spring 2022 Conference Highlights

LPESA welcomed NACE executive director Kevan Stone and regional representative Jacob Thorius from Washington County, Iowa, at the spring LPESA conference on April 20-21, 2022, at the West-Cal Arena and Events Center in Sulphur. “LPESA is proud to network our members, associate members, and vendors who are the driving force behind keeping Louisiana safe and moving forward,” LPESA President David Rome addressed the attendees as he co-moderated the conference with LTAP program manager Chris Melson.

Day 1 commenced with a warm welcome by Calcasieu Parish Police Jury President Tony Stelly, followed by legislative updates from the Police Jury Association of Louisiana (PJAL) executive counsel Debbie Henton. FHWA project delivery team leader Mary Stringfellow (FHWA) enlightened the audience with relevant highlights about the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL), and a preview to the proposed road and street rehabilitation program was provided by DOTD Local Public Assistance Programs Director Tanya Moore.

ConnectLA's Deputy Director Thomas Tyler, Jr. delivered an overview of Louisiana's efforts to eliminate the digital divide by 2029, while St. John the Baptist Parish public works director Clayton “Snookie” Fauchaux recounted how their parish recovered from Hurricane Ida. Associate members Stan Williams from Ergon Asphalt and Emulsions, Jerry Johnson from Corrective Asphalt Materials, and David Fuqua from Tensar International presented their respective best practices and low-cost solutions in preserving pavements in a roundtable discussion.

A fun way to end Day 1 was a social “crawfish boil” night sponsored by Ergon Asphalt and Emulsions, Material Resources, and Diamond B Construction. The Gumbeaux Gator even made a special appearance.

Day 2 kicked off with NACE's Executive Director Kevan Stone providing updates on their association's activities and programs, including the bipartisan infrastructure law's implications to the NACE community. It was followed by a seven-member panel discussion on “How Local Agencies Can Help Louisiana Reduce Roadway Fatalities” moderated by Louisiana LTAP center Director Steven Strength. The panel members were Betsey Tramonte (FHWA), Jacob Thorius (Washington County of Iowa), Leo Marretta (LTAP), Allen Wainwright (Calcasieu Parish) and Destination Zero Deaths regional coalition coordinators Shelly Barrett (Northwest), Cassie Parker (South Central), and Amber Ashworth (Southwest).

Amber Robinson from HDR Engineering provided an overview about the US Army Corps of Engineers' regulatory permitting and application process that engineers have to comply with. The conference also featured some applicable local research initiatives. Dr. Firouz Rosti from McNeese State University shared his research on sustainable method to stabilize lime and soil in Louisiana, and Dr. Robert Miller from University of Louisiana at Lafayette presented his flood mitigation research on quantifying the effects of extreme flooding on overall network accessibility in Lafayette. Dr. Carol Friedland, LaHouse director of LSU AgCenter, shared what LaHouse can offer to build a resilient infrastructure in local communities.

Eric McCalpine from Cintas Corporation highlighted the services and products that their company can provide to parishes and municipalities.



Social event sponsors Stan Williams and Mark Hartman from Ergon Asphalt and Emulsions pose with the Gumbeaux Gator, representing the Southwest Louisiana Convention and Visitors Bureau.



LPESA President David Rome (left) and Calcasieu Parish President Tony Stelly welcomed the 130 attendees, 67 of which were locals from 32 agencies.



NACE Executive Director Kevan Stone talks about the association's programs and activities.



Carl Thompson from Vernon Parish (left) interacts with Ted White from Goldman Equipment (right) at the 2022 LPESA spring conference in Sulphur, LA.

cont. on pg. 5

Combating RwD Takes More Than Just Chevrons and Rumbles

By Rudynah Entera Capone

The nation has a huge problem. It's the fact that people run off the roads and end up getting injured or dying. Nationally, the numbers indicate that rural roadway departures are approximately one-third of the traffic deaths—that's 30 people dying each day. In Louisiana, about 58% of the vehicular fatalities are due to roadway departures.

FHWA defines a roadway departure (RwD) crash as one that occurs after a vehicle crosses an edge line or a center line, or otherwise leaves the traveled way. Another term our partners often use is lane departure, which is synonymous with RwD, since both include head-on collisions when a vehicle enters an opposing lane of traffic.

Combating rural roadway departures is not as simple as putting chevrons here and installing rumble strips there. It takes more than just an engineering approach, for sure, but LTAP recently had its focus on three objectives when the team conducted a series of workshops on "Combating Rural Roadway Departures" across the state. These objectives were: first, keep vehicles in their lane; second, reduce the potential for crashes if drivers do leave their lane; and third, minimize the severity of crashes if they indeed happen.

FHWA's Resource Center Safety Engineer Dick Albin taught the first two legs of the workshops in Baton Rouge and New Orleans. LTAP Director Steve Strength and LRSP Manager Leo Marretta taught the remaining classes in Lafayette, Lake Charles, Alexandria, Covington, West Monroe, and Bossier City. LTAP collaborated with the regional safety coalition coordinators whose main goal is to liaise with local agencies in their respective regions in order to implement the Louisiana Strategic Highway Safety Plan (SHSP), the Roadway Departure Implementation Plan, and Local Road Safety Plans. The common vision of these plans is Destination Zero Deaths (www.destinationzerodeaths.com).

LTAP did more than just classroom instruction to engage the participants in identifying ways to help Louisiana reduce rural roadway departure deaths and serious injuries. A field assessment was conducted to provide them the opportunity to physically evaluate a roadway in terms of "what issues and hazards exist" and "what can be done to address them" based on FHWA's "Proven Safety Countermeasures" they learned from the class. Everyone also experienced how to actually determine advisory speeds on curves using ball bank indicators. *See "LTAP and Partners in Action" on page 7.*

Resources:

Roadway Departure Safety: https://safety.fhwa.dot.gov/roadway_dept/

Focus on Reducing Rural Roadway Departures (FoRRRwD) <https://safety.fhwa.dot.gov/FoRRRwD/>



Spring Conference *Cont. from page 4*

DOTD's District 07 Roadside Development Coordinator Michael Stevens shared their experiences from various roadside maintenance efforts in the Lake Charles area, and DOTD's Bridge Inspection Manager Stephanie Doolittle provided a refresher on bridge compliance and load rating.

The conference wrapped up with a round-robin on bridge topics. Forte and Tablada, Inc. CEO Joey Coco presented on best practices in bridge management. Lafayette Consolidated Government's Engineer III Alison Lognion shared what bridge repair projects their agency had completed (and are underway) in Lafayette, while Peter DeCuir showcased different bridge repair methods that Durable Piling Restoration has used for bridge projects.

The DZD team (from left): Regional Coalition Coordinators Shelly Barrett (Northwest), Susan Mitchell (Northeast) and Cassie Parker (South Central); FHWA Project Delivery team leader Mary Stringfellow and; FHWA Safety Specialist Betsey Tramonte.



NLTAPA at 40 *Cont. from page 1*

for Highway Superintendents in 1938 and eventually the Cornell Local Roads Program itself. The Cornell Local Roads Program joined the Local Technical Assistance Program in 1984—3 years after the LTAP system was founded.

LTAP Centers' Commonalities

LTAP's core emphasis areas are strategic workforce development, highway and worker safety, infrastructure management, communications, and innovation. All LTAP centers serve to provide training, education, and technical assistance that are accessible, cost-effective, and relevant to the work that local public works personnel and engineering professionals do. Overall, the goal of every LTAP is to meet a need that is not being met by others in a manner that works for the audience being served.

At the federal government level, the FHWA's **Center for Local Aid Support** is an important partner for all LTAP centers across the nation. Besides NACE, LTAP centers also partner with the American Public Works Association (APWA) and the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO).

Louisiana LTAP Keeps Growing

Now in its 35th year, the Louisiana LTAP center (formerly called the Louisiana Technology Transfer or T2 Center) is housed within the Louisiana Transportation Research Center (LTRC), a joint partnership between DOTD and LSU. The office is physically located at LTRC's Transportation Training and Education Center (TTEC) Building on Gourrier Avenue.

Louisiana LTAP's primary purpose is to provide multifaceted training and technical assistance to local public agencies, particularly those that have limited funding or access to training.

A Celebration of Local Transportation

The 40th anniversary of the LTAP system is a celebration of local communities across the country. Local agencies manage over three-quarters of all centerline miles in the US and Puerto Rico. Local roads, streets, and public works systems are the backbone of American commerce, public safety, communication, and so much more. Recognizing there is a need to support the people holding together these critical systems is important for the future of the nation. Happy birthday, LTAP! Congratulations to all the LTAPers!



GROUP OF GOOD ROADS WEEK VISITORS.

1915 Good Roads Week Held at Cornell University

Louisiana LTAP at LTRC: www.louisianaltap.org

The National Local Technical Assistance Program Association (NLTAPA): <https://nltapa.org/>

Federal Highway Administration Center for Local Aid Support: <https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/clas/>

LTAP Classes

Roads Scholar #4: Temporary Traffic Control for Local Agencies

This course is intended for engineers, technicians, inspectors, and maintenance personnel whose duties require an intermediate understanding of traffic control in work zones, including design, setup, and management of traffic controls.

August 16 – Baton Rouge	September 20 – Minden
August 23 – Alexandria	September 21 – West Monroe
August 31 – Lake Charles	September 28 – New Orleans
September 13 – Covington	September 29 – Lafayette



To register for any of our LTAP classes, log into the LTRC registration system:

<https://registration.ltrc.lsu.edu/login>

Let's Combat Roadway Departures, Y'all!

FHWA's Resource Center's Senior Safety Engineer Dick Albin (left) flew all the way to Louisiana to teach "Combating Rural Roadway Departures" workshops in Baton Rouge and New Orleans. Six of the remaining classes were taught by LTAP Director Steven Strength and LRSP Manager Leo Marretta. It provided an opportunity for participants (right) to be out on the field to assess roadway curves and even use a ball bank indicator to determine advisory speeds.



Kudos, Roads Scholar Graduate!



Congratulations to our latest Roads Scholar graduate, Greg LaFleur (left) from Calcasieu Parish Police Jury! He was awarded with a certificate of achievement by LTAP Director Steven Strength (right) during the "Combating Rural Roadway Departures" workshop held in Lake Charles this past May.

300 Is the Magic Number

A total of approximately 300 participants attended our "Roads Scholar #6: Heavy Equipment Safety and Maintenance for Local Agencies" classes held in nine locations from March 17 to May 19, twice in Lake Charles. As part of the course, class instructor Dwight Hutchinson (second from left) demonstrates how to safely operate a heavy equipment to novice and veteran operators.





LOUISIANA LOCAL TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

4099 Gourrier Avenue
Baton Rouge, LA 70808

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

Pre-Sort Standard
U.S. Postage
PAID
Permit No. 55
Baton Rouge, LA

www.louisianaltap.org

Need Technical Help? **Contact LTAP**

(225) 767-9717
(225) 767-9156 (fax)
www.louisianaltap.org

Steven C. Strength, PE, PTOE
Director

Chris Melson, MSE, PE
LTAP Program Manager

Courtney Dupre, MA
LTAP Business Manager

Leonard P. Marretta, MURP
LRSP and LPA Program Manager

Rudynah "Dynah" Capone, MPA
LTAP Innovation and
Technology Transfer Manager

Mia Bosco, MA
LTAP Training Program Coordinator

Publication Statement

Technology Exchange is published quarterly by the Louisiana Transportation Research Center. It is the newsletter of the Louisiana Local Technical Assistance Program. Any findings, conclusions, or recommendations presented in this newsletter are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect those of LSU, DOTD, or FHWA.

LTRC Publications Staff

Jenny Speights, Public Information Director
Jenny Gilbert, Editor
Emily Wolfe, Multi-Media Specialist
Chris Melton, Photographer

The purpose of the Local Technical Assistance Program is to provide technical materials, information, and training to help local government agencies in Louisiana maintain and improve their roads and bridges in a cost-effective manner. To accomplish this purpose, we publish a quarterly newsletter; conduct seminars, workshops, and mini-workshops covering various aspects of road and transportation issues; provide a lending library service of audio/visual programs; provide technical assistance through phone and mail-in requests relating to transportation technology; and undertake special projects of interest to municipalities in Louisiana.