



Open Forum

October 2005
Vol. 19 No. 1

Serving New York's State/Local Government and Corporate IT Leadership

CTG's XML Testbed Project Interview with Derek Werthmuller

XML (eXtensible Markup Language) began to get wide coverage in the technology trade magazines in and around 2001. Though its touted advantages are numerous, one of particular interest is that one can specify how to store almost any kind of data, in a form that applications on any platform can process.

Before XML became a buzzword, The Forum's Webmasters' Guild hosted presentations, conducted by Derek Werthmuller of the Center for Technology in Government (CTG), on its virtues. Since those early introductory presentations, CTG has embraced XML as central to its own web development and content management and has launched an "XML Testbed" project involving five key state agencies.

We are pleased to have this opportunity to interview Derek to help us understand just what XML and its advantages truly are; to trace its evolution within CTG as a tool and now as central to a new testbed project; and to become aware of what the anticipated outcomes of the testbed project will be.

Since Forum members have expressed significant interest in XML and the CTG Testbed Project, subsequent issues of the **Open Forum** will feature updates on the project and its outcomes within the five testbed agencies. Additional information about the CTG project is available at: <http://www.ctg.albany.edu/projects/xmltb>.

The Forum: *Derek, we believe that you were the first person to introduce XML to The Forum and its members. How was it that you "discovered" XML?*

Derek: I had been following the discussions about XML within the Open Source community, particularly its promise for more effective document management. We were approaching a "critical mass" point on our Web site in which we were experiencing serious difficulties in getting the Center's publications to the Web in acceptable formats (HTML and PDF) in a reasonable amount of time. I also knew that we had workflow bottlenecks in our entire publication process, not just the Web component, that were at least partially due to software issues. That is, software that just really wasn't up to the task of handling multiple formats for differ-

ent media. And this was also when accessibility issues regarding the Web were really coming to the forefront and the Office for Technology (OFT) was formulating its policies, standards, and guidelines.

Of course, at the time we weren't at all sure, but it seemed that if even half of what we were reading about XML and content management were true, it could be an excellent solution for all of those problems. And most importantly, it appeared to be a long-term, nonproprietary solution that would serve us well in the future.

The Forum: *Though the roots of XML date back to the 1970's with the work of Charles Goldfarb, Ed Mosher and Ray Lorie of IBM, in your mind, what were the key milestones leading up to the status XML holds today?*

Inside

| | |
|---|---|
| 19 th Annual Meeting Recognizes Member Accomplishments | 5 |
| Sharon Dawes Honored | 8 |
| What is The NYS Forum? | 9 |



Dear Colleague:

We welcome you to the commencement of The Forum's 20th program year! We also welcome our new team of NYS Forum officers: **Celia Hamblin**, Chair and CIO, NYS Department of Labor; **Leigh Favitta**, Vice Chair and CIO, NYS Dormitory Authority and **Diane Taylor**, Secretary-Treasurer and Section Head, NYS Office of the State Comptroller.

This year promises to be extremely active and productive for Forum membership. Key to the coming program year is a number of major education and training initiatives already in mature stages of development. Contributing to the richness of the coming year is the creation of the Business Continuity (BC) Committee, which had previously been combined with Security. This new committee, co-chaired by Tom Luther of the Office of the State Comptroller and Christopher Lloyd of Keane, has derived its initial program plans from the input provided by Forum membership at the July, 2005 Strategic Planning Session.


The year began in conjunction with the World Organization of Webmasters on October 6th with a luncheon recognizing the start of the 10th year of the Webmaster's Guild. Visit <http://www.nysforum.org/calendar/> for a listing of all Forum committee events and meetings.

At the Annual Meeting held on September 9th, The Forum's officers reinforced the open invitation to all state and local government IT leadership and staff to attend the monthly meetings of The Forum's Executive Committee. These meetings are held the 2nd Friday of the month (except November this year) from 8:30 - 10:00 am, at Rockefeller Institute of Government, 411 State Street, Albany, unless otherwise noted. Topics for discussion at the first several monthly meetings are noted below:

- **October 14:** Installation of new Executive Committee members/officers; Confirmation of committees and co-chairs; Presentation by Onnolee Smith and Kelly Lopez of GOER on IT Education and Training Opportunities
- **November 4:** NYS OCIO – Update by James Dillon
- **December 9:** NYS OFT – Update by Mike McCormack
- **January 13:** NYS CSCIC – Update by William Pelgrin

Please join us at these meetings and visit The Forum's web site for information on committee work that may be of interest and value to you and your agency.

Sincerely,


Greg Benson



Executive Committee

Officers

Chair, Cecelia Hamblin, Dept. of Labor
Vice-Chair, Leigh Favitta, Dormitory Authority
Sec./Treas., Diane Taylor, Office of the State Comptroller

Members

James Bell, NYS Senate
Walter Bikowitz, OGS
Thomas R. Bodden, Assoc. of Towns of NYS
JoAnn P. Bomeisl, Insurance Dept.
Vivian Conboy, Dept. of Taxation & Finance
Terri Daly, OFT
Sharon Dawes, CTG
Michael Donovan, OCIO
Stanley France, Schoharie County
Robert Freeman, Dept. of State
Jeffrey S. Grunfeld, OSC
Christine Haile, SUNY at Albany
Roman Hedges, NYS Assembly
Karl Kelly, DMNA
Robert G. Kelly, DHCR
Kim S. McKinney, NYS LGITDA
Nancy Mulholland, Workers' Comp. Board
Eugene Pezdek, DEC
Joanne Riddett, Thruway Authority
Franklin Slade, Dept. of Civil Service
Timothy Spencer, DOB
Victor Stucchi, HESC

Staff

Editor

Gregory M. Benson, Executive Director

Design & Production

Rebecca J. Buchner, Executive Assistant

Milena Ivanova,
Technical Coordinator

Editorial Office

The NYS Forum
Rockefeller Institute of Government
411 State Street
Albany, NY 12203
Phone (518) 443-5001
Fax (518) 443-5006
Visit our Web Site www.nysforum.org
E-mail info@nysforum.org

Open Forum is a regular publication of the The NYS Forum.

We welcome editorial proposals and submissions.

Derek: Well, first of all, I'm not an expert or scholar on the history of XML, but I can tell you the milestones that were most important for us. You can find many of the significant dates on the W3C website. (For readers who may not be familiar with it, W3C is the World Wide Web Consortium which is the primary organization overseeing standardization of HTML and other web technologies.) It's interesting that even though the origins of XML have been around for a while, it didn't become a W3C recommendation until February, 1998 and then revised in October, 2000. So it really is new in that sense. I think when XHTML became a W3C Recommendation in 2000, that was a big step because it incorporated the good structural practices of XML into HTML and pushed the world along in the XML direction.

For our purposes, the creation of DocBook in the early 1990's was a significant milestone, since that is the XML standard we use in structuring all of our documents. It's interesting that much if not all of the early work in XML was done by people who were managing documents and publications. It was also adopted for data exchange because it offered such a simple, effective format for that activity.

But people often don't realize that XML was "invented" to address document management issues; they think it's just for data exchange. In fact, as we've found, XML provides an excellent document and content management framework for your Web site.

Another very significant milestone for us was the start of the Cocoon project in 1999 as an open source project within the Apache Software Foundation. Without getting too technical here, Cocoon is an XML Web Publishing Framework which is the environment we use to run our XML-

based website. Just at the time we were getting interested in XML, Cocoon came along to provide a structure in which we could make it work.

We've also been monitoring the developing OpenOffice standard and its XML file format which also began around 2000. It will be interesting to see what comes from Microsoft's XML file formats in its next release of the Office suite. So you can see there are a lot of significant ongoing developments, most of them quite recent.

The Forum: *You obviously became convinced of XML's promise early on and have been involved in CTG's in-house implementation. What key factors led to the decision to actually convert to XML within CTG?*

Derek: There were two factors that were most significant. First was the ability to produce multiple formats (HTML and PDF primarily, but others as needed) from a single source document. The other was to actually achieve a single source document that would endure throughout the publication process. And we needed a solution that would make sense and deliver benefits throughout the organization, not just to the Web team. Quite frankly, it would have been difficult, if not impossible, to get the rest of the organization to commit to converting to XML if our only argument was that it helped the Web team make HTML pages.

Basically, the Web team is supposed to make HTML pages. What's the big deal? Can't you get Dreamweaver or a content management system to do that for you? So we needed to analyze the entire workflow process of getting content to the Web and other delivery media (print, email, etc.).

Now this was a total organization effort that occurred over several months, so I'm oversimplifying here,



Derek Werthmuller, Director of Technology Services, CTG

but when we looked at the process, it was riddled with redundancy and reverse loops and critical paths crashing into one another. But one thing was very clear. As we followed a document through the process, it rapidly lost its identity and integrity as a document. It might start as a Word document written by a project manager; be transformed into a PageMaker document by the Communications Team for printing purposes; be further changed into multiple HTML documents for the Web; and somewhere along the line a PDF was created as well.

In the midst of all these transformations, changes would and could occur at any and every point. By the end (if we made it to the end), we'd have multiple source documents and were not completely sure which one was correct. And that process was repeated for every publication.

With XML we were able to streamline and simplify that workflow process by having a single-source XML document at the center. The various formats are created by XSL stylesheets (which are the files used to transform and present XML documents). The rest of the organization benefits from a much simpler, less error-prone workflow. They see their

content get to the Web quicker and much more accurately. It sounds crazy, but it actually reduced our overall Web management time by 80%.

The Forum: *The implications of using XML go beyond specific "technical" advantages. How do others, perhaps those on the business side, view CTG's implementation of XML?*

Derek: From the nontechnical perspective, they see that their content gets up on the Web almost immediately. They are also comfortable and confident about requesting changes or updates to the Web site, which they had almost completely given up on before because they knew it was too much of an undertaking for an already swamped Web team. This turned out to be one of the most interesting outcomes because we on the technical side of the organization weren't even aware of this desire for changes on the business side. If they just stop asking because they assume it can't happen, how would you know? So it adds a new flavor to the ROI (return on investment) equation. We're now providing services or benefits that had completely fallen off the radar. Also, since the Web team has more time on their hands now, they're available for more fruitful development projects.

As a center, we've been able to offer and deliver new applications within our project work for various clients that just weren't possible before. I think down the line these business benefits will only grow since XML positions you very well for the future. And by that I mean the future beyond the Web, or at least the desktop browser that we've all grown accustomed to. With the proliferation of mobile devices and the widespread need to share data and information, to name just two trends, I think you need to be looking at XML very seriously from a business standpoint, if you're not already doing so.

The Forum: *Building on the organization's successful experiences, CTG has recently launched the testbed project designed to engage participating agencies in an examination of the benefits and challenges of adopting XML and new management schemes for managing web content. What are the core objectives of the testbed project?*

Derek: The testbed is not a technical how-to program about putting XML into operation, but is a structured year-long process to bring committed participants together to study best practices, work toward agency-defined practical goals, and build organizational capacity for better use of the Web.

The testbed project is being conducted in cooperation with the Governor's Office of Employee Relations, the Office of the Chief Information Officer, and the Office for Technology. Five New York State agencies have been selected to participate in the project:

- Department of Civil Service,
- Higher Education Services Corporation,
- Office of Cultural Education,
- Office for the Prevention of Domestic Violence, and
- Division of Housing & Community Renewal.


The agencies selected for the testbed will participate in hands-on workshops, organizational analysis, and development activities. This will culminate in the production and presentation of working XML-based Web site prototypes and business cases for expanding their efforts to a larger implementation of new technologies and associated policies and business processes for Web management.

The project formally started with a Kickoff Session on July 14 where the five agencies met to discuss their individual projects. Over the succeeding six months, the agency teams will participate in six one-day workshops and three training sessions. Each workshop and training session will be devoted to specific topics and tasks leading to the development of a business case and a successful XML-based Web site prototype.

To date they have completed training sessions and workshops on *Building a Business Case for IT Investment: Making Smart IT Choices*, *Introduction to XML/XSL*, *Advanced XML/XSL*, and *Managing a Web Development Project*. Future workshops topics include Content Management, Effective Web Site Design, NYS Accessibility Policy, Cost Analysis and Return on Investment, and Future Advancements in XML.

The Forum: *Thank you Derek. We'll be revisiting this conversation over the next several months to learn more about the progress and outcomes of the testbed project. Because our membership is very much interested, we'll share what we learn in future issues of the Open Forum.*

Derek Werthmuller

Derek brings more than ten years of experience to his position as director of technology services. A former CTG systems administrator, he now manages the Technology Solutions Laboratory and the Technology Services Unit, which maintains the Center's technology infrastructure, conducts technology investigations, and supports electronic products. Contact Derek at dwerthmu@ctg.albany.edu. 

19th Annual Meeting Recognizes Member Accomplishments

On September 9th, The New York State Forum honored its members at the 19th Annual Meeting. The event was attended by more than 230 state and local government employees and private sector members of The Forum's IT Corporate Roundtable.

Outgoing Executive Committee Chair, **Joanne Riddett**, Thruway Authority, announced the results of the Executive Committee election. Re-elected for another two-year term are: **Thomas Boddien**, Association of Towns of the State of New York; **Nancy Mulholland**, Workers' Compensation Board; **Robert Freeman**, Department of State, Committee on Open Government; and **Robert G. Kelly**, Division of Housing and Community Renewal. Newly elected are: **Diane Taylor**, Office of the State Comptroller and **Vivian Conboy**, Department of Taxation and Finance. Welcome!

At the October 14th meeting, **Cecelia Hamblin**, CIO of the Department of Labor, who has served this past year as Vice Chair, will assume the role of Chair. **Leigh Favitta**, Dormitory Authority, who has served this past year as Secretary/Treasurer, will assume the role of Vice Chair. And, pending approval of the Executive Committee, **Diane Taylor**, Office of the State Comptroller, will take office as Secretary-Treasurer.

Joanne took a look back at The Forum's accomplishments of the past year before passing the gavel to Cecelia Hamblin. Celia provided a forward-look at the objectives and initiatives she will oversee during her term as Executive Committee Chair.

Keynote Presentation

Carolyn Purcell is the State and Local Government Director of Internet Business Solutions Group of Cisco Systems and provided the keynote presentation. Carolyn's team works with the top thought leaders in state and local government to develop business solutions that improve service delivery to constituents and employees. Prior to her current position, Carolyn served nine years as Texas' Chief Information Officer and Chief Executive Officer of the Texas Department of Information Resources, the IT "corporate headquarters" for Texas state government.

IT Corporate Roundtable

An overview of the past year was given by **Stephen Frank**, Vice President of North American Sales for Curam Software and outgoing Chair of the IT Corporate Roundtable (ITCR). **Ken Damato**, Upstate New York Account Manager for RSA Security and incoming Chair provided a look forward.

October, 2001 convened the first meeting of the IT Corporate Roundtable – an idea proposed for bridging Forum members and the IT corporate sector to tackle IT problems and issues in a collaborative manner. At that time, the Roundtable consisted of six members.

Today, the Roundtable consists of nearly forty IT corporations and the Roundtable members play a key role

as Forum committee leaders and members. The Roundtable has made notable contributions to specific priority state projects being undertaken with the Office of the CIO and the Office of Cyber Security and Critical Infrastructure Coordination. In short, The Forum's IT Corporate Roundtable has come a very long way in an extremely short period of time and we are all very appreciative of the tremendous effort.

As with most success, one usually finds strong, steady leadership has been involved. That has been the case with the Roundtable. **Steve Frank**, was elected as the first Chair of the IT Corporate Roundtable in June, 2003 and has been instrumental in its growth and the alignment of its strengths in support of state initiatives. As the first Chair of The Forums IT Corporate Roundtable and in recognition of his leadership role for over three years, The Forum presented Steve with an award in appreciation of his leadership and vision.

Another IT Corporate Roundtable member receiving an award for his contributions as Co-Chair of the IT Procurement Committee was **Bill Branch**, Business Development Manager, BearingPoint.

Over the past year, a major concern of Forum membership and the Office of the CIO was centered on IT procurement issues and reform of the state's procurement process. Through the efforts of The Forum's IT Procurement Committee, a number of seminars and presentations were conducted for both operational and policy level staff. Noteworthy among those initiatives was a two-day

procurement seminar offered in conjunction with the NYS Office for Technology and a full-day symposium developed and offered in conjunction with the Government Law Center at Albany Law School.

Bill is joining Ken as Vice Chair of the ITCR along with public sector Co-Chair **Fred DiMaggio**, Empire State Development.

Award for Excellence

Each year, The Forum recognizes an individual whose work has definitively contributed to the overall improvement of government information services in New York State. In recent years public sector IT has become far more complex requiring integration across state-level agencies and with the local level. Moreover, government IT operations have become a likely target of external threats requiring a much higher degree of coordination and creative leadership. In today's fiscal environment, all of these challenges become even more difficult.

All that is to say that The Forum's Annual Award for Excellence in Government Information Services has taken on new meaning in this complex and dynamic environment we operate in. Achieving "excellence in government information services," as judged by one's peers, is no small accomplishment.

This year's award was presented to **Nancy Mulholland**, CIO, Workers' Compensation Board.

Nancy was appointed Deputy Executive Director and CIO of the NYS Workers' Compensation Board in September, 2002. She has over 28 years of experience managing IT projects and programs, and has served in executive management positions in various NYS agencies, including the Director of the NYS Project Management Office at the

Office for Technology. She served in various IT management and technical positions at the General Electric Company for 12 years before joining state service.

Most notably, Nancy was recognized nationally in 2005 as one of the *Computerworld* Premier 100 IT Leaders. She has a BA from Vassar College, is a Certified Project Management Professional (PMP) by the Project Management Institute, is active in the Upstate NY Chapter of the Project Management Institute, editor of the NYS Project Management Guidebook, and originator of the NYS Project Management Mentoring Program.

Best Practices Awards

The 2005 Annual Meeting marks the 10th year that we have been honored to recognize the outstanding work done during the past year in the area of Information Resource Management. A Call for Nominations was published in the June **Open Forum** and on the Forum web site. Submissions were then reviewed by the Awards Committee. Best Practices Awards were given in the categories of Management, Policy and Technical Implementation as follows.

Management

Management awards are given for innovative activities which improve the management of information resources and technologies. Innovations in this area might include the restructuring of an IRM organization to improve customer service, development of innovative procurement and/or partnering activities which maximize use of scarce resources, development and management of assessment teams to deal with crises like the Year 2000 or development of structures to effectively manage new technologies.

Department of Taxation and Finance – Project Portfolio Management (PPM) Project – PPM has ensured that Department executives from all major Department of Taxation and Finance divisions have a forum for the active participation in the establishment of IT project priorities and oversight of IT project performance. Within the governance structure of the Executive Portfolio Review Board, Department and Division Executives ensure that the IT projects undertaken support and advance the Department's strategic goals, instead of division specific goals.

Office of Children and Family Services – Contract Management Systems (CMS) – This web-based, state of the art system provides OCFS the infrastructure required to manage contractual obligations employed by the Agency to meet the mission established by Commissioner John A. Johnson and sanctioned by Governor George E. Pataki. CMS was initiated to replace outdated legacy systems to increase efficiency, accountability and improve contract cycle timeframes.

Policy

Policy awards are given for legislative initiatives or internal agency policy initiatives which improve information management and/or lower the barriers to effective information management. This might include the sponsorship of new laws which support electronic commerce, rewriting of regulations to lower barriers for the use of electronic documents, or development of effective organization-wide document management or security policies which improve document handling.

Office of General Services Procurement Services Group – Aggregated IT Procurement Program – The program is a comprehensive approach to applying best practices

in the areas of spend analysis, spend management, strategic sourcing, cooperative purchasing, contract negotiation and management, and inter-agency and intergovernmental collaboration. The program is available to NY state and local government entities and is expected to save tens of millions of dollars during the first year, with cost saving opportunities continuing to increase proportional to increased participation and the breadth of aggregated purchases conducted. This program is a collaborative effort between the Office of the Chief Information Officer, the Office for Technology, the Division of Budget, the CIO Council Technology Committee, and the Office of General Services.

The Institute for Local Government at SUNY Institute of Technology and the Northern Oneida County Council of Governments – *The Digital Towpath Project* – Rural communities in northern Oneida County recognized that the Internet could be a powerful tool to increase their citizens' access to local government services, especially since the size of the governments necessitated that they function on a full-time basis with part-time officials and their rural natures resulted in most residents having a difficult time getting to the municipal offices during limited hours. The Digital Towpath made services available all day, every day to fundamentally change the way these governments functioned.

Technical Implementation

Technical Implementation awards are given for effective implementation of information technology to meet business goals. Examples of innovation in this area might be the development of an agency Extranet which links internal units with external partners in a secure fashion, development of an agency Web application which improves communications with the

public, or effective use of prototyping and application development tools to streamline application development.

Department of Civil Service – *Web-Based Training and Experience Examination Program* – This program was designed to significantly reduce the amount of time and effort required to develop, administer, and score Training and Experience examinations for New York State and municipal positions. Additionally, the Department of Civil Service wanted to provide better service to State and municipal agencies by expediting the Training and Experience examination process to more quickly produce viable lists of qualified candidates for state and local positions.

Office of the State Comptroller – *Utilizing User Defined Functions to Capture Business Rules* – The NYS and Local Retirement System, a Division of the Office of the State Comptroller, is responsible for over 70 benefit plans that serve over 600,000 members. Due to legislative amendments, contract negotiations and a number of other factors, the business rules associated with these separate retirement plans must constantly be updated; a difficult and time consuming task when performed in a procedural legacy environment. The application chosen was the coding of a Pension Benefit Calculation, used to provide estimates and actual amounts of benefits in a variety of code modules.

Best of the Web

Paul Maguire, Office of Alcoholism and Substance Abuse Services and Co-Chair of the Webmasters Guild presented the awards for Best of the Web. The Best of the Web awards recognize the outstanding work done with the innovative use of web technology by state and local gov-

ernments. A Call for Nominations was published in the June **Open Forum** and on The Forum web site. To be eligible, sites had to be functioning at the time of the nomination. Evaluation criteria included innovative use of technology, value to the client, and cost efficiency to the agency.

Local Government

Town of Lewisboro – <http://www.lewisborogov.com> – This official site was designed by the staff of the Town Clerk's office to make available to the public, as much information about the government of the Town as possible. Having Town information available at all hours is a tremendous help to the residents. The website contains over 250 pages of information including the Parks Department seasonal brochure, agendas and minutes for the Town's many boards and committees; calendar of meetings and cable TV program guide; and is updated daily.

Westchester County – <http://www.westchestergov.com> – In a county that has no television station of its own, this site is an excellent resource for local news and information spanning more than 40 departments. The site boasts a number of useful services, including a personalized calendar of events, an interactive gas and home heating oil price database, as well as several electronic forms that allow residents to, among other things, file a consumer complaint, report standing water, sign up for e-mail updates and become a volunteer.

State Government

Department of Health – <http://www.nyhealth.gov> – This public web site had grown to 45,000+ documents as it evolved from its origins as a gopher site in 1994. The redesign came as the result of the need to comply with W3C coding best practices and

NYS Office for Technology standards and to improve information organization and the user interface.

Advance America Honor Roll

The NYS Forum has been named to the 2005 Associations Advance America Honor Roll, a national awards competition sponsored by the American Society of Association Executives (ASAE) in Washington, DC. The Forum received the award for its IT Accessibility Committee's work to develop a training program for making NYS web sites accessible and usable by the disabled and then affording that training to over 2,000 NYS government web site developers.

The recognition also acknowledged the role that the **IT Accessibility Committee** had in shaping the NYS policy and standards for government web site accessibility. Committee Co-Chairs **Debi Orton**, Governor's Office of Employee Relations

(GOER); **Mike Short**, Department of Civil Service; and **Lisa Hebert-Ryan**, MicroKnowledge, were presented with a copy of the award certificate. The committee includes members from a wide spectrum of NYS government agencies.

"The NYS Forum's program truly embodies the spirit of the Associations Advance America campaign. It is an honor and an inspiration to showcase this activity as an example of the many contributions associations are making to advance American society," remarked Associations Advance America Committee Chair David Gabri, President and CEO, Associated Luxury Hotels International.

Award for Volunteerism

Every July, The Forum undertakes a strategic planning session where, in one half day, the leaders of The Forum review accomplishments from the previous year and plot a course for the next. In recent years, as the work of The Forum has grown and the committees

have become more active, this task has become far more critical and complex. For the last three years, **Jonathan Blake**, Keane, Inc., has generously volunteered his time to be the facilitator of this important event. Jonathan's ability to keep the group on task has always resulted in fully and efficiently accomplishing the meeting objectives. Thank you, Jonathan, for your unselfish contribution to the planning process of The Forum.

Photos and Presentations

Unfortunately, the black and white quality of our **Open Forum** does not lend itself to clear, complimentary photos. Photos have been posted on our website at www.nysforum.org. Please feel free to download any or contact us for the original file. Complete award descriptions and available presentations are also posted at www.nysforum.org. Click on Past Seminars then Forum 19th Annual meeting. ♀

Sharon Dawes honored with Leadership Award

New York State CIO Jim Dillon presented the Rudolph W. Giuliani Leadership Award to Sharon Dawes, director of the Center for Technology in Government (CTG), at the Fort Orange Club in Albany, at the onset of GTC East 2005.

As Center Director, Sharon's main focus is building and nurturing CTG's research programs, applied projects, and public-private-academic partnerships. In addition to research, her work includes program development, and strategic management, and maintaining state, national, and interna-

tional relationships with the research and practice communities.

Sharon is also an Associate Professor of Public Administration and Policy and led the development of the UAlbany's Government Information Strategy and Management curriculum in public administration. This academic program focuses on the policy, management, and technology dimensions of information and technology use in the design and delivery of government programs.

Before coming to CTG as founding Director in 1993, Sharon was Executive Director of the New York State

Forum and an Executive Fellow at the Rockefeller Institute of Government. She began her career as a government program manager in the New York State Department of Social Services, where she spent seven years as an Associate Commissioner responsible for New York's then \$12 billion welfare programs.

Sharon is a fellow of the National Academy of Public Administration (NAPA) and of Pi Alpha Alpha, the National Honor Society for Public Affairs and Public Administration. In 1997, she was honored by *Governing* magazine as a "Public Official of the Year." ♀

What is The NYS Forum?

The New York State Forum is a network of public officials in state and local government organizations concerned with information management, policy and technology.

Information is a vital resource for New York State. As such, it is the mission of the New York State Forum to promote policies and practices for effective, equitable and secure use and management of information resources in New York State government at all levels.

Since its inception in 1987, The Forum's voluntary membership has grown to more than 2,000 state officials and 65 state government organizations, including virtually all the executive agencies and statewide public authorities, the court system, the state university, and both houses of the Legislature.

One of our most valuable assets is our committees and the dedicated co-chairs who volunteer their time to promote policies and practices of importance to government organizations. Each committee has its own section on The Forum's website (www.nysforum.org) and you are encouraged to visit them often to be kept abreast of the latest accomplishments and future offerings. Your participation in committee meetings is always welcome. Meetings are posted on the web and are open to individuals of state and local government and members of The Forum's IT Corporate Roundtable. No registration is required to attend meetings.

October marks the beginning of The Forum's 2005-2006 program year and the reassignment of committee co-chairs. If you would like additional information about any of The Forum's

committees, please feel free to contact us at (518) 443-5001 or call the committee of interest directly. Committee descriptions and contact information for the 2005-2006 committee co-chairs is provided below.

**Get involved!
Make a difference!**

Business Continuity

The objective of the newly created Business Continuity Committee is to work in collaboration with state and local agencies to develop education and training opportunities and tools that address business continuity planning needs. The committee is developing a working relationship with the NYS Office of Disaster Preparedness and Response in order to align efforts with emerging state priorities and activities in this area. The close relationship of security concerns to the development of continuance and disaster preparedness has also led to the pursuance of similar Forum working relationships with the NYS Office of Cyber Security and Critical Infrastructure Coordination.

Committee Co-Chairs:

- Christopher Lloyd, Keane Inc., (518) 432-3209
- Tom Luther, Office of the State Comptroller (518) 456-0645

Emerging Technologies

The Emerging Technologies Committee was explored by a group of public and corporate sector mem-

bers, at the request of NYS Forum public sector members, to bring to the forefront new and emerging technologies that can provide value and cost saving practices to public sector entities.

Committee Co-Chairs:

- Anthony DiMento, Sybase, Inc., (518) 682-4302
- Victor Stucchi, Higher Education Services Corp., (518) 474-7083

IT Accessibility

The Forum has a long history of addressing accessibility concerns related to disabilities as well as "digital divide" issues. The IT Accessibility Committee merges accessibility and the "digital divide" with the technology community to encourage the development of sensible policies to address these issues and to provide the technical training necessary to implement the policies. New participants are always welcome, especially those new to the topic of accessibility as it relates to information technology. Working on this committee is a great way to become familiar with the latest concepts and techniques. The IT Accessibility Committee has an electronic newsletter available to committee members.

Committee Co-chairs:

- Debi Orton, Governor's Office of Employee Relations, (518) 473-6202
- Lisa Hebert-Ryan, Micro-Knowledge, Inc., (518) 786-1181
- Mike Short, Department of Civil Service, (518) 457-5105

IT Corporate Roundtable

The Forum's IT Corporate Roundtable was created in October, 2001 to provide a productive context for IT corporations and Forum membership to pursue proactive communications and initiatives targeted on improved mutual understandings and communications and, ultimately, more efficient state procedures, products and services better aligned with NYS needs. IT Corporate Roundtable members work in close collaboration with key NYS and local IT leadership and serve as co-chairs for all NYS Forum committees.

Committee Co-Chairs:

- Bill Branch, BearingPoint, (518) 331-5338
- Ken Damato, RSA Security, (518) 875-9145
- Fred DiMaggio, Empire State Development, (518) 292-5200

IT Procurement

The IT Procurement Committee was created in December, 2001 to review suggested enhancements to the IT procurement process. Consisting of representation of the Office of General Services, Division of the Budget, Office for Technology, Office of the State Comptroller, the Forum's membership and the IT Corporate Roundtable, this work has resulted in specific recommendations to modify and streamline various aspects of IT procurement in NYS and coordinates its work closely with the NYS Procurement Council. In May, 2002, the NYS Procurement Council designated this committee as a work group to assist the council in preparation of a strategic plan. The committee now continues its work as the Procurement Council's IT Work Group.

Committee Co-Chairs:

- Peter Chynoweth, CMA, (518) 783-9003
- Susan Zeronda, Office for Technology, (518) 473-2807
- Mike LaFrancis, Gartner, (860) 683-1086

MATRIX

The Multi-Agency Technology Resource and Information Exchange (MATRIX) Committee has provided service to the information resource management community since its establishment in 1965 as ICEDP. For almost 40 years the ongoing mission has been to represent the state government information resource management community with respect to IRM-related initiatives and issues.

Committee Co-Chairs:

- Peter Hilton, Office for Technology, (518) 474-9181
- Joseph Romano, Computer Associates, (518) 218-2262

Project Management

The Forum's Project Management (PM) Committee was created to support government entities and government project managers as they implement project management standards and practices, Project Management Offices (PMO's), and project portfolio management (PPM) within their organizations. This committee has created two special interest work groups in this effort. First, the NYS PM Community of Practice (COP) was initiated several years ago by the Office for Technology PMO. When resource constraints in that office prevented the continuation of support for the PM COP, The Forum took on that role. This group provides a forum for an interactive exchange of ideas, prac-

tices, and lessons learned between project managers in NY government. Second, the PMO Roundtable was originally established by a handful of agencies as a grass roots effort to support each other in their Project Management implementation efforts. These efforts include PMO implementation, PM methodology implementation across a division/bureau/agency, as well as management of agency project portfolios. The PM Committee has an electronic newsletter available to its members.

Committee Co-Chairs:

- Jonathan Blake, Keane Inc., (518) 229-8961
- Nancy Mulholland, Workers' Compensation Board, (518) 486-7142

Security

The Security Committee works in close coordination with the NYS Office of Cyber Security and Critical Infrastructure Coordination (CSCIC) and its Local Government Advisory Group to development education and training as well as tools to assist state and local government to address their cyber security requirements. The Security Committee has been instrumental to the development and offering of the national webcast series in conjunction with CSCIC and hosted by the US Department of Homeland Security.

Committee Co-Chairs:

- JoAnn Bomeisl, Insurance Department, (518) 402-5330
- Chris Labatt-Simon, D&D Consulting, (518) 218-0900

Small/Medium Agency

Small and medium size agencies face distinctive challenges when it

comes to building and maintaining IT applications, including web based projects. Due in part to the small size of their IT staff and also restricted IT budgets, many small and medium size agencies struggle to develop and maintain needed business applications. This Special Interest Group (SIG) promotes discussion about those IT needs. Representatives from local government are also represented in this SIG and all are welcome to attend the meetings and share solutions.

Committee Co-Chairs:

- Peter Chynoweth, CMA, (518) 783-9003
- Karl Kelly, Division of Military and Naval Affairs, (518) 786-4690
- Paul Shatsoff, Governor’s Office of Employee Relations, (518) 473-3467

Webmasters’ Guild

The Webmaster’s Guild was initially formed to provide a means for those individuals within state and local government that have responsibilities for their agency’s Web sites to share ideas, issues problems, etc. and this purpose remains today. In addition to monthly meetings which typically focus on a single topic of interest, the group supports a list serv that is used by members to share questions and solutions as well as meeting announcements. Details to subscribe to the list serv can be found on the Webmaster’s Guild page of www.nysforum.org.

Committee Co-Chairs:

- John Kaldy, Microsoft, (518) 369-4879
- Paul Maguire, Office of Alcoholism and Substance Abuse Services, (518) 473-0985

Strategic Direction

Each July, The Forum conducts its Strategic Planning Session where committees have an opportunity to discuss their years’ accomplishments and get feedback on what our members feel is the direction they should be taking in the coming year. Breakout sessions promote discussion that is then presented to the entire group. Each breakout group reports to the group what they feel are priority initiatives. Those initiatives are then voted on and become The Forum’s strategic direction for the coming year. The suggested initiatives for The Forum, as an overall organization, to pursue in 2005-2006 are:

- Execute the BCP/Security split into two committees. (This initiative has already been accomplished.)
- Explore ways to enhance broader inclusion/participation in the monthly Executive Committee meetings.
- Provide greater advance notice of Executive Committee agenda topics.
- Given the pre-work of committees, explore options for the agenda and conduct of the annual planning meeting.
- Assess impact of GOER and employee union support of Forum training.
- Explore outreach to other appropriate state level organizations.
- Upgrade web capacity.
- Ensure that all committees review their relationship to and considerations of local government and facilitate committee linkage to groups and other local government committees such as the CIO Council’s ICC and

CSCIC local government committee.

- Address getting information out on records retention policy and law.
- Support collaboration of the Small and Medium Agency SIG and the Local Government committees.
- Regularly assess Forum/CIO Council coordination and alignment of like initiatives.
- Host informal get-togethers.
- Create a web site “news” section.

Initiatives prioritized for each committee are available at: <http://www.nysforum.org/committees/initiatives/>.

This is the Place!

The NYS Forum focuses on sharing knowledge and building professional relationships to enhance the effective application of information management in the public sector. Our timely, content-rich programs address priorities and provide “The Place” in New York state for meeting and interacting with people who can have a direct and positive impact on achieving your IT objectives. It is important to note that while the committee co-chairs take the lead, each committee’s success is due, in part, to the participation of all of our members. Without your dedication, none of the accomplishments that the committees have brought forth would be possible. Thank you for all that you bring to the table.

The Forum’s website is updated on a daily basis. Our home page features our most current event and lists upcoming seminars. Each committee’s page provides the committee overview, co-chair contact information, upcoming events and minutes from previous meetings. For the latest in Forum news, visit us often at: www.nysforum.org.

This is the Place!



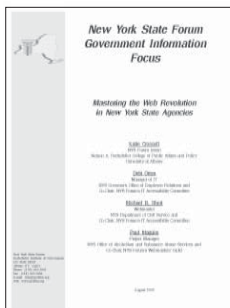


NYS Forum News

October 20 – NYS 1st Annual Cyber Security Awareness Conference – *Protecting our Children on the Internet* – This conference will focus on how to keep children safe while using the Internet and will feature an opening keynote address by Governor Pataki, followed by two workshops: one designed for parents, educators, legislators and law enforcement and another designed specifically for school children. The Cyber Security Awareness Conference is supported by the NYS Office of Cyber Security and Critical Infrastructure Coordination, the Jenna Foundation for Non-Violence, the NYS Forum, the University at Albany, the State Department, the NYS Police, NYS Division of Criminal Justice, NYS Lottery, the GTC, and the South Colonie School District. Details available at: <http://nysforum.org/csac/>.

November 2 – *Lightening the Load with Accessible Design* – Jointly hosted by the NYS Forum's IT Accessibility Committee in conjunction with the US Government Services Administration and Intercon, Inc. Visit: <http://www.nysforum.org>.

November 16 – *PMI Executive Symposium* – James Gallagher, a member of the PMI Board of Directors, will provide the keynote address at this luncheon symposium. Visit <http://www.nysforum.org>.



White Paper Released – *Mastering the Web Revolution in New York State Agencies* – This white paper is focused on the usability of government web sites across the entire, intended audience and is particularly targeted on issues related to whether a web site is fully accessible to users that have one or more disabilities. You may download the paper at: <http://www.nysforum.org> or call The Forum at (518) 443-5001 to obtain a copy.