



# **The Ombudsman: Life, Liberty, and the Pursuit of Fairness**

**United States Ombudsman Association  
37th Annual Conference**

**Pre-Conference: October 17 and 18, 2016**

**Conference: October 19, 20, and 21, 2016**

**THE WESTIN ARLINGTON GATEWAY**

**ARLINGTON, VIRGINIA**

**REGISTRATION PACKET**



Greetings! On behalf of the Board of Directors of the United States Ombudsman Association (USOA), we are pleased to invite you to join us at our 37th Annual Conference in Arlington, Virginia. This year's conference will be held on October 19-21, 2016, at the Westin Arlington Gateway hotel, with full day pre-conference workshops on October 17 and 18.

The world and society are constantly changing, but in every civilized community, there will always be a government. And because governments are run by humans, mistakes can and do happen. In a democratic society like the United States, an ombudsman is necessary to ensure that citizens are treated lawfully, reasonably, and fairly. Only then can Americans truly realize what our Founding Fathers declared to be unalienable rights of all men and women - life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.

Since 1979, the USOA's annual conferences have provided sessions to enhance the skills needed by government ombudsmen in various jurisdictions to effectively carry out their duties, to be aware of best practices, and learn of and discuss the profession's trends. The USOA conferences also provide attendees opportunities to network with peers who have similar jurisdiction for moral support, evidence-based strategy, self-maintenance, and lasting friendship.

This year's conference should appeal to anyone working in the field of conflict resolution, especially those who work with the public. Session topics include workshops on equity and fairness, emotional intelligence, detecting deception in telephone interviews, writing, and dealing with complaints that affect children, as well as presentations on the perspectives and practices of federal government ombudsmen and current activities by the American Bar Association to assist the ombudsman profession.

The annual conference will be preceded by two pre-conference workshops on October 17 and 18. The popular two-day New Ombudsman Training will be offered again, with instructors who are experienced ombudsmen from both legislative and executive branch offices. We will also be offering a pre-conference workshop entitled, "Dealing with Unreasonable Complainant Conduct." This one-day workshop has a 40-attendee limit each day and will therefore be offered on Monday, October 17, and Tuesday, October 18 in order to accommodate the anticipated demand.

Sincerely,

2016 USOA Conference Planning Co-chairs

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## About USOA

The United States Ombudsman Association is a national organization for public sector ombudsman professionals. Founded in 1977, the USOA is North America's oldest national ombudsman association with members from ombudsman offices in local, state and federal governments, as well as affiliated ombudsman offices. Under its bylaws, the USOA is organized to operate exclusively for educational, scientific, and charitable purposes.

The purpose of the USOA is to assist in improving the operation of ombudsman offices throughout the United States. Additionally, the USOA dedicates itself by social and educational means to promote and encourage the establishment of ombudsman offices at the local, state, national, and international levels.



**Early bird  
conference and hotel  
registration dis-  
counts end Septem-  
ber 16.**

***Special rate for  
USOA members!***

**Register at**

**[http://  
www.usombudsman.org/  
uso-a-events/annual-  
conference/](http://www.usombudsman.org/uso-a-events/annual-conference/)**

## Questions or Need Assistance?

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# Pre-Conference Agenda

*"May be Subject to Change"*

## OCTOBER 17 AND 18 – MONDAY AND TUESDAY (Two-day Training)

7:00 AM – 5:00 AM	Pre-conference and Conference Registrations
8:00 AM – 5:00 PM	Pre-conference Workshops
12:00 PM – 1:00 PM	Lunch

### **New Ombudsman Training (Pre-conference Workshop 1)**

This popular two-day workshop is designed for individuals who are relatively new to the role of government ombudsman. Faculty includes general jurisdiction/legislative ombudsmen and executive branch/agency-specific ombudsmen with more than 50 years of collective experience in their respective offices. Participants will learn about the origin, characteristics and standards of an ombudsman office. Instructors will discuss basic intake, interviewing and investigation techniques, reports and will present a case study to enable participants to apply knowledge to practice. The workshop will examine the role of the ombudsman in promoting an ethical climate in our organizations as well as review ethical challenges an ombudsman may face. Participants will also have the opportunity to discuss best practices, time saving tips and tools of the trade with a group of experienced, seasoned ombudsmen.

#### **Instructors:**

Kristie Hirschman – Senior Assistant, Iowa Office of Ombudsman

Linda Lord-Jenkins – Ombudsman, State of Alaska

Robin K. Matsunaga – Ombudsman, State of Hawaii

Gerald R. Papica – Ombudsman Program Director, TN Commission on Children and Youth

## OCTOBER 17 (MONDAY) OR OCTOBER 18 (TUESDAY)

***This is a one-day workshop. Attendance is capped at 40 each day so register early!***

### **Dealing with Unreasonable Complainant Conduct (Pre-conference Workshop 2)**

Unreasonable complainant conduct (UCC) can take up an inordinate amount of an agency's time and resources. Participants will learn the strategies developed as part of a joint project by the nine Australian Parliamentary Ombudsman offices to deal with UCC. This popular and world-renowned one-day workshop will provide participants with specific strategies and skills to effectively and confidently deal with UCC. It is designed for staff who come into contact with, or respond to, complainants or customers who display unreasonable conduct, as well as supervisors and senior management responsible for setting complaint handling policy. The workshop will also examine participant examples of unreasonable complainant conduct.

Participants will learn:

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

**Instructor:** Donald Sword – Educator and Advocate, New South Wales, Australia

# Conference Agenda

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## OCTOBER 18 — TUESDAY

**5:30 PM – 7:30 PM**      **Opening Reception (TBA)**

## OCTOBER 19 – WEDNESDAY

**7:30 AM – 5:00 PM**      **Registration**

**8:30 AM – 8:45 AM**      **Conference Opening and Welcome Remarks**

**8:45 AM – 9:45 AM**      **Plenary Session 1**

### **Equity and the Ombudsman : Ensuring Fairness for All Communities**

What is equity? Why does it matter? How does this affect the work of the ombudsman? And most importantly, how can ombudsmen be an effective resource to the communities that need them most? This session will answer these questions and provide practical hints and tips that attendees can incorporate into their daily work."

#### **Presenters:**

Judi Martin – District Ombudsman, Portland Public Schools, Oregon

Jonathan T. Stier – Senior Deputy Ombudsman, King County Ombudsman's Office, Washington

**9:45 AM – 10:00 AM**      **Break**

**10:00 AM – 11:00 AM**      **Concurrent Session 1/A**

### **From Many Cases, One Report: Annual Reporting Designed for Impact**

An annual report is your opportunity to showcase your office. It familiarizes readers with your authority, your successes, and your data. An annual report also confirms your office's value. In this session, two ombudsmen will discuss their annual reports, including elements and production, style choices, budget, report release strategies and impacts. Bring copies of your office's annual reports along to share!

#### **Presenters:**

Kristie Hirschman – Senior Assistant, Iowa Office of Ombudsman

Ruth Miles – Small Business Advocate, Oregon Secretary of State

**10:00 AM – 11:00 AM Concurrent Session 1/B****Making Federal Fair**

The federal government has established important tools for the public in achieving regulatory fairness. The SBA's (Small Business Administration) office of the National Ombudsman is one such office that works with small businesses and across agency lines. Learn how they creatively juggle an enormous caseload, focus on agency relationships, and work to make the application of federal regulations fair.

**Presenters:**

Earl Gay – National Ombudsman and Assistant Administrator for Regulatory Enforcement Fairness,  
U.S. Small Business Administration  
Yolanda Swift – Deputy National Ombudsman for Regulatory Fairness Programs,  
U.S. Small Business Administration

**11:00 AM – 11:15 AM Break****11:15 AM – 12:15 PM Concurrent Session 2/A****Where Are They Now? Reaching Audiences in the Digital Age**

Are your office's communications effective in today's digital age? This presentation session will discuss the communications challenges facing government organizations in light of rapidly changing technology. Our presenter will discuss the various social and digital platforms the GAO has adopted in order to ensure its information is seen in an information age.

**Presenter:**

Chuck Young – Managing Director, Public Affairs, U.S. Government Accountability Office

**11:15 AM – 12:15 PM Concurrent Session 2/B****The American Bar Association Dispute Resolution Section Ombuds Committee: Who We are and How Can We Help**

This session will share the mission, goals, and activities of the ABA's Dispute Resolution Ombuds Committee. Attendees and the panel will then engage in conversation on how the Committee can be of assistance to the ombudsman profession.

**Panelists:**

Charles L. Howard – Shipman, & Goodwin LLP, Chair of the Ombudsman Committee  
Wendy E. Kamenshine – Ombudsman, Consumer Finance Protection Bureau  
Jonathan T. Stier – Senior Deputy Ombudsman, King County Ombudsman's Office, Washington

**12:15 PM – 1:15 PM Lunch and Keynote Speech**

**Speaker:** John Barkat – Assistant Secretary-General,  
United Nations Ombudsman and Head of Ombudsman  
and Mediation Services

**1:30 PM – 3:00 PM      Concurrent Session 3/A****The Child's Perspective**

Do you treat a complaint filed with your office differently if a child is impacted either directly or peripherally? Should you? Do you consider what is in the best interest of the child when reviewing a complaint? Do you know what the child's rights are? This speaker will discuss a broad array of complaint examples provided by ombudsman's offices with varying jurisdiction that impact children. The list includes visitation with incarcerated parents, special education and bullying in the school system, relative placement when a child is removed from the home, and law enforcement response involving children.

**Presenter:**

Rob Geen – Director of Policy Reform and Advocacy, The Annie E. Casey Foundation

**1:30 PM – 3:00 PM      Concurrent Session 3/B****The Coalition of Federal Ombudsman presents: The Externally-Facing Federal Ombudsman**

The Chair of the Coalition of Federal Ombudsman will moderate a panel discussion exploring the unique structure and practices of a number of externally-facing federal ombuds. Come hear how these ombuds professionals improve the quality of federal processes and deal with the different challenges raised by serving the federal government's stakeholders – in other words, all of us!

**Moderator:**

Scott Deyo – Chair, Coalition of Federal Ombudsman

**Panelists:**

Joanne Dea – Ombudsperson, US Department of Agriculture

Paul Sotoudeh – Associate Ombudsman, Consumer Financial Protection Bureau  
Ombudsman's Office

Ella Yeargin – Ombudsman, Center for Tobacco Products, Food & Drug Administration

**3:00 PM – 3:15 PM      Break****3:15 PM – 5:15 PM      USOA Chapters Meeting**

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

- Children and Families
- Corrections
- Education
- Federal Government
- Healthcare
- Municipal Government

**5:30 PM – 6:30 PM      International Ombudsman Institute Meeting**

**OCTOBER 20 – THURSDAY****8:30 AM – 11:30 AM Concurrent Session 4/A****The Fairness Lens (Break: 9:45 AM – 10:00 AM)**

What is fairness? As practitioners dealing with disputes, how do we look at fairness? How sharp is your fairness lens? This interactive session, using case studies, will explain the Fairness Triangle: procedural, equitable and substantive.

**Presenter:**

Fiona Crean – Ombudsman, Hydro One, Ontario, Canada

**8:30 AM – 9:45 AM Concurrent Session 4/B****A Workshop on Ombuds Writing: Using A Framework to Be Clear, Concise and Effective**

In this session, participants will learn a standard writing framework used in the legal profession. The presenter will review how this framework is applicable to all types of ombuds writing, including emails, systemic analyses, and annual reports. In addition, she will discuss how this framework assists the reader in understanding how the ombuds assisted on the issue and how it assists the ombuds (the writer) in logically presenting the discussion. After learning the framework, participants will have an opportunity to do some writing to try out this framework in the ombuds context.

**Presenter:**

Wendy E. Kamenshine – Ombudsman, Consumer Financial Protection Bureau

**9:45 AM – 10:00 AM Break****10:00 AM – 11:30 AM Concurrent Session 4/C****The Role of the Ombudsperson is More Than a Service**

This workshop provides an informed perspective and examines the impact of your role as an ombudsperson. By the end of this session we will have:

- Increased your understanding of the ombudsperson role
- Explored the impact of empathy when responding to complaints while providing a fair and impartial process
- Discussed effective strategies to deescalate issues and disputes
- Explored outreach as an importance strategy
- Networked with other ombudspersons to develop future partnerships and support

**Presenter:**

Ronald McGlone, McGlone Mediation Services, LLC



**11:30 AM – 1:00 PM Lunch and USOA Annual Meeting**

**1:15 PM – 1:15 PM Break**

**1:15 PM – 5:00 PM Plenary Session 2**

**Detecting Deception in Telephone Interviews (Break: 2:45 PM – 3:00 PM)**

Detecting deception on the telephone is difficult, but not impossible. This presentation provides effective techniques to detect deception on the telephone. Additionally, several techniques to test for deception will be provided. These techniques can be used without the person you are talking to becoming aware that you are testing their veracity.

**Presenter:**

Jack Schafer – Assistant Professor, Western Illinois University

**6:00 PM – 9:00 PM Thursday Networking Event @ Arlington Arts Center**

**OCTOBER 21 – FRIDAY**

**9:00 AM – 11:45 AM Plenary Session 3 (Break: 10:15 AM – 10:30 AM)**

**Emotional Intelligence: You Can't Ombuds Without It**

Ombuds work with individuals and scenarios that are often intensely influenced by emotions. Research indicates that Emotional Intelligence (EI) is a core competency skill necessary for all ombuds, as they are regularly called upon to assist individuals in decoding emotional responses as the first step toward clarity and conflict resolution. This session is designed to help ombuds insert a practical definition of EI into their daily work and apply the body of knowledge related to EI to better equip their practice. The history behind this rapidly growing science and how EI fundamentals and ombuds competencies are intricately interwoven will be explored at length.

**Key Learning Objectives:**

- Provide a workable definition, history and scientific basis for emotional intelligence as it relates to the practice of organizational ombudsman.
- Assist participants in recognizing and understanding the knowledge domains of emotional intelligence and their impact on ombudsmanship.
- Provide useful EI resource material to equip ombuds in creating an effective office.

**Presenter:**

Susan Casino – Ombudsman, Mediator, Conflict Resolution Expert

**11:45 AM – 12:00 PM Conference Closing**

**A CERTIFICATE OF ATTENDANCE WILL BE PROVIDED**

## REGISTRATION FEES INFORMATION

There are three separate registration options this year:

1. Full Conference, 2. Pre-Conference (two options), 3. Guest Reception & Networking Event

### Full Conference Fees

October 19, 20 and 21, 2016		
<i>Includes the Tuesday evening reception, Wednesday and Thursday breakfast, lunch and refreshment breaks, Thursday evening networking event and a break on Friday</i>		
	On or before September 16	After September 16
Member	\$475	\$525
Non-Member	\$600	\$650
Students*	\$400	\$400

\*Proof of full-time enrollment is required.

The registration process allows registrants to receive the Conference Program in a binder or flash drive.

Single-Day Conference Registration		
October 19 and/or October 20, 2016		
<i>Single day registrations for Wednesday and/or Thursday – includes breakfast, lunch and refreshment breaks!</i>		
	On or before September 16	After September 16
Member	\$225/day	\$250/day
Non-Member	\$250/day	\$275/day

Single-Day Conference Registration		
October 21, 2016		
<i>Single-day registration for Friday – includes morning refreshment</i>		
	On or before September 16	After September 16
Member	\$100	\$125
Non-Member	\$125	\$150

**On-Line Registration Link:** <http://www.usombudsman.org/usoa-events/>

### **Pre- Conference Fees #1**

<b><i>“New Ombudsman Training”</i></b>		
<b>October 17 and October 18, 2016</b>		
The pre-conference registration fee – <i>includes</i> breakfast, lunch and refreshment breaks on Monday and Tuesday!		
	On or before September 16	After September 16
Member	\$375	\$425
Non-Member	\$475	\$525
Students*	\$350	\$350

\*Proof of full-time enrollment is required.

### **Pre- Conference Fees #2**

<b><i>“Dealing with Unreasonable Complainant Conduct”</i></b>		
<b>October 17, 2016 <u>OR</u> October 18, 2016</b>		
<b><u>This is a one-day workshop. Attendance is capped at 40 each day so register early</u></b>		
The pre-conference registration fee – <i>includes</i> breakfast, lunch and refreshment breaks!		
	On or before September 16	After September 16
Member	\$275	\$325
Non-Member	\$325	\$375

### **Reception & Networking Event Fees**

<b>Non-Conference Participant/Guest Reception and Networking Event Tickets</b>	
Reception - Tuesday Evening	\$25
Networking event - Thursday Evening	\$65

Contact [usoa@assocserv.com](mailto:usoa@assocserv.com) for information on group rates and registration assistance.

**On-Line Registration Link:** <http://www.usombudsman.org/usoa-events/>

# GENERAL CONFERENCE INFORMATION

## DRESS/ATTIRE

The dress/attire for the conference is business casual.

## HOTEL ACCOMMODATIONS

### **THE WESTIN ARLINGTON GATEWAY**

801 North Glebe Road, Arlington, VA 22203

Hotel Number: 703-717-6200

Hotel Reservations: 888-627-7076

Hotel Website: <http://www.westinarlingtongateway.com/>

We have contracted with the hotel for a reduced rate for conference attendees. The negotiated group rate is **\$222 per night plus 13% tax**. Subject to availability, this rate is effective three days prior and three days after the conference.

**Please book directly with the hotel no later than Friday, September 16, 2016.** This is the cut-off date for the USOA room block. After the cut-off date, the hotel will release unused rooms to the public. All reservations received after September 16 will be accepted on a space availability basis only.

## AIRPORTS & GROUND TRANSPORTATION

1. DCA or Reagan Airport (5 miles from hotel)  
Taxi (\$25-35) or metro to Ballston Station
2. IAD or Dulles Airport (27 miles from hotel)  
Taxi (\$45-55), subway and taxi, or SuperShuttle (800-BLUE-VAN or 800-258-3826)
3. BWI or Baltimore-Washington Airport (47 miles from hotel)  
Taxi (\$90-110) or SuperShuttle

### **NOTES:**

1. If there is heavy traffic, the fare or rate is higher. Inquire about it before choosing your mode of transportation to the hotel.
2. Traffic is heavy on weekdays essentially from 6 AM to 8 PM, especially in Virginia. A 15-mile trip can take an hour or more depending on the road used and the time of day.

## **BUS & METRO SERVICES**

The hotel is two blocks from the Ballston Station.

Bus & Metro Services Ballston-MU is the closest Metrorail Station and serves both Orange and Silver Lines.

Additional Information

[arlingtontransit.com](http://arlingtontransit.com) or [wmata.com](http://wmata.com)  
<http://www.westinarlingtongateway.com/hotels-near-ballston-metro-station>

## **THINGS TO DO**

Arlington, Virginia is the second-largest major city of the Washington DC metropolitan area. Apart from visiting The White House, Smithsonian Institute, Arlington National Cemetery and others, there are many of tourist attractions in close proximity to the hotel. In your spare time, you may want to visit:

### **Clarendon (2 miles)**

Prime location that sits between a city and a suburb. Go-to area for nightlife and dining plus music venues.

### **Kennedy Center (3 miles)**

The Kennedy Center is located in the intersection of New Hampshire Avenue, NW and the Rock Creek Pkwy. The John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts is walking distance to the Foggy Bottom/ George Washington University Metro Station.

### **Kettler Capitals Iceplex (0.2 miles)**

The practice arena of the Washington Capitals hockey team. It is the highest ice rink (8th Floor) in the US.

### **National Science Foundation (0.1 miles)**

The NSF was established in 1950 and welcomes thousands of visitors every year. It is the only US agency “dedicated to the support of fundamental research & education in all scientific & engineering disciplines.”

### **Upton Regional Park (2.5 miles)**

Large outdoor waterpark complex, deluxe (one of the longest) miniature golf course, and nine baseball and softball cages.

For more options, visit Arlington Convention and Visitors Service at

<http://www.virginia.org/Listings/VisitorInformationCenters/ArlingtonConventionandVisitorsService/>

## **CONFERENCE RESERVATION CANCELLATION & REFUND POLICY**

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

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

Cancellation on or before September 16:	100% refund, less \$25 cancellation fee
Cancellation from September 16 to October 18:	50% refund, less \$25 cancellation fee
Cancellation after October 18:	No refund

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

## **QUESTIONS?**

E-mail [gerald.papica@tn.gov](mailto:gerald.papica@tn.gov) or [kristie.hirschman@legis.iowa.gov](mailto:kristie.hirschman@legis.iowa.gov)