

# CES News

## Communication, Education, Service



Volume 1, Issue 2

### President's Message

Greetings Fellow CES Members:

Our membership drive ended in mid March and we currently have 60 members. WOW! I couldn't be happier. Many hours of hard work have been spent planning and organizing our "Get Back on Track" 2006 Annual Conference. I can assure all who attend will be leaving anticipating next year's conference. I would like to commend the Board of Directors for giving up so much of their time to make this conference unforgettable.

Nominations have been accepted for new officers. The installation of the newly elected Officers will be held during the conference. I challenge all members to consider taking on a leadership role in the organization. It is an extremely rewarding experience.

Request for nominations for the two awards has also gone out. The "Award of Excellence" and the "Above and Beyond the Call of Duty Award" will be announced during the Annual Conference. A panel of judges including non-LSU AgCenter personnel and LSU AgCenter support staff and faculty members will have the very hard task of making the selections. Remember, only a CES member can be nominated but anyone can nominate a CES member.

The community service project selected this year is CASA (Court Appointed Advocacy Association). The mission of CASA is to support and promote court-appointed volunteer advocacy for abused and neglected children so that they can thrive in safe, permanent homes. Directors throughout the state have asked all

faculty and staff to donate Easter basket items. As an activity during the conference the baskets will be assembled and sent on to CASA representatives in each region who will then distribute the baskets to children currently participating in CASA. We also have several 4-H clubs joining in as a community service project for their parish.

During the conference we will also hold a silent auction so bring your check book. The proceeds from the auction will go toward the professional development scholarships to be given in the fall of this year. The more we make – the more the scholarships will be worth!

Danielle Bayham will be installed as your next President. I will continue to serve as an Ex-Officio member. Danielle has a great amount of experience as a leader and I know, with the help of the Board of Directors, will continue this organization on a path of growth. A vision that I have had for all chapters of CES is to hold a national meeting. The reality of CES in Louisiana took a lot of determination and hard work and I believe that a national meeting can become reality. I enjoy every minute spent in the organization and coordination efforts of Chi Epsilon Sigma – Epsilon Chapter.

In the words of Vickie Snyder, Past President of Chi Epsilon Sigma – Alpha Chapter, "make someone's day, keep a positive attitude, help someone from the heart, love someone who is not-so-loveable, and try something new". This is a great example of someone who is a Chi Epsilon Sigma member!

**Mary Baronet, President**  
**Chi Epsilon Sigma – Epsilon Chapter**

#### Inside this issue:

Retirement Options	2
Name That Newsletter Contest	2
Let Me Introduce You!	3
Dates to Remember	3
Chi Epsilon Sigma Awards	3
Exchanging of Documents/Files	4
Annual Meeting Program	5-6

### Second Annual CES Meeting

April 7 and 8, 2006

Wesley Retreat Center  
 Woodworth, LA

Registration Fees:  
 \$57 for double room  
 \$72 for single room

This fee includes room, meals and the conference room use.

**Be sure to register for this fun event!**

# Retirement Options

## Retirement Eligibility

LASERS is a "defined benefit" plan wherein the employee and employer make contributions into a "pool" of funds from which you receive a retirement income based on a benefit formula. The formula for the maximum retirement benefit is 2.5% times creditable years of service (inclusive of credit for unused leave) times the average salary for your thirty-six highest successive months. Minimum eligibility requirements for regular retirement are: 10 years at age 60; 25 years at age 55; 30 years at any age. An employee can take early retirement with an actuarial reduction in their benefit when they have acquired 20 years of service at any age or with 10 years of service credit at age 50. (The option to retire with 10 years of service credit at age 50 will no longer be applicable after 12/31/06.) The actuarial reduction is based on the number of months you retire prior to reaching regular retirement eligibility.

## Deferred Retirement Option Plan (DROP)

An employee who is eligible for regular retirement may choose to participate in The Deferred Retirement Option Plan (DROP). Drop is an optional program in which eligible LASERS members elect to freeze their regular retirement benefits and to have those benefits deposited in a special account at LASERS. The

employee continues working and earning a salary. Participation is for up to 36 months and may only occur during the member's "window" which is their first 3 years and 60 days after eligibility for retirement. DROP allows a LASERS member to build up savings, but it may not be a good idea for every member because it freezes a member's high three-year average salary for retirement purposes at the pre-DROP level. The funds deposited in the member's account during DROP are withdrawn by the member after termination of employment. After termination of employment, regular retirement begins. The member may choose to continue to work after DROP and not retire until later.

## Initial Benefit Option (IBO)

Employees who are eligible for regular retirement may choose to participate in the Initial Benefit Option (IBO), in lieu of participating in DROP. In return for a reduced monthly retirement benefit, the IBO pays a retiree at the time of retirement, a lump-sum payment, up to an equivalent of 36 months of the maximum retirement benefit.

## Leave at Retirement

When an employee terminates state service, according to current

Civil Service rules, the agency may pay up to 300 hours of annual leave at time of retirement. Payment for 300 hours is based on the employee's hourly rate at termination. Most members have two choices relating to the remaining balance of their annual and sick leave: convert the combined annual and sick leave to retirement service credit, or receive an actuarial lump-sum payment for the leave.

## HRM Recommendations: PREP

HRM suggests you review your retirement service credit, eligibility date, and overall status with the HRM Office at least five years in advance of the date you think you are eligible to retire. LASERS offers pre-retirement education seminars (PREP) which include topics such as, eligibility requirements for retirement and benefits, Initial Benefit Option (IBO), survivor benefits, disability benefits, DROP, purchase of service credit, and Social Security. Visit the LASERS web Site at [www.lasers.state.la.us](http://www.lasers.state.la.us) for additional information about your retirement plan.

**Kathy Loyd**

**Ann Coulon**

**Human Resource Management  
LSU AgCenter**

## Name That Newsletter Contest

Congratulations to Torii Freeman for sending in the prize winning title for the Chi Epsilon Sigma newsletter. Torii is the assistant director of human resource management for the LSU AgCenter. We will be honoring her at our annual meeting on April 7 and 8.

## Let Me Introduce You!

CES member Elizabeth Jordan has been with the LSU AgCenter for 14 years. She is an Administrative Coordinator III and is located in the Caddo Parish Extension Office in Shreveport. Elizabeth started in 1992 as substitute 4-H agent while the agent was on sick leave for nine months. She then became a secretary and has remained there since.

Elizabeth has been happily married to Ralph Jordan since February

14, 1970. They have two daughters, Londa Croall and Jessica Bowie. Both of their daughters grew up in the 4-H program.

They also have two grandchildren, Emily and Elizabeth. They are waiting on the arrival of their newest grandchild, Jordan Croall.

Elizabeth enjoys quilting, reading and genealogy research.

Here are a few of Elizabeth's favorite things:

Favorite color—Blue

Favorite aroma—Fresh cut grass,  
which reminds her of watermelons

Favorite food—Shrimp

Favorite music—Anything Elvis Presley

Favorite song—Anything Elvis Presley

Favorite TV show—The Elvis Comeback Special  
1968

Favorite movie—*Gone With the Wind*

## Dates to Remember

**March 28** CES Board of Directors Meeting, 9:00 a.m.  
All distance ed sites used for last meeting are available

**April 7 and 8** Chi Epsilon Sigma—Epsilon Chapter  
2nd Annual Meeting  
Wesley Retreat Center, Woodworth, La.

### Chi Epsilon Sigma

Easter Drive  
For Court Appointed Special  
Advocacy Association  
(CASA)

We are collecting Easter candy or toys to make Easter baskets for CASA and would appreciate your help in this very worthy cause. Please bring them to our annual meeting on April 7th. If you cannot attend the meeting, please get them to a member that is.

## Chi Epsilon Sigma Awards

*Another first for the Chi Epsilon Sigma – Epsilon Chapter is the development of two awards. One is “Above and Beyond the Call of Duty” award and the other is “Award of Excellence”. The recipients will be announced and the awards presented at our Annual Conference in April. These prestigious awards will be given out annually .*

### Mission Statement:

The purpose of this fraternity shall be to maintain the standards and ideas, uphold the morale, prestige and respect of the LSU AgCenter support staff; to develop an effective working relationship and spirit of fraternal fellowship among present and emeriti employees of the LSU AgCenter support staff; to encourage professionalism; and to recognize, share and reward professional excellence in job performance.

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## We're on the web!

[www.lsuagcenter.com/en/administration/about\\_us/professional\\_organizations/chi\\_epsilon\\_sigma/](http://www.lsuagcenter.com/en/administration/about_us/professional_organizations/chi_epsilon_sigma/)

Given the ease of simply creating an email message and attaching a file or document to send, it may seem somewhat troublesome to stop and think before hitting that "Send" button; however, doing so will sometimes save you, your co-workers, and your clients unnecessary headaches. "What's the big deal??"...your files – that's what!! When it comes to sending email attachments - the smaller the file size – the better.

Let's say that you are trying to email two files to five different people in the same email message (one is a 5MB image file and the other is a 5MB database file). You attach the files and hit send. Shortly after you receive a message back from the automated mail administrator indicating that the total size of the message was too big. So you'll get around that – you'll send the files in separate email messages – and it works!! But, the next day you get a message indicating that your mailbox is closed because it has exceeded the server's storage capacity...

Why does all this occur? Every time that you send an email, the message and attached file leaves your computer and goes to the AgCenter email server in Baton Rouge. A copy of the file is stored in your mailbox (on the server in Baton Rouge) under Sent Items and then the message proceeds to be delivered to the mailbox (on the server – whether AgCenter or any other) of the recipient(s). When the recipient checks their email, a copy of the message and attachments are then sent to their computer. The default storage capacity of an AgCenter mailbox is 45MB. The simple scenario above took 20MB or nearly ½ of your mailbox's total capacity (1<sup>st</sup> try = 10MB in Sent Items, stuck in Outbox, or left in Deleted + successfully sent 5MB for each of the two in Sent Items)... It also took nearly ¼ of the total capacity for the five people that received the two messages that were sent successfully.

The methods of sending files listed below will help you more efficiently exchange data:

### ***Use Locally Shared Network Storage***

If possible, this is by far, the most efficient way to exchange files with co-workers within your office. Basically, if you are sending a file to the person sitting next to you, why send it to Baton Rouge? By placing it on a locally shared network storage area (Public, Office, or Network drive) you are saving both time and resources. Data transfer rates within offices are often 100 times faster than over the internet. Simply copy the file to the shared area and notify your co-worker of its location.

### ***Reduce Image File Size Before Emailing***

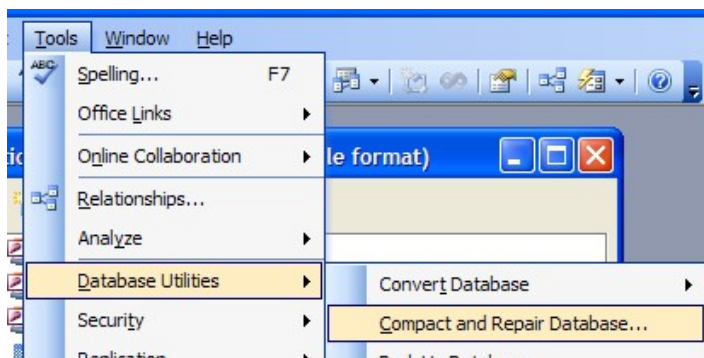
When emailing a Word, Publisher, or PowerPoint file, the images included in those documents are often much larger (file size – not appearance on the screen) than they need to be for their intended purpose. The same is true for regular image files such as a JPG's. You can find explanations of file sizes and

image resolution, as well as detailed instructions for reducing file sizes at the AgCenter's – Support Center Intranet site:

[https://www.lsuagcenter.net/infotech/support/articles/Image\\_File\\_Size\\_Parts\\_1-4.pdf](https://www.lsuagcenter.net/infotech/support/articles/Image_File_Size_Parts_1-4.pdf)

### ***Reduce Database File Size Before Emailing***

There is a very simple way to quickly and easily reduce the size of your databases before sending them via email. Open the database file and select Tools | Database Utilities | Compact and Repair Database (see image below). It is very interesting to compare the huge difference in file size before and after doing this.



If interested, you can find out what actually occurs to the database file using the compact and repair tool by visiting:

<http://office.microsoft.com/en-au/assistance/HP052727261033.aspx>.

### ***LSU's FTP Service***

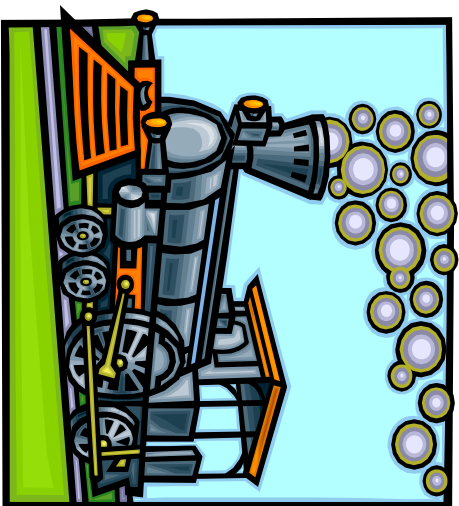
LSU's main campus has made available an FTP (File Transfer Protocol) site from which you can exchange very large files with anyone who has a connection to the internet. You would want to use this method when you must send files that are of large size. More information about this can be obtained from: <http://ftp.lsu.edu>.

Following these guidelines will put you well on your way to utilizing "Best Practices" for exchanging documents and files with others. It may seem daunting at first, but with a little practice and learning, these things will soon become second nature and part of your daily routine.

Please visit the AgCenter's IT Support Center web site for other IT tips and helpful information:

<https://www.lsuagcenter.net/infotech/support>

**Davis Dautreuil**  
**Regional Technical Support Specialist**  
**LSU AgCenter, Information Technology**



This past year saw some tremendous changes in Louisiana. All of our lives were affected by Hurricanes Katrina and Rita. Some of us suffered loss, while others had family and friends that did. Our economy was affected and well as our jobs.

To those of you who suffered loss,  
We pray for you.

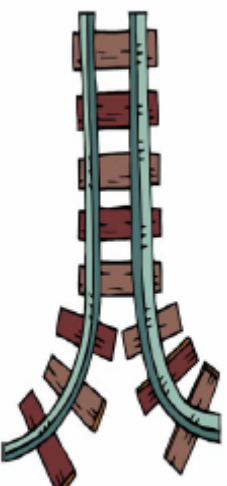
To those of you who helped where needed,  
We commend you.

To those who are still lost and need help,  
We hope we can help you

**Get Back On Track!**



Get Back On Track



Epsilon Sigma  
Annual Conference

Friday and Saturday  
April 7 & 8, 2006



# **Get Back On Track!**

## **CES Annual Conference**



**Friday, April 7, 2006**

**Saturday, April 8, 2006**

There is a Silent Auction going on today. Please look around and bid on any items that you might want.

1:00 – 1:30 p.m.	Check-in & Registration	7:00 – 7:30 a.m.	Power Walk
1:30 p.m.	Opening Session	7:30 – 8:30 a.m.	Breakfast
1:30 – 2:00 p.m.	Welcome Dr. Rosalie Bivin Assistant Vice Chancellor	8:30 -9:30 a.m.	Community Project Easter Basket assembly
2:00 – 3:00 p.m.	The Battle Behind My Eyes Johnny Arceneaux 4-H Youth Development	10:00 – 11:00 a.m.	CASA Project Ladonna Ward CASA
3:15 – 4:15 p.m.	Taking Control of Personal Finances Jeanette Tucker Human Ecology	11:00 a.m.	Election Results Officer Installation Ceremony
4:30 – 5:30 p.m.	Brenda Dunn EAP	Adjourn	
6:00 p.m. – End	Social and Dinner		