



Newsletter

Member Update of the Public Affairs Research Council of Louisiana

PAR 2009-2010 Board of Directors

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*NOTE: Past chairmen also
serve as ex-officio members
of the Board.*

PAR's 2009 conference another success

PAR's 2009 Annual Conference and Luncheon attracted a crowd of nearly 600 attendees to review top issues in the 2009 legislative session. The April 24 conference at the Crowne Plaza Hotel in Baton Rouge was co-chaired by board members **Beth Courtney** and **Greg Cotter**.

The event was sponsored by **AllStar Automotive Group**, **Chevron Corporation**, **Baton Rouge Coca-Cola Bottling Company** and **Cox Communications**. More than 60 other individuals and organizations served as gold and silver table sponsors for the event.

Gerald Seib, assistant managing editor and executive Washington editor of The Wall Street Journal, delivered the luncheon keynote speech, "The Obama Presidency: Great Ambition or Grave Overreach?"

The morning panel session featured a lively discussion on the upcoming legislative session with a focus on budget issues. Panelists included Chief Economist of the Legislative Fiscal Office **Greg Albrecht**; Commissioner of Higher Education **Sally Clausen**, Deputy Superintendent of Education **Ollie Tyler**, Department of Health and Hospitals Legislative Affairs Director **Julia Kenny**, Senate President **Joel T. Chaisson, II** (District 19); and Representative **Patricia Haynes Smith** (District 67). Times-Picayune Bureau Chief **Robert Travis Scott** moderated the discussion.



*ABOVE: Corporate sponsors and board members made a success of the annual event. Shown left to right are: sponsor **Fran Gladden** of Cox Communications, sponsor **Bill Lockwood** of All Star Automotive Group, incoming PAR Board Chairwoman **Donna Saurage**, sponsor **Darian Chustz** of Coca-Cola Bottling Co., PAR President **Jim Brandt**, event co-chair **Beth Courtney** of LPB and outgoing PAR Board Chairman **David Eustis**.*

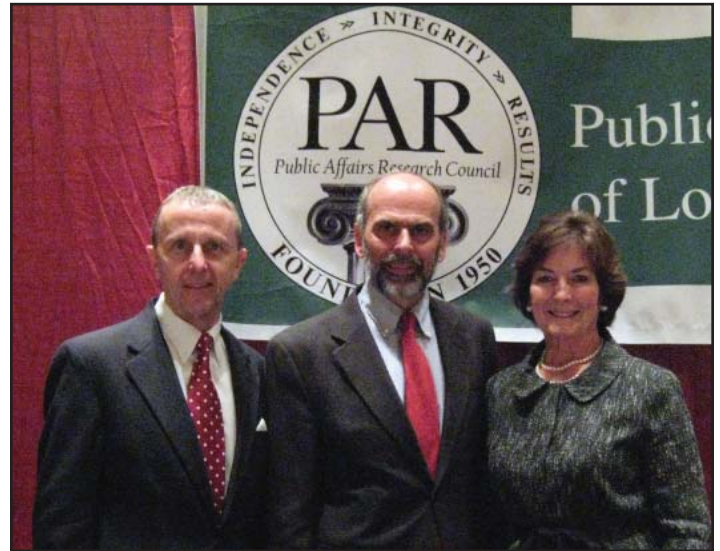
PAR welcomes four new members to 2009 Board of Directors

Donna M. Saurage of Baton Rouge was elected chairwoman of the PAR Board of Directors at the organization's annual conference in Baton Rouge on Friday, April 24.

The PAR Board also elected **Gordon Pugh**, senior partner at Breazeale, Sachse & Wilson in Baton Rouge, as vice chairman. **R. Hunter Pierson** of Pierson Investments in New Orleans was elected as secretary. **Dr. James R. Caillier**, executive director of the Patrick F. Taylor Foundation in New Orleans, was elected as treasurer.

In addition to officers, the PAR membership elected four new board members for three-year terms ending in 2012. New members of the Board of Directors are: **Charlotte Brent**, service quality leader, Dow Chemical, Plaquemine; **Layne McDaniel**, president, Noesis Data, Baton Rouge; **Ben Miller**, of counsel, Kean Miller Hawthorne D'Armond McCowan & Jarman, LLP, Baton Rouge; **W. Foster Walker, III**, president, Walker Automotive, Alexandria.

The PAR membership also re-elected six directors to serve another three-year term ending in 2012. They are: **Rob Stuart**, president, Capital One, Baton Rouge; **Ralph Miller**, VP state government relations, Freeport-McMoRan, New Orleans; **Richard Crowell**, attorney-at-law, Crowell & Owens, LLC, Alexandria; **Kathy Spurlock**, executive editor, The News Star, Monroe; **Greg Cotter**, Baton Rouge; **Ann Knapp**, senior financial adviser, Merrill Lynch, Lake Charles.



ABOVE: Gerald F. Seib (center), Washington bureau chief of The Wall Street Journal, delivered the keynote speech at PAR's annual luncheon. He is shown here with Jim Brandt and Donna Saurage.



ABOVE: Newly elected Board Chairwoman Donna Saurage expresses gratitude for the generosity of the event sponsors.



LEFT: Moderator Robert Travis Scott with the Times-Picayune led the morning panel discussion on the state's budget shortfall. Panelists shown (left to right) are Dr. Sally Clausen, commissioner of higher education; Greg Albrecht, chief economist of the Legislative Fiscal Office; and Rep. Patricia Haynes Smith, District 17 Louisiana House of Representatives.

PAR honors outstanding service of outgoing Board Chairman

The chairmanship of the board changed hands at the PAR Annual Conference and Luncheon this year.

At the luncheon event, incoming chairwoman **Donna Saurage** honored the long-term commitment of **David Eustis** and presented him with a clock to commemorate his service.

Eustis served as board chairman for two years and helped the organization reach even higher levels of excellence in public policy research, citizen education and development. His leadership was noted as being critical to PAR, not just during his tenure as chairman, but also throughout his board service.

He performed an outstanding job in co-chairing PAR's first ever capital

campaign and laid the ground work for its success. His hands-on participation in pursuing sponsorships for the annual conference and luncheon ensured the event's continued growth.

Throughout his years of service, Eustis was diligent in encouraging others to join PAR's efforts and was essential to PAR's ability to raise the funds to make its work possible.

Saurage noted that Eustis left his own very special imprint on the organization, and she expressed her admiration and gratitude for his leadership.

Eustis will continue to serve as past-chair of the PAR board as an ex-officio member of the board.



Event sponsors and board members gather at the patron's reception



ABOVE: Shown from left to right are **Luis Zervigon**, PAR Board member; **Allan Bissinger**, PAR Board member; **Fran Gladden**, with presenting sponsor Cox Communications; **Burton Weaver**, past PAR Board chair; **Norman Kinsey**, past PAR Board chair; and **Darian Chustz**, with presenting sponsor Baton Rouge Coca-Cola Bottling Company.



ABOVE: Shown from left to right are **Trey Hill**, PAR Board member; **Charlotte Brent**, new PAR Board member; **Dr. James Caillier**, PAR treasurer; **Beth Courtney**, co-chair of Annual Conference and Luncheon; **Bill Lockwood**, with presenting sponsor All Star Automotive Group; and **Ben Miller**, new PAR Board member.

Annual Conference and Luncheon Presenting Sponsors



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 Foundations
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**Please remember PAR in your
 will or estate planning.**

For more information, contact
 Susan Mintz Kantrow at (225) 926-8414.



2008–2009 HIGHLIGHTS

The **Public Affairs Research Council of Louisiana** is an independent voice, offering solutions to critical public issues in Louisiana through accurate, objective research and focusing public attention on those solutions.

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PUBLIC POLICY RESEARCH

PAR published a number of significant research studies on state government issues in the past year.

Transportation Funding This study examines the three major transportation funding “crises” facing the state in the near future and evaluates the severity and immediacy of each. The report finds that Louisiana will have to find a source of significant new funding to keep pace with increasing maintenance and capacity demands on the state’s highways, bridges and intermodal transportation system.

GulfGov Reports: The Role of Community Rebuilding Plans in the Hurricane Recovery This is the third special topic report in the GulfGov Reports research series. This study examines regional and community recovery and rebuilding plans in Louisiana and Mississippi. These plans provide the framework for the direction of the recovery and a glimpse into how the character of the affected communities is changing.

Electoral Redistricting This study evaluates the state’s options for determining how electoral lines will be redrawn following the next full census in 2010. Using best practices from other states that have designed an independent method for electoral redistricting, the report recommends the structure and function of an independent commission for Louisiana that would minimize the opportunity for political influence in the results.

Capital Outlay Reform Agenda for Louisiana Research Brief and Capital Outlay Process Backgrounder The capital outlay research brief makes 10 recommendations for reforming the way the state decides how to spend its construction dollars. It outlines the essential elements of comprehensive capital outlay reform, which would make the process more rational and less political.

GulfGov Reports: Three years after Katrina and Rita, Challenges Remain This final publication in the GulfGov Reports research series examines some of the recovery misconceptions state and local officials continue to combat more than three years after hurricanes Katrina and Rita washed ashore.

Assessing the Louisiana Health First Plan This research brief outlines concerns with the state’s new health care reform agenda and urges caution as legislators quickly consider whether to support the Department of Health and Hospitals (DHH) effort to convert the state’s Medicaid program to a model that would apply managed care principles used in the private-sector insurance market.

Higher Education Governance This report examines the structure and function of the state’s higher education governance entities, including the Board of Regents and the four system boards. This analysis of budgetary and management authority examines systems in other states to present Louisiana’s options for drawing clearer lines of accountability for spending and performance.

WATCHDOG ISSUES

PAR issued the following commentaries to provide a timely perspective on current public issues:

- 03/19/09 *PAR Urges School Board Reform*
- 03/12/09 *PAR Names Top Five Sunshine Solutions*
- 02/19/09 *Constitutional convention only helps future budgets, PAR says*
- 07/15/08 *PAR Calls Vetoes a Good First Step*
- 06/24/08 *Session Yielded Little Reform, PAR Says*
- 06/12/08 *PAR Calls Pay Raise Absurd Proposal*
- 06/09/08 *PAR Says Allow Tuition Increases*
- 05/30/08 *PAR Says Proposed Tax Cut is Shortsighted Fiscal Policy*
- 05/12/08 *PAR Says Scrap Records Exception for Governor, Start Over*
- 04/30/08 *PAR Says Stronger Burden of Proof Weakens Ethics Reform*

CITIZEN EDUCATION

PAR's citizen education efforts over the past year included updating recurring publications for reprinting and Web publication, making personal and media presentations, and answering requests for information.

Guide to the 2009 Louisiana Legislature This handy, pocket-sized guide was completely updated to reflect elections through March 2009. The *Guide* provides helpful information about state legislators, statewide elected officials and the state's congressional delegation, including biographical data, photos and contact information.

Guide to the Constitutional Amendments This objective analysis explains the arguments for and against each constitutional amendment that voters must approve or deny. The 2008 guide analyzed the seven amendments on the November 4, 2008, ballot.

Speeches, Public Forums and Media Appearances In the past year, PAR staff presented more than 50 speeches to civic or professional associations throughout the state and frequently appeared on TV and radio interviews.

www.la-par.org PAR's Web site is often visited by citizens and media professionals around the state for useful information on Louisiana government. A companion site, the GulfGov Reports Web site (www.rockinst.org/gulfgov), provides information specific to disaster recovery.

RESEARCH STUDIES UNDERWAY

Economic Development Incentives This research project will evaluate Louisiana's use of corporate incentive funds in comparison to best practices around the nation. This analysis will make recommendations to improve the accountability and transparency of spending the state's mega-project development fund and rapid response fund.

Highway Funding Options Building on the findings in PAR's 2009 transportation funding report, this report examines options to fill the annual \$650 million funding gap. A mixture of tax increases, dedications and/or private investment will be necessary for the state to keep pace with basic maintenance and capacity needs.

Charter Schools This study will examine the highly complex field of charter schools across the state and conduct a case study of 20 schools. The goal is to identify innovative approaches to public education that could be replicated both in new charter schools and in traditional public schools.

Mental Health Care Services This research brief will outline the mental health care needs of the Louisiana population and identify current gaps in public programs and services for care of the mentally ill, both long-term and acute care, especially in New Orleans and coastal areas where services remain shut down since the hurricanes of 2005.

Models for Medicaid Reform This research brief will outline the Medicaid management models used in other states that have demographics similar to Louisiana. The research is designed to answer questions about the best approach for the state to take as it redesigns the way Medicaid services are provided to citizens and payments are made to providers.

Workforce Development Strategy This analysis will evaluate the early results of Louisiana's workforce development reforms, which were initiated with legislation passed in 2008. The goal of the project is to evaluate the extent to which the changes are meaningful and show promise for improving Louisiana's capacity to build its workforce and link workforce needs with education funding.

Ethics Reform This report will analyze the impact of the 2008 changes and present a thorough analysis of how Louisiana ethics administration compares to other states. Recommendations for reforms that would further strengthen the state's laws and replace any real power that was lost with the changes will be offered.

PARTICIPATION ON BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS

PAR's president and staff have represented PAR on the following boards and commissions:

School and District Accountability Commission
Blue Ribbon Commission for Educational Excellence
High School Redesign Task Force
Civil Service Comprehensive Public Training Program Advisory Committee
Louisiana Commission on Civic Education
Louisiana Coalition for Open Government
Levee District Authority Nominating Committee
Louisiana Budget Project Advisory Committee (LANO)

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Officers

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R. Hunter Pierson, Treasurer

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Gregory J. Cotter	Sharon O. Kleinpeter	Julian J. Rodrigue, Sr.
Beth Courtney	Ann Knapp	Kathy Spurlock
Duane Cowart	O. Fred Loy	Rob Stewart
Richard B. "Dick" Crowell	Michael H. Madison	Robert M. "Rob" Stuart, Jr.
Louis M. Freeman	Ralph Miller	George H. Wilson, Jr.
Jacob Giardina, Jr.	Virginia B. Noland	Luis C. Zervigon

Past Board Chairmen Who Serve Ex-Officio

Wallace F. Armstrong	George D. Nelson, Jr.
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Norman Kinsey	W. L. Senn, Jr.
Richard F. Knight	Edward Stauss, Jr.
Morris F. Mintz	Burton D. Weaver, Jr.

PAR Staff Members

Jim Brandt, *President*

Dana Alfred, *Research Analyst*
Ann Heath, *Staff Attorney and Research Analyst*
David W. Hood, *Senior Health Care Policy Analyst*
Susan Mintz Kantrow, *Director of Development*
Ty Keller, *Senior Research Associate Emeritus*
Raimy Living, *Development Intern*

Julie Mascarella, *Office Manager*
Connie McClendon, *Administrative Assistant*
Jennifer Pike, *Research Director*
Karen Rowley, *Special Projects Manager*
Cheryl Serrett, *Research Analyst*
Leigh Townsend, *Research Intern*