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National Association of School Safety and Law Enforcement Officers

NASSLEO

July 22, 2009

Media Release

The National Association of School Safety and Law Enforcement Officers (NASSLEO) celebrated “Four Decades of Keeping Schools Safe” at the Astor Crowne Plaza Hotel in New Orleans, July 20-22, with its 40th Annual Convention. NASSLEO is the oldest school safety organization of its kind in America. With more than 1,700 members in thirty-two states and Canada, NASSLEO is also among the largest school security organizations in the world.

During the two and one half days conference, school security specialists, law enforcement officers, school administrators, teachers, and came from all over North America, to include the Virgin Islands and Canada, to see thirteen different sessions covering a broad range of topics. Chief B.J. Bilbo, the Director of Safety and Security for the New Orleans Public Schools, the Conference Coordinator, is pleased with the lineup he and the NASSLEO Board of Directors had developed for this anniversary session. “We are proud of the many programs New Orleans has in place to keep our schools and our entire community safe. This conference gave us a chance to showcase these programs and the people who make them work.”

The event kicked off Sunday afternoon with a pre-conference session by Dennis Lewis of Edu-Safe, Inc. presenting the best practices for school security and user-friendly emergency plans. The official start of the conference on Monday morning began with local security experts Jerry Sneed and Matt Kallmyer of the New Orleans Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Preparedness discussing the plans, policies and procedures that have been successful in keeping the New Orleans area safe. Larry Borland, a nationally recognized school security expert from Colorado, then reviewed some of the challenges he has experienced in his twenty-five year career. That day ended with Peter Pochowski, who has worked with the FBI on school security planning, introducing the attendees to some of the challenges the school and law enforcement communities are certain to face in the near future.

One of the highlights of the conference was be the presentation Tuesday by Mr. Bill Modzeleski, of the US Department of Education, Office of Safe and Drug Free Schools. He addressed some of the changes expected in the Obama Administration, among other school security issues from the national perspective.

NASSLEO's Legal Advisor, Gary Avery of Florida's Law Advisory Group, presented a legal update for law enforcement and school administrators, and the latest interpretations of the federal laws regarding student information. The President of the Florida Gangs Association, Gary Killam, led one of three afternoon-long sessions. A well-known gang expert, Gary introduced the attendees to the growing threat of gangs in our schools. The second session, led by Tim Thomasson of the New Orleans Urban Area Security Region, was a special 4-hour block that prepared the audience to take the test to become certified in the Department of Homeland Security's demanding ICS-402 Course. Finally, the most senior ranking attendees were invited to attend the "Executives' Session," the third year for this unique gathering of chiefs, directors, principals, school board members, and other high ranking officials. The topics on the agenda included funding and future sources, "sexting," training for school security staffs, and other challenges this group will face in the near future. Once again, the co-moderators were Chief James Golden of Philadelphia Public Schools and Assistant Chief Jeff Crawford of the Los Angeles School District.

The conference ended Wednesday morning with a presentation by Todd DeAngelis, from the organization "A Child is Missing," a notification system used to locate missing children and seniors.

NASSLEO President Michael Herrington, the Chief of School Police in Duval County, Florida, said, "In addition to this aggressive training program, NASSLEO was also proud to show the products and services of the twenty exhibitors who help fulfill our goal of producing the premier school security conference in North America. We had it all here under one roof."

As he does each year, Minaz Jivraj, a Canadian member of the Board of Directors, presented NASSLEO's student scholarships to six deserving high school seniors from across the United States and Canada. Former NASSLEO Executive Director Eugene (Red) McAllister presented the \$1,000 Past Presidents' Scholarship to Gabrielle Edgerson of New Orleans.

For the second consecutive year, Raptor Technologies was the Conference Sponsor for NASSLEO's Annual event.

NASSLEO has scheduled its 2010 Annual Conference at the Wilshire Grand Hotel in the city of Los Angeles, California, July 19-21, 2010.

"Education First – Safety Always"