

# LTAP 25th Anniversary

## The Iowa LTAP Advisory Board

**Editor's note:** This article is part of our ongoing series celebrating Iowa LTAP's 25th anniversary in 2008.

In 1983, the Iowa LTAP began providing services to Iowa's cities and counties. As time went on, the LTAP staff wanted to know how they were doing. Were the newsletter articles helpful to city and county employees? What additional training programs were needed? How could the library better serve local agencies?

To answer these questions and create better communication between the Iowa LTAP staff and the local agencies it serves, Iowa LTAP created its first advisory board in 1994. The 1994 advisory board consisted of representatives from the Iowa County Engineers Association (ICEA), the Iowa chapter of the APWA, the Iowa Highway Research Board, the Iowa DOT, and the FHWA.

"We wanted to bring all the LTAP partners to the table to help provide guidance and oversight for the program," says Iowa LTAP Director Duane Smith.

### Early goals

The primary goals of the first advisory board were to identify the needs of cities and counties and to figure out ways for LTAP to meet those needs. A notice was published in *Technology News*, introducing readers to the advisory board members and encouraging them to contact board members to comment, make suggestions, or ask questions about the Iowa LTAP.

The board members brought valuable feedback to Iowa LTAP from the agencies they represented. Agencies reported that *Technology News* was the main way they received information about LTAP programs. They requested articles on communication, technology, and practical "tips from the field."

"The most valuable thing about the first advisory board was the way they helped us look at how we interacted with our part-



The advisory board provides guidance and oversight for the LTAP program.

ners," says Smith. That interaction, he adds, is what makes Iowa LTAP so successful.

### Moving forward

Beginning in 1999, the role of the board changed. The agency representatives continued to review the LTAP program and provide feedback for its improvement. The local government representatives began to move away from their strictly reviewing function and began to operate as a working board.

The members of the working board wanted to find a way to increase participation in LTAP training programs. At a 1999 board meeting, they discussed the possibility of developing an accomplishment program to recognize workers for participating in LTAP training programs. This idea became a reality in 2001, when the Roads Scholar Program was implemented through the National LTAP program.

The LTAP board also played a major role in the development of the Iowa Secondary Roads Maintenance Supervisors Association (ISRMSA). Secondary roads supervisors worked in rural counties all across the state and didn't have much contact with each other.

"Supervisors needed a forum to discuss more management-type issues," says Bob Sperry, LTAP Local Roads Safety Liaison and LTAP advisory board member from 1994–2008.

"[The ISRMSA] allowed them the opportunity to share common problems and work together to find solutions," Sperry adds.

### Looking to the future

The current Iowa LTAP advisory board continues to work on developing new programs and finding more effective ways to serve Iowa's cities and counties. The board members are the lifeline connecting Iowa LTAP with the agencies and organizations it serves.

"The board members know our program and are very good at bringing us input from their organizations," says Smith. "Many times they help with ongoing programs or participate in the development of new ones."

For example, the Iowa chapter of the APWA is working jointly with Iowa LTAP to develop the Iowa Public Employees Leadership Academy. The ICEA provides ongoing support for the Motor Grader Operator Program. The Iowa DOT works with LTAP on the biannual Iowa Maintenance Expo. Finally, FHWA and IHRB provide substantial funding to the LTAP program each year.

### Meet your LTAP board

Board members for 2008–2009 are always listed in the sidebar on page 4 of *Technology News*. Feel free to contact them to ask questions or give us feedback.

Board members serve two-year terms. When a board member rotates off the board, the agency or organization that he or she represents is asked to provide a replacement. If you're interested in serving on the LTAP advisory board, contact Duane Smith at 294-8817, [desmith@iastate.edu](mailto:desmith@iastate.edu). ■