



NEWSLETTER

ASSOCIATION OF PAROLING AUTHORITIES INTERNATIONAL • FALL 2026

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TO-DO IN 2026

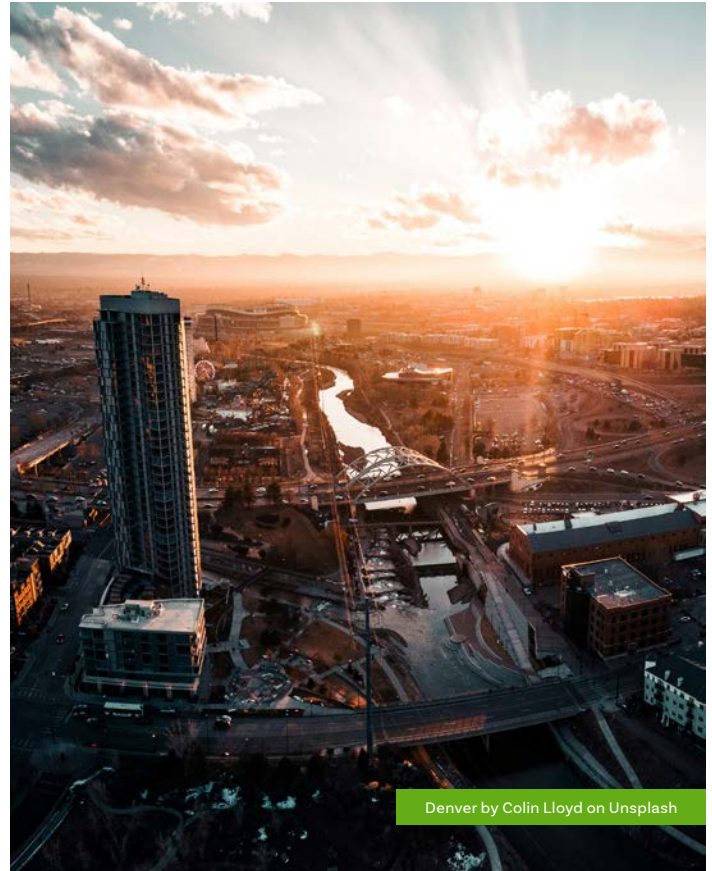
- Renew Membership
- Serve on a Committee
- Recruit Fellows to APAI

Make Plans to Attend the **2027 Annual Training Conference** in Denver, Colorado, April 25-28, 2027

MEMBERSHIP FEES*

Individual	\$65
Organizational	
Up to 8 Members	\$375
9 to 13 Members	\$475
14 to 20 Members	\$575
Alumni	\$40
Associate	\$40
Student	\$15

*fees on a per year basis.



Denver by Colin Lloyd on Unsplash

KECIA RONGEN

A Message from the President...

Greetings APAI Members, Partners, and Supporters!

As we transition into fall, I am grateful for the opportunity to serve as President of the Association of Paroling Authorities International and excited about the direction we are taking as an organization. Since beginning my presidency in July, I have had the opportunity to reflect on APAI's strengths, the dedication of our members, and the tremendous potential we have to continue growing and evolving together.

In my summer message, I shared my commitment to strengthening communication, increasing member engagement, and creating opportunities for greater involvement throughout our association. These priorities continue to guide our work, and I am pleased to

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share that we are taking meaningful steps toward establishing a strategic direction for APAI's future.

I have asked our Executive Committee to look at both short and long-term strategic planning for APAI. This includes identifying opportunities to strengthen our organizational foundation, expand our reach, and ensure we remain relevant and responsive to the professionals and agencies we serve. As highlighted in our Vice President's message, our discussions have focused on three important areas for immediate impact: communication and member engagement, strengthening our external presence, and professional development. Together, these priorities will help guide our efforts and provide a framework for measuring our progress.

As part of our effort to bring more professional development to our members, we have had two exceptional webinars this summer: Introducing AI, Safeguarding & Navigating at Work (Adam Harris, Carlos Turner & Oneisha Freeman Rojas) and Risk Assessment 101 (Dr. Jasmine Tehrani). We thank the presenters for their time and sharing their expertise with us.

Equally important is strengthening APAI's voice and visibility within the broader criminal justice community. By fostering relationships with national and international partners, encouraging collaboration, and promoting the important work of parole and releasing authorities, we can further establish APAI as a trusted resource and leader in our profession.

As we move forward, I want to emphasize that strategic planning is about establishing a shared vision, being intentional in our efforts, and ensuring that our work produces meaningful and sustainable outcomes. I believe our success should be reflected in the value we provide to our members, the relationships we cultivate, and our ability to positively influence the future of parole practices.

Finally, I want to thank each of you for your continued involvement and support. APAI's greatest strength has always been its members, and your perspectives and contributions will remain essential as we shape the next chapter of our association. I encourage you to stay connected, share your ideas, and seek opportunities to become more involved.

I am optimistic about what lies ahead and look forward to working together to build an even stronger, more connected, and forward-thinking APAI.

Fondly,



Kecia Rongen, M.A.

President

Association of Paroling Authorities International

CALL FOR ARTICLES

**Do you have news, advice or a story
of interest to the Paroling Profession?**

**Submit your stories, photos and news to:
Ashley Koonce at koonce@apaintl.org**

**The APAI Newsletter is available
year-round at www.apaintl.org**



STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

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Since our Annual Training Conference in New Orleans discussions have centered on several priorities with the main three being: Communications & Member Engagement, Strengthening the Association's External Presence, and Professional Development. We wanted to be purposeful in creating more opportunities for members to learn from one another. This work has already started through quarterly regional meetings and the webinars that have been hosted this year.

Most importantly, this strategic plan cannot be developed by the Executive Committee alone. Your voice matters. Participation in membership surveys, regional meetings, committees, and other opportunities to provide feedback is critical to understanding what APAI is doing well, where we can improve, and what our members need from their association. As we move forward, we intend to listen to that feedback and communicate how it is influencing decisions. I encourage every member to participate, share ideas, and help shape the next chapter of APAI. Working together, we can build a stronger, more connected organization that continues to advance our profession and better serve our members.

**THE POWER OF PAROLE PROFESSIONALS:
INVESTING IN PEOPLE, SUPPORTING PRACTICE, AND ENHANCING PUBLIC SAFETY**



2027 Annual
TRAINING CONFERENCE
April 25-28, 2027 • Denver, Colorado

• REGISTRATION OPENS SOON • VISIT WWW.APAINTL.ORG TO LEARN MORE •

JESSICA DILLARD, CHAIR, ENGAGEMENT & PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT
**ENGAGEMENT AND PROFESSIONAL
DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE:
ADVANCING THE CONVERSATION**

SPOTLIGHT ON COMMITTEE INITIATIVES AND A CALL FOR GLOBAL COLLABORATION

The Engagement and Professional Development committee is set to play a pivotal role at the upcoming Annual Training Conference in Colorado. The committee has been hard at work shaping the conference agenda and structure to foster growth and innovation within the parole and community supervision field.

In response to valuable feedback gathered from evaluations at last year's conference and this year's membership survey, the team has undertaken thoughtful revisions to the call for presenters. These improvements aim to ensure sessions are more responsive to attendee needs, encouraging diverse perspectives and practical solutions that address current challenges in the profession. The committee's efforts reflect a commitment to

continuous improvement and the cultivation of meaningful learning experiences for all participants.

We invite volunteers from across the globe to join the important work of the Engagement and Professional Development committee. By contributing your unique expertise, you can help "advance the conversation" and create a worldwide dialogue about the future of parole and community supervision. Your participation will be instrumental in shaping policies, sharing best practices, and building a network dedicated to progressive change.

We look forward to sharing more of the work of the committee over the year!

CYNTHIA MAUSSER,
SENIOR MANAGER
**PROFESSIONAL
STANDARDS
PROJECT UPDATE**
CENTER FOR EFFECTIVE
PUBLIC POLICY

CEPP extends a big thank you to all APAI members who joined the Chairs and Administrators sessions in New Orleans. Your insights, questions, and candid feedback on the proposed standards framework were exactly what we hoped for, and they've already helped shape the direction of this project.

Since the conference, CEPP has been hard at work synthesizing everything we heard and turning it into action. We're now actively drafting the full set of standards, with the goal of submitting them to the Executive Committee for review and approval in the coming months.

We also want to recognize the ad hoc committee of APAI members, Benita Murphy, WV; Chris Barnett, GA.; Scott Widmer, OH; John Bailey, OR; and Dan Fetsco, WY.; along with APAI Past President Jonathan Ogletree and President Kecia Rongen, who continue to partner with us throughout this process. Their practical experience and grounded, real world perspective are helping ensure the standards are not only aspirational, but genuinely useful for parole boards across jurisdictions.

This project is moving forward, and we're excited to keep the momentum going. CEPP looks forward to sharing more updates as the drafting progresses and we appreciate the continued engagement from APAI members as we work together to build standards that strengthen transparency, consistency, and effective parole decision making across the field.



Center for Effective Public Policy

***SPEAKERS*
WANTED!**

Parole and community supervision systems are continually evolving in response to changing communities, emerging research, advances in technology, legislative reforms, and new approaches to public safety and rehabilitation. This conference provides an opportunity for leaders and practitioners from around the world to learn from one another and shape the future of parole together.

Paroling authorities are invited to submit presentation proposals for an upcoming training conference focused on current issues, emerging trends, innovative approaches, and best practices in parole and community supervision.

This conference will bring together parole and release decision-making authorities, community supervision professionals, corrections leaders, policymakers, researchers, and justice professionals from around the world to share knowledge, examine evolving challenges, and explore effective strategies to support release decision-making, promote public safety, successful reentry, accountability, and positive outcomes for individuals under supervision.

We are seeking presenters who can provide practical, thought-provoking, and evidence-informed perspectives on the issues shaping the future of release decision-making, parole and community supervision.

Visit www.apaintl.org for more information or to download a Call for Presenters Form!

ASHLEY KOONCE, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

YOU SPOKE. WE'RE LISTENING.

EVOLUTION BASED ON MEMBER FEEDBACK



Thank you to everyone who took the time to share your experiences, ideas, questions, and even the occasional tough feedback. We asked because we genuinely wanted to know what is working, what could be better, and where APAI should focus its energy moving forward.

We are grateful to hear what our members value, what you want more of, and where you want to help shape what comes next. The results showed overwhelmingly positive feedback about the conference and staff, with great suggestions about building on what is already working: more connection, more year-round value, broader content, and greater transparency.

THE ANNUAL CONFERENCE IS WORKING. NOW, HOW DO WE MAKE IT EVEN BETTER?

The Annual Training Conference continues to be one of APAI's greatest strengths. Members described their conference experiences as valuable, engaging, professionally beneficial, and well organized. Networking repeatedly emerged as one of the most valued parts of the conference, along with the quality of

speakers, educational content, logistics, and opportunities to learn from colleagues across jurisdictions and countries. Our staff and volunteers also received exceptionally positive feedback for being welcoming, knowledgeable, responsive, and professional.

What we took from this: keep the foundation, but keep evolving.

Excellent feedback and takeaways include more practical and role-specific sessions, broadened international perspectives, and more opportunities to discuss the real-world challenges facing parole authorities today. There was also strong interest in making networking more intentional with roundtables and opportunities for newer members to connect with experienced colleagues and leadership. Perhaps one of the simplest ideas could make a meaningful difference: help members take the conference home with them. Members expressed interest in easier access to presentations, recordings, and other resources after the conference so they can revisit the information and share it with their teams.

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BEYOND THE CONFERENCE.

One of the strongest themes throughout the survey was that members want more APAI between conferences. Webinars. Virtual forums. Regional conversations. Peer learning. More opportunities to ask questions, exchange ideas, and learn from one another throughout the year. Along with that, members want better ways to know what is happening within the Association and to see how their voices are influencing its direction. Suggestions included more regular newsletters and organizational updates and closing the feedback loop by showing members what we heard and what we are doing about it.

That is a charge that the executive and administrative team of APAI welcomes.

APAI is more than an organization members connect with once a year. It is a professional community members can turn to throughout the year for information, connection, collaboration, and support.

BUSINESS MEETING AND AWARDS LUNCHEON

Overall, the annual Business Meeting and Awards Luncheon is an event that attendees truly enjoy, but there is an appetite to bring back more of the previous formats, where more detailed business is discussed. This includes greater visibility into committee activities, strategic initiatives, accomplishments, membership information, and annual budgeting.

There were also suggestions for making the awards process feel more engaging, including broader recognition of nominees and additional opportunities to celebrate the people and organizations doing important work across our field. This is where the association needs your help. While the number of award nominees has increased in recent years, it falls short of what we know is happening in the field. Please be sure that you are nominating your colleagues, from within your state or around the world so the pool of nominees is broadened.

These are areas where there is room to enhance our members' experience not because the current approach is not working, but because we want to ensure members feel more connected to the organization behind the conference.

MEMBERSHIP VALUE.

Members want relevant professional development. They want opportunities to connect. They want timely communication. They want practical resources and information they can use. They want stronger collaboration across jurisdictions and internationally. And they want APAI to remain financially and organizationally strong enough to continue serving the profession well into the future.

Perhaps most encouragingly, many members also expressed interest in becoming more involved—through committees, special projects, mentoring, leadership opportunities, and other avenues for participation. The desire is there. Our job is to make those pathways easier to see and easier to access.

NEXT STEPS.

The Executive Committee has used this feedback to help shape conversations about APAI's priorities, communication, member engagement, and future direction. Some changes can happen quickly. Others will require thoughtful planning, resources, and collaboration. One of the clearest messages from the survey was that members want to know that their feedback matters. We heard that, too. Going forward, expect to hear more about what APAI is doing in response to member input.

YOU SPOKE. WE'RE LISTENING.



ASHLEY KOONCE, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

#CAPTUREDCOLLABORATIONS

HIGHLIGHTING MEMBER CONNECTIONS THROUGH APAI

Agency partnerships and cross-state collaboration remain essential to advancing the field. Representatives from the National Institute of Corrections and parole authorities from Connecticut, Utah, Ohio,

Michigan, New York, South Dakota, Vermont, and Washington recently convened in Washington, D.C., to continue strengthening the Paroling Authority Network (PAN).



Collaboration and shared expertise are key to advancing effective public safety practices. Representatives from the parole boards of Georgia, Texas, and Louisiana joined together at the American Correction-

al Association's 156th Congress of Correction in Pittsburgh to share strategies for building strong partnerships with legislators and elected officials, fostering collaboration



APAI EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

President Kecia Rongen Washington	Past President Jonathan Ogletree Kansas	Vice-President Francis Abbott Louisiana	Secretary Chris Barnett Georgia
Treasurer MaryJane Ainsworth Vermont	Northeastern USA Vacant	Western USA John Bailey Oregon	Southern USA Benita Murphy West Virginia
Central USA Scott Widmer Ohio	International Section Alistair Spierling New Zealand	International Section Joanne Blanchard Canada	Executive Director Ashley Koonce Texas



FRONT ROW – Joanne Blanchard, International VP; Ashley Koonce, Executive Director; MaryJane Ainsworth, Treasurer; John Bailey, Western USA VP; Scott Widmer, Central USA VP

BACK ROW – Chris Barnett, Secretary; Jonathan Ogletree, Immediate Past President; Kecia Rongen, President; Francis Abbott, Vice-President

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