



## WLA CLASS OF 2016

Convened in Colorado Springs this December, the 17th Western Legislative Academy (WLA) hosted thirty-five promising western legislators. Participants were selected by their state's leadership to participate in a three and a half day program of extensive skill-building provided by national experts. The course agenda included training in the history of legislative institutions, the art of public decision making, ethics, time management, consensus building, communications, and leadership styles.

The sessions provided great opportunities to learn from both trainers and each other. Scott Raecker helped to kick off the Academy with a discussion on how to build a culture of excellence and ethics. Participants learned to find connection points with others allowing for respectful interactions and relationships. Following this conversation, Pam Vaccaro shared insights on how to become a truly focused leader by managing more than just time.

Kicking off the second day of the Academy, Dave Landis lead a spirited discussion on consensus building. Using a simulated exercise, participants tested and honed their negotiation skills. Stepping into the digital realm, Deb Sofield reviewed the role of media in the legislative environment. After an overview of the role of digital communications, she shared best practices as well as pitfalls to watch out for when incorporating such tools into the legislative experience. During an afternoon at the U.S. Air Force Academy, Daniel Miller lead class members through a variety of exercises designed to develop their leadership and team building abilities.

On the final day of the program, Phil Boyle reviewed the challenge of shifting from campaigning to governing with focused attention on the delicate balance of managing competing priorities. With the assistance of class volunteers, Bill Graham offered tools to increase likeability and promote better communication. Concluding the Academy sessions, participants were introduced to time-tested lessons in leadership from none other than President George Washington.

The WLA is a program of the Council of State Governments West (CSG West). Since the inaugural Academy in 2000, 643 Western legislators have graduated from the program, with many alumni serving in leadership capacities including presiding officers, majority and minority leaders, committee chairs and vice chairs, and caucus leaders within their state legislatures.

The 2017 WLA will take place November 29th–December 2nd in Colorado Springs, Colorado. Admission is competitive and limited to legislators in their first four years of cumulative service. Applications are available online and due to CSG West by April 28th. For more information, visit [www.csgwest.org](http://www.csgwest.org) or call (916) 553-4423.

## WESTERN LEGISLATIVE ACADEMY

# CLASS OF 2016

### ALASKA

- Representative Harriet Drummond
- Representative Andy Josephson
- Representative Sam Kito III

### ARIZONA

- Unable to Participate

### CALIFORNIA

- Assemblymember Mike Gipson
- Assemblymember Kevin McCarty
- Assemblymember Rudy Salas, Jr.

### COLORADO

- Representative Jeni Arndt
- Senator Beth Martinez Humenik
- Representative Kim Ransom

### HAWAII

- Representative Richard Creagan
- Representative Lynn DeCoite
- Senator Gil Riviere
- Representative Joy San Buenaventura

### IDAHO

- Unable to Participate

### MONTANA

- Representative Zach Brown
- Representative Kenneth Holmlund
- Senator Cynthia Wolken

### NEVADA

- Assemblywoman Amber Joiner

### NEW MEXICO

- Senator Craig Brandt
- Representative D. Wonda Johnson
- Representative Larry Scott
- Representative James Townsend

### OREGON

- Representative Greg Barreto
- Representative Kathleen Taylor

### UTAH

- Representative Kay Christofferson
- Representative Timothy Hawkes
- Representative Robert Spendlove
- Representative Jon Stanard

### WASHINGTON

- Representative Steve Bergquist
- Senator Sharon Brown
- Representative Patty Kuderer
- Representative Lynda Wilson

### WYOMING

- Representative Fred Baldwin
- Representative JoAnn Dayton
- Representative Dan Laursen
- Representative Tyler Lindholm

# PROFILE OF 2016 WLA CLASS PRESIDENT

## Wyoming Representative **TYLER LINDHOLM**



A Wyoming native, Representative Tyler Lindholm has been drawn away from the state only once to serve in the United States Navy. When not attending to legislative duties, he balances work as a Lead Substation Electrician for a power cooperative and the management of the family ranch along with his wife and four children. A fifth generation rancher, he hopes to pass on the ranch and its traditions to his children.

Driven by a tremendous passion for food and agriculture policy, Representative Lindholm first entered politics through his involvement with the local party. Through his dedicated participation, he was elected Chairman of the county party. Spurred by a natural fascination with policy work and the legislative process, he ran for the state legislature in 2014. After winning a 3-way primary, he went on to be elected as the Representative for District 1 encompassing both Crook and Weston Counties.

As he begins his second term, Representative Lindholm remains focused on his primary objective – to be an effective legislator. To obtain this goal he aims to ensure that his duties represent his constituency in a manner that conveys their message. To deliver on this promise, Representative Lindholm plans to be an active participant in the legislative process by developing and implementing meaningful legislation.

In addition to the honor of being elected 2016 WLA Class President, Representative Lindholm cited the communications sessions as his favorite part of the Academy experience. Drawing from lessons ranging from social media to body language, he plans to put this information to use in communicating with his constituents to carry their message to the capitol.

## **2017 Western Legislative Academy**

Nov. 29–Dec. 2, 2017  
Colorado Springs, CO

• **Apply online at [www.csgwest.org/WLA](http://www.csgwest.org/WLA)**

• **Applications due April 28, 2017**

“The programs were all extremely useful—and each one is distinct enough to stand alone. All very informative and inspirational”  
2016 WLA PARTICIPANT

## **PAST PRESIDENTS** of the Western Legislative Academy

- Alaska Representative Geran Tarr (2015)
- Idaho Representative Kelley Packer (2014)
- Arizona Senator Kelli Ward (2013)
- Wyoming Senator Ogden Driskill (2012)
- Nevada Assemblywoman Teresa Benitez-Thompson (2011)
- Wyoming Senator Drew Perkins (2010)
- New Mexico Senator John Sapien (2009)
- Arizona Senator Steve Farley (2008)
- New Mexico Representative Thomas Garcia (2007)
- Idaho Representative Rich Wills (2006)
- Nevada Assemblywoman Heidi Gansert (2005)
- New Mexico Representative Jose Campos (2004)
- Nevada Senator Kelvin Atkinson (2003)
- Montana Senator Jim Keane (2002)
- Alaska Senator Lesil McGuire (2001)
- Nevada Secretary of State Barbara Cegavske (2000)

## Special thanks to all the **WLA FACULTY**

- Phillip Boyle, Carl Vinson Institute of Government, University of Georgia
- Bill Graham, President, Graham Corporate Communications
- David Landis, Consensus & Negotiations Trainer
- Dean Malissa, Historical Portrayer of George Washington
- Daniel Miller, President, New Heights Learning
- Utah Senator Ralph Okerlund, CSG West Chair Elect
- Scott Raecker, Director of The Robert D. and Billie Ray Center at Drake University
- Edgar Ruiz, Executive Director, CSG West
- Deb Sofield, President, Executive Speech Coaching Co.
- Idaho Representative Jeff Thompson, CSG West Immediate Past Chair
- Pam Vaccaro, President, Designs on Time