Mission Statement: The National Center for Assisted Living’s (NCAL) mission is to lead the assisted living profession through public policy advocacy, knowledge, education, and professional development.

Vision Statement: NCAL is dedicated to promoting high quality, principle-driven assisted living care and services with a steadfast commitment to excellence, innovation and the advancement of person-centered care.

NCAL is the assisted living voice of the American Health Care Association (AHCA). NCAL is dedicated to serving the needs of the assisted living community through national advocacy, education, networking, professional development, and quality initiatives. NCAL’s proactive, national focus on assisted living legislation and regulation is backed by the strongest and most influential long term care advocacy team in the country. NCAL members know that their voices will be heard by the national policymakers and regulators who continually seek to influence the future of assisted living.

In addition to national advocacy, NCAL supports state-specific advocacy efforts through its national federation of state affiliates. NCAL state affiliates work to create local education, advocate on behalf of assisted living providers, and provide the direct, ongoing support their assisted living members need to improve quality, serve their residents and grow their businesses.

Kemper House, Cleveland, Ohio
NCAL BOARD OF DIRECTORS 2010-2011

Front Row: left to right: John Poirier, Patricia Giorgio, Michael Shepard, Nicolette Merino, Howie Groff, and Neil Pruitt Jr. Middle Row: left to right: Deb Choma, Ashley Blankenship, Cindy Luxem, Helen Crunk, Kristin West, Jan Thayer, and Marcia Hamilton Dooner. Back row: left to right: Christian Mason, David Kyllo, Edie Gerelli, Jeffrey Hyatt, Joe Perkin, and Brett Waters. Not pictured: Jim Birchem, Vickie Cox, Brad Klitsch, Deborah Meade, and Bob Van Dyk.

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Jan Thayer-Nebraska

Brett Waters-Idaho
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Kristin West-Ohio
Dear NCAL Members:

As your Chair, I am proud to present NCAL’s annual report for 2011, “Formulating Quality”.

NCAL has worked hard over the past year to ensure that our voice is heard as we advocate for assisted living and the seniors we serve. In March, NCAL’s Immediate Past Chair Howie Groff participated in the U.S. Senate Special Committee on Aging’s assisted living roundtable. Our key point was the need for federal agencies to consider expanding existing programs to cover the housing portion of assisted living and thereby increase access to affordable assisted living—a point of consensus amongst roundtable participants.

The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) issued a pair of proposed rules intent on restricting existing assisted living coverage in Medicaid home- and community-based waiver programs. NCAL filed comments cautioning CMS about the negative consequences the proposals would have on assisted living residents should the rules be implemented as drafted. NCAL also rallied state affiliates, members, and other groups to file comments. The result of NCAL’s leadership was that CMS’ state counterparts—the state Medicaid directors—filed comments strongly aligned with NCAL’s positions.

Another major achievement was NCAL’s successful efforts to ensure that CMS implements the elimination of Medicare Part D co-pays for dual eligibles on Jan. 1, 2012, the earliest date possible under the Affordable Care Act.

Our grassroots programs continue to grow. We’ve invited more Congressional representatives to tour our communities, met with more representatives and staff, and hosted more fundraisers than ever before. My personal thanks to every NCAL member who took the time to be involved and let our voices be heard.

Nothing helps our advocacy efforts more than providing information about our quality efforts. I am excited to learn that more providers participated in the second year of NCAL’s Performance Measurement Initiative. Almost 600 providers profession-wide participated in the Employee Vacancy, Retention, and Turnover Survey, and 25 percent of NCAL’s members completed the Performance Measures Survey. These surveys provide data for reports that show lawmakers, regulators, media, and consumers that providers are committed to quality care.

I am also pleased that preparation is underway for NCAL’s first Spring Conference to be held March 13-14, 2012 in New Orleans with the theme of Risk Management. We have an exciting curriculum and it promises to be a “must attend” event.

I’m proud to share our achievements and it has been an honor to serve as your chair for the past two years.

We work in a noble profession and I’m fortunate to have met so many outstanding individuals through NCAL who care so deeply about the residents they serve.

Regards,

Nicolette Merino
NCAL Chair
2010–2011
NCAL’s Finance and Policy committee directs the development of policy and advocacy efforts. NCAL actively works to monitor and respond to congressional as well as regulatory activity. Frequently, NCAL and AHCA lobby together on issues affecting both assisted living communities and nursing facilities.

Active Role In U. S. Senate Special Committee On Aging Roundtable

NCAL was a major contributor to the March 15 assisted living roundtable hosted by the U. S. Senate Special Committee on Aging. Months before the roundtable, NCAL staff worked closely with both majority and minority committee staff to stay informed of the latest developments about how the Aging Committee would examine assisted living practices. Traditionally, Senate committees conduct hearings; however, the committee decided to hold a roundtable instead. This format was less adversarial and relied upon stakeholders representing consumers, providers, state regulators, and federal officials to discuss issues. The roundtable was moderated by Susan Dentzer, editor-in-chief of Health Affairs. NCAL’s Immediate Past Chair Howie Groff, president of Tealwood Care Centers, Bloomington, Minn., was invited as a panelist.

A few weeks before the roundtable, the committee issued a 40-question survey asking about assisted living practices in three topic areas: Quality and Oversight, Affordability, and Access and Discharge. NCAL provided comprehensive answers to the survey and also submitted a statement to the committee for public record (available on NCAL.org).

The survey topics were the basis of discussion for the roundtable. Dentzer led the three-hour roundtable dedicating an hour to each topic.

While some participants argued that the federal government should play a larger role in regulating assisted living, four state regulators on the panel said that states were generally doing a good job.

During the discussion on affordability, Groff raised a point that became the only area of agreement amongst the group: consider expanding federal programs to increase assisted living access for low-income seniors and provide coverage for housing costs for Medicaid beneficiaries.

CMS Eliminates Part D Co-pays As Early As Possible

In a final rule, the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) decided to implement the elimination of Medicare Part D cost sharing for dual eligibles on Jan. 1, 2012—the earliest date possible allowed by Section 3309 of the Affordable Care Act. NCAL formally applauded the agency in a letter thanking it for its decision following months of urging CMS and others to implement the law on the earliest date possible. The prompt implementation date represented a major victory for NCAL. Since the Medicare Prescription Drug Benefit was established in 2006, NCAL continuously led a coalition of national organizations urging policymakers to eliminate Medicare Part D co-payments for dual eligibles in home- and community-based settings (HCBS), thereby creating cost-sharing parity with dual eligibles in institutional settings. CMS estimated about 600,000 low-income Medicare beneficiaries receiving Part D medications and Medicaid services in residential settings, including assisted living communities, would benefit from the implementation.
Warning to Preserve Assisted Living In CMS Proposed Rules

NCAL expressed extreme concern about a pair of CMS proposed rules that threatened the continued participation of assisted living communities in state HCBS Medicaid waiver programs. NCAL submitted comments to the CMS proposed rules: “Medicaid Program: Community First Choice Option” and “Medicaid Program: Home- and Community-Based Services Waivers.”

Both rules attempted to clarify and define Medicaid community-based settings. However, the proposed rules set forth specific conditions that assisted living communities had to meet in order to continue providing Medicaid HCBS to beneficiaries. NCAL’s comments asked CMS to be careful not to eliminate assisted living, an important cost-effective long term care option. NCAL staff expressed those concerns in-person to officials in the CMS Disabled and Elderly Health Programs Group—the group that issued the rules. NCAL also worked with its state affiliates and other stakeholders to oppose key provisions and modify others.

IRS 1099 Reporting Mandate Repealed

After more than a year of advocacy by NCAL, AHCA, and the U. S. Chamber of Commerce, Congress repealed the 1099 reporting mandate which would have required every provider to file an Internal Revenue Services 1099 form for every vendor that a provider paid more than $600 to each year.

Increased Resident Fire Safety

The National Fire Safety Protection Association adopted a set of recommendations from NCAL to update the 2012 edition of the Life Safety Code (LSC). The changes will help existing large communities—those with 16 or more residents—that are subject to the LSC, to stay within standards when the evacuation capacity of their resident decreases. As a result of the revisions proposed by NCAL, the 2012 edition of the LSC provides assisted living facilities with a less-costly option of upgrading the level of fire safety in an existing building while remaining in a residential classification.

To learn more, visit NCAL.org, and search Life Safety Code.

DOL Agrees To Let Certified Teens Use Lifts Under Certain Conditions

NCAL, AHCA, and several state affiliates worked with the Department of Labor’s Wage and Hour Division (WHD) to obtain a temporary suspension of enforcement of a rule that prohibits individuals under 18-years-old from using mechanical lifts in assisted living and nursing communities.

The WHD exempted communities from child labor enforcement actions if the teen was part of a two-member caregiver team operating the lift. One caregiver had to be experienced and at least 18-years-old. The teen could set up the lift but is prohibited from operating the mechanical lift to transfer a non-weight bearing resident. The temporary solution allowed providers to use certified nurse assistants under 18 years old under certain circumstances while WHD continued to review the issue.

The solution was based on a National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health recommendation.

Red Flag Rules Rescinded

AHCA/NCAL helped relieve members of some burdensome requirements being developed by the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) for detecting possible fraud. The Red Flag Program Clarification Act of 2010 (S. 3987), signed into law by President Obama in December 2010, appears to relieve health care providers, including many assisted living providers, from classification as creditors under the Red Flag Program and thus not subject them to the mandated processes, procedures, and enforcement connected with such classification. However, as explained to members in a December memo, further clarification from the FTC is still needed.

Educating Members About Health Care Reform

NCAL and AHCA staff continued analyzing and educating members about the impact of the many provisions affecting long term care that were included in the health reform legislation passed in 2010. These provisions include the new Community Living Assistance Services and Supports (CLASS) voluntary national insurance program for long term services and supports, and the new employer mandates.
State Leaders Effective On Capitol Hill
During the course of two-days in May, NCAL’s State Leaders from 20 states conducted 57 Capitol Hill visits during the third annual State Leader Program. State Leaders delivered two main messages to their congressional representatives:

- preserve Medicaid funding in the federal budget, and
- urge CMS to maintain assisted living in the Medicaid HCBS waiver program.

Leaders honed their advocacy and grassroots skills, and were given leadership training. State Leaders left the nation’s capital with newfound professional friendships and better able to assist their state affiliates on issues confronting the profession.

AHCA/NCAL’s 2011 Congressional Briefing
Congressional Briefing is one of the largest and well-attended annual events of the year. Almost 450 NCAL and AHCA members flocked to the nation’s capital in July to meet and tell their federal representatives about pressing legislative issues impacting long term care.

During a special NCAL Briefing, NCAL staff explained its concerns with Medicaid block grants and CMS’ proposed rules to restrict assisted living’s participation in HCBS waiver programs.

In 2011, the event featured:

- **Tucker Carlson**—Contributor to FOX News, Editor-in-Chief of The Daily Caller, and Senior Fellow at The Cato Institute; and
- **Mark Shields**—Syndicated Columnist and Political Analyst, PBS NewsHour.

Guest speakers also included **Rep. Tom Price (R-Ga.)**, a member of the House Ways & Means Committee; **Rep. James Renacci (R-Ohio)**, and **Rep Andy Harris (R-Md.)** who shared their insights of the 112th session of Congress.

ADVOCACY – THE KEY TO BEING HEARD
NCAL members are its most effective “grassroots lobbyists” because they provide the Senators and Representatives with local insight and personal expertise about assisted living issues. In the eyes of a member of Congress, the NCAL member is a constituent and a catalyst for an elected official to care about an issue. NCAL offered a variety of programs throughout the year that assist members in meeting with their federal representatives.
NCAL First Again To Cross PAC Finish Line
In 2011, NCAL’s Board of Directors upheld its long tradition of being the first AHCA/NCAL standing committee to reach 100 percent PAC participation. This means that every member of the Board made their contribution to the AHCA/NCAL PAC.

Representatives Visit Communities
NCAL continues to grow its political strength by hosting community tours and other events that gave NCAL Board members and State Leaders an opportunity to tell the assisted living story to federal lawmakers. For example, Minnesota’s Sen. Al Franken and Rep. Tim Walz visited with assisted living providers at communities in their districts. Retiring Wisconsin Sen. Herb Kohl visited with residents at a Harmony Living Center in Steven’s Point, Wis.

Rep. Tim Walz, (pictured center) talking with David Kylo, NCAL executive director (right) and Michelle Speltz, owner of Speltz Estates Assisted Living, Lewiston, Minn.

Longview Assisted Living Residence at Christian Health Care Center, Wyckoff, N.J.
POLICY RESEARCH

Assisted Living State Regulatory Review
NCAL’s 2011 edition of *Assisted Living State Regulatory Review* and an accompanying analysis of state regulatory trends found that almost 40 percent of the states made changes to assisted living regulations during the previous year. The annual *Regulatory Review* is the only report in the nation that compiles state assisted living regulations and publishes changes on an annual basis. The report is sought after and widely used by financial analysts, media professionals, policymakers, providers, regulators, researchers, and other groups.

LTC Tenth Largest Employer In The Nation
AHCA/NCAL released an economic report illustrating the important role that America’s assisted living, nursing and other residential care facilities play in the national and local economies. Long term care employees spend their salaries on food services, real estate, transportation, and other sectors that contribute to strong local economies. The economic impact of long term care facilities were categorized by state, congressional districts, and nationally.

INVESTMENT WITH OTHER FEDERAL AGENCIES

National Survey Of Residential Care Facilities
NCAL provided input during a forum hosted by the National Center for Health Statistics (NCHS) about a new biennial survey of all long term care settings, including assisted living that will begin in 2012.

Later this year, NCHS will release its first report based on an extensive survey of residential care settings that NCAL supported.

Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality
NCAL staff participated in Phase II of the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality’s assisted living consumer disclosure collaborative (ALDC). Phase II includes testing a pilot survey for providers to complete. AHRQ’s goal is to develop a questionnaire that standardizes assisted living care and services so that consumers can compare assisted living communities. The collaborative is a multi-year project. AHRQ is a division of the U. S. Department of Health and Human Services.

ENERGY STAR® For Senior Care Launches
NCAL worked with the Environmental Protection Agency on its launch of ENERGY STAR for Senior Care facilities in March. Assisted living communities and nursing facilities began using the online energy benchmarking tools that determine energy efficiency and saved money on energy costs. NCAL and AHCA became official ENERGY STAR partners promoting the ENERGY STAR for Senior Care facilities program to its memberships through a specially created web page on NCAL.org and promotion of ENERGY STAR webinars in *NCAL Focus* and *NCAL Connections*.
During the first half of 2011, NCAL conducted two surveys, which are the components of its Performance Measurement Initiative.

The surveys are:

- Performance Measures Survey, and
- Employee Vacancy Retention and Turnover (VRT) Survey.

NCAL’s Quality Committee developed the Performance Measures Survey. To read about the VRT see, “Measuring Workforce Loyalty” found on page 12.

In February 2010, NCAL debuted its Performance Measurement Initiative under its Advocating Care Excellence banner. The Performance Measurement Initiative consists of evaluation tools that providers can use to establish meaningful data to consumers, state, and federal policy makers.

The initiative demonstrates the profession’s commitment to delivering high quality, person-centered care to residents.

Assisted Living’s First Quality Performance Results Released Last Fall

NCAL’s 2010 Assisted Living Performance Measures Survey revealed that of the 16 percent of NCAL members that participated in the survey were using processes to evaluate the quality of their operations. Among the findings are:

- 98 percent of the survey respondents reported conducting criminal background checks on all new employees.
- 91 percent of the respondents said they measured resident and family satisfaction.
- 94 percent of the survey respondents reported having a licensed nurse available to the staff and residents 24 hours a day.
- 85 percent of respondents measured employee satisfaction.
- 86 percent of respondents had a safety committee.

In 2011, NCAL issued its second annual Performance Measures Survey to members. Approximately 25 percent of the NCAL membership responded to the 2011 survey which collected data on nine performance measures:

- Resident satisfaction and family satisfaction;
- Employee satisfaction;
- Resident census or occupancy rate;
- Use of resident councils;
- Use of family councils;
- Use of mission and vision statements;
- Implementation of safety programs;
- Criminal background checks for all staff; and
- Level of nurse availability.

NCAL released the results of the 2011 Performance Measures Survey at NCAL Day—the start of the 62nd Annual AHCA/NCAL Convention & Exposition held in Las Vegas.

The Performance Measurement Initiative includes a tenth measure—staff retention. To read more see “Measuring Workforce Loyalty,” page 12.
Performance Measures 2.0
The Quality Committee held a meeting at the Quality Symposium in San Antonio, Texas, to finalize Tier 2 Performance Measure areas, which are related to quality of care. NCAL is investigating how the care management data can be collected through an independent third party.

Joint Quality Initiative
NCAL continued its joint Quality Initiative with My Innerview (MIV). Approximately 800 NCAL members utilized MIV to measure satisfaction amongst residents, family members, and staff. On March 10, NCAL cohosted a webinar with MIV titled, “The Roadmap to Improvement.” More than 55 people registered and learned how to determine the causes of the community’s current performance levels, and how to identify solutions to bring about improvement. Another MIV webinar, “Staying on Track: How Do You Remain on Course for Continuous Quality Improvement” provided participants with strategies and techniques that other communities used in improving performance of a community’s staff. Reinforcing to membership the importance of measuring satisfaction, NCAL Focus published several articles and graphics about the importance of measuring satisfaction.

Clinical Guidelines for Residents With Diseases
NCAL created a new resource for its members that care for assisted living residents with specific diseases. A new webpage titled, “Clinical Practice Guidelines” has been created for members to download caregiving protocols for special diseases such as Alzheimer’s and dementia care, diabetes management, multiple sclerosis, infection control, and vaccinations.

Quality Award Program Continues Growth
The AHCA/NCAL National Quality Awards announced that it had received 1,116 applications from its members. This prestigious program is based on the core values and criteria of the Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award program. There are three levels of the award. The number of applications received for the Bronze award was 702. There were 373 applications for the Silver award, up from 271 in 2010. In the gold category, there were 41 applications for Gold, up from 26 in 2010.

The 2011 AHCA/NCAL National Quality Award recipients will be recognized during the Closing General Session/Awards Ceremony at the 62nd AHCA/NCAL Annual Convention & Expo in Las Vegas.
**STRENGTHENING THE WORKFORCE**

NCAL’s Workforce Committee is committed to identifying, developing or providing tools and resources to NCAL members that improve and assist with workforce retention and recruitment. In conjunction with the Quality Committee, the Workforce Committee oversaw the second annual VRT survey under the Performance Measurement Initiative.

**Measuring Workforce Loyalty**

NCAL’s inaugural and profession-wide “2009 Assisted Living Employee Vacancy, Retention, and Turnover Survey” revealed that the overall retention rate for all employees was 51 percent.

In 2011, NCAL launched the second annual national VRT survey for assisted living communities. More than 550 assisted living communities from across the nation participated in the NCAL survey which covers the tenth performance measure.

NCAL was able to secure the cooperation of the Assisted Living Federation of America, the American Seniors Housing Association and Leading Age. NCAL released the results of the 2011 survey at NCAL Day during the 62nd AHCA/NCAL Annual Convention & Exposition in Las Vegas.

The committee developed a series of workforce-related questions pertaining to Performance Measures that evaluate the level of employees’ morale and other areas of employee satisfaction. These questions will be included in the 2012 NCAL Performance Measures Survey.

**Preserving Collective Bargaining Process**

NCAL and AHCA filed an amicus curiae brief in response to the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) request for comments on a case where it is considering changing the traditional means of determining collective bargaining units in nursing facilities in favor of creating individual bargaining units. The case has severe consequences for assisted living communities because any changes to the rule could be applied to other healthcare settings including assisted living.

The brief reinforced the need for the NLRB to preserve the traditional methodology for determining the composition of bargaining units in nursing facilities. The brief stated the reasoning was not only sound, but effective and strongly supported the exercise of employee rights while recognizing the needs of residents within facilities nationwide.

The brief emphasized that there were no substantial changes in the operations of long term care facilities that would necessitate NLRB encouraging the creation of individual bargaining units. NCAL and AHCA worked to get 54 health care organizations to sign on to the brief as cosigners.

**DOL Releases Competency Tool**

NCAL and AHCA staff worked with officials in the DOL-Employment Training Administration (DOL-ETA) on a competency model that describes the academic, workplace, and technical competencies required for caregivers who provide social services, community supports and health care services for seniors and individuals with disabilities living in assisted living, congregate care, and nursing facilities.

By focusing on the skills requirements of workers, the model illustrates how skills can be transferred across related fields. This model helps coordinate the efforts of the profession, educators and local workforce initiatives.

In addition to providing input, NCAL and AHCA are Industry Champions and will continue to work with DOL-ETA to contribute insight into long term care workforce trends, identify promising practices for workforce competencies, and keep the competency model up to date.

**Helping With Certification Evaluation**

NCAL worked with ACT, the college testing organization, to evaluate certified nurse assistants’ areas of strength that can be used to help improve and retain staff. NCAL staff proctored an exam for the ACT Pilot program.

**National Employee Recognition**

This year the NCAL Awards program permitted individual members to make nominations directly to NCAL, if their respective state affiliate allowed. The streamlined nomination process resulted in 43 nominations being submitted from 11 states—the most...
nominations submitted in the history of the awards. Panels of judges selected the winners for the four categories from applications which blocked identifying information.

The 2011 award recipients are:

**NCAL Administrator of the Year**
Robin Aman, Rock Cove Assisted Living Stevenson, Wash.

**NCAL Assisted Living Nurse of the Year Award**
Rachel Ellis, Gardens at Osage Terrace Bentonville, Ark.

**NCAL Noble Caregiver in Assisted Living**
Eugene Ring, Maintenance/Environmental Services Supervisor Heritage at Dover Dover, Del.

**Best Programming for National Assisted Living Week**
For 2010 Theme: Living Life Ponderosa Assisted Living Community Yakima, Wash.
Lori Crow, Executive Director Marilee Ramos, Marketing Director Annie Oord, Activity Director

**Affiliations With Nurses & Caregivers**

**National Association of Health Care Assistants**
The Workforce Committee continued to support the National Association of Health Care Assistants by promoting its message of leading and empowering staff by publishing a Caregiver Tip of the Month column and quarterly Caregiver Corner inserts in *NCAL Focus*, the monthly newsletter.

**American Assisted Living Nurses Association**
NCAL also promotes membership in the American Assisted Living Nurses Association (AALNA) programs and its annual convention through its state affiliates. NCAL is pleased that AALNA held its annual conference in conjunction with the 2011 AHCA/NCAL convention.

Cadbury at Lewes, Del.
MEMBERSHIP SERVICES & EDUCATION

First To Host Assisted Living General Counsel Roundtable
In February 2011, NCAL hosted 15 in-house general counsels at the first Assisted Living In-House General Counsel Roundtable, held in conjunction with the American Health Lawyers Association’s Long Term Care and the Law Conference in San Diego. The roundtable focused on risk management in assisted living and provided an opportunity for in-house general counsels to discuss issues such as elopements, falls, residency agreements, and arbitration agreements. Many of the in-house counsels work for the nation’s largest assisted living companies.

Inaugural Spring Conference In 2012
NCAL will hold its inaugural Spring Conference March 13 – 14, 2012 at the Royal Sonesta Hotel in New Orleans. The event will be an in-depth learning experience centered on the theme, “Risk Management.” Attendees will be able to move between three educational tracks: Operations; Legal; and Public Affairs/Customer Relations/Media. Speakers with a focus on minimizing risk in assisted living will teach best practices and real-world actions providers need to understand to fully manage risk in assisted living communities.

The 2012 AHCA/NCAL Independent owners Conference will immediately follow in the same hotel as the Spring Conference.

NCAL Day Celebrates Fifth Anniversary
During 2011, NCAL celebrated the fifth anniversary of NCAL Day by adding a closing keynote speaker in addition to the opening keynote speaker to its daylong program dedicated to assisted living education. The opening keynote was delivered by former New York Fire Department’s highest ranking officer during the attacks on the World Trade Center Chief Richard Picciotto. Closing keynote speaker was Ross Shafer, best-selling author of “Nobody Moved Your Cheese.” NCAL hosted a two-track program with sessions focused on Quality and Leadership. Some of the presentation topics were: Culture Change in Action: Psychosocial Interventions for People with Dementia; Maximizing Return On Your Training Investment; and The Seven Keys to Exceptional Customer Service.

At NCAL Day 2010, almost 200 attendees participated in sessions following a two-track curriculum in Long Beach, Calif. Attendees chose from sessions focused on Operations or Workforce issues. The opening keynote for NCAL Day 2010 was Bruce Himelstein, former senior vice president of sales and marketing for Ritz-Carlton Hotels. The award winning 30-year hospitality veteran spent two years of his career with Marriott’s former Senior Living Division. His presentation energized the crowd.

National Assisted Living Week®
Since this year’s National Assisted Living Week began on the 10th anniversary of 9/11, NCAL chose a patriotic theme, “Forever Proud.” Building upon the feelings of national pride, Forever Proud also included recognition of residents’ achievements, families, interests, events, and hobbies. The Planning Guide & Product Catalog provided activity ideas, media kit materials, and products that enhance community celebrations.

NCAL established National Assisted Living Week in 1995 and it is eagerly awaited by providers nationwide. NCAL produced the logo, media kit, website, planning guide and products to help people salute the nation’s assisted living residents, their caregivers, and the country’s heroes.
NCAL On The Road
NCAL staff and Board members spoke at state affiliate conferences in more than 20 states in 2011. NCAL also helped state affiliates find speakers who can give presentations on topics not given by NCAL staff or Board members. NCAL maintains a comprehensive speakers list comprised of convention and NCAL Day speakers who have received a 4 or 5 rating—the highest scores on evaluations.

New NCAL Affiliate In Georgia
NCAL helped Georgia Health Care Association (GHCA) open its membership to assisted living providers. NCAL sent assisted living speakers to two GHCA conferences and is dedicated to helping GHCA succeed in welcoming new assisted members and enhancing the benefits offered.

New Lower Movie Fees
Want to show a movie in your community? A new agreement with the Motion Picture Licensing Corp. allows assisted living communities to show movies in common areas for free. Discount fees now apply for NCAL members in other situations such as showing movies on closed circuit television, providers with Housing and Urban Development contracts, or those with independent living units. NCAL members receive discounts and may receive additional discounts based on the number of licensed communities.

To learn more, visit NCAL.org, search Movie.
REACHING OUT TO CUSTOMERS

NCAL’s Customer Relations Committee develops and promotes tools that support positive consumer experiences and perceptions of assisted living. The following are tools and resources released in 2011.

Ethical Marketing Brochure Updated
This year, NCAL published a newly designed and updated “The Power of Ethical Marketing” training brochure. The brochure features new sections on social media, the power of information, and expanded sections on the Fair Housing Act and the Americans with Disabilities Act.

Faces of Assisted Living
The Faces of Assisted Living is a NCAL webpage devoted to the images of residents in member communities. It is part of a public effort to inform policymakers and consumers about what life inside an assisted living community looks like. NCAL encourages member communities to submit photographs of resident experiences in assisted living communities to NCAL so the photos can be featured on NCAL’s Faces of Assisted Living webpage.

YouTube Videos Convey Messages
NCAL produced two YouTube videos to summarize NCAL’s policy positions. One video featured Howie Groff, NCAL’s Immediate Past Chair, and participant in the U.S. Senate Special Committee on Aging assisted living roundtable. Mr. Groff summarized NCAL’s main points.

The second video featured Rosemary Carbonelli, NCAL’s State Leader from Florida, who stated how the CMS rule about HCBS waivers would impact her residents.

The videos were posted on NCAL’s website and published in NCAL Connections.

Media
Media is key to generating positive public perception about assisted living. This year, NCAL worked with the following organizations on stories about assisted living: About Health, The Arizona Republic, The New York Times, The Miami Herald, Kaiser Health, McKnight’s Long Term Care, Inside CMS, Long Term Care Management, and other media outlets.
COLLABORATING WITH OTHER ORGANIZATIONS

The Center for Excellence in Assisted Living
NCAL is one of the 11 founding organizations of the Center for Excellence in Assisted Living (CEAL) and continues to hold a seat on its board. The nonprofit organization was established to promote practice excellence, encourage the exchange of ideas, and encourage research amongst its stakeholders. NCAL staff educated CEAL members about the CMS Medicaid home- and community-based waivers proposed rule. CEAL’s accomplishments in 2011 included an expanded information clearinghouse, and submitting unanimous comments to CMS raising concerns about CMS’ proposed HCBS rule. CEAL also provided guidance on measuring person-centered care.

Long Term Quality Alliance (LTQA)
David Kyllo, NCAL’s executive director, serves on the Quality Performance Indicator Task Force of the Long Term Quality Alliance (LTQA). The LTQA is developing resources designed to improve the transitions among care settings.
PREPARING FOR THE FUTURE

NCAL is staying informed of policy and technological developments that will impact assisted living providers in the future and educating members through its conferences, publications, and meetings.

Staying In Tune With Health Information Technology

The advancement of technology combined with government incentives to move toward electronic health records is sure to influence the operations of assisted living. E-prescribing for medications will be common and providers of all types will have the capacity to transfer and receive electronic health care records.

NCAL is a stakeholder organization involved in the Long Term and Post Acute Care (LTPAC) Health Information Technology (HIT) collaborative. NCAL was a sponsor of its 2011 annual convention in Baltimore. The annual convention provides education sessions about the latest developments in HIT for professionals in aging services.

Along with AHCA, NCAL educated members about the administration’s rules for setting up an ACO organization at the AHCA/NCAL Independent Owners conference, and through an AHCA/NCAL webinar.

Updating Construction & Design Guidelines For 2014

2014 may be several years away, but NCAL Board members are already involved in the process of updating the 2010 Guidelines for Construction of Health Care Facilities (Guidelines). The next edition will be published in 2014. This guide is influential because it is used by states in whole or in part as architectural guidance for the health care industry.

To ensure the Guidelines include a real-world perspective, NCAL Board members Ashley Blankenship-Arkansas, Howie Groff-Minnesota, Chris Mason-Oregon, and Jan Thayer-Nebraska are serving on the Specialty Subgroup.

This subgroup is focused on the Residential Health Care Facilities section of the Guidelines. This section covers assisted living as well as adult day care, hospice, and nursing facilities. Its goal is to create more uniform design practices based upon minimum requirements across the senior living industry.

The 2014 edition will have its own volume dedicated to the Residential Health Care Facilities. The book is being published by the Facility Guidelines Institute, Dallas, Texas.

International Code Council

NCAL is an active participant in the start of discussions that will lead to revisions of the International Code Council (ICC) codes. The ICC codes include the International Building Code (IBC) and the International Fire Code (IFC). While the next edition of the ICC codes won’t be published until 2015, NCAL staff participated in meetings and discussions this past summer that will culminate into code revisions.

The Influence Of Accountable Care Organizations

The Affordable Care Act implements Accountable Care Organizations (ACOs) in 2012. NCAL’s leadership believes assisted living operators need to learn about how ACOs will impact hospital discharge planning and how payment bundling will reshape health care and long term care.

The U.S. Senate Special Committee on Aging assisted living roundtable.

The Chelsea at East Brunswick, N.J.
Currently, the IBC/IFC does not allow residents who are incapable of self preservation to occupy assisted living facilities under I-1 occupancies. NCAL is working to harmonize ICC requirements with the Life Safety Codes which does recognize that not all assisted living residents are capable of self preservation.

Prepared For Long Term Care Financing Reform

The 112th Congress may be the one to implement reductions to entitlement programs such as Social Security, Medicaid, and Medicare. NCAL continues to be part of AHCA and the Alliance for Quality Nursing Home’s work on long term care financing, ensuring the robust inclusion of assisted living. This year, NCAL organized meetings that stimulated discussion about how consumers could access life insurance policies to fund long term care services.

NCAL/NASL Medicare Workgroup

NCAL joined with the National Association for the Support of Long Term Care to create a work group. The goal of the workgroup is to raise awareness of the assisted living profession—residents, family members, physicians, and nurses—about access to rehabilitation services through Medicare benefits and how these services can promote wellness, reduce unnecessary transfers, and support continuity of care.
NCAL is dedicated to promoting high quality, principle-driven assisted living care and services with a steadfast commitment to excellence, innovation and the advancement of person-centered care.