



2010 Annual Conference Postponed

The NAJIS Board of Directors at their Winter Planning Meeting decided to postpone this year's annual conference until 2011. This decision was made based primarily upon the concern that the faltering national economy would prevent potential conference participants from attending the conference this year.

Many state and local governments, which fund conference participation, are suffering unprecedented losses in revenues as a result of the poor state of the economy. This has resulted in severe cut-backs in

program resources including the imposition of furloughs and lay-offs of personnel. Funding for many non-essential expenditures, such as funding for continuing education and training, have long been removed from budgets.

Last year's conference, held in Nashville, was a programmatic success but had a less than expected turn-out.— less than 100 practitioners were able to attend. NAJIS strives to attract 150 to 200 practitioners to its conference—providing enough participation to reflect the diversity of programs, initiatives and activities

occurring across the country, but not so large as to lose the more intimate and informal atmosphere that traditionally appeals to attendees. The Board of Directors felt that even fewer practitioners would be able to attend a conference this year. Consequently, the 2010 conference has been postponed.

We are pleased to announce that the 2011 conference has been scheduled for September 15—17 in New Orleans. Additional information and updates about the conference are posted on the NAJIS website— www.najis.org.

NAJIS Launches National Information Sharing Assessment

NAJIS is launching an initiative to assess the "state of information sharing" at the state and local level. To this end, NAJIS has joined with SEARCH, The National Consortium for Justice Information and Statistics and the IJIS Institute to conduct a survey of information sharing initiatives and programs throughout the country.

Information sharing within the criminal justice and public safety arena remains a high priority for many jurisdictions, but no one has conducted a comprehensive assessment of information sharing capabilities recently. It's time to determine how effective these efforts have been.

Information sharing has been a focal point of the criminal justice community since before 9/11. National information sharing

efforts began in the late 1990s with initiatives such as the development of a standardized RAP sheet and electronic court documents. The U. S. Attorney General established the Global Advisory Committee (Global) to address state and local law enforcement and public safety interests in technology initiatives including information sharing (More information about Global can be found at <http://www.it.ojp.gov/global>).

These efforts resulted in the development of the Global Justice XML Data Model (GJXDM), which in turn lead to the development of the National Information Exchange Model (NIEM). All of this focus on information sharing led to the awarding of substantial amounts of federal grant funds to state and local jurisdic-

tions to implement information sharing solutions as the local, state and regional levels.

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It's All in the Numbers

By Paul Wormeli, Executive Director, IJIS Institute

There is no doubt that one of the factors inhibiting the widespread adoption of information sharing practices throughout the justice system is the lack of funding. It's not just the shortage of federal grant funds. The bulk of the funding for information sharing will have to come from state and local budgets like it always has. But funding for information sharing and the more modern technology that will enable us to improve information sharing has to be seen by legislative bodies at the local, state, and federal level as being truly useful and something that just has to be done.

The legislative bodies that provide the funding invariably want to know what we have done so far with the money they have appropriated and what are the remaining needs to be filled. And most legislators these days are more impressed by actual data than rhetoric. The best way to fill this informational need is to hear from the practitioners that have and have not imple-

mented information sharing within disciplines and across disciplines.

We need to know, for the purposes of justifying continued support of these programs, that local, state, and tribal agencies have taken advantage of the work done by DOJ and others to develop new standards like NIEM. We need to know whether agencies have adopted the modern practices of service oriented architecture, web services, or XML as a means of improving information sharing. In how many counties does the sheriff use these new technologies and standards to exchange information with the prosecutor and then has the prosecutor taken similar advantage of the technologies to pass along the filings to the court without re-entering all the data? Are we reducing duplicate data entry by information sharing techniques? Are we delivering information more quickly to the person who needs it for decision making?

There is a strong emphasis in the federal government on evidence-based program support. If there is no evidence that a program is working, there will be no support. This philosophy is being considered at local and state levels as well, particularly in this recessionary time. On the other hand, if there is evidence that such programs can save time and money and make the justice system more effective, the support for these programs will grow even in the worst of times. We need to know where we stand and where we need to go.

The national survey that NAJIS is undertaking has exactly the right context. Ask the practitioners for input and for an explanation of what has been done well, and what remains to be done. It is critical that we gather this data (evidence) of progress and the documentation of needs to continue to pursue improvements. We are far from being done with the goal of efficient information sharing across the disciplines of the justice system and we must gather this data to help us move closer to the goal. **Stand up and be counted!**

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What Is NAJIS?

The National Association for Justice Information Systems (NAJIS) is an organization of individuals responsible for the acquisition, operation and management of local, state, tribal and federal criminal justice information systems.

All practitioners in prosecutor's offices, the courts, law enforcement, probation, corrections and allied agencies who design, improve, implement or supervise automated information systems can benefit from participating in NAJIS. Individuals who are investigating, evaluating and purchasing automated systems—both hardware and software—for criminal justice purposes are encouraged to join and participate in NAJIS activities.

NAJIS began in 1981 as the PROMIS (Prosecutors Management Information System) User Group and has grown to encompass the needs of all criminal justice agencies. The promotion of integrated criminal justice and new technologies is the focus of NAJIS.

NAJIS conducts an annual educational conference, publishes a newsletter and website with the goal of improving the criminal justice system through the practical application of technology.

Pennsylvania Justice Network (JNET) Deploys Federated Photo Search

By Dave Naisby, Executive Director, JNET

The Pennsylvania Justice Network (JNET) implemented a Service Oriented Architecture (SOA) platform including an Enterprise Service Bus (ESB). The ESB provides JNET with a platform for sharing information, integrating applications, and enhancing business process execution while continuing to ensure that business partners retain ownership and autonomy over their information and business process components.

JNET implemented the ESB to help enhance end user business processes, and the safety and performance of justice practitioners who access photographs and related information in the discharge of their duties. This project focused on applying JNET's ESB to search photos from various Commonwealth systems via a single inquiry.

Currently, photographs reside in two individual databases maintained by two different agencies; the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation (PennDOT) photo database and the Web-based Commonwealth Photo Imaging Network (WebCPIN) which contains arrest, prison intake, and parole intake photos, scars, marks, and tattoos.

Prior to the JNET Federated Photo Search, the practitioner needed to log into these two separate applications and generate two separate inquiries, using essentially the same information to obtain the available photographs. Using JNET's ESB, users need only enter their search criteria once, allowing the ESB to search all relevant data sources, gather related responses from each source of

the photographs, and present the results in a manner consistent with the role of the inquirer.

The Federated Photo Search application incorporates the use of a "secondary search" of information so that the response from one system may, as appropriate, be used to formulate still another transaction to the other target system. For example, an inquiry to WebCPIN using the unique State Identification Number (SID) will return name and date of birth; the ESB will then formulate an inquiry using this information (Name and DOB) to PennDOT (driver license photos) to obtain information and photographs from PennDOT.

Using JNET's Federated Photo Search, the justice official may make a single inquiry and automatically search the databases of PennDOT and WebCPIN. While PennDOT retains photos and demographics for all Pennsylvania drivers and Photo-ID cards, WebCPIN contains photographs from several systems including the NY/NJ High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area (HIDTA), Department of Corrections (DOC), Pennsylvania Board of Pardons (PBPP), County Prisons, and County Probation Offices. This technology allows this entire transaction to take place in less than six seconds. This application has afforded significant savings to the user community in terms of timeliness of search results, ease of use, and gaining access to information that would have otherwise not be queried.

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National Information Sharing Survey

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All of this effort and focus has resulted in many successful implementations. Information sharing projects have flowered across the country. Jurisdictions have embraced the idea of sharing data without having to "own" it or have it stored in a common data base. Now, in many jurisdictions, information flows between systems without regard to internal formats or data representations because of the common exchange language represented by NIEM and GJXDM.

But, in spite of these many steps forward, no one has made a comprehensive effort to assess the level of success achieved by the many information sharing projects completed across the country.

Now is the time to make this assessment—to take the time to see how successful these efforts have been. This is not to say that we have crossed the finish line of information sharing between all criminal justice partners. But it is certainly time to measure how much success has been achieved—as well as how far we may still need to go.

Have you successfully implemented an information sharing solution within your jurisdiction? Have you adopted national standards? Do you still face challenges and barriers to information sharing? We want to know, and this survey will capture and measure the degree of success that we have achieved over the past decade and how far we may need yet to go.

The survey is expected to be distributed by early September 2010. Check the NAJIS website for a link to the survey. We will be reaching out to you via our many professional associations and communities of interest. We hope you will respond. Please complete the survey and encourage others to do so. This is a great opportunity to see how well we're doing to further information sharing efforts.

To take the survey, go to www.najis.org