**IEA Awesome Podcast**

**Episode 17 – The IEA Program Development Department**

00:01 *Kelsey*: Welcome to the Awesome IEA Podcast brought to you by the Illinois Education Association.

00:05 *Diana*: The podcast for curious well-informed association members.

00:09 *Kelsey*: I’m one of your hosts, Kelsey Harms, a Computer Specialist from the IEA Program Development Department**.**

00:14 *Diana*: And I’m Diana Zaleski, one of your Instructional Resource and Professional Development Directors from IEA Teaching and Learning.

00:20 *Kelsey*: The goal of this podcast is to educate our members about important new educational policy initiatives in a brief and hopefully entertaining format.

00:28 *Diana*: Today we are going to speak with several staff members from the IEA Program Development Department to learn more about the supports the Program Development Department offers.

00:36 *Kelsey*: First up is Lisa Schnell, IEA Resource Specialist. Lisa, thanks for joining us today.

00:41 *Lisa*: Thanks, Kelsey and Diana. It’s great to be here. I’ll glad to have this opportunity to talk a little bit about what Program Development does.

00:48 *Diana*: Can you tell us a little bit about yourself and give us a general overview of the work you’re involved in?

00:54 *Lisa*: Sure. I came to IEA many years ago after a kind of lengthy tour through higher ed. Strangely enough, my background in public history and educational psychology have come together in my work. My official title is Resource Specialist but that’s come to mean a number of things. I’m often referred to as a utility player because I get to be involved in so many different projects in the organization, dealing with the very oldest of the Association resources right up to some of our more current resources.

01:26 *Kelsey*: So Lisa, I know that a lot of members will be familiar with the IEA survey tool. I know that you kind of tag team to work on that. Can you give us just kind of an overview of what the survey tool is and how it might be used in locals or regions?

01:40 *Lisa*: Sure. Yes, I work with the Research Department, Erika Lindley and Janet Bandy, and I help support the use of the survey tool. The online survey tool is a great adaptable resource. You can do anything from bargaining surveys, climate surveys for local associations. We’ve used it for registering people to attend professional development training in the region offices. And, we use it for evaluations for conferences.

02:09 I support the Research Department by helping people do everything from just getting a log in to actually putting together the survey questions, to launching the survey, to breaking out the data. And, we do everything in between that.

02:25 So, if you have a member who is interested in doing a survey for their local, we usually contact the UniServ Director to make sure that they’re included in the loop. But, if they are tech savvy and are very comfortable going forward, we just set them up with a password. If they require more assistance, we’re there for that as well.

02:45 *Diana*: I know you also are integral to several of our IEA conferences. Can you share a little bit about those conference services that you provide?

02:54 *Lisa*: Once again, in Program Development we work as a team in conference services. There are several people involved in every step of setting up a conference from site selection, to setting up the registration, to setting up evaluations, bringing the materials there, printing the materials, and actually working onsite registering people and welcoming them and getting them to their elective sessions. So, it’s kind of a whole package. And, again, it’s a team effort. There are several people involved in Program Development to help pull off these conferences and trainings throughout the state.

03:32 *Kelsey*: Thanks for sharing will us about the conference services, Lisa. Is there anything else you want to share with us about the work you do or anything that’s available to members?

03:42 *Lisa*: I said earlier that I get to work with the very oldest resources and some of the very newest here at IEA. When I initially started working for the IEA, my job was very heavily working with the archive collection of the organization. I think a lot of people don’t know that IEA got its start back in 1853 as the Illinois State Teachers Association. And, we have records that go back to the very earliest times, 1857.

04:07 We began publishing a journal at that time and we have those resources available in their original format. So, a lot of those resources had to be protected and had to be catalogued, had to be indexed, and they are available for research. We’ve had several people, members, who are working on their PhD’s come in and do research at the IEA archives.

04:28 What I’m trying to do now is make those resources available to people by scanning and digitizing them, and migrating, essentially, these resources forward so they’re preserved and they’re also available for people to use. What’s wonderful about this collection is you see a real continuity. You’re actually able to see, to read and research the history of the organization back from its earliest days to the present days.

04:53 I also work with the Legal Department and with the Research Department to keep track of Association records. Kind of the history, if you will, in paper of our local associations. Everything from their original charter files, to their contracts, to Labor Board certifications, and to their bylaws. And, these are all maintained in a large database.

05:16 We also have the governance archives. I work with Ann Holmes in the Legal Department to maintain a record of all board of directors meetings and the actions that have come out of those board meetings. The same with the RA. We’ve been meeting for 165 years and there are records of actions that have come out of all of those Representative Assemblies.

05:40 If anyone is interested in any of these resources, I’m also happy to take a phone call. I’m happy to help with any research. And, also if people want to come in and take a look themselves and dig around in some of these valuable resources, I’m happy to help with that, too.

05:56 *Diana*: Thank you so much for sharing all of this valuable information about the resources that IEA provides to our members.

06:02 *Kelsey*: Joining us next is Steven Hoff, IEA Computer Specialist. Steve, thanks for stopping by!

06:07 *Steven*: Thanks for having me.

06:08 *Diana*: So, can you tell us a little bit about yourself and the work that you do here at IEA?

06:13 *Steven*: I’ve been here at IEA for about 19 years now. I’ve been in the Computer Services Department about 16 of those 19 years. My main responsibilities would be in user computers and printers as well as maintaining a lot of the network infrastructure for IEA, and the IEA email system.

06:29 *Kelsey*: So Steve, one of things I was really impressed by when I first started at IEA was how much our team does to help out strike support. Can you share a little bit of what we provide for locals during a strike?

06:42 *Steven*: Sure. When a UD or a local contacts us about going on a strike, internet is a big thing. Get out there via social media or getting their website up and going. We will try to get in and provide internet for them using Wi-Fi hotspots. And, if needed, bring computers or send computers up to them.

06:59 A lot of locals have their own laptops. They can connect right up to our Wi-Fi. But, sometimes in other cases they might need a computer, we’ll send that up. We also send a basic Laser Jet printer for printing. So, when a package is delivered onsite at the strike headquarters, you have power supply that’s needed, power cords, everything is setup and ready to go, the printers are ready to connect to one of the computers we send.

07:21 The Wi-Fi is configured in a way that the computers that we send are ready and connected for the internet. And, then there’s also user name and password on the Wi-Fi device for other personal devices to be connected to it.

07:33 Another important thing during a strike is the local website. Sometimes locals don’t have a website and in those cases our webmaster, Dan Billingsley, can work with someone there and get their websites up and going through WordPress so they can get their message out to the community.

07:49 *Diana*: That was really helpful. It sound like the services you and your colleagues provide are very valuable for not only our staff but also our members across the state. Is there anything else that you’d like to share with us?

07:59 *Steven*: Of course, everyone wants to try to avoid a strike if they can but sometimes it’s unavoidable. So, at a time when impasse happens or you have a strike, it’s a good idea to make sure that you have a website if you can and have it up to date. That’s the most important thing because you don’t want to be scrambling around trying to build the website for the first time in a crisis like that. So, I would definitely suggest to any local that doesn’t have a website to contact our webmaster, Dan Billingsley, and get that set up.

08:27 *Kelsey:* That’s an excellent point. Thanks for sharing with us today, Steve.

08:30 *Diana*: Next up is Dan Billingsley, IEA Webmaster. Dan, thanks for joining us!

08:35 *Dan*: Thanks for having me.

08:36 *Kelsey:* Dan, can you start off by telling us a bit about yourself and the work you do here at IEA?

08:41 *Dan*: Well, my official title is webmaster here at the IEA and I’ve been here 17 years now. My main job here is to manage the website and Members Only.

08:52 *Diana*: Can you share with us first what Members Only is and how members sign up or log in, and what types of things can be found there?

09:00 *Dan*: Members Only contains a lot of information for members of the IEA. It’s really easy to get started by signing up and registering on the IEA website by clicking the Log In link on the top of right hand corner or accessing any Members Only page.

09:19 Once you sign up, you will then be taken to your members dashboard, which displays all your vital information at the IEA. It will give you your membership number, your local association, your UniServ Director’s name, your local office location. With all that information, you’re also able to print a temporary membership card and also access a digital membership card for an Apple device.

09:45 A few of the other things that on the Members Only site that you can access directly from your member dashboard are the discounts and deals. A lot of members really like these and from what I’ve heard people are able to save a dues amount of dollars just by using their access discounts.

10:02 The Online Learning Portal allows you to earn clock hours on demand, on your own schedule. So, it’s a great resource for all members to come to whether or not you want to earn clock hours or not. We also have file downloads. So special files that only you have access to in the organization.

10:21 Also available on the website available to anyone who goes to it is the IEA Connect chat tab. Anytime you have questions about your IEA membership, just click on the chat tab and someone will be able to assist you in real time.

10:36 *Kelsey*: Dan, I know you also help out with region and local association websites. Can you explain a little bit about the process if somebody is interested and if somebody doesn’t know if they have a region or local website, where they go to find those?

10:49 *Dan*: So, yeah, if you’re interested in finding out if your local association has a website, or if you’re interested in starting a website for your local association, it’s really easy to get started by going to the IEA website and clicking on the About tab. Under the About tab, or on the menu, there’s a section for local association and region websites.

11:10 On the local association and region website page, we have a current listing of local associations that have websites. Also on that page is a link about how to create a website using WordPress.com. We also have a link to add your own link to this page. You just complete a form and it will automatically add your site to our listing.

11:33 *Kelsey*: So Dan, if a local association is interested in creating a website but they are unsure or they have questions, do you have suggestions on next steps for them?

11:42 *Dan*: If you want to create a website or need webmaster support, just contact me using the IEA webmaster support button. You can give me a call or send me an email directly from the site. And, if you need assistance, just give me a call or send me an email and I’ll be glad to set up a web meeting with both of us and show you exactly how to go about doing things on your site.

12:05 *Diana*: Thanks so much for joining us today. That information was very helpful.

12:09 *Dan*: Thanks, Diana and Kelsey! I enjoyed being here.

12:12 *Diana*: Next up is Kathy Thompson, Print Shop Supervisor, and Joe Saccaro, Printer! Kathy and Joe, thanks for joining us!

12:20 *Kathy*: Thank you.

12:20 *Joe*: Thank you.

12:21 *Kelsey:* First, Kathy can you tell us a little bit about yourself and your role here at IEA?

12:25 *Kathy*: I’ve been here 36 years in June and I manage the Print Shop and do typesetting and get everything ready to be printed.

12:33 *Diana:* Joe, can you tell us a little bit about yourself and your role here at IEA?

12:37 *Joe*: I’ve been here, next month, it will be 40 years and I am the printer and that’s about it. I’m a perfectionist. I like to make sure every job I do is the best I can do and if it’s not, then I’ll ask you if you want it done differently. That’s pretty much it.

12:52 *Diana:* Well, I know everything you’ve done for me has been fabulous so I really appreciate all your help.

12:57 *Kelsey:* Can you guys share with us what services our members have access to through the IEA Print Shop? I’m on staff here and I had very little idea what options are actually available. So, if you can lay out what options our members have either for their locals or for individual printing?

13:15 *Kathy*: We do contracts for the locals. We can do banners, pop up banners, posters – anything like posters you get for kid to put on the wall – envelopes, business cards, pretty much anything you want us to print, notepads. We’ll give it a shot. If it’s something we can do, we’ll do.

13:29 *Kelsey:* I know we recently have the ability to print stickers as well. Can you share a little bit about that?

13:34 *Kathy*: We have crack and peel paper or circle stickers we can do. Thank you notes, invitations. We’ve done wedding invitations for our members. Just a little bit of everything. We are not a union shop. We have an in house union but not a printers’ union shop so we can’t do a union bug.

13:50 *Diana*: So, as our members know, we have our conferences, like our RA, and the SLA every year and your shop is very busy during those times. Can you tell us a little bit about the services you provide for conferences?

14:05 *Kathy*: If they have different meetings, we provide material the meetings. We do postcards to let them know that the meeting is coming up. Anything they need to make their conference run smoothly. Notepads, evaluations, anything they need to have we can print it for them.

14:21 *Joe*: Also programs, schedules.

14:24 *Diana*: That’s great. I know you also help the Teaching and Learning Department. You help us print all of our training materials. You’ve also printed our Restorative Justice materials on smaller cards so our teachers can have those handy when they need them. So, almost anything you can think of, I know our Print Shop can provide it.

14:42 *Kelsey*: So, specifically, I know that when our locals are in crisis, there’s a need to get information out very quickly. I know the Print Shop provides a lot of support during strikes. Can you share specifically what services the print shop provides for our locals during a crisis?

14:58 *Joe*: Well, whatever they ask for, we can do. I mean, we send them strike signs. If they need any other materials for their strike, we could print that up. It’s just they need to communicate with us to let us know what their needs are. As far as our wide format machine, the banners and that we do, it’s mainly materials for indoor use. It’s really not made for outdoor but it will work outdoors on a temporary basis. You can use it for a little while but for a permanent outdoor sign or yard sign or something like that, we would need to send out and have done with a different machine.

15:30 The size of the banners are 36 inches wide by whatever length you’re going to need. We also have 42 inch, so we can print quite a bit and pretty big. We grommet them if you want to hang them out on a fence or however you want to mount them.

15:44 As long as the file is a nice, high quality file, because it is large, it will look great. And, Communications makes most of those for us and Mark does a great job at that and Bambi.

15:55 *Kathy*: So, if it pixelates, if you do it at 100% and there’ a lot of pixilation, we’re going to have to jump it up to 800% it’s not going to look good at all. So, we need to make sure that it’s going to look good at the size you want.

16:05 *Diana*: So that means that means we need a high resolution images?

16:08 *Joe*: Right, like photos and that kind of material, yeah, it would need to be high resolution.

16:14 *Kelsey*: Well, it sounds like our Print Shop has a very wide variety of options available to our members and I know it’s a very competitive pricing.

16:25 *Kathy*: People are really surprised that we are here. I have had a UniServ Director that has been here for many years did not realize we printed contracts.

16:33 *Diana*: Fantastic! Is there anything else that you’d like to share with us about the services that you can provide to our members?

16:39 *Kathy*: During the election periods, usually in April and October, we do postcards. Any kind of material to get out there for you to vote for someone, we have variable data so we can put the address on them as we print them so that saves a step for our mail room. We were kept quite busy with this last school board election.

16:54 *Diana*: So, if our members would like to request services from the Print Shop, how do they get in touch with you? How do they make those requests?

17:01 *Kathy*: They can just email me at kathy.thompson@ieanea.org and give me the specifics they want and I can give an estimate. Or, if they give me the information I can call them and we can talk it over. That’s how you get a hold of me.

17:13 *Diana*: That’s very helpful and I think we can also put Kathy’s email address on the podcast site so everyone can have access to that. Thanks so much for stopping by. This information is extremely helpful for our members and really appreciate all you do.

17:27 *Kathy*: Thank you.

17:27 Joe: Thank you.

17:29 *Kelsey*: Our final guest today is Phil Banks, IEA Support Supervisor. Thanks for joining us today, Phil.

17:33 *Phil*: You’re welcome.

17:34 *Diana*: Can you tell us a little bit about yourself and your role within the organization?

17:39 *Phil*: I’m married. I have four kids. Within the organization, I hope I’m helpful. My duties are taking care of both buildings, maintenance problems, something happens with the plumbing, if I can fix it, I will. I do a lot of the painting, dry walling, patching holes. Whatever I can fix, I try to fix it. Both buildings, PDC and HQ.

18:03 *Diana*: Well, that’s incredibly important. You help our headquarters and the Professional Development Center run.

18:08 *Phil*: Yes.

18:10 *Kelsey*: Phil, I know you get to come with us to a lot of the IEA conferences. Can you tell us a little bit about what your role is at some of these IEA conferences?

18:18 *Phil*: Well, the RA, my biggest role is making sure I get the 17 foot truck and when we get that, make sure it gets filled up and make sure we have everything. And, before we leave here for Chicago, as far as all the supplies, we make sure all the ballots and booths are with us. We try to make sure we don’t forget anything. And, that’s here and at HQ, we pick up boxes and stuff from whatever they have there. My role is to make sure we have everything on the truck before we leave that Wednesday morning.

18:54 Then, when we get there, my role is, they call us runners. Once we get the truck emptied, whatever you guys need from Computer Services to Kathy, Audrey, we make sure Legal, Communication, everybody has everything in place where it needs to go. So, that’s what a runner is. Make sure we have the easel pads in place, markers, boxes, whatever.

19:20 *Kelsey*: And, then at the end?

19:22 *Phil*: Then at the end, on Saturday when it’s all over, we pack it all up and get it back here. But the good thing about that is we don’t have to unload it until that Monday morning.

19:31 *Kelsey*: And, so do you several conferences, not just the RA, right?

19:35 *Phil*: Well, I have been to the students’ but my main one is the RA.

19:41 *Diana*: Without you and your colleagues, these conferences wouldn’t run because you make sure we have the materials we need and everything is set up. That’s an incredibly important job. As a staff, we’re really appreciative of everything you help us with. As I get ready to do a PD session, you’re right there going, here’s all the documents you asked for, and making sure they make it to the right place so we really appreciate everything you do. Is there anything else you wanted to share with members about your role in the organization?

20:10 Phil: Well, I do want to share that I have two good workers, Gary Taylor and Joe Burke, they’re a big help to me. If I’m off on vacation, Joe Burke makes sure this building is ran, PDC. Gary Taylor makes sure HQ is ran smoothly.

20:27 *Kelsey*: Thanks again for joining us today, Phil, and sharing more about what our support team does for us.

20:34 *Diana*: If you have any questions, comments, or feedback, please check out the contact section on the Podcast page on the IEA Website.

20:41 *Kelsey*: Special thanks to Mark for the audio help, Amanda for the transcription, and Dan for the website. As always, thank you so much for being a member, and thanks for joining us!

20:49 End