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You know those five minutes before it's time to go home? You're tired of working on the current project and there's not enough time to get started on the next one... the secondhand on the clock moves excruciatingly slow and you have that mental battle between whether you should just slip hopefully unnoticed out the back door or stay dutifully at your desk. Next time, do the right thing: Use those five minutes to check out the ALMIS Resource Center website. You never know what you'll find! (Hint: new resources coming in from the ALMIS Database Seminar) Plus you'll look like you're still working...

ALMIS Database Seminar: Solutions Delivered

The ALMIS Database Seminar in Atlanta, Georgia on November 3 -5, 2003 was a great success! The seminar included 23 workshops/sessions, a troubleshooting clinic, and ample networking opportunities. A big thank you goes out to all that volunteered their time and skills in making it happen. A special thanks goes out to all of those individuals who were willing to serve as presenters and facilitators. On behalf of all seminar attendees, we're sure it goes without saying that without you [and attendee participation] there would have been no seminar!

For those of you who were not able to attend, rest assured, we filmed most of the event and will be releasing video from the seminar in a variety of media over the next few months. We are also in the process of posting the proceedings, PowerPoint presentations and handouts from the seminar on our website. Keep checking back!

Hear what attendees were saying they liked about the first ALMIS Database Seminar:

"...a wealth of information that I received about all of the current and new programs that will affect the ALMIS Database..."

"Awesome conference! A lot of practical tips were shared."

"...both the big picture and specific ALMIS Database discussions and the opportunity to network with state counterparts..."

"...meeting individuals from different states and learning from them..."

"...learning about the different projects that my state is not yet doing..."

"...the environment of this allowed the states to just talk and compare notes."

"...opportunity to speak face to face with peers from other states..."

"The presentations were short and precise with appropriate handouts."

"...taking a look at what we have at the present time and incorporating ideas and programs for the future. Great chance to network."

"XML discussion—sounds like we will be able to share information more easily."

Inside this issue!



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DBA in the Spotlight

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Photo provided courtesy of a friend of Cole's.



whatever has to be done, whether we're trained for it or not (just ask the always patient Denise Lee). But we face our challenges with good intentions and good humor. I'm lucky to have Simona

Grinberg helping me now.

What is your educational background?

I have a BA in Geography from the University of Delaware.

Are you originally from Delaware?

I was born in Washington, DC and raised in Bethesda, MD so I'm not far from my roots.

What are your interests outside of work?

I love the theater so I drive the Jersey Turnpike to New York often to see plays. My husband just bought a sailboat so we spend time

sailing on the Chesapeake. I like to travel. And I'm trying to train my newly adopted dog, Cole.

What is your favorite work-related web site? Why?

I love the National Crosswalk Service Center (www.xwalkcenter.org) because it makes my life so much easier! Thank you Iowa!

What is the strangest job you ever held?

Have you ever ordered trip maps from AAA? Did you ever wonder who sits around highlighting the routes in green? That would have been me for a short while. Except for the fact that I love maps, the job was pretty awful.

What is the most rewarding aspect of your current job?

I like solving puzzles and it seems this job always has a new puzzle to solve. It might be technical or it might be the best way to present the

latest information but it's always a challenge and it's always rewarding when the challenge has been met.

What is the most exotic (or awe-inspiring) place you've been?

I lived in Brazil for two years and was able to travel some while I was there. Probably the most awe-inspiring place I visited was Iguacu Falls at the border of Argentina and Brazil. The sheer volume of water plunging over this array of waterfalls is amazing. I'm always most inspired by nature.

What would a perfect day be like for you?

I like to travel with my family - seeing nature; a moose would make my day.

Note: Here's a picture of my new dog on our sailboat. He's half Golden Retriever and half Bassett Hound. Basically, he's a golden with short legs and he's a lovable goof. 🐶

NOTES from the ALMIS Resource Center Meeting, November 2003

The ALMIS Resource Center/ALMIS Database Maintenance Consortium met in Atlanta, Georgia on November 5-7, 2003.

Welcome by chairperson Bob Cottrell with a brief discussion of the week's events. Members gave updates on various consortia, policy councils, workgroups, Workforce Information Council, the

Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS), and the Employment and Training Administration (ETA). Due to the shortened meeting time because of the ALMIS Database Seminar earlier in the week, members spent most of the time working in subcommittees. Following are highlights of status reports to the full group during the general meeting times.

Vicki Boylston reported on the preliminary results of the ALMIS Database Seminar. There were more than 24 states represented and approximately 70 attendees. The evaluations looked very positive and there were a great number of responses. Comments were made by several attendees that they look forward to another ALMIS Database Seminar

and wanted to know if we would be having one next year.

There was approximately 12 hours of video footage from the seminar including the sessions on XML, ALMIS Database Fundamentals, and SQL. The footage will be incorporated into mini-series multimedia products. There were also filmed interviews completed with many seminar

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attendees and speakers and those will be incorporated into the upcoming products. Thanks to all those who helped with the seminar as it turned out to be a very positive experience.

Jeff Nall reported on the status of the Employer Database. A final master contract has not been signed between Iowa and infoUSA. As in the past, individual licenses will be signed between each state and infoUSA for use of the Employer Database. On Thursday, November 6 the Employer Database Committee met (via

teleconference) with the Attorney General's office in Iowa and representatives from infoUSA to discuss details of the contract.

The Education and Communication Subcommittee gave an update on their activities including the new website (www.almisdb.org) which has received very good feedback, e-newsletters which are still being released periodically, the LMI Forum "ALMIS Resource Center" workshop, and the soon to be released annual report. Additionally, due to the significant number of people requesting hands-on

training in addition to the seminar the subcommittee is proposing a hands-on training in April 2004 and a national seminar again in April 2005.

The Education and Communication Subcommittee will also be working on a business card CD-ROM marketing/awareness product using video footage from the seminar to be distributed in mid-December 2003.

The Structure Subcommittee spent the majority of their time discussing the details of the EMPDB table structure. Other issues

discussed were: SOC codes, education levels, increasing length of the progtitle field, projections issues (including adding descriptors), follow-up on MLS claim table, and Census-related tables.

Steve Rosenow and Joanna Hendrickson-Larson gave an update on National Crosswalk Service Center activities that have occurred since August 2003. Three new resources have been developed and are currently available on the web: O*NET 5.0 database (pre-production), www.almisdb.org (site went live in September and has been updated weekly since that

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DBA in the Spotlight

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How long have you been involved in the world of LMI?
About 12 years or so.

How long have you been an ALMIS DBA?
I worked on the ALMIS Database ever since it was introduced, and actually started with the OLMID database.

What is your educational background?
I have a BA in Mathematics from the University of Hawaii.



Are you originally from Hawaii?
Yes, I was born here and never had the desire, a reason, or the courage to relocate.

What are your interests outside of work? Shopping, traveling, movies, reading, collectibles, and spending time with family and friends.

What is your favorite work-related web site? Why?
Hawaii Workforce Informer (www.hiwi.org) because we put a lot of effort into it and it was exciting because it was our *first* LMI website.

What is the strangest job you ever held?
A part-time clerical job with a temp agency. The first day, I reported to this guy's


apartment. He was a pharmaceutical rep. and instead of clerical duties like typing or filing, he had me running errands all over town . . . including buying candles at the drug store for his girlfriend. Anyway, I never went back and the temp agency never heard from me again, which means I never got paid for that days work!

What is the most rewarding aspect of your current job?
Seeing how LMI data can help many customers.

What is the most challenging aspect of your current job?
Trying to keep up with new technology and changes.

What is the most exotic (or awe-inspiring) place you've been?

I would have to say Mexico because its the only place outside the U.S. that I have been to. While on a cruise, we made port stops at Puerto Vallarta, Mazatlan, and Cabo San Lucas.

What would a perfect day be like for you?
I would be in my favorite city, San Francisco, taking in all the sights, doing lots of shopping, and riding the cable car to the wharf to eat the best dungeness crab and clam chowder. 

Ask the ALMIS Database Expert

I was told that the OES (Occupational Employment Statistics) code has been replaced by SOC (Standard Occupational Classification) codes. Then what is SOC-based OES?

The Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) is involved with both SOC codes and OES-SOC codes which are very similar. The OES program moved to a SOC basis beginning in 1999. There were some differences, with the OES program combining some SOC occupations into a higher summary level to better suit their data collection methods. In subsequent years, the OES classification has moved closer to the SOC until, in 2001, the occupations used in the OES survey were all SOC occupations.

Where does the SOC come from?

The SOC is the responsibility of the Office of Management and Budget (OMB), but BLS manages it. The latest information in terms of update and revision of the SOC is that the Office of Management and Budget plans to

establish a new standing committee, the Standard Occupational Classification Policy Committee (SOCPC). The SOCPC will consult periodically to ensure that the implementation of the SOC is comparable across Federal agencies.


I have heard people referring to O*NET-SOC. Are these the same as SOC codes?

The original version of O*NET (O*NET 98) was based on the old five-digit OES codes. All versions since then have been based on the SOC. The folks at O*NET call their codes O*NET-SOC. Some people might refer to these codes as just O*NET occupations rather than O*NET-SOC. However you refer to them, they generally consist of a SOC code with a two-digit extension. It's "XX-XXXX.00" if the SOC isn't broken down into more detail in O*NET. "XX-XXXX.01" through "XX-XXXX.XX" if the O*NET is more detailed. And "XX-XXXX.99" for residual (all other) occupations.

Why doesn't everyone just use the same SOC without any changes or customization?

Other than the SOC itself, other SOC-based classifications are used for data collection and/or presentation. In each case, some limitations are imposed by the data collection program. Initial versions of the classifications were based on agencies' data collection experience and their assumptions about the level at which they can gather data. As they gain experience, we can expect changes to the individual classifications such as we've already seen with the OES program (see the answer to the first question on this page).

I downloaded the SOCCODE.DBF table from the NCSC server. Now, when I open the file with Excel, the SOCDESC field is blank. Can you tell me where I can get content for that field?

You may be able to experience similar results with a variety of software packages. Many of the FoxPro tables on the NCSC server contain information in FoxPro memo fields. These are the fields that are listed as "varchar(2000)" in the database structure document. FoxPro stores the content of these fields in separate files with an FPT extension. So, in order to use the SOCCODE table in FoxPro, you would need to download both SOCCODE.DBF and SOCCODE.FPT. You would not have been able to open the table in FoxPro unless you'd downloaded the second file. However, some other packages, such as Excel, will open the file even if the memo file is not present. In fact, with Excel it doesn't matter whether the second file exists – the contents of the SOCDESC field won't be imported. 

Special thanks to Steve Rosenow of the National Crosswalk Service Center for providing the expertise this month!

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time), and the NCSC Annual Report (now available on the web at www.xwalkcenter.org/xw_repo.html).


Additional NCSC activities include: revision of the ALMIS Data Page based on recommendations made in Maine, O*NET was scheduled to release the new

5.1 version of the database this week. The major changes may be more metadata variables and incorporated errata. NCSC will have full details after the database is officially released.

NCSC staff participated in and provided service for a

number of activities currently being done by the CareerOneStop Consortium, its product committees and its user groups. NCSC already has files for the new Metropolitan areas and will have them for New England. Upcoming activities for the NCSC include more O*NET updates (laytitles file –

quarterly), structure for the ALMIS Database version of that, new OES data from BLS, projections in the Spring, and updating some crosswalks.

Next meeting of the ALMIS Resource Center is tentatively scheduled for February 2004 at a site to be determined. 


Core Data Tables: Data Collection Sources

Data Tables	Data Source		When
	National	State	
CES	www.xwalkcenter.org (See Note**)	Your CES unit	Monthly, Annually, Benchmark Revisions
EMPDB	CD-ROM from <i>infoUSA</i>	CD-ROM from <i>infoUSA</i>	Semi-annually
INCOME	Not available separately. It is included with the state files at www.xwalkcenter.org/almisdb/stfiles www.huduser.org	www.xwalkcenter.org/almisdb/stfiles www.huduser.org	Annually
INDPRJ	www.xwalkcenter.org (See Note**)	Your Projections unit	Biannually
INDUSTRY	www.xwalkcenter.org (See Note**)	Your ES-202 unit	Quarterly, Annually
IOMATRIX	www.xwalkcenter.org (See Note**)	Your Projections unit	Biannually
LABFORCE	Your LAUS unit www.xwalkcenter.org (See Note**)	Your LAUS unit	Monthly, Annually, Benchmark Revisions
LICAUTH	n/a	Your Licensing collection staff	Annually or Biannually
LICENSE	n/a	Your Licensing collection staff	Annually or Biannually
OCCPRJ	www.xwalkcenter.org (See Note**)	Your Projections unit	Biannually
OESWAGE*	www.xwalkcenter.org (See Note**)	Your OES unit	Annually
POPULATN	Not available separately. It is included with the state files at: www.xwalkcenter.org/almisdb/stfiles	Varies NCSC does have state and county data at: www.xwalkcenter.org/almisdb/stfiles	Annually
URL	You NCSC does have an example URL file at ftp://ftp.xwalkcenter.org/almis/national/	You	You decide
WAGE*	www.xwalkcenter.org (See Note**)	Your OES unit	Annually

* Database Administrator may opt to populate one or both of these data tables.

** For Data: <ftp://ftp.xwalkcenter.org/almis/national/>

For Read Me: <ftp://ftp.xwalkcenter.org/almis/national/readme.txt>



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If you have any questions regarding **almis database news** or would like to contribute information, please contact Marilyn Skalberg (503) 623-2504 or Email mskalberg@yahoo.com.

The ALMIS Database is a normalized, relational database structure developed for the storage and maintenance of labor market, economic, demographic and occupational information. The ALMIS Resource Center is responsible for the ALMIS Database structure development, update, and maintenance. Members include North Carolina (lead), Connecticut, Georgia, Florida, Illinois, Iowa, Massachusetts, Minnesota, Montana, Nebraska, Nevada, North Carolina, Oregon, South Carolina, Wisconsin, and ETA, along with support from the National Crosswalk Service Center and the LMI Institute.