

Notes from ACR Chapter Leaders Teleconference December 7, 2006

Agenda items for the call:

- I. Board Update
 - II. Program Planning
 - III. Chapter Conferences
 - IV. Youth Activities and Involvement
 - V. Dealing with a Large Geographic Area
 - VI. D&E
 - VII. Next Steps – Topics for Future Calls
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Participants:

- Tara Fishler – Vice President
 - Ray Lanier – ACR President
 - Ed Blumstein – Greater Delaware Valley
 - Pat Shanahan – Northern California
 - Elizabeth Wade – North Carolina
 - Nicky Davenport-Weston – Georgia
 - Mary Forsyth – Greater New York
 - Ashley Parker – ACR Membership and Chapters Associate
 - Tazewell Hubbard - Virginia
 - Art Benson – Minnesota
 - Stuart Binstock – District of Columbia
 - Ronald Shane – Delaware
 - Frances Mossman – Hawaii
 - Ruth Lusby – Arizona
 - Susan Goldfinch – Arizona
 - Kathy Key
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I. Chapter Conferences

Discussion: There was discussion about which Chapters have held conferences and which Chapters plan on holding conferences. One Chapter commented that a problem in planning a conference is that there are many competing events in the area (which, though good for the field, discourages attendance.) Some Chapters do not have an annual conference but instead set time aside during bi-monthly meetings for networking and workshops.

Discussion: For those Chapters that deal with a large geographic area, conferences can be a good draw. Additionally, some Chapters are banding together with others in the same area to discuss regional, as opposed to Chapter, conferences.

Discussion: It was suggested that Chapters trade conference brochures. This can be done via the ACR Chapters Yahoo! Group, which can be found at http://groups.yahoo.com/group/ACR_Chapters/?yguid=255134002.

Discussion: The Keynote speaker is one of the main draws to a conference. Tazewell would like to see ACR encourage speakers to come the Chapter conferences at reduced prices. Tara reminded everyone about the ACR Speakers Bureau. Information can be found at www.ACRnet.org/about/speakersbureau.htm. Ashley also suggested contacting Andy Levin at ACR (202-464-9700,) as he is a potential resource regarding connecting Chapters with ACR members to speak.

Discussion: ACRGNY has a very successful conference each year. This conference consists of a full day which starts early with a breakfast, followed by the keynote, and conclude with a networking reception in the evening which includes wine and food. There are 2-3 1.5 hour sessions. To make sure that rooms are filled, they base the number of sessions at one time on the number of overall attendees (for example, with GNY's standard 200 attendees, a goal of 25 people per room indicates that 8 sessions should occur at the same time.) One thing that GNY does is it has an award, around which it is able to fundraise (based on the recipient, people volunteer to fund an event around the award and the next year these people become part of the award selection committee.) GNY also gets sponsorship for the conference, mostly from board connections. The Chapter also is able to offer reduced rates to community mediators and works with a courts program which offsets that cost. Part of the GNY success is attributed to the professional and deliberately selected board. But GNY's conferences have grown greatly over the past years and are an example that given time, other Chapters can grow a successful conference program.

Discussion: The key for most people is the networking. Successful conferences take advantage of this by providing opportunities to address this need.

Discussion: Most Chapters who hold an annual conference also have membership (and board) meetings throughout the year.

Reminder: As conference (and meeting) planning begins to come together, keep Ashley (Chapters@ACRnet.org) aware so that the information can be included in the ACR Master Calendar at www.ACRnet.org/webcalendar.

II. Board Update

Discussion: Sangita Sigdyaal has resigned as COO of ACR to pursue another opportunity. Jennifer Druliner has resigned as Program Manager at ACR.

Discussion: The Executive Committee recently met. They have hired an Interim Office Manager, Yvette Thompson, who is working out just fine. An organizational consultant has been hired and will begin immediately and who will be contacting some Chapter leaders over the next few months. The committee is working to hire an Interim Executive Director and has the goal of filling this position by early January 2007. Interviews are tentatively scheduled for the week of December 18, 2006. The committee has identified a few candidates and is still in the process of identifying others (those who have contacts for this position should contact Ray at hlanier@wmata.com.) They hope to make the decision shortly after the interviews and negotiate a start date of early next year.

Discussion: Ray is interested in forming a new committee to be made up of 2 Chapter leaders and 2 Section leaders along with the Chapter Director and the Section Director and several Board Members to look at a range of things. More information will be coming shortly in an e-mail from Ray.

III. Next Steps

Future calls will cover Program Planning, Youth Activities and Involvement, Dealing with a Large Geographic Area, D&E Issues, and Annual Reports.

Tara Fishler (tara@tarafishler.com) is always interested to learn what issues you'd like to talk about on future calls. Please send her your requests!

**Our next Chapter Leaders Conference Call will take place on
Thursday, January 4, 2006.**

Please save the date for a call on the first Thursday of each month.