

**Notes from ACR Chapter Leaders Teleconference
January 4, 2006**

Agenda items for the call:

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

- Tara Fishler – ACR Board Vice President
 - Lou Gieszl – Chapters Director
 - Christopher Watler – GNY
 - Gene Johnson – GNY
 - Tazewell Hubbard – Virginia
 - Frances Mossman – Hawaii
 - Ed Blumstein – Greater Delaware Valley
 - Michelle Ledo – North Carolina
 - Ashley Parker – ACR Membership and Chapters Associate
 - Ray Lanier – ACR Board President
 - Stuart Binstock – DC
 - Nicky Davenpost-Weston – Georgia
 - Art Benson – Minnesota
 - Kay Elliott – Dallas/Ft. Worth
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I. Board Update

Discussion: We welcome Lou Gieszl, the new Chapters Director. Lou is glad to be on board and he and Tara are having a smooth transition. Lou works with MACRO in Maryland. He can be contacted at 410-841-2260 or at lou.gieszl@mdcourts.gov.

Discussion: The Board has a candidate for the interim Executive Director position on ACR staff, whom will begin work on January 18. Volunteer leaders will be given more information within 48 hours. Yvette, the interim Office Manager, is working well. She will be continuing until the end of February so that there will be a month of overlap with the interim Executive Director. The Organizational Consultant has already been hired and has begun working (some Chapter leaders will probably be contacted by her.) The work is expected to be complete or near complete by the Board meeting at the end of March.

Discussion: Please let Lou know of any thoughts or concerns that you would like brought up at the March Board meeting by about 1 month prior (the end of February.)

Discussion: On the last call Ray mentioned his interest in having several people from Chapter leaders group who would have time available over next 2-3 months, identified by the group, to work with Section and Board leaders to form a working group. Ray received a few questions about this announcement/committee and therefore offers clarification. He is not looking for “representation” of Chapters, but an ad hoc committee to work with other groups to look at the organization. He asks that if anyone is interested in making a commitment of 5-10 hours per week for the next 2-3 months and helping the working group

to look at a range of organizational issues within ACR, he or she please contact Ray at 202-962-1622 or at hlanier@wmata.com. He will provide more information to those interested.

II. Dealing with a Large Geographic Area

Discussion: Kay asked if any Chapters have tried Video Conferencing. Northern California is about to begin a teleconferencing series (the ACR Commercial Section and the Workplace Section, among others, currently have teleconferences.) Ashley will look into the possibility of ACR offering Training in how to hold Chapter Teleseminars and will speak with Andy Levin (ACR Marketing Coordinator) regarding the service that ACR uses. Art Benson has a contact who does "ethical dilemma" roleplays. ACRGNY has a teleseminar for marketing. Many Chapter leaders agreed that an increased use of technology is a definite way to go. Some Chapters have hosted teleseminars that have been interactive. This can be complicated, but overall it has worked well. Maryland has created subdivisions of its membership by interest areas, so each cluster can be involved in its own area (for teleseminars or conferences.) Some Chapters co-sponsor events with other groups, to reach out to different communities. GNY has participated in a lot of successful co-sponsored activities.

III. Program Planning

Discussion: One problem that Chapter leaders have with program planning is having a better idea of what members want. Kay has sent around a 5 question survey to the members (however she is not getting an overwhelming response, yet.) She suggests that she might also circulate the survey at the meeting while she has people's attention. Nicky has an evaluation at each meeting which includes a brief survey. During the last 5 minutes of the Georgia meetings they have a brainstorming session to get input. Nicky and Kay will send surveys/evaluations to Ashley, who will post/distribute. One person mentioned that when judges come to the meetings, meeting attendance is high because that means business. One of the most successful topics is "Starting an ADR Business." People who are willing to share insider secrets is also a big draw. Anything related to marketing, how to make a living or how to be successful are always very popular and successful. Often these meetings are discussion oriented with plenty of time for Q&A. Many Chapters have also found that something interactive is good. Hawaii did a panel with different styles of mediation which was very successful and generated a lot of interest and conversation. GNY had professional roleplayers participate as they mediate the same case with three different mediators using three different styles. Maryland has done something similar and felt like it created a fun way for people to see different styles and decide what they think works or does not. This also allowed for a lighthearted, fun conversation on the issue. Additionally, Maryland had a video for a plenary where they presented this same idea. They had 8 different mediators try the same case and then they spliced together a video. Maryland also has a video with actual cases which is available and is great in classes (anyone interested in a copy should contact Lou with a postal address.)

IV. Annual Reports

Discussion: Reminder, **Annual Reports are due to ACR by February 15.** These include the Annual Report form, the Activity Plan Report, a copy of your Membership Application and a copy of your membership list (in Excel.) **All materials can be emailed to Chapters@ACRnet.org.** Any questions should go to Ashley.

V. Notes

IMPORTANT: Mark Welge, who has been sick for some time, is now terminal. For those interested, he can be reached at 484-840-1610. Those looking for more information can contact Ed Blumestein.

Call Notes: The Chapter section of the ACR website has recently been updated and all of the Notes from previous calls (beginning in January 2006) are now online. Please visit www.ACRnet.org/chapters to see the updates. The Notes themselves can be found at <http://www.acrnet.org/chapters/monthly.chapter.leaders.teleconference.notes.htm>. Other new additions include the Chapter Leader handbook and model bylaws.

Conference Proposals: The call for proposals for the 2007 ACR Annual Conference has just gone out. Lou would like to present on Starting a Chapter. If anyone is interested in assisting or has input, please let him know. There may also be interest in having a session on How To Keep Your Chapter Vital.

VI. Next Steps

Future calls will cover Youth Activities and Involvement, D&E Issues and Annual Reports.

**Our next Chapter Leaders Conference Call will take place on
Thursday, February 1, 2006.**

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