

THE CHAPTER DISPATCH

January 2006

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AT A GLANCE – Important Dates

2006 CALENDAR

| | |
|--------|---|
| Jan 15 | ANNUAL FINANCIAL REPORTS due to National |
| Jan 15 | 990 EZ OR 990 FORM DUE TO IRS |
| Jan 19 | CMAG ADVANCE in Long Beach, CA |
| Feb 1 | Spring MEMBER-GET-A-MEMBER CAMPAIGN begins |
| Feb 6 | ONLINE POLL OPENS for National Board Elections |
| Feb 14 | CMOY and AOSE Nomination Deadline |
| Mar 15 | CPC ELECTION OPENS – Presidents only |
| Mar 20 | National Board Election Closes |
| Apr 15 | Deadline-Award of Excellence in Adherence Management (AEAM) nominations |
| Apr 30 | CHAPTER INNOVATION AWARD Entry Deadline |
| Apr 30 | Spring MEMBER-GET-A-MEMBER CAMPAIGN closes |
| Jun 13 | CHAPTER LEADERSHIP WORKSHOP, Grapevine, TX |
| Jun 14 | CHAPTER PRESIDENTS' COUNCIL meeting, Grapevine, TX |

NATIONAL UPDATES

CMSA Website Updates – NOW AVAILABLE!

CMSA's Website Has a New Look and Feel!

This year, every member of CMSA will play a critical role in introducing the newest strategic initiative, **MyCMSA**. Launched in January 2006, phase one of the project and provides for a more personal experience on www.cmsa.org with the roll-out of a completely re-designed website with easy-to-use navigation and many new features, as well as all the current favorites on www.cmsa.org. Most significantly, you will notice the website will ask you to establish an online profile. This **one-time** request for your profile will benefit members by:

- Increasing privacy
- Making it simple and easy to modify your personal contact and demographic
- Allowing you to create and modify a password (*you will no longer be limited to your CMSA member number*)
- And, instant access to Member Only Resources when your membership is active

Most importantly, the addition of a profile page moves CMSA one-step closer to a fully customized web portal for personal content customization. Case management encompasses a broad spectrum of professionals, and the industry body of knowledge is rapidly growing to an immense volume. Consequently, CMSA is aggressively moving towards a portal concept. CMSA defines a CM portal as a single web gateway whereby individuals can access personalized and customized information. We envision a day, in the not too distant future, when a case manager will be able to personalize, filter and view content of personal interest.

CMSA's Educational Resource Library is completely web-based to facilitate "anytime, anywhere" access to learning content. Beginning January 2006, approximately 90 courses are live in several media formats. Over the next 12-18 months, course work will build to 150-200 modules. Most coursework is free to members. Every program in the Educational Resource Library is customized to three levels: *Basic*, *Intermediate* and *Advanced*. In addition, it features:

1. *A patient educational library.*
2. *A professional education library consisting of clinical and business coursework – most coursework **free to members**.*
3. *A CCM resource list of reading and study materials.*
4. *A Masters Level Educational link to Universities.*
5. *A tracking and monitoring section for completed coursework.*
6. *The ability to print CE certificates.*
7. *A tutorial on the CMSA web site and a session offered at the Annual Conference on navigating and using the Educational Resource Library.*
8. *A comprehensive consumer resource section.*

This is more than just a website. It is the beginning of a lifelong learning center. Visit the Educational Library today at www.cmsa.org under Education.

Chapter Listing & Resources

The chapter contact list & calendar are now located under the Membership tab as Local Chapters. Please take a moment to visit your chapters listing to ensure the contact information, dates of meetings and/or conferences are listed or updated. In addition, chapter tools & guides can now be found under the Membership tab as Chapter Resources. More tools are being added as we continue to grow these resources for chapter leaders to utilize.

Nominate Your Colleague for CMOY or AOSE

Now is your chance to recognize a peer who has significantly impacted the field of case management. Each year, CMSA presents two prestigious awards to members whose case management careers elevate professional standards, enhance individual and leadership performance, and exemplify merit and distinction. CMSA extends an invitation each year to its members to nominate a well-deserving colleague for one of the individual awards by Feb. 14.

AWARD OF SERVICE EXCELLENCE (AOSE)

Deadline: February 14, 2006

CASE MANAGER OF THE YEAR (CMOY)

Deadline: February 14, 2006

Winner of each category receives:

- Official Award Ceremony Recognition at Annual Conference
- Personalized Crystal Award
- Complimentary Conference Attendance
- Hotel Stay (3 nights)
- Coach Airfare (subject to CMSA Travel Policy)
- One Year Complimentary CMSA Membership (National & Chapter)
- President's Award Reception
- National Press Release (Post-Conference)

Visit www.cmsa.org/Professional/Awards to download forms and view previous award winner listings. Contact CMOY/AOSE Staff Liaison, Spring Houk, at shouk@acminet.com or (501) 225-2229 ext. 47

Award for Excellence in Adherence Management (AEAM)

2006 Award Entry Deadline April 15, 2006

The second annual national AEAM will be presented at the CMSA national conference in June, 2006. The award is supported through an unrestricted educational grant from Pfizer, and the deadline for entries is April 15, 2006. Created to acknowledge individual case managers who demonstrate excellence in applying CMSA's Case Management Adherence Guidelines (CMAG) and use of the online CMAGTracker tool, the AEAM includes a cash award of \$1500 and a plaque. Entries are open only to CMSA members who have attended a CMAG training workshop.

Applicants must complete the following activities:

1. Register to use the online CMAG Tracker system.
2. Enter assessment data from at least one patient into the CMAG Tracker system.
3. Submit an essay describing the applicant's activities to improve patient adherence to prescribed medications using skills or strategies learned in a CMAG workshop. Case manager essays may address any of the following activities, but must specifically reference CMSA's Case Management Adherence Guidelines:
 - A case study of one patient whose adherence improved through the case manager's use of motivational interviewing
 - Population based activities conducted by the case manager to improve medication adherence in a group of patients
 - Training and education activities of the case manager to improve adherence management practices of other case managers.

The award decision will be made by an advisory committee appointed by CMSA. The AEAM award winner will receive official award ceremony recognition at CMSA's Annual Conference June 13-17, 2006, at the Gaylord Texan™ Resort & Convention Center on Lake Grapevine in Fort Worth/Grapevine, TX. **Deadline for application for CMSA's 2006 AEAM Award is April 15, 2006.** All essays must be submitted electronically and become CMSA property. Contact CMSA for rules and application details.

CHAPTER REMINDERS

Chapter Presidents' Council Rep

Be a National Board Member and the voice of the chapters! This liaison position is the voice for the chapter leaders to the National Board and shares industry issues, requests, needs, and solutions related to chapters. This position is elected by the Chapter Presidents beginning March 15. Term of Office will begin June 2006 during CMSA's Annual Conference.

Nominations packets were emailed to all Chapter Presidents on January 4, 2006. If you did not receive yours, please contact mlee@acminet.com for a copy. See your packet for eligibility criteria or contact the National Office. **Nominations must be postmarked by March 1, 2006.** You may also contact the current CPC Rep, Teri Treiger, for more details of this position. Teri can be reached at teri.treiger@comcast.net.

Local Chapter Award Competition

Enter your chapter's best projects in CMSA's 2006 *Chapter Excellence & Innovation Awards (CEIA)*. Entries will be accepted from **January 1 until April 30**. Visit www.cmsa.org/professional/awards/ceia/ to find out more and to download award entry forms.

Judged by impartial individuals outside of CMSA according to set criteria, the CEIAs recognize chapters that embody CMSA's Mission – *Advancing Case Management!*

Recipients of these awards will be recognized at the Texas 2006 Annual Conference for promoting the growth and value of case management and supporting the evolving need of the case management professional.

Tips on Entering the Competition:

- Fill out the entry forms as completely as possible. Judges look at the description on the form, so provide information as completely, yet concisely, as possible. Supporting reports, brochures, videotapes, and photos are optional, but welcomed.
- Concentrate on the goal, its impact, the outcome and significance of the success. While numbers are very important, also include how the activity improved the lives of those involved or the community at large.

Chapter Excellence and Innovation Award Categories:

- ⇒ Best Use of Technology
- ⇒ Conference
- ⇒ Educational Programming
- ⇒ Membership Development
- ⇒ Print

Officer Updates

Make sure your chapter has updated their Officers with CMSA for the Leadership database. This will ensure that communications are shared with the proper individuals, including monthly reports, newsletters, updates, chapter dues, etc.... This information will also help ensure proper chapter contact information is listed on CMSA's website & calendar of events so that individuals may contact your chapter about upcoming events, exhibit or sponsorship opportunities, etc.... In addition, chapter presidents', vice-presidents', and president-elects' have an opportunity to network on CMSA's Chapter Presidents' Council (CPC) forum, providing their officer positions are up to date with CMSA. Contact Michele Lee in Member/Chapter Services to determine if your chapter is up-to-date!

LETTER FROM YOUR CPC REP

Greetings Chapter Leaders,

This past year has been so exciting with the amount of resources and networking the chapter leaders have engaged in. In addition to the National Office, the chapter presidents should be one of your primary key contacts for solving issues or generating ideas for your chapter's operational needs.



Just recently, on the Chapter Presidents' Council (CPC) forum, one chapter leader in Chicago writes: *We are looking to hire someone to help us with administrative duties. Do any of the chapters currently have this in place? If so how do you pay them? How are you handling employment tax etc? Thanks for your help.*

Several chapters responded with helpful information that will now give this chapter something to begin working with:

Houston Gulf Coast Chapter answers they do have an administrative clerk. "We hire her through a service so we don't have to worry about employment tax etc. We pay them a fee for service and they pay her as their employee. She does all of our RSVPs, website and emails. She processes all the paperwork for CE's, etc... It is very costly but you can indicate from the beginning how many hours a month you will approve. Our designated clerk works from home and works very closely with the president and treasurer. We had attempted to hire her outright but it was too much of a hassle with taxes and unemployment etc."

South Florida answers: "We do have someone that we hired...she helps with all administrative duties. She works as an independent contractor and we pay her. She takes care of the taxes".

New England Chapter shares their paid Executive Director's job description to get an idea of the duties a chapter might consider using an Admin Asst or E.D to do:
www.cmsne.org/documents/Executive%20Director%20Job%20Description%2011-03.pdf. Their E.D. manages their chapter's business office and administrative duties and will be happy to run through her responsibilities, etc... Maureen can be reached at (603) 329-7481.

There are several other chapters that have utilized paid staff to assist with the time consuming administrative duties that sometimes keeps us from promoting our chapter in the most effective way. This has freed up board members to do more strategic planning and have time to be more personal with members and potential members, creating a more efficient board. These paid positions can range from an administrative staff person, to an Executive Director and occasionally a management company. Some of these chapters include: Birmingham, Los Angeles, Dade/Broward Cty in FL, Indianapolis, Kansas City, New England, Oklahoma City/Tulsa, Dallas, Houston, plus a few others. These chapters can be contacted through the CMSA website under Membership.

Do keep in mind the issues of employment tax before hiring an individual. Check with the IRS on these requirements, or utilize employment services or contract labor as the chapters above have mentioned. In addition, be sure to have complete job descriptions and accurate contracts in place when hiring support staff.

Sincerely,

Teri Treiger
Your 2005-06 CPC Rep

CHAPTER HIGHLIGHTS

To contact any of the local affiliate or pending chapters, visit www.cmsa.org. Under the Membership link choose Local Chapter.

Pending Chapters

Las Vegas, NV

CMA-LV has a very exciting year in ahead of them as they strive for full-fledged affiliation with CMSA. Their Board introduced the 2006 Business Plan to about 30 members on December 6at the Holiday event and annual business meeting. In addition to their Program and Membership Committees, they are adding a Sponsor Support Committee that is charged with interfacing with their program sponsors. They have also added their own special interest group (SIG) which is focused on preparing interested CMs to take the CCM examination. The charge for the SIG is nominal (\$135.00 including textbook) and a large component of the curriculum structure involves the establishment of some independent study groups geographically located throughout Las Vegas proper. CMA-LV welcomes 2006 and looks forward to continuing to promote the practice of professional case management in the Las Vegas area.

Odessa, TX

The West Texas Society of Case Managers was founded in November, 2003. The Founder and elected President, Ross Padgett, RN,C began the group with 7 members and continued to grow. By December 2005, the organization grew to a membership of 78 members. The group meets quarterly and includes a 7 county region of West Texas, based in Odessa/Midland, TX. The organization has had its first educational seminar and workshop in December 2005 with 38 members and non-members attending the CCM prep-course.

Case Managers from the surrounding communities are able to participate and learn of changes and developments within Case Management, as well as having opportunities for continuing education. The group is planning more educational seminars for 2006, and is planning to charter into the Lubbock, TX and San Angelo markets.

The organization was established to allow a networking opportunity for Case Managers and to promote the growth and development of Case Management programs. This group has begun looking at the possibility for charter into the National CMSA.

Official CMSA Chapters

Birmingham, AL

The Birmingham Chapter of CMSA held their Annual Christmas Luncheon on December 21. The "price of admission" was an unwrapped new toy to be donated to the Toys for Tots Program. Master Sergeant Johnny Johns, U.S. Marines attended the luncheon to accept the donation.

Dade/Broward County, FL

South Florida Case Management Network wishes everyone a Happy New Year! Their continued focus on Membership and Education is keeping the board very busy. Their participant attendance at the meetings have been rising as well as the interest in membership. The calendar is planned for this year with good quality programs and speakers that will benefit anyone attending monthly meetings. They are working to improve the website and have been sending out informational flyers each month to inform everyone in the area about the upcoming meetings for the month.



Indianapolis, IN

The Central Indiana chapter held a “Holiday Gathering” at the Adam’s Mark Hotel, Indianapolis Airport with over 40 members and non-members in attendance. There were several door prizes donated by vendors as well as pictures taken with the “Jolly Ole Man”- Santa. The pictures put a spark of childish fun in the event.

Each year CICMSA picks at least one charity in Indianapolis to which donate goods and money. This year they picked Gennesaret Free Clinics: www.homestead.com/gennesaret/Homepage.html, a free Clinic that offers a wide array of health services to the poor and under-insured of Indianapolis; and Outreach Indiana: www.outreachindiana.org/, a Christian ministry in Indianapolis reaching out to homeless and at-risk young adults with the compassion of Jesus Christ.

The Program Committee is busily working to put together topics and speakers for the upcoming meeting year. Emilieann Vargo, Director of Outreach for Adult Protective Services Unit 8, serving Marion, Boone, Hamilton and Hendricks Counties is the speaker for January. She is talking about APS 101 - What You Need to Know, Where You Fit In With APS. This information should be of value both from a professional and personal standpoint.

St. Louis, MO

The St. Louis Chapter would like to share their year-end review. In 2005, they were able to have eight CE educational lunch meetings in 2005 with sponsorship for each meeting. The Chapter was able cover the entire cost of the meetings through sponsors. In June, the entire board was able to attend the National CMSA Conference with little out of pocket expenses thanks again to local sponsors. In September, they held their first two-day conference at Harrah's with over 50 vendors and 90+ attendees that came from as far away as Utah. Also in September, they hosted their first National CMSA event with the Advanced CMAG training! In October, they had their first evening event for Case Manager Appreciation Day. For the 3rd year in a row, the board handed out CMOY, Rising Star and Spirit of CM awards. The night was a great success with many non-member case managers attending. And thanks to the regular supporters and the 30+ physicians who sponsored the evening's food and drink which did not cost the chapter a penny. December brought the largest attendance to their 2nd annual holiday party/chapter review. The party was part fun and part business. They opened the floor for members to discuss any issues they felt important to bring to the board's attention. Needless to say, the board learned a lot!

Hudson Valley area, NY

At last! The Hudson Valley Chapter of CMSA made a successful journey to the NY Capital District on December 1 to host the first CMSA Chapter meeting in the area. They were fortunate to have the popular and nationally recognized speaker and author, Catherine Mullahy, provide attendees with a presentation called *Emerging Issues in the Care Management of the Transplant Patient*. Case Managers and Social Workers from all settings attended this well-received session. It was a great opportunity to network, make new friends and recruit new chapter members. Four members of the Hudson Valley Chapter including President Sheilah McGlone, and National Board Member Peggy Leonard, made the trip to welcome and greet the attendees. The chapter would like extend a special thanks to Roche Labs and their “Insights Program” for sponsoring this great evening.

With the New Year upon them, they have begun thinking about their June elections and the need to recruit volunteers to run for Officers and Board Members and have begun soliciting for individuals interested in learning more about the roles of their Board Members and Officers. The chapter wishes everyone a Happy, Healthy, New Year.

Cincinnati, OH

The Southern Ohio Valley Chapter recently advanced from pending status to full affiliation! The Chapter wishes to extend sincere thanks to all who have worked so hard to bring this dream to a reality. The Chapter continues to grow, and is up to 80 members. They have an exciting year ahead of them for 2006, with 6 general education meetings planned featuring some excellent speakers, including Susan Rogers! A website is also under development for the chapter.

Philadelphia, PA

The Mid-Atlantic Chapter celebrated their holiday dinner meeting on December 8th with delicious appetizers and a dinner complete with door prizes for several members. An exceptional presentation was delivered by Margaret Chu, a certified Feng Shui Professional, who described Feng Shui methods of attaining positive energy (Chi) and harmony in both professional and personal lives. The Mid-Atlantic Chapter will resume their educational program in February. The business for January will be to call for nominations.

Chattanooga, TN

Chattanooga Chapter CMSA held their monthly meeting December 13. The program was “*Getting to Know You*” – *Case Managers Meet Complementary and Alternative Medicine Providers!* To give the most information in the limited time they have for monthly meetings, the chapter held a Health/Information Fair and an extended time period for the December meeting at the Marriott Hotel in Chattanooga.

Case managers need information of the various treatments their clients are using, including CAM’s and “conventional medicine”. They need to know how the various treatments interact, while helping clients through the healthcare maze. To help them with this daunting task, the chapter dedicated the December meeting to the topic of CAM’s as options in healthcare today. Three doctors from facilities that provide CAM services in Chattanooga and North Georgia spoke on what CAM services are and services their particular facilities provide. One physician explained “Integrative Services”, which combines or integrates conventional medicine and CAM’s. CAM services represented at the meeting included: podiatry; homeopathic medicine; acupuncture; mind body interventions (meditation, prayer, music, art, dance); biologically based therapies (herbs, foods, hormones, etc.), manipulative and body based methods (Tai Chi, CranioSacral therapy, Rolfing, massage, etc.). Attendees enjoyed a “box lunch”, seasonal music, information booths, door prizes, and learned about an often overlooked area of health care in today’s society.

The monthly meeting for January was held on January 10, 2006. The chapter was very honored to have Connie Commander, National President-Elect of CMSA as their speaker. She spoke on the timely topic of “Insights to inFLUenza”. There were 75 members and visitors in attendance. Lunch featured a wide variety of food from Mojo Burrito, a local Mexican restaurant. The chapter reached its goal of increasing membership back to over 100 this month.

Plans continue for their annual spring seminar April 21, 2006 which coincides with the chapter celebrating their tenth anniversary since they first began meeting. The theme of the seminar is “The Many Pieces of Case Management”.

Dallas, TX

The first meeting of the year was held on January 10th. The CE presentation was on Professional Leadership and focused on strategies that were learned at the Leadership Retreat last May. BK Kizziar presented the program with panel discussion including Cheryl Acres, Julie Carroll & Steve Laughlin. Cheryl spoke from a past president's perspective while Julie provided insight from a current president's viewpoint. As a sponsor of the Retreat, Steve offered thoughts on the benefits of organizations sponsoring this type of event.

The early-bird discounted registration for the 14th annual conference, *Deep in The Heart of Case Management*, scheduled for February 9-11, was extended through the end of January.

Houston, TX

The Gulf Coast Chapter has a committee which has planned and implemented several training opportunities to local Medicare population regarding the Medicare Part B program. The latest feedback received is that the majority of their contacts have already signed up for a particular program. The widespread efforts of many different organizations, pharmacies and the media blitz have provided information and training on this program making it a successful effort. The chapter had planned a train-the-trainer event for January but are now unsure if this effort needs to be pursued since there has been such a heavy dissemination of information on this program.

The Houston Chapter had a very successful Holiday Party event on December 1 which was attended by over 120 members, sponsors and guests. The atmosphere was very festive including appetizers and a DJ. Several holiday gift boxes provided by sponsors were raffled off to the guests. Everyone enjoyed this special evening of relaxation and opportunity for camaraderie and networking. It was the perfect celebration to close out the 2005 season.

How Do We Safeguard Against Conflict of Interest? www.boardsource.org

When the personal or professional concerns of a board member or a staff member affect his or her ability to put the welfare of the organization before personal benefit, conflict of interest exists. Nonprofit board members are likely to be affiliated with many organizations in their communities, both on a professional and a personal basis, so it is not unusual for actual or potential conflict of interest to arise.

Why must we be concerned about conflict of interest?

Board service in the nonprofit sector carries with it important ethical obligations. Nonprofits serve the broad public good, and when board members fail to exercise reasonable care in their oversight of the organization they are not living up to their public trust. In addition, board members have a legal responsibility to assure the prudent management of an organization's resources. In fact, they may be held liable for the organization's actions. A 1974 court decision known as the "Sibley Hospital case" set a precedent by confirming that board members can be held legally liable for conflict of interest because it constitutes a breach of their fiduciary responsibility.

Does conflict of interest involve only financial accountability?

No. Conflict of interest relates broadly to ethical behavior, which includes not just legal issues but considerations in every aspect of governance. A statement by INDEPENDENT SECTOR describes three levels of ethical behavior: obeying the law; decisions where the right action is clear, but one is tempted to take a different course; and decisions that require a choice among competing options. The third level of behavior can pose especially difficult ethical dilemmas for nonprofit board members.

What can we do to prevent conflict of interest situations?

Self monitoring is the best preventative measure. Institute a system of checks and balances to circumvent actual or potential conflict of interest, beginning with well defined operating policies on all matters that might lead to conflict. Most important, create a carefully written conflict of interest policy based on the needs and circumstances of the organization. Ask each board and staff member to agree in writing to uphold the policy. A conflict of interest policy should be reviewed regularly as part of board self assessment.

What should be included in a conflict of interest policy?

A policy on conflict of interest has three essential elements:

1. **FULL DISCLOSURE.** Board members and staff members in decision-making roles should make known their connections with groups doing business with the organization. This information should be provided annually.
2. **BOARD MEMBER ABSTENTION FROM DISCUSSION AND VOTING.** Board members who have an actual or potential conflict of interest should not participate in discussions or vote on matters affecting transactions between the organization and the other group.
3. **STAFF MEMBER ABSTENTION FROM DECISION-MAKING.** Staff members who have an actual or potential conflict should not be substantively involved in decision-making affecting such transactions.

What are some examples of actual and potential conflict of interest?

- Organization policy requires competitive bidding on purchases of more than \$1,000, but a printing firm owned by a board member's spouse receives the \$25,000 contract for the annual report and no other bids are solicited.
- A board member serves on two boards in the community and finds himself in the position of approaching the same donors on behalf of both organizations.
- A staff member receives an honorarium for conducting a workshop for another group in the organization's field of interest.

Should an organization contract with a board member for professional services, such as legal counsel or accounting?

Attorneys, accountants, and other professionals can contribute valuable expertise to a board. Due to the potential for conflict of interest, their contributions should be voluntary. At the very least, a board member who is associated with a firm competing for a contract should abstain from discussion and voting in the selection process. If a competitive bidding process results in the selection of that board member's firm, he or she should disclose the affiliation and abstain from voting on future board actions connected with that firm's contract with the organization.

New Member Orientations That Work

By Leadership Coach Cynthia D'Amour, www.chapterleaders.com

If you get new members involved and experiencing value within 60 days of joining your chapter, you dramatically increase the odds of them renewing at the end of their first year of membership. An effective new member orientation helps speed this process. A well-planned orientation helps your new members confidently take their first steps in building a long-term relationship with your chapter.

The bottom line goal of an orientation event is to inspire new members to become active, long-term members. Additional goals include:

- Giving new members a better picture of your chapter and how they can fit in – and find value.
- Meeting key players in your chapter.
- Meeting other new members.
- Making them aware of opportunities for their involvement.
- And, reselling them on what a great idea it was to join your chapter!

Five tips for a dynamite orientation:

1. Keep the "official talk" short and to the point.

- ◆ Too often chapter orientations are boring and long-winded. You need to leave time for new members to meet others.
- ◆ In a one-hour orientation, presentations should be kept to 20 minutes or less. Give specific time limits to anyone who is going to talk.
- ◆ You want new members to be excited about joining your group – not dreading the next boring meeting.

2. Have key members such as your board, officers, and committee chairs attend and mingle with the new members.

- ◆ New members are very excited to get a moment of an officer's time. This short interaction helps them feel like they are an important addition to your chapter.
- ◆ It's also a great time for one on one recruiting for committee work. The personal interaction is a powerful way to get new members involved.

3. Help new members meet others your orientations.

- ◆ You can use "ice breaker" activities to get the conversation flowing. Another idea is to have an older member host and introduce each new member around. It's also a great time for a short, interactive program on how to build their network in your chapter.
- ◆ Remember your goal is to help new members to find buddies in your group – it makes it easier for them to get involved.

4. Provide new members with a sign up sheet for committee and special project work.

- ◆ As your new members meet different chairs and hear about various projects, they'll get a feel for what's a good fit for them.
- ◆ Some may hand in their sheet that night. Most new members will be overwhelmed and need to turn it in later.

5. Have someone follow up with new members within two weeks of attending your orientation.

- ◆ Check to see if they have any more questions. If they have not filled in the committee work sheets, the follow up person can do it over the phone.
- ◆ Follow up callers should encourage the new members to attend the next event and share any details that will make the new member feel more confident -- like they are "in the know."

Ideas to Generate Participation in Committees

Written by Carter McNamara, PhD, www.managementhelp.org

- To increase attendance and/or participation in committee meetings, consider some or all of the following: Ensure committee chairs understand and can convey the role of the committee to members, and that the chair and members have up-to-date job descriptions.
- Ensure adequate orientation that describes the organization and its unique services, and how the committee contributes to this mission.
- Remember that the organization and its committees deserve strong attendance and participation. Don't fall prey to the perspective that "we're lucky just get anyone." Set a standard for the best.
- Have ground rules that support participation and attendance. Revisit the ground rules every other meeting and post them on the bottom of agendas.
- Let go of "dead wood." It often helps to decrease the number of committee members rather than increase them.
- Consider using subcommittees to increase individual responsibilities and focus on goals.
- Conduct yearly committee evaluations that includes a clear evaluation process and where each committee member evaluates the other members, and each member receives a written report about their strengths and how they can improve their contributions.
- Attempt to provide individual assignments to the committee members.
- Have at least one staff member participate in each committee to help with administrative support and providing information.
- For board of director's committees, monitor quorum requirements for the entire board (as set forth usually in ByLaws), or the minimum number of board members who must be present for the board to officially enact business. This quorum, when not met, will serve as a clear indicator, or signal, that the board is in trouble.
- Develop a committee attendance policy that specifies the number of times a member can be absent in consecutive meetings and in total meetings per time period.
- Generate minutes for each committee meeting to get closure on items and help members comprehend the progress made by the committee.
- In committee meeting reports, include noting who is present and who is absent.
- Consider having low-attendance members involved in some other form of service to the organization, e.g., a "friends of the organization," or something like that, who attends to special events rather than ongoing activities.
- Have a "summit meeting" with committee members to discuss the low attendance problem, and use a round-table approach so each person must speak up with their opinions.
- Rotate in new members every year.

Grassroots... What's the Big Deal?

by Sheila Lane Forsyth, www.apa.org

Did you know that in any given legislative year 9-10,000 bills are introduced in the U.S. Congress? Although only a very small percentage (approximately 6%) actually becomes law, these laws govern every aspect of our lives, from communication to recreation, from transportation to education and much more. Laws governing such issues such as telecommunications, designation of national parks, gasoline taxes and educational loans and scholarships are among the hundreds of decisions that our legislators make on our behalf everyday.

But, how do they know what we want or what is best for their local community? They depend on their constituents (the voters in their state or district) to let them know how (proposed) federal policy affects their local community. Knowing and being responsive to the needs and concerns of the voters is, in fact, their top priority; it is what got them elected and will help get them re-elected. In some instances legislators making policy decisions are not fully experienced in certain areas. Legislators, therefore, rely heavily on the expressed views of their constituents and information provided by experts – such as YOU. Through constituent letters, phone calls, and face-to-face meetings, legislators learn what's important to the “people back home.” As the legendary Speaker of the House Tip O'Neill often said, “all politics is local.”

In fact, knowing what's really important to you, what your needs are, what's happening in your local area or across the state, is what really counts on Capitol Hill. Despite the cynicism surrounding politicians and politics – especially in an election year – most Members of Congress go to work everyday trying to make a difference for his/her district or state and the nation.

It may surprise you to know that they not only rely heavily on what the voters think about an issue, in many cases, they reach out to constituents who have expertise or knowledge in particular area and ask them for their help. Has that ever happened to you? If so, that's likely because you have been actively involved with grassroots. They know they can reach out to you when they need some assistance with a particular piece of legislation or even in the development of a proposed new policy initiative. In short: Members of Congress and their staff count on your letters and phone calls, your direct involvement, to help them know if they are “on the right track.”

However, no matter how involved you are as an individual, greater influence and impact is gained when large numbers of constituents speak with “one voice.” And, how is this best accomplished? It is only possible through organized grassroots activities.

Key Components to a Grassroots Campaign:

- Identify supportive interests and initiate contact
- Develop programs to educate and motivate members and employees to be politically engaged and active
- Develop key messages and communications methods to mobilize supporters
- Mobilize supporters to express themselves to politicians and officials through mail, fax, e-mail, telephone calls and personal meetings
- Establish a virtual campaign organization
- Identify key government contacts and build champions within the system
- Develop caucus & parliamentary committee presentations and related press programs
- Establish regular contact program for key political supporters
- Use House of Common & Senate Standing Committees to advance your positions
- Arrange other supportive advocacy advertising.