WWW.NAJA.NET.ORG Has a New Look!

In case you missed the big announcement at AEC, the new and improved NAJA website is LIVE!!! The new look and feel of the website still has all of the same information and resources, but also provides some new functionality as well. Visitors to the site can find information about NAJA and its history, the NAJA Foundation, and the NAJA Graduate Scholarship among other things. Users may also donate to NAJA, the Foundation, or the Scholarship directly from the website now. Users can also find past issues of The Crownet and eCrown Points. The online store has also been improved, and be sure to check back frequently as we are adding new items often. The website also has a new search function that will allow users to find things more easily on the site. Users can also connect to all of our social media accounts directly from the website. Users can also directly link to the NAJA Graduate Scholarship’s new website from the Scholarship drop down menu on our site.

Each Chapter has its own space on the website under the Chapters drop down menu that contains the location, the region, the website and constitution (if available), contact information, and a listing of prior awards won along with the narrative of the award submission.

Unlike with the old website, each user must register and receive her own login information. So if you haven’t done so already, please go to the site and register with your email address. This will allow you access to all the forms and resources the site has to offer. Also, NAJA will be hosting a Website Training at both the Northern and Southern Area Meetings, and we would encourage at least one member of your Chapter to attend.

Lauren Lisowe, NAJA PR Chairman

NAJA History Time!

For most of us in JA, our National Focus theme has always been a part of our experience. However, there was a time when NAJA did not embrace a National Focus. Did you ever wonder where it came from, or why it was created? Here is your NAJA History lesson for today!

In the late 1980’s, it became apparent that many Chapters were stagnant in their service offerings, doing the same projects year after year and not creating new and more relevant projects to serve their communities. Members were becoming frustrated and bored, and community needs were not being met. At the 1987 Annual Conference, the “Kids Count” logo was unveiled and a workshop was offered to help Chapters develop a project tailored to their communities that would utilize this theme which emphasized drug abuse education. The idea was to update and create a new National Focus slogan every 2 years to help Chapters keep their projects fresh and address the current needs of the folks where they lived. It was created as an idea to help jump start Chapter project development.

In the early 1990’s, however, it was determined that our NAJA Slogan, “Care Today, Character Tomorrow,” was actually our National Focus. The NF ceased to exist for a few years but returned with the encouragement of the Crown and Gavel members. The National Focus was never meant to replace our NAJA slogan, but to encourage fresh programs of service for our Chapters!

The National Focus has stressed drug abuse awareness, youth violence, children’s health and safety, teen pregnancy, and currently, the issues involved with computers, social media and other forms of communication with the 2017-19 focus, “Keeping It Real in a Virtual World.”

New Chapter projects are always encouraged and our National Focus is one resource that your Chapter can use to develop something new for your own community!

Jeanne Hildebrandt, NAJA Ex-Officio

Make an IMPACT on Your Chapter - Attend Area Meeting!

Kids are back in school, your JA year is getting busier by the day, and Northern Area Meeting is quickly approaching! What better way to “Pay It Forward” than to invest in educating the members of your Chapter? Join us in Memphis on September 23rd for the NAJA Northern Area Meeting! We have a morning packed full of great resources for you to take back to refresh and recharge your Chapter! Heather Fox will be joining us to bring a dynamic message about impacting the lives of others, and you won’t want to miss it! The attendees in Hattiesburg were really touched by her presentation. There are three dynamic workshops for the President, Treasurer and Provisional Trainer. For the rest of you, NAJA will host a roundtable discussion to get its Chapters talking (and the ideas flowing!), as well as a training session to educate its members on our fabulous new website! We’ve never been more excited about an Area Meeting, and we can’t wait to see you there. Don’t forget to register before the September 8 deadline!

Kelly Freeland, NAJA Third Vice-President

Ready for Reengagement

Whether your Chapter has been around for 10 years or over 50 years, one of the greatest assets can be your Associate and Life members. Taking the time to reengage these valuable members can help your Chapter meet your service and financial goals as well as offer great insight into your Chapter’s unique history. If you don’t already have a reengagement plan, here are some ideas to help you brainstorm.

The NAJA Membership Committee suggests you focus on three areas: communication, service, and fellowship. Several of our Chapters send birthday cards to their Associate and Life members. Also, having a liaison to send important Chapter information and special dates to these members will keep communication open and encourage continued engagement.

The main focus of every JA Chapter is service, and many of our members are still interested in serving their communities long after they have completed their 5-year commitments as Active members. It is not uncommon for members to stay involved in their favorite projects, but some Chapters take it a step further and have projects organized by Associate and Life members. Fellowship is probably the most fun way to keep members engaged in your Chapter. The possibilities for Chapter fellowships are endless. Hosting a brunch connecting your Provisional members with past active members, providing a special seating area at your annual gala, or inviting them to a Chapter meeting planned especially to recognize them are excellent opportunities to foster relationships among a cross section of members.

Reengagement should be a goal each Chapter is focused on achieving. Evaluating your Chapter’s strengths and weaknesses will help to identify if communication, service, or fellowship will best serve your Chapter. If you would like more information or ideas, go to Membership Information on the NAJA website under Chapters or contact your FSC for strategies that are working for other Chapters. And, of course, your NAJA Membership Committee is always here and happy to help in any way we can.

Alisa Taylor, NAJA Membership Chairman