Who Should Serve on Your Chapter’s Executive Board?

While reviewing a number of Chapter Constitutions and working with our new Provisional Chapter, I noticed some confusion about what positions should be on the Executive Board. The NAJA Handbook requires the following positions on the Executive Board: President, Vice President, Treasurer, Recording Secretary, Education Committee Chairman, Finance Committee Chairman, Projects Committee Chairman, and Membership Committee Chairman. The Ex-Officio and Public Relations Committee Chairman usually serve on the Executive Board. The decision to have additional members is left to the Chapter to decide. Your Chapter Constitution should clearly identify which positions serve on the Executive Board.

The Executive Board has general charge and control of the business and property of the Chapter and is responsible for examining the monthly bank statements and cancelled checks for all Chapter bank accounts. It must present to the Chapter all proposed major activities for ratification. Board members govern the Chapter and ensure the Chapter is complying with the Constitution, Policies & Procedures, and the NAJA Handbook. The Board establishes policies & procedures which give the Chapter direction and develop goals for the Chapter. The Board is also responsible to the Chapter and community to be good stewards of contributions raised to fund projects. Some Chapters assign other responsibilities to the Executive Board such as filling officer vacancies.

Individual Executive Board Members have a fiduciary responsibility to be objective, unselfish, responsible, honest, trustworthy, and efficient. Board members, as stewards of public trust, must always act for the good of the organization, rather than for the benefit of themselves. They must exercise reasonable care in all decision making and avoid placing the organization at unnecessary risk.

Ask your Chapter Support Coordinator if you have questions about the composition of your Executive Board.

Charrlott Jones, NAJA President

AEC Planning Updates

Annual Education Conference planning is in full swing! NAJA sent out planning packets to each Chapter this past week. Presidents and AEC Chairmen, please make sure to read all inserts and relay the information included to all Chapter members. I want to highlight that we also expanded our information packet to include details related to AEC events that would also be applicable to your Associate and Life members. We’d love for you to include your “seasoned” members in your Girls’ Trip to Mobile! Our programming is aimed at building leadership skills for women in all stages of life and career. Deadline for early registration for Active, Associate, and Life members is April 1! Spread the word and go ahead and get your registrations in! See you in Mobile!

Emily Johnson, Second VP

Reframing Chapter Training

Recently, I read about how authors and screenwriters “reframe” a story to make it attractive to a new or different audience. Reframing was described as being most effective when it “pulls the reader through the frame into the story.” That reminded me of what your NAJA New Chapter Development Coordinators have been striving to accomplish this year by “reframing” new Chapter training. We gathered a “think tank” of NAJA reps who have been intimately involved in working with Provisional Chapters to assess our Chapter on-boarding process and recommend improvements to our materials, process, and timeline. The value NAJA places on timely and effective training is seen throughout our Association with Chapter Board Training, Area Meetings, Annual Education Conference, Provisional Training and so much more. With New Chapter Development, our goal is to build on this solid framework and better position new Chapters for long-term success. We pulled in the best practices of Provisional Training, Chapter Board Training and came up with a Provisional Chapter Training program.

The updated New Chapter Development design has a timeline that ranges from 12 to 18 months, can be customized at the Chapter level, and can be delivered over shorter or longer periods of time, depending on the needs of the Chapter. In the first 3 months, the new Chapter would hold an Informational meeting led by NAJA reps where we introduce the prospective members to NAJA, our history and mission, and provide a high-level overview of the requirements for membership. Next the Chapter would hold a Petitioning meeting in which the new members vote to become a Provisional Chapter, pay NAJA, and establish a regular meeting time and place.

From this point, the Provisional Chapter Training begins and can last up to 6 months. The Chapter is encouraged to develop or find an established community project they work on as a group, while also participating in NAJA training focusing in depth on the NAJA mission, values, Handbook, and recruitment strategies. Each member is assigned to one of three committees: Administration, Constitution or Projects & Community Survey. They have direct input in the development and implementation of all aspects of the Chapter’s operation. This culture of “ownership” helps to bind the members together and build a commitment to the Chapter overall.

After the Provisional Chapter Training is complete, the Chapter holds an Organizational Meeting where officers are elected. Over the next 4-6 months, the Chapter begins holding regular Chapter and Executive Board meetings, obtains the Chapter’s Article of Incorporation and its 501(c)(3) status as well as ratifies the Chapter’s Constitution.

Junior Auxiliary of Yell County, Arkansas, is our newest Provisional Chapter and has been trained using this reframed training format. Beth Holbert, NAJA Chapter Development Coordinator, and Charrlott Jones, NAJA President, worked directly with Yell County to roll out the training. When asked about the training program, Sarah Davis, Yell County member, stated “It has been so thorough and we truly feel like we have been poured into. Charrlott and Beth are so accessible and it has been an easy process.” By following this training program, Junior Auxiliary of Yell County is on track to receive their NAJA Charter at the Annual Education Conference in Mobile, AL, this spring.

One of the most important pieces of an effective training plan is ongoing evaluation and modification to ensure the training is relevant and effective for its intended audience. In other words, we continually “reframe” our story to pull the members in and make them participants in the story rather than third-party witnesses to the story. NAJA will continue to evaluate and improve our training programs to meet the needs of current and future Chapters. We are currently working to start new Chapters in Hancock County, MS, Barren County, KY, Arlington, TN and surrounding area, Southlake/Denton County, TX, Saraland/Chickasaw Area – North Mobile County, AL, and Wynne, AR. Your input and suggestions are an important part of that, including, recommendations for new Chapters. Please email them to Leslie Vaughn, najacdcsouth@gmail.com, or Beth Holbert, najacdcnorth@gmail.com.