I'm a Board Member - Now What?

It is an honor and a privilege to be elected or appointed by your peers to serve on the board. Along with the honor and privilege comes responsibility and hard work. You must understand what is expected now that you are a fiduciary. A fiduciary is someone acting on the behalf of another based on an expectation of trust.

As a board member you act on behalf of your entire Chapter, your donors, and the general public which you serve. Fiduciary duty requires board members 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.

You can learn about your role and responsibilities as a board member at Chapter Board training. If your Chapter is not conducting training, please contact your CSC for help.

Your major responsibilities as a Board member are:

**Governing your Chapter.** The Board is involved in planning, monitoring, and evaluating the Chapter. You must ensure that the Chapter is carrying out the purpose stated in your Constitution and complying with your Constitution, policies, and procedures and the NAJA Handbook.

**Establishing policies and procedures which give your Chapter direction.** Your policies and procedures also serve as reference points for your members and the public and can make your Chapter more efficient.

**Developing goals for your Chapter.** Your goals may be short-term and long-term, and they guide you throughout the year. It is important to review progress during the year and evaluate the outcome at the end of the year. Suggested Chapter goal categories include administration, education, finance, fundraising, membership, public relations, scholarship, and service. Information on goal setting and specific examples can be found on the NAJA website in the Chapter Board Training section.

**Participating as an active member of the Board Team.** You are an important part of the team. This requires familiarizing yourself with the purpose, projects, and history of your Chapter; accepting and completing assignments; preparing for and attending meetings regularly; avoiding conflicts of interest — even in appearance; remaining loyal to the Chapter by supporting decisions of the board; keeping confidential information confidential; enhancing your Chapter’s public image and protecting your Chapter’s reputation; and seeking help when needed.

**Recognizing your fiscal responsibility.** You are responsible to the Chapter and community to be a good steward of the contributions used to fund projects. More on this next month.

Yes, serving on the board can be hard work, but it comes with many rewards. Together you can make a difference and accomplish more for your community that you ever dreamed possible. At the same time you will learn new skills and discover the potential in your own abilities.

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Service Projects Offered at AEC

At AEC 2016 NAJA debuted Service projects in which Chapters could participate. We had 18 JA members from four Chapters volunteer at Youth Villages and we had 34 JA members from five Chapters volunteer for the Girl Scout project. Thank you to everyone that volunteered.

The Girl Scout project was really two-fold: to serve the local Girl Scouts in Memphis and to show JA members how easy and inexpensive a project with Girl Scouts can be. Our project was titled “Unmask the Leader in You” and was superhero themed and based off of Stephen Covey’s 7 Habits of an Effective Leader for kids and his book *The Leader in Me.* We received positive feedback from many parents and Girl Scout leaders about this project and want to share the information with you. You will find all the project information (PowerPoint presentation, Bookmarks, Habit 2 Handout, Boss vs. Leader, game ideas, masks, and invite flyer) on the website under Project Resources.

If your Chapter has not engaged with a local Girl Scout troop yet, this is an easy and inexpensive project to get you started! If you have any additional questions about how to run this project, please reach out to Marketing VP Leslie James at NAJAmarketingvp@gmail.com

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One of Our Officers Resigned: What do We do Now?

Does your Chapter have procedures in place to fill an officer vacancy? Unfortunately, this issue comes up regularly in Chapters as members move, have babies or begin new jobs and are unable to serve. Start by reviewing the Chapter’s constitution, particularly in Article VII—Officers or Article IX—Committees, Section 1D—Nominating Committee. If your Constitution is silent on this subject, then your Chapter should amend its Constitution to include procedures for filling officer vacancies.

The following are several options to fill a vacancy:

- **Convening the Nominating Committee to select candidates for the vacant office followed by a vote of the entire membership**
- **Soliciting nominations for the vacant position from the floor at a regular Chapter meeting followed by a vote of the entire membership**
- **Designating the Executive Board as the body responsible for filling the vacancy**
- **Appointment by the President with approval of the Executive Board**

Whichever method your Chapter selects, be sure to follow Article XII—Amendments of your Constitution when making changes to the Constitution. Any proposed amendment should be presented to the Chapter at the meeting prior to the one at which the vote will take place. A two-thirds vote is required to adopt a Constitutional amendment.