



## KEY RESPONSIBILITIES FOR EFFECTIVE BOARD MEMBER SERVICE

### 1. Attend Board Meetings and Actively Participate

Meeting attendance and participation are the most basic responsibilities of a Board member, and probably the easiest. Chapter business takes place at the Board meetings. Your attendance helps keep you in the know. Because you are a Board member, people will ask you questions about the direction of the Chapter. Your attendance at Board meetings will prepare you to respond to most questions. If you are unable to attend a Board meeting, please inform the President prior to the meeting.

Become familiar with ALA and Chapter history, our mission, bylaws and budget. This general understanding will help you to participate in a knowledgeable, well-informed manner.

Welcome new members and meet people that you do not already know. This will not only widen your own network, but will help to make these members feel more connected to our Chapter. You should ask new members questions about their involvement, listen to their comments, and relay their concerns back to the Board. This informal information can be extremely useful in improving Chapter events.

### 2. Set Policy and Establish Goals

Board members are part of an inter-related team and need to act as a team. As a team, policy and goals are set for committees to implement.

When you commit to a task, do what you say you will do, when you say you will do it. It is very important, if you are unable to get the task done prior to the date you have committed to, that you ask for help. Don't wait until the last minute, when it is now too late to meet the deadline. Remember that people depend upon you to accomplish what you commit to do. If you are unsure about taking on a responsibility, say so. It is better to decline taking on additional responsibility if you will be unable to give it your all. Saying no then provides the opportunity for someone else – who is in the position to commit – to step forward. Once you do commit, perform your duties with diligence and in a timely manner.

### 3. Ensure a Strong Financial Base and Adequate Financing

It is the responsibility of Board members to make sure there are adequate finances to run the Chapter and that Chapter funds are spent responsibly.

As a Board member, you are responsible for ensuring that revenues are generated. You should support projects that the Chapter undertakes to raise money, and come up with creative ideas for new ventures.

Financial performance audits are part of a Board member's fiduciary responsibility. The Chapter treasurer will present monthly financial reports at each Board meeting, and it is your responsibility to review these reports with diligence to ensure that Chapter funds are being well spent on the programs and services that support our mission and goals.

#### 4. Actively Support Your Chapter

Develop volunteer opportunities for members to represent our Chapter. Look for small projects or tasks that you can delegate to other Chapter members. As Board members, we also need to be #1 supporters of our Chapter events and get involved in these programs or events.

Board members have the opportunity to voice their opinion on issues. However, once the Board has made a decision, Board members need to support that decision whether they were for or against the issue to begin with. Said in a different way, set aside your personal agenda and think of the good of the Chapter.

As an ambassador of our Chapter, you should make a concerted effort to attend Regional and International conferences, in addition to local Chapter programs and social activities. To assist you in attending these programs, you are provided a Board educational allowance.

Make an effort to learn more about the responsibilities and committee functions of other Chapter members. This will assist you in knowing who to contact about what. It will also help you to understand what other work is being accomplished in the Chapter and by whom. You can also align with other Chapter members, thereby creating opportunities to work together in fulfilling your Board responsibility.

#### 5. Prepare a Written Plan Outlining Long-term Goals for the Chapter

As a Board, we should identify issues and problems that our Chapter may face for the coming year and the direction we want the Chapter to take for the next few years. Once we have identified these key areas, we can outline our long-term goals. Failure to plan leaves the future to chance.

Each year, job descriptions of each Board member need to be reviewed and revised as necessary. By providing realistic expectations for the various Board positions, members can make informed decisions when considering a commitment.

#### Creed for a Good Board Member

- Honor your commitments.
- Discuss issues, concerns and/or conflicts at Board meetings or directly with the individual involved. Do not hold sidebars or talk behind someone's back. Failure to voice your opinion later waives your right to complain.
- Support the ultimate decisions of the Board even if it is not your personal choice.
- Support all Chapter events with your presence, energy and talents. Ask what you can do to help with events.
- Diligently work to gain knowledge about ALA and share that knowledge with others.