

NASW Oregon Chapter Board of Directors
Outgoing Executive Director Report
2006-2010

Financial Position

- NASW Oregon Chapter is in a healthy and stable financial position, with consistent income streams and nearly one year of operating revenue in cash/reserves.
- We have grown our annual operating budget considerably. In FY 2006, the budget was \$184,431. The draft budget for FY 2011 is \$260,500.
- We have diversified our revenue streams. In FY 2006, membership dues were 65% of our budget. In FY 2011, membership dues are 51% of the budget. Our largest area of growth has been in event fees.

Communications

- Our communications and image has been greatly professionalized over the last four years.
- In fall 2006, we began using e-communications more effectively to communicate with our membership, consisting of regular html emails and a monthly e-news. In addition, we used email software to automate html emails to new members, suspended members, and a reminder to members up for renewal.
- In winter 2006/2007, we redesigned the newsletter and continued to improve its design, particularly as we shifted to an electronic issue.
- In spring 2008, we launched a new and improved website.

Streamlined Operations

- The Chapter office has streamlined its operations in many ways, some of which have resulted in significant cost savings.
- In winter 2007, we purged and scanned files and paperwork that was taking up valuable space and reorganized the office to create a more productive space. We also painted the office and purchased new furniture and equipment.
- Staff duties were restructured to avoid duplication of efforts. In addition, we implemented electronic delivery of invoices and CEU application materials to cut down on postage and staff time.

Membership

- Despite fluctuations and a current decrease by 4% compared to last fiscal year of actual renewing members, membership has grown over the past four years. In July 2006, our total membership was 1,720. Currently, our membership is 1,807 and we reached all time high of 1,830 in November 2009.

Stakeholder Relationships

- Our relationships with key stakeholders have improved, particularly with the leadership of local social work education programs. For example, we have a representative from each program actively participating with the Social Work Reinvestment Initiative.
- In addition, our relationship within our own national organization is stronger. We have shifted away from an “us versus them” mentality and are better positioned as a collaborative and higher performing chapter. My participation as secretary of the Council of Chapter Executive Directors Council (COCE) Steering Committee for the past three years has been an excellent opportunity to be involved in discussions at the national level.
- Our chapter has also been recognized as a leader in sustaining the Social Work Reinvestment Initiative at the state level.

PR/Media

- Media relations and outreach has been part of strategic planning discussions for years, without a structure or mechanism for carrying out such tasks. In FY 2009, we increased our PR budget line item and contracted with MAP Communications. As a result, we obtained media coverage for our 2009 Day of Action in Salem, and published nearly 20 letters to the editor around the state about the new title protection law. In addition, an op-ed on the need for school social work licensure was published. It is a small step, but an important one.
- Currently, MAP Communications is developing an internal media “toolkit” that will be presented as part of media training for NASW leaders in June 2010. Additionally, they are developing a Press Kit that will profile social work in Oregon, the Association, and pitch various social work stories by highlighting several NASW members and their areas of practice/expertise. It is my hope that this will lay the foundation for proactive media outreach next year.

Legislative & Political Action

- In recent years, NASW has shifted to developing/introducing legislation and taking a lead role in working with coalition partners. This will require an increased contract with our lobbyist; however it positions us strategically and is an opportunity to improve our visibility while demonstrating our efforts back to the membership.
- We have greatly improved our e-communications strategy for issuing action alerts and soliciting donations for our legislative action fund and PAC.

Social Work Reinvestment Initiative

- We introduced the Social Work Reinvestment Initiative at a summit in November 2007. It was initially unclear if SWR would result in concrete action/progress and whether the initiative was sustainable. In 2008 we formed a SWR Taskforce and hired a SWR Coordinator for one year. As a result, we were able to conduct a statewide workforce survey and host an event for the social work community. We ended FY 2009 with a SWR retreat to set short and long term goals for 2010.

- In 2009-2010, our MSW student intern focused on SWR as her primary project. We organized a second annual event for the professional community, formed a PR/Marketing Committee, engaged in outreach to high school career centers, conducted a needs assessment of newer professionals, and continued analysis on the workforce survey. A second SWR retreat was held in April 2010.
- The SWR Taskforce will continue to meet in 2011, and will use SWR as an umbrella theme to support lobby day and legislative activities. A Social Work Reinvestment Act (SWRA) Memorial bill will be introduced in the 2011 legislative session, with plans to introduce an Oregon SWRA in the 2013 to establish an Oregon Commission on Social Work. The taskforce will also focus on workforce issues as its priority while creating a proposal to establish the Oregon Center for Social Work.

Social Networking

- In spring 2008, we hired an online marketing intern to create a MySpace and Facebook account for the chapter. We have since closed our MySpace account and moved to Twitter, while maintaining our growing Facebook community. This has been an important strategy to stay relevant and build an online community for social workers.

Challenges/Recommendations:

Fiscal Trends & Challenges

- Although we have grown our budget considerable, I am concerned that we have reached the threshold given our current staffing structure and possible market saturation. The chapter will need to continue to find ways to generate non-dues revenue. I believe that the strongest possibilities for doing so are:
 - Continued strategic event offering, such as national keynote speakers, regional conferences, ethics workshops and LCSW exam prep courses (which we currently have the market for); and developing LMSW and RBSW exam prep courses.
 - Expanded CEU DVD programs and online CEU courses through our new contract with Manexa.
 - Increased advertising sales on website/newsletter.
 - Increased sponsors/exhibitors at keynote events.
 - Development of chapter publications, such as the private practice handbook.

Membership Trends & Challenges

- Membership retention and recruitment is an obvious revenue strategy; however we currently lack the structure and capacity for a strategic approach to both retention/recruitment.
- Our average member is 54 years old; 75% of our membership are baby boomers or older. Therefore, we can expect a revenue/organizational crisis in the next ten years. It is essential that we pour resources into targeting students and newer professionals to join their professional association. This will likely require a variety of strategies, including programmatic structure, rebranding, targeted marketing, and expanded benefits that are relevant to this cohort.

District Development

- A local presence of NASW is essential for membership engagement, support, and recruitment. Using the Rogue Valley District as a model, we would greatly benefit by establishing districts around the state to help carry out our business. This may require paid field organizers in priority areas.

PR/Communications

- It is my recommendation that NASW move in the direction of having a monthly retainer with MAP Communications, Strategies 360, or another firm. In addition to featuring social workers and the Association in local media, we are rarely mentioned in the legislative realm.

Chapter Structure

- Currently the Oregon and Washington chapters are operating with similar budgets, inefficient staffing structures, and facing similar challenges. Merging our chapters would allow for a full restructuring, rebranding, growth and overall improved services. It is my recommendation that a northwest/regional chapter structure continue to be explored/pursued with the understanding each state would maintain an office and state specific efforts such as legislative efforts and the PAC.