

AGF Membership Committee Meeting
June 24th, 2008

Minutes

In attendance: Ellis Carter, Kevin Ruegg, Lynn Timmons, Mollie Trivers, Marissa Theisen, Lauren Bashaw

The meeting began with Lauren giving a brief overview of the current membership renewal status for the year. She reported that there hadn't been any significant changes since the last membership committee meeting. AGF has had four new members join this year (Arizona Christian Foundation, Schulz Charitable Foundation, Corporation for National and Community Service, and Steele Foundation). We have had nine members choose not to renew (Arizona Commission on the Arts, Bank of America, Blue Cross BlueShield, Choice Hotels International, Every Voice in Action Foundation, John C. Lincoln Community Health Center, Tucson Electric Power, and Turnbow Foundation). Lauren reported that Ellis Center for Educational Excellence did renew their membership, at \$2,500. Marissa reported that Prudential Financial would most likely not be renewing this year, though we have not heard anything official from Prudential. The committee decided that at this point, we should consider sending Prudential a letter officially terminating their membership, but Robin Hanson, Prudential's AGF liaison, would still be invited to attend AGF events as she is the chair of Valley Contributor's Network. Marissa will talk with Robin about the value of a termination letter.

The committee then discussed potential new members. A committee member suggested encouraging more current members to invite non-members who they know in the community to attend AGF events, and remind members that they can always bring guests to AGF programs. Ellis Carter said that she would be inviting some clients of hers who are potential AGF members to fill her table at AGF's 2nd Annual Art of Giving Luncheon. Ellis also printed out a list of Arizona foundations from her database, cross-referenced with our member list, and Lauren agreed to look over this list to pick out foundations that we have not yet contacted and send them membership information. Marissa then went over a list she has compiled of prospective corporate members, noting several organizations we have already been in contact with. The group looked over the list, and made the following commitments:

- Ellis offered to contact Allied Waste Industries Corporate Giving Program, as well as Arizona Diamondbacks Foundation. She also offered to see if there might be potential members in the Diversity Leadership Alliance.
- Kevin offered to contact Brad Gazaway, an attorney at Dial Corporation who is on her Board.
- Kevin mentioned that she has contacted Bashas' Inc., and they are not currently interested in membership, but will inquire as to why.
- Marissa agreed to contact Tom Ambrose at Phoenix Suns Charities to see what we could do to engage the other sports charities.

Marissa and Lauren asked that the committee continue to seek new members, especially corporate members, and keep AGF informed of any contacts they make.

Next, the committee discussed retention strategies for AGF, and reviewed the Member Retention scorecard that Lauren and Marissa filled out two months ago. The committee looked over the list and agreed that in many of the categories, they felt that AGF was doing very well and perhaps actually fell in a higher category than we were two months ago. Specifically, Marissa shared that AGF staff have been scheduling one-on-one meetings with approximately 30 members who have not been very engaged in AGF. At these meetings, we get to know the members, hear how we can help them and suggest member benefits that they may not be aware of or taking advantage of.

The committee agreed that while it was important to have strategic retention goals (which are written into AGF's strategic plan), it was not necessary to spend time writing an official "Retention Plan." The group engaged in a brainstorming conversation, and came up with the following ideas and suggestions or things we are already doing well:

- Get feedback from members who decide not to renew – exit survey
- Our surveys for members are a good way to keep them engaged, as long as we continue to keep them short and sweet
- Our newsletters are a good way to provide connections, particularly the new member intros, and Member Spotlight
- Make every effort to connect new members with specific experienced members, either through Peer Connections or by matching them with a "buddy" the first time they attend a program, with an effort to match similar interests, etc.
- Use the listserv to announce new members to the membership, including details about their organizations, grantmaking, interests, etc.
- Find ways to engage members by allowing them to contribute to AGF in some way – for example, using their meeting space for our programs, ask them to be a panel member or introduce a speaker, etc.
- At our Annual Meeting, we should recognize organizations who have been AGF members for a certain number of years
- Create a door sticker (or plaque, etc.) that says "Proud Member of Arizona Grantmakers Forum," similar to the website seal. Lauren agreed to send an email with the seal included to the committee for them to post on their websites.
- The committee discussed the creation of some sort of membership "card," listing a few important benefits of AGF for members to refer to. Marissa reported that she has been working on something like this, working off of an advertisement created by the Forum of Regional Associations of Grantmakers.

Finally, the committee briefly reviewed the Member Satisfaction Survey, as revised since the last committee meeting, mainly to shorten the survey considerably. The committee reported that it looked like an appropriate length, and did have any significant changes to make.

The meeting adjourned at 4:25pm.