

November 2008 Update Communication

“Stayin’ ALIVE” with Lively News!

Since the Congress of Volunteer Administrators Association (COVAA) meeting in December of 2006, steady progress has been made to bring the Association of Leaders in Volunteer Engagement (ALIVE) to fruition. This update contains an overview of the progress to date plus two important announcements: **Grant Award from the Volunteer Impact Fund and the Board Nomination and Election Process.**

Overview of the Progress to Date: The development of this association was conducted (via weekly conference calls) through the dedication of volunteer management field professionals from one coast to the other in addition to their personal, family, and work responsibilities. In an effort to provide the greatest option for sustainability and viability, all involved vowed to work diligently with thoughtful consideration to identify the best strategies for success. So, how was that accomplished?

Perhaps the greatest amount of work achieved occurred during a retreat in June of 2007. During this retreat, the team began to identify the overall purpose for this national, membership driven association which was the foundation of the formation of the mission statement; the identification of the name ALIVE; the content for the approved by-laws; the creation of the Articles of Incorporation (ALIVE was recognized by the State of Indiana as “incorporated” in June, 2008); and the process for electing the “Founding” Board of Directors. The strong, formidable infrastructure of ALIVE is attributed to the collaborative efforts established during the retreat in Las Vegas.

Constant input from professionals in the field as well as outside stakeholders was received through deliberate solicitation of the various COVAA committee members. Additionally, formal presentations were made to: attendees at the COVAA Town Hall Meeting during the National Conference on Volunteering and Community Service in July, 2007 as well as an exhibitor booth; to members of a NOVN conference call in November, 2007; and to attendees at the Climbing Higher, Diving Deeper conference in Portland, Oregon in October, 2008; and, informally, conversations were held with some attendees at the Association of Volunteer Resource Managers (AVRM) conference in both October 2007 and in October of 2008. Periodic updates were emailed out to the delegates and participants of the Denver meeting. Our website, www.volunteeralive.org, includes the updates and the detailed history of ALIVE.

Once incorporation was recognized, ALIVE began conducting business under the by-laws and therefore, Steering Committee Members become the **Initial** Board of Directors. Further in this communication will be information regarding the process and timeline for electing the **Founding** Board of Directors.

Volunteer Impact Fund Award: ALIVE responded to the Volunteer Impact Fund request for proposals and has been selected as the recipient of a \$100,000 grant in October 2008. The grant will support the development of ALIVE with the goal of building the capacity of the volunteer management field. *Quoting directly from the RFP, “The intent of the initiative is to mobilize and equip volunteer managers and their organizations on a wide scale to advance and expand volunteer resource management and, in so doing, to increase the capacities of nonprofit organizations to engage more volunteers in meaningful service. More than a one-time project, the Fund seeks to help create resources, infrastructure, and sustaining capacity to advance volunteer resource management nationally.”*

We are thrilled by the award of this grant! The Initial Board for ALIVE members are pleased by this recognition of our thoughtful, diligent work to create a meaningful organization that will serve our profession now and in the future and to help us serve the field with innovative and with tried best practices to meet our mission.

Election of ALIVE Founding Board: One of our last acts as the Initial Board is to support the nomination and election process of the Founding Board of Directors for ALIVE. The Board Development Committee is composed of individuals in the field outside of the Steering Committee Members. Those serving on the committee include: Christine Sorrels (Chair), Katie Campbell, Diane Hentges, Kathleen McCleskey, Kathy Perun, and Mark Redfield.

The incorporation documents and by-laws identify the approximate 90 members who were the former COVAA delegates at the Congress in Denver as the “Founding Members” and thus, the electing authority for the Founding Board. These delegates represented over 6,000 volunteer resource managers in the field and we believe reach the diversity necessary for a visionary board. Board member criteria encourage background, knowledge, and experience from inside and outside the field of volunteer management. We will make every attempt to reach all individuals from Denver – even if their contact information has changed. We might need your help with this task. We feel it is very important to have those of you that directed us to create ALIVE be the ones to cast the vote for your Board!

Once this new Board is elected by the COVAA delegates, final membership criteria of ALIVE will be determined and opened up to the field. A transition retreat for the Initial and Founding Board of Directors is planned for mid-February.

The new Board will play a critical role in the success of ALIVE and meeting its mission to “enhance and sustain the spirit of volunteerism in America by fostering collaboration and networking, promoting professional development, and providing advocacy for leaders in community engagement”. In the next week, we will be emailing out a Board Nomination Information Packet. Do you know someone that can lead the new association into the future of volunteerism? Please consider submitting your name or recommending the name of someone who you think would provide the type of leadership needed. Feel free to forward the packet on to your own networks. Inquiries regarding the process and/or election should be directed to Christine Sorrels, Board Development Committee Chair, at CSorrels@cox.net .

Our work has been challenging, rewarding, exciting, and finally coming to the next and final stage. We hope you are honored by our work. The dedication and appreciation of all involved is a true testament to the field of volunteer management representing the consummate professional.

Joanna

Joanna Johnson, CVA

President, Initial Board of Directors