

**George Washington University
School of Public Health *and Health Services*
Alumni Association
(GWPHAA)**

VOLUNTEER GUIDELINES

Congratulations on your appointment to a GWPHAA volunteer group! GWPHAA's officers, board members, and GW staff look forward to working with you during your term to provide meaningful programs and services for GW School of Public Health and Health Services (SPHHS) alumni. The following guidelines are designed to assist you in fulfilling this important responsibility.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF GWPHAA VOLUNTEERS

- By agreeing to serve on a GWPHAA Committee, you have accepted the following responsibilities:
- To make GWPHAA volunteer activities an important part of your professional responsibilities
- To respond to all meeting and conference call notices in a prompt manner
- To alert the chair or GW staff liaison if you cannot attend a meeting or conference call in which you had previously agreed to participate
- To actively participate in discussions and decision making
- To complete all assignments in the agreed upon time frame, or to alert the chair or GW staff liaison if this cannot be accomplished

COMMITTEE CHAIRS

Committee chairs are current officers that are nominated and approved by the Board of Trustees. The responsibilities of the chairs are:

- To make GWPHAA volunteer activities an important part of your professional responsibilities
- To develop a work plan for the year
- To develop the meeting agendas and related materials, and disseminate these materials to group members
- To attend GWPHAA Board of Trustees meetings when possible
- To familiarize themselves with the GWPHAA Strategic Plan and Bylaws, relevant GWPHAA policies and the committee's work during the previous year
- To make assignments to volunteer members and follow through to see that they are completed
- To involve members of the group in programs and projects
- To motivate volunteer members
- To bring the group to consensus
- To respond to requests for assistance from the Board of Trustees and GW staff

VOLUNTEER GROUPS' RELATIONSHIP TO THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES

GWPHAA's governing body is the Board of Trustees. Volunteer groups serve at the pleasure of the Board and are responsible to the Board for recommending policies, or considering issues within their responsibilities, which may have been referred by the Board for study and/or recommendation. Actions and related expenditures that affect the Association must be approved by the Board before becoming official policy.

Chairs attend meetings of the Board of Trustees to report on their groups' activities. Board meetings are usually held *quarterly*. This gives other chairs the opportunity to hear about all volunteer groups and their activities. *Each chair will act as the liaison*. The Board Liaison shall be the link between the Board of Trustees and the assigned volunteer group, and shall have the following responsibilities:

- Serve as a general adviser to the volunteer group
- Attend all regular group meetings, and advise the GWPHAA office when attendance is not possible; the President will consult with the Assistant Director of Medical Center Alumni programs to determine if a substitute is needed
- Provide the group with policies and budget information when needed
- Interpret actions and decisions of the Board of Trustees
- Report to the president and Board, if and when, problems occur
- Report group activities to the Board if the group chair cannot be present at a Board of Trustees meeting
- Assure that the group adheres to the Bylaws and policies; carries out its mission and objectives within the GWPHAA Strategic Plan

MEETINGS

Face-to-face meetings will be called by the chairs as necessary. All volunteer groups are encouraged to work via e-mail, listserv and conference calls as much as possible.

The chairs will notify volunteer group members via e-mail when a meeting or conference call has been scheduled, and ask if you will be able to participate. It is important to respond to all such notices in a prompt manner. If plans change, and you find you cannot attend the meeting, it is important to notify the chair or the GW staff liaison.

TELECONFERENCE CALL MEETINGS

Using conference calls rather than face-to-face meetings can expedite business, and give more GWPHAA members the opportunity to fully participate in board/committee activities. Approval for use of the university's toll-free teleconference should be obtained from GW staff at the Medical Center Alumni Programs.

A successful conference call depends on you. Your responsibility before, during and after conference call meetings is as follows:

Before:

1. Block the date and time of the call on your calendar, as you would for any out-of-town meeting.
2. Call the liaison if you did not receive all materials.
3. Read all materials thoroughly, and note what points you want to make sure are raised and discussed during the call.
4. Call the chair if you have any questions.

During:

1. Take the call in a quiet area without distractions.
2. Close your office door and notify other staff (or family members if you're taking the call at home) not to disturb you – you are out of the office at a meeting.
3. If possible, shut off all intercoms, call waiting, and other phone services that will disrupt the call. In addition, turn off radios or televisions that may be on. If you are home put your pets in another room.
4. Do not use a speakerphone – it is disruptive for others on the call.
5. Do not leave the conference call for any reason without announcing it to the other participants.
6. Be sure to identify yourself when you speak.

7. Make sure you make the points you want to make – since the chair does not have eye contact you, you must speak up.
8. Don't put your phone on "hold" if your phone system plays music or other messages when it's on hold.

After:

Follow through on any assignment. Notify the chair and/or GW staff liaison if this is not possible.

MEETING GROUND RULES

1. Attend meetings
2. Arrive on time
3. Be prepared
4. Only one person speaks at a time
5. No sidebars
6. Don't interrupt
7. Stay on point with comments
8. Consider all suggestions
9. Everyone participates-encourage involvement

ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATIONS



The GWPHAA office uses e-mail as its primary means of communication with volunteers



GW SPHHS listservs can be used by members to share ideas and enhance their conference call and face-to-face meetings



All GWPHAA volunteer groups are encouraged to develop ways to use GWPHAA online to enhance their missions and meet their goals. *New ideas will be reviewed by the internet committee prior to implementation.*

EXPENSES

Because GWPHAA's finances are limited, there are no provisions in the budget to provide travel or other meeting expenses for Board or committee meeting attendance.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE OFFICE OF MEDICAL CENTER ALUMNI PROGRAMS

The GW staff will assist the volunteer groups in carrying out their responsibilities during the year.

COMMUNICATIONS WITH THE MEMBERSHIP

Communication with GW SPHHS alumni should be approved by and/or handled through the office of Medical Center Alumni Programs. The GW staff will be able to assist committees in determining the appropriate communications vehicles for their information. Any publications developed by volunteer groups should also be handled through the office of Medical Center Alumni Programs so that our publications have a consistent, uniform look to them.