

## **Columbus Bar Association Recruitment and Retention of Members**

NABE Mid-Year Meeting  
Thursday, February 5, 2004

Emily S. Eastin, Director of Communications

### **RECRUITMENT**

#### **Give us half a chance campaign**

The Columbus Bar prorates membership halfway through the membership year (*providing 50% off the cost of membership dues for the remainder of this membership year.*). We target all former members with at least one year of inactivity and new members. Our campaign theme is “Give us half a chance to win you back this year, and we’ll give you a ‘half-off’ discount to rejoin the Columbus Bar Association.” We contacted our target market through a personalized letter – with a red stamp “Give us half a chance” on the outside of the envelope.

We received over 130 new members as a result of the campaign.

#### **Three for free campaign**

With three months left in our membership year, we have a three for free campaign. Members can sign up in April with no new billing until July of the following year (i.e. signed up and paid April 03, next bill July 2004).

We received over 60 new members as a result of the campaign.

#### **100% Club**

We started the 100% Club in 2003. Any law firm, corporate legal departments, law schools and government agencies with 2 or more attorneys are eligible for the 100% Club by enrolling 100% of their attorneys as members of the Columbus Bar. In return 100% participants are recognized in our annual Columbus Bar legal directory, each quarterly issue of Columbus Bar briefs and at the Annual Meeting. In addition, all firms with 100% participation will receive one free associate membership for every 20 attorney members. For example, if the firm has 40 attorneys, the firm will receive 2 free associate memberships, which can be used for paralegals, legal secretaries, librarians, etc.

We received over 20 new members as a result of this campaign. There are 121 organizations who pledged 100% “Firm Commitment.”

### **RETENTION**

#### **Dues Renewal**

Prior to mailing our dues renewals, we send an email out to the membership notifying them that their dues renewal notice is being mailed. We send out three notices, each with an email reminder. The dues notice is sent in an envelope stating in red “Important: Dues Renewal Information Enclosed.”

Once the deadline has passed, we terminate all non-renewers and prepare to send a directory verification form. The form includes their contact information, photo and their membership status. For those individuals who did not renew, they are listed as a non-member. This encourages many of the non-renewers to finally send in their payment. Because of the timing we have a month to obtain renewals as a result of the directory verification sheets and can therefore get their status changed in the directory. During the time of the directory verification process, a team of staff members are on the phones calling the non-renewers.

### **Sustaining Members**

Throughout the year we look for opportunities to stay in touch with our sustaining members. We have held a sustaining-members-only golf outing. We send special email messages to them prior to holidays and dues renewal, thanking them for their support. After a sustainer renews his/her membership or signs up to be a sustainer, our Executive Director sends a personalized, handwritten thank you note. We also recognize sustaining members at our annual meeting and in our publications.

### **Anniversary Emails**

Send emails to individuals who are celebrating their 1, 5, 10, 15, 20, 25, 30 etc. years in practice. For those individuals with 15+ years – we encourage them to upgrade their membership to the sustaining level.

### **New Members**

We send welcome letters to each new member and we publish their name in our weekly newspaper.

### **Misc. Membership Information**

Our membership department consists of a team of individuals. The team consists of our Director of Communications, IT Director, Director of Committees and Special Events, Controller, Graphic Artist/CLE Assistant and our Executive Director. As the team leader, I schedule regular meetings and develop and update our Membership Activity Plan. I work closely with our IT Director on essentially every project and together we implement the activity plan. This plan includes the type of membership activity, the target completion date and the staff member responsible for the activity. This is kept updated and is posted on our Intranet.