

WHAT IS COMMUNITY OUTREACH?

Communities need to know more about who you are as an Association. Community Outreach should be an important part of the local Association structure. There should be an established committee within the association that deals specifically with the community. This committee should have a plan that brings the association and community together.

In order to build a stronger relationship, it is important for our communities to know who we are and what we are about. We do not want the public to see us only when demanding higher salaries or urging the School Board to pass the budget. What we need is ongoing visibility in our communities so that when we do reach out to them, it is not only during a crisis. Communities have to see more of who we are and what we are about.

We do this by working with communities to build relationships and partnerships. A community outreach plan should be an integral part of a local chapter's plan and have a line item in its budget. Community Outreach programs need as much attention when bargaining is not going on as when it is.

A Community Outreach program works best when it is aligned with a chapter's goals and objectives. In order for this to happen, community outreach needs to be woven into the chapter's planning process. Only then is an association ready to start its community outreach program -- which will enhance its bargaining positions and other priorities.

WEAC members do community outreach every day through conversations with parents, students, caregivers and public agencies in and out of their workplaces. Local associations need only to survey and identify members who are already involved in community organizations and activities.

Community involvement is also an opportunity for locals to support community issues even when those issues don't impact the chapter. Some of these issues can include housing, safety, social services and transportation.

GETTING STARTED

Starting a Community Outreach program can be challenging. However, once you have gone through the [checklist](#), you are ready to go. It is recommended that your chapter has established an Outreach Committee. It is a good idea to have your Local Association bring in the Regional Director and State Organizer to assist until outreach is up and running. When you meet to plan for the first time it is recommended your Local Association President, Outreach Committee members (if applicable), Regional Director and State Organizer be in attendance.

At your first meeting you should do the following:

- Get to know each other — it is important to share why you are interested in community outreach.
- Talk about commitment, expectations and why it is important to be committed to community outreach.
- Discuss meeting dates, time and place.
- Look at Association timeline.
- Discuss the Associations purpose for Community Outreach.
- Talk about Next Steps.
- Adjourn the meeting.

After you had your first meeting and have learned more about your colleagues, looked at the Association purpose, timelines etc., your next meeting should focus on the following:

- Overview of previous meeting.
- Look at sending out community outreach [membership survey](#).
- Look at purpose and brainstorm ideas and strategies of how you are going to follow through.
- Identify the shakers and movers in the community. Think about who your Association should be contacting and developing a relationship.
- Brainstorm how the Association can be more visible in the community.
- Look at your Next Steps for next meeting.

SAMPLE CHECKLIST

An Assessment will let you know your strengths and weaknesses

Association Name _____

Chapter President _____

Outreach Chair (if applicable) _____

Regional Director _____

State Organizer _____

1. General Information Yes No N/A

- a. Chapter has need for Community Outreach O O O
- b. Chapter has contacted Regional Director O O O
- c. Chapter has Local Association commitment O O O
- d. Chapter has contacted State Organizer O O O

2. Outreach Committee

- a. Chapter has established a committee O O O
- b. Community Outreach Chair has been appointed O O O
- c. First meeting has been scheduled O O O
- d. Purpose and timelines have been developed O O O
- e. Available resources have been explored O O O
- f. Membership survey has been sent O O O
- g. Members interested in community outreach have been identified O O O
- h. Shakers and movers have been identified O O O

- i. Community database has been created O O O
- j. Is community outreach training needed O O O

3. Evaluate

- a. Evaluation process established O O O

SAMPLE MEMBERSHIP SURVEY

A membership survey will help you identify members who are active in the community.

When you are establishing a community outreach program, it is important to assess your membership to see how many of them live within the District boundaries. The survey will help you identify members who are already involved in community-based organizations, interfaith-based organizations and unions.

You may find that you have a ready-made base of members who can assist you in your community outreach program. Once you have identified them, it is important to bring them together to share what the Association is planning to do with its outreach program. One goal is to enlist those members who are connected with community groups to be a conduit to those groups. They can become ambassadors and assist the Association in building a relationship with the community. Remember, the key is to build relationships. Your members can share information about the Association, keep the community updated in District happenings and assist the community with its concerns.

Download a copy of the [Community Involvement Survey](#). This survey can be changed to meet the needs of your local and can be tailored to serve as a Membership Survey.

Prior to sending out the survey, the President or the Chair of the Community Outreach Committee should report out to the Local Association membership about the Community Outreach program. It is recommended to place an article in Association communications vehicles letting members know about the community outreach program and the importance of filling out the survey. You may be surprised to find previously uninvolved members who are enthusiastic about community outreach.

Once the surveys have been collected, they should go to the Community Outreach Committee to establish a database of members who are interested in getting involved.

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT SURVEY

Community Involvement Survey

In order to develop a local community outreach plan, it is important to identify members who are currently active in the community. This information will help our local Association design an effective outreach plan.

Name of member _____

Site _____

Email address _____ Phone _____

1. Are you currently involved in any national, state or local organizations? i.e., NAACP, LULAC, Kiwanis Club, Sierra Club

YES ___ NO ___

If yes, please list _____

2. Are you currently involved in any local or neighborhood associations ? i.e., PTA, Homeowners Association, Neighborhood Association

YES ___ NO ___

If yes, please list _____

3. Are you currently involved in any Faith-based organizations?

YES ___ NO ___

If yes, please list _____

4. Are you currently involved in any business organizations? i.e. Chamber of Commerce, Business Roundtable

YES ___ NO ___

If yes, please list _____

5. Would you be interested in serving on the Community Outreach Committee?

YES ___ NO ___

Thank you for assisting your Association in this critical outreach effort.

BUILD A PLAN

A good community outreach plan will keep the local chapter focused on its goals. One of the challenges that locals have with their community outreach program is sustaining their program. Too often, locals make an outreach effort because they are in a crisis and need community support. Chapters can no longer afford to operate in this manner. Communities need you to give back. If your association has done nothing in the community, don't expect them to always be there for you. Mutual support is based on building relationships.

In building relationships, locals have to focus on the long-term goal of community outreach. This means doing community activities and being visible. Your community outreach committee should look at its purpose, timelines, and resources to put the plan in action.

Some examples: Some locals have a booth at a community fair, do a library story night, sponsor parent workshops and [many other things](#).

LOCAL ACTIVITY IDEAS

- A Community Outreach Committee
- Business Roundtable

- Community Forum
- House Meetings
- Community Appreciation Event
- Read Across America
- Farmer's Market
- Community Fair
- Community Meetings
- Scholarship Drive
- Poster Contest
- Other Community Organizations' events
- Community Newsletter
- Speakers Bureau
- Listeners Bureau
- One-on-Ones
- Local Chapter Brochure
- Joint Project with community organization
- Parenting workshops or printed tips for parents from local teachers
- Community charities, fundraisers
- Holiday projects
- Health and safety projects
- Display at shopping centers, fairs, etc
- Citizen-of-the-Month award
- Program involving retired employees organizations
- Cultural events
- Walk-a-thon
- Athletic team sponsorship
- Co-sponsor picnic around beginning of school, end of school, etc.
- Golden Apple recognition program

ACTION PLAN

ACTION PLAN

1. ORGANIZATION: _____

2. GOALS: (What do you want to do? What is the purpose?):

3. OBJECTIVES: (Some specific targets):

- A. _____
- B. _____
- C. _____
- D. _____

4. DRIVING FORCES:

- A. _____
- B. _____
- C. _____
- D. _____

5. RESTRAINING FORCES:

- A. _____
- B. _____
- C. _____
- D. _____

6. TIMETABLE:

Date Action Point Person

- | Date | Action Point | Person |
|----------|--------------|--------|
| A. _____ | _____ | _____ |
| B. _____ | _____ | _____ |
| C. _____ | _____ | _____ |
| D. _____ | _____ | _____ |

7. NOTES:

COMMUNITY RELATIONSHIPS

Building relationships with the community is a crucial component of a strong local chapter.

So how do we build community relationships? Local chapters do this in a variety of ways such as:

- Hosting/Participating in Community Forums
- Sponsoring community projects
- Being part of a local coalition(s)

There is no one way to establish community relationships. Each chapter's community outreach team must assess itself and determine what it should do.

A team should identify who the movers and shakers are in their community. These should be people who are respected, have integrity, are influential and come from diverse groups in the community. They can include the following:

- Community-based organizations
- Faith-based organizations
- Chamber of Commerce
- Other unions
- Homeowners Associations
- Retirees
- Parents
- School support professionals

Once your team has identified potential allies, the first step is to make contact. The initial contact is for the purpose of coming together to have a one-on-one conversation to share your interests, purpose and goals. This time should be used to listen deeply so that you can determine if this is a potential ally for your chapter.

In order to sustain a long-term community outreach program with community organizations, you must have continuous communication with them and nurture the relationship.

It is important to remember that establishing a community relationship is a two-way street. It is just as important to be an advocate for our allies' issues as it is for them to support ours. You may not always agree on a given issue, but it should not end the relationship. Remember - there are no permanent friends and there are no permanent enemies in community organizing.

As your chapter moves forward developing a community outreach program, remember that WEAC provides support and resources to help you, such as the [Who's Who in Other Organizations](#) sheet. For further assistance, ask your Outreach Committee Chair or Chapter President to bring in your Regional Director or State Organizer.

Mapping your community is a great way to get started. [See one community's example.](#)

HOUSE MEETINGS

House Meetings are a useful tool for local chapters to organize the community. One of the best ways to get community support behind your chapter is to organize a house meeting. A house meeting can be held anywhere - someone's house, a church, restaurant or chapter office.

A successful house meeting should include the following steps:

- Have the chapter appoint a committee to plan house meetings
- Determine the number and purpose of the house meetings
- Prepare an agenda and talking points
- Establish a date for all speakers (members) to be trained prior to a house meeting
- Develop materials that can be given to members to reinforce the message
- Invite stakeholders

- Arrange for snacks and beverages
- Publicize the meeting

House meetings could be held to organize and mobilize around any issue, including:

- Pink Slips (Reduction In Force)
- School Board Elections
- School Referendum
- School Safety
- Drop Out Rate
- Achievement Gap
- Gang Problems
- State Budget Crisis
- Public Relations
- Lack of Recreation Facilities for Kids

Any issue that impacts your local association or community can be an opportunity to hold a house meeting. House meetings are one way to build community support for your issues.

POTENTIAL PARTNERS

This section provides a list of potential partners in the development of your community outreach program.

Wisconsin Education Association Council

National Education Association

Association of Community for Reform Now (ACORN)

Industrial Areas Foundation (IAF)

National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP)

League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC)

[Wisconsin Indian Education Association](#)

Asian Business Association

National Urban League

National Council of La Raza (NCLR)

Parents, Families and Friends of Lesbians and Gays (PFLAG)

100 Black Men of America, Inc.

National Indian Education Association

Mexican American Legal Defense and Educational Fund (MALDEF)

United Farm Workers (UFW)

[Wisconsin Parent Teacher Association \(PTA\)](#)

Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)

El Concilio

Local Chambers of Commerce

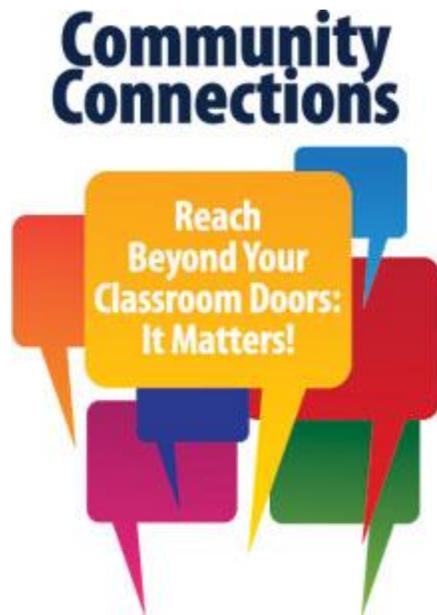
Local Animal Clubs Kiwanis, Lions, Moose, etc.

Local Labor Unions

County Federations of Labor

Neighborhood Associations

Faith-Based Organizations



Reach Beyond Your Classroom Doors!

