COMMUNICATORS FORUM
Board Meeting
January 11, 2005
3-166 CSOM

Membership: 266 (as of 1/20/05)

Present: Kristeen Bullwinkle, Connie Burkhart, Santiago Fernández-Giménez, Deb McKinley, Alan Olson, Lani Payette, Nicole Pilman, Jennifer Schulz, Pam Stenhjem, Donna Weispfenning

Minutes
Deb made a motion to approve the minutes, which was seconded by Santiago. The minutes were approved as submitted.

Treasurer’s Report
Nicole distributed copies of the December budget report. There was nothing unusual to note.

Action & Discussion Items

Marketing and Promotions chair: Pam Stenhjem has volunteered to step in as chair for the rest of the year. Yeah, Pam! Welcome back!

Inviting non-members to Member Event: The Member Event is usually a members-only event but has already been promoted as “open to all.” The board agreed this would be a good way to get new members and a good opportunity to invite high-level communicators, so board approved inviting guests. Pam will send email to membership encouraging them to invite their bosses and other high-level communicators. Pam and Connie will draft and send a special letter to high-level communicators, personally inviting them to the event. Jennifer pointed out that the alcohol permit procedure has become more strict; however, we don’t need a permit to serve alcohol for this event because it is being held at the Campus Club.

Writing seminar: The Program Committee has invited Steve Wilburs to lead a seminar on newsletter writing. Wilburs is a grammar and writing columnist who has been a popular speaker at past Forum conferences. The committee might need additional funds ($800) to help cover the cost of the seminar.

June member event: The Program Committee is thinking of inviting Stanley Hubbard as speaker, good opportunity to attract high-level communicators.

Gift certificates for program evaluations: Program Committee was thinking of purchasing gift certificates to give out in a raffle as rewards to those who submit program evaluations. The committee needs more thoughtful evaluations. Some board members questioned whether that was a good use of our money. Will people simply check the boxes and not provide any meaningful feedback? It was decided to use extra gifts (t-shirts, mugs, etc.). On the next month’s evaluation, we will provide a profile of the last month’s winner.

Maroon & Gold Program: This session was not too successful last year. Program Committee is thinking of not doing the event next year. If it goes better this year, the committee might reconsider.

New member: Five new members (1 recent member). Gift certificates will expire tomorrow, so Jennifer will buy more.
Committee Reports

Awards:
The awards committee met on January 4 and ad hoc on January 6 to finalize discussion on revising the awards program framework of entry categories and criteria. The board provided feedback on some of the committee’s latest ideas:

- reducing the number of judges to three (from 30)
- eliminating scoring sheets and holding judging on one day with all judges present and collaborating on their choices
- combining the entry registration with the conference registration online
- offering reduced memberships for $25 to those nonmembers who want to enter their work; or $10 off their first entry with a new $30 membership; or first entry free with a $30 membership.
- set entry fees same as last year? $15 for a single entry and $25 for a campaign/series entry
- having the U president present the Gold and Maroon winners and the MARGO (see next item) with their plaques (max 9)
- proposing a new award, the MARGO, chosen from all entries that wins for best use of budget
- incorporating the certificates of excellence entries into an awards slide presentation, using captions to name the winners (max 16)
- producing a CD/DVD of the winning entries to be given to everyone attending the conference as part of their conference fee
- Britt Bakke and Evelyn Khoo have volunteered for the awards publicity subcommittee. Britt will announce the 2005 award program details at the Forum’s Feb. 3 meeting and has begun to redesign the entry form as a fillable PDF. Evelyn will update the Web page information on the awards, as soon as information is finalized. They will work with the program subcommittee to develop a slide presentation of the winning entries for the conference. We are also forming subcommittees responsible for planning the program, awards, and judging.

Conference:
We’re going to the Depot! And saving money too! Parking will be available for $5. They also have a shuttle bus and business center.
Date: Thursday, May 12
Place: Milwaukee Depot
Theme: Mission: Possible
Working on sessions: project management, e-newsletters, stuff.

Marketing & Promotions:
The committee has been working collaboratively with the Program Committee to develop and organize the next membership appreciation event on January 25th. The committee took care of organizing the menu and ordering the food. They are also taking care of tracking all RSVPs as well as sending out reminder messages as the event draws near.

They continue to publish the Forum Communicator on a monthly basis. They receive more and more requests to include information in the newsletter and have received several commendations on the content and their willingness to share the information on members’ behalf.

Pam will be taking over as chair from this point forward and will organize the June membership appreciation event. The committee will begin having regular meetings after the 25th to ensure everyone is working together on this. The board had hoped the committee could tackle some marketing of the Forum this year, but half the year is already gone. Pam said the committee will try.
Programs:

Wrap-up on December 9th Program: “Privacy, the Law, and Your Communications”
- The group reviewed the comments from the program and were surprised that some attendees were not aware of the question-and-answer format, since that announcement was made at the beginning of the program.
- Good comments were received on the evaluations about what members wanted to learn in the upcoming program on newsletter writing. This is a good strategy that can be used in the future in planning for other programs.
- An announcement will be made before the next program to emphasize to attendees that the success of the program is dependent upon participation. We will also communicate expectations of the program ahead of time and try to generate feedback on member expectations.

February Program: Maroon and Gold Awards
- This program is scheduled for February 3rd. There was some concern that the January and February programs would be too close together, but since there is a limited audience for this session, the decision was made to stay with that date.
- The purpose of this program is to elicit enthusiasm for entering the Maroon and Gold Awards. Traditionally it has been difficult pulling this program together. Kristeen Bullwinkle, one of the speakers, did not have suggestions as to other presenters on the panel. Members are drawn to a program where past award winners describe decisions they made in designing the award-winning communication vehicle. Last year’s session covered how to fill out the award entry and included a question and answer section and was poorly attended. The program committee decided that this would be the last year they co-sponsored this Maroon and Gold Awards program.

March Program: Newsletter Writing Workshop
- Steve Wilburs is available to speak and would charge $800. He will be asked to cover the points members requested on the December program evaluation form. Steve’s Web site wilburs.com has many helpful tutorials.

April: Ethics of marketing in higher ed
May: Conference, no program
June: membership appreciation event with Marketing and Promotions Committee

Next Meeting:
Tuesday, February 8, 2005
3-4:30 p.m.
110 Heller Hall (Jennifer)
(Note: Jennifer and Kristeen traded months)

Respectfully submitted by Jennifer Schulz, recorder

Follow-Up Tasks
☐ Send content for newsletter to Pam Stenhjem
☐ Contact new members
☐ Ross/Technology Committee Members create framework for new online publications directory