

**Management  
Resource  
Package**

**ABWA**<sup>®</sup>  
AMERICAN BUSINESS WOMEN'S ASSOCIATION



2009-2010  
CHAPTER  
OFFICER AND COMMITTEE GUIDE,  
CHAPTER BYLAWS,  
RULES, POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

ABWA Mission Statement

The mission of the American Business Women's Association is to bring together businesswomen of diverse occupations and to provide opportunities for them to help themselves and others grow personally and professionally through leadership, education, Networking support and national recognition.

*ABWA's mission guides what we do as an Association, what we are as an Association, and what we continually strive to do as an Association. The mission should be the first consideration when evaluating the merits of a strategic direction or decision for an ABWA group.*



American Business Women's Association

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## 2000-2010 DECADE THEME

During ABWA's *Decade of Discovery, a Ten Year Adventure*, from Aug. 1, 2000, to July 31, 2010, members will discover new and exciting ways to grow personally and professionally.

## 2009-2010 ANNUAL THEME



Each year, a theme is chosen to represent the efforts of the Association. ABWA's annual theme coincides with the award year (Aug. 1 to July 31), enabling officers to plan Chapter events and materials around it. The theme is intended for *internal purposes* within ABWA Chapters/Express Networks, to provide a focus point for **energizing members and a fresh perspective for each year's membership campaigns**. Thus the theme can be used in Chapter newsletters and other member-only communication vehicles. Because of the threat of brand confusion, the theme can be used in **both internal and external communications only alongside ABWA's trademarked logo(s)**.

The 2009-2010 award year marks not only the culmination of our 10-year journey, **but also the 60th anniversary of the American Business Women's Association**. The last decade of discovery tops off an incredible 60-year history of innovation, alliances, and changing women's lives. **Because of all of this, it's only fitting that the 2009-2010 award year is represented by the theme, "Celebrate the Success!"**

## MESSAGE TO CHAPTER OFFICERS

This is the official ABWA Officer and Committee Guide, Chapter Bylaws, and rules, policies and procedures, which present Chapter management information for ABWA officers and committee chairs. If you have a question about officer and committee responsibilities or Chapter procedures, this guide should be your first resource.

**Another great resource for ABWA leadership tools is the Women's Instructional Network (WIN)<sup>TM</sup>. Inside, the Knowledge Object database contains a variety of tips, forms, articles and learning tools that are searchable by keywords.**

**The team at ABWA National is committed to understanding members' needs and supplying quality products and services. Our goal is to support members serving in leadership positions so that they can manage and lead their groups more effectively and efficiently. If you have questions about a particular issue or item contact us at [abwa@abwa.org](mailto:abwa@abwa.org) or 816-361-6621.**

**Updates to the 2009-2010 Chapter Officer and Committee Guide, Bylaws, and rules, policies and procedures are reflected in blue text throughout this guide.**

## DATES TO REMEMBER FOR THE 2009-2010 AWARD YEAR

### IMPORTANT DATES

Aug. 1, 2009-July 31, 2010: Chapter/Express Network® Award Year

*Chapter/Express Network terms of office run from Aug. 1 through July 31; during this same period, all award criteria for each year are to be met.*

Sept.-Nov. 2009: Nationally Sponsored Fall New Membership Recruitment Campaign

Sept. 22, 2009: **American Business Women's Day**

Sept. 24-26, 2009: **ABWA's 60th Anniversary National Women's Leadership Conference,**  
Kansas City, Mo.

March-May 2010: Nationally Sponsored Spring New Membership Recruitment Campaign

May 1-31, 2010: Universal Chapter/Express Network Officer Election Month

### 2010 ABWA CONFERENCE LOCATIONS

#### District Conferences

District I: Naples, Fla.

District II: The Woodlands, Texas

District III: Rockford, Ill.

District IV: Annapolis, Md.

District V: Indianapolis, Ind.

District VI: Reno, N.V.

### **National Women's Leadership Conference**

Oct. 28-30, 2010: Chattanooga, Tenn.

### IMPORTANT DEADLINES

Dec. 15, 2009: IRS Form 990-N (e-Postcard, *Return of Organization Exempt From Income Tax* for small tax-exempt groups whose gross receipts are \$25,000 or less) is due. The IRS's filing deadline for Chapters/Express Networks is four and one-half months after the Chapter/Express Network award-year end.

Jan. 1, 2010: Council Officer Election Report and administrative fee are due at ABWA National.

March 1, 2010: Nomination for National Office and Acceptance of Nomination forms due at ABWA National.

2009 - 2010 AWARD YEAR IMPORTANT DEADLINES CONTINUED

- May 2010: Conduct elections for Chapter/Express Network officers.
- May 15, 2010: 2011 Top Ten Business Women of ABWA candidate forms are due at ABWA National .
- May 15, 2010: **Councils' IRS Form 990-N** (e-Postcard, *Return of Organization Exempt From Income Tax* for small tax-exempt groups whose gross receipts are \$25,000 or less) is due. The IRS's filing deadline for councils is four and one-half months after the council-year end.
- June-July 2010: Newly elected officers begin planning for the new Chapter/Express Network year.
- June 1, 2010: This is the last day that SBMEF contributions for the 2009-2010 award year and applications for Scholarship Grant Requests and/or Business Skills Tuition Reimbursement for the 2009-2010 award year will be accepted at ABWA National.
- June 30, 2010: Chapter/Express Network Officer Election Report and administrative fee is due at ABWA National.
- July 21, 2010: 2009-2010 ABWA Best Practices award submissions must be postmarked and mailed to ABWA National; materials must be assembled and submitted with Award Certification Report and tabs from binder.
- July 31, 2010: Standing Committee Report for committee chair appointments is due to ABWA National.
- July 31, 2010: Chapter/Express Network membership counts will be verified for Best Practices awards.

## ABWA'S PROUD CODE OF CONDUCT

Ethical dilemmas occur as a result of values in conflict. It is important that the values of the American Business Women's Association are communicated to all members, and so Express Network and Chapter leaders are asked not only to communicate but also to embrace, support, reinforce and uphold ABWA's Proud Code of Conduct.

ABWA's Proud Code of Conduct was developed as a means of guiding all members in making ethical decisions. The broad statements of the code of conduct that are listed below are not expected to cover all conduct for all situations. This is why the Proud Code of Conduct was created as a living and fluid code.

1. **All members will serve as goodwill ambassadors for the American Business Women's Association.**
2. Members will not allow their personal beliefs and convictions to interfere with the representation of **ABWA's mission.**
3. Members will always treat their member colleagues, guests, vendors and sponsors with honesty, respect, fairness, integrity, responsibility, kindness, and in good faith.
4. Members will maintain compliance with ABWA National, Chapter and Express Network Bylaws.
5. Members will not use their personal power to advance their personal interests.
6. Members will strive for excellence in their professions by maintaining and enhancing their own business knowledge and skills, and by encouraging the professional development of other members.

# CHAPTER BYLAWS OF THE AMERICAN **BUSINESS WOMEN'S ASSOCIATION**

Each Chapter of the American Business Women's Association is a local league as set forth in the National Bylaws in a category established by the National Board of Directors. By accepting charters from the Association, all Chapters agree to comply with the current National Bylaws, Chapter Bylaws, rules, procedures, and policies of ABWA.

Chapter Bylaws are STANDARD for all Chapters with the exception of the articles and sections indicated below. At a new Chapter installation meeting, a first regular Chapter meeting, or a Chapter combination meeting, by the majority vote of the active membership of record, every Chapter decides the following:

ARTICLE I: Name of the Chapter, city, and state

ARTICLE III, Section 2: Amount of local dues and how payable

ARTICLE VI, Section 1: Day of the month of the regular Chapter meeting

Provisions for amending these articles and sections, once approved, are specified in Article VIII. For situations not covered in the bylaws, rules, procedures and policies of the Association, standing rules may be drafted by a Chapter.

## ARTICLE I. NAME

The name of this Chapter shall be:

CHAPTER: \_\_\_\_\_

CITY: \_\_\_\_\_

STATE: \_\_\_\_\_

## ARTICLE II. CHAPTER GOALS

The goals of the Chapters are to increase the business efficiency of all members; improve the earning power of all members; promote good relations between employers and employees; assist members in securing employment; advance members in a social, business and educational way; and assist women in the community to better themselves through professional development.

## ARTICLE III. MEMBERS

Section 1. Chapter membership is a valued privilege. Candidates for membership in this Chapter shall meet the requirements set forth in the National Bylaws.

Section 2. The monthly dues of this Chapter shall be \$\_\_\_\_\_ per month, payable in advance \_\_\_\_\_ (semi-annually or annually) to the Chapter treasurer. Any member who shall not pay Chapter dues upon the renewal date shall be removed from the Chapter membership roster.

Section 3. Only members in good standing nationally and locally shall be eligible to vote and participate in any other Chapter activity.

## ARTICLE IV. EXECUTIVE BOARD

Section 1. The Executive Board of the Chapter shall consist of the Chapter officers. The president shall act as chair of the Chapter Executive Board.

Section 2. The Executive Board shall have general supervision of the affairs of the Chapter between business meetings, set the time and place of Executive Board meetings, make recommendations to the Chapter membership and perform such other duties as specified in these bylaws. The Executive Board shall constitute Chapter authority in deciding matters of Chapter policy not otherwise decreed. The majority of the Executive Board shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of all business at Executive Board meetings.

## ARTICLE V. OFFICERS

Section 1. The officers of this Chapter shall be a president, vice president, secretary, treasurer, and any other officers the Chapter shall deem necessary to achieve the goals of the Chapter and should be primary members of the Chapter.

Section 2. A Nominating Committee, consisting of three members, shall be elected by the membership no later than March 31, and an Auditing Committee, consisting of two or more members, shall be appointed by the president by the July Chapter meeting. The members of the Nominating Committee should be primary members of the Chapter.

Section 3. All officers shall be elected in May by secret ballot to serve for one year or until their successors are elected. Their term of office shall begin August 1. A majority of the members voting shall elect. No member shall serve more than two consecutive full terms in the same office.

Section 4. With the exception of the office of president, a vacancy in any other office shall be filled by a majority vote of the Executive Board. Should the office of president be vacated, the vice president shall serve as president through that term of office. In the event the vice president cannot serve as president, the Executive Board shall appoint a member to serve as president until her successor takes office.

### Section 5. Accountabilities:

The PRESIDENT is the authorized leader of the Chapter. She maintains unity and harmony within the Chapter, directs officers, committees and members toward common goals and facilitates communication between **ABWA National and the Chapter's officers and members by disseminating information appropriately.** The president:

- Maintains primary affiliation with the Chapter for which she serves her elected office.
- Maintains compliance with ABWA National and Chapter Bylaws, rules, policies and procedures, and ABWA Proud Code of Conduct.
- Collaborates with the Executive Board in developing an annual plan and budget that best serve the **needs of the membership within the context of ABWA's mission.**
- Leads Executive Board in reviewing and understanding Best Practices for Chapter management, **evaluates their Chapter's performance as it relates to Best Practices in an effort to improve its performance.**
- Prepares meeting agendas and presides at all meetings of the Executive Board and Chapter.
- Reviews ABWA materials and information and distributes to the Executive Board, committee chairs and membership as appropriate.

- Finalizes and executes contract with meeting venue.
- Appoints committee chairs except the nominating committee, which is elected.
- Assigns Executive Board members as project leaders of specific committees.
- **Countersigns checks with the Chapter treasurer or with the vice president in the treasurer's absence.**
- Welcomes and introduces all new members and guests .
- Notifies the secretary, treasurer and membership chairs when members are to be removed from the Chapter roster for nonpayment of annual national dues.
- Supports and recognizes Executive Board and committee members in fulfilling the responsibilities of their positions.
- Recognizes the efforts of Chapter members and presents member awards at Chapter meetings.
- Serves as primary contact for the Chapter.
- Utilizes Best Practices Binder, *What We Are, What We Do and What We Continually Strive to Do*, to compile, organize and maintain important Chapter documents.
- Conducts two membership recruitment events annually in order to maintain a minimum of thirty members in the Chapter.

The VICE PRESIDENT is the Chapter host and primary assistant to the president. The primary responsibilities of the vice president:

- Maintains primary affiliation with the Chapter for which she serves her elected office.
- Maintains compliance with ABWA National and Chapter Bylaws, rules, policies and procedures, and ABWA Proud Code of Conduct.
- Assumes all duties and responsibilities of the president in her absence or when called upon by the president.
- Serves as an official Chapter host, welcoming members and guests at Chapter functions.
- Reserves meeting venues.
- Schedules, plans and coordinates orientation sessions for new members throughout the year.
- Countersigns Chapter checks in the absence of either the president or treasurer.
- Utilizes Best Practices Binder, *What We Are, What We Do and What We Continually Strive to Do* to compile, organize and maintain important Chapter documents.
- Conducts two membership recruitment events annually in order to maintain a minimum of thirty members in the Chapter.

The SECRETARY is the transcriber of the Chapter meetings and correspondence. The secretary:

- Maintains primary affiliation with the Chapter for which she serves her elected office.
- Maintains compliance with ABWA National and Chapter Bylaws, rules, policies and procedures, and ABWA Proud Code of Conduct.
- Records the minutes of all meetings of the Chapter and its Executive Board. Minutes should include the number of members in attendance.
- Conducts general correspondence for the Chapter and shares correspondence with the membership **at the president's request.**
- Provides one copy of the minutes to the president and sends a monthly meeting report to ABWA National. Report can be sent to ABWA National via e-mail to [abwa@abwa.org](mailto:abwa@abwa.org) or by submitting meeting report cards.
- [Posts Executive Board Action Items in the WIN Team Board.](#)

- Obtains approval of Chapter minutes from the membership and approval of Executive Board minutes from the Executive Board.
- Prepares reports of meetings of the Executive Board and provides a summary to the membership.
- Preserves in a permanent file all minutes and records of value to the Chapter. Minutes and records are to be retained for seven years.
- Reports changes in officers, committee chairs, web site URL and meeting venue in a timely manner to ABWA National.
- Receives payment of and gives receipts for Chapter dues or other monies in the absence of the treasurer.
- Turns over all payments accompanied by an itemized report to the treasurer.
- Presides at Chapter meetings in the absence of the president and vice president.
- Ensures Chapter roster/listing of active members accurately reflects information provided by ABWA National.
- Reports all status and information changes to the Chapter and ABWA National.
- Utilizes Best Practices Binder, *What We Are, What We Do and What We Continually Strive to Do* to compile, organize and maintain important Chapter documents.
- Conducts two membership recruitment events annually in order to maintain a minimum of thirty members in the Chapter.

The TREASURER is responsible for all Chapter money and is custodian of the financial records. She advises the Chapter regarding finances and budget matters. The treasurer:

- Maintains primary affiliation with the Chapter for which she serves her elected office.
- Maintains compliance with ABWA National and Chapter Bylaws, rules, policies and procedures, and ABWA Proud Code of Conduct.
- Prepares a formal budget for the Chapter.
- Annually obtains and files any required Internal Revenue Service (IRS) forms and sends copies of these forms to ABWA National.
- Administers the bank account(s) of the Chapter, keeping itemized records in the permanent file of all receipts and expenditures, which should be retained for seven years.
- Collects, makes bank deposits of and issues receipts for all Chapter monies.
- Reconciles bank statements with Chapter records.
- Submits her books for audit before the end of her term of office or at any time upon the request of the membership or Executive Board.
- Disburses money as approved by the Chapter. All disbursements shall be made by check, countersigned by the president, or in her absence, the vice president.
- Presents a monthly financial report to the Chapter.
- In the event that a member does not pay her local dues, notifies the member in writing that she will be removed from the Chapter roster; also provides the secretary, membership chair and ABWA National with the names of any such Chapter members.
- Utilizes Best Practices Binder, *What We Are, What We Do and What We Continually Strive to Do* to compile, organize and maintain important Chapter documents.
- Conducts two membership recruitment events annually in order to maintain a minimum of thirty members in the Chapter.

## ARTICLE VI. MEETINGS

Section 1. Regular meetings are the normal periodic gatherings of the Chapter to transact business, typically held at regular intervals. Special meetings are the opposite, convened only to consider one or more items of business specified in the notice of the meeting.

Section 2. Regular meetings shall be the \_\_\_\_\_ (day of the month), and shall usually consist of food, program or speakers, networking, and a business meeting. Members shall be notified in advance of the time, place and duration of each Chapter meeting.

Section 3. Special meetings may be called by the president or by the Executive Board and shall be called upon the written request of one-third of the members in good standing of the Chapter. The purpose of the meeting shall be stated in **the call. Except in case of emergency, at least three days' notice shall be given.**

Section 4. The quorum of the Chapter shall not be less than one-third of the Chapter membership. A quorum must be present for the valid transaction of Chapter business. The right to vote is limited to members in good standing locally and nationally who are present at the time a vote is taken at a meeting.

## ARTICLE VII. COMMITTEES

Section 1. The standing committees shall be Fundraising/Advertising, Membership, Newsletter, Professional Development, Program, Publicity and any other standing committees the Chapter shall deem necessary to achieve the goals of the Chapter. Members of these committees can be primary or secondary members of the Chapter.

Section 2. Special committees shall include the Nominating Committee, Auditing Committee and any other special committees the Chapter shall deem necessary to achieve the goals of the Chapter.

Section 3. All standing committee chairs shall be appointed by the newly elected president by June 30 and they shall serve for one year beginning August 1.

Section 4. Committee chairs are empowered to select their committee members immediately upon their appointment. The chairs shall provide the names of their committee members to the current and incoming (if applicable) secretary and membership chair(s) promptly following their acceptance.

Section 5. Duties:

The AUDITING **Committee shall audit the treasurer's accounts annually**, upon a vacancy of the office, or upon demand of the membership or Executive Board.

The PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT Committee shall inform the membership of seminars, leadership opportunities and other professional development opportunities offered in ABWA and in the community. The committee also shall be responsible for presenting to the membership its recommendation of candidates for SBMEF Business Skills Tuition Reimbursement and SBMEF Outright Grants. Additionally, the committee shall review the professional development programming at ABWA district and national conferences with the membership.

The FUNDRAISING/ADVERTISING Committee shall present recommendations for projects that will **provide sufficient funds for the Chapter that should be used to support the Chapter's goals (as stated in Article II**

of these Chapter Bylaws). Once annual projects are approved, the committee shall act to create plans for generating revenue to offset operating costs associated with their Chapter initiatives. The committee shall be responsible for the completion of the approved projects, including maintaining accurate records.

The MEMBERSHIP Committee shall encourage membership retention and promote membership recruitment, either in its Chapter or in the formation of a new Chapter. The committee shall maintain an accurate Chapter roster and report all status, name and address changes to the secretary. The committee also shall assist the vice president in performing her duties as Chapter host.

The NEWSLETTER Committee shall publish a Chapter newsletter, bimonthly and at most monthly, shall maintain ABWA brand standards within it, and shall coordinate its distribution.

The NOMINATING Committee, having been elected by March 31, shall nominate one or more candidates for each office to be filled and shall present a slate of candidates to the membership at the May meeting.

The PROGRAM Committee shall secure programming that reflects the members' needs (skills, knowledge and experience) to achieve their career goals. The Program Committee shall utilize the aggregate results from ABWA's Member Interest Survey as a compass when selecting speakers. The committee also shall notify the newsletter chair of the speaker's name, presentation topic, date and time of program.

The PUBLICITY Committee shall send promotional information to all appropriate media outlets in their community to promote Chapter and member achievements as well as notable Chapter events. The committee shall send copies of major publicity coverage to ABWA National. The committee also shall list or file information about the Chapter with sources for potential member contact in the community, such as cable television stations, or local chamber of commerce.

#### ARTICLE VIII. AMENDMENTS

With the exception of setting the amount of Chapter dues, all proposed amendments to these bylaws shall be approved by ABWA National before being put to a Chapter vote. Amendments to the Chapter Bylaws require an affirmative vote by a majority of the active membership of record (not simply a majority of members present). Such amendments shall not conflict with the National Bylaws of the Association. Articles permissible to amend in every Chapter are:

ARTICLE I: Name of the Chapter, city, and state

ARTICLE III, Section 2: Amount of local dues and how payable

ARTICLE VI, Section 1: Day of the month of the regular Chapter meeting

No other Articles to these Bylaws may be amended except by ABWA National, which reserves the right to do so at its discretion.

#### ARTICLE IX. STATUS

Section 1. The Chapter is organized as not-for-profit and no part of the net earnings shall inure to the benefit of any member, and it shall not engage in a regular business of kind ordinarily carried on for profit.

Section 2. If deactivation of this Chapter should occur by vote of the membership, written notice shall be provided to ABWA National by the current Executive Board, and the Chapter charter returned. All funds remain-

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ing in the treasury, after payments of all debts, shall be contributed to the American Business Women's Foundation and/or the Stephen Bufton Memorial Educational Fund (tax-exempt organizations to which contributions are deductible under Section 170 of the Internal Revenue Code), as shall be specified by the Executive Board of the Chapter.

# CHAPTER RULES, POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

## CHAPTER STANDING RULES

Chapter standing rules are designed to cover situations not written in the bylaws, rules, or procedures and policies established by the Association. Chapter standing rules cannot conflict with the National, Chapter or Council Bylaws, and are not bylaw amendments.

Each Chapter should develop a list of standing rules covering issues relating to that individual Chapter. Standing rules are approved by a majority vote of the membership at a business meeting and are reviewed annually. Although rules may be reviewed at any time, it may be convenient to do so after May elections. The newly elected president can appoint a committee to review the rules and make recommendations.

Outdated rules should be rescinded or updated. Changes or revisions to standing rules require majority approval by the membership at a Chapter meeting. Examples of frequently used standing rules are:

1. The Chapter Standing Rules will be approved by the membership at the \_\_\_\_\_ monthly meeting. They will be distributed to the membership and to all new member affiliates.
2. The members of the Chapter will abide by the ABWA Proud Code of Conduct and will print it in each issue of the Chapter newsletter.
3. The Chapter will pay for up to five district conference registration fees and one **National Women's Leadership Conference** registration fee for elected officers and two chairs to attend and participate in ABWA conference training.
4. Annually, the Chapter membership will decide prior to the meeting to pay full registration fees for members in good standing to attend the district conferences and/or national conference.
5. The Executive Board may approve bills up to \$ \_\_\_\_\_ without the approval of the membership.
6. **The Chapter will pay each member's \$15 WIN Technology Fee or reimburse her directly if provided a receipt indicating the payment in full of her national membership dues.**

## SUSPENSIONS AND DEACTIVATIONS

### Suspension

Chapter Bylaws stipulate that all Chapters must conduct the election of officers in May of each year. Election results are to be reported to ABWA National no later than June 30, in addition to the administrative fee for Chapters and Express Networks, which helps to cover the costs of the Chapter under the national Association's umbrella insurance policy.

A Chapter will be placed on suspension if it does not complete the following by June 30th:

1. Conduct an election for Chapter Executive Board officers;
2. Submit a slate of elected officers to ABWA National; and
3. Pay the \$100 Administrative Fee.

Services to the Chapter will be temporarily suspended until all conditions have been met.

*If a suspended Chapter fails in a second consecutive year to conduct its election and report results, and/or pay the Administrative Fee, its charter will be terminated and the Chapter will be deactivated.*

## Deactivation

Deactivation may occur when a Chapter dissolves or disbands, with members converting to national member status only or individually joining other Chapters; or when two or more healthy Chapters relinquish their original charters to form under a new charter as a combination Chapter. In all cases, deactivation requires a majority vote by the primary members of the group in good standing.

Following the vote to deactivate, the Executive Board is responsible for:

1. Notifying ABWA National in writing and returning the Chapter charter, if possible. (Combining Chapters must notify ABWA National in this manner as well.)
2. Paying any remaining bills.
3. Disseminating remaining funds. The balance of its funds should be donated to the American Business **Women's Foundation or the Stephen Bufton Memorial Educational Fund**. (If the Chapter is deactivating to combine with another Chapter, after its bills are paid, the funds in its treasury can be transferred to the new Chapter and/or donated to the ABW Foundation or SBMEF.)

After ABWA National is notified that a Chapter has voted to deactivate, each member will revert to a National Member without a local league affiliation status with the Association.

## DEDUCTIBILITY OF DUES

Dues may be tax deductible if the purpose of belonging to an organization is to promote your own or your employer's business. **Each member should consult her tax advisor to determine if her dues are tax-deductible.**

## DISCRIMINATION

The Association does not discriminate based on race, color, religion, sex, age, national origin, sexual orientation, disability, employment status, job title or industry.

## FINANCES

**Each local Chapter of the American Business Women's Association is an autonomous business unit and thus** is responsible for controlling its overall operations, including its own financial operations. Neither the Association nor any agent or representative of the Association shall be liable or responsible for financial obligations of ABWA Chapters/Express Networks or individual members incurred without the specific written authorization of the ABWA National Board of Directors and ABWA National.

## TAX EXEMPTION REQUIREMENTS AND FEDERAL EMPLOYER IDENTIFICATION NUMBER

Each Chapter is responsible for obtaining a Federal Employer Identification Number (EIN), necessary to open a Chapter bank account.

If the formation team has not done so already, a newly chartered Chapter should immediately apply for an EIN and tax-exempt Letter of Determination. Filing forms and further information also can be found in these materials as well as at the IRS Web site at [www.irs.gov](http://www.irs.gov).

It is recommended that the Chapter send a copy of its EIN and Letter of Determination documentation to **ABWA National so that these can be kept in the Chapter's permanent physical file.**

More information on managing Chapter finances and ensuring compliance with the Internal Revenue Service can be found in the [Women's Instructional Network](#).

#### FORMATIONS

All formation projects must be approved by ABWA National in advance of starting and can be initiated by any member in good standing. Leaders interested in learning more about starting a new Chapter in your community should contact ABWA National at [abwa@abwa.org](mailto:abwa@abwa.org) or 816-361-6621.

#### LOGOS, REGISTERED TRADEMARKS AND INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY

Trademarks are symbols that convey information to the public regarding the source, sponsorship and/or affiliation of products and services. Registered trademarks are owned and legally protected against unauthorized use under a system of state, federal and international laws.

**The Association's name and logos are registered trademarks and, as such, may be displayed only on stationery, booklets, newsletters, Web sites and other items pertinent to ABWA Chapter use in accordance with the guidelines set forth in the Brand Standards Guidelines. Use of ABWA registered trademarks shall create no rights for users to the marks or their use beyond those stated above. Logos shall remain at all times the sole and exclusive property of the ABWA Management LLC.**

[ABWA logo and branding guidelines must be followed in all instances of ABWA logo and trademark usage. These Brand Standards Guidelines along with JPEG images of ABWA logos are available in the Women's Instructional Network.](#)

#### MAILING LIST

Use by ABWA National

The ABWA membership list is not generally rented for commercial purposes. Permission to mail or solicit by phone to the membership list is occasionally granted to those companies chosen to provide special Association services to the entire membership, such as insurance, financial and travel services. Members may request that their names not be shared with anyone outside the Association, whereby the only mailing which would then be sent would be *Women in Business*<sup>®</sup> magazine and official Association correspondence.

Use by Chapter

The names of other ABWA presidents and members may not be used by ABWA Chapters to distribute raffle tickets, fundraising requests or to solicit customers for non-ABWA functions or to publicize activities in **conflict or competition with district or national activities. Members' contact information should not be shared** without written permission from each individual.

#### COMMUNICATIONS FROM ABWA NATIONAL

The Chapter president receives the majority of the mailings and e-mail communications from ABWA National. Special mailings and e-mail communications to other officers are sent periodically to the officer of record at the time of the mailing.

If a president or any of the officers of the Chapter are no longer members in good standing, then mailings to that chapter will be suspended until the Executive Board members of the Chapter are all members in good standing. If a Chapter has been placed on suspension or deactivated by ABWA National, such mailings and e-mail communications will cease.

## MEMBERSHIP RECORDS

ABWA National maintains the national membership list of the Association and the primary Chapter/Express Network affiliation of all members.

Each Chapter should encourage members to *update their own personal record periodically.*

Members can do so by logging in to the Member Login section at [www.abwa.org](http://www.abwa.org) and clicking on **"Update your Membership Record."** Inside ABWA's secure site, they can edit all relevant demographic and contact information.

**It is the Chapter's responsibility to maintain a current roster that accurately reflects the membership information provided by ABWA National.**

## NATIONAL OFFICER NOMINATING PROCEDURES

As referenced in Article X, Section 2, of the National Bylaws, a Chapter may nominate one of its primary membership to be elected to the National Board of Directors. The procedure for nomination is as follows:

- The candidate or a representative should call or e-mail ABWA National or send ABWA National the national officer candidate request for information coupon printed in *Women in Business*® magazine.
- Materials will be sent to Chapter members who expressed an interest in being elected to the National Board of Directors.
- The candidate must be nominated at a Chapter meeting by majority vote of the Chapter members present in good standing. (For national officer candidate eligibility requirements, see National Bylaws, Article X, Section 2.)
- The candidate must return her completed nomination and acceptance of nomination form and all additional materials by March 1 of the year of the Annual Meeting in which the election will be held for her nomination.
- Once the nomination has been approved by the National Nominating Committee, the nominee is an official candidate.
- A Chapter must be willing to commit to support a candidate for national office, both financially and in terms of professional endorsement. The candidate will need campaign materials and must be in attendance at the Annual Meeting. Chapters must determine how much of their resources they are willing **to invest in supporting a member's candidacy and incorporate this into their annual planning and budgeting process.**
  - Some Chapters opt to co-sponsor fundraising events, involve the community or solicit contributions for the candidate to help with expenses.
  - Other Chapters set a maximum dollar amount they are willing to give the candidate to help cover the expenses.
  - Candidate campaign costs (including in-kind donations) are limited to \$1,500 for district vice president candidates and \$2,500 for the top three officer candidates.

## NEW MEMBER AFFILIATION CEREMONY

Chapters may design their own special welcome to new members or use this formal affiliation ceremony.

### *Membership Chair:*

Invite your new members to come forward. Introduce each to the membership by giving a brief biography, including her name, firm and position. Tell about her previous ABWA involvement, if any.

### *President or Presiding Officer:*

**“On behalf of \_\_\_\_\_ Chapter of the American Business Women’s Association, it is my pleasure to welcome you as (an) active member(s) in our Chapter.**

**“When you accepted membership in ABWA, you agreed to abide by the National Bylaws of the Association. You also became (an) active supporter(s) of our Association’s mission, which is to bring together business-women of diverse occupations and to provide opportunities for them to help themselves and others grow personally and professionally through leadership, education, networking support and national recognition.**

**“We invite you to share in the goals of our Chapter, to stretch and grow, reach and learn as we build new friendships and master new skills. May your membership bring you many rewarding achievements. Welcome to our Chapter!”**

## RECORDS RETENTION

The term “records” includes charter documents, minute books and records of activities, correspondence, officer-related information and any paper (or electronic record) that in any way relates to the Chapter or its activities. Chapters must decide when records should be kept or discarded, although ABWA National suggests that ABWA Chapters retain minutes and financial records for a period of seven years. Because of the range of records and because each Chapter is subject to different state laws, a comprehensive record retention schedule has not been included in this guide. However, it is advised that the Chapter develop a written record retention schedule that would be applicable both to it and to all persons who serve the Chapter in an official capacity. This schedule will help to ensure that records needed to comply with regulatory requirements are available for inspection and that unnecessary records do not clutter the files. This schedule also will show that the Chapter has made systematic judgments about retention and disposal of records based on usefulness and applicable law.

Records should be kept in a safe place, like a safety deposit box. Records include standing rules; original documents along with dated copies of each revision; tax returns; audited/reviewed annual financial statements; membership lists and records; copies of SBMEF contribution and request forms; bookkeeping journals and ledgers; minutes of Executive Board meetings; financial policies; Best Practices Award binder(s); and historical records. Items in current use should be accessible in labeled files. Consider keeping the minutes of meetings in bound books or in three-ring notebook binders.

## REFERRALS OF PROSPECTIVE MEMBERS

Whenever appropriate, as prospective members make membership inquiries, ABWA National will refer those prospective members directly to local ABWA Chapters/Express Networks in one of two ways: providing the prospective member with the presidents' primary e-mail address and/or directing the prospective member to the Chapter/Express Network Web site.

## UNIVERSAL ELECTION/TERM

The Association has a universal election month of May for all Chapters and Express Networks and a universal term of office beginning August 1 for Chapter and Express Network officers.

## EXECUTIVE BOARD

The Executive Board, comprised of the elected Chapter officers, has general supervision of the affairs of the Chapter, sets the time and place of Executive Board meetings, makes recommendations to the Chapter membership and performs such other duties as specified in the Chapter Bylaws and Chapter Standing Rules. The president acts as chair of the Executive Board. The Executive Board, led by the president, is responsible for goal-setting and planning for the upcoming Chapter year.

**One of the Executive Board's primary objectives should be to minimize the amount of "business" reporting and planning during the monthly Chapter meeting.** Instead, the Executive Board should report updates and the status of initiatives by utilizing the Chapter newsletter **and Team Board in the Women's Instructional Network**, for it is the Executive Board's function to conserve time and effort in the Chapter meetings without infringing on the individual member's rights and privileges.

Executive Board meetings should be scheduled on a specific date before each regular Chapter meeting. Executive Board meetings should be conducted face-to-face and not via conference call or other means. A majority of the Executive Board determines a quorum for the transaction of all business at Executive Board meetings. The president is the presiding officer and in her absence, the vice president presides. Additional Executive Board meetings may be called by Executive Board members. Committee chairs and any other members may be invited by the Executive Board anytime necessary or helpful to achieve certain goals.

Minutes of meetings of the Executive Board are approved only by Executive Board members. Action taken by the Executive Board should be reported to the membership through the Chapter newsletter **and Women's Instructional Network**. Business details that do not require Chapter attention should be discussed and managed by the Executive Board. Minutes become a part of the Chapter's permanent record and are retained for seven years.

Executive Board members are assigned by the president as sponsors of specific committees. The sponsor acts as a liaison between the committee and the Executive Board. It is the sponsor's responsibility to be informed at all times of the plans, status of initiatives and year-to-date expenses, etc. being considered by the committees she sponsors (even though she is not a voting member of the committee). She may report committee activities at Executive Board meetings as necessary.

*See the Article V, Section 5, of the Chapter Bylaws for a description of each officer's duties.*

## COMMITTEES

With the exception of the Nominating Committee, which is elected, committee chairs are appointed by the president. Chairs can select their committee members immediately upon appointment. Article VII of the Chapter Bylaws establishes six standing committees: Professional Development, Fundraising, Membership, Newsletter, Program and Publicity. Other committees may be appointed as the Chapter or Executive Board deems necessary to achieve Chapter goals. The responsibilities of other committees should be specified in the Chapter standing rules.

As detailed in the previous section, “Executive Board,” Executive Board members are assigned by the president as sponsors of specific committees. Standing committees should meet at regular intervals, preferably prior to Executive Board meetings. Committee chairs should make regular reports to their sponsors and at Chapter meetings or through the Chapter newsletter and WIN Team Board. Special committees can meet as often as needed to fulfill the purpose for which they are appointed. The committee can dissolve when its work is complete and its final report is made.

Each committee chair should have a written agenda prepared for meetings. She should explain clearly to committee members the scope of committee duties, funds allocated and procedures to follow to fulfill committee responsibilities.

## STANDING COMMITTEE DUTIES

### Professional Development Committee

- Keeps the membership informed of seminars, leadership opportunities and other professional development opportunities, both locally and through ABWA National at district and national conferences.
- Acts as a liaison between the Chapter and the Stephen Bufton **Memorial Educational Fund** (ABWA’s scholarship fund), educating Chapter members with regard to fund purposes and opportunities.
- Evaluates candidates for SBMEF Grants and Business Skills Tuition Reimbursements and presents candidates to Chapter for majority vote.
- Manages any Chapter Special Scholarships that the Chapter may offer.
- Develops written scholarship eligibility requirements and guidelines for any scholarships the Chapter may offer each year, ensuring they are non-discriminatory and legal.
- Monitors progress on assigned initiatives.
- Maintains compliance with the operating budget.
- **Reports status on initiatives to the Chapter’s Executive Board.**
- Provides end-of-year written summary of activities and accomplishments to the Executive Board for inclusion in the Best Practices notebook.

### Fundraising/Advertising Committee

- Identifies opportunities to secure advertising and promotional dollars from local business for corporate partnerships/sponsorships.
- **Plans fundraising projects as a means of supporting the Chapter’s annual goals.**
- Presents its recommendations for all fundraising projects to the Chapter membership for a majority vote.
- Implements approved fundraising projects.
- Monitors progress on assigned initiatives.
- Maintains compliance with the operating budget.
- **Reports status on initiatives to the Chapter’s Executive Board.**
- Provides end-of-year written summary of activities and accomplishments to the Executive Board for inclusion in the Best Practices notebook

## Membership Committee

- Coordinates membership campaign events.
- **Maintains Chapter's strength by planning and implementing biannual membership campaigns.**
- Invites prospective members to attend Chapter recruitment event.
- Promotes membership growth.
- Assists the vice president in performing her duties as hostess at meetings and events.
- Monitors progress on assigned initiatives.
- Maintains compliance with the operating budget.
- **Reports status on initiatives to the Chapter's Executive Board.**
- Provides end-of-year written summary of activities and accomplishments to the Executive Board for inclusion in the Best Practices notebook

## Newsletter Committee

- **Publishes a bimonthly newsletter and distributes it to Chapter's membership and posts on Chapter's WIN Team Board** on time and on budget.
- Mails or e-mails **one copy to the Chapter's district vice president and one to ABWA National.**
- Monitors progress on assigned initiatives.
- Maintains compliance with the operating budget.
- **Reports status on initiatives to the Chapter's Executive Board.**
- Provides end-of-year written summary of activities and accomplishments to the Executive Board for inclusion in the Best Practices notebook.

## Program Committee

- Conducts Member Interest Survey by downloading a printable version, administering the survey, and compiling the answers. **A printable version can be found in the Women's Instructional Network.**
- **Utilizes the aggregate results from ABWA's Member Interest Survey by compiling surveys to use as a compass when selecting speakers that fulfill the members' needs for knowledge, skills and experience.**
- Identifies and secures subject matter experts to present to Chapter members.
- Provides topic/speaker info to newsletter and publicity chairs to promote the event to members and non-members.
- Communicates room set-up and A/V requirements to vice president.
- Introduces guest speakers.
- Notifies the newsletter chair of the date, time and place of each Chapter meeting and special event.
- Conducts post-event survey to determine programming effectiveness.
- Provides written post-event report to president.
- Monitors progress on assigned initiatives.
- Maintains compliance with the operating budget.
- **Reports status on initiatives to the Chapter's Executive Board.**
- Provides end-of-year written summary of activities and accomplishments to the Executive Board for inclusion in the Best Practices notebook

## Publicity Committee

- Sends promotional information covering national, Chapter and member achievements and Chapter activities to all appropriate media.
- Lists or files information about the Chapter with sources for potential member contact in the community, such as the local chambers of commerce or public libraries.
- Forwards major publicity coverage to ABWA National.
- Monitors progress on assigned initiatives.
- Maintains compliance with the operating budget.
- **Reports status on initiatives to the Chapter's Executive Board.**
- Provides end-of-year written summary of activities and accomplishments to the Executive Board for inclusion in the Best Practices notebook

## SPECIAL COMMITTEES

Special committees, sometimes called ad hoc committees, are created and appointed for specific purposes. When the work is done and a final report is made, they automatically cease to exist. Required special committees include Auditing and Nominating. Such additional committees as Business Associate, Chapter Woman of the Year, Top Ten Nominating or Chapter Formation committees may be formed in order to accommodate special events.

### Auditing Committee

The Auditing Committee is responsible for auditing the records of the treasurer. This activity takes place **during the final month of a treasurer's term**, whenever a vacancy occurs, or when otherwise deemed necessary by the Executive Board. This committee is appointed by the president. The Auditing Committee is responsible **for monitoring its progress on assigned initiatives, reporting status to the Chapter's Executive Board and maintaining compliance with the Chapter's operating budget.**

### Nominating Committee

A Nominating Committee is elected by majority vote of the membership no later than March 31. The president cannot serve on this committee. Responsibilities include selecting a slate of one or more eligible candidates for each of the Chapter offices and reporting the slate of candidates at the election meeting. Nominations for this committee can be made from the floor by any Chapter member. The Nominating Committee is **responsible for monitoring its progress on assigned initiatives, reporting status to the Chapter's Executive Board and maintaining compliance with the Chapter's operating budget. Members of this committee should be primary members of the Chapter in which they are serving.**

## PROCEDURES FOR OFFICER ELECTION, INSTALLATION AND TRANSITION

### Elect the Nominating Committee

- A three-member Nominating Committee is elected by March 31.
- With the exception of the Chapter president, any member on the active Chapter roster is eligible to serve on the Nominating Committee. Members serving on the Nominating Committee should be primary members of the Chapter.
- Nominations for the committee are made from the floor. No member of the Chapter has the right to nominate more than one person for the committee until every other member has had the opportunity to nominate a candidate.
- If there are more than three nominees, a majority vote is necessary to elect a nominee for the commit-

tee. Members are voted on in the order that they are nominated. The first nominee elected serves as chair.

- At the Chapter meeting in which the Nominating Committee is elected, the presiding officer:
  - Calls for a majority vote of the Chapter membership to decide which method of election procedure is preferred (see: “Balloting, Method One” and “Balloting, Method Two”).
  - Calls for a majority vote of the Chapter membership to decide whether the slate of officer candidates will be published prior to the election meeting.
  - Asks the membership to suggest prospective nominees for the upcoming Executive Board election.
  - Provides the nominating committee chair with the current roster from ABWA National and any standing rules pertaining to nominations and duties of officers.

### Nominating Committee Procedures

The chair schedules meeting(s) in agreement with committee members. The committee:

- **Reviews the eligibility requirements (see “Instructions to Voting Members”) and duties for Chapter officers.**
- Evaluates qualifications of all suggested nominees.
- Verifies that each suggested nominee is eligible to serve.
- Prepares a slate of one or more candidates for each office to be filled.
- Contacts each nominee explaining major responsibilities and obtains her permission to place her name on the ballot.
- Follows Chapter instructions on publishing or not publishing the slate of officers. If the Chapter voted to publish the slate, it provides a written copy to the newsletter chair for publication or by other written **communication to all Chapter members, and posts it on the Chapter’s WIN Team Board.**
- Secures the following supplies necessary for the election of officers:
  - Slips of paper and pencils to be used in balloting. Ballots may be printed in advance. Names of all nominees are listed under the proper office heading and a blank space is provided for possible write-in votes. Directions for the proper method of marking should be printed on the ballot.
  - **Sheets of paper to be used to tally and record the tellers’ report. (See “Tellers’ Report.”)**
  - Receptacle for ballot collection.
- Reads the slate of candidates at the May election meeting. Gives a written copy to the presiding officer, along with the election supplies listed above.

### Opening the Local Election

- Before conducting an election, the presiding officer determines that a quorum is present (not fewer than one-third of the Chapter members in good standing at local and national level). She then determines the exact number of voting members present. A countdown of numbers is helpful (i.e., **first member whose name is called answers with number “one,” and so on, until every active member’s name has been called**).
- The total number of members present who are eligible to vote is recorded by the secretary.

### Instructions to Voting Members

The presiding officer reads, or directs the secretary to read, the following sections:

Eligibility requirements:

- Candidates for office must be in good standing nationally and locally.
- No member is eligible to serve more than two full consecutive terms in the same office.
- No member is eligible to hold office in two or more Chapters/Express Networks at the same time.
- Candidates for the Executive Board must be primary members of the Chapter.

#### Balloting instructions:

- Written ballots for each Chapter office are cast in accordance with one of the two balloting methods (**i.e., “Balloting, Method One” or “Balloting, Method Two”**).
- A majority of the votes cast is necessary for election.
- If any one candidate does not receive a majority vote, then a runoff is held between the two candidates receiving the highest number of votes. Should the runoff result in a tie, the balloting continues until one candidate receives a majority vote.

#### Nominating Committee Report of Nominees for Chapter Office

- The Nominating Committee chair reads the slate of candidates for each office.
- The Nominating Committee chair gives a written copy of the slate to the presiding officer, along with the supplies necessary for balloting.

Note: Nominating Committee duties terminate at this time.

#### Appointment of Tellers to Distribute, Collect and Count Ballots

- The presiding officer appoints three tellers. The first named teller is the chair. A candidate should not serve as a teller.
- The tellers are informed of the number of eligible voters present, and they record this count for their report.
- **Tellers are given a Tellers’ Report (for sample, see “Tellers’ Report”)**, blank paper for tally sheets, envelopes marked with the name of a Chapter office and receptacles for the receipt of the ballots.

#### Balloting

Two alternate procedures for the sequence of nominating and voting in elections by ballot can be used. The first method affords greater flexibility in choosing officers while the second requires less time.

*Method One:* Balloting for each office immediately follows nominations from the floor for that office. The ballots are counted for the office and the result is announced before the next office to be voted on is opened for nominations from the floor. The members are then able to take into account the results of the offices previously voted on before deciding upon both nominations and votes for later offices.

*Method Two:* Nominations for all offices can be completed before any balloting takes place and voting for all offices is commonly done by a single ballot. It may be a preferred method in any large meeting to save time. In either method, if any office remains unfilled after the first ballot (no candidate received a majority), as may occur when there are more than two nominees, the balloting should be repeated for that office as many times as needed to obtain a majority vote for a single candidate.

The following procedures apply to both methods:

- The presiding officer reads from the report of the Nominating Committee the names of the candidates for the office of president or for the entire slate.
- The presiding officer asks for nominations from the floor:

- Any member meeting the eligibility requirements may be nominated from the floor even though she had not been named as a candidate in the report of the nominating committee.
- Nominations should not be closed as long as nominations are forthcoming.
- The tellers distribute the ballots.
- The presiding officer and members vote.
- The tellers collect and count the ballots.
- The ballots are placed in a sealed envelope with the name of the office on the outside.
- **The tellers complete a Teller's Report for each office.**
- **The chair of the tellers addresses the presiding officer and reads the tellers' report. See sample below.**
- The chair hands the report to the presiding officer without declaring who has been elected.

### Tellers' Report

The tellers prepare a report using the following format:

Office of: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Number of votes cast: 70  
 Necessary for election: 36  
 Mary Smith received: 40  
 Jane Jones received: 20  
 Louise Williams received: 10

If none of the candidates receives a majority of the votes, the report might look like this:

Office of: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Number of votes cast: 70  
 Necessary for election: 36  
 Mary Smith received: 30  
 Jane Jones received: 24  
 Louise Williams received: 16

In this instance, the number of votes received by each candidate would be reported, and then there would be a runoff between Mary and Jane. A candidate would have to obtain at least 36 votes to win the election.

### Announcement of Election to Office

- **The presiding officer announces to the Chapter: "A majority of the votes cast is necessary for election. By your ballots you have elected Mary Smith president."**
- If there are any questions about the balloting for the office, they should be stated at this time. If the results are not challenged when they are announced, the election stands.
- A majority vote of the Chapter members in attendance is necessary to order a recount of the ballots.
- Should a recount be ordered, it must take place immediately.
- The process is repeated for the next office elected or proceed if balloting on entire slate.
- The Nominating Committee must destroy all ballots following conclusion of the election meeting.
- As soon as the elections are announced, the Chapter president gives the president-elect her packet of planning resource materials that were sent to her by ABWA National with the pre-election materials.

### Effective Date of Local Election

Election to an office becomes final immediately if the candidate is present and does not decline or if she is absent but has consented to her candidacy. If a newly elected officer is not present, she should be notified promptly of her election. Officer terms begin August 1. Installation may take place immediately following the election or at a subsequent Chapter meeting. The purpose of the officer installation is to have new officers make a formal commitment to the membership to fulfill their responsibilities.

#### Reporting the Election of Local Officers

- The outgoing secretary completes the Officer Election Report form and mails it to ABWA National.
- **A Chapter's charter will be suspended if the Chapter does not elect officers and report election results to ABWA National by the June 30 deadline.**

#### INSTALLATION OF OFFICERS (Optional)

If your Chapter chooses to hold an installation, it may take place immediately following the election or at a **subsequent meeting. Regardless, an officer's term officially begins on Aug. 1. If you do hold an installation,** you may want to implement this script.

#### *Presiding Officer Comments*

**"On behalf of the outgoing officers of the Executive Board, thank you for your cooperation and your enthusiasm. You have made our term of office rewarding and enjoyable. We pledge our continued support of the Chapter and its new officers. It is now my pleasure and privilege to install the new officers of \_\_\_\_\_ Chapter of the American Business Women's Association. Will the newly elected officers please come forward?"**

NOTE: The new officers come forward and stand in a row beside the presiding officer, in this order: **president, vice president, secretary and treasurer. As each officer's name is called, she steps forward, takes the oath of office and steps back again.** The presiding officer then moves on to the next officer to be installed.

#### *Oath of Office*

Presiding officer addresses elected officers:

- **President:** " \_\_\_\_\_, you have been elected president. Your leadership will guide us in pursuing Chapter goals throughout the coming year. To you, all officers will look for guidance. To you, all members pledge their support. Do you accept these responsibilities and promise to fulfill to the best of your ability, the duties of president? If so, **answer 'yes.'**"
- **Vice President:** " \_\_\_\_\_, you have been elected vice president. It is your responsibility to serve as official host at all Chapter functions. Also, you are to assume the duties of the president in her absence. Do you accept these responsibilities and promise to fulfill, to the best of your ability, the **duties of vice president? If so, answer 'yes.'**"
- **Secretary:** " \_\_\_\_\_, you have been elected secretary. You are to record the minutes of each meeting and make them available to the Chapter when needed. It is also your duty to handle all official Chapter communications and to make them available to the Chapter when needed. Do you accept these responsibilities and promise to fulfill, to the best of your ability, the duties of secretary? **If so, answer 'yes.'**"
- **Treasurer:** " \_\_\_\_\_, you have been elected treasurer. You are responsible for collecting and disbursing Chapter money and keeping an accurate account of all transactions. You are to provide a financial report each month, and you are to submit your records for examination by the auditing committee when requested. Do you accept these responsibilities and promise to fulfill, to the

best of your ability, the duties of treasurer? If so, answer 'yes.'"

- **Presiding Officer addresses Chapter members:** "In accordance with the Chapter Bylaws, these members have been elected and installed as the Executive Board of Chapter, and will take office effective the first day of August. During their terms of office, they will lead us in our efforts to fulfill the mission of the American Business Women's Association and strive to achieve Best Practices for Chapter management.
- **Chapter members respond:** "In return, we Chapter members are obligated to support them in their roles and to cooperate enthusiastically in all Chapter initiatives. In doing so, we will increase the effectiveness of our officers, ourselves, our Chapter and the national Association."
- **Presiding officers ask:** "Do you as members pledge your commitment to support our newly elected officers in performing their duties?" If so, answer 'yes.'"

#### TRANSITION OF OFFICERS

A transition period for Chapter leaders is the time set aside for newly elected officers to plan for the coming year. The Chapter's incoming leaders should meet with outgoing officers and committee chairs to learn about their responsibilities and to establish goals, action items and budgets to support Chapter initiatives. With the universal election, a two month planning period is available (June and July). During this time, there are many things both the outgoing and incoming officers can do to expedite the process.

Detailed suggestions for smoothing the transition between elected boards can be found in "Passing the Gavel," in the Women's Instructional Network.

#### AWARDS PROGRAMS:

##### RECOGNIZING EXCELLENCE IN GROUP MANAGEMENT AND IN INDIVIDUALS



National Recognition for ABWA Chapters and Express Networks:  
Best Practices for Group Management

Chapters of the American Business Women's Association should strive to reflect "Best Practices" in every aspect of ABWA group management. By achieving Best Practices, Chapters ensure their strength and vitality as well as the quality of the ABWA experience for Chapter members and guests.

ABWA recognizes Chapters/Express Networks for a variety of group management practices that set the standard of excellence for the Association. ABWA National has defined three levels of Best Practices for ABWA Chapters/Express Networks that have been chartered for at least one year.

The Best Practices Guide contains criteria for each level. This guide, along with tips and tools to help attain Best Practices in group management, can be found in the Women's Instructional Network. Leaders are encouraged to utilize the Best Practices Scorecard assessment to drive their Chapter's performance. This assessment is available for completion online in the Women's Instructional Network.

Chapters and Express Networks receiving all levels of Best Practices awards will be posted on the National Web site for one Award Year and will be recognized at the annual national conference. Additionally, those Chapters/Express Networks that qualify for Level One Best Practices will receive the official ABWA Seal of Approval in recognition of Best Practices in group management and will be authorized to display the seal on

their Web sites and Chapter/Express Network materials for the period of one year. A set of usage guidelines will be provided with the exclusive seal, to guide these top groups in how to incorporate it into Chapter/Express Networks materials appropriately.

### *Eligibility*

The activities designated for each group award category must be completed between Aug. 1, 2009, and July 31, 2010. If awards criteria require attendance or participation at a nationally sponsored event, the member must represent only the Chapter with which she has her *primary affiliation*.

**To qualify for any level of the Best Practices Awards, the Chapter's official submission must be submitted mailed to ABWA National and by July 31, 2010. Official submission binders and tabs can be purchased in ABWA's online store and at district conferences.**

### District Conference Sponsor Award

The Conference Sponsor Awards recognize the members of the sponsoring Chapter/Express Network that have supported ABWA National in the delivery of the district conference event. In order to qualify, a Chapter must serve as an official sponsor for a district conference in accordance with the terms established by ABWA National.

### Newsletter Award

The Newsletter Award recognizes Chapter/Express Network newsletter winners from competitions held at each district conference and national conference. ABWA Chapters and Express Networks can enter their newsletters in competition in their district conference only. ABWA newsletter submissions are judged by non-ABWA members, with five award winners selected per district conference.

Those who win a newsletter award during the district conferences are eligible to enter their newsletters at **ABWA's National Women's Leadership Conference**.

Three non-member judges will select five national award winners. Councils also are eligible to enter newsletters in the national conference competition, where they compete against other councils. The council competition does not encompass district conferences.

Newsletters entered into competition at district and national conferences must adhere to these guidelines:

- Any active primary member in good standing from the group may submit the newsletter entry in their district conference only.
- The member representing the group (Chapter/Express Network or council at national conference) **must submit her group's entry in person to the newsletter competition committee.**
- District conference winning newsletters are not forwarded to the national conference by ABWA National; Chapters must submit these themselves.
- Each submission must include two copies of two different issues, dated in the current Chapter/Express Network award year (Aug. 1 through July 31).
- One set of two newsletter issues will be for display. The other set will be used for judging.
- Entries must be identical to the issues distributed to Chapter members.
- **A newsletter confirmation form must be signed to confirm newsletters' authenticity.**

The following identification must appear on the publication:

- Official ABWA logo in a prominent position on the front and/or back page
- “**American Business Women’s Association**” – spelled out, not an abbreviation
- **Promotion of the Association’s mission and Proud Code of Conduct**
- Chapter/Express Network (or council at national conference) full name
- Chapter/Express Network (or council at national conference) city and state
- Month and year of issue
- **Newsletter editor’s name and address** (e-mail or mailing) or phone number (or both)

Newsletters are judged on the following criteria:

- **Demonstration of ABWA brand consistency and compliance with ABWA’s Brand Standards Guidelines** for logos and trademarks usage
- Effective page layout and design, including the use of graphics and illustrations
- Grammar, spelling, mechanics, etc.
- Communication and development of ideas (i.e., simple, to the point, active voice)
- Formatting consistency
- Useful, stimulating, informative business and market-relevant content

A member may submit a newsletter into competition only for the Chapter/Express Network that is her primary affiliation. At the presentation of Newsletter Awards, a member must come forward to receive the award for her ABWA group otherwise, *the newsletter is disqualified*.

[Tips and templates for creating informative and eye-catching newsletters can be found in the Women’s Instructional Network](#). For further information on the newsletter competition, email [abwa@abwa.org](mailto:abwa@abwa.org) or call ABWA National Meetings Department at 816-361-6621.

*NOTE: The presence or absence of advertisements is not a factor in judging. Points are awarded for quality of content, not volume of material. Points will not be deducted if portions of national ABWA publications are reprinted and carry the appropriate copyright indication.*

## NATIONAL RECOGNITION FOR INDIVIDUALS

The following honors are reserved for individual members who have demonstrated personal excellence on a national level.

### Top Ten Business Women of ABWA Program

Each year, ten members of the Association are recognized nationally for exceptional achievements by being selected as the Top Ten Business Women **of ABWA**. **The Top Ten represent the Association’s image of success**, and serve as important role models and mentors for ABWA members. For details on nominating a member of your Chapter for national Top Ten recognition, including eligibility requirements, judging guidelines and **procedures to follow**, please consult the guide, “**Top Ten Business Women of ABWA**.” [This guide is included in the Women’s Instructional Network](#).

### Professional Development Recognition

ABWA offers *contact hours* for approved professional development programs. Contact hours are units of measurement signifying 60 minutes of participation in continuing education. ABWA provides a number of opportunities to earn professional development contact hours, including articles and quizzes, leadership and business skills seminars at national and district conferences, **and within the Women's Instructional Network**.

Select professional development programs qualify for *continuing education units (CEUs)*. A continuing education unit is an internationally recognized measure of participation in continuing education. This non-degree credit is granted to programs that meet the standards of the International Association for Continuing Education and Training. Some of the professional development seminars offered at district and national conferences qualify for CEUs, including the ABWA-KU MBA Essentials and ABWA-KU Management Certificate Series courses.

Special recognition is given to members who earn 50 or more contact hours (CEUs are counted as contact hours for the professional development recognition program, with one CEU translating to 10 contact hours). Once a member earns 100 contact hours, she is recognized at the Platinum level, while the prestigious Titanium level recognizes 250 or more ABWA contact hours.

### Twenty-Five Year Members

Members who have completed 25 years of membership with ABWA will receive a 25-year recognition pin from ABWA National. Subsequent guards are available from the ABWA Merchandise department for 30-, 35-, 40-, 45-and 50-year members.

### Inner Circle/Friendship Program

Special recognition and exclusive awards are earned by enthusiastic ABWA members who have shown their **active desire to see the American Business Women's Association grow**.

When a member has sponsored two new members, she earns the Friendship Star guard, which attaches to her ABWA pin. After sponsoring six members, **she receives ABWA's Friendship lapel pin**.

When a member has sponsored 11 new members, she enters the select Inner Circle of the Association and receives the gold Inner Circle charm and bracelet. As an Inner Circle member, she also receives special recognition at district and national conferences.

After qualifying for membership in Inner Circle, members may earn higher Friendship Star charms as they continue to sponsor other businesswomen in the Association. These higher awards are as follows:

<u># Recruited</u>	<u>Award Level</u>	<u>Ribbon Color</u>
22	Emerald Star	green
33	Golden Sapphire Star	gold
44	Blue Sapphire Star	blue
55	Garnet Star	red
66	Amethyst Star	lavender
77	Pearl Star	pink
88	Diamond Star	purple

**Members may sponsor new members throughout the country. A sponsor will receive "friendship" credit if**

her prospective member enrolls and the sponsor's name appears on the new member's application. To receive an Inner Circle award, the sponsor must be in good standing nationally. If a member has been inactive for **three or more years, the sponsoring member will receive one "friendship" credit for encouraging her to re-new active status.**

## CHAPTER AWARDS

Chapters are encouraged to provide local recognition to promote their members and the organization within **their communities and to deliver on ABWA's mission. The following can be awarded by local Chapters to their respective membership.**

### Chapter Woman of the Year Program

Each year Chapters emphasize the outstanding achievements and contributions members make by selecting a Chapter Woman of the Year, according to criteria set by each individual Chapter. [Suggestions on developing Chapter Woman of the Year criteria and recognition can be found in the Women's Instructional Network.](#)

### Volunteering to Support Your District Conference

If you and/or your Chapter are interested in volunteering at your next district conference, please contact **ABWA's Meetings Department** at [abwa@abwa.org](mailto:abwa@abwa.org) or 816-361-6621.

### Protégé Award

The Protégé Award recognizes a member of a Chapter who has completed one year of membership in the Association and is starting her second year. Criteria for this award are to be established by each Chapter. The recommended criteria are that, in the first year of membership, the member must have at least:

- Attended 10 or more meetings.
- Participated in an activity to support the Chapter.
- Recruited at least one new member.

## EVENTS

### **American Business Women's Day**

**The first American Business Women's Day (ABW Day) was celebrated in 1982. It is a national day for Americans to recognize the achievements of not only ABWA members but also the millions of employed women in the U.S. In 1983 and 1986, joint congressional resolutions were passed designating a national observance of Sept. 22 as American Business Women's Day. Following each resolution, President Ronald Reagan issued a presidential proclamation. Today, it is observed on Sept. 22, the anniversary of ABWA's founding.**

### Nationally Sponsored Events

Each year ABWA presents two types of nationally sponsored meetings. In the spring, district conferences are **held at various sites throughout the country, and in the fall, ABWA holds its annual National Women's Leadership Conference.** The two types of conferences have some similar elements but differ in purpose and design.

### *District Conference Overview*

The principal purpose of the district conferences is to bring concentrated leadership training to members who are currently or planning to serve in a leadership role for their ABWA Chapter/Express Network. In addition, ABWA National provides professional development opportunities through dynamic keynote speakers

and engaging breakout sessions. The conference experience allows similarly minded businesswomen, many of whom are from the surrounding geographical area, to engage one another in a variety of topics. District conferences also provide an excellent opportunity for members to become familiar with the district's candidates for the office of district vice president prior to the election at the national conference. District vice candidates are introduced to the membership, and while they do not formally campaign aside from giving a campaign speech, they are available to talk with members in a more personal setting.

### ***National Women's Leadership Conference Overview***

The original purpose of ABWA's national conference was to serve as a site for the Association's Annual Meeting and the election of national officers. **However, today, the National Women's Leadership Conference is a three day concentrated agenda focused on professional development, recognition of individuals and groups, networking, etc.**

## ASSOCIATION FOUNDATION RESOURCES

### **American Business Women's Foundation**

The American Business Women's Foundation was established in January 1998 when the ABWA Board of Directors approved a proposal for a Foundation with the following purpose: to receive, administer, and expend funds for charitable and educational purposes in connection with the following:

- Helping women to achieve their career goals.
- Helping foster, encourage, and promote the improvement of the condition of business and professional women throughout the country.
- **Providing funds for the development of professional programming that will increase women's business acumen.**

As a 501(c)(3) organization, the ABW Foundation provides individuals and corporations with the opportunity to help promote women by making a tax deductible donation. Among other initiatives, the ABW Foundation provides support to the American Business Women's Association by funding special educational programming within the Women's Instructional Network and at national events.



One opportunity to support the ABW Foundation and contribute to the education of women is to utilize ABWA's partnership with Fundraising Solutions. By clicking on the golden shopping bag throughout ABWA's Web site and communications, visitors can complete purchases with thousands of online merchants who donate a percentage of all proceeds to the ABW Foundation.

With the establishment of the American Business Women's Foundation, businesswomen have a new avenue to remove the barriers that prevent women from achieving their goals. The foundation promotes networking and professional development programming designed to increase a women's business efficacy.



### Stephen Bufton Memorial Educational Fund

The Stephen Bufton Memorial Educational Fund (SBMEF) is the national scholarship **trust of the American Business Women's Association**. The objective of this fund is to support women achieve their full potential through education. SBMEF is named in honor of Stephen Bufton, son of ABWA founder Hilary A. Bufton Jr., and

Ruth H. Bufton.

SBMEF is a tax-exempt trust, administered by ABWA National however, the elected national officers of the Association serve as the trustees of the Board and as the selection Board for determining scholarship recipients.

To learn more about the Stephen Bufton Memorial Educational Fund, visit [www.sbmf.org](http://www.sbmf.org) or email the fund administrator at [sbrosen@abwa.org](mailto:sbrosen@abwa.org).

The forms, information and tools referenced here are designed to help you lead your Chapter.

They can be found in the **Women's Instructional Network** by searching the Knowledge Object database for keywords relative to the education you need.