Western Division Monthly Member/Steering Committee Minutes for October 10, 2023

Present: Elaine Rinfrette, Sylvia Gold, Cheryl Eberl, Jesse Grossman, Ellen Silver, Diane Elze, excused Cheryl Mills. Members introduced themselves to Diane Elze, new member and to Ellen Silver, returning member.

Review of Previous minutes and business.

-Meet and greet in other counties. Since no one offered to meet in their county with the Division Director, it was suggested we have a virtual meeting instead of face-to-face.

-Review of student orientations at Buffalo State and Niagara University. Sylvia and Elaine related students and Professors were interested and receptive. They distributed informational packets along with new Division pens and demonstrated how to access NASW State and Western websites. How to keep students engaged and aware of NASW so that they might join was questioned.

AGENDA

Social Work Month Suggestions, March 2024

-Book Club Group was mentioned. Last month’s attendees suggested *Half the Sky*. Will be virtual. Looking for a member to lead the discussion. -Student film night, *Strong in Broken Places*, also virtual. This will also need to be led by a member of the Division.

Continuing ED suggestions

-Chapter Chat. Elaine has identified two UB MSW students who volunteered to present: one on environmental social work and the other student on transgender issues. The environmental social work Chat is on 1/9/24.

- Possible multidisciplinary conference on transgender issues for the fall 2024 (or later) discussed. Invite other professions to present on topics for panel discussion or sequential presentations. Elaine to contact Stanley Vance, MD from UCSF, pediatric sexuality program director, about being keynote speaker.

Budget

-There was confusion regarding the balance of our budget based on expenditure taken from 2023 budget since the event, Chapter Meet & Greet, was planned in 2022 budget period but occurred in July 2023. Therefore, the cost was taken from the 2023 budget. This left us wondering how to pay for CE presenters in 2024 from the 2023 budget. Albany agreed to cover costs if our attendance is not sufficient to pay the presenters the promised honorarium or fee. We have no control of our attendance and much communication between Albany and Elaine took place regarding clarification of the budget and presenter payment.

Member Engagement and Retention.

-There was much discussion regarding our lack of information/names re: Western Division membership. How are we to directly communicate with members re being active in the Division, welcoming new members, suggestions for programs, what they expect from Western Division, and how to contact us. It is cumbersome to have to go to Albany to send out blasts, etc. It was noted that relationships are built through communication and knowing a person’s name is a basis of that communication. This is the foundation of building a strong Division membership. The question was raised on how do other divisions cope with this restriction on membership information.

-Suggestions. Develop a Division list-serv, ask Albany to release member information to our Division. Help Elaine address this issue with Albany.

-How to determine what students are interested in re issues that impact them, and how to determine whether we saw an increase in student membership because of our face-to-face presentations.

-Suggestions: Survey professors at schools visited for their feedback on how to keep students aware of NASW and how to engage them in membership efforts.

-Have Meet and Greet for all members of the Division advertised through a blast or, if we can, personally contact them.

Division Goals for 2023-2024

Elaine presented the following:

-Membership Recruitment

-Continuing Education events

-Networking Events

-Social Work Month

-Student Social Work Awards

-Steering/Membership Committee Meetings

Next Membership Meeting on the first Tuesday of each month, Nov 7 at 6-7:30 on zoom.

Next Clinical meeting is on the third Monday of each month, Nov 20 at 6-7:30 on zoom.

Respectfully Submitted,

Sylvia Gold, LCSW-R