



Take Me to Your Leader: Tips & Tricks for Engaging Your Members

By Stacy Holmes, Senior Section Leaders Liaison

*"I joined the section months ago but haven't seen or heard anything
...did I do something wrong?"*

We hear this inquiry, or something like it, many times throughout the year. Sometimes it's just bad timing. An individual joins a section just after the newsletter goes out, or just after the last flurry of list serve discussions, and so he or she does not hear anything "from the section" for weeks or months. Other times, the Executive Committee is being flooded with legislative requests from the WSBA and, as a result, regular communication with the members gets put on the back burner until the legislative session is over. Either way, the inquiry above is a reminder that the smallest touch from section leaders to their section members may go a long way.

When individuals join a WSBA section online, they receive an automated receipt confirming their purchase, explaining the list serve, and pointing them to the section's website. After that initial contact, any other section-related engagement comes from the section's Executive Committee or designated sub-committees. Section leaders are committed volunteers and have employed several strategies for engaging their members over the years. The list below is by no means comprehensive, but revisiting some of these ideas may help inspire your busy Executive Committee!

Create a member engagement role or sub-committee. Member engagement can be made easier if it becomes a core function of the Executive Committee. In addition, adding a standing agenda item on this topic to each Executive Committee meeting can help keep it in the forefront for all of your peer leaders.

Send welcoming e-mails or letters to new members. Section leaders can request a roster of "new" members (those members who haven't joined your section previously) and reach out to that group of individuals with a targeted welcome message. Doing this quarterly can help you capture the people that join throughout the membership year. You can also see the names of who has joined your section in any given month by reviewing the "fees" report that is sent monthly with the financials to your section's treasurer.

Solicit volunteers or share public service opportunities. Reaching out to your members and asking for their help or feedback is another way to keep them engaged. Members can be asked to join sub-committees, contribute articles, be available to young lawyers for questions, and/or represent the section at an event. As a result, you may also end up cultivating a future member of your Executive Committee.

Stay consistent. Section leaders are using many channels to deliver benefits to their members. Having a consistent schedule can make all the difference. Newsletters, blog postings, list serve

messages, website updates, legislative action updates, statewide networking opportunities, and CLE's are some of the key benefits. A consistent schedule increases the likelihood that you'll touch most of your members soon after they join.

Have a party! Professional networking is one of the main reasons individuals join sections. Plan to have a social event after your section's CLE seminar or coordinated with another conference/event that you know your members are likely attending. Member receptions have ranged from an informal brown bag lunch in a firm's conference room, a wine and cheese reception at a rented restaurant venue, or an evening program with a guest speaker followed by food and drink. Contact your section liaison to explore free meeting space at the WSBA offices or the free Alki Room across from the WSBA-CLE Conference Center.

WSBA staff continue to partner with section leaders to generate and share ideas. Have an idea you want to explore? Feel free to post to the Section Leaders List serve (section-leaders@list.wsba.org), and/or contact Stacy (stacyh@wsba.org) or Paris (pariss@wsba.org) for assistance.

Don't Forget to Use Your List Serve!

We now automatically upload all new and renewed members within 30 days of their joining to the section list serve, which means you will be able to engage a larger percentage of your membership instantaneously. The list serve enables you to send attachments, and reach your members with last minute announcements and reminders, without having to wait through the e-blast process. Members still have the option of requesting to be taken off of the list serve or unsubscribing themselves, however, these lists have grown and will continue to grow, becoming a resource for engaging your members, both old and new.

Fireside Chat

By Patricia Paul, Immediate Past Chair of WPTL

It's been reported that I am the only person who served as the chair of two sections at the same time. Those two sections were the Civil Rights Law Section (CRLS) and the World Peace Through Law Section (WPTL) for the 2012 term. In terms of time commitment, I dedicated each Monday to work on responsibilities for each section, generally between two to four hours weekly. Mondays became the day to draft reports, answer email correspondence, and communicate with our executive committee. Because the CRLS is a relatively new Section, I utilized all my organizational and coordination skills to ensure that the Section was a success. The effort paid off. The CRLS was the first to implement the WSBA Work Plan for sections and went on to implement several more, organized around our committee work: CLEs, membership; and around our structure: administration. I also volunteered on each of the committees to keep in tune with the overall organization. After I had completed all the tasks for the CRLS, then I went on to focus on the WPTL, which is a well-established Section. We had continuing leadership that worked very well together and I patiently learned their methods; a big focus is on continuing legal education. Key to all the work accomplished is a close working relationship with the WSBA section liaison.



Sections Working Together: Examples of Successful Collaborations

By Paris Seabrook, Section Leaders Liaison

Interested in co-sponsoring an event or CLE seminar and looking for a partner? Look no further than your fellow sections. More and more sections are working together in partnership to host an event or sponsor a CLE seminar. The benefits of your section working with another section may include cross-marketing, professional networking with other volunteer attorneys, sharing of resources (including work load and funds), and the opportunity to bring together to bring together memberships of two different sections that may have overlap in their practice areas.

In September, the **Corporate Counsel Section** partnered with the **Business Law Section** to host a half-day CLE and social networking event in Eastern Washington. The expenses and revenue from the event were split evenly between the two sections. Both sections worked to market the event to their members. Paul Swegle, chair of the Corporate Counsel Section commented,

Sections provide professional development and networking opportunities built around the core interests and concerns of each section's members. But that narrow focus is artificial and it's always great to see different sections working together to cross-market or even jointly offer programs. By jointly sponsoring the CLE we were able to share costs, reach out to a much larger group of potential attendees and offer more diverse programming. That type of cooperation among sections leverages strengths and creates more value for all WSBA members.

In November, the **Labor and Employment Law Section** partnered with the **Alternative Dispute Resolution Section** to host an event in Seattle at the WSBA-CLE Conference Center, entitled "The Art of Arbitration: A Symposium of Practice Tips, Crucial Updates, Forms and Checklists." Hon. Paris Kallas was pleased to have the opportunity to work with the Labor and Employment Law Section. *"Working with the Labor and Employment Law Section was a very productive experience; it allowed us to have a substantive focus in addition to a general arbitration focus. I believe it increased attendance too."*

Partnering with another section is a great way to combine resources to do something "different" or pilot a new idea, such as hosting an event in Spokane, adding a social networking hour to an educational event, or hosting a golf tournament!

When beginning a partnership with another section, we recommend sorting out the logistics in advance. Planning may include dividing the responsibilities between the two (or more!) sections, deciding which section will act as the fiscal agent for the event, and deciding how the expenses and revenue (if any) will be distributed between the partnering sections. Deciding these factors in advance will make the event planning go smoothly.

So, if you want to try something new or reach a wider audience, scan the list of 27 sections and find your partner!

Save the Date—Section Leaders' Spring Meeting

Join together in further Sections Executive Committee networking on **Wednesday, May 1, 2013**.

In our last Section Leaders' Spring Meeting we discussed identifying your section's goals, new lawyer education, as well as budgets and work plans. You can see more information for the Spring 2012 meeting on our [Section Leaders' Toolbox](#).

Stay tuned for more information on this year's Spring Meeting!

Section Leaders Present to WSBA Job Seekers Group

By Heidi Seligman, M.A., L.M.H.C., WSBA Lawyer Assistance Program

On Jan. 9, the Lawyers Assistance Program of the WSBA was honored to welcome five section leaders to its Bi-Monthly Job Seeker Group meeting, in a panel presentation on issues related to choosing one's ideal practice area. The Bi-Monthly Job Seeker Group is a free ongoing service of the Lawyers Assistance Program, offering WSBA members an opportunity to learn about a wide variety of job-search related topics through presentations and discussions, as well as to network with and meet other lawyers.

The January session was a unique offering in that it was a first-time panel discussion for the group, and by

all accounts, was a highly meaningful experience for those who attended. The panel was made up of the following section leaders who generously volunteered their time and expertise during a busy post-holiday work week: Jeremie Lipton (Real Property, Probate & Trust), John Pierce (Health), John Rizzardi (Creditor Debtor), Jennifer Willner (Solo/Small Practice), and Aaron Wolff (Criminal). The panelists discussed such topics as pros and cons of each of the practice areas represented, strategies for how people get jobs/clients in each practice area, and personality-types that tend to succeed in each practice area. In addition, the panel explored some of the current trends in the job market for each of the practice areas represented, as well as the typical “career trajectory” for someone in each practice area.

It was a fascinating exploration of this often overlooked aspect of the job search, and the 20 or so members who turned out to hear the presentation were amply rewarded by a rich discussion highlighting helpful strategies and offering support around this important aspect of career development and the job search. The panel was such a success that plans are being considered to host another panel with representatives from other sections to discuss similar topics. The Lawyers Assistance Program is deeply grateful for the time, energy and dedication displayed by these section leaders and their willingness to volunteer for this event, offering their expertise, insights and generous support to other lawyers.

To learn more about the WSBA Lawyers Assistance Program, visit the [WSBA website](#).

Did You Miss It? 2013 Open Section Night

By Paris Seabrook, Section Leaders Liaison



The Third Annual Open Section Night was held on Jan. 23 at the WSBA-CLE Conference Center. The WSBA Young Lawyers Committee worked closely with the Sections Team to get the word out about the event and it worked! We had over 160 total attendees (including section leaders).

With generous contributions from the WSBA sections, we were able to provide delicious small bites and wine and beer for attendees. New and young lawyers were encouraged to mingle with their peers and learn about the various WSBA sections.

New this year, we featured four prizes: two door prizes were awarded to young lawyers, and included a WSBA pen and a gift certificate to Starbucks; and two raffle prizes that included a gift card to a local restaurant and a bottle of wine (donated by the Creditor Debtor Rights Section), were given to attendees who joined a section on-site.

The Sections Team solicited feedback from the new and young lawyers about the event. When asked if they found the event valuable, attendees wrote many positive comments, including: *“Great networking and also it was great to find out about all the different sections,”* and *“Yes, the event was extremely valuable, both in terms of learning about the sections and having a unique networking opportunity with both new and experienced attorneys and others from WSBA. I’m so glad I attended the event.”*

Thank you to all the sections who participated in the event, and to the Young Lawyers Committee for its continued support for the event.

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Upcoming BOG Meetings

**March 8-9:
Hilton, Vancouver**

**April 26-27:
Davenport, Spokane**

**May 31:
WSBA Offices**