

A-B-C TRAINING FOR BOARD BUILDING 2019
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A: ASSESS current Board composition & Equip Board Members to be your **AMBASSADORS**

Example: Just Buffalo Literary Center’s mission is to create and strengthen communities through the literary arts. Integral to meeting our mission is having a board that reflects the full diversity of the communities we serve.

An analysis of current board composition shows that:

86% are over 40 and 14% under 40

64% are female and 36% male

79% are white and 21% are people of color

Additionally, a review of current board member skills and competencies reveals areas to strengthen and gaps that we seek to fill. Recruitment priorities related to background/experience are:

Community Engagement

Youth Development & Education

Marketing – especially connected with a firm

IT Technology

Young (under 40) including those seeking their first board experience

Ambassador A-B-C-D Training *Do this at a Board Meeting w/plenty of time for the “C” personal stories to be shared by everyone.

Example:

A – AT Just Buffalo, we believe in the love of reading, the art of writing, and the power of the literary arts to change individual lives and communities.

B – We are perhaps **BEST KNOWN** for our BABEL Author Series that brings 4 of the world’s greatest writers to Buffalo each year ... and we also have many other programs including ...

C – I CAME TO KNOW Just Buffalo (by/through/because/when ...)

Tell briefly your own story – how did you come to know/be involved with JBLC?

D – Decide how to invite them to get closer!

The best way FOR YOU TO GET TO KNOW Just Buffalo is by experiencing it in person!

*Issue a personal invitation:

- We have a BABEL Reading/STUDIO Poetry Reading/Wordplay Release/_____ coming up. Would you like to go as my guest?

- We have students at the JB Writing Center every Tuesday & Thursday afternoon from 3:30-6. Would you like to stop over and see it?
- We've just completed a major renovation of our space which shares a historic building with Book Arts Center. Would you like to stop down and see it?
- We're offering new and expanded programs including more writing workshops for teachers and adults. Would you like to learn more?

*Set up a coffee date:

- I'd love to introduce you to our Executive Director and talk more about how you might get involved with Just Buffalo. Could we make a date?

*Refer to the website:

- We have a fantastic website has all kinds of information including upcoming programs, short videos, and a student blog – it's justbuffalo.org

*Offer to email a video link or additional information:

- We've got a beautiful 1-minute video on BABEL/The JB Writing Center/STUDIO Poetry Series – how about I send you the link so you can see for yourself the kind of work we're doing ...

B: BEGIN the year with a set of Board Goals.

This list of goals is developed each year and aligned with “Ten Basic Responsibilities of Nonprofit Boards” by Richard T. Ingram (Board Source, 2015). Board members are provided with a copy of this book to read and reference. Taken together, these 10 responsibilities constitute a board job description.

- (1) Determine Mission and Purposes, and Advocate for them
- (2) Select, (3) Support and Evaluate the Executive Director
- (4) Ensure Effective Planning
- (5) Monitor and Strengthen Programs and Services
- (6) Ensure Adequate Financial Resources
- (7) Protect Assets and Provide Financial Oversight
- (8) Build and Maintain a Competent Board
- (9) Ensure Legal and Ethical Integrity
- (10) Enhance the Organization's Public Standing

The following goals are proposed to the full board by the Board President and Executive Director following a review of prior year’s goals, committee recommendations and feedback from the board self-evaluation. They are recommended for the Board to complete during the coming year to support meeting these responsibilities (& reviewed during year at meetings).

*This is your place to develop goals that can advance your organization forward in the ways that you want. This helps the Board focus on the Board’s work (though note, the process of creating these goals, using to shape committee meeting agendas and reporting back is driven by the E.D.). These can be very simple to start. You can develop over time & use to do ongoing tending. Here are a couple examples:

(6) Ensure Adequate Financial Resources

Goal	Responsible	Timing
Approve budget and projections for the coming year. Monitor using current financial statements, key indicators and ratios to maintain healthy balance sheet.	Treasurer and Full board	June and every meeting
Review Board fundraising expectations and secure 100% participation in annual campaign.	Development Committee	November
Review how board members can help with securing and stewarding major gifts, grants and sponsorships using specific examples. Create sense of “shared ownership” which includes celebrating successes, small and large.	Development Committee	November

(8) Build and Maintain a Competent Board

Goal	Responsible	Timing
Assess current Board composition and terms. Identify priorities and gaps, prioritizing diversity, equity & inclusion. Identify, recruit and recommend candidates to the full Board.	Governance Committee	February
Provide opportunity for Board members to reaffirm or change committee assignments.	President	September
Conduct Board self-assessment and use to inform plan for the year.	Governance Committee	May

C – Require a personal financial CONTRIBUTION from all Board members .

Way to propose to the Board:

Board members provide essential leadership for our organization’s fundraising efforts. It is essential for us to have 100% participation from the Board in making a personal gift before we seek donations from other individuals and grant funders. To that end, all Board members are asked to:

Participate in the Board Campaign

Make this organization one of your top three charities

Make an annual gift in an amount meaningful & significant to you

Also, participate in cultivation events and meetings with prospective donors

Help identify others within your sphere of influence who might be interested in supporting the organization

Recommended timing: Calendar year often works best but can align w/fiscal year. Establish early in the year. Ideal to have Board champion; but E.D. must be prepared to make happen. Hand out pledge forms with inspirational encouragement at fall Board meeting to be returned by 12/31 or at first Board meeting of the new year for the coming year. **Don’t stop follow up until have pledge form in for every Board member.** This will take a lot of time the first year or two but then much less. Announce at Board meeting success at reaching 100% participation and total that’s been committed, “in gifts ranging from \$x to \$x”. Track using simple form:

<u>Name</u>	<u>2020 Pledge Form Rec'd</u>	<u>2020 Pledge Amt</u>	<u>2020 Pledge \$ Rec'd</u>
Board Member 1	12/11/19	\$ 150.00	\$150, 4/16/20
Board Member 2	1/14/20	\$ 100.00	
Board Member 3	12/11/19	\$ 300.00	\$300, 4/16/20
Board Member 4	12/11/19	\$ 250.00	

With this in place, begin building “a culture of philanthropy” within the organization with an emphasis on P2P (person-to-person) individual gifts. Invite guest speaker to a Board Meeting, share articles, recruit Board member who likes fundraising and can be a champion! Create simple goals: secure first gift of \$1,000+ from an individual donor; increase individual donations from 1% of budget to 3% etc. Create a pledge form. Set up some personal meetings to ask for support. The E.D. must come to embrace this as an important and essential part of the job.