

## Minding your Money Matters: PACs/Foundation

Judith P. Keller, M.S., CCC-SLP

## Political Action Committees

- Are an important aspect of American politics and the American electoral system. Political Action Committees exist legally as a means for corporations, trade unions, etc. to make donations to candidates for Federal and state office. PAC's are designed to influence government by shaping public opinion through the news media and advertising.

## Evolution of PACs

- In **1974**, the comprehensive campaign financing act of 1974 provided for the public financing of presidential campaigns
- In **1974**, the Federal Election Committee reported that there were 608 Political Action Committees registered.
- By **1983**, more than 3500 PACs were in existence.
- By **1995**, there were 4000 PACs
- By 2008, there were 4234 PACs (1.2 billion dollars!)
- By 2009, there 4611 PACs

## Rules and Regulations

- PACs are governed by the Federal Election Campaign.
- Contributions by individuals to **federal** PACs are limited to \$5000. (Check your state for limits)
- Corporations and unions may not contribute directly to federal PACs though they may pay for the administrative costs of a PAC affiliated with the corporation or union.
- Corporate-affiliated PACs may only solicit contributions from executives, shareholders and their families while union-affiliated PACs may only solicit from members.

## Starting a State PAC

- Is it the right thing for your State Association?
  - Do you need a PAC?
  - Will your association members support a PAC?
  - How can the PAC be managed?

## Benefits of having a State PAC

- Provides support for your legislative champion(s)
- Gives members a way to participate in the political process
- Adds substance to your association
  - The power of 1 versus 100
- Raises the profile of the state association

## Moving ahead....

- Initial Steps
  - Develop a general knowledge of PACs
  - Visit your local secretary of state office or Web site.
  - Establish a timeline for implementation
- Laying a Secure Foundation
  - Organizational structure
    - Involve a significant portion of state association's members

## Building Blocks

- Start with a strategic plan
  - Develop a Mission Statement & Goals
  - Develop Bylaws
  - Appoint a PAC Board

## PAC Board/Committee

- PAC Officers
  - Treasurer, Assistant Treasurer, Chair, Secretary
- Operating Policies
- Candidate Contribution Guidelines
- Administration
- Activity Report Filings

## Getting members involved!

- Demonstrate the Need for PACs-Talk about the success of other organizations
- Educate your membership about the value of PACs
- Get members involved in Political Activities – visiting legislators at the state capitol and in the home district. Have Legislative days.

## Stay in communication with members

- Develop a brochure
- Have information on websites or use e-mail blasts
  - Password protection?
- Plan special Meetings & Events at conventions
- Newsletters – include pictures of successful visits with legislators

## Methods That Have Worked when soliciting from members!

- Peer-to-Peer Solicitations
- Dues Check Off
- E-mail Solicitations
- Direct Mail
- Annual Meetings
- Fundraiser Events
- Sweepstakes or Raffles
- Recognition Gifts

### Defining Operational Guidelines

- Sample guidelines used by ASHA's federal PAC:
- Sample guidelines from other state associations

### Who will you target?

- Members of KEY jurisdictional committees
- Members in LEADERSHIP positions
- CHAMPIONS or potential champions of legislation
- MEMBERS in competitive races

### Helpful Hints!

- Maintain separate bank accounts
- Develop a Strategic Plan
  - Multi-year with fundraising goals
- PAC Meetings
  - Open to members of the State Association
- Activities
  - Raffles, silent auctions, dinners
- Acknowledge your contributors!

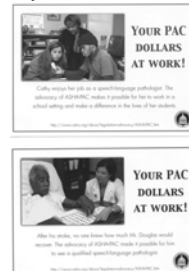
### Consider member attitudes??

- Testing the water? Taking the temperature? What are the attitudes of your membership? It might be important to know what members think about Political Action Committees and the value of organizing this!
- Are attitudes of the membership something that you will need to improve before you begin soliciting funds?
- Do you need to market the value of PACs to the membership in order to encourage contributions?

### Can you change the image?



### How do our contributions affect our practice? Our profession?



## FOUNDATIONS?

- Why does your state association need a foundation?
- Are you providing scholarships?
- Recognizing leadership?
- Acknowledging professional accomplishments?

## A Foundation provides the format..

- For giving scholarships
- Recognizing leadership
- Acknowledging professional accomplishments

## A state foundation - Are you ready?

- Consider the organizational structure of ASHA and other state associations?
- Consider inviting a speaker from the national association or a neighbor state association to speak to a select group of members about the possibility of creating a foundation.

## Steps to a foundation

- Must be have 501 (c) (3) nonprofit status. This takes some time (several months)
- 501 (c) (3) can be classified as either charity or private foundation and is exempt from federal income tax if it is charitable, religious, educational, scientific, etc.

## Organization

- Similar to PACs
  - Need separate organizational structure from your state association (Board of Directors)
  - Need separate financial structure
  - Need separate by-laws
  - May want to consider a strategic plan (mission and vision statements)

## Generating Funds

- Look to the universities in your states –
- Talk to past leadership
- Promote contributions from membership
- Work with NSSLHA to create funds for a pre-professional scholarship
- Develop activities to generate funds

### Set financial guidelines

- Consult a CPA or financial planner about how to set up a funding hierarchy.

### Enjoy your Foundation

- Have convention activities highlighting your success
- Market to the membership scholarship and research recipients
- Applaud the professional success of your state leadership

### Questions?

- Judith P. Keller – Assistant Professor - Retired
- Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center
- **[Judith.keller@ttuhsc.edu](mailto:Judith.keller@ttuhsc.edu)**
- **Served on the TSHA PAC**
- **Served on the ASHA PAC**