



SOROPTIMIST
Best for Women

2014-2016
South Atlantic Region
Membership Chair Report
Submitted by Patricia C. Witt
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The Big Picture

As we have all had opportunity to vote on the proposed bylaws and procedures changes, we are aware now of several that impact membership specifically.

Following are brief recaps of those changes.

Soroptimist International

- SI Board has removed the membership criteria from its by-laws for local clubs. Each Federation is charged with defining its own membership criteria within its geographic boundaries.

Important to note: All members of SI local clubs will remain members of SI.

Soroptimist International of the Americas, Inc.

- Each club shall maintain a membership of *individuals* from the community who support SIA's mission (occupational status and classification codes have been omitted).
- All previous member types of Regular, Retired/Unemployed, and Embarking members will now be known as "Regular" members. A 'Regular' member type is defined as an *individual* who supports SIA's vision, mission, and core values. [SIA vision, mission, and core values included below]
- No change made with regard to Life Members.
- To be a club in good standing, a club must remain current in all financial obligations to the region and Federation and have submitted all required final reports from Federation club grants and disaster relief grants.
- No club shall forfeit its charter as long as they remain in good standing. Recommended number of members is 12 and minimum is more than one.
- To charter a new club, a minimum of 12 members is necessary.

South Atlantic Region

- Online club, SI/Greenville, SC, has conducted several online planning meetings and two club meetings with prospective members participating. Club is ready to adopt their initial service project. Bylaws are being updated.
- SIA has referred 44 prospective members to SAR as of end of March 2014. Majority of referrals were contacted later in the year. Two referrals wish to start new clubs in their respective NC cities of Durham and Charlotte. Referral distribution: DC 3; MD 14; NC 7; SC 3; VA 15.

SAR Membership Statistics 2014 -15

Membership in South Atlantic Region for 2014-2015 at the beginning of July, 2014, began with 26 clubs, 556 members with a 78% retention rate. As of March 2014, SAR has 26 clubs, 577 members; 41 new members, 11 reinstated; 31 terminated membership from July 1, 2015.

SIA Membership Statistics 2014 -15

As of March 1, 2015, Total Clubs = 1,303, Total Members = 33,175, decrease of 12 clubs with increase of 777 members since July 1, 2014; almost half the increase in membership in January and February, 2015. SIA membership is 1007 members less than same period last year. The primary way prospects hear about Soroptimist continues to be word of mouth followed by local

event/promotions and internet searches – predominantly women interested in women’s issues, especially trafficking.

SIA Membership Council

South Atlantic Region participates in the SIA Membership Council. As a result, the messages from SIA membership are shared and input from all the region representatives can be shared. Following are some of the highlights and reminders of existing resources:

- Several regions report that local clubs have social activities and/or projects that involve family members; generally on weekend so everyone can participate. Younger members enjoy this and stay engaged.
- SIA has created and posted another video called “**Problem Solving**” to help clubs address difficult situations. Check it out on SIA website.
- **Corporate Engagement Opportunity (CEO)** is being implemented across the Federation. CEO provides way for business/corporation to have employees engaged in service to the community in lieu of initiating their own community service program. At least one employee from the interested entity becomes a member of SI at local or regional level and pays membership dues for that employee. Sponsored employee becomes liaison from SI club and community service opportunities to business entity.
- **Live Your Dream** supporters number close to 13,500 supporters! This increase is due in part to the partnership with Care2.org, to develop an advocacy program to address US Congress for support of victims of military sexual trauma.
- Participated in one of two conference calls of the SIA Membership Council. SIA technical difficulties with second conference call would not allow participation. Notes reflected within this report.
- **Important to note:** With more and more integration of technology for communication, the club email address is an outstanding way to ensure accurate contact with the local clubs in a timely manner. SAR clubs have a fairly low rate of activation and use. More than half of the clubs need to reactivate their account. Prospective members may also be given information about these club email addresses so they can direct their inquiry themselves. As you know, there is now a mapping of club locations available on our SIA website.

Federation-Wide Membership Recruitment Campaign

SIA plans kick off in Fall of 2015. Membership Council requested to obtain feedback of the following factors being considered in the planning of this Recruitment Campaign:

- + What questions members have heard from other members about the new membership changes.
- + What is unique about clubs who have family members as members and/or clubs who have members with family members in other SI clubs.
- + What is unique about clubs who have members in their 20s, 30s, and/or 40s
- + Is it important to use existing websites to expand ways members can become aware of volunteer opportunities within their own neighborhood or in other SI regions/countries.
- + What impact does Live Your Dream have on recruitment/retention
- + Which materials (format, content, and delivery medium) would be most effective to kick off the campaign during Fall 2015 region events
- + How clubs welcome and orient new members
- + How the focus on women and girls affects the retention of members.
- + Which Soroptimist programs or activities members seem to enjoy most
- + What clubs are currently doing to engage members.

References identified above

SIA Vision, Mission and Core Values

VISION

Women and girls have the resources and opportunities to reach their full potential and live their dreams.

MISSION

Soroptimist improves the lives of women and girls through programs leading to social and economic empowerment.

CORE VALUES

- o *Gender Equality*: Women and girls live free from discrimination.
- o *Empowerment*: Women and girls are free to act in their own best interest.
- o *Education*: Women and girls deserve to lead full and productive lives through access to education.
- o *Diversity & Fellowship*: Women from varied backgrounds and perspectives work together to improve the lives of women and girls.

Corporate Engagement Opportunity – On February 1, 2013, a survey was sent to 736 club presidents with email addresses in order to solicit feedback about both the concept and the resources regarding the CEO strategy. Of those 736 emails sent, 93% were delivered (684); 52% of those delivered opened the email (356); and 12% who opened the email completed the entire survey (44). The materials can be found here:

<http://www.soroptimist.org/members/membership/CEO.html>