

NALS Jett Award Application

I. General Description of Program

- A. 1.** **NALS of Lansing 50th Anniversary Celebration**
- A. 2. a.** **Classification:** Medium Chapter
- A. 2. b.** **Category:** Association Development
- A. 3.** **NALS of Lansing (Michigan)**
- A. 4.** **Submitted by:** Vicki L. Ballinger, ALS
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B. Program Description:

Our program was in the form of a reception in celebration of the 50th Anniversary of NALS of Lansing held at the State Bar of Michigan during Court Observance Week. The purpose of the event was to re-establish our chapter as a resource for Greater Lansing legal industry professionals. The event became a single venue for the sharing of information about NALS with attorneys and court members while celebrating our history, rekindling friendships with former members, and gaining interest in potential new members and their employers.

C. Program Summary:

On October 15, 2009, over 100 persons attended a reception at the State Bar of Michigan in honor of the 50th Anniversary of NALS of Lansing. Those in attendance included one Michigan Court of Appeals Judge, 24 members of the Michigan Bar, 17 Past Presidents of NALS of Lansing, 26 former Legal Professionals of the Year, 4 former NALS of Michigan Past Presidents, and 1 former President of NALS (national). One large room was dedicated to the history of NALS of Lansing, NALS marketing information, and a display of Court Observance Week materials, which included a proclamation from Governor Jennifer Granholm. Attorneys in attendance who have been members of the Bar for 25 years or more were presented with boutonnieres as they arrived. Former NALS members, some from decades past, were welcomed with smiles and hugs from current members and former employers. The apex of the evening was the presentation of a special resolution from the State Bar of Michigan to NALS of Lansing followed by the reading of a poem by Theodore W. Swift (deceased) dedicated to his secretary (and former NALS member) Kay Lovejoy titled "Lady Catherine".

II. Judging Criteria

A. Needs Assessment

1. Determination of Need.

The calendar reminded us that on December 2, 2009, it would be 50 years since NALS of Lansing received its charter. The chapter had been struggling with the dwindling size of its membership for some time and felt that a public celebration could be a step toward rebuilding our chapter and taking it into the next 50 years.

2. How does this program address this need?

The NALS of Lansing 50th Anniversary Celebration took the form of a professional networking event hosted by NALS members. In the NALS History and Information Room at the event were eight displays with NALS marketing information. Even before the event, the increased awareness resulted in the interest of two professional organizations asking the chapter to give presentations to their groups. As a result of the exposure and interaction with the legal community, we believe there will be a growing interest in membership with NALS of Lansing.

B. Planning and Design

1. List the program's objectives.

- 1) Re-establish NALS of Lansing's connections to the legal community in the Greater Lansing area.
- 2) Gain renewed recognition among the professional legal services industry as a resource for education, training, and networking,
- 3) Develop a contact database to disseminate information about NALS activities.
- 4) Grow membership in NALS of Lansing.
- 5) Reach out to former members.

2. Describe the steps taken to design and develop the program.

In June 2009, a committee was formed to discuss plans to celebrate the chapter's upcoming 50th anniversary. The members of the committee included: Barbara Stone PP, PLS - Chair; Kathleen Amirante PP, PLS; Vicki Ballinger ALS; Beverly Bishop PLS; Rhonda Mask ALS; Carole Schneider PP, PLS; Judith Salminen PLS; and Deborah Surls. The committee met regularly every two weeks and more often as the event drew closer. The possibility of a sit-down

dinner was discussed; but, considering the current economy, the party evolved into a simple (but elegant) reception. Committee members volunteered for a variety of assignments, not the least of which was to try to identify and contact as many members as possible from the last 50 years and invite them to the event. Chapter membership rosters were located for 43 of our 50 years of existence. These were thoroughly reviewed and research was done to locate current addresses for the former members. Other tasks included finding a location, creating the invitation, designing the programs, creating name badges, ordering boutonnieres, creating the marketing posters, garnering a proclamation from the Governor, and deciding on party favors.

Invitations were circulated to each member of the Ingham County Bar Association (numbering 3,000) via an insert in the September 2009 issues of *Briefs*, their official publication that is published ten times a year starting in September. Therefore, our insert was included in that long-awaited first issue following the summer hiatus. In addition to the mailing list of former NALS members (170), a list of judges and court administrators from each state and local court, and administrative offices of the county and state bars were also developed for distribution of invitations. Notices of the event were sent to local radio and television media outlets.

C. Logistics and Production

1. Program Delivery.

Our chapter utilized three rooms at the State Bar of Michigan for the event. A registration table was set up near the door. The catered appetizers were displayed in the Hudson Room. Wine service was set up in the atrium hallway directly past the registration table and reception area. A double-sized classroom was made available for the NALS of Lansing History and Information Room. Tables were uniquely arranged to allow for a flow around the tables holding memorabilia, poster displays, and marketing materials. The Governor's proclamation for Court Observance Week was displayed in an alcove in the same room. Also on display was a letter of congratulations from NALS President Julie Abernathy, PP, PLS.

2. Description of educational materials, methods, and resources.

This was more of a promotional event than an educational event. Please see item E1 below regarding marketing activities related to this event.

D. Budgeting and Finance

1. What is the annual income and expenses of the chapter?

See attached approved chapter budget.

2. Was this program funded in whole or in part by a Grant from the NALS Foundation?

No funding was sought from the NALS Foundation. However, the chapter did apply for a grant from the Ingham County Bar Foundation in July of this year. We should be notified of that application's outcome sometime in November.

3. What were the program's broad financial objectives (profit, break-even, or subsidized service)?

The program's broad financial objective was simply to break even. Our objective was to have a first-class program on a shoestring budget, since we had no budget for the event. It was primarily an event of recognition and celebration with the added benefit of renewing professional relationships and potentially growing our membership. It was not meant to be a profit-making venture.

4. Provide both the projected revenue and expense, as well as the actual revenue and expense.

	<u>Estimated</u>	<u>Actual*</u>
Expenses:	\$5,500	\$2,518
Printing and Postage	\$1,000	\$645
Decorations and Favors	\$1,500	\$373
Food and Drink	\$1,500	\$1,500
Miscellaneous		\$75
Income:	\$4,000	\$2,840
Attendance	\$1,500	\$1,515
Sponsorships	\$1,500	\$1,250
**Amount of grant funds requested.	\$1,000.00	Not yet known

Note: 105 attendees paid \$15 each (with their registration) to cover the cost of food.

*These calculations are preliminary. We have not had a report from the Treasurer since the event, which was only two weeks ago.

**We are still waiting to hear the result of our Ingham County Bar Association grant application.

5. Association resources expended on this program.

No association funds were budgeted for this event. The catering was paid for by the registration fees collected. Sponsors were sought to cover the cost of the inserts, postage, programs, favors, and boutonnieres. We were successful, and quite fortunate, to have received \$1,250 in sponsorship funds, most of which

came from employers of current members. Some costs were covered by committee members out of their own pockets.

E. Marketing, Promoting, and Advertising

1. List and describe the specific marketing, promotional and advertising vehicles used.

In the History and Information room, a laptop and projector were set up with a continuous running of the NALS membership and education presentation.

Our 16-page program contains a welcome message from our chapter President, Michele D. David, PLS, information about NALS including the Vision, Mission Statement, and Code of Ethics. Two pages were dedicated to information about Court Observance Week and this year's theme "A Legacy of Liberty and Justice." The program also listed former Legal Professional of the Year and Boss of the Year recipients and a note about our scholarship program.

Eight table posters containing marketing materials from the NALS website were on display featuring topics such as Membership, Education, Networking, Certification, Ethics, Support, Marketability, and Belonging. Also available were tri-fold Membership handouts and several issues of @Law.

F. Evaluation

1. To what extent did the program achieve stated objectives?

- 1) Attendance at the celebration was at or near the anticipated goal of 100 former members and/or those who currently serve the professional legal needs of our community.
- 2) We have received Invitations to make NALS presentations to two of the five industry leaders (per year) that we had projected. Those two organizations are the Mid-Michigan chapter of the Association of Legal Administrators (Mid-Michigan ALA) and the Ingham County Bar Association (ICBA).
- 3) Because the event was so recent (we have yet to hold a membership meeting since that evening) we cannot tell what the impact will be on membership.

2. What broader impact, if any, did this program have on the growth, image or performance of the chapter or its members?

It has only been two weeks since our celebration event, so it is too early to tell what the impact will truly be. We do believe that the process of putting this event together and having it advertised and discussed frequently over the past 4-5 months has increased our visibility and credibility a great deal. We have certainly achieved our first two objectives of re-establishing our connections and gaining recognition as a resource. Due to the huge effort put forth by Judy Salminen and

others, we now also have a great new contact database to help us further our membership goals.

3. Based on the outcome of this program, describe the most significant changes that might be made the next time a similar program is offered.

It would be the year 2059 before this particular event would again take place. However, one suggestion would be to make certain that the chapter's member rosters are kept in such a manner and in a format that the information is relatively easy to retrieve. It would also be beneficial to maintain more regular contact with former members, possibly with holiday messages, in order to maintain current contact information. Otherwise, this type of event is only as limited as the imagination of those who bring it to life.