

AMERICAN JUDICATURE SOCIETY
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING
ANNUAL MEETING
December 6, 2018

Report of Communications Committee

This year, the efforts of the Communications Committee ("Committee") have focused on further developing AJS's online presence and tasks related to the upcoming 2020 Convention. The following is a summary of the Committee's activities and achievements:

Website Developments

A major focus for the Committee has been the continuing development of the AJS Website. The following improvements to the website are worth of note:

- Membership Database: In response to the concerns raised at the 2017 Annual Meeting, the Committee, and in collaboration with the Membership Committee, has established an official membership database that is now hosted on the same server as the website. The database is password protected and certain members of each committee have received the access information. Going forward, the information for new members will be automatically added to the database as new members complete the online registration form.
- Volunteer Form and Database: In anticipation of the 2020 Convention, the Committee has set up a volunteer database. New Volunteers can now visit the website and provide AJS with their contact information. The Committee is currently exploring different applications that will allow volunteers to sign up for various tasks and/or shifts for the Convention.
- SideBar 2018: The official Announcement and Registration Form for the 2018 SideBar program has been posted to the website.
- Search Engine Optimization: The Committee is happy to report that the search engine ranking issues that had plagued the website have been resolved. The AJS website now appears within the first three hits of searches conducted via google, bing, and other search engines.

The Committee also proudly notes that the website has attracted the attention of visitors nationwide:

- CBS News, New York On June 6, Debbie Rubin, a producer at CBS News in New York City reached out to AJS looking for answers to questions she had relating to the recent recall of Judge Persky from the California bench.

- Kane County Law Library, St. Charles Illinois: AJS received a request from the Kane County Law Library & Self Help Legal Center in St. Charles, Illinois (the "Library") to purchase a number of copies of the AJS brochure entitled "Behind Closed Doors: a Guide for Jury Deliberations", which the Library normally includes in the materials given to local Boy Scouts working to attain their Law Merit Badge. With the help of former AJS Director Russ Carparelli, the Committee has been able to re-print copies of the brochure and fill the Library's order.
- Provincial Court of British Columbia: AJS has received a request from the Provincial Court of British Columbia (the "Court") to purchase copies of a book that was published by AJS in 1961 entitled "Handbook for judges; an anthology of inspirational and other helpful writings for members of the judiciary". It has been the Court's tradition to give a copy of this Handbook to each judge as a gift when he/she is appointed and the Court. At present, AJS does not have copies of the book to sell and no longer has a copy of the original manuscript. The Committee has located a digital copy of the book on Heinonline and is in the process of evaluating how best to convert this digital copy into a manuscript suitable for re-printing. The Committee is also considering whether this may be an opportune time to create an updated edition of the Handbook for Judges.

Convention Related Activities

This year, the Committee completed projects relating to the 2020 AJS National Convention (the "Convention"). The following achievements are worthy of note:

- Convention Theme: After many meetings and discussions over the internet, the Committee has developed an official theme for the Convention. The theme for 2020 will be "***Judicial Independence in the Age of Political Polarization***".
- Release of Convention E-mail Announcement and Online Interest Survey: The Committee has developed and released an E-mail Announcement and Online Survey for the Convention. The Announcement gives the dates of the Convention and notes that there will be sessions on Political Influence, Reform, Judicial Selection, Diversity, Conduct & Ethics, Public Education, Formation of State Chapters, and more. The Online Survey asks the participant to indicate his/her level of interest in attending the Convention and to provide contact information so that we can send to him/her detailed Convention information once such information becomes available. Both the Announcement and Survey have been released to all AJS Members/Subscribers via E-mail, posted on the AJS Social Media pages, and posted to the AJS Website.

Plans for the Upcoming Year

For the coming year, a main project for the Committee will be the development of a Strategic Communications Plan for AJS (the "Communications Plan"). The goal of the Communications Plan is to position AJS as a credible, reliable, and independent advocate for the American justice system. To date, the Committee has identified a number of communications strategies and strategic objectives. The greater challenge for the Committee has been identifying specific

communications activities that would not only be effective but also be feasible considering the Committee's limited budget and lack of a full-time staff.

Respectfully submitted,

Communications Committee

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