AAJA Governing Board Meeting - Fall 2018  
Friday, November 16, 2018  
8711 Cabrillo Highway, Montara, CA

Officers present: President Yvonne Leow, Senior Vice President Michelle Lee, VP of Journalism Programs Ramy Inocencio, VP of Civic Engagement Pia Sarkar, VP of Communications Nicole Dungca

Officers absent: Treasurer Shawn Nicole Wong

Governing board members present: Julia B. Chan of SF Bay Area, Anh Do, Sameer Rao

Governing board members absent: Kathy Park, Mihir Zaveri

Others present: Ted Han, incoming VP of Finance; Frank Bi, incoming VP of Journalism Programs

Yvonne started the meeting at 1:24 p.m. and Nicole took roll: Ted, Anh, Sameer, Ramy, Yvonne, Michelle, Pia and Nicole were present.

Pia made a motion to approve the spring 2018 board meeting minutes. Ramy seconded the motion. All those present approved it, with Ted and Sameer abstaining because they did not attend the meeting.

Michelle made a motion to approve the summer 2018 board meeting minutes. Sameer seconded it. All those in favor said aye.

Yvonne introduced the national board report, which showed us exceeding revenue for job listings. She wanted more information about the metrics behind it.

Ramy said the small market broadcast co-director is hoping to step down because he is trying to move out of the market. Ramy advised the affinity group to identify other leaders who want to stay in the small market broadcast market, for some sort of continuity.

Ramy said he has been on a listening tour of affinity groups and chapters.

Ramy asked if we have social media goals, and Yvonne said we don’t; generally, we need more marketing goals.

Ramy also talked about a meeting between consultants and those involved with our signature problems. Yvonne introduced a summary of the Envision consultant’s look at signature programs. She showed us the 2019 budgets for the programs, which Justin and Daniel created.
Yvonne said we want to create a pipeline and make sure all of our members and others know the programs exist. She said she wants us to think of the programs as products.

Yvonne made a motion to go into closed session to talk about personnel and the update on the executive session search at 1:55 p.m., and Michelle seconded. All present approved.

Frank Bi called in at 2:30 p.m.

Michelle Lee made a motion to go out of closed session at 2:59 p.m. and Sameer seconded. All in favor approved the motion.

Ted asked whether we all think the programs are a pipeline. Sameer wanted to ask if they all work as pipelines into actual jobs. Ramy sees the first two as pipelines, but the other two less so.

Yvonne directed us to the mission statement and what we want to accomplish.

Julia Chan came in at 3:06 p.m.

Yvonne said we should look at our mission more broadly, especially as some of our executive director candidates had questions about how exactly we see our mission.

Ted said that he thinks we should have auto-renew to help retention. Ted said NationBuilder doesn’t serve us as well as we can. Ted said we have to think of technology and how it serves our needs and goals.

Michelle said that we make it harder to keep subscriptions. We don’t have the system to understand the behaviors of our subscribers, such as tracking who leaves our programs and where they go, what happens to Media Institute participants.

Yvonne said we needs clarity on what our vice presidents and governing board members are doing.

Yvonne asked whether we think our mission is relevant: We focus primarily on AAPI journalists. Does it exist to serve AAPI solely or other groups? Funders are interested in diversity and equity inclusion.

Sameer asked about Pacific Islander journalists and how we can reach out to them more. Yvonne also said that Asian ethnic media is

Anh asked about an advisory board including non-journalists. Julia asks about rebranding not just AAPI, but what about tech and media? There are so many intersections that exist that we’re just starting to explore.
We talked about our 2020 plans and those goals.

Frank said we need something specifically for Asian Americans in journalism.

Pia asked what our members want. Ramy thinks it’s about jobs. Michelle asked about what kind of community we want to give our members.

Ramy said we should think about the aspect of being visible. Anh said she wants to focus on networking successes. Pia said she liked the idea of visibility. Julia said she feels strongly about Asians within their own group as not being engaged.

Ramy mentioned the idea of 2020 Vision for our 2020 goals. Yvonne asked what visibility means.

Pia said that’s lifting people into leadership positions, deficits of Asians in journalism. Ted asked about putting those pieces in CJR and OC Register. Pia also said visibility is getting written about, etc.

Yvonne encouraged us to talk about what increasing visibility means to us:

-- highlight trailblazers that not everyone knows about
-- keeping track of members speaking somewhere, etc
-- AAJA speakers bureau
-- members talk about AAJA
-- keeping track of our own media hits
-- being recognized by a journalism organization
-- 30 under 30 list
-- must watch people in media
-- youtube channel / sizzle reel
-- highlight women in broadcast
-- tokyo olympics - pronunciation, etc
-- demonstrate benefits of being a member

We recessed at 5:20 p.m.

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Others present: Ted Han, incoming VP of Finance; Frank Bi, incoming VP of Journalism Programs, via Google Hangout, Willoughby Mariano of Atlanta, Sonam Vashi of Atlanta

Michelle Lee called the meeting to order at 12:51 p.m. Nicole called roll.

Frank discussed the 2018 convention and what we did well and could do better. He said we got a lot of good feedback. He talked about logistical issues that we need to tackle, and Ted asked how we’re supposed to do that. Michelle said it will be a matter of working with Derrick to figure out AV.

He said that some of the feedback said there was a lack of cohesion with some panels. Frank said he wants to accept rolling pitches since March is somewhat early.

Nicole said that skills and training sessions are well attended, and Michelle said it was because our convention attendance skews young now. Anh said we should focus on quality versus quantity.

Michelle said that we are rethinking how the expo hall can be: We will change it to one day of the job fair, and the other day will have targeted recruiting meals and experiences. NBC would host a breakfast in the closed portion of the hall, etc.

In 2019, speakers will submit their LinkedIn and resumes, so that they can be offered to recruiters earlier.

At 1:20 p.m., Yvonne entered the meeting.

Julia asked whether we can make the conversation also about editors, leadership pipeline. Anh said it could help engage our veteran members.

Yvonne said we need to empower our new executive director to tackle some of our pain points and problems that we’re mentioning.
Frank said he wants to improve some of the moderator quality, and making sure some of the conversations are more seamless.

Willoughby and Sonam, the co-chairs of the 2019 convention, joined the conversation via Google Hangout. They are taking the lead on Saturday programming, which will be community oriented. Willoughby said that the chapter has been talking about the schedule possibilities and who they may ask. One important theme: showcasing Atlanta and making sure we talk about important emerging ideas.

The schedule will include an awards luncheon and high profile event in the evening. She mentioned there are many emerging women leaders and hip hop activists that can be tapped. We could possibly do a panel with a musical performance. Food trucks are a possibility.

Yvonne encouraged thinking about who we want to reach: can we attract people outside of the AAJA community?

Yvonne asked about how we want to define our mission and how to orient ourselves around our 2020 goals:

1. Increase our membership from 1,500 to 2,020. It's more than a statistic. If we want to ensure organizations are held accountable to diversifying media, we need to find strength in numbers.
2. Be a leader in diversity, equity and inclusion issues. While our focus is on the AAPI community, we will continue to create opportunities for all journalists of color.
3. Focus on digital innovation. Our future depends on us experimenting and embracing new technologies. We're exploring ways AAJA can help solve systemic diversity challenges, including a potential freelance jobs platform.
4. Expand our presence in Asia. Our Asia chapter is one of the fastest-growing in AAJA, and we want to support its expansion in the years to come.
5. Elevate and advocate for our most seasoned AAJA members. We want to better support AAJA managers and editors so we see more of them rise to the highest levels of leadership in journalism.

Lawrence from Northwestern University stopped by to talk about the school’s programs and how the media fits into a world where advertising revenue has been increasingly taken by Facebook and Google. Ted talked about membership and fundraising. Pia agreed with membership and elevating members. Nicole said increasing membership and diversity and elevating membership. Ramy said he wants increasing Asia’s presence and elevating members can support the diversity goals. Frank said he wants to have more programs that people can take over.

Yvonne encouraged us to focus on 2020 members and elevating members. The next step is to get deeper.
Ramy talked about affinity groups and growth. There is a lot of momentum now, and the next thing to focus on is the handoff to next leaders. Leaders told Ramy that they want more input for programming, and spaces to meet during convention. Some asked about money.

Frank said that many affinity groups felt like they weren't heard in terms of programming pitches. He said there will be more pitches because there are newer affinity groups. He clarified that affinity groups are guaranteed one panel during convention.

Pia mentioned that MediaWatch was slower to respond to coverage on an imam. She said it was a more difficult situation to address because it was less black and white. Michelle asked how we can more efficiently respond to that, and Pia said it was difficult to address because of so much nuance.

Pia said the Muslim American Taskforce is developing a source database, and now there is some money ($5,000) from the New Democracy Fund to help it along.

Pia said Doris is helping to steer the effort to update our own handbook on covering Muslim communities.

Yvonne made a motion to enter closed session to talk about personnel at 3:40 p.m. and Michelle seconded it. All those present approved the motion.

Sameer made a motion to go into open session at 4:06 p.m. Julia seconded it. All those present approved the motion.

Julia, Nicole, and Ramy talked about how groups should elect leaders after 2 successive years in existence. Ramy said Yung AAJA and Sports Task Force were electing their own boards. We decided to look at what happens in the elections. Nicole will write a policy before the spring board meeting.

Julia said that she was concerned that Student Broadcast was smaller than Yung AAJA, and that there would be increased responsibilities. Michelle said she likely didn't want people to feel lost in the merger, but she said she does not think doubling their programming is the right solution.

Anh Do left the meeting at 4:15 p.m.

Ramy said Video and Women affinity groups were getting off the ground. He also said that seasoned AAJA members wanted to start a group, but nobody has taken ownership of it. Data Viz may also start up.

Yvonne suggested paying program directors. Julia said she’d be open to exploring it. Yvonne said it could help bring different talent to the table. Michelle said she wants to be cognizant of
how we’re evaluating each program and investing in them. Yvonne said it would add a level of professionalism.

Michelle wanted to offer some sort of deal for allies. Could it go to first-time convention goers who have never been members? Julia said she likes the idea of incentivizing allies.

Ramy asked whether it would make people annoyed to see the same spam over and over. Julia said she liked the idea of keeping spaces neutral, which we did for this election. Julia liked the listserv and Facebook campaigning free.

Nicole will write a policy:
-- Campaigning is allowed in equal access channels on Facebook and Slack (aaja-general, official AAJA page)
-- Chapters are not allowed to retweet or share messages
-- Listservs are not included;

Ted explained what he is looking for - where are we patching technical problems with staff time? He recommended going forward with Submittable for three years. He said that we may need a better website.

Yvonne explained why we are using NationBuilder. Ted said we should take the year to identify and assess the needs we have.

Frank is hoping to get Submittable up and running for the first round of Voices. He said he wants the programs to have more cohesion. He said there were now applications for program directors, so he wanted the applications to be earlier.

Yvonne made a motion to adjourn the board meeting. Julia seconded it and we all voted to adjourn at 5:28 p.m.