



What's not to like?

ASWB's new Social Media and Information Coordinator brings #enthusiasm, #engagement.

Tracey Daniels joined the ASWB Communications and Marketing department in May to steer the association's social media presence. Daniels, who has an extensive background in nonprofit communications, is particularly interested in online social media. "I like the direct contact with the audience," says Daniels, "engaging people in a personal and sometimes fun way."

"The power of social media is sometimes underestimated," Daniels says. "There's really high value in being able to engage directly with the audience." She cites ASWB's activity on Facebook as an example. "Our Facebook audience is primarily made up of social work licensing candidates... they're really eager to learn more about the exams, which is completely understandable, because it's important to their career." The association first set up a Facebook page a few years ago and has posted regularly on a broad range of topics. Daniels has begun to focus more on that audience, most of whom are early-career social workers. "Right now, we're doing a series about test day tips, and that's getting a lot of attention." She has been particularly interested to see that beyond the usual liking and sharing, users are tagging their friends in the comments for

some of these posts. By doing so, they are pointing their friends to ASWB's message, rather than just rebroadcasting it. "We want to be seen as the source for finding out about the exams and licensing, and Facebook is one more channel for us to reach those people."

"The biggest response so far [on Facebook] is a post we did about PTSD Awareness Month," Daniels says. "Sometimes we share information that is relevant to social workers in a broad way," and that post was the most shared ASWB post, with more than 40 people sharing that message with their own networks.

"Twitter is a more diverse audience, with a bigger range of messages. ...It has potential for reaching journalists and the media and other organizations more than Facebook does," says Daniels. But she also notes that several ASWB volunteers are active on Twitter and are great resources for sharing ASWB's information. Claude LeBlond of Québec, for instance, has re-tweeted several of ASWB's messages, and also tweeted about ASWB meetings he attended.

While there are many social media networks online—including Pinterest and Instagram, for example—ASWB is currently sticking to just a few. "We can get a lot more value" says Daniels,

“by becoming more deeply involved in a few networks, rather than doing a little bit everywhere.” For now, ASWB has a strong presence on Facebook ([ASWBOnline](#)), Twitter ([@ASWB](#)) and [LinkedIn](#).

“One of the main measures of success in social media is engagement.

Are people commenting, liking, and sharing our content?” Daniels says. “Growth in the audience is important, but you’re not going to have growth without that engagement. The last thing you want to do is put a bunch of stuff out there and just have it go into a black hole. With social media, you can tailor what you’re doing and refine it as you get feedback from your audience.”

In the three months since she joined ASWB, Daniels has also gotten away from her social media accounts to attend New Board Member Training, which opened her eyes to the importance of ASWB’s work. “I really appreciated having [social work regulation] made tangible... You hear about regulation and it sounds so abstract, but then you meet these people and they’re regular people who’ve taken a volunteer position... and we’re helping them to learn what they need to learn to be effective regulators.” Likewise, attending the National Association of Social Workers National Conference in July helped her see the association’s role from the perspective of social workers and licensure candidates, she says.

LinkedIn is the association’s most recent foray into social media, with a discussion group started this



month to talk about social work regulation. “LinkedIn is considered the professional network for social media,” Daniels says. “We wanted to have a presence in that forum. It’s a great venue for helping to distribute accurate information about regulation and engaging people in conversation.” Already the discussion group has more than a dozen members, both people known to the association and newcomers. “We’re trying to reach multiple audiences [on LinkedIn]: social workers, regulators, educators, even the general public,” Daniels says.

Daniels’ background in communications is combined with a work history of nonprofits and advocacy organizations, making her a particularly good fit for the mission-focused ASWB. “I have a long history of jobs that are related to social work. ... I worked for a prison ministry and an inner-city drug rehab program. I trained to be a teacher and taught in public school early on,” she says. “Being able to work in an environment related to social work is great. The values of social work are important to me, and I see this as furthering the cause and helping social workers get their credentials so they can help more people.”