



## Reception mixes leaders old and new

Having a welcome reception at the Annual Meeting of the Delegate Assembly is not a new idea, but using it to further committee recruitment by having the reception hosted by committee chairs was new at the 2016 annual meeting.

Building on the success of the nominating committee's efforts at the 2016 Education Conference ASWB, staff decided to encourage potential volunteers to consider committee service by highlighting six out of the seven committees in an informal setting. The reception, held in the area in front of the ballroom in the US Grant Hotel, was viewed as a great way for people to meet the current committee chairs and find out what they do in that capacity. Committee interest forms were available at the reception for those ready to take the next step and a number of them were completed in San Diego and another 15 were completed online.

Committee chairs, many wearing ASWB t-shirts which made them easy to spot, explained what their committee was charged to do and what a committee appointment would mean to a new committee member. These informal interactions at the reception sparked interest in the committee reports the following day.

Of the people who responded to a question about the reception on the meeting evaluation, 64 percent said they had learned more than they already knew about service and leadership roles with ASWB. One of the attendees reported they now "understand roles better," while another wrote, "Opportunities to discuss committee service and leadership were numerous. Culture is warm and engaging and participants feel welcome and valued."

Once she returned from the Delegate Assembly, Melissa Ryder, volunteer engagement and outreach senior manager, looked at information provided by the 116 attendees--members, committee chairs, liaisons to the Board of Directors--about their committee experiences. She will use the candid responses about the various segments of the Delegate Assembly to help evaluate which are the most vital.

As part of committee recruitment and outreach, Ryder is also trying, "to determine how to support the effectiveness of committee work and to ascertain whether the time commitment required was what volunteers had initially been led to expect." Ryder explained, "In addition to increasing the pool of potential volunteers and helping new committee members get off to

a good start, focusing on the steps helps grow leadership.”

Survey results might also be one of the criteria used by the ASWB President in making committee appointments for 2017. This thoughtful, detailed process takes into consideration geographic and ethnic diversity, a desire for Canadian participation, as well as a volunteer’s interests and strengths.

Ryder added, “If we know someone is interested in volunteering we can contact him or her directly. We might otherwise rely too heavily on the same people who have been volunteering or put someone else in an uncomfortable spot by asking for their participation at a time when they do not feel ready or their schedule does not permit.”

ASWB is extremely fortunate that new volunteers with strong leadership skills are joining the ranks of those who continue, year after year, to support our mission and objectives.