

Recruiting and Retaining New Members

LET'S START WITH WHO WE ARE:

ASSOCIATES OF VIETNAM VETERANS OF AMERICA is an independent organization that is dedicated to working side-by-side with Vietnam Veterans of America, focusing on helping veterans and their families, from all eras of service.

- ✓ Clearly understand the Mission, Vision, and Core Values of Associates of Vietnam Veterans of America (AVVA). www.avva.org
- ✓ Set recruiting goals – How many new members, and by what deadline?
- ✓ Have member applications on hand always.
 - (Order by contacting membership@vva.org)
 - Share ideas at regular meetings.

WHAT CAN WE DO?

Recruit at your events:

- Set up membership and info table.
 - ✓ Be prepared to answer relevant questions about AVVA
- Have Membership, A.O., Legislative, benefits, and other brochures or flyers available.
- Always have member apps! (Order through membership@vva.org)
- Hand out business cards or flyers containing your chapter contact and meeting information to everyone you talk to.

Some Other Ideas:

- Co-sponsor events with other organizations.
- Co-sponsor events with other Associates of Vietnam Veterans of America and Vietnam Veterans of America chapters.
- Talk about AVVA where ever you go.
- Develop a Recruitment Campaign:
 - ✓ Offer members prizes for highest # of recruits in a specific time frame.
 - ✓ Prizes need not be expensive or elaborate!

Now that we have them how do we keep them?

Membership Retention:

- ✓ Get new members involved ASAP! Help them feel essential to the organization.
 - Give new members a responsibility (chair a committee etc.) but do not overwhelm them.
- ✓ Introduce yourself to new members at first sight. Help them introduce themselves to others, so that they feel welcome.

RETENTION ...

- Let new members have a say; listen to their ideas.
 - Do not be a dictator! Whether members are new or existing;
 - they will not respond well!
 - Try to hold social events, for everyone to get acquainted.
 - Encourage new members to attend conferences, conventions, events, etc.
 - Have clear expectations and respect all members.
 - Be organized.
- ✓ Appoint or elect a membership chair: (Duties: www.avva.org/policy.html Section 11)
 - If not possible, be sure you, as chapter rep or president, are very familiar with your roster.
 - Build and maintain a current email list for all members!
 - Contact members by mail, or email, and follow up with phone calls if you see they are hovering on the edge of “inactive”.
 - ✓ If members drop from the roster, contact them and invite them back. Let them know they are missed.

MOTIVATE MEMBERS:

Motivation must come from within:

- Be a model (as president, representative or officer).
- Ask them why they became involved with AVVA.
- Reward those who do well: From small things like mention at meetings, cards, little gifts, all the way up to national award recognition.
- Start discussions about the purpose of AVVA. Members need to feel connected.
- Always have a “can-do” attitude rather than a “what can we do” attitude.

And....

- Allow for personal growth.
- Remember: The sweetest sound to any person is their own name.
- Involve all members in the short and long-term goals of your chapter. Let them be a part of the decision-making process.
- Provide individual attention that identifies and utilizes a member’s strengths and affords the opportunity for developing new skills.

Some Handy Reference Info:

1. National Website (www.avva.org)
 1. Job descriptions and duties – all levels
www.avva.org/policy.html. Section 11

1. Membership Application Brochures – order through membership@vva.org
OR
2. You can print member applications from the website:
www.avva.org/forms/membership/Membership_app_fillable.pdf
1. Contact your regional director or state rep/president listed:
www.avva.org/region.html or www.avva.org/statechapter.html
2. Contact a recruitment mentor: bobby514@comcast.net
3. Check out the other power-points on the avva.org website to get more training information! (www.avva.org/training.html)

Questions? Comments? Discussion?