

Getting Involved in PSA

With the exception of two employees at headquarters in Oklahoma City, the Photographic Society of America (PSA) is operated entirely by volunteers. It is a tribute to these volunteers that the Society manages so well. There are benefits to volunteering: Many long-term friendships can be realized through offering services and involvement leads to a sense of belonging; self-esteem receives a boost after a task well-done; or perhaps a member is using the benefits of PSA and being a volunteer gives one the opportunity to “give back.” While there are always several positions open, many members, particularly those new to the Society, may wonder how to go about researching what positions are available and how to volunteer their services.

There are three main sources to explore. To start with, the *PSA Journal* publishes the *Services and Activities* (S&A) section quarterly in the January, April, July and October issues of the *Journal*. A quick glance at the S&A in the July 2008 issue shows 4 positions advertised: **Instructional services**-Electronic Imaging Division (EID) video; **Study groups**, EID-Video study groups and Photojournalism Division (PJD) study groups; **Competition and Exhibition** -PJD Interclub competition; all are Volunteer Opportunities. It is important to read all of the various sections of the *Services and Activities*.

The second excellent resource would be to read the News section of the *Journal*, which is located towards the back of each issue. Many times the various editors will solicit volunteers. For instance, in the July issue, the Photojournalism Editor, **Lynn Maniscalco, FPSA, EPSA**, writes about volunteering in PJD. Or look in this issue on page 40; the Color Projected Imaging Division (CPID) is looking for volunteers.

The third resource would be to go online to www.psaphoto.org and go to Divisions and look for the officers of each division. An email to a division officer should yield results. Let an officer know that you are interested in a particular division and tell them what talent or experience you may bring to an opening. Please note that although Division positions are for a two-year term and expire at the close of the even year conference, many vacancies occur in the interim period.

The three previous suggestions are the most popular methods to procure a volunteer job but they are not the only means available. Membership VP, **Joanne Stolte, APSA, EPSA**, tells us, “Paying a membership fee makes someone a PSA member; however, it does not necessarily make a person ‘feel like they belong.’ To feel like they have a part, have a say in their society, or truly ‘belong’ a member can get involved in a small part of the organization or the day-to-day conduct of business. Any member can share their skills with other members or assume responsibility for coordinating a PSA activity. There is a webpage that offers a confidential link to discuss the opportunities for any member who wishes to help: http://psa-newmember.org/consultation_services/serving_psa_volunteering.html

Other officers of the Board of Directors have committees that serve directly under them and they too need volunteers. This is especially true for Chapter, Clubs and Council VP, **Sharp Todd, APSA, PPSA**, cccVP@psa-photo.org; and Conventions VP, **Gerald Emmerich, FPSA, EPSA**. Contact any Officer of the Society for information on volunteer positions.

Volunteers write every word in the *PSA Journal* and the editor is always looking for Feature articles. For information on writing for the *Journal* please contact Publications VP, **Elena McTighe**, pupvp@psa-photo.org. But know that publication is an opportunity and not a right of membership and all articles are subject to approval by the editor.

Volunteers should have Internet access as most PSA business is conducted by email. Accepting a position is a commitment and volunteers must be courteous, willing to follow through on their position’s requirements, and answer all emails promptly.

Bailey Donnally, FPSA, EPSA, Chairman of the Honors Committee states, “The Photographic Society of America (PSA) seeks to recognize those exceptional people who contribute greatly to improving photography. PSA honors, the Associate (APSA) and the Fellowship (FPSA), are awarded in recognition of contributions to the advancement of the arts and sciences of photography within or outside of PSA.”

Elena McTighe

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