

NABE-News

CALENDAR from www.nabenet.org

NABE Board of Directors meeting

When: Nov. 5 - 6
Where: Destin, FL

GR Section Workshop

When: Nov. 10 - 12
Where: Washington, DC

NABE Administration and Finance Section Meeting

When: Feb. 7 - 8
Where: Salt Lake City, UT

NABE/NCBP/NCBF Midyear Meeting

When: Feb. 8-12
Where: Salt Lake City, UT

CSE Retreat

When: March 8 - 9, 2005
Where: Chicago, IL

Bar Leadership Institute

When: March 10 -12, 2005
Where: Chicago, IL

ANNOUNCEMENTS

NABE BOARD MEETING: The NABE Board meets next Friday and Saturday at the Sandestin Beach Resort in Florida, which luckily remains standing after all the hurricanes. The Board will address a number of topics, including the adoption of an investment/reserve policy, increasing the number of scholarships to meetings, and benefits to offer our members, especially those who cannot attend meetings. Several of you have emailed me with ideas for benefits, and it's still not too late. If you have a suggestion for a member benefit we can offer, please email it to me ASAP so the Board can consider it. A review of the Board's actions will appear in a future NABE-News.

BEST WISHES AND GOOD LUCK: Chris Blake, the Communications Director for the Connecticut Bar Association for the past 9 ½ years, has announced his resignation to accept a position with an association management firm based in West Hartford, CT. Chris has been a thoughtful, supportive, and highly respected member of the Communications Section, serving as its chair in 2002-03. Here is a sampling of the responses from members of the Communications Section to Chris's announcement:

"What an incredible loss for the Section and blessing for your new employer! Your creativity, boundless energy, eternal optimism, and endless support will be missed by ALL of your colleagues."

"You have been a friend, a mentor, an inspiration. Whenever anyone throws out a question on the listserv, you always respond with a detailed, thoughtful, and extremely helpful answer. When something needs to be done, you are always the first to volunteer to do it."

"So, who is this Chris Blake guy that now has at least 20 messages from friends, colleagues, people whose lives he touched for being such a decent, hardworking and friendly type? So, who is this Chris Blake guy that never failed to say hi to just about everyone he met at an ABA meeting? I'll tell you who is this Chris Blake guy. Someone who, for me, is unforgettable."

"I have to add --It is a testament to his PR abilities that he is able to generate so much good press! And it just goes to show that sometimes the old-fashioned values of hard work, being generous with your time and advice, and doing your homework ARE noticed and appreciated. Belonging to the NABE Communications Section is one of the greatest benefits of Bar work -- and Chris Blake (my "buddy" at my first NABE Comm Section Workshop in 1998) is one of the finest examples of the kind of people you meet, laugh with and learn from."

May we all have such praise heaped on us when we leave! Good luck in your new job, Chris -- we'll miss you!

NABE WEBSITE SURVEY: If you haven't already done so, please take a few moments to complete the NABE Website Committee survey. You can access it at <http://www.surveymonkey.com/s.asp?u=58260668134>.

GOVERNMENT RELATIONS SECTION WORKSHOP: Also, remember the GR Section Workshop, November 10-12 in Washington, DC. Hotel reservations can be made at Jurys Washington Hotel, Dupont Circle (866/534-6835 or 202/483-6000); rooms are \$150/night. The registration fee is \$185 for GR Section members; \$220 for NABE members (includes workshop registration and GR Section dues); and \$250 for non-NABE members. Limited scholarship opportunities are available. To apply, provide a brief statement of interest and contact information to GR Section Chair, Matthew Hallisey, at 860/612-2004 or mhallisey@ctbar.org.

WHAT IS AND ISN'T MICROMANAGEMENT? Some thoughts from CompassPoint Nonprofit Services:

- “Micromanagement” may be wryly defined as whatever the board does that the executive director doesn’t like!
- The line between what constitutes micromanagement and what doesn’t falls differently in different organizations – based mostly on the board’s confidence in the executive.
- Board members don’t get much direct evidence on whether they should gain or lose confidence in the executive director – so if the board packet is sloppily put together, the budget wasn’t controlled last year, or thank-you letters to donors were late, board members start to step in closer.
- The board chair should organize the board so that the executive director is not beset with conflicting orders from board members. A simple way is for the board chair to act as “gatekeeper” between the executive and board members, deciding what should come to the board and what shouldn’t. However, since the board as a whole does oversee the executive and board-staff relations, the board as a whole should review the gatekeeper decisions to bring it into alignment on the level of confidence in the executive.
- If as an executive director, you think the board is micromanaging, ask yourself and the board chair what signals the board is getting to make them wonder about your ability to lead and manage the organization. Tackle the real issue – such as budget control or donor recognition – rather than argue over a “trivial” matter, such as whether the purchase of light fixtures is a board or staff decision.
- As executive director, pick your battles – choose ones that are meaningful, not symptomatic. And don’t forget to give the board direct feedback too, by saying, “I appreciate the confidence you have in me as demonstrated by your agreeing that this decision was a staff decision,” or “Is this input to my eventual decision or are you saying this is a board decision?” or “Since you’re questioning a decision I think is a staff decision, should we take a look at the board’s overall assessment of my performance?”

WHY WAS NABE-NEWS A DAY LATE? Choose the reason you think best explains why NABE-News was sent on Wednesday this week instead of its normal Tuesday:

- Oh no, I forgot . . . again!
- Is it really Wednesday? Are you sure it’s not Tuesday?
- What? You mean I’m president of NABE and supposed to do a weekly e-newsletter?
- Hey, I live in Memphis and time moves slower in the South!
- I was deeply depressed and unable to function after the Cardinals lost the first 3 games of the World Series.
- All of the above.