

Volunteering to Get Involved with IACLEA

(The President's address was presented on July 1, 2003 at the 45th Annual Conference in San José, California)

by Dolores Stafford, President

Let me begin by thanking each of you and the many members who couldn't be here for the conference for entrusting me with the presidency of this great association. I have been a member of IACLEA for thirteen years, but I remember my first conference in 1993. I vividly remember sitting in the audience listening to the president's speech and thinking that it would be awesome to be the president of this organization. Soon after the conference, I was perusing the membership directory and I realized that there had never been a female president of IACLEA. Now here we are in 2003 and I am in the daunting position today of becoming the first female president of this great organization. I can honestly say that it is a bit overwhelming! When I became Chief at GW, I was the first female in that position and, at 27, I was easily one of the youngest chiefs in the country. Those were the first major hurdles for me in my young career, and this will surely be the second.

I am fortunate though, because I have many people on the board and in the organization who will be with me 100% and I know that if I slip, they will catch me before I fall. I am honored to be part of the current board of directors. I can say that we are all very different, but we are each strong leaders in our own right. I



was pleased with the dynamics of this group during the strategic planning session last month. Everyone was able to express their opinion and in the end, we came to consensus on almost every issue. It never got personal, it never got ugly, and it was obvious to me right then that this group of people is simply interested in making this organization as good and as strong as possible. There is a great deal of strength and determination in the people who sit before you and I look forward to a very productive year from our leadership team.

In preparing to write this speech, I read each speech given by the last five presidents. I am in awe of the many great leaders who have been on the board and those that took the leap of faith by running for president. I truly admire the leadership of the people who have served as president during the past five years, like Fred Behr, John King, O.J. Clark and Scott Doner. It is obvious to me that the association has moved forward at warp speed since the first strategic plan was developed in 1998.

When I look at the goals from the first plan and the achievements, I am amazed! I don't think that most of our members have a real sense of what has been accomplished within the association over the last five years. Surely, these accomplishments would not have been possible without a committed group of members who volunteered for IACLEA. I think we need to summarize those accomplishments in the next issue of the *Campus*

Law Enforcement Journal so the members can get a real sense of the progress made by IACLEA for the benefit of the individual members, as well as for campus law enforcement and the security industry (see page 34).

We can't deny that the landscape of our business has changed dramatically since September 11, 2001. Many events have transpired since that time including anthrax scares, various periods of heightened alert, the war in Iraq, and tight fiscal times in the nation and, in particular, on our campuses. These events have led to our most recent initiative to apply for a grant to train all campus police and security personnel in the country in a basic weapons of mass destruction course that focuses on an introduction to risk assessment, the prevention of WMD attacks, target hardening, and recognition of dangers. We have been notified that we will be receiving two million dollars to pursue this initiative.

During this past year, we completed another Membership Needs Assessment Survey to identify what the membership wants, needs, and expects from IACLEA. Last month, the board and a group of members came together to develop the strategic plan that will guide the direction of the association for the next five years. The approach in defining the new strategic direction was not to identify what IACLEA is doing today, but to determine what is not being done today, and must be done in the future to be successful.

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The strategic direction is not about business as usual—it is about change! The board and I prioritized the initiatives that I will work to lead us through during the upcoming year. All of these initiatives revolve around IACLEA's core purpose, which is to represent and promote campus public safety.

The goals for the next five years are as follows:

- IACLEA will be its members' indispensable resource for standards, services, innovative professional development, and networking.
- IACLEA will be the proactive advocate for advancing the role of campus public safety.
- IACLEA will be the widely recognized public voice for campus public safety.
- IACLEA will be financially viable in order to achieve its strategic goals.

With these goals as our guide, during this year we will undertake the following initiatives: First, we will increase opportunities for training at the regional level. I am working with the company that has been contracted by the U.S. Department of Education to write the Clery Act Handbook that has recently been funded by Congress. They have been asked to conduct training sessions and we are working with them to bring the training to each IACLEA region, in conjunction with our regional conferences, once the handbook has been completed. The target for rolling out the training is during the spring of 2004.

Second, we will research the viability of having IACLEA representation in Washington, DC to deal with U.S. government and law enforcement/security affairs. This past year, we were invited to participate on task forces and in meetings with U.S. federal agencies and associations more than ever before in the history of IACLEA. We need to determine cost, the implications for our tax status, and whether the membership will financially support the concept of the Association having paid government relations representation in Washington.

Third, we will work to develop more in-depth relationships and partnerships with key national associations. This year

we will focus on opportunities to strengthen our relationships with NACUBO and the American Council on Education.

Finally, we will focus on various initiatives to meet our goal of ensuring financial viability, including reviewing our current dues structure; reviewing current non-dues revenue sources; exploring opportunities to develop new revenue sources; reviewing the current reserve fund policies; and examining the current expenditures, both operational and long term.

In all of the speeches written by the last five presidents, one theme was prevalent, that of—volunteerism. In the 2003 membership survey, more than 85% of you said you were satisfied or very satisfied with the value of IACLEA membership. At the same time, respondents indicated with similar percentages that they were only somewhat involved or not involved at all.

This means that currently, only a small percentage of the members of the association are volunteering to work for the association. We continue to struggle to get members actively involved, and it is really frustrating when a significant percentage of the members fail to complete even the simplest tasks, such as completing a survey or voting. For example, only 29% of the members completed the 2003 Membership Needs Survey and only 41% voted in the recent national election for president and at-large directors. I know we can do better!

I have to reiterate the message of the speeches over the last five years by talking for a minute about volunteering to get involved with IACLEA. Many of the opportunities for involvement require a commitment of only one to two hours each month. If every member donated a mere hour per month, whether that involves becoming a member of a committee, volunteering for a task force, taking the lead on a project, or writing an article for the CLEJ, can you imagine where this association would be in the next five years? I can imagine it! I am an avid football fan, specifically a 49ers fan, and I look at this association like it's a football game. I am willing to be the coach and to spend as much time as it takes watching game film. I know my fellow

board members are willing to be the assistant coaches, but we need people with a wide variety of talents to play all the different positions. We need starters and we need back-up players. We can't win the game with the majority of our players on the sidelines waiting for someone else to make it happen. Everyone in this association needs to get in the game if we are to ultimately achieve our largest goal of all, which is that "IACLEA will be recognized as the professional association of campus public safety."

In closing, I would like to thank the committee chairs and committee members who have already volunteered to help us achieve our goals for this year. I would like to thank Peter Berry, Karen Breseman, Pam Hayes, Carol Ewing, Tessa O'Sullivan and Dr. Tom Porter for all of their hard work on behalf of the association. Our staff works hard for the association every day and provides an important element of continuity during the transition between each president's terms in office.

I also want to make it clear that I would not be able to take on this challenge if it weren't for my terrific staff at GW. I have an outstanding department with an exceptional management team and excellent staff members at every level. I am lucky to work at an amazing institution and to have a boss who is supportive of all of my professional goals. I am proud to be the leader of the George Washington University Police Department. Lastly, I am thankful to my family and friends who have supported and encouraged me in every adventure along the way.

I look forward to a challenging but productive and successful upcoming year. Your support and involvement are the keys to the organization's success. Thank you for your confidence and support.

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