**College and University Retiree Associations of Canada**

**Associations de retraités des universités et collèges du Canada**

# BULLETIN

### No. 9   October 2015

**ROUNDTABLE REPORT ON RECRUITING NEW MEMBERS TO RETIREE ASSOCIATIONS**
**CURAC CONFERENCE DISCUSSION GROUP SESSION HELD MAY 22, 2015**

Our group discussion of recruiting new members into membership associations made the following suggestions:

## We identified barriers to recruitment as:

- Regularly obtaining the names of new retirees from human resource departments and
- Overcoming any negative perceptions that an ex-university group will be the same-o, same-o in terms of attitudes, morale, etc.

## Ideas we discussed regarding recruitment issues:

- Distribute information on a regular basis via a one-page hand-out, a short speech at retirement receptions or Human Resources seminars, etc.
- Offer new retirees a one-year free membership at any point after they retire.
- Have your University install a link called "*Retiring from the University*" on their HR website connected to the Retiree Association website.  Request the same link to the Retiree Association under "Staff" and "Faculty" links on this same page.
- Co-operate with faculty and other employee-related associations to have them promulgate news from retirees and their association in their communication bulletins
- Provide new and creative incentives.  e.g., Queen's is able to offer members of their retirees' association a half-price membership at the University Club.  This translates into $125 saving per year for a $20 membership in the RAQ.
- Other ideas for incentives included reduced memberships in Athletic Centres, annual dinners or luncheons subsidized by the retirees' association, discounts at the bookstore,

free library and electronic access, discounts with economical select health and travel insurance, Collette travel packages, and discounted parking on campus.

- Simplify the membership renewal process so that it can be made as easy as possible. i.e., Institute a payroll deduction option for those receiving pension payments from the University. Consider use of the services of PayPal (2.9% fee) or a MasterCard/Visa transaction through the University.
- A reduction or exemption in tuition fees for retirees who are members of their retiree associations and their families would likely be a good seller.
- Drum up other retirees' interests by having members profile and share the activities that they have been doing in their retirement.
- Identify topics for six hour courses that could be offered to members under the banner of "Learning in Retirement", i.e., a course of six evening sessions at one hour apiece, such as a 'power of Attorney' seminar.
- Combine the presentation of seminar topics with other local associations or organizations to enhance networking and raise the profile of the retiree association and its members.
- Develop external outings for members such as the weekly SFU Walking Group; local theatre or group concert attendances as well as attending local sporting events and visits to various other local cultural/historical places of interest.
- Promulgate that membership in their association links them into a powerful national lobbying voice for senior's issues through the umbrella CURAC organization.
- Advice that membership also provides a forum for sharing best practices and governance information with other similar organizations.
- Boards need to work hard to define what is of real and significant interest to potential members.  Regular surveys may be useful in this regard.
- Encourage staff members soon to be retired to participate, by having an annual dinner/lunch (subsidized slightly) for only staff members
- Offer "couples or lifetime membership" options. e.g., RAQ's annual fees are $20 per person or $30 per couple.
- Offer effective "associate memberships" to retirees of other universities living in your catchment area.
- Above all, use the personal touch approach by encouraging all current members, when they occasionally meet a retiree, to proudly promote membership in their association.

**Jim Boyd, Roundtable Recorder**