



# Leadership Development Committee

Association of Flight Attendants-CWA, AFL-CIO  
43rd Annual Board of Directors Meeting  
Las Vegas, NV  
April 28-30, 2015

## ***Report to the 2015 AFA Board of Directors***

**Subject:** 2013 Agenda Item #2: Advanced Leadership Training

**From:**

International Staff Representatives (ISRs),  
Leadership Development Committee (LDC)

In 2013 the BOD approved Agenda Item #2, which directed an Advanced Leadership Training be developed and offered to the AFA leaders. The ISRs, LDC and SPC worked for over a year to develop the seedling of a new Advanced Leadership Training as the leaders requested. In 2014 the BOD voted to fund the Advanced Leadership Training. Therefore final plans began to bring the Advanced Leadership Training to fruition.

The process began by trying to determine who would best be able to help the ISR's with the AFA leader's desired curriculum. The ISRs had preliminary conversations and requested proposals from several different University based educators. The LDC reviewed these proposals and spoke with 3 different institutions in the summer of 2014:

Ken Margoles from Cornell University

Marilyn Sneiderman from Rutgers University

Barbara Boyd and Bob Bussel from the Labor Education and Research Center (LERC) at the University of Oregon

After evaluating what each of the educators could offer AFA, the decision was made to work with Barbara and Bob from the LERC. Both the ISRs and the LDC felt they would be the best fit for what we wanted to see happen in this training.

Once the choice was made, work began on building the courses & where the training would be conducted. Because of the connection with the University of Oregon, it was decided to hold the training in Portland, OR. Initial course outlines were developed and submitted to the LDC in early January for feedback. The ISRs made a trip to Oregon later in January to work with Barbara and Bob on building the full curriculum. Follow up conference calls were conducted with the LDC after a majority of work was done to get their feedback.

The inaugural Advanced Leadership Training took place in Portland, OR on February 24-26, 2015. The training was designed as a "cafeteria" style concept. The training offered choices between 2 core courses which were offered each morning over the three days and six different workshops offered over the two afternoons. The participants chose their core courses for this year's training and then next year

they can take the opposite courses. This way the participants get a full training through the 2 years of participation.

The courses offered were:

- Core class I:* Facilitation and Planning – The Keys to Successful Meetings
- Core class II:* Leading and Motivating in a Democratic Organization
- Workshop I:* Managing Time – Being Productive and Protecting Work-Life Balance.
- Workshop II:* Organizing and Coalition-Building: Finding Allies in Our Struggles.
- Workshop III:* Financial Strategies - Making the Most with Limited Resources
- Workshop IV:* Front and Center – Getting Comfortable with Public Speaking.
- Workshop V:* Fighting Apathy - Involving Members in the Life of the Union.
- Workshop VI:* Managing Social Media – Directing the On-Line Discussion

A total of 59 participants attended the Advanced Leadership Training in Portland. Everyone who expressed a desire was offered an opportunity due to cancellations and inability of others to attend.

All of the handouts and PowerPoint presentations from the entire training have been housed on Google Drive and shared with all of the attendees. This allowed those who didn't attend a specific class or workshop access to that information so they could coordinate with other council leaders who did attend and wanted to move forward with an idea they got from the workshop or class they took. Thank you to ISR Guy Bosworth for creating the drive and sharing that information with us.

There was valuable feedback given to the ISRs, LDC and Barbara and Bob, which will be used in modifying the program for the training next year. Copies of the evaluations and a summary are available from the LDC. Here's some of the highlights from that feedback.

- The relationship with LERC was very positive. We appreciated the fresh perspective that they were able to bring and enjoyed working with them. We look forward to continuing the relationship and revamping the training to make it even more effective for our group.
- A little more than half submitted evaluations. Response via the evaluations and verbally from participants was largely positive though there were opportunities for improvement identified. We are going to put out a follow up electronic survey to attempt to capture any further comments or concerns.
- The participants overwhelmingly valued being together and being able to share stories and experience throughout the week.
- The location in PDX was difficult for many of our attendees to access. Future training should be held in a more central location with better non-stop access.
- Having the opening session in the evening on a day of travel was difficult for many. It would be preferable to start the program fresh on the first morning.

- The large class size in Core Course 2 took away from training. This also created a tight set up for the room which was not conducive to good learning. We should limit the class size and adjust room layout in any future training.
- We need to re-examine how to challenge all skill levels while not limiting participation.
- Provide more information (full syllabus if possible) for participants prior to registration so they can more accurately assess whether they want to select any given course.
- Ensure that communications continue to reiterate the full schedule. There was confusion over the closing session
- The closing session needs to be more engaging.

The Committee and instructors had the following Initial suggestions for changes to future Advanced Leadership Training:

- Schedule the training in the Fall. This would be better due to weather and provide leaders an opportunity to gather away from the BOD meeting.
- Ideally participants would have a plan of action to take away – Perhaps building a campaign to follow when they return to their councils. This would allow each participant to adapt the training directly to the issues facing them at the time.
- Revisit format for future training. Ideas included eliminating core courses and offering all short workshops, offering a combination of short and long workshops (long workshops would take the place of core courses), offering multiple versions of the same workshops over the week to avoid larger class sizes and to allow more opportunity to attend (not overlap).

Overall, the LDC felt the Advanced Leadership Training was a success and we look forward to helping to shape the next installment of the training. Once the Board takes action on funding, we will begin the process of building that refined program.