



ASSOCIATION OF CORPORATE COUNSEL HOUSTON CHAPTER

BOARD OF DIRECTORS PLAYBOOK

Welcome to the Board of Directors of the [Houston Chapter of the Association of Corporate Counsel!](#)

Thank you for giving back to our community by serving on the Board of our chapter. We hope you will enjoy this experience and contribute to our in-house community.

We are pleased to have you join the Board and have prepared this playbook to help you transition into your Director role. This document should help you understand the Board's responsibilities as the ultimate governing body of our chapter, and your individual contributions and responsibilities as a Director. We highly recommend you start this journey by familiarizing yourself with our chapter's formation documents, which you may find at the "member area" of the [StarChapter](#) website (our online event registrations system, [click here](#) for more details), especially our [Bylaws](#).

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Our Chapter

The Association of Corporate Counsel (ACC) serves the professional needs of in-house counsel and is the premier source for information, networking opportunities and education for the in-house practitioner.

The Houston Chapter (ACC Houston) is home to over 1,200 in-house counsel in the Greater Houston Area. The chapter provides resources to its members through chapter meetings, practice groups, networking opportunities, and written resources through the ACC website.

Leadership

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

ACC Houston is led by a Board of Directors, which includes between 12 and 21 members who are all members of ACC Houston. The Board is led by an Executive Committee composed of at least the President, the President-Elect, the Secretary, the Treasurer and the Immediate Past President. Additional Directors may be invited to the Executive Committee from time to time to support the Executive Committee's activities.

The Board members are assigned various responsibilities to help manage the chapter. For example, many Board members lead Practice Groups, Committees, and various other initiatives.

For more details on the various leadership positions of our chapter, please [click here](#).

DIRECTORS AT-LARGE

An ACC member is elected as a Director for a three-year term and should become familiar with the Houston Chapter By-Laws, Committees, and Practice Groups. The new Director should attend the half-day Board meeting in early October to help plan the upcoming year's activities (the fiscal year runs from October 1 through September 30). This meeting gives Directors an opportunity to discuss his or her interests, volunteer to assume Committee or Practice Group responsibilities, and obtain answers to any questions. Another more in-depth and strategic retreat is held in June, usually at a resort with family invited, which addresses many of these issues on a longer-term perspective, allows for deeper discussions into issues that time does not permit during regular monthly Board meetings, and adopts the slate of Board nominees who will be elected by the membership in September. On average, Directors are expected to spend 6-10 hours per month on ACC business.

After the October Board meeting, monthly Board meetings are held the first Friday of the month from 11:30 to 1 and lunch is provided. While there is no requirement to attend a certain number of meetings, Directors should make every effort possible to attend all Board meetings, as well as the October and June retreats, which count as the monthly meetings. If a Director is absent from a significant number of meetings, the other Directors will likely approach him or her and encourage better attendance.

A Director is also expected to participate in ACC activities, such as monthly Chapter lunch meetings, Practice Group meetings, and social events. This gives the Director an opportunity to meet Chapter members, prospective members and sponsor representatives, hear concerns, and report back to the

Board any ideas or issues. To encourage monthly chapter meeting attendance, the Houston Chapter absorbs the cost for Directors at these meetings.

Each Director is expected to volunteer for at least one Practice Group or Committee leadership position. Usually Directors lead the Committees and Practice Groups, but sometimes a non-Director will lead one of these groups and a Director will act as liaison between it and the Board. The Practice Group or Committee Chair is responsible for organizing Practice Group/Committee activities in conjunction with the sponsor and acting as liaison between the Board, the Executive Director, and the sponsor. Directors are also encouraged to volunteer, or be receptive to requests for assistance, in planning or executing other major ACC activities, such as the annual Golf/Spa and Symposium events. Directors are also requested to evaluate ACC members for possible positions on Committees, Practice Groups, or the Board.

Each Director is expected to connect with at least one law firm sponsor to maintain communications between the sponsors and the Board. Usually, a Director chooses sponsors with whom the Director's company has an existing or prior relationship, but that is not necessary. Other times, a Director who leads or participates with a Practice Group will connect with the sponsor for that Practice Group. At least once a year, Directors, in pairs or individually, treat a couple of the key sponsor attorneys to an "appreciation lunch" where the Directors pass along the Board's gratitude for the sponsorship and request the firms' attorneys to provide feedback. Lunch expenses are reimbursed after filing an expense request form.

If a Director wants to become an Officer, he or she should make that desire known to one or more of the existing Officers. ACC Headquarters conducts training programs for these positions and the Chapter will reimburse a Director's expenses for attending them, if prior Board approval to attend is obtained.

Directors are not required to participate in ACC HQ meetings, but they are encouraged to do so if their companies approve it. Travel and registration expenses to the ACC annual meeting are typically the responsibility of each Director's company, not the Chapter.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

ACC Houston is also supported by an Executive Director, who supports the Board and manages the chapter's day-to-day operations. For example, the Executive Director is responsible for ensuring that marketing materials satisfy ACC's standards and that they are distributed to our members. The Executive Director helps the Board in managing and scheduling events through a master calendar, locating and securing event space, maintaining the website, handling membership relations and keeping the books and records for the chapter. The Executive Director is a non-voting member of the Executive Committee. Without the Executive Director, our chapter would not function with as much success as it has over the years.

THE FUTURE: RECRUITMENT OF BOARD MEMBERS

The Executive Committee constantly looks at our Board to determine what types of leadership candidates the Chapter needs. We are especially careful with considering Board diversity (gender, background, large/small law department composition, practice area and industries) and personality to ensure a good Board mix and better decision making through a diversity of perspectives.

The process for recruitment of new members generally follows these steps:

- Determine the number of board openings that will need to be filled.
- The Directors at large openly solicit good candidates and encourage them to consider serving as a board member; the Board also makes open calls for expressions of interest at Chapter Meetings and other events.
- Send interested members the [Board Member Interest Statement](#) questionnaire.
- Route copies of the director interest questionnaires to the full board.
- Schedule a “meet and greet” to allow the board members to observe the board candidates in a more casual, social setting to help determine “fit” and “personality” for the board.
- Hold open discussions at the summer retreat concerning the qualities of the candidates. Vote in rank order for all candidates and select the top candidates as per the number of open board positions. If there is a good candidate that did not “make the cut”, encourage that person to take a leadership position helping with a Practice Group or Committee.
- Confirm successful candidates’ willingness to have their names placed on the annual ballot.
- Conduct annual election in accordance with the Bylaws.
- Provide Board Member “On-Boarding Package” and assign a board member “buddy” who will be a resource for the new board member.
- Provide welcome to new board members at October board meeting, and collect the necessary signatures on conflicts of interest, etc.

NEW BOARD MEMBER INTEREST STATEMENT

The ACC Board is composed of volunteers who commit to at 3-year term. As part of the Board’s efforts to secure members who understand the commitment involved and have a passion for serving, the Board created a member interest statement that may be shared with any potential Board member. A template of the New Board Member Interest Statement can be found [here](#).

After receiving the completed interest statement, the existing Board will evaluate the candidates based on the current and future needs of the Board. Even if a candidate is not selected as a Board member in a particular year, that person may be a great asset in supporting other initiatives (e.g., practice groups, committees, interest groups, etc.).

The Big Pieces

ACC Houston has several big pieces to the organization that have continued throughout the years as integral offerings to its members, including: Practice Groups; Annual Ethics Seminar and Golf/Spa; Full-Day Marquee Sponsor CLE; Back to School Symposium; Diversity Scholarship; and Career Development. The following section is intended to provide a general summary and some practice pointers about what is involved in leading these components.

SPONSORSHIP

The Chapter offers a variety of sponsorship opportunities to law firms and legal services vendors interested in connecting with in-house counsel in the Houston area.

As a sponsor, firms and companies have the opportunity to interact and network with ACC Houston membership at CLE events, practice group meetings, social activities, pro bono projects and our signature event—ACC Houston’s Annual Ethics Seminar and Golf/Spa Event. Sponsorship opportunities are limited; details and important dates are included on the Sponsorship Package, which you can find at the “member area” of the [StarChapter](#) website. It is the responsibility of the Board, and each individual member, to develop and maintain relationships with the sponsors.

CHAPTER MEETINGS

ACC Houston hosts monthly CLE meetings open to all members of the chapter. These meetings are named “Chapter Meetings” and currently take place at two different locations. One, hosted at Maggiano’s Little Italy restaurant, is organized around the Galleria area which is typically held on the second Tuesday of each month. The other, is organized in the Woodlands and naturally caters to members that work or reside in North Houston (see “[Woodlands Committee](#)” for more details on these events). The cost of the event in the Galleria is subsidized by ACC Houston but is funded from the sponsorship fees paid by sponsors as well as meeting fees paid by member to partially cover the costs. The sponsors can elect to present in the Woodlands location and cover the cost of that event (members are currently not charged for the Woodlands event).

The Chapter Meetings are the most important recurring events for sponsors to engage with members of ACC Houston, and a great opportunity for members of ACC Houston to participate in continuing legal education and networking. All members, in-house counsel non-members and guests accompanied by a member are welcome to attend. The meeting attendance policy of the chapter can be found on the Policy Page of the website. These meetings traditionally have been presented in a “luncheon” format, and feature the sponsor for each month (see “[Sponsorship](#)” for more details on sponsorship). Chapter Meetings are normally 90 minutes in duration, including sign in and networking time of approximately 30 minutes at the outset of each meeting. Based on availability, ACC Houston’s President-Elect generally opens the meeting with the introduction of the speakers and sponsor and adjourns the meeting with a final message to the membership that normally includes reminders of future events and other relevant messages.

As stated, each monthly Chapter Meeting features a different sponsor. Sponsors select a topic of interest for the presentation (which can be related to their own business strategy, but oftentimes selected based on timely topics of interest by the legal profession), with input from the President-Elect and Executive

Committee. One to two sponsor speakers co-present with one in-house speaker at these meetings. Co-presentation with in-house speakers has been a great success from both member and sponsor engagement perspectives and is highly encouraged.

The Chapter Meetings are organized primarily by the Executive Director and sponsor representatives under the guidance of the Executive Committee.

PRACTICE GROUPS

Currently, ACC Houston hosts nine practice groups: (1) Best Practices; (2) Data Privacy & Security; (3) Energy; (4) Environmental; (5) Intellectual Property; (6) Labor & Employment; (7) Litigation; (8) Mergers & Acquisition; and International. The make-up and number of groups has evolved over the years as interests evolve.

Each Practice Group is led by a Board member Chair and either a board member or ACC Houston member who is not a board member as Co-Chair. We strive to identify and engage a non-Board member to help manage the Practice Group to get more members engaged and identify future chapter leaders.

The Practice Group leadership is responsible for liaising with the Practice Group sponsor. This includes making sure that the Sponsor understands the benefits they receive through the sponsorship packet and being responsive to requests from the Sponsor. However, any material changes to the benefits need to be approved by at least the Executive Committee. Many Sponsors over the years have made such requests. The Board has approved some changes and denied others. Remember that the Sponsors are also looking to maximize their value, but ACC Houston also needs to appreciate the value that they provide to the Sponsors. Please note that ACC does not allow the sharing of member contact information and/or roster information with any non-member or sponsor. The only information that can be provided to a sponsor is a registration list of their sponsored event which will consist of registrant's name, company and title. This information is gathered and distributed by the Executive Director.

Here is a checklist of some key items that Practice Group leaders should follow:

- Maintain strong working relationship with Sponsors, both the business contact as well as the marketing/client development contact.
- Schedule kick-off lunch with Sponsor for January to plan event topics and dates. The Executive Director can be included.
- Brainstorm topics with Sponsor. Use feedback from chapter and Board as well as your own experiences to help identify areas that would be of interest and use to the broader chapter. Before finalizing on the topic, let the Board know so that we can work to minimize overlapping topics.
- Determine location, date, and topics upfront with Sponsor. Remember that the Sponsor pays for the event costs, so be mindful of suggestions. All dates are reviewed and approved through the Master Calendar maintained by the Executive Director.
- Encourage Sponsor to provide 0.25 hours ethics credit in each presentation.
- Encourage Sponsor to include interactive element into presentation, where appropriate.
- Review invitations for events before distributed. Work with the Executive Director as the Sponsors sometimes have creative marketing tools that we need to be mindful. Our only major stipulation is that all flyers and marketing must be co-branded with ACC Houston logo.

- Review presentations materials before the event. This should be done at least 48 hours before the event to allow time for any necessary changes. You are looking to make sure the content makes sense (e.g., isn't too basic for the audience) and that all pages have the appropriate ACC Houston logo.
- Introduce Sponsor at the event and introduce ACC to new members and guests. Coordinate with the Sponsor on what other speaking/introduction roles they would like you to be responsible for at the event.
- Sponsor is requested to send all presentation slide decks to the board liaison and the Executive Director to be posted to the Program Materials Page on the ACC Houston website.
- Ask for attendance/attrition records for each event from the Sponsor if not provided directly to you.
- Maintain list of all topics for past 3-5 years (currently a work in progress with the Executive Director).

For more information about each practice group [click here](#).

COMMITTEES

Pursuant to our [Bylaws](#), the Board may establish functional committees, comprised of members of the Board and members of the Chapter, to manage initiatives and programs in support of the Chapter's mission. There are currently 10 active functional committees of our Board, as follows:

- Golf and Spa Committee
- Back to School Symposium Committee
- Texas Law Book Committee and Corporate Counsel Awards
- Diversity Committee
- Volunteer/Pro Bono Committee
- Social / Networking Committee
- Membership Development & Retention Committee
- Woodlands Initiative Committee
- Women In-House Committee
- Value Challenge Committee

For more information about each committee [click here](#).

OTHER INITIATIVES AND INTEREST GROUPS

In addition to functional committees of the Board, the Board may also establish special committees to advise and report to the Board or the Chapter on subjects of interest to the Chapter as a whole.

Currently, there is only one such special committee active, which is the Career Advancement Interest Group. For more information about the Career Advancement Interest Group [click here](#).

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COMMITTEE DESCRIPTIONS

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OTHER INITIATIVES AND INTEREST GROUPS

[Career Advancement Interest Group](#)

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STARCHAPTER ACC HOUSTON

In an effort to simplify and streamline our processes and offer a more secure online registration platform, the Chapter uses an online event registration system called StarChapter. This chapter management platform enables members to conveniently register for Chapter events on a secure, password protected system.

Within StarChapter, there is a “Member Area” that has restricted access to the members of the Board of Directors of the chapter, including a page containing a repository of important documentation relating to the chapter’s formation and organizational documents, as well as other administrative documentation you will need to discharge your functions as a member of the Board.

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THE PRESIDENT

The President serves as Chairman of the Board and, in such capacity, exercises overall supervision over all of the affairs of Chapter and provides overall direction the same.

The President's typical duties include:

1. Presides over all Houston Chapter Monthly Board Meetings, October planning meeting and summer board retreat.
2. Develops the Agenda for the Houston Chapter Monthly Board Meetings, including the Board's first session in October.
3. Is accountable for the organization of the Houston Chapter Board's Annual Retreat. The President develops the retreat's agenda based on topics that have been table for in-depth discussion throughout the year and coordinates logistics with the Board's Executive Director. (Good practice requires the President to collect feedback from other Board Members to decide the topics for the retreat's agenda.)
4. Ensures that the initiatives decided by the Houston Chapter Board are followed through.
5. Communicates periodically with the Executive Committee, the Executive Director and the Directors at large to stay apprised of the state of affairs of the Chapter.
6. Participates of the "Chapter President's Call" organized by ACC National.
7. Together with the Executive Committee, steers the Chapter's succession planning.
8. Ensures that the President Elect or another Board Member presides through the Houston Monthly Chapter Meeting. The President will be back-up to President-Elect if he/she is unable to attend.

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THE PRESIDENT-ELECT

The President Elect typically serves as the Chapter Meetings Chair, and as part of this role is expected to liaise (along with the Executive Director) with each sponsor before each Chapter Meeting to assist in delivering a useful, appropriate and meaningful CLE session to our members. Included in this responsibility is handling the introduction of the topic/sponsor at each Chapter Meeting. Typical duties include:

1. In January, the President-Elect will reach out to all Monthly Chapter Meeting sponsors to make introductions to the chapter, thank the sponsor and assign the sponsor a month to present. At that time, the President-Elect will confirm the sponsor's intent to present at the Woodlands location during their month to present at the Galleria location.
2. One week prior to the presentation, the President-Elect will obtain the presentation materials from the sponsor and will review the content for typos, in-house relevance, topic sensitivity with cohesion to the title and co-branding. The President-Elect will then return the slide deck to the sponsor with feedback by the Monday prior to the Chapter Meeting.
3. Arrive early to Chapter Meeting to greet Sponsor and members.
4. Welcome audience to get started promptly at designated time.
5. Introduce and thank Sponsor.
6. Introduce Speakers with bios.
7. Remind attendees of upcoming ACC Events, requests, etc., as appropriate.
8. At end, thank everyone for coming, remind of upcoming ACC Events, requests, etc., as appropriate.
9. In the absence of the President, run the monthly board meetings.

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THE TREASURER

The Treasurer is responsible for all aspects of financial management of our chapter, working closely with other members of the Executive Committee to safeguard the chapter's finances.

In summary, the Treasurer or back up is responsible for:

1. General financial oversight;
2. Financial planning and budgeting;
3. Financial reporting at each board meeting; and
4. Oversight of banking, bookkeeping and record keeping in conjunction with the Executive Director.

Given these responsibilities, the Treasurer typically acts as an information and reference point for the Executive Committee and other members of the Board, clarifying financial implications of proposals, confirming legal requirements; outlining the current financial status; and retrieving relevant documentation.

At the start of each fiscal year, the Treasurer will ensure that all account signature cards are up to date. If any updates are needed, the wording in the board meeting minutes must read as follows:

*The signatories to all of the ACCH accounts at BBVA Compass Bank (checking and money market) and all investment account at Charles Schwab will be updated. All prior signatories will be removed and new signatories **[input all names of new signatories here]** shall be added; Executive Director will have access to use the ACCH debit card, but not signing authority for checks. New signatories will coordinate a time to go to the bank and update the signatories' information at BBVA Compass and Executive Director will coordinate the update for the investment account.*

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THE SECRETARY

The Secretary plays a critical role in fostering communication and ensuring proper management and utilization of important organizational records. Our chapter's bylaws set the exact duties of the Secretary, however, duties may change from time to time as may be assigned by the board.

First and foremost, the Secretary is an active conduit for communication between the board, the Executive Committee and our members, by giving proper notice of any meetings and timely distribution of materials such as agendas and meeting minutes.

The Secretary is also tasked with knowing and complying with notice requirements and scheduling meetings to accommodate the members of the Board. From scheduling board meetings to ensuring an adequate number of meetings are held per year, in accordance with the organization's bylaws. The Secretary is also charged with recording minutes of meetings, which memorialize chronology of key information such as board actions, elections of officers or directors, and certain reports from committees and staff.

Finally, as the custodian of the organization's records, the Secretary is responsible for maintaining accurate documentation and meeting legal requirements, such as annual filing deadlines. The Secretary is also responsible for reviewing and updating documents as necessary and ensuring all documents are safely stored and readily accessible for inspection by directors and/or members.

At each board meeting:

1. Arrives early to set up for minute taking;
2. Ensures there is a quorum; and
3. Checks physical and phone attendance.

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THE IMMEDIATE PAST PRESIDENT

The role of the Past President is to provide continuity to the organization by providing historical context for issues to the President, and ensure continuity during governance transition and organizational change.

Typical duties include:

1. Support the President in his/her role (i.e. President may use Past President to help to oversee or advance an ongoing project)
2. Share lessons learned from previous mandate,
3. In the absence of the President or President Elect, run with monthly board meetings, and
4. Serve in functional committees and or practice groups where he/she can add strategic value.

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THE MERGERS AND ACQUISITIONS PRACTICE GROUP

The mission of the M&A Practice Group is to provide members with opportunities to share information on the legal issues and documentation associated with various transactions commonly associated with M&A legal work for public companies such as mergers, acquisitions and dispositions of legal entities, businesses and assets, and the formation or organization of joint ventures and equity investments.

The M&A Practice Group schedules two CLE luncheons each year with the practice group sponsors at local restaurants. Law firms are the primary target audience for sponsorship opportunities. This is largely due to the legal practice subject matter expertise required to meet the CLE needs of members.

The action plan for this group is largely driven by direct engagement with the sponsor to meet and confer on dates for the two CLE events and topic selection. This has required sometimes heavy support from the executive director to ensure the CLE luncheon event dates get calendared timely. In order to be successful, early planning is required to meet with the Sponsor to begin the process brainstorming on topic selection and dates and locations for planned CLE luncheons. More frequent interaction will be planned to develop a high-level action plan to meet the practice group meeting deliverables and ensure the success of the events.

Currently, this practice group has a leadership structure with a non-Board Member chair. This requires an added amount of collaboration to ensure all the necessary planning and coordination with the Sponsor is accomplished.

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INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY PRACTICE GROUP

The IP Practice Group overall goal is to promote IP within the legal profession by (i) heightening new, developing, and relevant IP issues to the ACC community, (ii) establishing networking opportunities for In-House IP counsels, and (iii) exposing the In-House counsel to Sponsor's competencies, resources, and personnel that may be beneficial for In-House IP counsels' needs and requirements. The IP Practice Group also works with the Sponsors to host two CLE events promoting IP issues to the ACC community.

Here is a checklist of some key items that IP Practice Group leaders should follow:

IP Practice Group Committee

- The Committee should have at least a Chair and a Co-Chair, with the Chair being an ACC Board Member having the primary responsibilities for communicating with the Sponsor. The Co-Chair does not have to be a ACC Board member.
- At least one of the Chair or Co-Chair should be an In-House counsel with a premier Energy Company in the area. The other position is preferably a mid-size company which a specialized market, such as a chemical company, an electrical company, or a software company.
- Other Committee positions are preferably for ACC members with interest in becoming Chair or Co-Chair.

IP Practice Group Sponsors

- Maintain strong working relationship with Sponsors, both the business contact as well as the marketing/client development contact.
- Set up January conference with Sponsor to plan out year.
- Coordinate with Sponsor and Executive Director for educating the Sponsor of their responsibilities including CLE event responsibilities.
- Sponsors are typically, but not required, large law firms that can provide excellent topics, knowledge, and non-Houston area Speakers, if desired.
- The existing Sponsor has priority for renewing Sponsorship.

IP Practice Group CLE Events:

- Coordinate with the Sponsor on:
 - The CLE Topics including CLE ethics content.
 - Assist on the quality, content, and relevance of Presentations. Review presentations materials before the event to make sure the content is consistent with the knowledge and understanding of the members (e.g., the presentation is too basic for the audience) and have the appropriate ACC Houston logo. This should be done 48 hours before the event.
 - Sponsor speakers and any In-House counsel Co-Speakers. Make sure the Speaker is prepared and will be on-topic for the Presentation as advertised.
- Work with Sponsor for timing and maximizing attendance for CLE events.
 - CLE events should be in both Spring (March to May) and Fall (September to early November) to address timely topics to the largest possible audiences.

- Coordinate with Sponsor and Executive Director for any assistance with CLE events. Sponsor should be aware of their CLE event responsibilities.
- Events should be planned 2-3 months in advance with encouragement for reserving calendar dates at the earliest possible opportunity.
- Raise awareness for the Woodlands optional secondary presentation.
- Assist Sponsor in preparing ACC advertisement for the event and contact possible attendees.

- Secure attendees and Site for CLE event
 - Preferred sites for CLE events are generally in the Galleria area or I-10 corridor. Woodlands opportunities should be explored with the Sponsor.
 - Attendance should be at least 45, with the site having sufficient room and facilities for a presentation.
 - Attendance is variable based on topic and location. Historically, about 15-30% of RSVPs do not show. Walk-ins, particularly non-ACC In-House counsels, are common.
 - Encourage ACC members to attend, and non-ACC members to join ACC.

- Sponsor speaker should be able to present a 45-50 minute discussion at the event; encourage the Sponsor to speak about themselves for a few minutes
 - Someone from the IP Practice Group should also introduce the Speaker, the Sponsor and their attendees, and encourage ACC membership; with ending the event by thanking the Sponsor and Speaker.
 - Coordinate with the Sponsor on what other speaking/introduction roles the Sponsor would like the ACC to be responsible at the event.

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BEST PRACTICES PRACTICE GROUP

Best Practices is led by a Chair, supported by a Co-Chair and delivers CLE-accredited presentations addressing best practices in areas typically encountered by corporate in-house counsel. Panels consisting of in-house and outside counsel explore an area, set a foundation, and discuss challenges for meeting best practices within that area.

Best Practices typically hosts three CLE lunches per year, generally attended by 35 – 70 members. Recent panels have addressed securities laws, transactions, due diligence, tax, and litigation and optimizing the in-house/outside counsel partnership.

Given the nature of the mission, a law firm sponsor would probably be best suited to this practice group.

Meet with the sponsor in January to discuss potential topics and tentatively set the calendar for the upcoming year. The partners then hand off details to the coordinator for fine-tuning and project management, in accordance with ACC policy and forms, all of which are posted on our website. The Chair checks in with the coordinator 6 – 8 weeks in advance of the project, typically learning that all is on-track and in order, but available for assistance if not.

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THE INTERNATIONAL / CROSS BORDER PRACTICE GROUP

The International Practice Group focuses on a wide-range of cross-border issues that are of interest to in-house counsel. The group is led by a board member chair and co-chair and is open to have non-board members serve in a leadership capacity. Its objective is to advance the professional development of in-house lawyers practicing internationally by improving their understanding of international legal issues and best practices for corporate lawyers.

The International Practice Group typically hosts two CLE lunches per year.

Given the nature of the mission, a law firm sponsor would probably be best suited to this practice group.

Meet with the sponsor in January to discuss potential topics and tentatively set the calendar for the upcoming year. The partners then hand off details to the coordinator for fine-tuning and project management, in accordance with ACC policy and forms, all of which are posted on our website. The Chair checks in with the coordinator 6 – 8 weeks in advance of the project, typically learning that all is on-track and in order, but available for assistance if not.

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ENERGY PRACTICE GROUP

The Energy Practice Group is the only practice group with two sponsors. This requires collaboration between the Energy Practice Groups chairs to ensure all the necessary planning and coordination with both of the Sponsors is accomplished, topics are unique and dates are spread out.

The mission of the Energy Practice Group is to provide members with opportunities to share information on the legal issues and documentation associated with various transactions commonly associated in the Energy sector.

Each Energy Practice Group schedules two CLE luncheons each year. Law firms are the primary target audience for sponsorship opportunities. This is largely due to the legal practice subject matter expertise required to meet the CLE needs of chapter members.

The action plan for this group is largely driven by direct engagement with the sponsor to meet and confer on dates for the two CLE events and topic selection. Early planning is required to meet with the Sponsor in January to begin the process brainstorming on topic selection and dates and locations for planned CLE luncheons.

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SMALL IN-HOUSE LAW DEPARTMENT PRACTICE GROUP

Small Law delivers CLE-accredited presentations designed specifically for generalist in-house attorneys in law departments of five or less, but are open to all. Panels consisting of in-house and outside counsel address topics that are practical and actionable, including issue spotting and when to call in an expert.

Small Law typically hosts two CLE lunches per year, one in Houston and one in the Woodlands. The events were attended by 30 – 45 members. Small Law has only been active since 2017, when their presentation (both in Houston and the Woodlands) addressed risk analysis for litigation outcomes.

Given the nature of the mission, a law firm sponsor would probably be best suited to this practice group. We connect with the sponsor in January regarding setting dates and encourage discussion of potential topics, and meet sometime during Q1. The Chair checks in with the firm 6 – 8 weeks in advance of each event to affirm all is on track and offer assistance, which typically isn't necessary.

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THE DATA PRIVACY AND SECURITY PRACTICE GROUP

The mission of the DPS Practice Group is to provide ACC Houston members with opportunities to share information on the legal issues and best practices concerning data privacy and security of company's sensitive information. In addition, the DPS Practice Group provides legal education on cybersecurity, incident response plans, privacy by design, internet of things, etc. The DPS Practice Group does not discuss IP topics related to patents, trademarks and or copyright infringement unless it is in the context of protecting the confidentiality of such information.

The DPS Practice Group schedules two CLE luncheons each year. We usually schedule one CLE in the Spring and another one in the Fall.

Law firms are the primary target audience for sponsorship opportunities. This is largely due to the legal practice subject matter expertise required to meet the CLE needs of ACC Houston chapter members. The action plan for this group is largely driven by direct engagement with the Sponsor to meet and confer on dates for the two CLE events and topic selection. The Chair and Sponsor have a planning lunch in January and brainstorm topics and discuss potential dates which discussed with the Executive Director for feedback. It is important to schedule the DPS CLE events during a time frame to avoid conflicts with other ACC events, holidays or other major events in Houston.

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THE ETHICS AND COMPLIANCE PRACTICE GROUP

The Ethics and Compliance Practice Group focuses on a wide-range of issues that are of interest to in-house counsel in ethics and compliance. The group is led by a board member chair and co-chair, and is open to have non-board members serve in a leadership capacity. Its objective is to advance the professional development of in-house lawyers practicing in the area of ethics and compliance as well as to provide CLE topics that fulfill ethics requirements of the bar regardless of practice area.

The Ethics and Compliance Practice Group typically hosts two CLE lunches per year.

Given the nature of the mission, a law firm sponsor would probably be best suited to this practice group.

Meet with the sponsor in January to discuss potential topics and tentatively set the calendar for the upcoming year. The partners then hand off details to the coordinator for fine-tuning and project management, in accordance with ACC policy and forms, all of which are posted on our website. The Chair checks in with the coordinator 6 – 8 weeks in advance of the project, typically learning that all is on-track and in order, but available for assistance if not.

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THE LABOR AND EMPLOYMENT PRACTICE GROUP

The Labor and Employment (L&E) Practice Group is led by a current Board Member and designated the Practice Group Chair. Typically, another, Board Member is designated as a back-up.

The mission of the L&E Practice Group is to provide ACC Houston members with opportunities to share information on the legal issues that arise in the workplace such as the Americans with Disabilities Act, Fair Labor Standards Act, National Labor Relations Act, Family Medical Leave Act, employment discrimination laws and investigations, managing performance cases and difficult employees, social media in the workplace as well as any state and/or federal laws that impact the relationship between employees and their employers. We provide opportunities for in-depth, focused continuing legal education relevant to this area of the law.

The L&E Practice Group typically schedules two CLE luncheons each year. We will drive direct engagement with the sponsor(s) to meet and confer on dates for the two CLE events and topic selection. These CLE's are very well-attended with up to 80 attendees in recent years, which have been held both at restaurants in central Houston and at the offices of the Practice Group's sponsor.

Selection of dates will require support from the executive director to avoid time conflicts and to ensure the CLE luncheon event dates get calendared timely. In order to be successful, early planning is required to meet with the sponsor(s) to begin the process brainstorming on topic selection and dates and locations for planned CLE luncheons. We should have dates selected no later than January 31 and immediately afterwards we will engage with the sponsor(s) about content.

This Practice Group is very popular with our members. We should consider the addition of a ½ or full day “marquee” to meet the needs of both our sponsor and members.

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THE LITIGATION PRACTICE GROUP

The Litigation Practice Group's overall goal is to promote the litigation practice within the Houston legal community by: (i) heightening new, developing, and relevant litigation issues to the Houston ACC community, (ii) establishing networking opportunities for in-house counsel with a litigation interest, and (iii) exposing in-house counsel to the Sponsor's competencies, resources, and personnel that may be beneficial for counsels' needs and requirements. The Litigation Practice Group also works with the Sponsor to host two (2) CLE events promoting litigation issues to the Houston ACC community.

Here is a checklist of some key items that Litigation Practice Group Leaders should follow:

Litigation Practice Group Committee

- The Committee should have at least a Chair and a Co-Chair, with the Chair being an ACC Board member having the primary responsibility for communicating with the Sponsor. The Co-Chair does not have to be an ACC Board member.
- The Chair and/or Co-Chair should be an in-house counsel with some professional focus on litigation matters, including general practitioners.
- Other Committee positions, aside from the Chair and Co-Chair, should preferably be filled by ACC members with interest in becoming Chair or Co-Chair.

Litigation Practice Group Sponsors

- Practice Group Leaders should maintain a strong working relationship with Sponsors, both the professional (i.e., lawyer, for the sponsor) contact as well as the marketing/client development contact.
- Set up planning meeting(s) with the Sponsor to plan the years CLEs, discussing possible deadlines, topics, venues, speakers, etc. This planning meeting usually occurs in January or February.
- Coordinate with the Sponsor and ACC Houston administrator to educate the Sponsor of their responsibilities including CLE event responsibilities.
- Sponsors are typically, but not required, large law firms that can provide excellent topics, knowledge, and speakers. It is preferred to have an in-house speaker co-present with the Sponsors in order to give an in-house perspective.
- The existing Sponsor is given priority for renewing their sponsorship.

Litigation Practice Group CLE Events

- Coordinate with the Sponsor.
 - Review CLE topics (including content and marketability).
 - Assist on the quality, content, and relevance of CLE presentations. Review presentation materials before the event to make sure the content (1) is consistent with the knowledge and understanding of the members (i.e., that the presentation matches the desires and education of the audience) and (2) has the appropriate ACC Houston logo. This should be done AT LEAST forty-eight (48) hours before the event.
 - Coordinate regarding speakers and in-house counsel co-speakers. Make sure the speaker is prepared and will be on-topic for the presentation as advertised.
- Work with the Sponsor for event timing to maximize attendance.

- Ideally, CLE events should be in both Spring (March to May) and Fall (September to early November) to address timely topics to the largest possible audiences.
- Coordinate with the Sponsor and ACC Houston administrator for any assistance with CLE events. The Sponsor should be aware of their CLE event responsibilities.
- Events should be planned 2 to 3 months in advance with encouragement for reserving calendar dates at the earliest possible opportunity.
- Raise awareness for the Woodlands optional secondary presentation.
- Assist the Sponsor in preparing ACC advertisement for the event and contact possible attendees.
- Sponsor should secure a site for CLE event with Practice Group Leader providing guidance and insights.
 - Preferred sites for CLE events are generally in the Galleria area, Downtown or I-10 corridor. Woodlands opportunities should be explored with the Sponsor.
 - ACC members have expressed reservation about events at Sponsors' offices due to parking concerns and lunch restrictions.
 - Target attendance should be no less than 45, with the site having sufficient room and facilities for a presentation (including AV equipment).
 - Attendance is variable based on topic and location. Historically, about 15-30% of RSVPs are no-show. Walk-ins, particularly non-ACC in-house counsels, are common and encouraged.
 - Encourage ACC members to attend, and non-ACC members to join ACC.
- Sponsor's speakers should be able to present a 45-50 minutes discussion at the event; encourage the Sponsor to speak about themselves for a few minutes.
 - Someone from the Litigation Practice Group should also introduce the speaker, the Sponsor and their attendees and encourage ACC membership; with ending the event by thanking the Sponsor and the speaker(s).
 - Practice Group Leaders should coordinate with the Sponsor on what other speaking/introduction roles the Sponsor would like the ACC to be responsible at the event.

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THE HEALTHCARE LAW PRACTICE GROUP

A Health Law Practice Group proposal is being considered due to the heavy presence of health care and medical facilities in the Houston metropolitan area. There have been multiple requests from ACC Houston members to add such a Practice Group. This initiative will be led by a current Board Member. We are currently working with a potential sponsor to coordinate a pilot event to test topics, interest, attendance and venue / location. A Practice Group Chair will be designated if the pilot event is successful and the Board approves. When this Practice Group is mature we would expect another Board Member or chapter member to be designated as a back-up.

The mission of the Health Law Practice Group is to provide ACC Houston members with opportunities to share information on the legal issues that arise for providers, payers and patients, as well as other businesses with interests in health care. Issues particular to this area of law include HIPAA, the Affordable Care Act, the Anti Kickback Statute and Stark Law, FCA liability relating to business practices where reimbursement is from the government (such as CMS and TRICARE), as well as any other state and/or federal laws that impact businesses engaged in health care. We will provide opportunities for in-depth, focused continuing legal education relevant to this area of the law.

This is a potential new Practice Group. While we anticipate two CLE events per year, our initial effort will be for a pilot event in the Spring of 2019. We have no historical basis to anticipate attendance, and the number of current members with an identifiable connection to health care is relatively low. However, we expect this PG may be of interest to many other members, and we hope that with the assistance of our sponsor this presents an opportunity to introduce many in-house health-law practitioners to ACC, possibly for the first time.

In general, we would expect to seek sponsors with a strong health law practice since they will be in the best position to share relevant legal information as well as be on the cutting edge to identify and communicate new or anticipated developments in regulations, legislation or case law.

Seyfarth Shaw has agreed to be the inaugural sponsor for the pilot event. Because the untapped potential of this Practice Group is currently unknown, we have agreed that we will not expect funds from the sponsor for this first event, other than the costs directly associated with the program.

We intend to place on the calendar in Q1 of 2019 an event. This will require support from the executive director on several fronts including calendaring, assistance with venue selection, and coordination of an outreach program (in conjunction with the sponsor) that should be more aggressive than for established practice groups. Once the outreach campaign begins, we could use the assistance of the entire Board to advertise this new Practice Group and encourage participation.

If this Practice Group is successful, it may make sense to seek Board members in the future to participate on the Board as a representative of the health care law practice for Houston ACC.

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ANNUAL ETHICS SEMINAR AND GOLF/SPA COMMITTEE

The Golf/Spa Event is the ACC Houston “Signature Event” each year. It is a full day event, normally organized around the month of February, and features a 2-hour ethics CLE and a number of organized activities catering to wellness and wellbeing of our members, as well as ample networking opportunity and member-sponsor engagement. This Event is supported by a Marquee Sponsor and several smaller sponsors that purchase specific sponsorship packages that provide benefits such as entry of golf teams, spa treatments, signage and visibility with Members (see [“Sponsorship”](#) for more details on ACC Houston’s sponsorship opportunities). All these sponsorships help to pay for the Event, which is generally structured as follows:

9:00 am Shotgun Start - Golfers at Champions Golf Club

9:00 am - 4:00 pm - Spa Appointments

4:00 pm - 6:00 pm - Ethics CLE Program

(Featuring a special speaker with ethics component)

6:00 pm - 7:30 pm - Reception/Raffle/Awards

*Light Breakfast, Lunch and Evening Hors d'oeuvres and Cocktails Include

All sponsors are invited to the reception to promote the opportunity to meet ACC Chapter Members and build relationships.

The Purpose of the Golf/Spa Event is multifaceted. First, to encourage our Members to take a day out of the office and receive many free benefits from being an ACC Houston Chapter Member. Second, to access Ethics Continuing Legal Education credits, which are difficult to achieve. Third, to expose our Members to several Sponsors who provide the funding for ACC Houston events. These Sponsors are not limited to sponsors of the Golf/Spa Event, but also include Chapter Meeting Sponsors and Practice Group Sponsorships. Fourth, to provide added value to our Sponsors in participating in an event where they can meet Members in a friendly, social environment.

We encourage the Sponsor’s involvement in decisions concerning the event, such as the nature of the CLE, presenter/speaker at CLE, and selection of major “give-away” items for all participants. The Marquee Sponsorship includes a Chapter Meeting Sponsorship (generally for the October Monthly Chapter Meeting) as part of the sponsorship package.

Sponsorships can change from year to year, but other Sponsorship Levels generally include:

Sponsoring a two-person golf team (paired with two in-house attorneys);

Spa Participant – enjoy a spa treatment followed by Reception;

Spa Networking – hang out in the spa and network but not receive spa treatment;

Premium Hole – have two representatives advertise their firm with banner at a table at a golf hole with give-away items and/or prizes, plus attend the Reception for more networking;

Tee Box Sponsorships – signage on a tee box plus have one representative attend Reception; and

Beverage Cart – two sponsor representatives network with golfers throughout the day and at the reception (the cost of beverages are paid by ACC Houston).

Historically, we have held the CLE, spa, and reception portions of the event at The Houstonian, with the Golf portion of the event being held at Memorial Park Golf Course. The Houstonian’s Trellis Spa works with us to maximize the number of spa treatments that can be worked into the afternoon, as spa

appointments always have more requests for spa treatments than there are slots available for those treatments. There are always last-minute cancellations, and the Trellis works with us to maintain a waiting list so that those openings can be filled by another Member.

Memorial Park Golf Course is one of the better public golf courses in Houston. Its proximity to The Houstonian helps to encourage golfers to return to The Houstonian for the Reception following the golf event. However, during recent renovations to the course which required course closure, the chapter elected to hold the golf portion of the event at a premier private course call Champions Golf Club. This was more expensive than Memorial Park but was vey well received and can be a good alternative to the public course if funds are available.

The Reception is generally a sponsored event but can be paid for by the Chapter if no sponsor is signed up.

The Event is usually scheduled for the first Tuesday that Memorial Park Golf Course will schedule tournaments (generally last week in February or first week in March). Each year, we have the right to renew our reservation for this date. We always indicate our interest in moving the date back to sometime in mid-March because of weather concerns, but so far, the organizations that have those later dates continue to renew their events, so none of those dates have become available. Ideally, we would like to schedule the event the week after Spring Break in Houston schools. We also reserve The Houstonian and Trellis for the same date as Memorial Park Golf Course, approximately one year in advance.

The decision for the main “give away” item needs to be completed by the Board Meeting in January to provide adequate time for shipping and delivery. January and February are also busy in getting Sponsors signed up for the golf sponsorship items.

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BACK TO SCHOOL SYMPOSIUM COMMITTEE

The Back to School Symposium is one of ACC Houston's signature events that has been hosted for many years. This event provides 6-hours of CLE credit, buffet breakfast, lunch, and a social hour to the attendees, which is held in August. Much like the Practice Groups, the leader of this committee must coordinate with the Sponsors, help develop topic ideas, and finalize the planning. What's different is that there are 6-8 sponsors. So, communication is key so that the sponsors know who is doing what and when. Working with the Executive Director is also key as they are instrumental in securing the location and event planning.

Here is a checklist of some key items that Committee leaders should follow:

- Maintain strong working relationship with Sponsors, both the business contact as well as the marketing/client development contact.
- Send a kick-off email to all Sponsors by late January to prompt topic development, providing topics that the Board has already brainstormed as suggestions.
- Request sponsor to provide 0.25 hours ethics credit in each presentation.
- Request sponsor to include interactive element into presentation, where appropriate.
- Review presentations materials before the event. This should be done 48 hours before the event, but often it is in the last 24 hours. You are looking to make sure the content makes sense (e.g., isn't too basic for the audience) and that all pages have the appropriate ACC Houston logo.
- Introduce Sponsor at the event and plug ACC. Coordinate with the Sponsor on what other speaking/introduction roles they would like you to be responsible at the event.
- Work with Executive Director to update website with marketing materials.
- Follow up with Sponsors every 4-6 weeks so that the event stays on their radar and they know that you are there if they have questions.

The challenge for this event managing 6-8 sponsors and ensuring that they provide topics, descriptions, and identify the speakers in a timely fashion.

Typical Schedule:

Breakfast and Check-In: 8:00 am - 9:00 am

Session 1: 9:00 - 9:50 am

Session 2: 10:00 - 10:50 am

Session 3: 11:00 - 11:50 am

Keynote Speaker, Lunch: 12:00 noon- 1:30 pm

Break 1:30 to 2:00 pm

Session 4: 2:00 – 2:50 pm

Session 5: 3:00 -3:50 pm

Session 6: 4:00 – 4:50 pm

Evening Reception and Raffle *Social 5:00 to 7:00 pm*

There is typically a keynote luncheon speaker at the symposium. Finding a speaker within budget can be a challenge. This is an area that can be worked on early, as soon as the date is set.

In 2018, a school supply drive was added to the back to school symposium. School supplies and donations were collected from participants to benefit Teacher’s Aid for the Houston Food Bank.

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TEXAS LAW BOOK COMMITTEE AND CORPORATE COUNSEL AWARDS

The Texas Lawbook is a legal publication based in Dallas that caters primarily to business lawyers in Texas. It is owned and managed by Mark Curriden. The Texas Lawbook has an editorial advisory board that includes 30 seasoned Texas business lawyers. Half are in Dallas and half are in Houston. More than one-third are in-house counsel.

Our chapter has partnered with The Texas Lawbook for the benefit of our members. Among other activities, The Texas Lawbook publicizes and promotes our chapter's events and activities. From time to time, ACC-Houston may also co-sponsor Texas Lawbook CLE programs at which events ACC-Houston members are welcome free of charge.

The Texas Lawbook also publicizes ACC-Houston members who get new jobs, promotions and successes. The Texas Lawbook writes and publishes a feature profile about an ACC-Houston member each month. Our chapter members also have the opportunity and are encouraged to contribute substantive and feature articles, which may be published by The Texas Lawbook. These articles can focus on anything from insight into pending legislation or regulatory matters to tips for outside counsel.

The Texas Lawbook partnered with our chapter in the annual Corporate Counsel Awards. The Corporate Counsel Awards increase the exposure of our chapter and the great legal work being done by our members. The Corporate Counsel Awards is a joint effort with the The Texas Lawbook, from selection of the date of the event, the location, the judges and the actual award categories. A summary of the Corporate Counsel Awards is as follows:

1. We select a date for the awards ceremony. Preferential dates are mid/late-February, first week of March, mid/late October, and early/mid-November.
2. The Texas Lawbook and ACC-Houston announce the initial details about the awards ceremony in a series of articles. Together, we would determine the categories and then promote the categories and prepare law firms and corporate legal departments in advance of the submission period and process.
3. Nominations normally open 90-120 days prior to the selected ceremony award date. The Texas Lawbook promotes the awards to the Houston area legal community and announce the date and location. The Texas Lawbook and ACC-Houston establish panels of judges to evaluate the nominations and determine the finalists. Selection and judging is done 75-60 days prior to the date of the event.
4. In the month prior to the awards ceremony, The Texas Lawbook would interview and publish in-depth profiles of each finalist.
5. As all of this is happening, The Texas Lawbook would identify potential sponsors and nail down all the funding for the event and expenses, but we would commit that we would work to make sure that current sponsors of ACC-Houston would not divert money that they already give to you for this.
6. The Texas Lawbook and ACC Houston will create a scholarship for low-income, minority students in the Houston area interested in going to law school that will be completely funded through revenues raised by the event.
7. The awards event is held and the President acts as a co-presenter for the awards with the representative from Texas Lawbook.

In addition to the Corporate Counsel Awards, the Texas Lawbook and ACC Houston also promote a “Lifetime Achievement Award”.

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DIVERSITY COMMITTEE

The Diversity Committee overall goal is to promote diversity within the legal profession by (i) heightening awareness of the importance of diversity in the law, (ii) celebrating ACC's diversity scholarship recipients, and (iii) thanking supporters of the ACC diversity program. The Diversity Committee also works with the Sponsors to host two CLE events promoting diversity (e.g., elimination of bias in the legal profession; round table discussion on a diversity topic).

Here is a checklist of some key items that Diversity Committee leaders should follow:
Diversity Reception (Spring Semester)

- Diversity Reception must take place by mid-April, before the students begin preparing for exams
- Secure location for Diversity Reception
 - Brennan's is tried and true for a \$10,000 budget
- Secure speaker for a short discussion at the reception (e.g., former scholarship recipient); encourage Sponsor(s) to speak for a few minutes
 - Someone from the Diversity Committee should also speak for a few minutes and thank the Sponsor(s), scholarship recipients, and all those present for supporting diversity within the legal profession
- Secure attendees for reception
 - Brennan's includes space for about 75 guests.
 - Sponsors: Most of the 75 seats are reserved for Sponsors, but extra effort needs to be put forward to encourage the Sponsors to attend. There have been challenges in the past to ensure that the Sponsors attend the event.
 - Scholarship Recipients: Need to get the recipients to the event, particularly since this event is in their honor. Recipients have a plus 1 invite.
 - Historically, 15% less people show than have sent in RSVPs.
 - Encourage ACC members to attend, though space is limited

Chapter Meeting with Scholarship Recipients (Spring)

- Coordinate with President-Elect to identify a chapter monthly meeting to invite the scholarship recipients to attend.
 - Historically, February has been a good month for the students.

Day in the Life Internship Program (Spring/Summer)

- During the Spring Semester, secure commitments from ACC members to host scholarship recipients for either a ½ or full day at their offices, showing life as an in-house attorney.
- Historically, about 9 of the 12 students have chosen to participate.
- Most are interested in larger companies. Try to secure multiple opportunities at the larger in-house organizations.

Scholarship Award Process (Fall Semester)

- Letters to representatives to the Houston area law schools go out soon after the fall semester begins, which is generally in August of each year
 - As of October 2014, the local law schools include: University of Houston; South Texas College of Law; and, Texas Southern University.

- Students submit applications by mid-October (a Wednesday) to the Law School
- Law School sends applications to ACC the following Friday
- Diversity Committee reviews applications, identifying recipients within 3 weeks of receipt of the applications from the Law Schools and provides report to Board describing the selected recipients
 - May solicit additional reviewer support from the Board

Law School Panel Discussion (Fall Semester)

- Secure 4-5 in-house counsel to visit the Houston area law schools and discuss the legal profession
 - Past events have taken place over breakfast, lunch, or as an afternoon session
- Coordinate with law schools to host the panel discussions
 - Questions from past panels are available from the Diversity Committee

Promoting Diversity (Year-Round)

- Promote the exchange of information regarding diversity initiatives among our members
- Use the CLE opportunities to further develop relationships with the Sponsors and promote diversity

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VOLUNTEER/PRO BONO COMMITTEE

The Pro Bono Committee works with sponsors, primarily law firms, and nonprofit legal aid organizations in Greater Houston, e.g. Houston Volunteer Lawyers, to plan and make members aware of legal pro bono and other general volunteer opportunities. The Committee focuses on partnering members with organizations that provide malpractice coverage for legal volunteers. The leadership structure for this committee has varied over the years, but historically one Board member serves as chair and another as co-chair. There have also been years where a non-Board member has served as chair upon approval by the Board with a Board member volunteering to serve as a liaison between that member and the Board. When members express an interest in the Pro Bono Committee, the chair and co-chair seek to get them involved.

The mission of the Pro Bono Committee is to provide members with legal pro bono volunteer opportunities through planned events and by linking to events sponsored by partner organizations, such as Houston Volunteer Lawyers (HVL). The Committee also endeavors to provide family-friendly non-legal volunteer opportunities for chapter members.

- Pro Bono Pairing - For the last several years, the Pro Bono Committee has partnered with a sponsor law firm for its annual pro bono pairing event. The event is typically usually held in Q1 or Q2 of the chapter fiscal year on a weekday evening. HVL typically brings a variety of pro bono cases, and members pair up with sponsor attorneys to select a case. All of this takes place over drinks and heavy appetizers. The attendance for this event has been dwindling and has ranged from anywhere from 10 to 30.
- Ethics CLE – This has not been an annual event but sponsors occasionally put on an ethics CLE centered on the ethical obligations of attorneys who take on pro bono cases. This has been done in partnership with legal aid organizations who also talk about the great need for lawyers to volunteer. This event has been held in the evening in the sponsor’s office with a cocktail reception following, but this event would probably have better attendance if planned during the lunch hour at a central restaurant. In-house counsel joined the panel, and it would be beneficial to continue having in-house counsel on the panel going forward.
- Houston Food Bank Family Volunteer Day – This is an annual event that is generally held in the spring, but it has also been held in the fall. ACC Houston has always sponsored this event with the exception of 2018 where for the first year a sponsor was allowed to sponsor the event. Members meet on Saturday morning to volunteer at the Houston Food Bank warehouse from 8:00 a.m. to noon and lunch is served at the warehouse afterward - either paid for by the Chapter or the sponsor if there is one. The Chapter also orders t-shirts for all volunteers. This is a popular event with members who attend and their families.
- Food from the Bar (FFTB) – April 2018 was the chapter’s first time to participate in the Houston Food Bank Food from the Bar competition. FFTB is a month-long competition in April of each year between law firms, legal departments and other legal organizations to see who can provide the most support to the Houston Food Bank by volunteering, donating food and money. The Houston Food Bank organizes several volunteer events for the legal community throughout the month, and ACC gives members an opportunity to join its team and advertises the various volunteer opportunities. ACC also sought monetary donations from members to support the Houston Food

Bank, and the Board approved a donation from the Pro Bono Committee's funds in support of this cause.

Sponsorship opportunities are targeted to law firms since usually only licensed attorneys are able to provide pro bono legal services. However, other non-legal sponsors have expressed interest in getting involved in events like FFTB.

The success of this committee will depend on membership's interest in volunteering. Attendance for the pro bono pairing event has been low, and the Board has discussed inviting HVL to a few chapter meetings to briefly speak with the members about their ethical obligations to do pro bono work and the great need for volunteers in our community. If there is no boost in attendance, the Committee should revisit its mission and perhaps look to serve as a liaison to connect members with volunteer opportunities instead of planning them.

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SOCIAL / NETWORKING COMMITTEE

The social committee was established to assist the sponsor with social events. The goal of the sponsor and committee is to have members enjoy a purely social event. It is simply an opportunity to network and enjoy each other's company. The current structure is a board member chair and co-chair. This committee works closely with the executive director.

This committee benefits ACC members because it provides an opportunity to just engage and be social with other in-house attorneys and potentially their families. With many other ACC activities, the time allotted to networking is usually just before or immediately after the event. With a social, the entire time is dedicated to socializing allowing for a closer-knit community.

Activities have included or could include renting out a movie theater, sports events (Astros, Texans, Dynamos), Crawfish Boil, holiday party, cooking class, wine tasting, escape room or art exhibition.

A social sponsor can come from any genre of sponsor. There is no dedicated timeframe for a social, with the exception of the holiday party which occurs in December. The board member chair and co-chair, along with the executive director will work with the sponsor to:

- Review the sponsors selection of venue and potential dates for the social
- Help guide the sponsor to an activity that the members will enjoy
- Make sure the schedule for that week/month is not too full with other ACC activities
- Determine if it is a member only event or if families can participate
- Understand the limitations associated with the number of attendees
- Make sure the activity is not too repetitive of another sponsor's activity

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MEMBERSHIP DEVELOPMENT & RETENTION COMMITTEE

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WOODLANDS INITIATIVE COMMITTEE

The “Woodlands Initiative Committee” was formed by the Board with the stated mission of increasing engagement between the ACC Houston Board and members of ACC Houston that work or reside in North Houston.

The Woodlands Initiative Committee is generally comprised of three members of the Board (at least two), one of whom serving as this committee’s Chair. While, out of convenience of logistics, the members of this committee have traditionally been selected from members of the Board that work or reside in the Woodlands, there is no formal requirement to do so. The Woodlands Initiative Committee’s members and Chair are appointed by the Board from time to time, based on interest or necessity to support this initiative.

The most important recurring event organized by the Woodlands Initiative Committee are the Chapter Meetings, which normally take place every month (see ACC Houston [“Chapter Meetings”](#) for more details). While the Monthly Chapter meeting sponsors (see [“Sponsorship”](#) for more details on ACC Houston’s sponsorship opportunities) have the option, not the obligation, to host a second Chapter Meeting in the Woodlands during the month in which such sponsor is featured, sponsors have generally elected to do so. Events begin with 30 minutes of registration and networking opportunities, followed by a presentation over lunch. At each meeting, one of the members of the Woodlands Initiative Committee becomes responsible for opening the meeting with the introduction of the sponsor and speakers, and for adjourning the meeting with a final message to the membership that normally includes reminders of future events and other relevant messages.

Practice Group Sponsors also have the option, not the obligation, to host a second Practice Group continuing legal education (“CLE”) event in the Woodlands during the month in which such Practice Group CLE is featured. At each CLE, one of the members of the Woodlands Initiative Committee becomes responsible for opening the CLE with the introduction of the sponsor and speakers, and for adjourning the meeting.

Lastly, the Woodlands Initiative Committee also organizes Social / Networking events with the ACC Houston Social/Networking Committee (see [“ACC Houston Social/Networking Committee”](#) for additional information on social events) and other ad hoc activities and initiatives based on member engagement and sponsorship need and opportunity.

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WOMEN IN-HOUSE COMMITTEE

The Women In-House interest group provides networking and information sharing opportunities for members, with the goal of supporting the advancement of women in the legal profession. There is a Chair and Co-Chair for this committee (together, “Co-Chairs”). The Chair serves as the lead and the Co-Chair assists as able/needed. The Co-Chairs meet with event sponsors to discuss and decide on event themes and/or speakers. The Co-Chairs serve as the liaison between the sponsors and the Board and Executive Director in the planning of events.

There are usually 4 to 6 events a year depending on the number of sponsors. Event sponsorships are offered through the yearly sponsorship package process. Each sponsor is given a time window at the beginning of the calendar year for their event (generally a 2 to 3-month period, e.g., January/February, March/April, May/June/July, etc.). The Co-Chairs communicate this time window to the Sponsors at the beginning of the calendar year and meet with the Sponsors early in the year, or at least several months before the event time window, to discuss and decide on event themes, speakers, location, etc.

Sponsors are law firms and vendors. The Sponsors are responsible for finalizing all event details, with assistance from the Co-Chairs as needed.

Events are typically on weekday evenings with about 40-60 attendees and are usually held at a restaurant or hotel event space. Attrition for evening events is about 30% which should be taken into account when planning and setting limits on attendees.

Examples of events

- Shake it up for the New Year (Cocktail Demonstration), Brenner’s on the Bayou
- Rising to the Top: A Framework for Career Advancement, Speakers, Masraff’s
- Cooking Class, Four Seasons
- Time Management, Speakers, Tango & Malbec
- New Year, New You, Speaker, The Houstonian
- Women on Corporate Boards, Speaker, Brennan’s
- Practicing Law While Female, Speakers, The Tasting Room
- Executive Presence/Communication, Speaker, Café Annie
- Putting the “Work” in Networking, Speaker, Grotto
- Holiday Market/Women Owned Businesses, The Houstonian
- General Counsel Panel, Brennan’s
- Art Viewing/Networking, Private Home
- Escape Room, The Escape Room City Center

The Co-Chairs are also responsible for outreach to members as needed to elicit event ideas and participation. The Co-Chairs may also attend other legal and professional women’s organization events to develop future event ideas, membership, and identify potential sponsors.

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VALUE CHALLENGE COMMITTEE

The Value Challenge is an initiative supported by ACC HQ. It currently does not have a Sponsor and so is not officially a “Practice Group”. It is led by a Chair, supported by a Co-Chair.

The Mission of the Value Challenge initiative is (1) to expose our Members to Alternative Fee Arrangements, (2) to provide practical examples of how these may be employed by our Members, and (3) to make our Members more aware of the Value Challenge initiative by ACC HQ.

Value Challenge activities at first glance have an inherent conflict of interest – what is good for the law firm (hourly time-charge billing) can expose our Members’ companies to open ended legal bills. Creative thinking is required to align the interests of our law firm sponsors and our Members’ companies to create “win-win” fee structures that reward law firms for more efficient legal representation (or better results in that representation) while providing more predictability for outside legal spend for our Members.

Historically, the Houston Chapter has conducted Value Challenge activities as an evening event over dinner, as the time to work through a presentation was determined to be too long for a “lunch and learn” presentation. These groups generally consisted of 20 or so Members and a law firm sponsor to pay for the event. In our discussions with potential sponsors, we have entertained the idea of having the law firm sponsor provide an extended “lunch and learn” with the idea of having the presentation last an hour and a half. We think that if we market this properly, those Members interested would still be able to stay for a slightly longer time period to enable our Sponsor to better develop the material. We are still in discussions on this point without a firm decision having been made. Potential sponsors are very interested in pursuing something in this area. Because this is still a fairly new area, we have not suggested that they pay a Practice Group Sponsorship fee, but instead, just pay for the event costs.

No time has been set for any event. We would like to see potential sponsors host a fall event and move forward with lining up the other for an event in either January or February.

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CAREER ADVANCEMENT INTEREST GROUP

<Insert>

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