



NCBWL Board Member Special Informal Session – Convening for 2023 Pearls of Wisdom Debrief

Date: Friday, October 20, 2023 at 3:00 p.m. to 3:35 p.m.

Venue: Remote meeting via Zoom

Attendees:

Claudia Weber, President and meeting lead
Tricia Casa Santa
Trish Cronin
Carol Ann Fernandez
Jennie Guinn
Sandra MacSweeney
Mary Rolando
Patricia M. Smith
Ellen Wade

Absent/excused:

Connie Allison
Lauren Barca
Kelley Colopietro
Courtney Conklin
Karoline Mahoney

Discussion Summary:

Claudia Weber called for today's short virtual meeting in order to: collect Board member inputs on 10/6/23 Pearls of Wisdom gala's financial status, scholarship award considerations, and ideas around raising additional current-year funds, and related subsequent actions. Below are discussion highlights.

- **PoW financials:** Yesterday, Karoline Mahoney distributed the September Treasurer Report, and today she sent the preliminary work-in-process report for October. As Claudia also emphasized, we are still awaiting some PoW payment receipts (e.g. silent auction proceeds), and we still have to process additional expense payments.
- **Scholarship funding:** The preliminary estimated per-school scholarship gift that NCBWL will be able to grant, based on current PoW financial forecast, is \$14,000. Based on input that Claudia had received from one school, this covers the approximate annual education cost (in \$10-13,000 range) of each student. Last year's PoW-based donation was \$20,000 per school/scholarship recipient, based on the larger 2022 event attendee/participating donor base and different expense venue dynamics.
 - Ellen Wade and others pointed out that to date, the amount of NCBWL annual scholarship awards is correlated to net funding raised through Pearls of Wisdom, not necessarily equating to full-year tuition coverage at any of the schools but rather serving as a meaningful, helpful contribution toward tuition.

- **Additional auction:** When Claudia mentioned there are ‘left over’ auction goods that were not purchased through the PoW event, she, Sandra MacSweeney, and others agreed that it makes sense to communicate the availability of these items, to those on NCBWL’s extensive member/friend mailing list. The goal is to raise additional funds through post-gala bids on these remaining items (e.g. Predators birthday party with GNASH at Ford Ice Center).
- **Donor acknowledgement letters:** Claudia raised the importance of our organization’s acknowledging and thanking donors for their donations including in-kind donations, and she would like Trish Cronin (who agreed) to support the thank you letters. Patricia Smith mentioned she already has drafted a letter for donors and is asking Connie Allison to review and provide input from Legal perspective. She is sending Trish the initial draft letter. Claudia would like to assure we have accurate records and are able to send letters promptly, ideally during November. The PoW chairs should have extra stamps/postage materials that can be applied.
- **Scholarship winner interactions:** Ellen noted that in the past, current scholarship winners personally have met with NCBWL members. Claudia, endorsing that practice, advised that school leadership would like to have NCBWL hold monthly lunch or dinner meetings at their schools, to facilitate members-girls interactions.
- **PoW venue considerations:** A larger PoW venue like last year’s location, the Nashville Catholic Pastoral Center, would draw more participants and potential donors. The direct costs from the center would be lower than those of a country club like Richland, which offered a stunning and tasteful venue for this year’s gala. More hands-on support is needed in the non-country club setting. If the Pastoral Center is used, we can afford to include more students plus encourage student volunteers to pitch in to support event preparation. Claudia advised that in January, a more robust PoW/fundraising debrief will be held for further review of financials, detailed discussions, and various decisions around next year’s gala.
- **November 15 meeting:** The next (November) monthly NCBWL meeting, at Coco’s restaurant, is set to feature nonprofit “Springboard Landings,” with whom Mary Rolando, following introduction by Patricia Smith, has been coordinating the presentation. Springboard Landings’ Patricia Cooper and Elizabeth Woodliff are expected to be well-received speakers. They will be promoting awareness of their mission and activities and encouraging visits to their website (that includes a donate function).

Respectfully submitted,
Trish Cronin, Secretary