

Summary Results of District and Unit Survey on New Member Recruitment, Retention and Integration – May 2020

Districts

16 of 25 District Presidents completed the survey. While most of them were in their 1st year as president, nearly all had held other positions on their boards.

In the area of new member recruitment, only 1 district spends more than \$5000, 2 spend between \$1000 and \$2000 and 1 spends <\$1000. 4 respondents did not know how much is spent.

In the area of new member retention and integration, only 1 district spends more than \$5000, 2 spend between \$1000 and \$2000 and 1 spends <\$1000. 2 respondents did not know how much is spent.

From the comments, it's clear that most districts see these as unit activities and while some offer programs, they are generally tournament related such as reduced entry fees for new player of specific education programs.

Units

152 of the 299 Unit Presidents completed the survey. Only 42 of these were in their first year in the position and nearly all had held other unit board positions.

In the area of new member recruitment, 100 of the 149 units responding spend unit funds in this area. 75 of these spend <\$1000, 3 spend more than \$5000, 1 spends between \$3000 and \$5000, 4 spend between \$2000 and \$3000 and 21 spend between \$1000 and \$2000.

In the area of new member retention and integration, 93 of the 144 units responding spend unit funds in this area. 75 of these spend <\$1000, 3 spend more than \$5000, 1 spends between \$3000 and \$5000, 5 spend between \$2000 and \$3000 and 9 spend between \$1000 and \$2000.

Only 19 units report receiving funds from their district for these activities. Of these, 14 report receiving over 50% of their expenditures from their district.

Discussion

It's clear from the survey that only a small minority of units that reported their spending are likely to be spending the entire 11% of member dues they receive for the purposes of new member recruitment, retention and integration. Over \$660,000 was given to the units in 2019.

That some districts are spending funds in this area is noteworthy and their help is acknowledged by the units in the survey.

ACBL has had a membership growth objective for decades as a strategic priority. Membership has been declining as well as new member recruitment and retention. It is critical that membership be stabilized and that growth is achieved for the long-term success of the league.

Best Practices and Activities

ACBL's structure of clubs, units, and districts lends itself to collection and distribution of successful practices in the critical area of membership growth. Units can work with their clubs to understand what works well and disseminate that information throughout the unit and through the membership, I/N and Education chairs share at the district level. The district chairs can ensure good communications across the units and share with liaisons in ACBL headquarters. Collecting data in each area of the cost and effectiveness of the activities is critical.

From the survey, here are the frequently mentioned activities:

New Member Recruitment

- Advertising subsidies
- Teacher training subsidies
- Learn Bridge in a Day
- Membership dues subsidies
- Recruiter incentives
- Easy Bridge subsidies
- Other education activities

New member retention and integration

- Tournament subsidies for new players
- Mentor/Mentee programs
- Education programs
- Club Director training subsidies

