Board of Directors Expectations and Responsibilities

The ten independent colleges and universities in Washington have joined together to form ICW for the purpose of expanding opportunity and choice for students by promoting the value and vitality of high-quality, academically rigorous independent higher education, and by broadening access through enhanced student aid. The association raises critically needed student aid funds from the corporate community for scholarships for students attending the ten member institutions and coordinates activities to influence state and federal policy affecting independent higher education.

This coordinated approach calls upon Board members to assist in making the fundraising case and advocating for private colleges in public policy decisions that have an impact on higher education in Washington. With the support of key corporate leaders, we can further strengthen higher education opportunities in this state.

The Board is deeply committed to the high quality education and preparation ICW colleges provide to the more than 35,000 students they serve. We believe that the private alternative is one that must be carefully, aggressively, and enthusiastically tended to ensure that these schools are an option for future generations.

While most directors are products of an independent college or university, we also welcome those who have attended state institutions, understand the importance of these schools, and can articulately address the need for healthy private institutions. Having a genuine belief in private higher education is the most critical qualification for a director to possess.

Expectations

Board Meetings

- Four year term of service with the possibility of a second four year term
- Serve on one committee of the Board
- Consider serving as a mentor to new Board members
- 100% Board participation in annual giving appropriate to one’s capacity
- Attendance at two meetings per year in Washington
  - Spring meeting is a one- or two-day meeting
  - Fall meeting is two days
- Prepare for and participate in Board and committee meetings
- Serve the organization as a whole rather than any special interest group or constituency
- Disclose to the Board any conflicts of interest in a timely manner
- Board members pay for their own travel expenses. Reimbursement is available for Board members for whom this is a hardship

Outreach in the area of one’s choice

- Assist in cultivation and solicitation of corporate/foundation donors
- Develop familiarity with state and federal policy issues concerning higher education and assist in ICW’s public policy work, tailored to a Board member’s strengths
Participate in editorial board visits, write an op-ed, engage with ICW’s social media, or otherwise extend the visibility of ICW facts and agenda in the broader community

Responsibilities

Managerial
- Hire, support, and evaluate the Chief Executive Officer
- Assess Board performance
- Exercise prudence with the Board in the control and transfer of funds

Governance
- Ensure effective organizational planning by participating in and approving the establishment of a strategic plan and annual goals
- Ensure effective financial management and compliance, controls and reporting
- Determine and monitor ICW programs for effectiveness and quality
- The Board seeks to make collegial decisions; once made, the decision needs to be supported by all Directors
- The confidentiality of deliberations of the Board must be preserved

Priorities
- Ask – help secure philanthropic support through personal giving and helping to raise funds from others
- Access – help make connections with corporate leadership, governmental officials, foundations, media
- Advocate – use those connections to advocate for ICW’s position

Individually
- Be strongly committed to independent colleges, and to ICW’s mission and goals
- Work to increase your understanding of the organization
- Be knowledgeable about ICW’s operations, programs, strengths, and weaknesses
- Be objective in evaluating personnel, programs, and policies
- Budget time and plan ahead to attend meetings and participate on committee calls
- Recommend others who can serve on the Board
- Be a year-round ambassador and advocate by being alert for opportunities to further the mission, goals, and fundraising
- Keep the collegial atmosphere of the group dynamic intact
- Speak positively in public about the organization, its mission, leadership, members, and Board
- The Board of Directors exerts its power as a group. Individual directors are not authorized to issue directives to the President or members of the staff
- Board members should not use their position to try to gain special favors, privileges, contracts, employment, or other personal gain from ICW or its staff

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