



Tuesday, October 13

3:00 – 5:00 pm	Registration
4:30 – 5:00 pm	Pre-Workshop Gathering for New Folks <i>First timers - Make some friends and meet some NABE veterans prior to the opening reception! Come to the reception area at 4:30 p.m. to mingle before heading in to socialize.</i>
5:00 – 6:30 pm	Welcome Reception <i>Join us for a warm and welcoming start to the Workshop! Connect with fellow attendees, enjoy delicious refreshments and appetizers, and set the tone for an inspiring few days in D.C.</i>
Sponsored by: 	

Wednesday, October 14

8:30 – 9:30 am	New Comm Connect <i>Stay tuned for more details!</i>
10:00 am – 12:00 pm	Exhibitor Set Up
10:00 am – 5:00 pm	Registration
11:15 am – 12:00 pm	Lunch, Networking & Opening Remarks <i>Arrive early to get comfortable, enjoy some lunch, and connect with both new and familiar colleagues and friends before we kick off an exciting day!</i>
12:00 – 1:00 pm	Presentation of Awards (Luminary, Anne Charles, Wally & NewCOMMer) <i>Each year, the NABE Luminary Awards program recognizes excellence in bar association communications and marketing by honoring the outstanding communications projects of the last year. Join us and celebrate your colleagues with the presentation of the Luminaries Awards!</i>
Luminary Awards Sponsored by: 	
<i>In addition to our Luminary Awards, celebrate your colleagues with the presentation of the E.A. "Wally" Richter Distinguished Achievement, Anne Charles Award, and the NewCOMMer Award!</i>	
1:00 – 2:00 pm	Plenary: When the Bar Association Becomes the Story: How to Communicate When Your Organization Faces a Crisis. Because the Court of Public Opinion is Always in Session. <i>Bar executives sit at the intersection of lawyers, the judiciary, politics, the media, members, donors, employees and the public. In that environment, a hot-button issue can spread in</i>

2026 COMMUNICATIONS WORKSHOP

October 13 - 16 | Washington, DC



moments. Since it takes years to build a reputation and only seconds to damage one, managing the message is an essential skill for bar executives – as well as the attorneys they serve. This fast-paced session focuses on a strategic approach to communicating during a wide range of crises. Participants will learn practical methods for maintaining control of the message during a sudden onslaught from traditional or social media.

Speaker: Bruce Hennes, President, Hannes Communication

2:00 – 2:30 pm

Partner Networking Break

Enjoy some light snacks and beverages while visiting with our partners and learning about their products and services that can help you in your day-to-day routine!

2:30 – 3:30 pm

Breakout: Ctrl + Prompt: Unlocking AI for Bar Associations

Artificial intelligence is rapidly changing how associations communicate with members, create content, and potentially manage limited staff resources. This session explores practical, ethical, and realistic ways bar associations can leverage AI to improve communications while maintaining authenticity and trust.

*****Please bring your laptop so participants can learn how to create their own GPTs.*****

Speaker: Jennifer Weaver, Communications Director, Utah State Bar

2:30 – 3:30 pm

Breakout: Managing Stress (or not!) and Well-Being in an Always-On Profession

A practical, interactive and candid conversation about the particular challenges communications professionals face, including constant connectivity, competing deadlines, social media and email, after-hours responsibilities, crisis communications, difficulty disconnecting, and the general feeling that our work is never completely “done.”

Moderated by: Liz Novak, Chief Executive Officer/Executive Director, Monroe County Bar Association

Panelists: Nick Hansen, Member Engagement & Sponsorship Manager, Customer Experience Professionals Association | Jessica Smith, Communications/Media Director, Dallas Bar Association

3:30 – 4:00 pm

Partner Networking Break

Enjoy some light snacks and beverages while visiting with our partners and learning about their products and services that can help you in your day-to-day routine!

4:00 – 5:00 pm

Breakout: Building a Cohesive Centennial Communications Strategy

How do you tell a 100-year story in a way that feels unified, engaging and memorable? In this session, Whitney von Haam and Amy Davis of the Wake County Bar Association in Raleigh, North Carolina, share how they developed and executed a comprehensive communications plan for a centennial year celebration. From establishing a central theme and visual identity to



maintaining consistency across a full calendar of events, they'll walk through the strategy behind the messaging and the logistics of planning a year of celebrations.

Through real examples, including videos, graphics and campaign elements, attendees will gain insight into planning a yearlong initiative that stays cohesive while evolving over time. They'll also reflect on key takeaways from the experience, including how certain centennial moments resonated so strongly that members now expect them as annual traditions.

Speakers: Amy Davis, Communications Manager, Wake County Bar Association | Whitney von Haam, Executive Director, Wake County Bar Association

4:00 – 5:00 pm

Breakout: Eager Minds, Same Goal: Working With Excited Volunteers

Whether you work at a voluntary small bar or a large mandatory bar, collaborating with volunteers is a key aspect in communicators' roles. In this panel session, four communicators from voluntary and mandatory bars open up about how they navigate passion, purpose, and policy when working with eager volunteers.

Speakers: To be announced

6:00 – 8:00 pm

Workshop Soiree (OFFSITE - Flight Club DC — Social Darts®)

Get ready for an evening of tech-enabled darts, great food, and even better company. Flight Club puts a modern spin on the classic pub game with Social Darts® — multiplayer dart games with instant tracking, on-screen scoring, and instant replay of your best (or worst) throws. No experience necessary; it's designed to be fun for beginners and sharks alike.

Food & Drink: Food and drinks will be served throughout the night.

What to Wear: Casual — wear whatever you're comfortable in.

Getting There: A 10-minute walk from the D.C. Bar, or a 20-minute walk from YOTEL Washington DC. Prefer not to walk? We'll have Uber vouchers available at the 8am booth for you to pick up.

Sponsored by: 

Thursday, October 15

7:30 am – 4:00 pm

Registration

8:00 – 9:00 am

Welcome, Announcements and Light Breakfast

Arrive early to get comfortable, enjoy a bite to eat, and connect with both new and familiar colleagues and friends before we kick off an exciting day!

9:00 – 10:00 am

Plenary: The Changing Media Landscape

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The media landscape is rapidly changing, with the sector facing more political and economic pressure than ever. This session will provide some lessons from the trenches for current and former working journalists, including how the challenges affect your ability to get coverage and how you can sharpen your pitches to make them more impactful.

Moderated by: To be announced

Panelists: Nicole Gaudiano, Director of Media Affairs and Storytelling, American Federation of Teachers | Rhina Guidos, Latin America Regional Correspondent, Global Sisters Report | Aliah D. Wright, Digital Communications Strategist and Author

10:00 – 10:30 am

Partner Networking Break

Enjoy some light snacks and beverages while visiting with our partners and learning about their products and services that can help you in your day-to-day routine!

10:30 – 11:30 am

Breakout: Stronger Together: Building Meaningful Partnerships with Affinity Bars

Your bar can benefit from building relationships with other bars nearby, whether they be affinity bars (e.g., women lawyers, African American lawyers, trial attorneys) or bars covering different geographical areas (e.g., local vs. state bars). This session will feature several real-world examples of programs the presenters' bars created to foster relationships with colleagues in nearby legal organizations. Hear their experiences, best practices, and potential pitfalls and discover how to create meaningful connections among disparate bars and their people.

Moderated by: Rebecca Johnson, Public Affairs Director, State Bar of Texas

Panelists: Will Korn, Assistant Editor, Texas Bar Journal | Liz Novak, Chief Executive Director/Executive Director, Monroe County Bar Association | Emme Veenbaas, Director of Communication & Events, The Chicago Bar Foundation/Association

10:30 – 11:30 am

Breakout: Revenue Beyond Dues

PILOT — A Practical Framework for Building Non-Dues Revenue in Real Time: With association dues now responsible for only 30–45% of total revenue, bar associations must diversify to remain financially resilient. Yet most bars rarely have the luxury of stepping back to design new revenue streams. Work is constant, member needs evolve quickly and opportunities often appear mid-flight. More often than not, the plane needs to be built while it's already in the air. This one-hour session introduces PILOT, a structured, practical framework that helps bar leaders build and test non-dues revenue ideas while operating at full speed. Using the five steps of PILOT — Prioritize, Ideate, Launch, Optimize, and Track — participants will work through a guided process to identify high-value opportunities and shape them into actionable concepts.

Speaker: Stephanie Titzel, Director of Communications and External Relationships, Pennsylvania Bar Association

11:45 am – 12:45 pm

Networking Lunch



	<i>Enjoy lunch while networking with your industry friends, our incredible partners, and new connections!</i>
1:00 – 1:50 pm	Breakout: Crisis Communications & Issuing Statements <i>Session description to be announced.</i> <i>Speakers: To be announced</i>
1:00 – 1:50 pm	Breakout: Beyond the Event Recap: Communicating Your Bar’s Impact <i>Discover how to move beyond event recaps and announcements to create stories that showcase the real impact of your bar association. Learn how to identify compelling narratives, highlight member success, measure and communicate outcomes, and tailor stories for newsletters, magazines, websites, annual reports, and social media. You'll leave with practical ideas for making every story reinforce your association's value and mission.</i> <i>Moderated by: Meghan Tinkham, Associate Executive Director, Mecklenburg Bar Association</i> <i>Panelists: Amelia Gabor, Communications Lead, Baton Rouge Bar Association Geoffrey Hinkson, Digital Content Specialist, State Bar of Texas</i>
2:00 – 3:00 pm	Breakout: Social Media That Engages Members <i>Session description to be announced.</i> <i>Speakers: To be announced</i>
2:00 – 3:00 pm	Breakout: The Mechanics of Magazine Publishing in 2026 <i>Running a bar magazine or journal takes more than good writing and design; it also requires a solid business plan. This panel will cover the challenges of magazine and journal publishing in 2026 including printing and distribution, working with vendors, selling ads, and the looming question of when — if ever — is the right time to go fully digital. We'll talk about achieving costs savings, the weird things no one tells you about publishing, specific issues facing mandatory vs. voluntary bars and more!</i> <i>Moderated by: Rachel Kipp, Director of Communications and Marketing, Philadelphia Bar Association</i> <i>Panelists: Susannah Buell, Senior Content Editor, D.C. Bar Fleur Harris, Associate Director, Content, D.C. Bar Patricia McConnico, Managing Editor, State Bar of Texas Jessica Smith, Communications/Media Director, Dallas Bar Association</i>
3:00 – 3:30 pm	Partner Networking Break <i>Enjoy some light snacks and beverages while visiting with our partners and learning about their products and services that can help you in your day-to-day routine!</i>
3:30 – 5:00 pm	Exhibitor Tear Down
3:30 – 4:30 pm	COMM Crawl



Grab a drink of choice and join the Comm Crawl! Visit one of several discussion stations to meet with experts and conversation starters who can help brainstorm solutions to association-related issues that keep you up at night. Jump in and join the conversation!

Moderated by: Amelia Gabor, Communications Lead, Baton Rouge Bar Association & Will Korn, Assistant Editor, Texas Bar Journal, State Bar of Texas

6:00 – 8:00 pm

Dine Arounds - OFFSITE (Various Locations)

Separate registration required.

Friday, October 16

8:00 – 11:00 am

Registration

8:00 – 8:45 am

Welcome, Announcements and Light Breakfast

Arrive early to get comfortable, enjoy a bite to eat, and connect with both new and familiar colleagues and friends before we kick off an exciting day!

8:45 – 9:00 am

Section Business Meeting

9:00 – 10:00 am

Plenary: 60 Tips in 60 Minutes

Session description forthcoming

Moderated by: To be announced

10:30 – 10:30 am

Informal Networking

A SPECIAL THANKS

A heartfelt thank you to the D.C. Bar and the D.C. Bar Meetings Department for their generous hospitality in hosting this workshop. Your team's support made this gathering possible, and we are truly grateful for the partnership.



An enormous thank you as well to the entire Communications Section Programming and Sponsorship Committees for their dedication and tireless planning efforts. This workshop would not come together without you.