



Arkansas Retired Teachers Association

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Ask the RTA

Positioning Your Local Unit
as a Community Resource



Arkansas Retired Teachers Association

Appeal to potential members BEFORE they retire.

As a membership organization, you rely on the continual addition of new members to keep your group vibrant, interesting and relevant. ***But the recruitment process begins well before an individual has retired.*** Each contact with others by a member, each time your organization is mentioned by name, builds awareness

of your group and its purpose.

A great way to build general awareness for your group is to consistently remind the community how it can benefit from the service and expertise available from your organization and its members.

Speaking Engagements

Members of your organization may be especially knowledgeable about public education, financial planning, retirement living, a community service project, or other topics of interest. Odds are you also have members with unique hobbies or skills to share.

- Let other community groups know that you are a resource for them when they need program speakers, panel discussion participants, etc.

Guest Writer

Many print and online publications accept articles or letters from their readers.

- Identify websites or publications that accept submissions and develop articles that allow you to share your organization's activities or expertise with their readers.

Expert Interviews

Reporters are always looking for expert sources or quotes.

- Make a list of local media contacts, such as morning shows, newspapers, organizational publications, newsletters and even bloggers and let them know in which areas your members are able to provide commentary or insight.

Host an Event

Hosting an event that is open to those outside of your membership is a great way to build awareness and attract new members. You may even use it to generate additional funds for your organization.

- Consider whether a regular unit meeting could be opened up to the community at large.
- Utilize your members' expertise to host a seminar or workshop for members of the community.
- Host a social event to entertain current members and attract potential new members.

Resource Pool

Your members are a valuable source of contributions.

- Let your local schools, churches and community organizations know that they can contact your organization when they need volunteers or donations. (Do not share your membership list with them.)
- You may present the opportunity to your members, but be careful not to make anyone feel that they are required to contribute. Group projects may need to be voted on/adopted by the members.

Social Media

Used carefully, social media is a great way to build positive awareness of your organization and its role in the community.

- Use social media to begin important conversations.
- Share when you have something useful to add to a discussion.
- Be known as a respectful voice.

When a potential member is invited to join, they should already recognize a few faces and know what to expect from the organization.