



161 North Clark Street, Suite 4300, Chicago, Illinois 60601

## **Associate Board New Board Member Information**

Revised March 2020

### **LAWYERS FOR THE CREATIVE ARTS**

In 1972, a group of young lawyers formed what they called the "Creative City Committee" to determine ways to work more closely with the life of the city. They targeted the artistic community, and created a pro bono art and law organization, Lawyers for the Creative Arts. Its mission: to provide legal assistance to artists and arts organizations financially unable to retain legal counsel.

Under the leadership of its first president, James N. Alexander, and first full-time executive director, Thomas R. Leavens (both still actively involved with LCA), LCA soon boasted a \$38,000 budget. Fifty-three volunteer attorneys processed 100 matters. Since that start, LCA has mushroomed, enlisting more than 1,800 lawyers to provide pro bono assistance to our thousands of clients.

In addition to providing legal assistance, LCA now conducts workshops on not-for-profit incorporation and tax exemption, organizes seminars pertaining to music, publishing, film, copyright and other areas, and mentors young attorneys. In the past twelve months, LCA has provided service, in one form or another, to over 2,000 people and organizations in all areas of the arts.

### **MISSION**

Legal advice is a necessity for all businesses, including the arts business. The problem is that most artists cannot afford market rate legal services. That's where LCA comes in. LCA is the only pro bono legal service organization in Illinois, specialized, and expert in, all areas of the arts.

### **LCA PROGRAMS**

Throughout the year, LCA conducts various seminars and educational lectures pertaining to music, publishing, film, copyright and other areas. Please visit <http://www.law-art.org/> for more details.

## **ASSOCIATE BOARD - INFORMATION**

### **Membership:**

The **LCA Associate Board** is geared towards young professionals (including attorneys), artists and patrons who share a commitment to LCA and its mission. Membership offers an exclusive calendar of networking and educational events designed to help broaden members' understanding of arts and entertainment law.

The LCA Associate Board supports LCA and its Board of Directors by taking on key responsibilities in the areas of fundraising and development. The Associate Board believes the engagement of new attorneys, professionals and creative artists and entertainers will not only increase awareness of LCA's programs and services, it will also provide LCA with direct and tangible benefits through its fundraising efforts.

### **Associate Board Structure:**

#### *Executive Committee*

The Associate Board has an Executive Committee comprised of four Officers consisting of a President, Vice President, Secretary and Treasurer, and four to six At-Large Members to carry out Board duties. The Executive Committee runs on the calendar year and all Executive Committee Members are elected by the Associate Board membership for a two-year term. Officer positions have a term limit of four years, or two terms, each for any one individual.

Any out-going President will automatically be appointed to an At-Large Member position for the term after their presidency, to help with the transition.

All Executive Committee Members, besides the President and At-Large Member out-going/most recent past President, are required to Chair one Committee during their two-year term. Chairs will be selected using a method at the President's discretion. Chair terms coincide with the Executive Committee Member two-year term.

#### *Associate Board Members*

Associate Board Members are the linchpins of the Associate Board, as they comprise the face and voice of Lawyers for the Creative Arts in the community. Associate Board Members are elected for a one-year renewable term, and it is expected that upon resignation an Associate Board member will recruit or nominate a suitable replacement, should they not wish to renew their membership.

## **Legal Responsibilities:**

Under well-established principles of nonprofit corporation law, a board member must meet certain standards of conduct and attention in carrying out his or her responsibilities to the organization. Several states have statutes adopting some variation of these duties, which would be used in court to determine whether a board member acted improperly. These standards are usually described as the duty of care, the duty of loyalty and the duty of obedience.

### *Duty of Care*

The duty of care describes the level of competence that is expected of a board member, and is commonly expressed as the duty of "care that an ordinarily prudent person would exercise in a like position and under similar circumstances." This means that a board member owes the duty to exercise reasonable care when he or she makes a decision as a steward of the organization.

### *Duty of Loyalty*

The duty of loyalty is a standard of faithfulness; a board member must give undivided allegiance when making decisions affecting the organization. This means that a board member can never use information obtained as a member for personal gain, but must act in the best interests of the organization.

### *Duty of Obedience*

The duty of obedience requires board members to be faithful to the organization's mission. They are not permitted to act in a way that is inconsistent with the central goals of the organization. A basis for this rule lies in the public's trust that the organization will manage donated funds to fulfill the organization's mission.

## **Associate Board Member Commitment:**

Every Associate Board member will be expected to fulfill the following obligations:

- Remit dues to the Associate Board Treasurer (or as otherwise directed) in a timely fashion;
- Attend at least two of the quarterly All-Member Associate Board meetings;
- Serve on one Associate Board Committee, and actively assist that committee in the execution of its objectives;
- Attend the Annual Associate Board Shindy Fundraiser;
- Attend at least one Associate Board event planned by a Committee you are not assigned to and that is separate from the annual Shindy;
- Actively engage the community and professionals, increasing the awareness and interest in Lawyers for the Creative Arts, in person and through all forms of media.

## DUES

The Associate Board runs on a fiscal year from July through June. Membership requires a minimum donation, with the additional expectation to buy and sell tickets at fundraisers and seek out sponsors for the organization and events. Associate Board dues break down as follows:

\$250 (attorneys)/\$150 (non-attorneys)/\$75 (law students)

**Associate Board dues are an imperative part of LCA's income. We appreciate them being paid in a timely manner.**

*\*If you find yourself unable to make timely payment or otherwise experiencing undue financial hardship and in need of some assistance, please contact the current Associate Board Treasurer to set-up a payment plan or other mutually agreeable arrangements.*

### **Associate Board Member Benefits:**

Upon receipt of your Associate Board dues, your membership benefits include:

- Free admission to the Annual Associate Board Shindy Fundraiser;
- Free access to the Associate Board Members-Only Educational Workshop;
- Discounts to LCA Events when available;
- Networking opportunities with industry professionals;
- Invitation to the LCA Holiday Party;
- Resume booster and chance to enhance your soft skills and leadership abilities

## COMMITTEES

Currently, the Associate Board has five committees: Community Service/Outreach, Education, Events, Recruitment and Shindy. Members are required to serve on one committee during each year of their membership. You will be assigned to a Committee as part of your admission process into the Associate Board. All Associate Board Members will be eligible to make a request to change their Committee assignment at the beginning of each fiscal year, provided they have served on their current Committee for at least one year. Procedural details for doing so will be provided to the Associate Board membership by the Vice President.

### **Community Service/Outreach Committee:**

The Community Service/Outreach Committee is tasked with providing our membership the opportunity to assist other groups or organizations in need, preferably groups that have a similar mission or are otherwise related to the arts. The committee must plan at least (1) community service/outreach event each year.

### **Committee Chair:**

(1) Gina Gerard- [gina.gerardi@gmail.com](mailto:gina.gerardi@gmail.com)

### **Education Committee:**

The Educational Committee is responsible for planning educational programs for artists focusing on legal concepts and/or continuing legal education programming for LCA volunteers and the legal community at large. The committee must plan at least (1) educational event for the larger community and at least (1) Associate Board Members-Only educational workshop each year.

### **Committee Chairs:**

- (1) Amanda Alasauskas- [aalasaus44@gmail.com](mailto:aalasaus44@gmail.com)
- (2) Kenny Matuszewski- [kmatusze13@gmail.com](mailto:kmatusze13@gmail.com)

### **Events Committee:**

The Events Committee is tasked with creating and organizing social, networking and fundraising events for LCA. Throughout the year, the Events Committee will work to develop creative events that are of interest to LCA's clients, volunteers, and Board Members, as well as to the public at large. The committee must plan at least (2) events each year.

### **Committee Chairs:**

- (1) Michael Reed- [mreed.lawfirm@gmail.com](mailto:mreed.lawfirm@gmail.com)
- (2)

### **Recruitment Committee:**

The Recruitment Committee shall market, advertise and conduct public relations work on behalf of the Associate Board in an effort to grow the Associate Board Membership. The committee must plan at least (1) recruitment event each year.

### **Committee Chair:**

- (1) Michelle Wahl- [mwahl@smbtrials.com](mailto:mwahl@smbtrials.com)

### **Shindy Committee:**

Each year, the Associate Board hosts the "Shindy," a networking and fundraising opportunity for our artistic community. It is usually a festive evening filled with food, drink and live entertainment and presents an opportunity to not only raise money for LCA, but for members of the arts to meet and mingle with one another. This is the Associate Board's biggest fundraiser of the year for LCA.

### **Committee Chairs:**

- (1) Myka Bell- [myka.bell@cityofchicago.org](mailto:myka.bell@cityofchicago.org)
- (2) Odell Mitchell- [odellthethird@gmail.com](mailto:odellthethird@gmail.com)

## **KEY INFORMATION**

**LCA Mailing Address:**

161 North Clark Street  
Suite 4300  
Chicago, Illinois 60601  
312.649.4111  
[www.law-arts.org](http://www.law-arts.org)

**Associate Board Email Address:** [associateboard@law-arts.org](mailto:associateboard@law-arts.org)

## **2019-2021 EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

Michelle Wahl, President, [mwahl@smbtrials.com](mailto:mwahl@smbtrials.com)  
Gina Gerardi, Vice President, [gina.gerardi@gmail.com](mailto:gina.gerardi@gmail.com)  
Amanda Alasauskas, Secretary, [aalasaus44@gmail.com](mailto:aalasaus44@gmail.com)  
Kenny Matuszewski, Treasurer, [kmatusze13@gmail.com](mailto:kmatusze13@gmail.com)  
Jeffrey Becker, [jbecker@smbtrials.com](mailto:jbecker@smbtrials.com)  
Myka Bell, [myka.bell@cityofchicago.org](mailto:myka.bell@cityofchicago.org)  
Odell Mitchell, [odellthethird@gmail.com](mailto:odellthethird@gmail.com)  
Michael Reed, [mreed.lawfirm@gmail.com](mailto:mreed.lawfirm@gmail.com)



*Nourishing the creative spark! ®*

**MEMBERSHIP ACCEPTANCE AND DUES**

The Lawyers for the Creative Arts Executive Board would like to formally extend to you an invitation to join its Associate Board. The main goal of the Associate Board will be to spread the word of Lawyers for the Creative Arts in the community, as well as raise funds in order to ensure that the organization’s mission is successful. With your help, we will accomplish these goals through social, educational and networking activities and opportunities for our Associate Board Members, the general public, and artists all around Chicago.

This invitation is for a one-year membership and in order to effectuate acceptance of your invitation, you must sign and date below. The fees are as follows:

Attorney –	\$250/year
Non-Attorney –	\$150/year
Law Student –	\$75/year

By signing below, you indicate that you accept the invitation to join the Lawyers for the Creative Arts Associate Board. In addition, you agree to remit payment of your tax-deductible, annual membership dues in full, or alternatively, make other arrangements with the Associate Board Treasurer to pay your annual dues.

Please remit this signed acceptance form to [associateboard@law-arts.org](mailto:associateboard@law-arts.org) and pay your dues online here: <https://law-arts.org/associate-board-membership>.

If you choose to pay your dues by check, you can make the check payable to Lawyers for the Creative Arts, write “Associate Board Dues” in the memo line, and mail to the address below. When mailing your annuals dues, please mark the envelope: ***Personal & Confidential***.

After submitting your annual dues, you will receive a letter from Lawyers for the Creative Arts confirming that your dues are tax-deductible. Please feel free to contact the Associate Board Treasurer with any questions or concerns.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Printed Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signed Name

Date:

**Lawyers for the Creative Arts, 161 North Clark Street, Suite 4300, Chicago, Illinois 60601  
Phone (312) 649-4111 Fax (312) 944-2195**