



NALSWD Newsletter | September 2015



[2015-2016 NALSWD Executive Board Elections: Candidacy Statements Due Sept. 30!](#)



National Association of Law Students With Disabilities

The [National Association of Law Students With Disabilities \(NALSWD\)](http://nalswd.org) would like to announce the elections for the 2015-2016 NALSWD Executive Board and Junior Officer Committees. The Executive Board consists of the President, Executive Director of Advocacy, Chief Financial Officer, Chief Information Officer, Membership Director, and Conference Director. In addition, there are several Junior Officer positions that are available to pre-law and law students who would like to have a more active role in NALSWD. Overall, NALSWD's leadership structure can be flexible if needed to incorporate the talents and energies of more of our members who want to take on a leadership role.

Election Process & Schedule

If you would like to run for any position with NALSWD for 2015-2016, please

submit a short 1-2 paragraph personal statement indicating who you are, why you are running (including a couple of key qualities you have or a specific project you think is important), and what position(s) you are interested in. Being open to more than one position makes it easier to find a position that will fit.

All candidacy statements should be submitted to president@nalswd.org by Wednesday, September 30, 2015 at 9pm Pacific.

After all submissions are received, our current Executive Board will process these statements, possibly talk to candidates about their preferences, and try to configure a slate of candidates that makes sense and meets those interests. Generally speaking, anyone who wants a role in NALSWD and is flexible about what specific level or title they get, we will work hard to find a position for. NALSWD has no interest in turning away talented people who want to help make this organization even better.

The new officers will shadow the current office holders (sitting in on meetings, beginning to take over duties, handing down information, etc.) until mid-October, when they will assume full responsibilities.

Overview of 2015-2016 NALSWD Positions

The NALSWD Executive Board consists of the President, Executive Director of Advocacy, Chief Financial Officer, Chief Information Officer, Membership Director, and Conference Director. The Executive Board meets weekly/bi-weekly for a short conference call to coordinate projects and discuss big picture issues. With that in mind, we will now describe the general duties of each Executive Board and Junior Officer position with NALSWD.

Position Descriptions & Duties

Executive Board:

- **President** - has chief responsibility for running NALSWD, monitoring the work of the Executive Board, and calling meetings. They also write the email newsletter and serve as the point person for contact with other disability organizations and the American Bar Association. The President has a large say in the big-picture direction of NALSWD, but is also where the buck stops for both problems and projects. Being President takes a substantial time commitment and is a position best filled by someone with substantial contacts in the disability community and familiarity with NALSWD's mission. The President has a very active group of former NALSWD Presidents and other alumni to call on for advice and support at all times.
- **Executive Director of Advocacy** - fills in for the President when needed and takes primary responsibility for NALSWD's advocacy projects. In the past, this has included writing student self-advocacy guides (LSAT accommodations, applying to law school, bar exam accommodations, etc.), signing on to position papers and amicus briefs, and could include authoring op-eds or other public statements. The Executive Director of Advocacy also coordinates advocacy projects that might involve other NALSWD members, such as lobbying, co-writing op-eds, or becoming involved in litigation. Ideal candidates have strong inter-personal skills and some specific ideas for projects and causes it makes

sense for NALSWD to pursue this next year.

- **Chief Financial Officer** - manages NALSWD's finances. This involves a lot of interaction with law firms and corporations to solicit donations, keeping track of funds, and potentially applying for grants to help NALSWD grow. The CFO coordinates all fundraising projects and may, at times, call on the Executive Board for manpower. Great candidates for this position are comfortable communicating with law firms and can organize people. Further, it is crucial that fundraising happen early in the CFO's term in order to successfully gear up for the annual conference.
- **Chief Information Officer** - controls the face NALSWD presents to the world, through management of our website, blog, mailing list, Facebook, Twitter, and other social media accounts. The CIO also takes minutes for all Executive Board meetings. Most important are website editing skills, the ability to routinely make posts and updates onto social media, and making timely responses to any messages NALSWD receives via social media.
- **Conference Director** - organizes the annual NALSWD Conference. This involves scouting a location, booking space and catering, arranging panels and speakers, deciding on swag, and publicizing the event. The Conference is NALSWD's flagship event and a fabulous opportunity for networking and community-building. This is a great position for Co-Directors in order to lighten the load, and all Executive Board members contribute effort when needed. Conference planning should begin early in the Conference Director's term, and the geographic location of the conference should rotate in order to draw on different groups of speakers and make the event more accessible to students. Candidates should be very organized, and event-planning experience is extremely helpful.
- **Membership Director** - recruits new members for NALSWD. Because 1/3 of our members graduate every year, it is essential that we keep reaching out to students who can benefit from our organization. Past membership activities have focused on reaching students through Facebook and online forums, as well as through law school administrators. There was a lot of excitement at the conference for the idea of organizing small regional student meetings throughout the year (potentially as simple as "any NALSWD members in Chicago, meet at this bar/cafe at this time to socialize"). Strong social skills and ability to respond to email in a timely manner are very important for this position, as answering member questions is a major component (you can also draw on alumni knowledge and contacts for this).

Junior Officer Positions:

These are positions that provide direct support to a particular Executive Board member. Junior Officers take on substantial responsibilities for discrete projects and serve as part of a committee of volunteers. The Junior Board does not partake in the weekly Executive conference calls, but may have a weekly or bi-weekly call with their Executive Board member about projects in their area. Pre-law students are welcome to run for any Junior Officer positions.

- **Advocacy Committee** - Junior Officers who will take on discrete projects to further the advocacy goals of NALSWD. The committee will have discretion to

focus on projects they care about and can include lobbying for more judges with disabilities, writing articles about laws/regulations, or drafting amicus briefs. The committee will be organized and overseen by the Executive Director of Advocacy. The committee would not take part in the weekly/bi-weekly Executive Board calls, but may have their own calls as needed.

- **Finance Committee** - Junior Officers who will take on discrete projects to further the financial goals of NALSWD. The committee will have discretion to focus on projects they care about and can include raising money from organizations and law firms, writing grant proposals, planning budgets, interacting with law firm diversity committees, helping NALSWD obtain its 501(c)(3) non-profit status, or developing a NALSWD scholarship for law students with disabilities. The committee will be organized and overseen by the Chief Financial Officer. The committee would not take part in the weekly/bi-weekly Executive Board calls, but may have their own calls as needed.
- **Communications Committee** - Junior Officers who will take on discrete projects to further the goals of NALSWD's online presence. The committee will have discretion to focus on projects they care about and can include assisting with managing NALSWD's various social media sites, creating and disseminating digital publicity materials, improving our website and creating an accessible forum for communication, and writing posts and/or contacting potential writers for NALSWD's blog. The committee will be organized and overseen by the Chief Information Officer. The committee would not take part in the weekly/bi-weekly Executive Board calls, but may have their own calls as needed.
- **Conference Committee** - Junior Officers who will take on discrete projects to further the conference planning goals of NALSWD. The committee will have discretion to focus on projects they care about and can include organizing the logistics of NALSWD's Annual Conference (such as scouting a location, booking space, booking catering, deciding what swag to distribute to conference attendees, etc.), arranging the panel line-up for the conference and booking speakers for the panels, and promoting & publicizing the conference. The committee will be organized and overseen by the Conference Director. The committee would not take part in the weekly/bi-weekly Executive Board calls, but may have their own calls as needed.
- **Membership Committee** - Junior Officers who will take on discrete projects to further the membership goals of NALSWD. The committee will have discretion to focus on projects they care about and can include reaching out to deans of law schools and disability resource directors across the country, driving grass-roots efforts to recruit members through social networking sites and online forums, and publicizing our organization to pre-law and undergraduate students to encourage more people with disabilities to enter the legal profession. The committee will be organized and overseen by the Membership Director. The committee would not take part in the weekly/bi-weekly Executive Board calls, but may have their own calls as needed.

If you have any interest in getting more involved in NALSWD - as an Executive Board member, Junior Officer, or even just as a specific project volunteer - please get in touch with us at president@nalswd.org with your ideas! NALSWD is doing

exciting things and we would love to have you be a part of that.

Finally, please remember to **submit your candidacy statement by Wednesday, September 30 at 9pm Pacific** to president@nalswd.org. We hope to hear from you soon!

-The NALSWD E-Board, 2014-2015

For more updates from NALSWD, Follow us on [Facebook](#),
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