

## **ICMA Board Update to the Membership**

### **Fostering the Next Generation**

**June 2016**

The ICMA Executive Board places a high value on fostering a new generation of innovative, positive and principled leaders in local government management. This future is one that will require greater local action and a diverse and inclusive membership that reflects the make-up of our communities. The Executive Board, with its partners IHN, NFBPA, and ICMA-RC, have taken significant steps to meet that goal and there are a number of positive signs that bode well for the profession as we make our way into the third decade of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. However, the Board acknowledges that more can be done and is committed to providing the leadership necessary to see this task through.

Over the years, the Board has worked arduously to implement policies and guidelines that would attract strong, principled individuals to the profession. In the past year alone, the Board has successfully brought on ICMA-RC as a partner to underwrite the membership dues of ICMA collegiate student chapters around the country. The results are already tangible with a 21% increase in chapters in the span of only a few months. The Board expects this number to rise significantly over the next several years. The Board signed new partnership agreements with IHN and NFBPA that include membership advantages such as a joint dues structure and co-sponsorship of conference educational sessions. The Board also instituted a new flat fee dues structure for department directors. Since implementing the new rate in July 2015, we have increased membership in this category by 55%.

The Board continues to support the ICMA Local Government Management Fellow program and encourages local governments to fund and hire fellows to provide an in-road for students seeking access into a public management career. To date, 30 local governments host 46 fellowships. Similarly, ICMA's student scholarship program for ICMA conference attendance offers yet another opportunity for a young person to make the necessary connections that could prove to be the difference in effectively building one's career. Additionally, the Board entered into an agreement to offer the CAL-ICMA Coaching program nationwide to provide professional development and career coaching at no cost to participants.

In 2015, the Board adopted many of the recommendations from the Task Force on Women and the Task Force on Inclusiveness. Work continues to further implement those recommendations in FY 2017.

Although much has been accomplished thanks to the support of the ICMA membership, there is still more that can be done. The Board is only as effective as its individual members. To that end,

the Board encourages the association's members to seriously consider being candidates for the Executive Board.

The Board is comprised of 18 members from the United States and 3 International members. Membership on the Board is determined by a nominating process that is meant to provide the states and international members with the greatest voice in the selection of who represents the membership on the Board in any given year. This is critically important since the Board deals with those issues and needs that are the core values of the local management profession. These may be practiced differently across this country and abroad. The Executive Board does not unilaterally choose ICMA Executive Board members. Rather, this selection is done in the ICMA regions by representatives of the various State Associations, NACA, IHN, NFBPA, and the Board President. However, the Board does provide guidance and encouragement to the regions on the selection process and the importance of selecting nominees who fully represent all of our organization's members. ICMA's affiliate organizations, IHN, NFBPA and NACA, are also encouraged to recruit and encourage potential candidates to submit their application for consideration.

The most inclusive Board membership would include males and females, young professionals, seasoned professionals, people of color and varied ethnic backgrounds, Caucasians and managers/assistants representing communities of small and large populations and everything in between. Though laudable in its intent, it is not necessarily possible to address each of these priorities each year when only 6 new Board members are selected for each three year term. In addition to providing a diverse pool of Board members each year, there is also a need to provide for a selection process that includes opportunities for every state and every international member nation to participate fully in selecting an individual they believe will best represent their regional issues and needs. Furthermore, there is a rotational process that by its very nature may not provide annually a very diverse candidate pool if the states whose turn it is, do not have a large pool of diverse candidates serving in manager or assistant roles. The decision is made at the time to nominate the best candidates from each region and sometimes the region itself is not very diverse.

Serving on the Board is also a very personal choice for managers and assistants. Not only are there the overarching considerations that the states and the Board have each year for promoting diversity, but every potential nominee has to make the decision to become a candidate based on very personal circumstances. Depending on the geographic rotational process in place in any particular region, a given year may generate a demographically different set of candidates. Perhaps the best view of the Board's diversity is a long-term view. When viewed over the last ten years—for example—the Board's make-up has been significantly diverse. However, more can and should be done to foster a new wave of candidates to lead us into the future. The ICMA Executive Board is committed to that goal.

To that end, the Board will host a "What it Takes to Be an ICMA Executive Board Member" session at the 2016 annual conference. It is hoped that this session will help raise awareness of the

process and elicit interest from those that may not have previously considered Board work. At the grass roots level, the Board encourages all ICMA members to promote the career of local government management to young professionals and support and encourage M.P.A. student programs to the greatest extent possible and to encourage engaged professionals to participate on ICMA committees, task forces and to attend the annual conference and regional summits. Anyone considering Board service should feel free to contact any past or present ICMA Vice President for input and advice. In addition, the Board will include a discussion on Board diversity on agendas at least twice per year. The Board will also discuss the possibility of requiring potential candidate names one month prior to the actual deadline for submission of nominees in order to insure that the candidate meets all of the rotational requirements that relate to the qualification of potential candidates to serve.

It is expected that the cumulative impact of these actions will provide for the greatest opportunity to reach the goal of Board diversity to the fullest extent possible and that a long term view of these efforts will be the best measure of "success."