



## **Handbook for Chapter Officers**

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## INTRODUCTION

Each AATG chapter and its officers represent the national association to local, state and regional AATG members. The role of the Executive Council and the national headquarters and its staff is to support the chapters, wherever possible. This relationship requires constant communication between both partners and strong leadership on the local level. Chapter officers need to serve as leaders who will help teachers and their students at all levels to maintain and improve their skills, their programs, their enrollments, and their place in the educational community. It is incumbent on all concerned to elect capable officers so that consistently excellent services and strong communication links are provided to members at the chapter and national levels.

## ORGANIZING A CHAPTER

The national Constitution and By-Laws (see: [http://www.aatg.org/member\\_services/bylaws.html](http://www.aatg.org/member_services/bylaws.html)) stipulate that "Chapters may be organized by twenty or more members, upon approval by the Executive Council." This minimum size requirement is intended to provide adequate membership to assure the chapter's continued viability. Chapters presently exist in all fifty states and in Europe. Questions regarding the establishment of a new chapter should be discussed with the Executive Director who will bring the petition for formation of a new chapter to the Executive Council for its consideration.

## REGIONAL COORDINATION

In states with large numbers of German teachers, or where concentrations of German teachers are separated by great distances, more than one chapter may exist. In these states, the chapter officers should meet regularly to discuss matters of state-wide concern or to coordinate activities among the chapters and their members. Similarly, where regional concerns transcend state boundaries, a regional council of chapter presidents would achieve the same coordination. The following chart (Composition of AATG Regions by Chapters) shows the formation of such a regional council with the AATG Executive Council representative as convener of the chapter presidents.

Chapter boundaries are defined by zip codes in any state having more than one chapter. Members living in one chapter's territory may prefer affiliation with another chapter. A member should contact the national office to establish chapter membership other than according to zip code. A member may belong to only one chapter.

## COMPOSITION OF AATG REGIONS BY CHAPTERS

<b>Northeast:</b>	Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, Northern New England (Vermont and New Hampshire), Central New York, Hudson Valley, Long Island, Metropolitan New York, Rochester, Western New York, Rhode Island. (11 chapters)
<b>Southeast:</b>	Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, Virginia, European. (10 chapters)
<b>Central:</b>	Indiana, Maryland, Michigan, Northern New Jersey, Southern New Jersey, Ohio, Central Pennsylvania, Western Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, West Virginia. (10 chapters)
<b>Midwest:</b>	Northern Illinois, Southern Illinois, Iowa, Kansas, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota, South Dakota, Wisconsin. (10 chapters)

**Northwest:** Alaska, Colorado/Wyoming, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, Northern California, Oregon, Utah, Washington. (9 chapters)

**Southwest:** Arkansas, Arizona, Hawaii, Louisiana, New Mexico, Oklahoma, Southern California, San Diego, North Texas, Houston, South Texas. (11 chapters)

## CHAPTER CONSTITUTION

Each chapter must have a constitution governing the conduct of its business. The chapter constitution must agree with the principles of the national constitution and by-laws and be approved by the Executive Council. **A copy of the current chapter constitution must be on file in the national office** and a copy should be included in materials given to new chapter officers by outgoing officers. The chapter constitution should be reviewed regularly, at least every five years. The Executive Council requests that your chapter constitution reflect the following:

- the length of the terms of office be two years;
- no president be reelected for more than three consecutive two-year terms (total of six consecutive years)
- terms of office be alternated between post-secondary and pre-collegiate colleagues, whenever possible
- there be provision for an executive board so that the work of the chapter is shared by a larger group of members
- there be a membership chair among the members of the executive board
- the past president be included on the executive board
- the election process is clearly defined for the membership
- there be an amendment clause.

A sample constitution follows.

## SAMPLE CHAPTER CONSTITUTION

### Constitution of the \_\_\_\_\_ Chapter of the American Association of Teachers of German

- I. Name  
The name of the chapter shall be the \_\_\_\_\_ Chapter of the American Association of Teachers of German.
- II. Purpose  
The purpose of the chapter conforms to that of the national organization. It proposes to promote and improve the teaching of German in the area covered by this chapter, and to encourage a spirit of cooperation and fellowship among its members.
- III. Membership
  1. Any teacher of German or anyone interested in the teaching of German may join the chapter and the national association upon payment of the annual dues as specified by the by-laws of the national association. No one can be a member of the chapter alone. All chapter members belong first to the national association. Membership will be retained by the continued payment of the annual dues.
  2. The annual dues, which include subscription to the official publications of the national association, are payable in September for the following calendar year. Only members in good standing may exercise the privileges of membership. Membership is on a calendar year basis.

3. Graduate and undergraduate students who are certified by the chairperson of their department may become student members upon payment of the annual dues for student membership.
  4. A teacher who at the time of retirement has been a member of AATG may elect emeritus membership. The dues for this type of membership are defined in the by-laws of the national organization.
  5. Honorary membership in the AATG may be granted only in accordance with the stipulations in the national constitution.
- IV. Officers, Nominating Committee and Elections
1. The officers of the chapter are the president, the vice-president, the secretary, and the treasurer (or, secretary/treasurer). They shall normally be elected for a term of two years renewable for one more term and are thereupon normally not eligible for reelection to the same office.
  2. The nominating committee shall be constituted in accordance with the appropriate section(s) of Robert's Rules of Order. This committee asks for suggestions for nominations from the membership and shall present at least two candidates for all offices. A change of officers from one election to the next is desirable.
  3. The slate shall be made known to all chapter members at least three weeks prior to time of election. Election shall be made by secret mail ballot of all chapter members.
- V. Administration
- The administration of the chapter shall be in the hands of the executive council, which consists of the officers provided for in Section IV. In addition, the ex-president of the chapter may be a member of the executive council for one year following retirement from office.
- VI. Meetings
- The chapter shall meet at least twice a year. The time and place of the meeting shall be determined by the president after due consultation with the executive council. The members present at any session shall constitute a quorum.
- VII. Changes in the Constitution
- The constitution of the chapter may be amended by a two-thirds vote of members present at any regular meeting. Such amendments may be proposed by the executive board or by written notice to the executive board by at least four members of the chapter not later than one month in advance of the meeting at which action is to be taken. The secretary shall submit such proposed amendment or amendments to the membership at least three weeks prior to the time of final action.
- VIII. By-Laws
- By-laws may be adopted or changed at any annual meeting of the chapter by majority of the members present, provided that written notice of the proposed changes is sent to all the members at least thirty days prior to such meeting.

## **MEMBERSHIP**

Requirements for membership are stipulated in the national By-Laws. Regular, life, student, emeritus, unemployed, joint, contributing, sustaining, patron, and honorary members are defined. Chapter members must be members of the national AATG. (Membership information on AATG's website: [http://www.aatg.org/member\\_services/membership/index.html](http://www.aatg.org/member_services/membership/index.html)).

If the local chapter elects a member to the status of honorary member, it is only applicable at the local level. The granting of honorary membership in a chapter means that the national service fees of the honorary chapter member must be paid to the national office by the chapter. A local chapter officer must inform the national office of the status of honorary members in advance of the annual membership dues mailing in August.

## **CHAPTER EXECUTIVE BOARD**

An executive board, composed of the present chapter officers, the immediate past chapter president and a small number of members-at-large, is an effective planning group. The executive board serves to set policies and goals as well as to deal with matters between meetings.

Executive board members should be involved with nominating, awards, membership, chapter testing as well as writing and submitting chapter project grants. The chapter structure is essential in generally supporting the organization, identifying potential leadership and involving as many members as possible in smaller, more limited obligations which can later be expanded as the member becomes more interested in serving the chapter. Committees are an important training ground for future chapter officers. Be sure to invite new teachers in your area and graduate students to become members of AATG and the local chapter.

In addition to sharing the work of coordinating chapter activities with the chapter officers, the executive board should:

- a. work closely with colleagues from different geographical locations within the chapter and from all teaching levels.
- b. encourage colleagues to implement projects jointly and, therefore, more efficiently, in their local area.
- c. enable colleagues to share each other's special skills, e.g., press release writing, artwork, graphic design, technology, community politics, organizational skills, knowledge of grass roots support, materials reproduction, knowledge of current events, teaching methodology.
- d. survey and complete an inventory of all foreign language programs in every pre-collegiate and postsecondary institution in the area to determine how German stands compared to the overall foreign language enrollment in an institution. Included in this inventory should be institutions where German has been discontinued. A future activity might be to rekindle interest in German classes in such schools. Postsecondary members should also help identify of teaching assistants/graduate students in German.
- e. encourage everyone in the chapter to register their programs on the national interactive database, German Learning Opportunities Website (GLOW): <http://www.learngerman.us>. GLOW documents information on German programs, tutors, translators, and job seekers. Increase your program's visibility by using this free service!

- e. identify and assist German programs at all levels of instruction that may be threatened with elimination. Chapter members should be encouraged to help the instructor of that program by contacting members of the community to speak for the program, helping to influence members of the board of education or administration of the college/university, organizing an advertising campaign in the community, writing letters in support of the program, encouraging students to speak for the program and sharing teaching resources.
- f. identify German teachers in the area who will be retiring soon. Insure that the program will not be eliminated by assisting the teacher in finding a replacement before the retirement occurs. Send announcements to the AATG teaching positions listserv for dissemination (see: [http://www.aatg.org/member\\_services/lists/GER-JOBS-L.html](http://www.aatg.org/member_services/lists/GER-JOBS-L.html)).
- g. advocate for *Kinder lernen Deutsch* programs in the area and state.
- h. encourage members of the chapter or the chapter itself to contribute to the Endowed Scholarship Fund (See: [http://www.aatg.org/programs/endowed\\_scholarships/index.html](http://www.aatg.org/programs/endowed_scholarships/index.html)).
- i. support and help establish a strong connection between the local chapter and the state foreign language association.

## ONLINE RESOURCES

**AATG's national office e-mail address:** [headquarters@aatg.org](mailto:headquarters@aatg.org)

**Visit the AATG website frequently, especially the “What’s New” section!** <http://www.aatg.org> provides information for AATG members and local chapters, along with an online store for AATG materials. An important section is GROW (German Resources on the Web, at <http://grow.aatg.org/index.html>), which is a database of standards-based teaching resources. Check it out!

**The AATG Listserv**, an electronic bulletin board for AATG members, is a great resource for all teachers of German to communicate – people post questions or comments, and colleagues reply. Join this vibrant forum! Information, including how to subscribe online, is available at: [http://www.aatg.org/member\\_services/lists/aatg-l.html](http://www.aatg.org/member_services/lists/aatg-l.html)

**The AATG Listserv for Teaching Positions in German:** The AATG office posts announcements on teaching positions in German at all levels of instruction. After subscribing, people receive email messages with listings. (See: [http://www.aatg.org/member\\_services/lists/GER-JOBS-L.html](http://www.aatg.org/member_services/lists/GER-JOBS-L.html)). Information on available positions should be sent directly to the AATG office via e-mail ([headquarters@aatg.org](mailto:headquarters@aatg.org)), and after verification, the AATG office posts the announcements.

**GLOW (German Learning Opportunities Website):** [www.LearnGerman.us](http://www.LearnGerman.us) is an interactive national database registry of German programs of all types. List your program!

## MEMBERSHIP CONTACT INFORMATION

**Chapters may request contact information for their members** by contacting the AATG office via e-mail ([headquarters@aatg.org](mailto:headquarters@aatg.org)). Available are:

**Membership lists** (request any of these options)

- **(M)** Current members – those who have paid dues in the current membership year
- **(L)** Non-renewals from the previous calendar year who have not yet renewed for the current year
- **(F)** Former members who have not renewed in two or more years
- **(P)** Promotional list (those who have never been members)

Request any of the above in alphabetical or zip order; on paper or electronic versions (electronic formats available: Word or Excel).

**Mailing labels** are also available, either in alphabetical or zip order. Request any of the membership categories listed above.

Since the AATG office receives address changes almost daily, we encourage you to request lists as needed throughout the year, so that your information stays current.

## CHAPTER WEBSITES

The AATG strongly encourages every AATG chapter to establish a chapter website. This is invaluable as it can be accessed by members 24 hours a day and provides useful and important information for chapter members. Chapters should also consider establishing a chapter listserv to facilitate communication with chapter members; many have already done so with great success!

The AATG Executive Council has approved a set of guidelines for chapter websites. Chapters whose sites meet or exceed the guidelines will receive an award of \$100.00 in the form of Inter Nationes materials from the AATG Materials Center. Please send the URL of your new or revised chapter website to Donna Van Handle ([dvanhand@mtholyoke.edu](mailto:dvanhand@mtholyoke.edu)) who will review the site and forward the approved URL to AATG so that it can be linked to the national site.

## GUIDELINES FOR CHAPTER WEBSITES

**Each chapter is expected to include the following on its website:**

- List of chapter officers and contact information
- Chapter constitution
- Information on chapter meetings and registration (either submittable online or can be printed out)
- Link to national AATG site
- Link to regional Goethe Institute site
- Link to AATG Professional Development Consultant List
- Link to site of the state foreign language association
- Link to site of the regional FL associations (i.e., Northeast Conference, Central States, etc.)
- Information and, where applicable, nomination forms for Awards (e.g., Certificate of Merit Award, Outstanding German Educator, etc.)

- Information on testing (contact information for chapter testing chair and information on the AATG National Exam)
- Chapter Officers' Handbook
- Information on submitting online teaching resources (link to info on the national AATG website)
- Author of pages (i.e., webmaster) and contact info
- When the site was last updated

**It is strongly recommended (but not required) that each chapter include the following on the chapter's website:**

- Link to German *Partnerstädte* (for cities in chapter)
- Link to homepages of chapter members
- Chapter newsletters
- Link to elementary, middle, high school German program websites in chapter
- Link to university/college German department websites in chapter
- Information on GAPP and possible links to GAPP websites developed by chapter members
- Minutes of chapter meetings (perhaps including Treasurer's Report)

**Where to put your chapter website?** Some local chapters have members who have access to web server space at their school or university. If that member is responsible for your chapter website, this is a workable solution, and is often free.

Chapter sites hosted by schools or universities may have some of the following drawbacks:

- It may be difficult or impossible to transfer or share webmaster responsibilities with members not affiliated with the hosting institution
- The URL for the chapter site usually carries the name of the school rather than the chapter and is usually long & obscure
- Facilities like email lists may not be available, or difficult to have set up

**The AATG National office is pleased to be able to offer space for small websites to local AATG chapters, with the following features:**

- low cost, only \$60/year (\$5/month)
- a URL that has the form "localchaptername.aatg.org"
- 10 MB of space

Chapter presidents can request web space for their chapter by sending email to Joan Campbell <[goldenfrau@comcast.net](mailto:goldenfrau@comcast.net)> or filling out this application for web space: [http://www.aatg.org/local\\_chapters/webspaceapp.pdf](http://www.aatg.org/local_chapters/webspaceapp.pdf).

Note: Creating web pages requires a computer, software, and a person with the appropriate knowledge and training. The national office does not and cannot provide hardware, software, technical support or training.

## MEETINGS

At least one business meeting a year is necessary to maintain active chapter status. Other activities for students and workshops or immersion programs for teachers are encouraged. Holding more than one meeting gives members the opportunity to be more involved. Chapter meetings may also be held in conjunction with other professional organizations, for example at state or regional meetings.

Business at all meetings should be conducted according to Robert's Rules of Order. Minutes of all meetings should be kept to record the actions taken and the major points of discussion. They should be kept in a minute book along with documents that are part of the minutes. This minute book should be passed on from each chapter secretary to the next.

Minutes of all chapter meetings must be sent to the national office within two weeks of the meeting date, on an ongoing basis. When a chapter executive board meets, its minutes should also be recorded as described above.

A chapter that holds no meetings in a year and/or does not submit its minutes to the national office is considered inactive and will receive no dues reimbursement of membership fees. (See Chapter Finances section for further details on reimbursement.)

A summary of annual activities must be submitted to the national office by January 15 for inclusion on the AATG website. See: [http://www.aatg.org/local\\_chapters/chap\\_reports\\_byregion.htm](http://www.aatg.org/local_chapters/chap_reports_byregion.htm)

## IDEAS FOR MEETINGS

Often it is the president of the chapter who is responsible for planning the local meetings, though this task should be shared by the executive board. Whenever possible, themes and activities should appeal to a broad range of teachers at all levels of instruction.

Below are several suggestions that might be helpful when planning chapter meetings:

1. Contact the nearest German/Austrian/Swiss consulate or Goethe-Institut and find out how they can help the chapter. Get on their mailing lists. Invite representatives to attend chapter meetings.
2. Develop a yearly theme that relates to your region or to a particular current event or literary genre, for example. Invite workshop leaders from all instructional levels to present and participate.
3. Offer to show a good recent German film, ideally one that could be used for instructional purposes. A speaker on the film followed by a discussion would be an appropriate program.
4. Offer seminars on new textbooks and teaching materials. Often you can invite the authors to present, especially to a larger group. Such visits may be funded by the publisher.
5. Offer demonstrations of level-specific teaching techniques and methods, especially featuring frequently-used textbooks and other materials.
6. Take advantage of the AATG Professional Development Consultants List, which provides access to experts who conduct presentations at minimal cost to chapters (contingent upon grant funding). The directory is available at: <http://www.aatg.org/programs/profdev/PDC.htm>

7. Plan regional activities with neighboring chapters. Contact your Executive Council regional representative for help (and invite that person to your chapter meetings!).
8. Plan “How To” sessions with other chapter members, e.g., how to teach a piece of German literature or a cultural topic. Teachers should bring extra copies of successful materials they use for sharing with other members.
9. Plan demonstrations of computer, video, or online resources for classroom and teacher use.
10. Plan one-day or weekend intensive immersion workshops for teachers and students.
11. Instead of meeting only on a Saturday, try an after-school meeting with some social event following or, better yet, plan a school-day seminar at a quiet retreat. Some chapters report that they have doubled their attendance, and that school districts have paid for registration and lunch if the program appeared worthwhile.
12. Meet in conjunction with the regional conferences: Central States Conference on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (Web: <http://www.centralstates.cc/>); Southwest Conference on Language Teaching (Web: <http://www.swcolt.org/>); Southern Conference on Language Teaching (Web: <http://www.valdosta.edu/scolt>), and the Northeast Conference on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (Web: <http://www.dickinson.edu/nectfl>)
13. Plan a meeting around an awards luncheon, reception or dinner. This is an excellent opportunity to entertain parents, friends, special supporters, and administrators and to demonstrate the level of commitment on the part of AATG members. Have students prepare part of the program.
14. Plan student activities, especially competitions, such as poetry readings, drama festivals, *Sprachfeste*, declamation contests, writing contests.
15. Ask chapter members who have participated in an AATG-sponsored summer seminar or workshop to give a presentation based on what they have learned.

Creative ideas for successful chapter meetings and chapter projects include:

- Present a “Certificate of Participation” to each chapter member who attends a chapter meeting
- Offer door prizes at meetings
- Sell tote bags or T-shirts with a creative and appealing logo
- Organize an immersion day or weekend for teachers
- Help organize a statewide convention for students, parents, teachers
- Approach German societies in your area for donations to buy awards for students who score well on the AATG national exam
- Organize a *Festessen* or award dinners for students who have scored well on the AATG National Exam
- Organize social evenings or receptions (at Christmas time, for instance) for chapter members
- Offer free membership in AATG for one year to new teachers in the chapter
- Send “letters of commendation” to members who have organized a meeting or conducted other activities of benefit to the chapter or the teaching of German in general
- Organize a “Bring a friend to lunch” chapter meeting

- Establish ties to local PBS or local cable access stations and encourage them to broadcast programs of interest to German teachers or speakers
- Establish a *German Educator of the Year* Award and recognize this individual at the state foreign language association's annual meeting
- Make sure that AATG chapter events are published in the state foreign language association's newsletter; reciprocate by publishing state foreign language events/news in the AATG chapter newsletter.

Work as much as possible with neighboring chapters or chapters in the same region and plan joint meetings.

## CHAPTER ELECTIONS

The election of competent and committed chapter officers is important. Each chapter must have at least three officers: a president, treasurer, and a chapter testing chair (an appointed position – more on this below). Most chapters also have a vice-president and a secretary (often combined with treasurer). Many chapters have a newsletter editor and a membership chair. Some chapters also have a second vice-president or a president-elect. Most officers are elected by the chapter members, but in some cases may be appointed by the chapter executive board, depending on the individual chapter's constitution. The Executive Council requests that chapters adhere to guidelines listed under the section "Chapter Constitutions" (see above).

The AATG office contacts presidents in the fall to appoint testing chairs to serve in the winter/spring. AATG then contacts testing chairs information directly, often with copies to chapter presidents. The testing chair should have a committee of at least two or more people. Testing program information is on AATG's website at: [http://www.aatg.org/programs/hsstudentprogs/testing\\_program/index.html](http://www.aatg.org/programs/hsstudentprogs/testing_program/index.html)

In many chapters, the vice-president is the president-elect; this provides a term of on-the-job training and a measure of continuity of leadership. A nominating committee should be appointed each election year. This committee should not include any officers or members of the executive board. It is also important to insure that the composition of the nominating committee varies from election to election. Additional nominations should always be solicited from the general membership.

Candidates should submit written statements to be circulated to all chapter members in the election mailing. All ballots should also provide a line for write-in candidates.

**Immediately following an election, the chapter president should send the names, addresses, telephone and fax numbers, e-mail addresses, and terms of office for the new officers to the national office.** Go to the "Local Chapters" section of the AATG website at: [http://www.aatg.org/local\\_chapters/index.html](http://www.aatg.org/local_chapters/index.html) then click on "Chapter Officer Update Form" (in PDF format).

Each officer should promptly forward all records collected during the term of office to the newly elected officer.

New **treasurers** should establish a chapter account at a bank mutually agreed upon by the executive board as soon as possible.

## **CHAPTER FINANCES**

The American Association of Teachers of German is a tax-exempt organization as described in Section 501 (c) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code. AATG's Tax Identification Number (TIN) is 23-1944578. Chapters should use this number when they are opening interest-bearing accounts.

Primary responsibility for the financial affairs of the chapter rests with the chapter treasurer, who should have at least minimal familiarity with basic accounting principles and procedures. At least one other officer, usually the chapter president, should be authorized to sign checks drawn on the chapter's account. The chapter should consider an interest-bearing account in addition to an operating account. All accounts must be in the name of the chapter, not the chapter treasurer.

The national constitution specifies that only the Executive Director can enter into contracts for the national organization or any of its components.

At the beginning of the membership year, the chapter executive board should prepare a formal budget. The budget should detail the programs that the chapter plans for the year, showing anticipated revenue by source and anticipated expenses by program. The adoption of the budget should be noted in the minutes.

The chapter treasurer should maintain a simple cash receipts and disbursement journal. The source of each receipt should be noted as well as the purpose of each disbursement. A cash disbursement sheet should allocate each expenditure according to the programs approved in the budget. Expenditures for items not included in the approved budget should be ratified by the chapter executive board and a note made in the minutes.

The chapter treasurer should provide simple financial statements showing actual receipts and expenditures versus budgeted amounts. These statements should be provided both to the executive board and to the general membership at a regular business meeting. An annual audit of chapter books should be conducted by an internal chapter committee.

The national office reimburses each chapter 10% of members' dues up to \$5.00 per person in March/April each year, as long as the following conditions are met by January 15:

- minutes of meetings must be submitted to the national office
- a short summary of annual chapter activities must be submitted to the national office
- an annual treasurer's report or a copy of the chapter's year-end bank statement must be submitted to the national office
- all chapter officers must be current members of AATG.

The Executive Director is available to the chapter treasurer or chapter president for consultation on any financial matter.

## **CHAPTER DUES**

Many chapters charge a small amount for local dues to cover mailings, newsletters, refreshments, etc. These range from \$5.00 to \$15.00. Chapters with limited funds may levy such local dues, as long as they are in addition to the members' national dues.

## CHAPTER NEWSLETTER

Many chapters publish newsletters, usually twice annually in conjunction with fall and spring chapter business meetings. Contents range from chapter meeting announcements and national AATG program announcements to items of local, regional, and state interest including the exchange of teaching strategies, public relations ideas, membership news, local resources, etc. Chapters are encouraged to save printing costs by publishing newsletters on the chapter website or distributing information via e-mail. If your chapter publishes a print version, find support for the publication through advertisements from businesses with an interest in the German language and culture. AATG has no funds available for chapter newsletters. Suggestions for funding include: financial support through local chapter dues; or asking a college/university professor if the department could pick up printing and mailing costs.

**Labels for chapter mailings and current membership lists (including email addresses) may be requested free of charge from the national office (see “Membership Contact Information” section for more information).**

## MEMBERSHIP RECRUITMENT

AATG's membership year is the calendar year, January 1 to December 31.

The AATG's strength and effectiveness are determined at the chapter level. Many chapters have been successful in increasing their membership numbers. Recruiting new members and retention of present members is best accomplished at the local level. The national office can support the membership committees in each chapter, but a strong chapter program and the personal touch are the keys to successful membership recruitment and retention.

Here are some steps to help you in your efforts to increase membership:

1. Form a membership committee. The number of members will depend on geography and the size of the chapter. After the national office sends out the first membership renewal notice in August, about two-thirds of the previous year's members rejoin. The last one-third, plus those who have never belonged, offers the greatest challenge.
2. Send a personal letter or email from the chapter president or membership committee to any non-renewing or inactive member. As a follow-up, call these non-renewers and find out why they are not joining. Clarify any misunderstanding they may have and direct any further concerns to the national office.
3. Have one of the post-secondary membership committee members send a mailing to local university and college professors, citing the value of the journals, the possibility of publishing in them, and the Annual Meeting and the possibility of presentations there. In this letter, encourage postsecondary German departments to provide graduate students with complimentary memberships to AATG. Have one of the K-12 membership committee members send a mailing to local K-12 teachers, in which they mention the benefits of AATG's *Kinder lernen Deutsch* program, the National Testing and Awards Program, the AATG German Summer-Study Program, the German National Honor Society, and the AATG Materials Center.
4. Obtain the list of German teachers from the state education department through the state language supervisor, if possible. Check the names against those on your list and then have the national office do the same so that any new names will be entered. The national office will mail an invitation to join AATG.

Since many of the state education department lists are incomplete, ask members to help identify new German teachers and programs.

5. Send your chapter newsletter to non-members with an invitation to join. Keep inviting them to your meetings and other events. Let them know how active the chapter is. Use personal telephone or e-mail contacts whenever possible. Be persistent.

### **PRESIDING OFFICER OF THE CHAPTER PRESIDENTS' ASSEMBLY**

The Presiding Officer of the Chapter Presidents' Assembly serves a three-year term. The Presiding Officer of the Chapter Presidents' Assembly is nominated and elected by the other chapter presidents in a process that takes place before the Annual Meeting for a term that begins in January. A candidate must be a recent chapter president. However, it is not necessary that the candidate be a chapter president throughout the three-year Executive Council term. The Presiding Officer of the Chapter Presidents' Assembly serves as a regular voting member of the Executive Council and therefore has similar duties. In addition, the Presiding Officer of the Chapter Presidents' Assembly:

1. Serves as a representative of all chapter presidents and therefore should be in touch with as many of them as possible, as often as possible, throughout the term of office.
2. Plans the yearly meeting of the Chapter Presidents for the Annual Meeting in conjunction with the AATG President and the Executive Director.
3. Presides at the yearly Assembly of Chapter Presidents.
4. Helps organize any extraordinary meetings of regional chapter presidents in cooperation with the regional representatives involved.

### **NATIONAL PROGRAMS AND SERVICES**

The national AATG offers a wide variety of ongoing programs and services for members. AATG's website <http://www.aatg.org> describes current programs, publications, and services. Check the "What's New" section frequently.

#### **Awards Programs**

The AATG offers awards for outstanding teaching and service each year. The AATG depends on chapter officers and members for nominations, since you know best who these outstanding educators are. Make sure that your outstanding members gain the recognition they deserve!

1. Up to three AATG Outstanding Educator Awards, one each at the Elementary, Secondary, and College/University levels. Awarded by the AATG for excellence in teaching, as evidenced by the individual's ability to stimulate and challenge students intellectually; and for the teacher's professional growth and contributions, as evidenced by continued study, by the ability to influence the quality of education in classrooms other than one's own, and by contributions to the academic environment outside the classroom.
2. AATG/Goethe-Institut Certificate of Merit, presented each year to several AATG members for outstanding achievement in furthering the teaching of German in schools at all levels in the USA.

3. The AATG Friend of German Award (one or two presented each year) recognizes outstanding support for and promotion of German and the study of German at the local, regional, or national level.

Detailed information and nomination forms for these awards are posted on the website each year, and chapter presidents are alerted by email. Award nominations are due in late spring/early summer. Go to the “Local Chapters” section of the AATG website at: [http://www.aatg.org/local\\_chapters/index.html](http://www.aatg.org/local_chapters/index.html) then click on “Nominating Procedures for Awards” (in PDF format).

AATG also offers two annual awards for best articles in *The German Quarterly* and *Die Unterrichtspraxis*, selected by the editorial boards.

### **National Elections**

Each year, two representatives are elected to the Executive Council, one from the pre-collegiate level and one from the post-secondary level. The AATG regions are paired for each election. (The chapters in each AATG region are listed in the beginning of this handbook.) The order is:

Southeast pre-collegiate and	Northwest post-secondary
Central pre-collegiate and	Southwest post-secondary
Midwest pre-collegiate and	Northeast post-secondary
Northwest pre-collegiate and	Southeast post-secondary
Southwest pre-collegiate and	Central post-secondary
Northeast pre-collegiate and	Midwest post-secondary

Every other year a candidate is sought for a two-year term as Vice President, who then assumes the Presidency for two years. According to the Constitution, this office must alternate between pre-collegiate and post-secondary representation.

We depend on chapter officers to nominate potential candidates for those important positions. The organization can only be as strong as its elected officials.

Announcements about nominations are made in the Newsletter and to chapter presidents. Nominations are submitted in the spring, and the nominating committee selects the slate of candidates for the fall ballot. Go to the “Local Chapters” section of the AATG website at: [http://www.aatg.org/local\\_chapters/index.html](http://www.aatg.org/local_chapters/index.html) then click on “Nominations for Executive Council” (in PDF format).

### **Chapter Projects**

Chapters are encouraged to develop and offer their own programs. Good standards of program planning include: clear definition of the purpose and the nature of the program; review of meeting schedules to insure that the project does not compete with other language activities; selection of facilities for the program; planning for resource persons and speakers; and communication to all chapter members, or if it is a regional venture, to all in the region. Joint projects among chapters are particularly encouraged.

Chapter project funding is available from the Federal Republic of Germany through *StADaF* (*Ständige Arbeitsgruppe Deutsch als Fremdsprache*).

Plan well in advance for these grants! Applications must be submitted over a year in advance, so long term planning and stability is essential for the project. The fiscal year for these grants begins on October 1 and ends September 30. For example, if you plan a chapter project to take place in November of 2005, your application is due in November, 2004; if your project is planned for February of 2006, your application is also due in November 2004.

Chapter project application forms are available on the AATG website. After proposals are submitted to the national office in early November, the members of the Chapter Projects Committee review them and make a funding recommendation to StADaF. StADaF conducts a further review and makes its funding decisions in the spring. Chapters are then notified of these funding decisions. Go to the “Local Chapters” section of the AATG website at: [http://www.aatg.org/local\\_chapters/index.html](http://www.aatg.org/local_chapters/index.html) then click on “Chapter Projects Application Form” (in PDF format).

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