

LONG RANGE PLANNING COMMITTEE REPORT BOARD MEETING, MARCH 20, 2009

In June, 2007, PARTT State Director Sylvia Williams appointed María Teresa Perez, Rita Thacker and I to the Long Range Planning Committee. We were entrusted with reviewing the structure and goals of all the Tables and make recommendations which would strengthen the organization at both the individual Table and State levels.

The State Director's concerns were:

1. Difficulty in finding Directors.
2. Lack of interest by some Table members in PART.
3. How to use technology to help us bind, communicate and support one another.
4. What should we be doing to prepare future leaders?

This was a daunting task. In order to poll the 21 Texas Tables, I divided our work into three groups of 7 tables each, so that each committee member could reach each of the Tables in their group.

The Tables who contributed to this report provided a wealth of very frank and interesting suggestions. They provided a window into their Tables which will be very beneficial for the future of PARTT.

A summary of their comments follows:

1. DIFFICULTY IN FINDING DIRECTORS

Directors should serve for only one year. The Director's job is ever more time consuming and some Tables have resorted to combine duties so less officers are needed. Have the Associate Director chair some of the meetings.

2. LACK OF INTEREST BY SOME MEMBERS IN PARTT:

Have careful recruitment of members once a year. New members join and lapse into inactivity. Increase in membership does not necessarily mean a well functioning Table. Attract and keep young members and involve them as soon as possible and provide flexible meeting times to accommodate younger professionals who cannot leave their jobs early in the afternoon.

Have fewer meetings during the year. Encourage open discussions among members on important matters to be voted on. At roll call, provide members with a clear and concrete reason why a member is not present.

Make programs interesting and short, particularly providing information of our neighboring countries by inviting guest speakers and have casual sharing of

information by the members of the countries they represent. A suggestion which came in recently, proposes that each Texas PART develop a sister PART in one of the other countries. This would be a large step in fulfilling our objective of establishing friendship. Discuss the Alliance, the OAS and what they stand for. The Texas Tables seem to be uninformed of the work of the Alliance and much more so of the Organization of American States.

Do more community work by encouraging a higher community profile – collaborating with local museums, local charities, etc. This may give members a sense of being a part of the community. Other than awarding scholarships, most Texas Tables do not seem to get involved in community affairs. Involvement in the community would give the Tables more exposure and generate interest in the Pan American Movement and would stimulate candidates for membership.

3. TECHNOLOGY

The establishment of an Electronic Committee to create a Web page to post minutes, newsletters and planned events of each Table is recommended. A recent Web page created by the Alliance Zone 1 Director has created a lot of interest in the Texas Tables as evidenced by the responses received.

As the Tables join the 21st century, email is being used by the Tables more to disseminate information. Training on the use of the Internet is recommended for members who are not familiar with the system. However, the use of newsletters is also recommended since members appreciate receiving news of events in this more personal manner and this practice is encouraged.

4. FUTURE LEADERS

Encourage Table members to attend State and Alliance conventions where Pan Americanism is featured and members learn of the accomplishments of other Tables and their future plans and projects.

Encourage Members to invite daughters and granddaughters to meetings. Assign a mentor to them and use them as aides in Pan American functions.

This committee has continued to contact Tables for further suggestions, and some were forthcoming as of this date. We are grateful to the Tables that participated in true Pan American spirit. This report could not have been possible without their contribution and the work of committee members Rita Thacker and Maria Teresa Perez.

Respectfully submitted,

INA A. POOL, Chairman
Long Range Planning Committee