01/29/22 NAHJ Board Meeting
12 p.m. Eastern

Present: Nora Lopez, Julio Cesar Chavez, Yvette Cabrera, Arelis Hernandez, Keldy Ortiz, Blanca Rios, Jennifer Marcial Ocasio, Jessica Retis, Mc Nelly Torres, David Cordero, Jamie Stockwell, Melissa Macaya, Ninette Sosa, Valerie Mia Juarez, Johnny Córdoba, Cristy Farjado, Jorge Flores

Not present: Elwyn Lopez

Guests: Yaneth Guillen, Leslie Anne Frank, Yunuen Bonaparte, B.A. Snyder

I. Call to Order – President López
II. Roll Call – Blanca Rios
III. Minutes Approval – President López
   1. Blanca moves to approve minutes, Julio Cesar seconds.
IV. President’s Report – President López
   1. Welcome- Nora announces we are close to having an ED. She thanked our great staff and the dedication of our board members who spend a great deal of time on various committees that tackle issues impacting our industry.
   2. State of NAHJ - Organization continues with over 4K members. We have maintained our membership of over 4k. That’s still a record. We continue to offer a variety of panels and sessions that provide members with tools for that first job or to move up the ladder. Over the last 2 years we’ve trained over 2K journalists across the country. We held Ñ awards that garnered more than 8K views.
   3. Rapid Response Team (RRT) - News representation remains a key priority. Recently participated in a public statement of journalism organizations calling public access to courtroom audio feeds. NAHJ issued guidelines on the proper use of Spanish surnames, based on the Valentina Orellana case. This week we put out a statement regarding the rising safety threats against Multimedia Journalists. And distressingly, NAHJ also issued a statement about the continued violence against our colleagues in Mexico. Veteran journalist Lourdes Maldonado Lopez became the third journalist killed since the first of the year. Also urging Mexican president AMLO to end his attacks on the press.
   4. Strategic Plan - We have been formulating a five-year strategic plan. Working with La Piana consulting firm. Yvette Cabrera will have an update later. We have a survey to see what we should be prioritizing that’s on the front page of our website.
5. **Scholarships** - Deadlines are coming up. Students encouraged to apply. There’s over $100K in opportunities. Feb. 11 is the deadline for scholarships, internships, and fellowships. Nora also announced the new $30K scholarship this year aimed directly at our Afro-Latinx students. It honors and is named after the late award-winning journalist Ada Lourdes Vigo.

6. **Conference** - Aug 3-7 is our annual conference in conjunction with NABJ. Keldy and Mc Nelly are heading that committee. Jennifer, Jessica, and Yoli Martinez are also on the committee. Luz Gray, Claudia Cruz, both members in Nevada, will be our conference chairs.

7. **Palabra** - Palabra encompasses over 100 freelancers, editors, and visual journalists. Valeria Fernandez has taken over for founding editor Ricardo Sandoval. We congratulate Fernandez as an Emerson Collected Fellow.

8. **Executive Director** - Close to selecting a new ED. This is a personnel matter so we are limited to what we can discuss. Several candidates interviewed. Narrowed it down to three. Later today the board will meet in executive session to decide on the next step.

V. **Treasurer’s Report – Keldy Ortiz**

1. **Budget vs. Actual** - Keldy presented the NAHJ “budget vs. actual” as it stands from January through November 2021. We budgeted for $1.2M but we are actually $1.8. Keldy went line by line and gave a shout out to member Robert Hernandez for helping us increase our membership. There was discussion. Mc Nelly noted that NAHJ has not had a strategic plan.

2. **Proposed 2022 Budget** - Keldy went line by line to discuss our proposed $1.549,399.54 budget for 2022. It’s based in preparation for this year’s annual conference which will theoretically be in Las Vegas. In the past we’ve made more but we are keeping the number conservative at $650K. Another big chunk will come from grants. We hope to bring in $555K which is a little more than double from last year.

3. Nora reminded members that Keldy stepped in and spearheaded our budget in the absence of our ED.

4. Blanca moved to approve the budget. Keldy seconded the motion. Passed unanimously.
VI. Regional Director Reports

1. Valerie Mia Juarez - Region 6
   i. Greater Cleveland Association Chapter - started in April. A lot of amazing work. Just a few days ago the chapter partnered up with the local NABJ chapter to meet with Cleveland mayor. Also partnered up with local organizations in the area and seeing what they can do to really get the word out about the NAHJ chapter. Henry Gomez with NBC news virtual event.
   ii. Wisconsin Chapter - In November, several members covered the controversial trial of Kyle Rittenhouse that made national news. Great work by the local members who stepped forward to provide fair and accurate coverage. NAHJ Wisconsin treasurer Chernina Amhara is moving from Milwaukee to the Miami market. The Green Bay area wants to have a meeting about at least 3 news directors leaving. Hoping that with new management across Green Bay have a virtual meeting so we are on the same page.
   iii. Chicago Chapter - They’re raising funds for the annual Nuevo Comienzo scholarship fund. Huge shout out to member Virginia Matos becoming first Latina E.D. at ABC 7 Chicago.
   iv. MMJ Safety - Valerie points out that she is an MMJ. And there’s a lot in the region. She proposes more discussion on their safety.

2. David Cordero - Region 1
   i. Puerto Rico Chapter - During his first month as Region Director, David helped create the professional chapter Puerto Rico. They met in January to discuss an agenda for the next six months. They held a training on climate change. They’ve reached more than 100 followers on Twitter. They are conducting a survey to discuss the main concerns of members. Main objective is to increase membership
   ii. 1st Amendment Rights - The region is currently facing a situation which threatens our rights as journalists and the Freedom of the Press. More details to come.
   iii. Virgin Islands - David is looking for members in the Virgin Islands and also keeping in contact with members in Mexico which fall under his region.
3. **Jaime Stockwell - Region 2**
   i. **The New England Chapter** had a virtual cafecito before the holidays. They recently awarded a $2500 scholarship. The Hortencia Zavala scholarship was created by former president Hugo Balta in honor of his grandmother.
   ii. **Goals** - Jaimee plans to meet with New York students in the next coming weeks. Going through some training with other regional directors to better assist chapters and spotlight the great work the members are doing. She hopes to meet with them before the next board meeting.

4. **Melissa Macaya - Region 3**
   i. **Overall** - 2 active professional chapters in DC and philly. And 3 student chapters. There are more than 700 members under Region 3. Several memberships have lapsed so Melissa is working with leaders to remind them to renew. About 400 members still have their membership activated.
   ii. **D.C. Chapter** - Nearly 200 members in the area. She was on a board call with them earlier this month and they’ve been doing great work. They are planning on hosting the Washington D.C. job fair which was postponed over the last 2 years. They are keeping up on the effort to work with Congress and continue growing their relationship with the White House. They continue to engage with international organizations based out of D.C. The chapter is working to have their Charlie Erickson supplement for spring. They are also getting ready for their Noche de Periodistas fundraiser.
   iii. **Philly Chapter** - fairly new chapter that launched in January 2020. Nearly 50 members. Hosting virtual events in the fall and in the new year. In-person mixer in October. Very active on social media. Always posting the scholarships opportunities on national level and events on national level.
   iv. **Virginia Tech Chapter** - led by Brian Zapata. Doing great work on campus. Primarily science-based university and he’s found a great group of journalists who are covering science and tech.

5. **Ninette Sosa - Region 3**
   i. Ninette teaches at the University of Arkansas. Working on increasing membership. Working with 3 students one-on-one. Goal is to create an NAHJ student chapter at the University of Arkansas. Region 5 is only under 500 and she wants to increase that.
6. **Johnny Cordoba - Region 7**
   i. **ASU** - In October, ASU got a new dean for the School of Journalism. Johnny attended the Dean’s open house. Got to have a one-on-one chat to introduce himself and see how NAHJ can collaborate with the Cronkite 2.0 project.
   ii. **ALMA** - Johnny attended their last meeting in December. Good opportunity to network. There are a lot of independent journalists and a lot who are retiring.
   iii. **Nevada Chapter** - Johnny worked on creating a new NAHJ Nevada Chapter. He thanked Claudia Cruz who has been the catalyst of the project as well as Yanethh Guillen who helped steer the project.
   iv. **Overall** - At last count, more than 350 members for the region.
   v. **New Chapter** - Johnny moves to create Nevada chapter. Mc Nelly seconds. Motion carried. And we now have a Nevada Chapter.

7. **Cristy Fajardo - Region 8**
   i. **Overall** - There are four professional chapters in the region.
   ii. **Northwest Chapter** - got a donation of 3200 from the Hispanic Media Corporation.
   iii. **Bay Area Chapter** - very excited about San Francisco State launching a bilingual journalism program.
   iv. **LA Chapter** - Recently held a virtual panel on using newsroom tools, fundraiser for scholarships, NAHJ membership giveaway to freelancers or journalists who are unemployed.
   v. **San Diego Tijuana** - Big concern with membership safety and those who work in Mexico. Just launched a newsletter and a member spotlight to promote members’ work. They have an incredible website. Holding a mixer with NABJ and a FOIA workshop.
   vi. **MMJ security issue** is also a big issue in her region. Hoping that all the chapters will hold a virtual meeting to discuss the issue.

VII. Old Business – President López

1. **Committees / Task Forces**
   i. **Keldy Ortiz, Afro-Latino Task Force**
a. Still taking applications for the Vigo scholarship. Thanked members of the task force. Come up with some kind of panel in coordination with NABJ for the conference. Trying to figure out what we’re going to do with money received from Ganentt which is 5K. Task force would like to put out a survey to find out how many Afro-Latino members there are within NAHJ.

ii. **Mc Nelly Torres & Yvette Cabrera, Investigative and Data Journalism Task Force**

a. Mc Nelly says the subcommittee held two workshops for members last year. Now we are working with IRE to build several panels and hands-on sessions for the conference that deal with investigative and data reporting.

b. Yvette sees a subcommittee that focuses on management issues tied to the lack of diversity on investigative teams. Needle is not going to move until we have latinos in leadership positions on these investigative teams. Meeting with investigative teams at newspapers across the country. Formed a working group within the subcommittee that includes members of NABJ, NAJA and AAJA members. Started having meetings in December and continued into January with the Center for Public Integrity, LA Times, Associated Press, NBC and others. Meetings are not off the record but on background. Give leaders a chance to speak with us. Asking them to fill out a survey. Goal is to use this information to hold these organizations accountable. We are offering to meet with them on a quarterly basis.

iii. **Jessica Retis, Academic Officer**

a. **Overall** - Newsletter continues strong. We are getting ready to judge student works. Working with Jorge Flores to encourage students to apply via social media.

b. **Training and workshops** - organizing a panel with Columbia Journalism school

c. **Task force** - Frequently sends encouraging academic members to submit their proposals for the task force for the conference.

d. **Research** - Working on an NAHJ directory. Working on mapping Latinx schools. We will have a report on the recruiting, hiring and retention of latino educators by conference time.
e. **Upcoming event on Feb. 3** - though University of Arizona being led by Arelis and Rep. Joaquin Castro will present it. It’s called “The Missing Part of the Narrative: Hispanics in the US Media Industry”

iv. **Jorge Flores, Student Rep**
   a. **Jorge Flores, Student Rep** Jorge created a new student committee. They would like to present an annual report. They’ve held 2 Cafecito in order to get to know students. About 60 people from different parts of the country and region have participated. Planning on doing a panel on representation and how it matters.

v. **Jennifer Marcial Ocasio, Spanish At-large officer**
   a. **Overall**- Mention to all our members that we are just a click away whenever you have a situation. Spanish Media journalists - usually one of the few if not the only bilinguals - especially in duopolies. She has to do her work twice and she doesn’t get paid double for that. She wants to hear from all the bilingual journalists.
   b. **Puerto Rico Chapter**- Jennifer is extremely happy that we finally have a professional chapter in Puerto Rico, that was one of her goals as Spanish At-large Officer
   c. **Regional Directors**- She wants to work with Region Directors to work with the Spanish journalists.

vi. **Yvette Cabrera, Strategic-Planning**
   a. **Need**- The last time we had a strategic plan was 2002. In our October meeting we set aside time for the board to go to a retreat to prepare for this. We need to lay out a vision for the next five years and beyond.
b. **Action**- We met over 2 days in October. It was a really great opportunity to just step back and think about this. From there La Piana consulting helped the committee create a draft for a plan. A survey was shared with members. So far we’ve received 56 responses. We need more participation.

c. **Goal**- We’ve learned there are so many issues that we can tackle as a board. The RRT has helped us learn that NAHJ can have a crucial role in speaking up for members. The Strategic Committee is meeting in February to lay out next steps. The idea is to have our next ED also provide feedback. Goal is to present the strategic plan at our conference.

**VIII. New Business – Open**

1. Facebook - $10K scholarships for five students for 5 years will be awarded in August. The Facebook Journalism Project will conclude in December.
   i. Moving forward, Mc Nelly Torres cautioned about accepting future funds from Facebook.

2. NAHJ members on call were given the opportunity to ask questions and provide feedback. Marilyn Garateix asked if we’ve looked at raising staff salaries given inflation. Nora says she appreciated the comment but says she cannot discuss it because it’s a personnel matter.
   i. Ninette suggested developing a criteria for sponsorship. Arelis discussed how we may need to work with our new ED on this.

**IX. Executive Session – President López**

1. Board went into Executive Session at 2:38 p.m. eastern
2. Board resumes at 3:50pm Eastern

**X. Adjourn – President López**

1. Arelis made a motion to adjourn. Julio Cesar seconded the motion. Meeting was adjourned at 3:52pm Eastern.