

## **NMRID Board of Directors Report to the Membership**

### **January 2011**

2010 was a busy year for the NMRID Board of Directors. Our organization continues to grow and our Affiliate Chapter had record-breaking membership numbers in 2010! Our main focus has been service to our members, the growth of our state conference and professional development opportunities, improvement of technological resources, as well as compliance with national requirements and guidelines in an effort to meet the needs of our membership.

State licensure was established in 2009 and 2010 was the first year of New Mexico provisional license renewals. The board worked collaboratively with the State Licensing and Regulations Department as well as other community resources in order to ensure that provisional licensees received notification of renewal, understood the requirements to renew, and were able to successfully renew their licenses. With all new processes, there is a learning curve, but the board hopes that its efforts minimized frustration for members and will continue to work with the state to find ways to improve the licensing process.

Two years ago New Mexico did not offer members the option of attending a state conference, but that all changed in 2009. NMRID hosted its second annual conference in 2010. We had fantastic attendance from members across the state and were pleased to have a nationally recognized leader as our keynote speaker, the addition of afternoon break out sessions, as well as a vendor space complete with massage therapists! We look forward to continuing to grow our conference in the years ahead and anxiously await our third conference this May.

The board of directors is committed to doing all that we can to broaden pool of qualified interpreters serving New Mexico's Deaf and Hard of Hearing community and thereby charged the Scholarship committee with the task of creating a testing scholarship. In 2010 NMRID announced the creation of an annual performance exam scholarship. This scholarship covers the cost of taking, or re-taking, the NIC or CDI exams. Currently, only one scholarship is available per year; however, it is the board's hope that this scholarship will be expanded in the years to come.

The board is also committed to creating opportunities for our members to network with one another as well as offering opportunities for members to strengthen their ties to Deaf and Hard of Hearing community. The NMRID Social committee was revitalized with a new chair and committee members in 2010. This committee is devoted to working collaboratively with other entities in our community to host fun and non-work related events that bring the Interpreting and Deaf community together. It is the board's hope that these events will be valued by both the membership and the community, we hope to see you at one of the 2011 events.

When the board took office in 2009, we noted that our website was grossly outdated and underutilized. We set a goal to completely re-designing the website with the hopes of making it a viable resource to our members as well as the community. The board is thrilled to announce that this goal was successfully completed in 2010. New features include current content, topic specific resource links, an events calendar, and buttons to access our Facebook page and to join our Yahoo Group. The board continues to seek ways to improve to the site and is currently working on establishing an option for online payment through Paypal.

RID is attempting to improve compliance across all levels of the organization due to more

stringent oversight from the IRS as well as a desire to make the organization more transparent. Many practices of Affiliate Chapters are currently in violation, or are simply not enforced. The board has taken a pro-active response to this initiative by working with National Office staff, our Regional Representative, and other Affiliate Chapters to ensure that our chapter achieves complete compliance before this board's term ends in June 2011. We were pleased to learn that our accounting methods adhere to IRS reporting requirements and that NMRID was the only Affiliate Chapter in our region to submit a complete Annual Report within RID's established timelines.

We have also begun to go through our bylaws to identify areas that need improvement.

Consequently, we identified that our board of director meetings have not been in compliance with RID's policy and procedures for several years. According to NMRID's bylaws, the board of directors is required to meet quarterly to attend to the business of the organization. Our bylaws do not specify if meetings are open or closed; however, RID's policy and procedures states that meetings should be open for members to attend and observe. The board investigated the history of our chapter in an effort to understand when and where incompliance first began. From our research, we discovered that our board of director meetings were open for many years, however due to lack of attendance in the late 1990's, meetings slowly and unintentionally began to be held in a closed setting, often meeting at a board member's home.

The board sincerely apologizes for this oversight. We seek to foster a culture of organizational transparency and will therefore re-open all board meetings to the membership, effective immediately. The current board's meetings will be held in public locations, or will utilize free conference calling options, and will be posted on our events calendar. Members are welcome and encouraged to attend.

As we enter our final months of board service, we will continue to seek opportunities to serve our membership. We have begun the process of documenting our policies and procedures for the next board with the hopes that a policy and procedure manual will be developed in the future. We recognize that our chapter struggles to meet the needs of members living outside of the Albuquerque area and we welcome ideas and assistance in improving our services to members who reside in other parts of the state. Please feel free to contact a board member if you have any questions, concerns, or ideas for ways that NMRID can serve you.