

Why should staffs join scholastic organizations like SCSPA and SIPA?

To learn! I cannot imagine what I would have done without **SCSPA**. When I became an adviser in 1992, I could barely turn on a computer and knew little or nothing about newspaper writing, photography, design, technology, desktop publishing, legal issues, etc.

I attended **Carolina Journalism Institute** the summer before I began advising, took notes which I consulted over and over and got through that first year. The second summer I attended again and brought students. During this second session, I could ask intelligent questions and again took lots of notes and brought home great resources. My editors returned ready to take on their, responsibilities.

Staff members and I have attended several **SCSPA** summer redesign workshops and other opportunities offered by SCSPA and at least one SCSPA conference each year since 1992. The long bus ride home is always fun because the staff members are excited and full of ideas for the year to come. In addition, the SCSPA staff has always been helpful and professional in answering questions and giving suggestions on issues that come up throughout the year.

Most importantly, **SCSPA** has helped staff members to understand the importance of scholastic journalism and to take their responsibilities seriously.

I just cannot imagine what I would have done without SCSPA. I came in knowing nothing but with the help of SCSPA have learned so much and have found that I really enjoy being an adviser. Each year brings new challenges and new pleasures. Working closely with the students brings frustration on some days but also special joys and special friendships.

– *Shirley Tuttle, Beaufort High School, Beaufort, S.C.*

For the adviser, scholastic organizations like SCSPA and SIPA are the places to learn all you need to know and then some about advising a scholastic publication. Most school districts give you plenty of support for your English classroom, but nothing for your journalism classes. During the SIPA conferences I September and April and the SIPA convention the first weekend in March all the advisers needs are addressed: curriculum, classroom management, financial management, moral support.

For the staff, attending conferences and conventions and developing relationships with other scholastic journalists show them that there are others who share their passion for working on a scholastic publication. Through their membership in SCSPA or SIPA they are exposed to some of the finest journalism instructors and learn so much from workshop sessions and from their contacts with other schools' staff members.

The best thing about SIPA is that it takes you beyond the S.C. state lines. While we have great publications throughout the state, SIPA gives us an opportunity to see what those in the Southern region are doing, trends and challenges that they too are facing. It just gives us a more extensive, broader view of the world of scholastic journalism.

The SIPA annual conference extends on what students get at the SCSPA one-day conferences. I've taken students to JEA and CSPA conferences, and while they are fun and the students learn a lot, nothing compares to the weekend SIPA conference. These national conferences are just too big and a bit overwhelming whereas the SIPA conference offers the same caliber of sessions but on a more comfortable, manageable size.

– *Martha Herring, Carolina Forest High School, Myrtle Beach*

Why should publications be evaluated each year by state, regional and/or national organizations?

The evaluation has always served as the standards for the staff. They want to produce a good newspaper and the evaluation guidelines give them the criteria they must meet. (And if students want to do something really "off the wall," I can pull out the guidelines and point out what **SCSPA** says!)

Doing well on the evaluation(s) has always been a staff goal set at the beginning of the year. We celebrate when we achieve our goal, announce it at school and send news releases to the district office and local press. The students appreciate the recognition and are deserving of it.

– *Shirley Tuttle, Beaufort High School, Beaufort, S.C.*

Evaluations are a must. Students are evaluated by teachers, teachers are evaluated by administrators, and that's how we all grow, learn and improve. It's very easy to become complacent and rest on your laurels. Evaluations keep you up on the latest trends and allow you and your students to strive for improvement. It's also a good idea to be evaluated by state, regional and national organizations in order to get a feeling for what's happening everywhere, not just in your area.

However, it's important to let students know that evaluations are just one judge's opinion, and the reason for the evaluation is for improvement, not just the awards.

– *Martha Herring, Carolina Forest High School, Myrtle Beach*

Why should advisers enter staff members' work in ESNA or the YB or MG individual competitions?

I appreciate ESNA because it judges individual accomplishments, and the kids are excited about having someone beside me critique their work. Just like evaluations we get back, we make a big deal about students doing well in ESNA.

– *Shirley Tuttle, Beaufort High School, Beaufort, S.C.*

It's great for individuals to be recognized. I keep all awards and have them presented at the end of the year awards assembly where they receive even more recognition.

– *Martha Herring, Carolina Forest High School, Myrtle Beach*

Why should you encourage your staff(s) to attend workshops and conventions?-

This is where kids pick up knowledge and skills that I may not be able to teach them. It also is a great motivator and students have an opportunity to meet other scholastic journalists, see their publications, learn from some of them, teach some of them and they also get to see so many other publications which gives them ideas, etc..

At first I had problems getting kids to sign up for workshops, conferences and conventions, but after a few go, they come back and get the others excited, telling them how much they missed.

– *Martha Herring, Carolina Forest High School, Myrtle Beach*

How do you manage to pay for these opportunities?

The district has covered the cost of the bus to Columbia. The conference fees are paid for through ad sales; the kids also pay some of the fee.

– *Shirley Tuttle, Beaufort High School, Beaufort, S.C.*

Students pay their own way to SCSPA conferences in September and April. We fund raise for the SIPA convention the first weekend in March one and any of the national ones we may go to. Those who are really serious, raise most of the money through fund raising.

– *Martha Herring, Carolina Forest High School, Myrtle Beach*

Additional comments about the benefits of getting involved in scholastic journalism organization?

I never took a journalism course in college. I've advised publications for 20 years, and we've earned our share of awards. None of this would have happened; we would never have grown and improved, without my membership in SCSPA and SIPA. Everything I've learned and in turn taught to students came from these organizations.

– *Martha Herring, Carolina Forest High School, Myrtle Beach*