

WSO BOARD OF TRUSTEES REPORT

WSO Board of Trustees Report

It is a pleasure to provide delegates the 2024 annual report from the Board. The year 2023 was another great year for our fellowship as WSO provided support to the Conference (ABC) and meeting groups in 58 countries, meeting listings in 32 languages, and literature accessibility in 13 languages.

As of May 6, 2024 we have:

- 2,702 Registered ACA Meeting Groups in 58 countries.
- 103 Intergroups
- 3 Regions

The Board of Trustees provides day-to-day support to our groups through our committees and staff and reports to the Conference where we all gather together in unity to discuss large matters of policy and finance and topics of global relevance.

Per the WSO ByLaws, Article II.3, "To achieve its purpose, ACA WSO shall convene an annual conference where consideration regarding the business of ACA WSO occurs and priorities for the coming year are discussed and implemented when/where feasible." And per Article IX.2, "The purpose of the ABC shall be to bring Unity and Consistency to the ACA fellowship."

What is ACA WSO?

The Adult Children of Alcoholics World Service Organization (ACA WSO) "is an agency created and now designated by the fellowship of ACA to maintain service for those who might be seeking, through ACA, the means for recovering from being raised in an alcoholic or otherwise dysfunctional home" (ByLaws Article II.2). The ACA WSO shall do this by using the Twelve Traditions and the Twelve Concepts of Service in its deliberations and decision-making process and use its best efforts to ensure that the traditions are maintained throughout the fellowship (OPPM Section I).

Who is ACA WSO?

WSO is "Us, the ACA Fellowship." WSO is also an incorporated nonprofit business entity, subject to the laws of the State of California, USA, with a Board of Trustees guided by the Traditions and Concepts. The Trustees guide the staff and volunteer committees to implement ABC directives and manage the general operations, as well as provide regular support to ACA registered groups.

Additional information is available at: [ACA WSO Bylaws](#)

What is the Current ACA WSO Structure:

- **Trustees:** 6 Trustees
- **Staff:** 8 full time, 3 part time staff and 1 part time consultant
- **Volunteers:** 60 in various committees
- **Committees:** 18 Standing Committees
- **Studies/Advisory Groups:** 7 (four established by the Conference, three established by the Board)

It has been both a challenging and successful year for WSO. We went from five Trustees at the 2023 ABC down to three in February 2024. Yet, in answer to an appeal we sent to the fellowship and

WSO BOARD OF TRUSTEES REPORT

delegates asking for help, we received support and continue to receive offers of support to sustain our World Services.

Part of the reason for the reduced number of Trustees and WSO volunteers in general were issues related to health and safety. In response, the Board created a Health and Safety advisory group early in 2023, which swung into action to assess and resolve a number of situations that were contributing to a general unease among WSO volunteers and ABC Delegates. As a result, many volunteers and prospective Trustees have expressed an increased sense of safety and energy. Ideally we would like to have 10-12 Trustees, our bylaws permit up to 20 Trustees.

Another reason for the attrition of board members, who volunteer their time and service, was service workload. For instance, at times the Board has had over 60 topics that require attention and approval. In order to address this we have encouraged greater self care and we are also suggesting this to our volunteers. Additionally, we are restructuring Board operations by delegating more to staff, as resources permit, and making changes to the workflow. We are encouraged by the progress and we know this will help us provide improved service to our fellowship and keep the workload of current and future board members more manageable.

Our WSO Office is critical to support our fellowship by answering calls, emails and distributing literature to our global hubs around the world. We recently added three part time staff to handle the increased IT and publishing work. We are extremely grateful for our General Manager's guidance in managing our organization for the benefit of our fellowship.

The Committees and Study/Advisory Groups are crucial to day-to-day maintenance and future success of ACA WSO and the Conference. The Board is continuing to review the WSO committee structure with the intention of consolidating, simplifying, pausing when sufficient resources are not available, and transferring some responsibilities to staff or other committees where possible. *Additional information is available at: [Org. Chart](#)*

STATUS UPDATES

A. Previous ABC Motions

A list has been compiled of ABC motions approved by previous Conferences (ABC) since 2014 along with the status of each. The Board is immensely grateful to the Archives Committee for their tireless work in gathering much of this data.

See: [ABC Motions Passed with Status \(2014 - 2023\)](#)

B. Priorities & Goals

At the 2023 ABC, the Board presented a list of the priorities being worked on to serve our fellowship. This past year has been a whirlwind of activities with a reduction in Trustees and other volunteers. Despite all this, we have made progress and are confident that the positive progress will continue.

See: [Status Updates on Priorities & Goals Presented at 2023 ABC](#)

WSO BOARD OF TRUSTEES REPORT

C. Policies Presented at the 2023 ABC

At the 2023 ABC the Board presented a list of the policies in development.

See: [Status of Policies under Development Presented at 2023 ABC](#)

KEY TOPICS for 2024 ABC

A. Social Media

Our General Manager worked with the Public Services Committee and brought this pilot project to use social media as a public awareness tool to the February 2023 QDM. A status report was issued at the 2023 ABC and questions were added to the post-ABC survey for additional delegate feedback.

The following presentation on WSO use of Social Media will be given by Bill D., General Manager, at the 2024 ABC: [Social Media Presentation -2024 ABC](#) and the following motion will then be presented to the delegates for their consideration and approval.

Motion: To approve the use of social media as a public awareness and outreach tool by ACA WSO while adhering to the Traditions in its use.

Background: The use of social media was discussed by the Public Services committee from 2021 to 2022. In 2023 at the February QDM the office recommended a pilot project to the delegates and board to use social media as a public awareness and outreach tool. A report was presented at the 2023 ABC a few months later that began to outline how WSO was setting up the social media project along with very preliminary results.

The project was continued throughout 2023 with the results of the yearlong project showing much increased engagement while not encountering any issues regarding the Traditions. A couple of other social media platforms were tested as more knowledge was gained from the project. It has been shown that utilizing the video capabilities of platforms like Instagram attracts a significantly higher amount of engagement, and again without negative results regarding the Traditions.

Social media has been a well-used tool by the larger 12 Step programs for quite a few years; today it is their number one method of communication.

B. 2023 Audit

When the end of year finances indicated that ACA WSO would generate more than \$2M in Revenue, then the ACA WSO Board of Trustees commissioned a financial audit for the 2023 fiscal year as required by California law. Volunteers with relevant backgrounds heeded the call to form an Audit Committee and they have done a great job. They presented the audit reports/findings to the Board and shared that the 2023 audit had a significant reduction in findings as compared to the last audit done in 2016.

The Audit committee and Auditor will give a presentation to the delegates at 2024 Annual

WSO BOARD OF TRUSTEES REPORT

Business Conference on the audit results. See: [Audit Committee webpage](#) for more information.

C. Registered Meeting Listings Policy

At the 2023 ABC, we mentioned that one of the policies that was being updated was about “Meeting Listings.” WSO receives many different types of requests to list meetings on the WSO website. Here are a few examples that we may be asking for the fellowship’s guidance about through future Town Halls, etc., so that a fair and consistent policy can be developed while respecting group autonomy:

- a. Members want to combine ACA meetings with other 12 step programs (e.g. Double winners meeting)
- b. Having meetings that focus on hobbies/interests (e.g., gardening, music, etc.).
- c. Having meetings that focus on specific physical/psychological diagnoses or issues.
- d. Requests where personal interests cross over into political issues or a specific ideology.
- e. Meetings where leaders control things with their own personal agendas, such as rituals and re-interpreting ACA literature - and there is no group conscience allowed.

In general, policies can take several years to develop and implement and we look forward to future discussions on these topics.

D. Resolution of Concerns about Registered Groups

The IT- Meeting List Maintenance Sub-Committee, the Safety Resources Committee, and the Service Review Panel work together to update our meeting listing procedures and resolve concerns received about registered groups

Here are a few examples of meeting issues WSO receives and who they go to:

a. Technical Issues - Meeting Listings Maintenance Subcommittee

Examples: Routine issues such as concerns about technical issues, reports of inactive meetings, questions about clarity of listing text, complaint about someone not able to opt out of a meeting’s email list, a meeting listing that has a non-ACA-related website, and Zoom bombing concerns.

Resolution: Write to meeting contacts to clarify, update the meeting listing, delete the meeting listing if inactive, or support the group with Zoom protocols to protect the group, etc.

b. Safety Issues - Safety Resources Committee

Examples: An individual reports being personally threatened, someone reports discrimination, assaults, being ejected out of a meeting, feeling threatened with someone who turned their camera off and on periodically in the meeting.

Resolution: Acknowledge the concern; remind that meetings are autonomous, but offer assistance such as contact the meeting to clarify; for some safety issues, may suggest getting authorities involved, depending on the circumstances, for others the suggestion

WSO BOARD OF TRUSTEES REPORT

may be a business meeting to discuss and obtain group conscience, for some suggest the person reporting the issue may need to find another meeting.

c. **Significant Tradition(s) Violations - Service Review Panel**

Examples: Someone is promoting their personal business in ACA meetings or a meeting is focused on specific therapeutic techniques.

Resolution: Write to obtain more details and suggest they bring to the group for group conscience; follow up if needed with meeting contacts to clarify what is happening, remind them of the Traditions and provide support as appropriate.

E. **Policies- 2024 Summary of Large Policies and Projects**

To date, we have 11 large policies in development and 9 major projects.

See: [May 2024 Summary List Policies & Projects in Development](#)

Some policies are needed for WSO's non profit organization and some may have impact on the fellowship and require input from the Annual Business Conference (ABC), and possibly also from the fellowship at large, before final approval. The Conference Charter, under development by the ABC Study, and work done by the Concepts 2 & 6 group will help provide us with future guiding principles.

In the meantime, WSO has been thinking about how we can increase engagement of our groups and delegates in finalizing some current policies. There will be an initial discussion at the 2024 ABC, followed up with further communication and surveys on this topic.

Conclusion

We have much to celebrate:

- Over 75,000 Adult Children purchased literature in 2023
- Our literature - Five publications in 2023 in over 13 languages and even more in translation development. Three new publications scheduled for 2024 - A New Hope, Connections and Ready Set Go
- All ACA publications have been converted to electronic books that are accessible around the world
- 2023 Annual World Convention (AWC) had 2800 registrations from over 68 countries
- Increased number of members applying to be Trustees and volunteers for WSO committees
- Safer spaces in the Conference (ABC), Board with Fellowship Meetings (TC), in WSO committees and on Slack, thanks to the Health and Safety Advisory group's efforts. Significant positive feedback received.
- New WSO office and warehouse with increased space for no increase in cost
- Increased public awareness and outreach through Social media
- Through ACA's correspondence outreach we have increased support to incarcerated ACA members.

WSO BOARD OF TRUSTEES REPORT

As we mature, it seems we are starting to reflect more and more on who we are as an ACA fellowship and organization as we see with the Name Study; what kind of meetings are ACA meetings; and where is the healthy balance between an ACA meeting and our open literature policy. We have come a long way and we will continue to move forward in the decades ahead answering these questions together.

Service by our volunteers is key to our success and our sustainability. Service at our meeting groups, intergroups, regions and WSO has never been so important. Strong service levels at the local levels supports strong service levels at the WSO level. It has been our experience that service work is also an opportunity to heal our traits in ways that may not always be possible and make many new friends.

There is a lot of support and fun for our volunteers. Please join us!

For more information see: [Contribute-your-time](#)

We also encourage you to participate in the [Board Meetings with the Fellowship](#) (TC) to carry on the conversation - Our next meeting is June 8 at 2:00 PM ET.