

# Club Operations

Club operations are defined as the policies, procedures and leadership development that contribute to the operations of a club or federation.

1. State your club or federation's operations goal(s) as they relate to:
  - Long-range planning
  - Analysis of member needs
  - Leadership organization and development
  - Fiscal management (budgeting, dues, non-dues income and fundraising)
2. Describe the methods used for achieving these goals
3. State/define the results of these executions.

## Club Operations

At AAF of the Midlands, our club's overall goals for 2019-2020 were as follows:

- To increase our membership by 25 percent and retain 100 percent of our corporate members.
- To increase diversity among our membership and reflect that diversity in everything we do, including:
  - At least 50 percent of this year's board represents women and people of color
  - At least 50 percent of this year's luncheon presenters represent women and people of color
  - Recruit at least one woman and one person of color to serve on our panel of three American Advertising Awards judges
- To set a budget and finish the year with revenue exceeding our expenses while fully funding our scholarships and AES Fund contributions. (The Advertising Education Sponsor fund helps support college students in the AAF's third district as they compete in the National Student Advertising Competition.)
  - Our budgeted scholarship contributions total \$1,500
  - Our budgeted AES Fund contribution totals \$1,500
- To lay the groundwork for next year's board by recruiting eight committee members to help out this year and learn about board service in hopes of joining next year's board.

### Methods & Results:

**Goal 1 - Membership:** Increasing membership was the most important factor for us this year and for the long-term sustainability of our club. We had seen a downward trend in membership for a few years, and last year we had to work really hard to get to 100 members to maintain our status as a member of Division

III (100-249 members). Thankfully, we were able to hit the 100-member mark in 2018-2019, and that propelled us forward over the summer to think about how we could increase membership moving forward and promote long-term growth.

Membership is the lifeblood of our club. Members drive attendance to and cover the cost of our monthly programs and special events, and they are directly correlated with the number of entries we receive for the American Advertising Awards.

Membership Co-Chairs Valerie Russell and Kevin DeLoach contacted individuals for membership. These individuals included past, current and potential new members. Prospective members were not limited to the advertising industry. We contacted marketing professionals in the medical industry, education, and other industries. This effort reflects the fact that the majority of our market is not traditional advertising agencies. Much of our market is composed of in-house professionals. All membership representatives collaborated to form a list of marketing professionals to prospect for membership.

Incoming President Jeff Lawler contacted all past and existing members for corporate membership with some help from Treasurer Sam Bond, Immediate Past President Lenza Jolley and President Joey Wallace. The membership team brainstormed to form a list of corporations to contact. The board also emphasized face-to-face or asks over the phone instead of relying on email for member recruitment. We felt that, the more personal the touch, the more likely we would be to secure a membership and begin building long-term relationships.

Currently, we have 112 members, which is a 12 percent increase over last year. Another part of our membership goal was to retain all previous corporate members. Again, we noted that this was an ambitious goal, as previous individual members may have moved or changed jobs. While we fell short of

our goal of 100 percent retention for corporate members (we retained 13 of 14 of our corporate members from the prior year) we also added four new ones for a total of 17, an increase of 21 percent.

While the number of total membership does fall short of our ambitious goal, we are proud of how quickly we secured these members and how their increased engagement has been evident throughout the year:

- We started out the year with an 8 percent increase in advanced registrations for our free Kickoff and Art Auction, with 149 compared to 137 in 2018. Our gross revenue from art auction sales increased by 6 percent from \$3,193 in 2018 to \$3,393 in 2019. (Exhibit 1)
- Our first lunch and learn featured Jennifer Sutton, CEO of Bright + CO in Greenville, SC, and we sold all 65 tickets in advance and managed to make room for five of Jennifer's staff members to attend with her, which brought our total attendance to 70. (Exhibit 2)
- Our Oyster Roast and Media Auction was held in November where we saw a 22 percent increase in ticket sales with 92 this year compared to 75 in 2018. (Exhibit 3)
- When the time came for American Advertising Awards entries, we saw a tremendous 66 percent increase in the total number of professional entries and a 9 percent increase in student entries. (196 professional entries in 2020, 118 entries in 2019). (Exhibit 4)

These are just a handful of examples of increased participation and engagement with our members throughout the year. We feel confident that our board will continue this momentum and grow even more next year with most of our board returning in some capacity.

**Goal 2 - Diversity & Inclusion:** We also took to heart some feedback we had received from members about the need to increase diversity. Diversity, equity, and inclusion are often viewed as areas in need of improvement in communications and advertising, and our club is no different. [According to Forbes](#), 3 percent of all creative directors are women, and less than 0.1 percent of creative agencies are founded by

women. [One study](#) found that “African Americans/Blacks are only 6 percent of the industry, Hispanics/Latinos only 8 percent and Asians only 10 percent.”

We questioned as a board how we could combat those statistics and raise awareness so that students and professionals alike would be able to see other cultures working in their realms and feel as though their voices are valid in these same spaces. The first step in this process began when we recruited board members for the 2019-2020 year. We met our goal here by recruiting 16 board members, of whom nine are female and two are African-American. We range in ages from our 20s to our 50s while representing a diverse set of backgrounds both professionally and culturally.

We also realized that we had no hard data on racial and gender representation in our local club, so we added optional fields to our membership application to begin the process of creating a baseline to measure our progress moving forward. (Exhibit 5) By establishing a baseline this year, we will be able to better gauge our progress in the future.

We also made diversity a priority from the get-go when we started recruiting our committee members. We sought to involve both new and current members alike by presenting them with opportunities for involvement on the committee level. The following board areas utilized committees this year:

Communications, Mosaic, Judging and Public Service. We found that committee members came from one of two areas; existing members that were interested in getting more involved with AAF, where committee work would set them up for success as potential future board members, and former board members, allowing them to stay involved with AAF without the commitment of board service but with the option of returning to board service in the future.

We believe that one of the keys to attracting new members and retaining existing ones is to offer a slate of luncheon speakers who offer expertise from a number of fields, but we also believe in expanding the

concept of diversity beyond our subject matter. We believe that if we want to increase the overall diversity of our membership, then we need to offer a more diverse set of speakers. (Exhibit 6) The previous year, our slate of speakers at six luncheons included one female and one person of color. This year, in six luncheons, our slate of speakers included two women and three persons of color. It was a step in a positive direction that we hope to continue next year.

One of the ways we wanted to represent diversity for our local club is in one of the most misunderstood processes—judging for the American Advertising Awards. We have received feedback from members in the past that the judging process can be confusing. In an effort to increase transparency, we tried to give entrants a better idea of how it all works. Although the smaller size of our market can make it challenging to recruit the highest quality judges, this overall sense of confusion made it more important than ever to pull from a diverse group of judges so our local industry felt represented.

We specifically recruited volunteer judges with a demographic makeup similar to our club and local industry. For us, this meant ensuring that our group of three judges included at least one female judge and at least one African American. We were able to achieve this in part because of our club's reputation for an enjoyable judging experience, as well as through early and specific recruitment of individuals who met our criteria.

Recruitment of a diverse group of judges ensured different perspectives and experiences were present throughout the entire judging process, making it not only a smooth and enjoyable experience, but one where we feel all entries were examined from multiple angles and given the level of consideration we ourselves would have provided. It was also important for us to increase transparency around the judging process, and we made it a point to highlight our panel of judges and their backgrounds during our American Advertising Awards Gala. (Exhibit 7)

**Goal 3 - Budget:** It may go without saying, but we also set a goal to stick to our budget and fully fund our scholarships and AES contributions. Our club is fortunate to find itself in a strong financial position, but we wanted to make it a priority this year to do our part to maintain the health and stability of our organization by staying under budget and to avoid dipping into our reserves.

We believed the first step to continuing our financial success was educating the various board members on the various revenue streams, as well as expenses the club plans to incur throughout the year. During the kickoff board meeting in July, Treasurer Sam Bond presented a budget breakdown that explained various cost and profit centers. (Exhibit 8). This presentation gave background of where we succeeded and failed in the previous year in financial terms and then broke down recommendations for this year. Those recommendations were broken down by the major cost areas of the club: Membership, Programs, and the American Advertising Awards Gala. This was done so our board members could see how their revenue and cost budgets affected the other areas of the club.

To further help board members understand and track their budgets, monthly trackers were sent out for those functional areas listed above (Membership, Programs, and American Advertising Awards Gala). These trackers allowed those board members to easily track how they were doing in terms of revenue and expenses against the approved budget. Before these trackers, there was no easily consumable way for board members to know how they were tracking against their budgets. (Exhibit 9)

We believe we have received better buy-in from board members in regards to the financial success of the club in part due to this continued education about how the club functions. Through February 2020, our club's revenue stands at \$57,004 compared to \$51,698 in FY19 through February. Our expenses through February 2020 stand at \$31,981 compared to \$42,127 in FY19 through February of that year. Overall that means we've seen a \$25,024 net income through February 2020, a 161 percent increase over the \$9,571

we had through February 2019. This is incredibly important for the club because all of our revenue driving events are over for the year and we still have some large expenses left to incur. The increase in income, when coupled with board members' decreasing expenses, will allow us to give all of our budgeted scholarships to students, as well as a full donation to the AES fund.

We attribute the bulk of the revenue growth to an increase in membership, specifically corporate memberships. While we had a 12 percent increase in physical members, the 14 percent increase in revenue helped down the line with increases in American Advertising Award entry fees (up 18 percent from FY19) and AAAward Gala ticket sales (up 27 percent from FY19).

**Goal 4 - Laying the Groundwork for Next Year:** As we mentioned earlier on, we felt that we could get a head start on fleshing out the 2020-2021 board by recruiting committee volunteers to assist in many aspects of the club. Our committee member count by area is as follows: Communications (2), Mosaic (3), Public Service (2), Judging (2). Many of them were new to AAF, but some were also past board members. Our goal of building a pipeline of future board members is not inconsistent with our use of past board members, as it is fairly common for board members to have a “gap year” between stints on the board.

The Communications Committee assisted with a social media calendar and content creation. The Mosaic Committee helped recruit panelists for our Life After Work event focused on diversity and spent an afternoon at Columbia High School, a local school that has a large number of minority students. In order to empower more high school students of color to begin considering careers and majors in advertising, the group participated in the Communities in Schools Career and College Fair. The Judging committee recruited student volunteers to help with setup and cleanup on judging weekend and consisted of two past

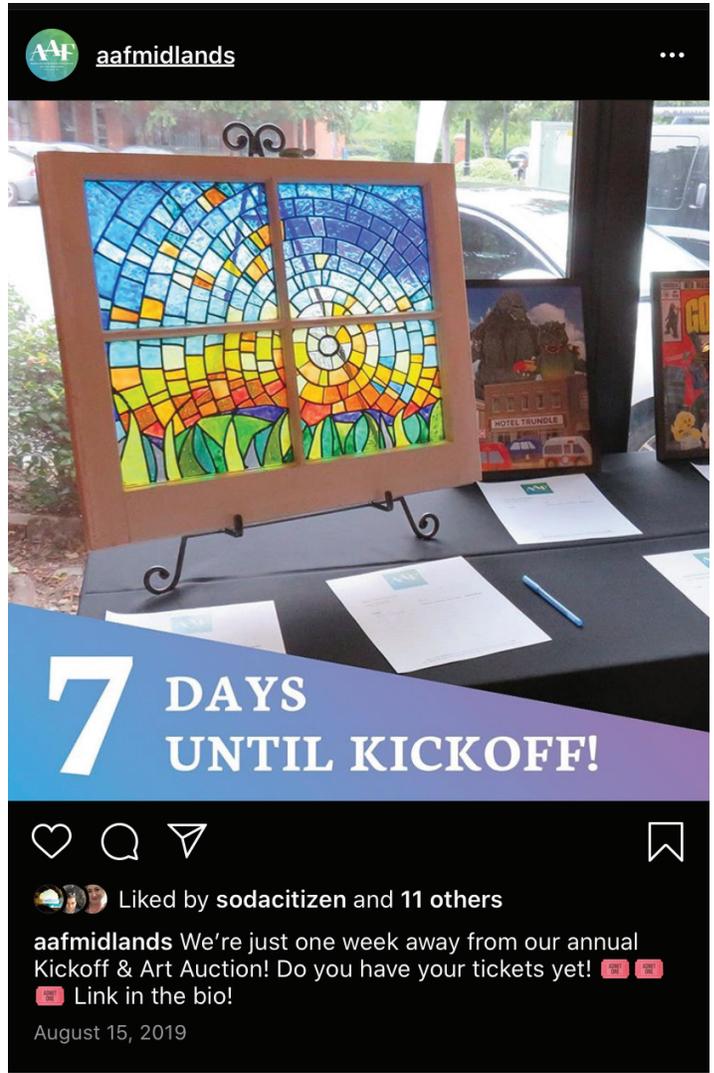
board members who had both served as judging chairs and were willing to help. Public Service recruited members to assist with logo and website design.

We found that committee members came from one of two areas; existing members that were interested in getting more involved with AAF, where committee work would set them up for success as potential future board members, and former board members, allowing them to stay involved with AAF without the commitment of board service.

Regarding the upcoming year, our goal is to have active and engaged board members who will assist in building our committees to continue growth and provide opportunities for “job shadowing” through committee service for future years to come. This process started out strong at our board retreat, and we continued that effort by recruiting committee members throughout the year. This year, we are looking to add a number of those committee members to the board and begin the recruitment process for new committee members now. In doing this, we are looking at both talent and diversity in a number of different facets such as industry, age, gender, experience, and culture.

Overall this year, our growth in members, our events and our programs were very strong. We are well within our budget and all of our events saw increased overall attendance, positive feedback and have included a diverse range of content. We hope to continue the momentum we have built up this year and grow our membership even more. Because so many of our luncheons were at capacity, we are already investigating either increasing available space or moving to a new venue to support our growing club. Despite issues with COVID-19, we are well on the way to finalizing our board and getting a head start on next year's events.

# Exhibit 1: 2019 Kickoff and Art Auction



# Exhibit 2: Jennifer Sutton - Sept. 2019 Lunch and Learn

**September Lunch & Learn**  
Jennifer Sutton, BRIGHT + CO

SEPTEMBER 17, 2019

**Mark Your Calendars for the first Luncheon of the Year!**

Jennifer founded her company, BRIGHT+CO, a full-service marketing and advertising agency in 2013. Prior to 2013, Jennifer and BRIGHT+CO's other principal, Andy Mendelsohn, both worked at big, global agencies on big, global brands. They did well, worked their way up and gained enormous experience. So much experience, in fact, that they realized there was a better way. Come hear about Jennifer's journey on starting BRIGHT+CO, its unique business model, and the growth plan she created for the company.

Our last three Lunch & Learns were **SOLD OUT**, so get your tickets today!

**September Lunch & Learn**  
Jennifer Sutton, BRIGHT + CO  
Tuesday, September 17, 2019  
11:45 am - 1:00 pm  
United Way of the Midlands  
1818 Blanding Street  
Columbia, SC 29201

**RSVP TODAY**

**AAF of the Midlands**  
September 17, 2019 · 🌐

We had a stellar crowd for our first Lunch & Learn of the year! 🌟 Thank you to Jennifer Sutton with BRIGHT+Co Marketers for speaking to our members today. 🍌🍌🍌

**aafmidlands**  
United Way of the Midlands

**3 LESSONS LEARNED**

- Stay true to your vision.
- Imposter Syndrome is real. Battle it.
- Get comfortable with being uncomfortable.

🍌🍌🍌 Liked by e\_yarborough and 35 others

**aafmidlands** We had a stellar crowd for our first Lunch & Learn of the year! 🌟 Thank you to Jennifer Sutton with @brightcomarketers for speaking to our members today. 🍌🍌🍌

September 17, 2019

**AAF of the Midlands**  
September 10, 2019 · 🌐

This event is officially **SOLD OUT!** We'll see y'all next Tuesday!

**OUR NEXT LUNCHEON IS SOLD OUT!**

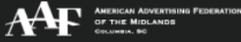
# Exhibit 3: Oyster Roast and Media Auction



# Exhibit 4: American Advertising Awards Event Photos



# Exhibit 5: Updated Membership Form



AMERICAN ADVERTISING FEDERATION  
OF THE MIDLANDS  
COLUMBIA, SC

[ABOUT US](#) [MEMBERSHIP](#) [EVENTS](#) [NEWS](#) [AWARDS](#) [STUDENTS](#) [CONTACT](#)

## Membership Form

**Name \***

First  Last

**Company \***  **Email \***

**Job Title**  **Phone \***

**Address \***

Address Line 1

Address Line 2

City  State  Zip Code

**Membership Level \***

## Committees

Please check one or any committees you have an interest in joining or learning more about and we will contact you with more details!

**Interested Committees**

<input type="checkbox"/> Programs	<input type="checkbox"/> Oyster Roast
<input type="checkbox"/> Life After Work	<input type="checkbox"/> Membership
<input type="checkbox"/> Public Service	<input type="checkbox"/> Communications
<input type="checkbox"/> Government Relations	<input type="checkbox"/> American Advertising Awards - Gala
<input type="checkbox"/> American Advertising Awards - Judging	<input type="checkbox"/> Diversity

## Demographic Information

This section is completely voluntary. In an effort to better serve you and to create a welcoming and diverse environment for all advertising and communications professionals, we would like to know a little bit more about our membership. Please respond to any questions you feel comfortable answering.

**Age**

18 – 25       26 – 35       36 – 45  
 46 – 55       56 – 65       65+

**Gender**

Female    Male  

**Ethnicity**

White or Caucasian    Black or African American    Hispanic or Latino  
 Native American or American Indian    Asian or Pacific Islander    Biracial

**Education**

Less than High School    High School Diploma or GED    Associates Degree  
 Bachelors Degree    Masters Degree    Doctorate Degree

**Employment**

Agency    In House    Freelance/Contract/Self-Employed    Business Owner

[Winners!](#)

[Calling All Artists!](#)

**Archives**

Archives

Select Month

**Categories**

Categories

Select Category

## Exhibit 6: 2019-2020 Slate of Speakers



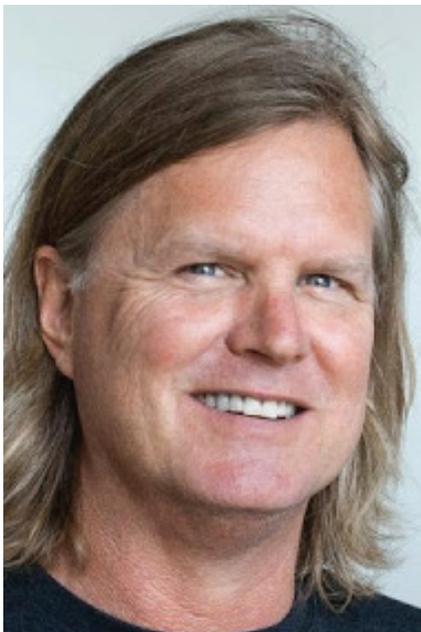
**Jennifer Sutton**  
Bright + CO Marketing  
September Speaker



**Yeosh Bendayan**  
Push Button Audio  
January Speaker



**Tiffany Andrews**  
Myrtle Beach Convention Center  
February Speaker



**David Oakley**  
BooneOakley  
March Speaker  
(rescheduled for June)



**Shane Santiago**  
Bravely  
April Speaker  
(rescheduled for fall 2020)



**Ryan Beck**  
Beck Digital  
May Speaker

## Exhibit 7: Meet Our Judges

### AAF *Meet Our Judges*



*Clay Prewitt*  
KNOXVILLE, TN



*Stephanie Kelly*  
NASHVILLE, TN



*Sherman Winfield*  
ATLANTA, GA

This slide was presented at our American Advertising Awards Gala during the presentation along with a brief bio of each of our judges.

# Exhibit 8: Budget Presentation

## Revenue Recap

- About \$8,000 short on revenue projections
- A large decrease in corporate/individual memberships led to a decrease in Addy submissions, which affects tickets sales



Budget	Projected	Actual	Difference
Kickoff	\$ 5,000	\$ 3,193	\$ (1,807)
AAAwards	\$ 24,750	\$ 21,172	\$ (3,578)
Luncheons	\$ 1,750	\$ 2,973	\$ 1,223
Oyster Roast	\$ 8,250	\$ 8,077	\$ (173)
Scholarships	\$ 1,250	\$ 200	\$ (1,050)
Membership	\$ 24,750	\$ 21,751	\$ (2,999)
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 65,750</b>	<b>\$ 57,365</b>	<b>\$ (8,385)</b>

## Expenses Recap

- Came in under budget by about \$6,000 for the year, which helps offset the miss in revenue
- Only reason AAAwards were “over budget” was due to the amount of duplicates ordered, which is a pass through expense for the club

Budget	Projected	Actual	Difference
Kickoff	\$ 5,540	\$ 5,244	\$ (296)
AAAwards	\$ 21,650	\$ 22,456	\$ 806
Luncheons	\$ 11,400	\$ 7,464	\$ (3,936)
Oyster Roast	\$ 3,700	\$ 3,651	\$ (49)
Scholarships	\$ 3,150	\$ 2,271	\$ (879)
MISC	\$ 20,275	\$ 18,806	\$ (1,469)
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 65,715</b>	<b>\$ 59,892</b>	<b>\$ (5,823)</b>

# Exhibit 9: Monthly Trackers

## AAwards Judging Revenue & Expenses as of 2.28.20

Revenue		Budget Revenue	Dec	Jan	Feb	Actual Revenue	Difference
Entry Fees		\$10,500	\$1,752	\$9,229	(\$555)	\$10,426	(\$74)
Forwarding Fees		\$250				\$0	\$(250)
Student AAward Workshop Sponsorship		\$0				\$0	\$0
Total		\$10,750	\$1,752	\$9,229	(\$555)	\$10,426	(\$324)
Expense	Budget Expenses	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Actual Expense	Difference
Take-In Day	\$100					\$0	\$(100)
Judging Weekend - Judge Expenses	\$2,425		\$1,336	\$1,327		\$2,663	\$238
Trophies and Frames	\$2,700		\$73			\$73	\$(2,627)
District Forwarding Fees	\$1,750					\$0	\$(1,750)
National Handling Fees	\$2,000					\$0	\$(2,000)
Total	\$8,975	\$0	\$1,409	\$1,327	\$0	\$2,736	\$(6,239)



## AAwards Gala Revenue & Expenses as of 2.28.20

Revenue	Budget Revenue	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Actual Revenue	Difference		
Ticket Sales	\$9,000		\$2,102	\$7,712		\$10,019	\$1,019		
Gala Sponsorships	\$2,500		\$500	\$500		\$1,000	\$(1,500)		
Total	\$11,500	\$0	\$2,602	\$8,212	\$0	\$11,019	\$(481)		
Expense	Budget Expense	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Actual Expense	Difference
Call For Entries Announcement	\$575				\$465	\$57		\$522	\$(28)
Decorations/Tables/Linens	\$1,500						\$374	\$374	\$(1,126)
Band/DJ	\$500		\$250					\$250	\$(250)
Venue	\$3,000	\$1,500					\$3,400	\$4,900	\$1,900
Catering	\$3,250							\$0	\$(3,250)
Bar	\$3,000						\$3,519	\$3,519	\$519
Misc Expenses	\$100						\$127	\$127	\$27
Total	\$11,925	\$1,500	\$250	\$0	\$465	\$0	\$7,420	\$9,692	\$(2,233)

