

General Service Association of ABA
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Canada

1 Jan 2017

TO: All ABA Members and Groups Worldwide

RE: Critical Financial Situation of the GSA

As we begin 2017, we wish all our members and Groups everywhere a joyous and blessed recovery journey over the coming year.

We are writing to everyone at this time to fully inform you of the difficult financial situation we, as a Board, have been dealing with at every meeting over the past year and to ask for your help. As you know, we are your elected service board and directly responsible to you alone.

If you have been following events through the Annual General Meeting minutes over recent years, you will be aware that the GSA has operated in a deficit position most of the time. Over the past year this deficit has steadily eroded our financial reserves to the point that in December 2016 we were unable to make payroll for the first time. Our Treasurer responded appropriately to this critical situation by cutting back staffing hours at the General Service Office to skeleton levels for the time being.

As you may appreciate, this response is an interim measure only and not sustainable in the long run. If our Office is unstaffed, the many needs of the ABA Fellowship cannot be met—literature cannot be shipped, emails will go unanswered, essential support services to the entire Fellowship will suffer in a variety of ways. Furthermore, we will not retain a capable Office Manager if we cannot offer stable employment. *This is our one and only paid position*, and we need it filled in order to function as a viable organization. Until now the work we require from the person in this position averages 20 hours per week, a modest investment on which hinges the entire operation of our General Service Office.

Those of you who attended ABA's 2nd International Conference in September 2013 in Dallas will recall the financial appeal that was made at that time. The response was gratifying, with a significant number of individual members making large financial contributions. Some of you were even able to make the maximum permitted annual donation of \$1000 for individuals.

Since then, the Groups have responded variably to the Quarterly Appeals that are regularly made by the GSA. Unfortunately, this income has failed to keep up with slowly increasing expenses.

Our only other source of income is from literature sales, and our profit margin on this has also been insufficient to match our expenses. Furthermore, in a spirit of service, we have made our recently developed literature (documents on Sobriety, Meal-Support Guidelines, Sponsorship, many audio recordings) available free of charge by posting all of it on our website. A month ago the Board voted to request a voluntary donation from anyone downloading documents, but this strategy has yet to make a financial impact.

We therefore have decided to issue this appeal. We ask each of you to search your hearts, to pray, to talk to others about this, and to respond as generously as you possibly can at this time. Many of you may be able to send the maximum personal donation (\$1000) once again, even though no donation is too small. *There is no upper limit to the amount any Group can contribute.*

Our need is urgent and immediate, because if our situation fails to improve, we will have no alternative other than to dissolve the General Service Association using the legally required process for that. Without the GSA to serve it, ABA itself will be unable to continue. So, the question to ask yourselves is, "How important is ABA to my recovery?" The answer will determine your response.

Thank you for considering all of this. If you would like further information, all GSA Board meeting minutes and monthly financial reports are available to anyone, by simply contacting the Office.

Yours in service,
The Board of the General Service Association