

Joe Offutt Receives ALA Region 4 Outstanding Volunteer Award

Joe Offutt is a Dallas Chapter member who is well respected by his colleagues, the members of his firm, and the legal community in general. He joined International ALA and Dallas ALA in 1984 and has been a member of ALA consistently for over 26 years.

He first served with the Dallas Chapter immediately after joining. Within a few short years he became a member of the Board of Directors for the Chapter. In the late 1980's, Joe became a charter member of the Fort Worth Chapter, but ultimately returned to his roots by rejoining the Dallas Chapter as a primary member. (During his time with the Fort Worth Chapter, he continued to maintain a secondary membership with the Dallas Chapter.)

Since joining ALA, Joe has been involved in Chapter life at every level - holding almost every leadership position available - whether it be on the Board, as part of a committee or section, or as an advisor to other Chapter leaders. (See his abbreviated Record of Volunteer Service below.) What sets Joe apart, however, is that he does not just "hold a position" on the Board or Committee when elected. Instead, Joe exemplifies what it means to SERVE his colleagues.

Every position he has accepted over the years has benefited from his leadership. For example, during his Presidency in the Dallas Chapter (2006/2007) Joe was instrumental in garnering support for the Business Partner program for which our Chapter is now well known. As a member and co-chair of the Chapter Membership Committee, Joe has always demonstrated what it means to actively seek out new ALA International members in the Dallas area who have not joined the local chapter. He coaches them on the many benefits of membership and encourages them to become personally active in the Chapter.

He is the glue that binds the Chapter together. Professionalism and a wonderful sense of humor work hand-in-hand to help Joe break down any barriers that may exist within the Chapter, bridging the gap between new administrators and the more-seasoned professionals. Everyone knows Joe! He is also the person who is not afraid to speak up when he sees things may be going awry and offer advice on next steps or possible solutions.

Whenever there is a function or an activity, Joe can often be found in the thick of things offering up his enthusiasm and support. He is an advocate of all Chapter-sponsored social functions, Community Challenge events, and Business Partner programs; all of which benefit from his attendance. Peruse the pages of a decade's worth of Chapter newsletters and you will find Joe's picture or an attribution to him in almost every issue.

Joe's historical knowledge is often called upon by new Chapter leaders. They ask his advice in the hopes of avoiding potential pitfalls, which allows them to build upon lessons learned by past Boards. The ability to access this historical information has allowed the Chapter to continue to improve year after year. He is a member of the Past President's Advisory Committee for the Chapter and has participated in multiple Board Retreats over the past few years. He is never more than a phone call away.

Education is also important to Joe. He has frequently attended Regional Conference, Annual Conference, and CLI. He encourages others, especially Board members, to also attend as a way of serving their firms, colleagues, and the Chapter through professional growth.

Joe has served as a guest speaker, active participant in round-table section meetings, member of a Texas grass-roots large-firm group (that meets several times per year), an occasional panelist for Chapter General Meetings, and a peer-consultant at the Chapter level.

Joe Offutt is the epitome of an Outstanding Volunteer and illustrates what it means to be a successful servant-leader within ALA. The Dallas Chapter humbly requests that Joe be selected as this year's recipient of the Outstanding Volunteer award.

Record of Volunteer Service (Abbreviated)

- Currently serving as the Dallas Chapter Membership Co-Chair (2011/2012)
- Dallas Chapter Membership Co-Chair in 2010/2011
- Association Nominating Committee in 2009/2010
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- Association Nominating Committee in 2008/2009
- Dallas Chapter Board Director-At-Large Past President in 2007/2008
- Dallas Chapter Board President in 2006/2007
- Dallas Chapter Board President-Elect in 2005/2006
- Dallas Chapter Board Director-At-Large in 2004/2005
- Fort Worth Chapter Treasurer in 1995/1996
- Fort Worth Chapter Secretary in 1993/1994
- Fort Worth Chapter Director-At-Large Past President in 1989/1990
- Fort Worth Chapter President in 1988/1989
- Fort Worth Chapter Vice-President Programs in 1987/1988
- Helped charter the Fort Worth Chapter of ALA in 1986/1987
- Dallas Chapter Board 1985/1986 as Director-At-Large
- In addition to the leadership positions listed above, Joe also served as a committee member on a multitude of committees and projects (too numerous to mention) throughout his 26 years with ALA.