



# Week's Wirth



December 4, 2009

All membership associations are not created equal! Some associations charge a low fee and exist primarily for networking purposes. Others, like CAHSA, are a “full service” association with paid professional staff and a host of member benefits and services. As the year draws to a close and we prepare for 2010 I want to take this time to remind you what your dues investment provides you throughout the year. I encourage you to share this issue of Week’s Wirth with prospective members who may be thinking about joining an association and encourage them to consider CAHSA.

At CAHSA, our primary focus is to advocate on your behalf; provide education on hot topics and best practices including an annual convention, offer networking opportunities for you and your staff; develop future leaders; provide information on issues of importance to you through strategic communications; connect prospective customers to you through our website; and serve as your resource to help you find solutions and answers to your issues and questions. Let’s look at each one of these member benefits and services and how we deliver them to you.

CAHSA’s advocacy efforts are the heart of our work on behalf of you and your customers. We have a paid contract lobbyist who is your professional advocate at the legislature and with state agencies who regulate and provide reimbursement to providers. Through our efforts we influence legislation, reimbursement, and regulations. We recommend members to serve on key advisory committees for long term care, health reform, health information technology, and those created by legislation for a specific and time-limited purpose. In addition, we work with a public relations company who constantly seeks opportunities to communicate our policy positions through the various media outlets as well as promote CAHSA and our members as resources on senior housing and aging services. We position our members as experts who are at the forefront of providing care and services to seniors, and we connect you with opportunities to share your expertise and influence public policy.

In addition to member meetings that facilitate networking, we recently introduced “CAHSA Connect” to members. “CAHSA Connect” is your online member networking program and is offered exclusively to members. The networking site enables you to search and browse a complete member directory, share your own personal profile and web content with other members, participate in member forums, send messages, request meetings, and invite members to your events.

CAHSA has been recognized nationally for our efforts to develop future leaders through the CAHSA Next program geared to staff who are new to senior living and aging services. CAHSA Nexters hold educational events as well as networking opportunities throughout the year. Other programs they offer include a formal mentor program, annual pre-convention workshop, and an annual Legislative 101 program at the state capitol. These members are CAHSA’s future leaders and their programs and perspective reminds us that we have a multi-generational workplace to acknowledge and embrace.

To keep you informed, CAHSA has some time-tested approaches as well as a host of exciting new benefits. In 2010 we will publish our newsletter “CAHSA Connecting” as an email newsletter on a quarterly basis with the focus on member profiles and best practices. We will continue our weekly email communication “Week’s Wirth,” and/or “Capitol Focus” during the legislative session. Be sure to follow us on Twitter and catch our regular “tweets” reporting on action as it occurs during the session. We have revamped our website to make it easier to use and added new features, including expanded listings to help drive consumers to your organization, an events section for promoting your programs to the public, an updated consumer section to educate consumers about senior living and aging services, links to our Facebook and LinkedIn profiles, and a blog to offer two-way communication with members and others interested in our issues and programs.

At CAHSA, our strength is our membership. We thank you for your continuing support and commitment to CAHSA as an advocate for mission-driven senior housing and aging services providers and the seniors we serve. Working together we can create a better future.