

# The Gift Is Freedom

## A Note from Your World Board

We want to begin by expressing our gratitude for the chance to serve the Narcotics Anonymous Fellowship. This yearly update of activity gives us a chance to reflect on all that we have done over the past year and all that lies ahead. The report also helps us to see and consider both the impact our work has on the NA Fellowship and how our members make that work possible. We remain deeply grateful to be involved in helping to further the Vision for NA Services.

The theme for this Annual Report is taken from the 36th World Convention of NA, “The Gift Is Freedom.” The Narcotics Anonymous message has made it possible for hundreds of thousands of NA members all around the world to experience freedom from active addiction. The 2014–2015 fiscal year began with the acceleration of efforts to carry out the wishes of the 2014 World Service Conference, and concluded with a celebration of recovery at WCNA 36. Thousands of members converged on Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, to celebrate the gift of freedom that is possible through recovery in NA.

The 2014 World Service Conference charged NA World Services with a great deal of work, including continuation of the Service System Project and the Traditions Book Project. The Service System Project focused on providing assistance and support to communities that are adopting aspects of the proposals. We continued to gather locally developed resources and best practices related to the project. The Traditions Project brought together a workgroup to process and consider the input gathered in the previous Conference cycle. Drafted chapters were distributed for Fellowship review and input, and many revisions followed.

We also ventured into new territory in this Conference cycle by creating virtual workgroups to carry out the work of some of our Conference projects. These workgroups conducted business primarily through web meetings and using other Internet resources. Our publication workgroups (*Reaching Out* and *NA Way*) meet virtually, but the 2014–2016 cycle was the first time we created project workgroups that only met virtually. The virtual workgroups include Decision Making at the WSC, Planning Our Future, and Delegates Sharing, and we have included updates on the progress of those workgroups in this report. As you’ll read, the Decision Making Workgroup found it needed two face-to-face meetings, so was not strictly virtual. Later in the fiscal year, another workgroup was created to address the issue of WSC Seating and evaluate requests from regions seeking to be seated at the WSC.

The World Convention in Brazil took place at the end of the fiscal year. Planning and executing an event of this magnitude in a country far from our primary base of operations was challenging, but also of great importance. Despite the difficulties, the investment made in the well-being of NA in Brazil and in South America will continue to show results for many years to come. The Convention is reported on in greater detail later in this report. Our celebrations of recovery serve as unique opportunities to touch the lives of those members who are able to attend, and also touch the lives of many others who will benefit indirectly. Every World Convention is a learning experience for everyone who attends—and for NA World Services, as well. Each time we learn more about how to manage events in different environments and to ensure that the event helps NA to grow locally and around the world.

Distributing NA recovery literature to communities around the world remains one of the most important

functions of NA World Services. Getting literature to communities that need it most is essential to the ongoing health of our Fellowship and is directly connected to our primary purpose and A Vision for NA Services. The need for free and subsidized literature is ever-increasing.

With careful planning and concerted effort, we have been able to keep pace with demand. We leverage savings in production and distribution costs in order to make each dollar spent on literature go a little further. At the same time, we have almost doubled our spending on free and subsidized literature since 2001, a reflection of our commitment to this priority. Taken together, these factors compound our ability to meet the literature needs of a growing Fellowship. In this fiscal year, we spent \$539,919 to produce literature for this purpose. This figure may be more meaningful when viewed as part of a trend over time in the graph below.

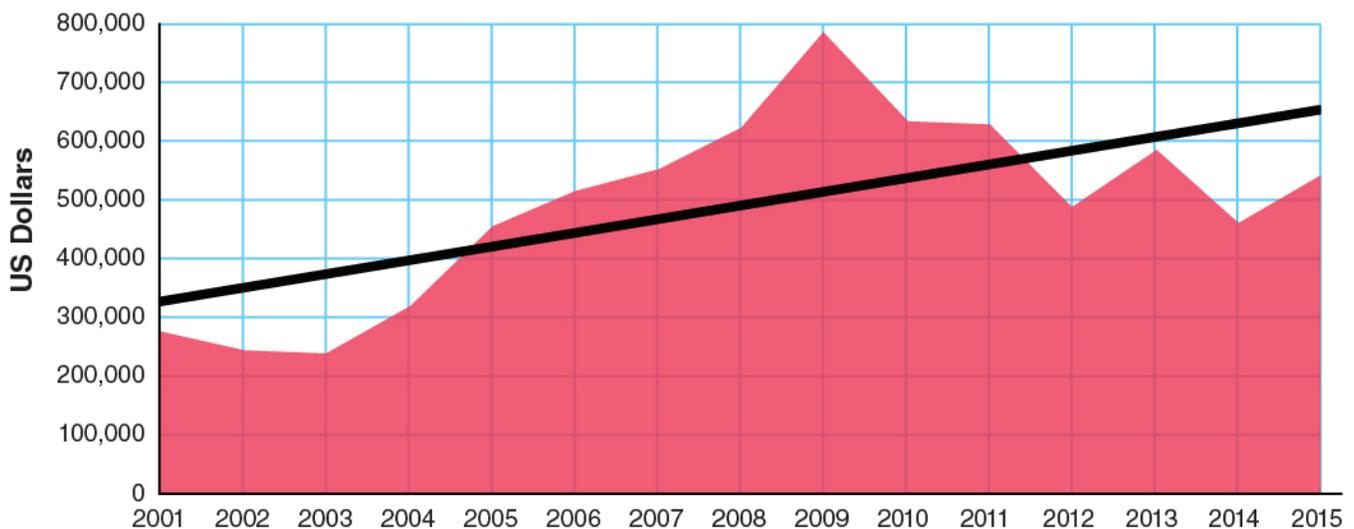
By its very nature, this activity reflects our commitment as a Fellowship to our primary purpose—to carry the message to the addict who still suffers. Every day, in NA meetings around the world, members are reaching out with whatever they have to carry the message. Our goal is to

continue to meet as many requests as possible. It requires planning and constant evaluation, and we remain open to new ways of accomplishing our goals.

We are constantly evaluating our ability to meet the Fellowship’s needs in this area and adapting approaches to keep pace with demands. Ultimately, we are grateful for this challenge, as it means that the NA message is being carried regardless of the ability of a community to purchase literature.

All of our work at NA World Services helps us to further the primary purpose of the NA groups, moving us further toward a future in which “every addict in the world has the chance to experience our message in his or her own language and culture and find the opportunity for a new way of life.” This message of freedom is a priceless gift for all of us, and we each thrive from the work of making that gift more widely and readily available to addicts seeking recovery. This report offers a window into what we accomplish together—NA World Services alongside the NA Fellowship. We thank you for your continued support, and we encourage you to read this report as an account of our shared challenges and successes.

### Free and Subsidized Literature 2001–2015 with trend (Cost to NAWS)



*Note:* The high point in the 2008–2009 fiscal year reflects distribution of the Fifth Edition Basic Text for use in H&I settings when we published the Sixth Edition.

## World Board Members

Board Member	First Elected	Term Ends	Location
Mary Banner	2004	2016	Little Elm, Texas, USA
Ron Blake	2004	2016	Richmond, Victoria, Australia
Iñigo Calonje Unceta	2010	2016	Estepona, Málaga, Spain
Paul Craig	2006	2016*	Quispamsis, New Brunswick, Canada
Mukam Harzenski	2004	2016	Ship Bottom, New Jersey, USA
Tali McCall	2012	2016*	Anahola, Hawaii, USA
Ron Miller	2004	2016	Winter Haven, Florida, USA
MaryEllen Polin	2012	2016*	Simi Valley, California, USA
Tana Agostini	2012	2018	Saugerties, New York, USA
Irene Crawley	2012	2018	Westmeath, Ireland
Paul Fitzgerald	2012	2018	Mumbai, India
Bob Gray	2012	2018**	Fort Lauderdale, Florida, USA
Arne Hassel-Gren	2006	2018	Waterloo, Ontario, Canada
Mark Hersh	2006	2018	Las Vegas, NV, USA
Franney Jardine	2006	2018	Olympia, Washington, USA
Tonia Nikolinakou	2006	2018	Athens, Greece
Junior Odilson Gomez Braz	2008	2020	São José dos Campos, São Paulo, Brazil

### *In Memoriam*

\*\*We are saddened to report that Bob Gray, a member of the World Board since 2012 and a longtime member of NA, passed away on 15 October 2015. Bob's life was defined by his passion for Narcotics Anonymous and his commitment to helping others. His service to Narcotics Anonymous spanned 37 years. His contributions to Narcotics Anonymous have been immense, and he will be greatly missed. He was a dear friend to many and a mentor to many more; his passing has been felt in the hearts of recovering addicts all over the world. He will be remembered for his easygoing nature, humility, and generous spirit.

### Human Resource Panel

	First Elected	Term Ends	
Lib E	2012	2016	Christchurch, New Zealand
David J	2012	2016	Llanbedr, Gwynedd, UK
Michael B	2014	2018	Nashville, Tennessee, USA
Sherry V	2014	2018	Bunker Hill, West Virginia, USA

### WSC Cofacilitators

	First Elected	Term Ends	
Dickie D	2012	2016	Amite, Louisiana, USA
Laura B	2014	2018	Albuquerque, New Mexico, USA

\* Our guidelines state, "If the World Service Conference chooses to elect more than eight (8) Board members at the same time, the term lengths will be determined by volunteers and then by random drawing at the first World Board meeting following the WSC." Since eleven Board members were elected at WSC 2012, three Board seats were chosen at random for four-year terms.

# Projects, Workgroups, and Fellowship Discussions

The World Board engages in strategic planning every two years in preparation for the biennial World Service Conference. This planning process helps us identify specific goals and approaches to be implemented in each two-year cycle, and to draft project plans for consideration at the WSC. In 2014, the WSC elected to continue the multicyle work of the Traditions Book Project and provided more direction for the next phase of the Service System Project. The Conference also approved plans for public relations work in the 2014–2016 cycle and for some virtual workgroups. In addition, the World Board forms internal work groups to accomplish tasks and reflect on its processes. In this cycle, these included WCNA Program, WB Operating Values, and WSC Seating. WCNA Program is a workgroup formed before each World Convention; WB Operating Values and WSC Seating were both workgroups to help us frame discussions during our Board meetings about these issues. Finally, common concerns that gain traction in the course of the WSC are often identified as “Issue Discussion Topics” or IDTs. In this first of two years of the Conference cycle, we began to frame conversations on *Welcoming All Members*, *Group Support*, *Planning*, and *The Role of Zones*. A summary of the ideas and input we have received on these issues follows.

## Service System

The 2014 World Service Conference saw the adoption of three motions related to ideas from the Service System Proj-

ect. These focused on group support forums (GSFs), local service conferences (LSCs), and local service boards (LSBs) and were informed by the field test that took place in the 2012–2014 Conference cycle. The motions asked whether the Fellowship agreed in principle to move in the direction of a service system that contains GSFs, LSCs, and LSBs. The motions contained a series of essential and recommended characteristics for these service bodies. Conference action led to an amendment that added the text “to be included in the GTLS as an option along with our current service units” to each motion. The intent of this amendment was to offer the SSP ideas as options for NA communities to consider, along with existing elements of our service system. Each of these motions, along with the Service System Project Plan for 2014–2016, passed by more than a two-thirds majority.

The work in fiscal year 2015 focused on offering support to communities making the transition to a new system. The 2014–2016 Service System Project Plan identified four main goals for the cycle:

- Developing tools and resources for local implementation of elements of the service system
- Continuing to collect input about how local communities are adapting the project’s ideas to best meet their particular needs
- Creating opportunities for communities to share their struggles and successes with each other
- Collecting and recording experiences and best practices so that we can help communities transition to a new system.

We moved toward these goals in a number of ways. We continued to gather locally developed resources related to the project and its key concepts, and began a redesign of the Local Service Resources area of na.org to include a section for these resources. We also continued to correspond with members and service bodies around the world who had questions about the project's ideas, or who were engaged in implementing them.

We hosted a web meeting to introduce the SSP ideas to delegates at the European Delegates Meeting in November 2014. This served as a beta test for subsequent web meetings that were held in August and September 2015. More web meetings focusing on implementing ideas from the project and the challenges associated with recovery and service in rural areas are also planned.

During this cycle we had hoped to create a number of basic, easily translatable resources focused on a brief overview of the core principles of the Service System, Group Support Basics, and Local Service Basics. Our limited resources prevented us producing these. We hope to make progress on them, or similar tools to meet those needs, in the near future. The additional experience of NA communities worldwide, combined with our efforts to collect and share information and resources, will make what we ultimately produce even more useful.

Materials related to the project, including the videos and the *CAR* essay related to the 2014 motions, the project plan, and a range of draft tools created for the field test, can be found online at [www.na.org/servicesystem](http://www.na.org/servicesystem).

## “Guiding Principles: The Spirit of Our Traditions”

The Traditions Project spanned two Conference cycles, from 2012 to 2016. This fiscal year at NAWs marked the time of greatest activity for the project. The plan for this cycle included the creation of a workgroup, drafting of material for the Traditions Project, and conducting Fellowship review-and-input periods on the material.

The workgroup had its first meeting just before the beginning of the 2014–2015 fiscal year, in June 2014. Made up of experienced NA members from around the world including two Europeans, a member from Iran, another from Brazil, and several Americans, the Tradi-

tions Project workgroup hit the ground running. The tasks before the workgroup were daunting, starting with the process of reading more than 2500 pages of raw input on the Traditions gathered from the NA Fellowship over the course of the previous Conference cycle. Based on Fellowship input the previous cycle, the World Board had already put forward preliminary ideas about the structure of the workbook. As the workgroup processed the material gathered from the Fellowship, ideas about the ways each chapter would operate were considered and evaluated.

Review and input on the project began with the release of an introductory chapter and Tradition One in November 2014. Releasing Tradition One on its own prior to fully developing material on later chapters made it possible to capture the Fellowship's initial reaction to the structure and organization. This feedback was taken into account for the project as a whole. The input submitted by dedicated members, groups, and service committees around the world helped to refine each chapter and the structure overall, and the review-and-input periods continued through the duration of this fiscal year.

As is common for Conference projects, the work of the Traditions Project extended well beyond the close of the fiscal year. The approval form of the Traditions workbook, “Guiding Principles: The Spirit of Our Traditions,” was released with the 2016 *Conference Agenda Report* in November 2015. The World Service Conference will vote on the draft at WSC 2016 in April.

We are deeply grateful for all that the Fellowship has done to help make this piece of literature the best it could be. We are confident that, should the NA Fellowship choose to adopt this as NA Fellowship-approved literature, it will be an excellent resource for enriching the recovery of our members, improving our service efforts, and helping to make the NA message more readily available to those who have yet to find recovery from addiction.

## Workgroups

### WSC Decision Making

While WSC Rules of Order guide the Conference's formal business sessions, the 2014 Conference identified a need to refine our processes for the important work that takes place in our discussion sessions. To that end,