

06.22.08

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF COLLEGE AND UNIVERSITY ATTORNEYS

**POLICY ON CORPORATE SPONSORSHIPS**

**I. Preface:**

Currently, NACUA employees, directors, and certain member attorney representatives make requests for sponsorships from law firms that have a specialized practice in higher education law as well as selected other organizations and corporations. These funds defray a portion of expenses related to the NACUA Annual Conference and its Continuing Legal Education Workshops in exchange for appropriate recognition. The majority of law firms that provide sponsorship have representatives that are also individual members of the Association. The primary interests of the Association that are served by having a sponsorship program are: to provide an opportunity to law firms and corporations to demonstrate their interest in and support for the mission and services of the Association and of its members who serve institutions of higher education; and, through their financial support, to defray the costs associated with the Annual Conference and Continuing Legal Education Workshops that otherwise would be borne by the attendees.

**II. Relationship to Other Policies of the Association, Specifically Conflicts of Interest:**

The NACUA Policy on Corporate Sponsorships is consistent with the following related ongoing obligations and standing policies of the Association: the *NACUA Board of Directors Policy on Conflicts of Interest*; the *NACUA Employee Policy on Conflicts of Interest*; and the *NACUA Employee Code of Ethical Conduct*. This Policy is therefore designed and intended to cover and guide the obligations and conduct of NACUA employees, Directors, and those member attorney representatives acting on behalf of NACUA with regard to NACUA's sponsorship efforts. This Policy is not designed or intended to address or capture the obligations or conduct of NACUA member attorney representatives acting at their own behest; it does not address or capture member attorneys' own understanding of their individual institutional rules and state laws relating to acceptance of personal benefits that are employment-related; and it does not address individual member attorneys' policies on conflicts of interest or codes of ethical conduct.

NACUA's Sponsorship Policy, together with its Employee and Board of Directors Policies on Conflicts of Interest and its Employee Code of Ethical Conduct, will govern the conduct and practices the Association related to sponsorship, as described further in this document.

### **III. General Guiding Principles for NACUA Sponsorship:**

Sponsorship of NACUA's programs and services provides law firms, organizations and corporations that have goals consistent with NACUA's mission with the opportunity to demonstrate their strong support for the higher education community and attorneys who serve colleges and universities. NACUA appreciates the commitment of its sponsors, which helps to ensure that NACUA continues to deliver the highest quality programs to its members. Opportunities for sponsorship include NACUA's Annual Conference and Continuing Legal Education Workshops and other NACUA activities, programs, and materials consistent with NACUA's mission. The following principles serve to guide the relationship between NACUA and its sponsors:

- A sponsorship is a financial or in-kind (such as complimentary use of a room or facilities) contribution to NACUA by any corporation, organization, or law firm, either for-profit or not-for-profit, which provides support for specific NACUA activities or programs, consistent with NACUA's mission "to advance the effective practice of higher education attorneys for the benefit of the colleges and universities they serve."
- NACUA strives to provide meaningful recognition to those who sponsor its programs and services.
- NACUA's interactions with its sponsors are characterized by the same high degree of professionalism, quality, and service that it provides to and shares with its own members. NACUA's interactions with its sponsors are always personalized and collegial, in keeping with the Association's culture and core values of civility and collegiality.
- NACUA understands the desire on the part of sponsors to receive as much recognition as possible, but NACUA respects its members first and foremost. Sponsors may interact with NACUA member attorneys while attending NACUA educational programs. However, sponsors will not be provided with NACUA member attorneys' mailing or email addresses for the purposes of sending communications or solicitations, either in advance of or after the educational program.
- Sponsorship and programmatic planning are completely independent of each other, and speaking slots are not granted to any individual or organization as a result of, or in return for, sponsorship.
- NACUA maintains strict and complete editorial control of all materials published in connection with sponsorship. Direct solicitation of business or promotion of products or services during educational sessions, networking events, or in the registration area is not allowed.

- NACUA does not endorse any individual sponsor or its products and services. NACUA acknowledges sponsorship participation publicly, but in ways that do not suggest or intend endorsement.
- NACUA is accountable primarily to its members. Member objectives and directives, if they are ever in conflict with sponsor objectives, take precedence.

#### **IV. Overview and Current Practices of Sponsorships for Annual Conferences and Continuing Legal Education Workshops:**

NACUA does not have or offer exhibits as part of its Annual Conference or Continuing Legal Education Workshops. The primary interests of the Association that are served by having a sponsorship program are: to provide an opportunity to law firms and corporations to demonstrate their interest in and support for the mission and services of the Association and of its members who serve institutions of higher education; and, through their financial support, to defray the costs associated with the Annual Conference and Continuing Legal Education Workshops that otherwise would be borne by the attendees.

##### **a. Current Practices:**

- Sponsorship opportunities at NACUA Annual Conferences and Continuing Legal Education Workshops are derived from activities and events that are already planned as part of the overall Conference and Workshops (and would otherwise be offered to attendees, whether or not they are officially “sponsored”). As such, all contributions from all sponsors go directly to the benefit of all attendees.
- NACUA appreciates the support provided by its sponsors, and provides recognition for that support through signage at events and, at the Annual Conference, through an on-site sponsorship brochure listing the names of and information about all of the sponsors. Based on their sponsorship level, sponsoring organizations are entitled to certain benefits, such as complimentary registrations and complimentary program CD-ROMs.
- NACUA does not provide a place on the Annual Conference, Continuing Legal Education Workshops or any other educational program for sponsors as a result of their contributions and there is no preferential treatment of any law firm or corporation for any reason.
- NACUA retains the right to decline sponsorships from corporations and firms that NACUA determines are not of interest to, or have a potential for conflict of interest with, our members.
- NACUA may consult with members on an as-needed basis for their feedback on potential sponsors.

**b. Benefits that NACUA Provides to Sponsors of Educational Programs:**

- Published descriptions of and contact information for Annual Conference sponsors in the Annual Conference sponsor recognition brochure. This text is reviewed by NACUA staff for appropriateness and accuracy.
- Recognition of the sponsor's contribution in the Annual Conference sponsorship brochure and on-site program received by all Conference attendees. Continuing Legal Education Workshop sponsors are recognized in Workshop promotional email messages (such as the attendee checklist) and on the Workshop schedule. Virtual Seminar sponsors would be recognized in Seminar promotional email messages.
- Complimentary CD-ROMs of the proceedings of the Annual Conference for Annual Conference sponsors that contribute \$5,000 or more, and complimentary Annual Conference registrations for sponsors that contribute \$7,500 or more, and complimentary CD-ROMs of the proceedings of Continuing Legal Education Workshop for sponsors that contribute \$3,500 or more, and complimentary Workshop registrations for sponsors that contribute \$5,000 or more.
- Tables, in an area separate from the NACUA registration area, for Annual Conference sponsors that contribute \$10,000 or more. Tables, in an area separate from the NACUA registration area, for Continuing Legal Education Workshop sponsors that contribute \$5,000 or more. These entities may display their materials and products in accordance with NACUA's instructions, and may not disrupt or interfere with NACUA's registration area or educational sessions.
- Sponsor logos placed on Annual Conference tote bags, for sponsors that contribute \$10,000 or more.
- Upon request, lists with names, organizations, cities, and states of attendees (the same list that is distributed to all conference and Workshop attendees).
- Signage with the sponsors' names (and logos for sponsors that contribute \$7,500 or more to the Annual Conference) at events and on general signs at the Annual Conference. Signage with the sponsors' names (and logos for sponsors that contribute \$3,500 or more to the Continuing Legal Education workshops) at events and on general signs at Continuing Legal Education workshops.
- Click-through links to the sponsors' websites on the NACUA Annual Conference website, Continuing Legal Education Workshop website, or Virtual Seminar website.

**c. Benefits that NACUA Does Not Provide to Sponsors:**

- Distribution of promotional materials, during sessions or in the registration area, by law firm sponsors to attendees.
- Access to attendees' emails or phone numbers.
- Arrangement for private or small-group meetings with attendees in exchange for sponsorship.
- Selection of speakers based on sponsorship contributions. Selection of speakers and recruitment of sponsors are conducted completely independently.
- Permission to include the sponsors' logo on educational session materials.

NACUA's sponsorship activities are administered according to a series of sponsorship practices and procedures, as listed under Attachment I to this Policy.

**V. Additional Funding for Other Projects:**

The Association may also solicit and accept funds for other purposes or for special projects, initiatives or events, provided such funding does not cause either a) undue staff burden; b) competition with Annual Conference or Continuing Legal Education workshop sponsorship fundraising efforts; or c) confer any benefit other than recognition similar to what is provided for Annual Conference or Continuing Legal Education workshop sponsorship.

*Approved by NACUA's Board of Directors, June 2008.*