

the Illinois District

association of Chapters / Barbershop Harmony Society



a state of close harmony

Subject: Chapter Officers' Training Proposal to IL District Board
Date: August 25, 2018

IL District Board Members,

Proposal: The Illinois BHS District will promote and fund 24 of its Chapter leaders to attend superior Leadership Training in January 2019 at the Land of Lake's BHS District Leadership Academy in River Falls, WI.

1. Recent History of BHS Chapter Support Leadership Training (CSLT) in Illinois.

Annual IL District Chapter Officer Leadership training flourished in the early 2000's when it was partially funded and taught by BHS approved teachers. By 2013, there was little interest in attending this yearly training: possibly due to diminished BHS support, the quality of training, the middle Illinois venue, or reduced turnover in the Chapter leadership due to dwindling membership.

In 2013 and 2014, no IL District CSLT were held, reportedly due to lack of interest. The Midwest Harmony Alliance (MHA) Massed Chorus leaders took note of this training deficiency and the potential adverse effect on all Chapters' health. MHA leadership decided to hold a one day Leadership Summit in January, 2015 in an Elgin, IL church. It was primarily focused on preparing students to assume Chapter leadership roles (core training). Thirty-three Barbershop members attended this training. In the Fall of 2015, IL District again cancelled its CSLT for lack of interest, so MHA held its one day January, 2016 Leadership Summit in Elgin IL. Sixty-five Barbershoppers from 14 chapters in three states attended this Summit.

In mid-2017, I was asked by the District President to join the IL District Board as VP CSLT and Chapter Advocate Program. I accepted the invitation in order to reduce the MHA/District Chapter Officer Leadership

Training and funding gap. IL District did partially fund the 2015 through 2017 MHA Leadership Summits for nominal expenses not covered by our \$5/student fee.

On January 14, 2017, MHA/ IL District hosted the third annual Leadership Summit in Elgin. We invited the Barbershop Harmony Society to provide two reputable trainers for this Summit. BHS CEO Marty Munson taught our Presidents' Class and Christian Hunter taught our Chapter Development VP's. Over 45 men attended this Summit and provided excellent reviews for core training.

In the Spring of 2017, the MHA Leadership Team decided to take another step to help Chapters by hosting a brand-new event called **ABCDEF: A Barbershop Chorus Director's Educational Forum**. The purpose of this Forum was to provide an opportunity for chorus directors, associate or assistant directors, would be directors, arm wavers, wanna-bee's, and song leaders to participate in an open forum, round table discussion to build musical support network in a non-competitive environment. Also there were planned presentations of techniques and methods by qualified BHS instructors and live chorus practices. The initial ABCDEF was scheduled for August 26, 2017 in the western Chicago, IL suburbs. This event was cancelled for lack of interest even though the invitation was directly issued to all BHS Chapter Music Directors in Illinois.

Our fourth annual MHA/IL District Leadership Summit was scheduled for January 13, 2018. It too was cancelled for lack of interest when only 8 Barbershoppers returned sign-up forms. We attribute this malaise to our inability to offer non-core, elective classes that really excite the new and former students. This we learned at the Land of Lakes Leadership Academy.

2. **LOL Leadership Academy**

After cancelling the January 13, 2018 Illinois District/MHA Leadership Summit, new Elgin Chapter President, Dave Carter, and I registered and attended the Friday and Saturday 2018 Land of Lakes District Leadership Academy and were simply blown away by our experience. LOL attracts over 200 students to a well-planned, and continually improving weekend of great classes at a University of Wisconsin, River Falls Campus.

After a great deal of soul-searching and recent memories of the difficulty we've had attracting good teachers and 30 students, I contacted the organizers of the Land of Lakes Leadership Academy in mid-2018 and requested permission for Illinois District to send 24 students (approx. 1 student per IL Chapter) to their January, 2019 event. They have agreed to host our students. I would accompany our IL group to this Academy.

Since LOL provides some Chorus Director coursework also, we may be able to get a few of our Chorus Directors enrolled also. **In this way, Illinois can begin building a cadre of well-trained Chapter leaders who can be the IL District Chapter Officer Leadership Summit trainers of tomorrow.**

Attached is an e-mail from LOL's Leadership Academy Chairman, Del Ryberg, which lists all the classes to be offered this coming January and the teachers being lined up.

3. Expenses for LOL Leadership Training

Out-of-District, Quality Leadership Training comes at a cost. There are multiple expenses associated with sending IL District Chapter Officers to the LOL Leadership Academy;

- a. **Student Registration Expense:** \$85 covers the training, course materials, venue, and five meals over two days. This is a very reasonable cost considering the quality of the training and the five cafeteria meals
- b. **Transportation expense:** Bus transportation from Northern IL was considered but cost \$2400 for two days and one overnight. Car pool cost varies by distance from IL student's home to River Falls, WI and by the number of people riding in a car. Round trip mileage from Northern IL is 700 miles. Using a \$0.25/miles reimbursement results in a cost of \$175/car or \$44/rider if four students are in a car. If the IL students are uniformly spread around the state, a 1000 mile round trip will be a reasonable average which results in \$63/rider in a 4 student car.
- c. **Hotel expense:** many students depart from UW River Falls after the Saturday supper and drive through the night to get home. I do not recommend this as the January weather in this Minneapolis area is unpredictable and the District doesn't want any of its members injured in late night mishaps after a full day of classes. Thus I recommend that IL students book two nights in local motels which average \$65/room night /person (including all taxes) for double occupancy

d. Total expense per student is:

\$85 Academy registration fee
\$65 Mileage reimbursement
\$130 Hotel expense for two nights
\$ 280 Total

4. The Proposal

Dealing with the **mileage reimbursement** is messy and would likely involve multiple chapters for a single car. Therefore I recommend that each student reimburse their driver for their portion of the \$0.25/ car mile and then they in-turn seek reimbursement from their Chapter.

In order to jump start this high quality out-of-District Chapter Leadership Training, I recommend that the Illinois BHS District pick up the remaining registration and housing expense of \$215 (\$280-65) per student. Cost to IL District would be \$215/student x 24 students = \$5160

These District and Chapter expenses would be realized in 2019.

5. Summary

The future of Chapter Officer Training in Illinois is questionable if we continue to try to train Chapter Leaders (in core classes only) on our own. Current discussions among CSLT VP's call for BHS investing in Internet on-line training for the core District and Chapter positions. We cannot wait for this to happen as our District needs better leadership training now.

Our neighboring LOL District runs an successful, tested Training Academy that draws hundreds of students and provides specialized leadership experiences that buoys student skills and spirit.

IL District needs to be capable of running an LOL type Leadership Academy in Illinois with administrators and teachers trained at the LOL Academy. We must get this started and it needs to be subsidized to start.

We must move now to train our Chapter and future leaders before it's too late! Please vote in favor of this proposal.

Bill Miller
VP Chapter Leadership Training and Chapter Advocates
BHS Illinois District

