

Junior Optimist International President

Introduction

So, you have decided to run for Junior Optimist International President. That's great! In order for you to have a better understanding of what the expectations of the office are, we have compiled this information for you. Please read the information carefully and make sure that you understand it.

Serving as the International President is a lot of fun, but also requires time and dedication in order to be effective. We have created a minimum set of responsibilities that need to be fulfilled by the President. In cases where an International President would not be able to complete tasks, steps can be taken to remove or replace the President from office. If you have questions, please contact the Junior Optimist Department at (800) 500-8130.

Your Role

If you are elected as President, you will be taking a very "high profile" leadership position. You will serve your year as the main representative of the organization to all Members, the Directors on your Board and to adult Optimists. You are the "model" for other Officers and adults who are thinking about starting Junior Optimist Clubs.

As the President, you will not only serve as a Board Member charged with making decisions that will affect the entire organization now and in the future, but you will also be responsible for setting the direction for your Directors for the year that you serve. You will be responsible for setting goals that will lead the organization to the next level. Make sure that your goals will "stretch" the organization, but are also attainable. You will need to think "globally," putting the good of the organization ahead of what might be best for your Club or District.

Probably the most important part of being the President is being a great "communicator!" We have all said that better communication is something that needs to be strived for and you

will have the opportunity to make that happen! You will be assigned a group of Districts to communicate with all year long. It will be your job to keep these Districts in the loop about things that are happening. You also need to be the person who can help and encourage Districts to continue to add new Members and build new Clubs. You will also need to be in constant communication with Directors on your Board, Staff and the Chair of the Committee. You will also be a key promoter of the Junior Optimist International Convention.

Attire

When you are representing the organization, you will need to wear business attire, unless you are told otherwise. This means coat and tie, pantsuit, suit, dress or skirt. You are representing future Optimists and want to send the best message possible!

Travel

If you are elected President, there will be opportunities to travel.

There will be two meetings during the year. The first meeting will be held in mid-October in conjunction with Optimist International Committee meetings in St. Louis, MO. We will begin on Thursday evening and will continue through Saturday evening. Staff will be making your travel arrangements and will work with you on schedules.

You will be sent a binder of information prior to each Board meeting regarding topics that will be discussed at the meeting along with minutes from past meetings. Please spend some time reviewing these items so that you will be ready to take part in the discussion at the meetings.

The other meeting takes place during the Convention. Again, the Staff will make your travel arrangements.

For the October and July meetings you will receive a per diem to offset expenses. Optimist International will pay for your plane ticket and hotel room. Any other expenses will need to be paid for with your per diem. During these meetings, you will be sharing a room with other Board Members.

If elected, you will sit on the Optimist International Board of Directors representing Junior Optimist International as an “ex-officio” Member. Your input on issues is valuable to the decision-making process of the Optimist International Board. You will receive a notebook of information prior to the Optimist International Board meeting. Please be familiar with the material before the meeting begins. The Optimist International Board meets the first part of December, March and just prior to Convention.

Finally, as President, you may be requested to visit Districts to either promote Junior Optimist, help start a District or assist in building new Clubs.

Communications

As the President, you will be communicating on several different levels. Be prepared to make lots of phone calls and send out lots of e-mail messages. Since you will be in charge of roughly 10 Districts, you will need to make sure that you are in contact with each Governor or representative. You also need to communicate with your other Board Members on at least a weekly basis. You need to communicate with Staff at least weekly, if not more often. Remember that communication with the other Board Members is critical to the overall success of your year. Develop a relationship early on with each of your Directors. These are the people who will help promote your goals for the year and who you need to work for you. Also, keep in mind that one of these Directors may well step into your shoes next year. It is your job to teach them what they need to know about being a good President.

If you send an e-mail message to your Districts, please also copy the International office. We want to know what information you are sending out in case we can help in any way.

Make contact and stay in contact frequently with your Districts. At the very least, you should be talking to your Districts monthly. It would be a good idea to get the e-mail addresses of the Club Presidents in each of your Districts and send them a message from time to time. During the year, you will be given specific items to discuss with your Districts and report back on. We will be expecting a monthly report on each of your Districts from you.

We use e-mail a great deal when contacting you and other Board Members throughout the year. Check your e-mail daily! Expect lots of e-mail and also be prepared to respond to it when and if the time arises. If the International office sends an e-mail and asks for a response – do so as promptly as possible. There will also be e-mail from your fellow Board Members, Staff, Committee Members, people in your region, and other people associated with Optimist International. All of this e-mail should be read and you should take the proper course of action concerning the message’s content. If you are uncertain of what to do, forward the message to Staff and they will help you.

If your computer goes down or you cannot get into your e-mail account, please notify the Staff immediately at (800) 500-8130, and we will let everyone else know. Also, be prepared to give us an alternative way to give information to you until you are able to receive e-mail again. It will be your responsibility to find out what takes place during the time that you are unable to access your e-mail.

Occasionally, the Board and Committee conduct business by conference call. Be prepared to help plan the agenda for these calls. You will conduct the call as if you are conducting a Board Meeting. Staff will assist you and will get the information out to everyone on how to access the call.

During the course of the year, there will be several discussions regarding things that affect the organization. Since we only meet two times a year, many of these discussions take place via e-mail or conference call. It is important that you play a leading and active role in these discussions.

Miscellaneous

Be prepared to present a report at each of the Board meetings. Your report will be on how and where the organization is and the progress that we have made in reaching the goals for the year. This is a time to thank everyone for the hard work that they have done thus far and to encourage them in areas that need improvement. You will also need to give a brief report on what each of your Districts has done during the year and what future plans they have.

Be prepared to spend at least 10 hours a week on Junior Optimist International-related work.

Being the Junior Optimist International President is a lot of work, but if you are elected, it will be the experience of a lifetime!

I have read and understand these rules and agree to abide by them.

(Name)

(Date)