



AMBASSADOR HANDBOOK

FJI Staff:

John Beckord – **President;** johnb@forwardjanesville.com

Dan Cunningham – **Vice President of Government Relations;** danc@forwardjanesville.com

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FJI 2018-2019 Board of Directors:

Lynn Gardinier – **Chair**

Tim Lindau – **Vice Chair**

Oakleigh Ryan - **Treasurer**

Sherri Stumpf – **Past Chair**

Directors:

Barry Brandt, Jen DeGarmo, Deb Dongarra Adams, Mary Fanning-Penny, Mick Gilbertson, Derek Greene, Mark Gregory, Dave Hiller, Dave Marshick, Terri Miland, Tim Cullen, Paul Schieldt, Daniel Swanson, Eric Thorton, Paul Van Den Heuvel

Forward Janesville is the private economic development organization in Janesville. The businesses that invest financially in our organization are dedicated to the growth and economic vitality of our community. Forward Janesville is the forum where businesses network to develop and act with a unified voice in the political, educational, economic, and organizational areas for the betterment of member investors and the community.

Forward Janesville

14 S. Jackson Street, Suite 200 ~ Janesville, WI 53548



Ambassador Statement of Purpose:

Recognizing that Forward Janesville consists of businesses interested in establishing and maintaining the Janesville area as a good business community in which to live, work and play, it is the purpose of the Ambassadors, as representatives of the business community and on behalf of Forward Janesville...

- ~ To retain present membership
- ~ To serve as public relations liaisons for FJI at all business events
- ~ To promote membership in FJI

AMBASSADOR ACTIVITIES:

MEMBER BUSINESS LIAISON

1. Ambassadors are the liaisons between the 500+ FJI community/business members and the FJI office. Each Ambassador is assigned approximately **10-12 member businesses**. Ambassadors are encouraged to introduce themselves to the members and frequently share information with these businesses regarding upcoming events, training, seminars, networking sessions or any opportunities that would provide value to their membership. Examples of communication might be:
 - Sending an email to the member business introducing yourself as their Ambassador
 - Occasionally stopping by their office to say hello and dropping off your business card to reinforce your involvement with Forward Janesville (and thank them for their membership investment!).
 - Letting your member business know that if they have any questions/concerns/ideas, they can contact you directly. If you do not have the answer, you can forward their inquiry to the FJI office by calling 757.3160 and someone from the FJI office will contact the business directly to handle the inquiry.
 - Regularly reach out to your member business by forwarding email communication encouraging participation in upcoming Business After Fives, Expo, luncheon/dinners, fundraisers and opportunities for business networking. Encourage active membership involvement as the best way to get a return on their investment. Remind your member businesses that when their business is a member, every employee is a member too!
2. Once a year, Ambassadors participate in a ‘**Membership Matters**’ campaign. Ambassadors are asked to schedule an appointment to meet with their member businesses one-on-one to share updated FJI projects, learn about issues that affect the member business or anything new with their business environment (review current contact information, employee statuses, etc). The FJI office provides materials to each Ambassador and documentation is returned to the FJI office once completed. This ‘campaign’ is communicated at the monthly Ambassador meeting and typically occurs in the Spring.
3. **Membership Development:** On an ongoing basis, Ambassadors may be asked to assist with developing prospective member lists, encouraging business involvement in FJI membership and following up on potential dropped members. Ambassadors are key stakeholders in the business community and play an important role in helping FJI communicate the benefit of an investment in a business membership.

AMBASSADOR MEETINGS

- Held on the third Wednesdays of the month for one hour.
- Alternating times each other month from 7:30am, Noon, or 4:00 pm
- Meetings are held at a member business or the Forward Janesville building (14 S. Jackson St., Ste. 200) in the large conference room
- Ambassadors are encouraged to attend all monthly meetings and are asked to RSVP to the FJI office for attendance. Information will be shared in the weekly Red Thread regarding agendas, lunch & payment options, etc.
- Ambassadors are encouraged to engage in open discussions regarding ‘heard it on the street’, member questions and FJI project updates.
- Opportunity to be elected to an Ambassador Action Team (leadership team) which meets one week prior to the monthly Ambassador meetings. This group works together to facilitate the monthly meetings, agendas, Membership Matters annual project and other task forces.

EVENTS

1. Business After Five

- Networking opportunity that is held once a month, typically on the third Thursday from 5-7pm
- Ambassadors are asked to volunteer during these BA5’s with two shifts offered. If you volunteer, your admission is complimentary.
 - Ambassadors take admission and greet guests
 - If not volunteering, Ambassadors are encouraged to attend all BA5’s and wear their red Ambassador wear and nametags.
- Ambassadors are asked to seek out and welcome new attendees to the BA5. Introduce yourself as well as target to introduce them to 3 new contacts. New businesses are also encouraged to seek out an ‘Ambassador in RED’ for introductions/welcomes, etc.

2. Ribbon Cuttings

- These events occur as needed and are scheduled by member businesses. Ribbon Cuttings typically take 20-30 minutes. If an event is scheduled to take longer (dedication, lunch included, etc), this will be noted in the Red Thread communication.
- Ribbon Cuttings are a great way for Ambassadors to learn more about our member businesses, learn first-hand about their services/product or why they are celebrating (new business, new location, new branding, new staff) as well as get ‘behind the scenes’ tours.

3. FJI & Community Events

- Ambassadors are asked to volunteer (and participate with their member business representatives) at many events throughout the year. Volunteering at registration or on committees are great ways to stay connected in the community.
 - Rock Regional Business Expo & Luncheon / held in October
 - Awards Luncheon & Banquet / held in January
 - Annual Dinner / held in March
 - Golf Outing / held in summer
 - Others as assigned

FJI COMMUNICATION

- Refer to the weekly ‘**Red Thread**’ email which comes out on Mondays with upcoming events and information (email is sent from Claudine Manor). Attachments are typically included that can be shared with your member businesses. RSVP’s to events are required for volunteering, ribbon cuttings, lunches, events, etc.
- Refer to the weekly e-newsletter, Forward Janesville Weekly Report, for upcoming happenings, events and FJI things of interest. All members receive this email that typically is sent on Monday afternoons.
- Refer to the FJI web site and FJI social media page (Facebook) for relevant information or pictures from past events. FJI encourages ‘shares’ from their social media site to increase traffic.

PARTICIPATION POLICY

Ambassadors have many opportunities to participate including regular meetings, retention calls, Business After Five, ribbon cuttings, groundbreakings, special events and more.

1. Ambassadors who volunteer to work at registration or greeting for a BA5 are not required to pay the \$5 admission (**This applies to BA5 events only**). All other Ambassadors and spouses of Ambassadors will pay the regular member admission price.
2. It is expected that Ambassadors will regularly attend monthly Ambassador meetings in order to keep updated on Ambassador activities and general information regarding Forward Janesville.
3. Ambassadors are expected to wear their Forward Janesville/Goodwill Ambassador nametag to all events and are strongly encouraged to purchase a red Ambassador jacket or other apparel.
4. Ambassadors are requested to read the weekly email communication, called the *Red Thread*, and RSVP to Ambassador related events by e-mail: claudinem@forwardjanesville.com or phone at 757.3160.
5. Retention calls are the most important part of the Ambassador's responsibilities and are **REQUIRED**. Each Ambassador is assigned 10-12 members that they are responsible for contacting throughout the year and at Membership Matters campaign time. If calls are not complete, an Ambassador will be dismissed. This is relayed to each potential Ambassador in their entrance interview.
6. Implemented in the Spring of 2014, an 'Ambassador Scorecard' will be used to track Ambassador involvement and participation. Points will be given for event and meeting attendance, committee involvement, Membership Matters completion and on-going member communication. This point system is a way for Ambassadors to be accountable to their commitment and for the Ambassador Leadership Team to evaluate non-active Ambassadors.

RULES AND BY-LAWS GOVERNING MEMBERSHIP AS A FORWARD JANESVILLE AMBASSADOR

ARTICLE I: MEMBERSHIP

- Section 1:** Membership is restricted to individuals or employees of companies that belong to Forward Janesville, Inc. An Ambassador may request retaining their position for up to 6 months if, as a result of a job change they are no longer employed by a member business and hope to find employment with another FJI member therefore becoming that member's Ambassador.
- Section 2:** The total number of Ambassadors shall reflect 10% of the active membership.
- Section 3:** Any member of the Ambassadors or FJI staff can propose a prospective new Ambassador.
- Section 4:** Nominees will be interviewed by members of the Action Team. Members of the Action Team will present information on nominees at the following Ambassador meeting. The Ambassadors will take a vote and the new Ambassador will be contacted upon outcome of vote.
- Section 5:** New Ambassador Orientations are held quarterly. Once an Ambassador is voted in, they will attend the following scheduled orientation.

ARTICLE II: AMBASSADOR ATTIRE

- Section 1:** The designated **Ambassador attire and nametag** will be worn at all Forward Janesville events to help identify the Ambassadors as representatives of FJI with the exception of the annual dinner where we suggest that you wear your nametag.
- IMPORTANT:** Each Ambassador will be provided two nametags free of charge. If lost or a duplicate is requested, the Ambassador will be charged the current rate (approximately \$20/ea).
- *Ambassadors are asked to purchase his/her attire and within 30 days of being voted in.

ARTICLE III: RESPONSIBILITIES

- Section 1:** Ambassadors should be present, job permitting, at ribbon cuttings, grand openings, the Annual Dinner, networking events, or any other FJI special event.
- Section 2:** Each Ambassador is to visit everyone on their member list at least once each year during the Membership Matters campaign. FJI will help with the content of the membership contacts, methods for documenting all calls/attempted calls, communications and other info sought by FJI. Throughout the year Ambassadors are encouraged to make reminder calls/e-mails about upcoming FJI events and program invites. They can also forward any pertinent information that may be of value to the members.
- Section 3:** Ambassadors are expected to promote memberships in Forward Janesville. Each Ambassador is encouraged to forward new member leads to the Membership Development Coordinator at Forward Janesville.

ARTICLE IV: MEETINGS

- Section 1:** The Ambassadors shall meet once a month at a time agreed upon by the majority of the Ambassadors.
- ATTENDANCE:** Participation is encouraged to be at a greater level than this, but a minimum expectation would be:
- Ambassadors should attend at least half of the scheduled Ambassador meetings each year.
 - Ambassadors should not miss more than three consecutive Ambassador meetings.
 - If attendance is lacking, the Action Team will review and take actions as the committee determines.
- Section 2:** The Action Team shall meet once a month at a time agreed upon by a majority of the committee.

ARTICLE V: OFFICERS

- Section 1:** An Action Team composed of 10-15 members will be formed annually, from volunteers within the Ambassadors, FJI Staff and Board Members.
- Section 2:** The Action Team shall annually elect a Chair, Vice-Chair, Past Chair, Secretary and Task Force Leaders.
- a) The Chair of the Action Team shall facilitate monthly Action Team & Ambassador meetings.
 - b) The incoming Vice Chair makes a three year commitment whereby on an annual basis, becoming the Chair then Past Chair
 - c) The Action Team meets monthly, one week before the general Ambassador meeting.
 - d) The Action Team shall be responsible for bringing ideas and suggestions to the Ambassador meeting and lead the work of the Task Force committees based on the Board's goals.

BRIEF HISTORY OF FORWARD JANESVILLE

In 1991 the economic outlook for Janesville was uncertain. The Board of Directors of the Janesville Area Chamber of Commerce and Janesville Economic Development Corporation hired National Community Development Services (NCDS) to interview owners and managers of small, medium and large companies asking, “What needs to happen in Janesville so your company can succeed?”

The overwhelming response was, “Bring new businesses into town.” NCDS recommended that the Chamber and JEDCO merge, and that a four-year program of work be initiated to bring new businesses to Janesville. Hence, Forward Janesville was formed. About 120 businesses committed \$1.6 million to fund the New Beginnings four-year program of work. This money was in addition to their membership dues. The New Beginnings program was a success with many new businesses locating here.

As the program was ending in 1995, the economy in Janesville was robust, unemployment was low, and Forward Janesville again utilized the expertise of NCDS. Based on interviews with owners and managers of small, medium and large companies, The New Century Program was launched in 1996. 110 companies that pledged \$1.6 million in support funded this four-year program of work. The New Century Program had one main mission: to strengthen existing employers’ ability to stay and grow in Janesville. To accomplish this, Forward Janesville worked on government relations, education, economic diversity, downtown revitalization and small business programs.

After September 11, 2001 and the subsequent economic downturn, the Janesville economy was affected and FJI membership mirrored this slowdown. Membership dropped from a peak of 740 in early 2001 to 590 in 2006. FJI continues working in areas of government relations, education, small business, regional partnerships, economic development and membership services to further the mission to strengthen and diversify the Janesville area economy. Volunteer commitment and involvement remains a critical strength of this non-profit organization. More than 200 volunteers lend their expertise to various boards, working groups, and councils.

THE VALUE OF ACCOMPLISHMENTS TO THE COMMUNITY:

A STRONG LOCAL ECONOMY: New businesses, new jobs, and an increased tax base are results of Forward Janesville’s efforts in the retention and expansion of existing businesses, enhanced networking between local businesses, and political action for business. Our Design and Development Center helps ensure people share their vision and ideas for possible improvements and development of Janesville. REBA counseling and in-depth seminars enhance the profitability of businesses. Ensuring our youth receive the skills necessary to build a strong future workforce contributes to Janesville’s long-term economic vitality. Having them learn what careers are available here can help them to return to Janesville for a career after college.

SAVING MEMBERS TIME AND MONEY: FJI’s effective government relations, quality publications, and ability to bring businesses together, saves you the time and money it would take to accomplish on your own. This frees you up to devote your time to building your business. Choosing an FJI membership is like adding another hard-working employee to your staff without the cost.

THE POWER OF COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS: FJI recognizes the importance of creating a solid foundation and strong, diversified leadership to carry out our mission. Public-private partnerships, such as the Education Council and the Applied Learning Academy program, provide unique opportunities to maximize resources and increase the impact of our efforts. Regional partnerships strengthen our presence on a national level.

A VOICE FOR BUSINESS: Representing Janesville’s business community, FJI has established a presence at city council, county board and school board meetings. This involvement has led to informed involvement from the business. The Government Relations Council’s legislative agenda addresses the issues that affect business and keeps our members informed.

OTHER MEMBER BENEFITS: In addition to our economic development efforts, FJI also provides a number of benefits to our members: networking, seminars and workshops, member-to-member discounts, ribbon cuttings, referrals, sponsorship & advertising opportunities and communications.

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