

## **AAJA SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENT: Initiative to Assist AAJA Members Laid Off from their Newsrooms**

Recent business decisions by media companies to cut newsroom staff have affected a number of AAJA members. They also have an impact on AAJA's underlying mission to encourage more Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders to join the ranks of journalists and to ensure greater diversity in the workplace and in news coverage.

In its desire to assist AAJA members who have recently been laid off as a result of downsizing at their companies, AAJA has established the following measures to assist those in need:

### **AAJA MEMBERSHIP DUES**

Effective immediately, AAJA members whose membership has not lapsed for more than TWO years are eligible for a reduced 2008 membership fee of \$20 (regular Full Member dues is \$55). This is not applicable to those who have already renewed their 2008 membership.

### **COMPLIMENTARY UNITY CONVENTION REGISTRATION**

Current AAJA members or AAJA members whose membership has not lapsed for more than ONE year AND who a) have been laid off from their newsrooms within the past year and b) are currently unemployed but actively seeking another employment as a journalist are eligible to apply for a complimentary UNITY '08 Convention registration.

AAJA hopes that enabling these members to attend the Chicago convention will provide them the opportunity to meet with potential employers at the UNITY Career Fair and to participate in skills training sessions at the convention that would help them in their new job search.

Because there is only a **limited number** of complimentary registrations that AAJA can provide, we regret that those who have taken voluntary buyouts at their companies are not eligible to apply for this benefit. Priority will be given to applicants demonstrating greatest financial need.

### **POSSIBLE TRAVEL STIPENDS TO ATTEND UNITY '08 CONVENTION**

Due to its limited budget, AAJA is unable to assist with travel costs to the UNITY Convention. However, affected members should contact

their respective local AAJA chapters directly to find out if there are travel stipends available to them to attend the UNITY convention. Affected At-Large members should contact the National Office which in turn, will reach out to AAJA Chapters who might be able to assist with travel stipends.

### **CAREER COUNSELING**

AAJA will also seek every opportunity to help laid-off members and those facing staff cuts in their workplace through career counseling. Please watch out for announcements on AAJAOnline or on the national Web site regarding conference calls, Webinars or other events regarding this subject.

### **APPLICATION PROCESS:**

The above benefits are NOT automatic. Concerned members MUST APPLY for them, through the following simple process:

To apply:

Send an email (with the subject line **AAJA Member Assistance**) to: [National@aja.org](mailto:National@aja.org)

Or send/fax a letter to:

**AAJA Member Assistance**  
**1182 Market Street, Suite 320**  
**San Francisco, CA 94102**

Fax : (415) 346-6343

The email or letter must contain details of your circumstances with your last employer, including the **date that you were laid off**, and a **brief statement of your financial need**. You must also certify that you are currently unemployed but actively seeking employment as a journalist. Indicate whether you are applying for:

- 1) A reduced 2008 AAJA Membership Fee, or
- 2) Complimentary UNITY Convention registration, or
- 3) Both Reduced Membership Fee and Complimentary UNITY Convention registration

**DEADLINE** to submit application letters/emails is **March 31, 2008**. Applications received thereafter will be considered on a case by case basis, depending on the availability of complimentary convention registrations. Members planning to apply for a complimentary UNITY

Convention registration are urged to do so if possible by the **Early Registration deadline of March 14, 2008.**

The AAJA National Office will verify eligibility in as far as the number of years that your AAJA Membership has lapsed and will contact you regarding next steps needed to complete your membership renewal or UNITY Convention registration.

For availability of travel stipends to attend the UNITY Convention, please **contact your local AAJA chapters directly.** At-Large members should contact the National Office.