Phone-A-Thon Reconnects Members

On December 1, 1999, the Membership Services Committee, several Board members and staff gathered at Oramenta Newseme's (99) office for a membership phone-a-thon. The morning was spent contacting classmates and other graduates encouraging them to re-join LW as dues-paying members. The phone-a-thon raised $11,400 in pledged memberships.

The phone-a-thon gave callers the opportunity to reestablish connections with former class members. Everyone had a great time, especially Howard Ross, who led in pledges and won tickets to a Baltimore Ravens game (donated by Gene Sachs). Thank you to all the callers: Patty Perkins Andringa (96), Donna Crocker (99), Garry Curtis (89), Howard Ross (91), Gene Sachs (98), Jerry Sachs (92), and Priscilla Skillman (98).

Membership Services Committee Co-Chair Gene Sachs (98) gives Howard Ross (91) Baltimore Ravens tickets for getting the most pledges.

Five Members of Class of 2000 Successfully Work Together to Help Save Greater Southeast Hospital in Washington, DC

by Dr. Marc Weiss, Class of 2000

During the fall of 1999, a major news story in metropolitan Washington was the potential closing of Greater Southeast Hospital, the largest private employer and full-service medical facility east of the Anacostia River in Washington, DC. This drama was being played out in federal bankruptcy court, city hall, street rallies and demonstrations, the hospital, and community meetings.

In the end, with a lot of hard work, cooperation, and a little bit of luck, the hospital was saved from closing its doors, a bankruptcy settlement was approved, and Greater Southeast was purchased by the Doctors Community Hospital Corporation.

One interesting aspect of the tense negotiations and bitter public disputes that raged on for months before a miraculous deal and sale was concluded in December was the major roles played by five members of the Leadership Washington Class of 2000. Though they were on different sides of this issue representing a variety of constituencies and interests, eventually all five came together to produce a victory for the city and region in maintaining over 1,000 health care jobs and providing quality service to residents of Washington, DC and Prince George’s County.

They are: Alice Rivlin, Chair of the DC Financial Responsibility and Management Assistance Authority; Ana Raley, President and CEO of the new Greater Southeast Hospital; Sandra Allen, DC Council member from Ward 8 and Chair of the Human Services Committee; Regina Woods, Director of the DC State Health Planning and Development Agency; and Marc Weiss, Senior Fellow at the Center for National Policy, who served as the strategist and media spokesman for the Health Care Now/Greater Southeast Community Coalition. The coalition organized and mobilized citizens, churches, health care workers, and neighborhood organizations in support of keeping the hospital open.

These five members of the Class of 2000 spent several hours during Leadership Washington lunches and coffee breaks on program days discussing the issue of how to save Greater Southeast Hospital, and their "bonding" in the class helped them work together more effectively to address this important regional challenge. They all participated in a press conference and reunion at Greater Southeast Hospital on February 25 to celebrate the victory.

Among many others at this event who played key roles in saving the hospital were Congresswoman Eleanor Holmes Norton, and Robert Malson (93), President of the DC Hospital Association and a member of Leadership Washington's Board of Directors.