Initial Email

*Subject line:* Q: LSA Involvement in NWAV 44+

Dear Drs. …,

My name is Darcie Blainey, and I am a postdoctoral researcher working with Naomi Nagy at the University of Toronto. I am writing to you about NWAV 44, because the LSA has offered to become more consistently involved in organizing the conference. Since you are among the founders of this meeting, the conference organizers want to solicit your opinions about any such involvement before moving forward. The LSA’s offer is not specific regarding its potential role in NWAV’s organization and financing. What are your feelings about the LSA’s implication in the organization and funding of NWAV? Are there specific ways you think that the LSA could contribute beneficially? Are there any limits that you would prefer to set on any such involvement?

Thank you very much in advance for your valuable input. Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

Darcie Blainey

Initial Response Summary :

* Those who responded would all like more information about the LSA’s offer.
* Some want sponsorship but also independence.
* Some want independence, but not as badly if dependence means guarantee of NWAV’s future. Interested in an administrative connection.

Initial Responses (Full) :

**1. Friday, April 17, 2015 11:02 AM**

Thanks for this message. I would more than welcome LSA sponsorship of our meeting (as ADS already does with a small grant that asks only that one session of NWAV be identified as the ADS Session). Beyond that, I would need to know more about what they are offering. Our autonomy (and even rebuff of any long-term or centralized organization) has always been important to us, and I would not be for any serious revision of that independence, which has been very important to each individual organizing institution.

**2. Friday, April 17, 2015 11:13 AM**

I agree with … response with respect to sponsorship, however, I'm not as protective of the autonomous stance under which it operates. The autonomy might work for now, but administrative continuity in the future might ensure that NWAV continues seamlessly.. Along with its autonomy comes a kind of vulnerability that could sabotage this critical conference as the next generation succeeds the founders. Personally, I would be in favor of exploring some administrative connection with LSA to preserve the continuity and future of NWAV. The nature of that relationship would have to be worked out, but that can be done. That's my personal opinion; I have no idea what others (other than …) think about this but would like to hear.

**3. Friday, April 17, 2015 11:53 AM**

As one of the three co-founders of NWAV it seems important to me to begin with the fact that the group was created to be a “non-organization” with no official membership, dues, journal, officers, or central method of publishing papers. I have not been active in NWAV for several years now, but it seems to have done very well despite the lack of these normal administrative benefits. One problem with the lack of a central administration, however, is that retired scholars like me have a difficult time learning when and where the next NWAV will take place because there appears to be no centralized mailing list.

Where NWAV’s annual meetings would take place is decided informally among its participants. It exists and grows in spite of this. I agree with … that LSA sponsorship and publicity would be welcome, and I also agree with … that NWAV’s continuity may be tenuous. On the other hand, it has always been tenuous and seems to have survived quite nicely up to now at least.

 I am still active in LSA these days and I find it difficult to see how NWAV meetings could be held in connection with the already huge LSA meetings--- if that is a consideration. ADS can manage to do this because it is much smaller.

…’s worry about NWAV’s potential future vulnerability is important, however, and I join with … in wanting to learn more about what LSA has in mind.

**4. Friday, April 17, 2015 12:11 PM**

Excellent thoughts. It seems like we're on the same page. I would like to see administrative coordination with LSA but not see it subsumed under the annual conference.

**5. Saturday, April 18, 2015 12:34 PM**

Thank you for consulting me on this. Although I was one of the founders of the conference, it has developed it's own culture over the past 44 years. For example, we originally imagined it would be an annual Georgetown University event, parallel to the GU Roundtable on Languages and Linguistics, but that did not continue. Two of the three of us who founded the conference had in mind that it would be about variation in nuts-and-bolts linguistics and it has since taken on a more sociolinguistic flavor. My opinion on the extent of LSA involvement should not carry any weight. Such input should come from current leaders.

Second Email

*Subject line:* Re: LSA Involvement in NWAV 44+

Thank you for your responses. The LSA has not tabled a specific offer. Rather, they have asked those involved in NWAV to make a proposal. Are there any elements that you would like to see included or excluded in such a proposal?

Sincerely,

Darcie Blainey

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