Don’t Make Me Say No.

The Emergency Assistance Fund, an often overlooked benefit of AYP membership – is one of the best reasons to keep your membership current.

Written By: Natalie Norton, President & CEO, AYP

Don’t make me say no! I am writing this as I just said, “no” yet again to an Emergency Assistance Fund (EAF) grant application, and like most of you, I have a hard time saying no.

As most of you know EAF is a lifeline to many of our colleagues across the country in their time of need. So, why have I had to say no? As I ask that question in my travels across the country the overwhelming response is immediately, money and that is not correct. The reason that I have had to say no – a total of nine times in the last two months, is because the (often very worthy) applicant is NOT a member of AYP.

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-Natalie Norton

Each of the applications that I read made me cringe that I had to say no. whether it was for someone who needed help covering funeral costs, or a colleague who was diagnosed with a terminal disease that insurance was only covering a portion of the treatment costs and they had exhausted their savings and couldn’t pay medical bills. These and all the others I have had to decline have been worthy of an EAF grant, except for the fact that they were not members, which is the first threshold to clear for approval.

I have heard over and over, Y staff across the country questioning the value of their AYP membership, and while there are plans being developed locally and nationally to bring AYP membership with the needs of the Y professional in 2015, the value of your membership for just the access to EAF can make or break a family in a way that makes a significant difference. The EAF fund is, “for us, by us.”

In a 1920 issue of the “Association Forum” (as the AYP Magazine was known then) this was written:

“In 1903, one of our older secretaries, a railroad man, was laid aside by a long and incurable illness. One hundred of his brother secretaries agreed to give $3 a year each, as long as this veteran should live. In this way was established what is now known as the Employed Officers’ Relief Fund.”

-W.H Morris, Treas. Relief Fund - Association Forum, 1920

Recently, at the AYP National Conference in our nation’s capital, we were awed and amazed by the generosity in our Text-to-Give initiative. In a just 30-45 minutes Y professionals raised over $25,000 for EAF. The power, relevance and value that this brings to our colleagues across the nation is invaluable – so, please don’t forget to renew your AYP membership, encourage your colleagues to do the same and contribute to EAF – next time it might be you, and I hate to say, no.