Theosophical Order of Service USA Plan of Action (with updates)
July 2013 – July 2018

Background - The 3rd TOS International Conference convened at Olcott, the national center of the Theosophical Society in America, from July 23 through July 26, 2013. Over sixty delegates from eleven countries attended this working conference which was focused on the "TOS Into the Future" and organized into three stages: 1) a review of accomplishments over the last five years, 2) planning for the next five years for both international and national sections, and 3) specific planning for and commitments by the delegates in attendance from individual countries. Consequently, the twenty-five delegates from the United States met and constructed a "Plan of Action" for the Theosophical Order of Service in the United States. Our USA delegation came up with the following plan of priority actions and the what, who and when necessary for implementation.

The Board of Directors of the TOS acknowledged the Plan of Action as a guideline for future TOS work at its meeting on February 12, 2014.

TOS (five year) Plan of Action

I. Increase awareness of the TOS's existence and the nature of TOS work by:

A. Developing PowerPoint presentations about the TOS and its activities and sending speakers on tour to local groups.

Actions taken –

1. A tour of the groups along the west coast began Sept 2013 with two groups visited.
2. A presentation was given at the Mid-South Federation meeting in April 2014.
3. Plans to visit the other west coast groups in Sept and Nov 2014 are underway.

4. Further development of presentations that can be given by local TOS representatives (called 'liaisons') or others in their regions of the country is the next step.

B. Increasing the scope of the TOS website and the use of email and emeetings to include:

1. subscriptions to eNewsletters
2. transitioning of our TOS Newsletter to an eNewsletter
3. including the liaison eNewslettter on the website
4. installing a Face book button
5. including "what we stand for" on the website

6. providing links to non-TOS resources for group development.

Actions taken –

1. A website committee was established to redesign the 'look and feel' of our website with attention to incorporating the above. The committee's suggestions were approved by the board in February 2014. A demonstration of the new website was given at the July 2014 board meeting and was not accepted. The committee will try again. Deadline for completion is January 1, 2015.

2. Subscriptions to eNewsletters are underway with email addresses being gathered.

3. A way to convert the Liaison e-Newsletter to Word has recently been discovered. It can now be included on our website.

4. We plan to develop a Facebook page as soon as our website redesign is operational.

C. Identify/recruit/encourage and train TOS representatives to the community.

II. Review existing and create new publications and support materials by:

A. Increasing flexibility in areas of service, structured and unstructured. Within one year, the TOS board is to compose written guidelines regarding what comprises a theosophical project.

B. Review current materials especially in the light of Vic Hao Chin's presentation, "The TOS 100 Years From Now".

Action taken –

A committee was formed to do the initial review and make recommendations to the TOS board for new materials. Their report was presented at the July 2014 board meeting.

III. Encourage more collaboration between the TSA and the TOS by:

A. Including TOS material in the TSA's new member packets.

Action taken –

1. TOS brochures are now being included in the new member packets.

2. A letter to new members about the TOS will be written and included within the next six months.

B. Including a TOS page in the Quest magazine:

Action taken - the idea was presented to the TSA president and the editor of *Quest*. It was decided that the TOS would continue to place items of interest in the "Timely Bits" section of the magazine, and that an occasional article from TOS could be published if relevant to the theme and approved by the editor.

C. Encouraging TS groups to include TOS presentations in their programs and to initiate and celebrate local TOS projects as a group – all TSA members are automatically TOS members, but many don't realize that.

IV. Identify and strengthen skills needed by the TOS and design inner development programs and resources by:

A. Identifying local TOS leaders and offering them support by hosting leadership development seminars at Olcott or Krotona and attempting to team up local leaders with more experienced 'mentors'.

B. Developing groups and adding resources for TOS youth and children through:

Action Taken –

1. Exploration of a joint service project between the TOS and an existing Round Table group is underway. The idea of publishing a TOS children's book is being looked into and a committee has been formed. The first report of the committee was made to the TOS board of directors. The stories will be written and illustrated by the children and will combine service with Round Table virtues appropriate to each level of the Round Table. The book will also have an appendix (for adults) that describes the TS, the TOS and the Round Table with pictures of the children in ceremonial garb, etc.

C. Having local TOS groups speaking about a TOS service project at a local high school was suggested as a way to get youth involved.

V. Explore funding resources such as grants by identifying and getting assistance from a TOS member/s experienced in grant writing.

Actions taken –

1. A plea for members with grant writing skills was made via the Newsletter and TOS On the Road visits to groups with the result that a member possessing these skills has stepped forward.
2. It was suggested the TOS apply to be included in the Combined Federal Campaign which is a charitable giving program for federal employees. The paperwork is being submitted.
3. The need for an assistant webmaster was identified. Two individuals volunteered for Drupal training (our website is written in Drupal) with our webmaster.