



PRESS RELEASE
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Jewelers of America to Redefine Relationship With Affiliate Associations

New York, NY – Jewelers of America, the national trade association for businesses serving the fine jewelry retail marketplace, has announced it is redefining its relationship with the state and regional affiliate jewelers associations. The thirty-nine affiliate associations will have the opportunity to continue their relationships with Jewelers of America through new partnership agreements, which affiliate association presidents were notified about by June 16, 2009, via mail and personal calls.

After careful evaluation during an 18-month strategic review completed last year, Jewelers of America's Board of Directors determined that the organization's current business model was not sustainable to cover its operating costs. Traditionally, Jewelers of America has produced and developed the majority of services offered to members, yet it retains less than 20% [on average \$12.21 per storefront in 2008] of the annual dues paid by member companies. Jewelers of America remits the balance of annual dues back to the affiliate associations. In the new partnership model, Jewelers of America will no longer offer operational assistance to affiliate associations, such as dues collection and database maintenance, but will continue a positive, ongoing relationship through other educational and marketing support.

Under the current structure, which will end on August 17, 2009, Jewelers of America members have joint membership in their local jewelry association and the national organization. Going forward, members will elect to join or renew their membership with Jewelers of America and/or their local association separately.

“While the current economic forecast has made it necessary to redefine the relationship Jewelers of America has with its affiliates, the association intends to continue a long-term connection with them through restructured agreements and future partnership opportunities,” says President & CEO Matthew A. Runci.

In the notification sent to affiliate presidents, Chairman John Green wrote that Jewelers of America “will continually strive to strengthen and grow the partnerships it has with all state and regional jewelry associations, as it works to increase the benefits and services it offers to its membership. Our organizations share many of the same goals, [such as] ... establishing and preserving high professional standards, and the continuing and growing prosperity of our members.”

A Focus on Direct Benefits to Members

The change in operating structure is designed to align Jewelers of America resources to provide positive benefits directly to its members. It continues to focus on benefits that best address the current concerns of its member companies and to explore direct delivery options that are most convenient to them -- in their stores, at local events or online. Examples include recent discounts on education and online training from some of the jewelry industry’s top education providers.

The association also has exciting new benefits on the horizon, such as a redesigned, user-friendly website that is set to launch this fall. This will improve ease of access to all member services, including its exclusive regulatory and legislative guidance materials and online educational offerings from GIA and other education partners. Jewelers of America is also strengthening its efforts in Washington, D.C., to support the independent jeweler through legislative advocacy on key retail issues, such as sales tax fairness and group healthcare access.

An important merger with Jewelry Information Center (JIC) is also planned that promises to give members exciting access to high-quality consumer marketing materials and traffic-building programs. JIC members will receive equivalent access to Jewelers of America benefits, as they will become Jewelers of America members. More details on this integration will be announced soon.

About Jewelers of America:

Jewelers of America is the national trade association for businesses serving the fine jewelry retail marketplace. Jewelers of America's primary purpose is to improve consumer confidence in the jewelry industry by: serving as a forum for discussion and analysis of issues; playing a leadership role in public, government and industry affairs; advocating professionalism, including high ethical, social and environmental standards; and facilitating members' access to education. For more information about Jewelers of America, visit www.jewelers.org.

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