

## **Making Use of Alumni Members**

### **Susan Rickards - Phi Upsilon Omicron**

- Have had alumni chapters 50-60 years; now developing an online alumni chapter
- they never lost touch with their alumni, and have spent lots of effort over time keeping up with them
- A few alumni driving the online chapter
- Allow a delegate to their annual conclave including a voting member if chapter at least 7 people
- They have a very competitive alumni award for people who have contributed to the society over the years; includes letters of recommendation; get way paid to conclave, plaque
- they have one staff person and hire an hourly person to enter data, have a contract media person; rely heavily on alumni to get things done
- Building allegiance with the honor society is crucial to building alumni; have received two large estates, one of \$350,000. One from a person she had a relationship with but the other came out of the blue.
- use Microsoft Access, likes it because its a commonly-used program
- Have alumni on Board of Directors (discussed definition - she would consider our Board alumni but they also have 4 students)
- Media specialist does website, edits publications. Collegiate members had been doing facebook, but then wouldn't know passwords over time so moved that to media specialist.
- Media specialist wants to have a contest - submit photo and description; to use on FB, instagram
- Martha - Psi Chi has student interns work on social media under a staff member.
- Did strategic planning - insisted they had to decide whether alumni or collegiate group was more important. That Board could not decide.
- Alumni pay national annual dues \$25, they send out a statement; or lifetime alumni membership \$350; but some confusion because you're still a lifetime member regardless.
- They added to bylaws (Constitution?) that only the interest would be used.
- Surveyed members and they did not want electronic copies of their magazine, send out 75,000-80,000.
- Are there alumni bylaws? Yes, each chapter has bylaws but can be different as long as they don't conflict with constitution
- They have had a Foundation since 1970. Why set one up? Not sure, maybe attracts more donations, there is a separate Board for the Foundation. Their focus is only on raising funds for foundation, guidelines for distribution, distribution. They manage a different pool of awards and scholarships.
- Foundation Board members often establish a scholarship fund or give big donations later. People who might be interested in donating might wish to serve first on Foundation Board.
- They have an alumni research grant if published in the public domain of \$2,500. Pay \$2,000 initially, the additional \$500 if published within a time period.
- They will run mailing lists for alumni chapters with only request to send back any that needed updating
- Permanent/current address/business address/professional address different ones kept
- Name changes are especially problematic.

Brent Anderson - Omicron Delta Kappa

- They do have a Foundation. Sometimes it seems like there's lots of duplication, two Boards, two audits, two investment funds.
- They help fund society by giving a management fee (about \$120,000 a year) because Foundation has very little they do for operations but use staff
- Have two 990s, two \$8,000 audit charges annually
- They are thinking of combining and reducing duplication.
- If trying to decide about having a Foundation, what would the purpose of the foundation be? Are there tax exempt considerations? Maybe get CPA opinions. Strict bylaws could protect donor funds to be used as they intended without a Foundation.
- Hold reception for alumni; send mailers within 200 mile radius of annual meeting. Then what's the next step? Had local chapter officers there to introduce them to and get them to a chapter.
- If they want to be more active invite them to be part of National Advisory Council (about 12 people).
- Didn't have much luck with alumni chapters, so went with receptions instead. Now they are reconsidering because people at those receptions are asking about starting alumni chapters.
- Could be giving to students at meetings information about where alumni chapters are located and encourage them to look it up when they start their new job
- They use RaisersEdge (integrates with [yourmembership.com](http://yourmembership.com) if you have that).
- They are about to completely redesign their website

Tricia Gomulinski - Tau Beta Pi Director of Alumni Affairs (new position)

- Have had alumni chapter more than 100 years but have been neglected for so long
- We do have sample bylaws so that's much easier than each coming up with all different kinds of bylaws.
- Each has a section where chapter decides purpose of chapter
- Sometimes problems with maintaining email addresses as well as street addresses.
- She found there are about 200,000 bad mailing addresses
- Alumni chapters could be a good way to split up the list and look for current addresses.
- Could focus on chapter officers first, to focus on that group of students who were highly involved at one point; award winners.
- They also have a Major Gifts Officer, so she is asking for their time and talent. Wants to get them involved to network, work with a local collegiate chapter so they can see there is a way to be involved after they graduate; "involvement cliff" nothing to do with society after graduation post high involvement in college
- Resume workshops; speed mentoring (alumni-collegiate pairs)
- Had just been sending them annual donation appeal but no request to do anything.
- Same is happening with TBP that alumni chapters were not interesting to people for a long time, now people are more interested. For some reason especially class of 2010.
- You could email students right after they were expected to graduate, update your contact info; thinking of doing it twice a year after fall and spring graduations but before their university emails are not working.

Roger Smmitter - Delta Mu Delta

- sort of a numbers game, have to keep pushing things out
- Universities are interested in very successful alumni, how can HS be tied in their minds to the very good experience of their entire academic career

- How do we maintain their loyalty to us too.

Donna Cherry - Phi Alpha

- Considering an alumni chapter service grant, competitive
- But no alumni chapters yet, no ongoing contact.
- Considering starting with something like Linked In.
- Go through chapters to push out to their alumni, but lots of variability in how well chapters keep up
- Susan - Use every method you can think of!
- Do you have a sense of return on investment? Tricia - get volunteers to run down the alumni addresses.
- Hard to tell because they may not respond to first contacts then suddenly do.

Martha Zlokovich - Psi Chi

- Has anyone used the high school or college reunion sites like [classmates.com](http://classmates.com)?
- They do allow you to enter universities attended/graduated from and affiliations.