

## **Truman State University Alumni Board of Directors Meeting Minutes, April 5, 2008**

Alumni Board President Jim Cherrington informed the group that they would begin on the agenda and then break to join the Foundation Board for a joint meeting. The Board has been asking for more input from the Foundation Board and the Board of Governors. With the campaign getting under way, this is a good time for all three boards to meet and for the Alumni Board to hear from Dr. Dixon. Chuck Foudree will present on the campaign, and members of the Alumni Board can ask any questions.

Alumni Board President Jim Cherrington asked all members of the board to introduce themselves. Members present included: Von Abbot, Jim Cherrington, Victor Childers, Jeannette Harris, Tina Fish, Jessica Hill, Erin Lesczynski, John Mathis, Stacey Sifton, Gus Simmons, Denise Smith, Cindy Spiker, and Pat Thornton. Others present were Christina Rector, Office of Advancement Intern, Deanna Rood, Coordinator of Alumni Publications, and Stacy Tucker-Potter, Coordinator of Alumni Relations.

Cherrington officially called the meeting to order and asked for amendments to the agenda as presented. Hearing none, he asked for a motion that the agenda be approved as presented. The motion carried. The minutes from the previous meeting had been e-mailed to the group earlier in the week. They were also included in the packet of materials. Cherrington asked for questions or concerns from the minutes. Cindy Spiker asked for clarification on the portion of minutes that included the statement "The Board hopes to have 100% giving on the Alumni Board at the end of each calendar and fiscal year." Denise Smith informed the group that members receive their gift receipts on a calendar year, but gift societies run on the fiscal year. After discussion, the group decided that it would be better to exclude the statement regarding the calendar year. The sentence would then read "The Board hopes to have 100% giving on the Alumni Board at the end of each fiscal year." The fiscal year runs from July to June. The Alumni Board had 100% giving last year. They were the only board on campus to do so. Currently, the Alumni Board is at 70% of members giving for this fiscal year. The October meeting minutes were approved with the correction noted.

### **Officer Reports:**

◆ President Jim Cherrington reported the year has been going well, largely due to the help of the staff and of Vice President Jessica Hill. Additionally, he has begun attending the Board of Governors meetings at the suggestion of Mark Gambaiana, Dr. Dixon, and Denise Smith. Cherrington thinks it has increased communication opened and up better visibility. We are getting to the point where we are seeing these three groups (Alumni Board, Foundation Board, and the Board of Governors) on the same page as opposed to three separate groups.

◆ Vice President Jessica Hill reported that one of her goals for the year is to support the committee chairs. Board member Nicole Higgins expressed that she would have liked an orientation for the student recruitment. If any other committee chairs need assistance, please let Hill know. Hill would also like to provide more orientation to new members; hopefully there will be time for that at the retreat in June. Cherrington agreed that this is an excellent idea. He also encouraged those who have been on the board awhile but feel they could benefit from a refresher to take advantage of this opportunity.

◆ Secretary Denise Smith asked the board to write down [al07@truman.edu](mailto:al07@truman.edu) and [al09@truman.edu](mailto:al09@truman.edu). These are the e-mail for the Intern in our office and the student worker. They send e-mails for Denise, so everyone will want to add them to their address book. Please also add Stacy's e-mail, which is in the spreadsheet provided.

The group adjourned to begin the joint Alumni Board/Foundation Board Meeting.

When the meeting resumed, Cherrington asked the group for their reflections on the joint meeting. Victor Childers thought the joining meeting was productive. Cindy Spiker shared reservations with the idea of the campaign being focused on the Alumni Chapter structure. She does not feel she is good at asking people for money. Jim Cherrington shares her reservations but believes there are ways we will be asked to assist that don't require calling a list of potential donors, such as in hosting events as a Chapter. Jessica Hill says she is happy presenting the goals of the campaign. Spiker communicated that she is comfortable assisting with the campaign provided she has information and understands how to represent the program. Cherrington made the point that the Alumni Board will play a part in the campaign, but if there are larger donors, the Advancement staff will field those contacts. Jeannette Harris asked a question regarding competition between chapters. Denise Smith and Jim Cherrington were unfamiliar with this. Someone reported that

Mark Gambaiana says there will be chapter goals for amounts raised. Denise Smith told the group that each member can specify their level of comfort with different portions of the campaign. Communicate to a member of the Advancement staff what role you are comfortable in. The group seemed pleased that Dr. Dixon will be at each of the kick-off events. Jeannette Harris asked if each of the alumni members will receive a mailing. Denise Smith says that we aren't at that stage in the campaign, but she predicts there will be. Harris also wondered if a mailing would go to the alumni who are not chapter members. The campaign may also be a good way to boost alumni chapter memberships.

◆ Continuation of the Secretary Report: Denise Smith shared information on the number of communications/touches from Alumni Relations from January 1, 2008, to present. These are just numbers from Alumni Relations, not Public Relations or Development. Alumni Chapters have hosted 18 events, and the Alumni Relations staff has sent 100 different communications for these events, touching approximately 28,000 alumni. Smith and Stacy Tucker-Potter are working on tracking our touches with alumni to keep better track of these numbers so we can utilize data more efficiently.

Smith went on to introduce Stacy Tucker-Potter to the board. She said we are fortunate to have Stacy on board. Tucker-Potter is comfortable with the databases and also has an English background, so feel free to utilize her. Smith then introduced student intern Christina Rector. Christina has been fantastic assisting with mailing and events and managed chapter memberships. She has stepped up in the absence of a coordinator; please express your gratitude to her. Rector is also a psychology major, and she would like to interview as many of you as possible. She is inquiring about volunteerism.

Alumni Relations has just added a pay online for alumni events this week. This is very exciting. We had online registration, but we have added the capacity to pay online for chapter events. Please be patient because we have to create routing numbers for each event. Mid-Atlantic has added pay online for their banquet, and Dallas will be doing the same as well. As you send us the information for events, be sure to let Alumni Relations know if you would like this feature available. Cindy Spiker asked if the Office of Advancement would then send a check to the chapter. Smith says we will have to figure that out for each event. Deanna Rood mentioned that we can take RSVPs in addition to payment, for instance when it is a free event.

Smith thanked Rood for her assistance setting up the pay online and went on to congratulate Deanna Rood for producing the best alumni magazine out there. The *Truman Review* goes out to 50,000 alumni, and Rood also edits the e-newsletter that goes to approximately 20,000 alumni.

Smith also drew attention to the calendar in the packet of board materials that reflects the alumni events for the rest of the year. She requested that alumni leaders be in contact with the Office of Advancement regarding any future events to be certain they are added to all calendars.

Jim Cherrington inquired about the True Men postcard publicizing the concert in Ottumwa as part of the Iowa Alumni Chapter. This event—as well as a couple of new events—such as the Mid-Atlantic Chapter Congressional Breakfast and the Chicago Alumni Chapter Frank Lloyd Wright Tour events have been added to the calendar.

### **Committee Reports:**

#### ◆ Chapter Development

Cindy Spiker informed the group that one of the goals has been to increase the number e-mail addresses collected to increase inexpensive communication. The university has done a good job of requesting e-mails to assist with this. There has been a problem with some of the divisions not getting information about communications from divisions to alumni. Gus Simmons drafted a letter asking them to pass this information along to the Office of Advancement. Denise Smith says that we have seen an increase in this type of communication. The plan is to draft a letter every year reminding the divisions to inform the Office of Advancement of communication and updates. The Student Alumni Association has dwindled, so the Chapter Development's goals regarding SAA will have to be tabled until they are able to grow. The committee believes these goals are important as it is crucial to increase student involvement while the students are still on campus.

Another ongoing goal is increasing participation at chapter events. The committee is focusing on personalized communication. Chapter members calling or e-mailing people they know is a great way of getting people involved. The committee will create a script to make it easier to send an e-mail or make a phone call. Not everyone would need something like this, but it can be put in the *Alumni Resource Book* to have available. You can use *Truman Review* and

*Class Notes* – read and find people in your area, and e-mail them about upcoming events. One of the goals is to have better demographic information on alumni in the area to help determine, for instance, what kind of events would be best in a certain area of the city? Demographic and geographic information would also help in the campaign. Spiker is writing up a recommendation to present to the committee. The committee will then present this to the board. Denise Smith has looked at some programs in the past, but they were not good fits. Smith also e-mailed the universities in the conference but hasn't heard back from everyone. Most of the universities contacted do not map; those that do utilize mapping, do not track the kind of information we are looking for. Smith plans to call the other universities to get more information. Finally, the committee would like to encourage board members to use the TruView Web site. One of the problems is that their password times out. The committee suggests finding a way to have an automatic system for it to send you your password. Gus Simmons suggested entering alumni for a drawing every time they use the site. The committee encourages everyone to use it. All of the meeting minutes are posted on the group site, and the *Alumni Resource Book* is also posted on the site. Jim Cherrington commented that it is largely a matter of establishing a habit. Denise Smith says that approximately 60% of members have been on TruView in the last 90 days. Spiker commented that the system is cumbersome, but it is a good way to pass files. Smith also mentioned that it is secure, where other servers are not. One drawback is that you are not able to load very big files.

Cherrington asked for clarification on the lack of involvement in SAA. Smith reports that most of the members are interning or in Jefferson City. Those that are here are involved in the community service activities today. Cherrington mentioned that he was at the December commencement, and the class did not give a gift. What would our role be in encouraging something like that? How can we encourage students to give back to the university?

Jessica Hill asked about the Senior Tribute Project. Smith informed the group that it is a program designed to try to encourage giving. Deanna Rood gave more information—they can make a gift in recognition of a person, family member, group, etc. The Annual Fund staff presents information about this to the students. Participation has been minimal; Smith would estimate participation at one to three percent. There is distribution of these flyers at the senior picnic as well as at the Senior Graduation Fair. Jessica Hill thought that a project or specific gift might entice more students. The project could have a list of all of the donors to encourage students to participate. The Magruder Hall Brick Campaign is a good example of a successful project like this.

## **Chapter News:**

### Mid-Atlantic Chapter

Erin Lesczynski presented to the group that they are hosting a congressional breakfast on April 17. The chapter has invited Senators and Representatives, and Dr. Dixon will be there. They would like to invite congressional leaders from surrounding states (Iowa and Illinois, for example) in the future. The following day, the chapter will host their banquet and silent auction at a restaurant where they have had good turnout before. They are hosting a reception for interns over the summer, and they are also planning a camping trip to Assateague Island. They would like to encourage more family involvement.

### St. Louis Chapter

Jeannette Harris presented the upcoming events. On May 2, they are hosting an event, the Cardinals vs. the Cubs baseball game. On August 3, they have planned a Freshman Send-off. The golf tournament has not been scheduled. Cindy Spiker suggested combining the baseball event with the Chicago Alumni Chapter. First preference for the event is given to St. Louis Chapter members due to a limited number of tickets. It is then opened to other chapter members and then to students.

### Iowa Chapter

Cindy Spiker reported that the Iowa Energy game and pizza was rescheduled for tonight. Those games are a lot of fun. Next week is their Seventh Annual Ronza event. The following week is the True Men concert in Ottumwa. The concert has grown into a huge event. The chapter is also hosting a swing baseball game in Davenport. They are also hoping to have an event with the board retreat in June. They are also planning a Freshman Send-off and a Wineapalooza in September where the chapter will go from winery to winery in Iowa.

### Kansas City Chapter

Pat Thornton presented the upcoming events. The chapter is planning a golf tournament for May 17, and they are well on their way to signing people up. They are doing the Royals Cardinals game along with the Mid-Missouri, St. Louis, and NEMO alumni chapters. They have their Freshmen Send-off the second Thursday of August in Loose Park. They

are also planning a Welcome New Alumni event. They might do it in conjunction with Red Friday – which kicks off the Chiefs season and serve Ronzas. They are considering wrapping up at a piano bar.

#### Dallas Chapter

John Mathis reported that their spring banquet is coming up on April 25. They are planning a Rough Riders baseball game. The Dallas events tend to be smaller; they don't have enough to do a golf tournament. They do a Freshman Send-off, care packages, and college fairs.

#### NEMO Chapter

Von Abbott represented the NEMO chapter and reported that the next event is the reception and Lyceum on April 22. The chapter will be participating in the Royals/Cardinals game. The NEMO golf tournament will be July 11. In the fall the chapter will host a Freshman Send-off. They also plan to tailgate at one of the football games. Last year, they used the alumni tent and had a band. The fall banquet is typically in November, but it might be moved up since Homecoming is so early this year.

#### Chicago Chapter

Tina Fish filled in for Nicole Higgins and presented the upcoming Chicago events. In May they host a networking event. It is right after graduation so new graduates will be able to make connections. Their Freshman Send-off is in July. They held it in the Lincoln Park Zoo, but they found it will be more economical to do it in the suburbs. They are planning a wine tour in August or September and an adult dinner in October. The chapter scholarship is at \$9300, which is close to endowment status. Tina also reported membership numbers and that the chapter is not sure if they will meet their 2008 membership goals. The chapter is scheduled to go assist with eight college fairs. One of the local alumni set up a Chicago Alumni Group on FaceBook. The chapter is hoping this will be a good medium for getting alumni in the area involved.

#### Mid Missouri Chapter

Jim Cherrington gave the Mid-Missouri Chapter report. Cherrington would like a list of college fairs in the area.

Denise Smith informed the group that there is information on the Admissions Web site. Admissions also contacts the chapters in the fall to inform them of opportunities.

Mid-Missouri also hosts a legislative reception in Jefferson City as well as a Freshmen Send-off. They are also part of the Royals/Cardinals event. They are planning additional events for the year, including care packages.

#### ◆ Chapter Membership Reports

Denise Smith presented chapter membership numbers to date. Alumni Relations didn't get reports from St. Louis, Dallas, or Mid-Atlantic. Numbers are probably where we were this time last year if not a little ahead, but the numbers in the report only reflect pay online, so it appears lower. Some of the chapters haven't had their first event, so more will join with the event. Some of the chapters are ahead of where they were last year, so that is good. Lapsed membership notices will go out in April, and that always brings a large number of memberships.

#### ◆ Executive Committee

Committee reorganization is the main topic of discussion. A few committee chairs and vice chairs will be leaving around the same time. This leaves a situation where there are two relatively new people at the same time. George Yardley has submitted his resignation from Colorado due to work commitments. As a result, committees have been reorganized, and the draft is presented in the packet of information titled 2008-2009 FY Committees. Cherrington suggests keeping past board presidents on the board as a good source of information. This might be a good point of discussion for the Retreat. The length of terms might also be another point of discussion for the retreat because there isn't much time to get momentum once you come onto the board. One possibility would be to open an additional member to the executive board with the option of one person being able to serve a fourth term. Or fourth terms could be opened for all members. Cindy noticed there are several officers who are scheduled to leave at the same time. There are several board members who are in their first year. It might be necessary to reorganize every couple of years based on the length of terms and how they fall. This can be an agenda item for the retreat.

Jim requested a motion regarding the committee reorganization. Jeannette Harris motioned, Erin Lesczynski seconded, and the motion passed.

#### ◆ Nominating Committee

Jessica Hill informed the group that the bios of new members are presented in the board materials. Nominees are: Kent Donaldson, Iowa; Dave Peppard, NEMO; Stacey Sifton, St. Louis; Mike Wilson, KC; and Janys Zimmerman, at large.

Hill expressed her excitement about the slate of candidates. President Cherrington complimented the group on their candidates. The proposal serves as a motion. The candidates were approved.

Up for reelection are John Gadbois, at large, John Mathis, Dallas, Eric Short, Arizona. The candidates were approved for reelection.

#### ◆ Programs and Awards

Certificates of appreciation were presented to outgoing board members by Programs and Awards Vice Chair Victor Childers: Pat Thornton, Cindy Spiker, George Yardley (absent), and Gerry Ready (absent). Board President Jim Cherrington presented a certificate to Victor Childers.

#### ◆ Travel Program

Victor Childers presented information on the travel package available in October to northern Italy. There is a brochure for the travel program in the packet. The trip is reasonably priced, and it looks like a good itinerary. The mailing went to just short of 10,000 alumni with a target age of 50-70. The trip is open to all ages, but the travel company suggested we target marketing to this group. Our trip next year will probably be to Ireland. We are also considering for a domestic trip.

#### ◆ Retreat

The Retreat is in Des Moines in June 20-22. Arrangements are being made for a tour of the test kitchen and test gardens for Better Homes and Gardens. The weekend of the Retreat will be very busy due to a large marathon that weekend as well as an event in Newton, IA. Confirmations of attendance must be made by May 16 to keep the rate. You can probably find a cheaper rate by flying into Kansas City or Omaha and driving into Des Moines.

#### ◆ Student Recruitment

Tina Fish reported on behalf of Nicole Higgins. The Chicago Alumni Chapter has attended several events in the Chicago area. Representation at the college fairs also encourages alumni to become members of the alumni chapters. A Truman graduate is in Tanzania and represented Truman State University at the college fair there. Deanna wrote about her in the Truman Review that is coming out soon.

#### ◆ Strategic Plan

The strategic plan is in the packet of board materials. Under measures of success, #5 is measuring increase of alumni giving. This ties in really well with the campaign. There were suggestions to add additional constituencies under "stakeholders." "Attendees" and "Friends" were discussed as additions. The group discussed other constituencies such as corporations. The group decided that these were more financial supporters of the university and not necessarily stakeholders. President Jim Cherrington suggests the board take action on this document and review it annually. Denise Smith motioned to accept the document with the addition of "Attendees" and "Friends of the University" under stakeholders. Jeannette Harris seconded the motion. The motion passed.

#### ◆ Endowment Fund

Cindy Spiker reported that the endowment has grown from the credit card program. The credit card was in place a few years ago. Denise Smith reported that there was \$156,000 principle and around \$170,000 total. Mark Gambaiana requested the board make recommendations on expenditure of the endowment of this fund (the endowment would average \$7,000-\$10,000 per year depending on the market). Spiker is recommending the funds go to an overall alumni fund to be dispersed at the discretion of the Director of Alumni Relations and the Vice President for University Advancement. Some of the ways the money could be used include: helping fledgling clubs and chapters re-establish themselves, funding to begin new alumni chapters, increasing chapter membership, supporting chapter events, allocating more funds to chapters for bronze, silver and gold designations, creating events where there are no chapters or clubs, and sponsoring an alumni speaker series. The idea is that each year, a specified amount of money from the endowment will be available for use by the chapters. Members of the Alumni Board and chapter officers will be notified of the money available to give them an ample amount of time to submit requests. Victor Childers complimented Spiker on a job well done. His only reservation is that this program needs to be well-publicized among the chapters. Denise Smith made the comment that the best way to keep people informed of the program is for chapter and club members to keep people informed. The focus on the program is to help alumni all over the country, including at large areas. President Cherrington recommends this be an action item so it can go to Mark Gambaiana. President Cherrington accepts Spiker's report as a motion, Childers seconded. The motion passed.

◆ Homecoming

This year's theme is "Where in the World is Harry Truman?" It is October 2-5. Please discuss the best times for the Leadership Conference with other board members, chapter officers and chapter members to get a sense of what works best for everyone. Jeannette Harris suggested having the Alumni Board meeting on Thursday night, leaving Friday open for the Leadership Conference. During Homecoming weekend, we would like as many board members and chapter officers to march in the parade, attend the banquet, and attend as many Homecoming events as possible.

Jeannette Harris asked about pursuing an alumni directory; the last one was done nine years ago. A printed directory will not be pursued because it takes one year to produce one, which is out of date by the time it is printed. There are plans to have an online community within the year.

"Where in the World is Harry Truman," is also the theme for the Retreat.

The next meeting is scheduled for October 3, although the date might change. The Retreat is scheduled for June 20-22.

Cindy Spiker requested for notes from the Alumni Board meeting to be posted on TruView so non Board Members can see what happens at Alumni Board meetings.

President Cherrington extended his thanks to the outgoing board members, welcomed new members, and congratulated members who were re-elected.

John Mathis moved to adjourn, Jeannette Harris seconded. Meeting adjourned at 11:48 a.m.