



# **Truman State University Alumni Board**

## **Board Meeting Minutes**

### **October 15, 2010**

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The Truman State University Board of Directors met on Oct. 15, 2010, on the University campus in Kirksville, Mo. The meeting was held in the Alumni Room in the Student Union Building and was called to order shortly after 1 p.m. by Alumni Board President Jessica Hill.

Present: Von Abbott, Jim Cherrington, Kent Donaldson, Keith Epperson, Jessica Hill, Sharon Husmann, Ellen McLain, John Mathis, Dave Peppard, Denise Smith, Vid Vidyasagara, Tanner Williams, Mike Wilson, Janys Zimmerman.

Guests attending included Baillie Cloyd, Melanee Crist, Mark Gambaiana, Nicole Higgins (filling in for Sarah Theriault), Robert and Emily Kelchen, Deanna Rood, Stacy Tucker-Potter.

#### **Call to Order**

Alumni Board President Jessica Hill called the meeting to order and welcomed guests.

#### **Campaign Update**

Mark Gambaiana, vice president for University Advancement, presented an update on the University's ongoing "Bright Minds Bright Futures" Campaign and thanked the Board and alumni volunteers for helping with the campaign regional events. University staff and campaign volunteers are continuing to follow up on the 12 regional kickoff events held around the country in 2010. He noted that more than 1,000 campaign visits had been made with alumni and other supporters of the University living across the country, and that they had 30 major proposals in the works ranging from \$15,000 to \$2.5 million. They plan to reach the campaign goal of \$30 million before the end of the campaign which will conclude on June 30, 2011.

Discussion followed on marketing practices, giving levels, prospects for major gifts and future plans.

#### **International Alumni**

Vid Vidyasagara reported on the interest in pursuing an opportunity to engage international alumni and to support an international alumni group of alumni living in the U.S. and abroad; Vidyasagara shared information concerning discussions initiated last year about ways to engage international alumni. Melanee Crist, assistant director of international student affairs, was present to discuss opportunities for engaging international alumni and international students. Crist noted that Truman has a growing population of international alumni; Truman currently has 314 students from 48 countries. Melanee had met recently with graduating seniors at Truman who had expressed enthusiasm for the idea of having some type of organized international alumni group. Suggestions included creating a virtual presence online where international alumni could engage with the University and with other international alumni and/or creating an international club or chapter. Future endeavors for the international group could include fundraising initiatives to increase scholarship support for international students, creating a career network for students before and after graduation, matching up mentors with students in their field, and bringing alumni to campus to speak at student orientation. Faculty-led study abroad programs could present opportunities to hold events for alumni living outside the U.S. Some of the considerations discussed included funding and management of a new chapter based on current resources and possible

amendments that may need to be made to bylaws. It was also suggested that the University find ways to engage international students while they are on campus so they will continue to be involved with the University as alumni. A committee will be created to make recommendations to present to the Board. The committee will consist of Vid Vidyasagara, Jessica Hill, Melanee Crist, Ellen McLain and Denise Smith.

The minutes were presented and approved.

### **Officer Reports:**

#### **♦ President**

President Hill reminded Board members to complete the survey for the Strategic Planning Advisory Committee (SPAC), which is developing a strategic plan for Truman that will cover the next five years. SPAC is seeking input and plans to present a strategic plan to the Board of Governors by August 2011 that articulates who we are as a Truman Community, while shaping what we can become.

#### **♦ Vice President**

No report.

#### **♦ Secretary**

Denise Smith presented updates from the University including the updated web pages and commended the staff for their work. She reminded all Board members to review their packets, specifically the Homecoming details on the honorees that will be presented at the banquet and the issues of the *Truman Today* that contain campus news.

### **Chapter Reports:**

♦ Mid-Missouri Alumni Chapter had held numerous events including an accepted student event, a legislative reception, soccer game, wine tasting, freshman send-off, care package assembly, and a reception at Missouri Military Academy.

♦ St. Louis Alumni Chapter attended a Cardinals game and hosted a freshman send-off event, and the chapter had a very successful golf tournament which raised around \$4,000 for their scholarship. The chapter also provided food for the Truman Orchestra when the group performed in St. Louis. Other events included a wine tasting event coupled with officer elections and a zoo event with Scott Ellis giving a behind-the-scenes tour.

♦ The Kansas City Chapter has been holding regional networking events/happy hours and has sold out all 150 tickets they had for a baseball game. Their golf tournament had a good turn-out and raised a significant amount for their scholarship. They had a large turn-out at the Kansas City regional campaign event and the chapter held their annual freshman send-off. Among the new events scheduled were a winery event, a Boulevard Brewery event and a hockey game.

♦ The Iowa Alumni Chapter has planned several events including a True Men Concert in Ottumwa, an event in Cedar Rapids, and a baseball game in Burlington. They are keeping track of alumni chapter members who attend events and will be giving away a free trip to Homecoming to a chapter member like they did last year.

♦ The Northeast Missouri Alumni Chapter has had a number of successful new events including a winery event in Macon and a sponsorship and promotional role for the University's Gold Medal Concert. Their golf tournament was not as successful as it has been in past years but has produced some scholarship

revenue. They are attempting to get more alumni involvement in the Quincy and Hannibal areas with events such as a Quincy Gems baseball game.

♦ The Arizona Chapter continues to face the challenges of a dispersed population and is looking at more Truman-related events such as organizing an event around a televised football game. They continue to host a hike, Cubs game, and quiz night. They had a good showing at their wine-tasting event with several new people attending.

♦ The Dallas Chapter has been moderately encouraged by the success of their ability to engage alumni through events such as their participation in college fairs. The chapter continues to make care packages for students during finals week.

♦ Past activities for the Chicago Alumni Chapter included a wall-climbing event, Student Send-off, and tailgates. The chapter has also planned several events such as a Wolverines game and a brewery event. Nicole Higgins is taking Ronzas back to Chicago for their Ronza Night.

♦ Jessica Hill helped organize a freshman send-off in Cape Girardeau with more than 50 people in attendance which included 19 students.

## **Committee Reports**

### **♦ Executive Committee**

A Conflict of Interest/Confidentiality Agreement for Board members was included in the meeting packets and a copy was also stored on the flash drives distributed at the Leadership Conference. All Board members and chapter officers were asked to sign two agreements — one for the current year and one for next year—and send signed forms to Denise Smith. The group discussed the creation of an attendance policy for Board members; the topic was tabled and will be added to the agenda for the April meeting.

### **♦ Chapter Development Committee**

The *Alumni Resource Book* is substantially on track but has references to old information. Committee members will review it and provide edits to bring it up to date.

Two sheets were included in packets—one page outlined the current Honor Chapter structure and the other included a proposal for a new structure. One of the issues discussed was how items for achieving points are weighted. It was noted that chapter areas with fewer alumni populations, such as Dallas, may be at a disadvantage because they will never have the opportunity to achieve the Gold Level. The proposal was sent back to the committee for further consideration to look at weighting the point system based on alumni population in chapter areas. The committee will schedule a conference call.

### **♦ Nominating Committee**

The Board welcomed its newest member, Keith Epperson. It was noted that the Board will be discussing open positions at the April meeting. In the past, new members were more staggered, however, in the next few years there will be a high turn-over on the Board. Members were asked to think about strategies for Board succession. The Board also discussed upcoming open positions and officer elections; officer elections will be held in April. Board members interested in serving as an officer were encouraged to contact a member of the Executive Committee to find out more about the expectations required for the positions.

### ♦ **Programs and Awards Committee**

The Alumni Association is offering a group travel program to Alaska in August 2011, and people have already started signing up for the trip. Denise Smith is maintaining a mail list of people who have expressed an interest in the travel programs, and a mailing was sent to the mailing list. Denise plans to send a second mailing to another targeted audience that includes chapter members, donors, and Board members. President Troy Paino and his wife Kelly may be interested in going on the trip depending on the number of people who participate. It was noted that the travel programs are not designed to be a fundraising initiative; the University does not make a profit from the travel program, it is provided as a service to the University's constituency. The suggestion was made that it might be advantageous to have a Board representative on each of the trips to show support for the travel program.

Tanner Williams and Jessica Hill shared information they had gathered from conducting research on the possibilities of organizing legislative advocacy. Through a meeting with Ralph Cupelli and Public Relations they noted that two of the University's major concerns were budget and time to manage a new program. They would like to continue working along with the University on this initiative and start with something small such as having Ralph send e-mails to a targeted group. As a starting point, Denise Smith will pull a list of alumni who participated in the Government Internship Program. The Board will have more internal discussions on this topic.

### ♦ **Student Relations Committee**

Von Abbott will be stepping down as chair and Ellen McLain will become the new chair. Sarah Theriault will serve as the vice chair. The committee developed guidelines for Freshman Send-offs which were included in the Board packets. The guidelines will help Admissions train new staff for the send-off events by providing scripts for introductions and other helpful information.

Mentoring and internships were discussed earlier that day at the Alumni Leadership Conference. Representatives from the Career Center shared information on the type of information and services available on the Career Center's website.

### ♦ **Homecoming**

The Alumni Board will have the annual entry in the Homecoming parade; those who are interested in participating in the parade will meet at 8:15 a.m. in the parking lot at the southwest corner of Franklin and Patterson Streets. They will be handing out candy along the parade route. Kent Donaldson and Stacey Sifton are members of reunion classes and will be serving as emcees at the reunion luncheons. Jessica Hill and Mike Wilson will be serving as emcees for the Alumni and Friends Banquet. Board members were encouraged to attend the Alumni Mixer at the Kirksville Arts Center that is sponsored by the Alumni Board and the Northeast Missouri Alumni Chapter.

Affinity Reunions: The Board is looking at drawing more support from affinity groups at Homecoming. Starting with social groups such as Greek organizations, they would like to create a template that would be applicable across various groups. A committee headed by Mike Wilson has had preliminary discussions with Greek Life in regards to their department hosting a Greek Reunion during Homecoming weekend.

## ♦ Old Business

There has been some interest in creating chapters that are a departure from the usual chapter structure, such as an International Club/Chapter discussed earlier, and a Black Alumni Chapter/Club. Alternatives, such as the formation of an advisory group, will also be explored and the issue will be discussed further at the April meeting. Alumni Director Denise Smith noted that other MIAA universities do support such groups. Smith also noted at this time funding will likely not be available to start new groups. The Office of Advancement organizes and helps fund a Black Alumni and Attendees event on a regular basis in the St. Louis metro area. The Executive Committee will further investigate and discuss affinity groups and similar chapter requests.

Retreat 2010: The Board will plan a 2011 Retreat similar to 2010 and asked members to provide suggestions.

## ♦ New Business

### **Membership goals for 2011**

Membership goals were discussed and Board members made their recommendations: Arizona 45, Chicago 75, Colorado 35, Dallas 40, Iowa 100, Kansas City 120, Mid-Atlantic 65, Mid-Missouri 105, Northeast Missouri 360 and St. Louis 200. Board members are encouraged to communicate these goals to their chapter leaders.

### **Strategic Plan Update**

A new committee was formed to work on a Strategic Plan Update with the Executive Committee. Board members volunteering for the committee include Ellen McLain, Mike Wilson, and Sarah Theriault (nominated by Nichole Higgins). The committee will begin review and present a draft document in April.

### **Establishing “Volunteer of the Year” Award**

The Executive Committee has discussed adding a new award to Homecoming. The Committee will draft criteria and bring to discussion.

### **Purple Fridays and National Truman Spirit Day**

The University now has Purple Fridays; students, faculty and staff can win prizes when they wear purple on Friday. Following the example of the Spirit Days initiated by the Kansas City Alumni Chapter, the Alumni Board approved the designation of the first Friday in April and October as the dates for two National Spirit Days. April 1, 2011, will be the first National Spirit Day. The National Spirit Days will be promoted in e-mails, Facebook, and alumni publications.

### **Next Meeting:**

The next Alumni Board meeting will be held on Saturday, April 9, 2011. The Retreat will be held on Friday, April 8 and the morning of Saturday, April 9, 2011.